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**First, the Bad News:
Opposition Media in Authoritarian Regimes**

A dissertation submitted in partial satisfaction
of the requirements for the degree
Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science

by

Eoghan Wallace McGreevy-Stafford

2020

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ABSTRACT OF DISSERTATION

First, the Bad News:
Opposition Media in Authoritarian Regimes

by

Eoghan Wallace McGreevy-Stafford
Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science
University of California, Los Angeles, 2020
Professor Barbara Geddes, Chair

Why do dictatorships sometimes allow opposition groups to publish media, but at other times forbid opposition media? I propose a theory that dictators tolerate opposition media selectively in order to limit protests. I formalize the theory in a signaling model, from which I derive several testable empirical implications. I illustrate the logic of the theory with a case study of the Ben Ali dictatorship in Tunisia during its first five years (1987-1992), based in part on interviews I carried out in Tunisia. I show how the theory explains variation in Ben Ali's willingness to allow opposition media, across both time and opposition groups. To test the implications of the model quantitatively, I construct a panel dataset on ten Arab countries with authoritarian regimes during 1992-2017. The data measure which regimes allowed opposition groups to produce media in which years and are based on my research on a wide range of opposition groups (of various ideologies and legal statuses) and of media

(including newspapers, websites, and TV channels).

I find that dictators allow opposition media when their regimes are most likely to survive an uprising, in order to signal their strength to citizens and discourage them from protesting. In particular, in years when authoritarian regimes experience strong economic performance — including low unemployment, high economic growth, and plentiful revenue from oil and natural gas — they are far more likely to permit opposition media. After the “Arab Spring” uprisings of 2011 revealed that the region’s authoritarian regimes were more vulnerable to mass unrest than they previously appeared, those regimes became much less likely to tolerate opposition media. By advancing a new theory and analyzing original empirical evidence, this study contributes to our understanding of why media freedom varies in authoritarian regimes.

The dissertation of Eoghan Wallace McGreevy-Stafford is approved.

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2020

I dedicate this work to Ceren, with boundless gratitude and love.

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Chapter 1

Introduction

“For Mubarak, its value is based on the extent to which it can contain forces, not unleash them.”

-Mohammed Sid Ahmed, journalist, on the loosening of media restrictions in Egypt in the 1980s (quoted in Ross [1986])

Less than three years after Hamad Isa Ibn Al-Khalifah ascended to Bahrain’s throne, he faced a potent new challenger to his regime. Founded in November 2001, Al-Wefaq was an Islamist organization that called for a genuine *constitutional* monarchy. The group also demanded an end to the discrimination faced by the Shiite Muslims who make up the majority of Bahrain’s population and are ruled by a state whose top officials are predominantly Sunni. Despite Al-Wefaq’s call for fundamental political change, and its swiftly growing membership and electoral support, King Hamad allowed the opposition group to openly operate media

outlets throughout the 2000s. During this time, his government did not block Bahraini citizens' access to Al-Wefaq's website, nor did it shut down the group's weekly newspaper. But beginning in 2010, the king abruptly abandoned this permissive approach toward Al-Wefaq's media outlets. In September of that year, the government banned the newspaper and began blocking access to the website from inside Bahrain. The newspaper never reemerged. The government restored access to Al-Wefaq's website in 2012, only to resume blocking it in 2016.¹

Why do authoritarian regimes sometimes allow opposition groups to run their own media outlets, but other times prevent them from doing so? Indeed, why do dictators — a group not generally known for their enthusiasm about the airing of views different from their own — *ever* allow their opponents a public platform? What's in it for the dictator? In what circumstances do dictators expect to benefit from allowing opposition media outlets, and when do dictators think they are better off banning them? As far as I am aware, no previous research has tried to answer these questions in a general way. In this study, I offer a theory to explain the motivation of some dictators to allow opposition media, and why in other cases they choose not to do so. I represent this argument abstractly in a simple game-theoretic model, from which I derive testable predictions about when we should and should not expect to see opposition media out in the open in dictatorships. I illustrate my argument with a qualitative case study of the Ben Ali dictatorship in Tunisia, based in part on fieldwork I conducted there. Finally, I test the model's predictions quantitatively, using an original dataset on authoritarian governments' tolerance and intolerance of opposition media in several Arab countries during the last few decades.

¹For the sources this paragraph is based on, see the narratives on Al-Wefaq and its media in Appendices 3 and 4.

1.1 My Argument in Brief

My answer to this puzzle starts from the premise that opposition leaders do not always want to mobilize their followers to protest against authoritarian regimes. Often they judge that protest is too risky. They may fear that the protest would fail to achieve anything, that protestors could be violently repressed, and that failure and repression will discourage citizens from joining future protests that might have had a better chance of succeeding. Opposition leaders might consider a couple factors in particular when considering the likely outcome of a protest. First, are many citizens likely to join the protest once it gets started? Second, how likely are the security forces — the police, the army, etc — to use violence against protestors? No one can know the answers to these questions perfectly in advance, but elites in both the opposition and the regime will tend to have sources of information to base their guesses that most ordinary citizens lack. For example, elites in a dictatorship will tend to have a better idea than ordinary citizens about how well the economy is performing nationally, which could affect the number of citizens who are dissatisfied with the regime and potentially willing to protest. Elites would also have a better idea of whether the security forces are personally under the control of the individual who leads the regime or whether a larger group of regime elites shares control over the security forces. This factor will affect the likelihood that the security forces would be willing to use violence against protestors to keep the dictator in power.

When elites have information that protest is unlikely to succeed, opposition leaders will want to discourage their followers from protesting. In these cases, authoritarian governments will allow opposition groups to publish their own media, so that opposition leaders can reach as large an audience as possible with the message that the time is not ripe to protest. After all, citizens are more likely to believe that conditions do not favor protesting if they hear this message from opposition groups, rather than just from state-run media, since the latter

would always want to send that message. When protest is likely to be more successful, opposition leaders will not be willing to use their media to discourage their supporters from protesting. In such cases, the government will not allow the opposition to publish at all.

We might suppose that an authoritarian regime will only allow opposition groups to have media when the regime is very weak: that it will allow opposition media as a concession when it faces a high risk of mass unrest. But the theory I present in this study predicts the opposite pattern. Regimes will only allow opposition groups to have media when the opposition is either unable to mobilize citizens to protest or the regime can count on the security forces to violently repress protests if they occur. Regimes that face the greatest threat of unrest — because the opposition can plausibly mobilize more citizens to protest than the security forces would be willing or able to suppress — will prevent opposition groups from publishing media.

This study aims to add to political science's understanding of why media freedom varies under authoritarian rule, how and why opposition groups sometimes act in ways that benefit the regimes they seek to change, and how dictators use the trappings of democracy to prolong authoritarianism. If my argument is right, we should be very skeptical about whether dictators who allow opposition media will continue to do so for long, let alone embark on other forms of political liberalization. Rather, such tolerance is more likely intended to prolong their rule than to guide their countries towards democracy. And just as quickly as they opened space for opposition media, future circumstances may lead the rulers to decide they would be better off shutting that space down.

1.2 Why study this question in Arab countries?

I explore my theory empirically in the context of modern authoritarian regimes in the Middle East and North Africa, specifically in Arab countries. I conduct a qualitative case study of Ben Ali's policies toward opposition media during his first five years as president of Tunisia (1987-1992) and a quantitative study of authoritarian regimes in ten Arab countries over a twenty-six year period (1992-2017). The prevalence and persistence of authoritarianism in the Arab region makes it a fertile ground for the study of opposition media under authoritarian regimes. Additionally, the breakdown of the social contract between governments and citizens throughout much of the region and the rise of opposition movements, particularly Islamists, beginning in the 1970s brought renewed relevance to dictators' problem of avoiding being overthrown by their own citizens. The danger of mass unrest that dictators face in the region has remained pressing throughout the last three decades, as the "Arab Spring" and other uprisings have dramatically underscored. Many Arab authoritarian regimes during this period have carried out political liberalization measures that were often later reversed and in most cases did not bring an end to authoritarian rule. Thus the recent history of the region is particularly relevant for understanding how authoritarian leaders use pseudo-democratic reforms to promote the longevity of their regimes.

1.3 Outline of the Study

In the next chapter I present in more detail my theory of why dictatorships sometimes allow opposition groups to produce media and sometimes do not. I discuss the literatures that this theory builds on, including studies on media freedom in authoritarian regimes,

relations between authoritarian governments and opposition groups, authoritarian regimes' strategies for preventing and containing threats to their survival from mass unrest, and the ways opposition elites influence collective action. I present a game-theoretic model that formalizes my theory and then derive from it empirically testable implications that I will explore in the next two chapters.

Chapter 3 presents a case study of Tunisia during the first five years of the Ben Ali dictatorship to illustrate how the strategic dynamics in my model play out in practice. Drawing on news articles, human rights group reports, secondary sources, and field interviews, I show how predictions from the model help explain why Ben Ali allowed some opposition groups to produce their own newspapers but not others, and why he allowed opposition groups to publish in some years but not others. At any given time, he was more likely to allow media produced by those groups that posed the least threat of mobilizing protests against his government. For any given group, he was more likely to allow it to publish a paper at times when its capacity to mobilize was lower and the government's capacity to repress protests was higher.

In Chapter 4, I test the theory cross-nationally and over a longer and more recent time period. Specifically, I explain how I identified all significant opposition groups under Arab authoritarian regimes during 1992-2017. I then describe how I created a dataset measuring whether each regime allowed or banned media produces by these groups in each year. To my knowledge, this is the first cross-national dataset on toleration of opposition media by authoritarian governments. I present results from linear probability models, using regime fixed effects, that support many of the predictions from the model. Specifically, regimes are more likely to tolerate opposition media when their revenues from extracting oil and natural gas are higher than usual, when unemployment is lower than usual, and when GDP growth is higher than usual. After the "Arab Spring" uprisings, they became less likely to allow

opposition media. I also present various robustness tests, using different model specifications and an alternate version of my dataset based on slightly different coding rules.

Chapter 5 concludes. I summarize the findings, discussing the extent to which the hypotheses helped to explain the Tunisian case and were supported by patterns in the cross-national analysis. I discuss how the findings of this study extend and differ from previous results in the literature. I also discuss the limitations of the study and recommend future directions for research on the topic of opposition media under authoritarian regimes.

Chapter 2

Amplifying Pessimism: A Theory of Opposition Media Under Dictatorship

No one could accuse Jordan's Muslim Brotherhood of being sore losers. In November 1993, Jordan held a parliamentary election, in which the Brotherhood's Islamic Action Front (IAF) saw its seat share fall from 22 to 16 (Redden 1993). Yet, when King Hussein gave a post-election press conference, a reporter from the IAF's newspaper *As-Sabeel* prefaced his question as follows: "To begin with, let us congratulate you and ourselves on this national celebration. Jordan has provided an unprecedented example in the Arab world of relations between the government and the opposition, especially the Islamists" (BBC Monitoring: Middle East 1993). Leaders of Bahrain's Islamist Al-Wefaq party offered similarly kind words for their monarch on their website in 2002: "The political societies were honored to meet with His Majesty the King on Friday, 13 September 2002, where he praised the great role played by political societies in this historical stage" (Accord National Islamic Society 2019a).

Why would opposition groups engage in such an anodyne public discourse? Although these groups may seek substantial political change as a long-term goal, I argue, they often calculate that it is not in their short-term interest to challenge the state. Authoritarian rulers are only too happy to amplify such accommodating messages, in hopes of dissuading the groups' followers from taking to the streets. In this way, allowing opposition organizations to produce their own media can sometimes serve to shore up a dictator's powers.

When opposition media under Arab authoritarian governments do engage in criticism, it is often quite mild, in comparison to the stated long-term goals of the opposition organizations. Consider the top stories on the news website *As-Sahwa*, produced by Yemen's Islamist Islah party, on a day in February 2010. Though not full of praise for Yemen's government, the site was not exactly scathing in its criticisms, either. The top article focused on problems experienced by Yemeni students studying abroad as a result of the overlapping responsibilities of the Ministry of Finance and the Ministry of Higher Education. Another leading article reported on a Yemeni businessman's call for a conference to improve the country's investment climate (Al-Sahwa Net 2019). Opposition media in authoritarian Arab countries have often limited themselves to criticizing minor policies of their governments, while stopping short of calling for fundamental political change. Writing in the newspaper *Ash-Sha'b* during the Sadat era, a leading Muslim Brotherhood official wrote that "complete and comprehensive reform" was "a distant goal" and that, for the time being, "the Muslim Brotherhood offers its advice to all Egyptian governments, wishes them all success" (quoted in Lust-Okar [2005: 164-165]).

Of course, opposition groups frequently are not permitted to publish forceful criticisms of their governments even if they want to. Authoritarian governments typically place tight limits on the content the media publish and have the power to enforce those limits. And yet opposition groups that want to challenge a regime that limits the content they can

publish often have an alternative to playing by the government’s rules: silence itself can speak volumes. By refusing to publish at all, a group can draw attention to the restrictions the government is imposing on what they can say. Journalists under authoritarian regimes have often gone on strike to put a spotlight on the censorship they face — and by extension, the dictator’s fear of independent voices. Examples from recent decades include Algeria in 1998 (Goldstein 1999), Russia in 2003 (Associated Press 2003), Egypt in 2006 (Committee to Protect Journalists 2007), Tunisia in 2009 (BBC Monitoring: Media 2009c), China in 2013 (Coonan 2013), and Sudan in 2018 (Hendawi 2018).¹ Thus, while the existence of opposition media can signal a dictator’s strength, censorship can reveal his weakness.

2.1 Argument

In this chapter, I present a novel theory to explain why authoritarian regimes sometimes allow their opponents to publish their own media, while in other circumstances regimes deny their opponents a voice. In this section, I discuss the intuition of the argument. In the next section, I review the relevant scholarly literature that this theory builds on and the new contribution it makes to this literature. In subsequent sections, I present a formal (game-theoretic) model that reflects the logic of my theory. Finally, I derive hypotheses from the model that I will empirically test in the next two chapters.

I define opposition groups as organizations that seek to substantially change the policies and/or political institutions of their government. I define toleration of opposition media at

¹Instances abound of newspapers publishing a blank section in their pages where a censored article would have gone. Examples of this practice can be found in the Ottoman empire under Allied occupation after World War I (Baykal 2019), South Africa under Apartheid during the 1980s (Parks 1986), Tunisia during the Gulf War in 1991 (Donnadieu 1992), and Egypt under the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces in 2011 (Purkiss 2011). Because Brazil’s military dictatorship in the 1970s prohibited newspapers from publishing blank spaces, one paper began publishing “recipes for inedible dishes” in place of censored articles (Dassin 1979: 4).

the level of the individual media outlet. Thus, a government can tolerate media produced by some opposition groups, while not allowing other groups to have media. It can also tolerate some media outlets produced by an opposition group, while blocking other outlets produced by the same group (or preventing them from launching them at all). Toleration of opposition media as I use the phrase can be best be defined negatively, in terms of what constitutes *not* tolerating a given media outlet. A lack of toleration can be manifested in either of two ways, at the production level or at the access level. First, a government can prevent or attempt to prevent the media outlet from forming as an organization, producing media materials (articles, audio recordings, videos, etc), or making the materials public. For example, the government could arrest all of the outlet’s personnel or destroy its physical equipment.² Second, a government can prevent or attempt to prevent individuals within its borders from consuming the content that the outlet has made public, for instance by blocking a website or jamming a TV signal.³ Only if the government allows both production and access do I consider it to be tolerating a media outlet.⁴

I argue that dictators will sometimes allow opposition groups to produce their own media outlets when anti-government protest would be likely to fail. The success and failure of protests exists on a spectrum, of course. Success might mean overthrowing a regime or simply forcing the regime to make some policy concession. Failure might simply mean protestors don’t achieve the changes they demand or it could mean that large numbers of

²Not all interference with production constitutes a failure to tolerate the outlet overall. A government might use threats to prevent an outlet from publishing a particular article, for instance, while still allowing it to publish other articles. As this example suggests, toleration of an outlet could be thought of as existing on a spectrum. Nonetheless, I will hue to a binary conception of tolerating media for simplicity, focusing on whether an opposition media outlet is allowed to publish some content — though it may face some restrictions — or is simply not allowed to publish at all.

³Note that interference with users’ access to a media outlet is almost never absolute — rather such efforts are usually intended simply to make access prohibitively difficult. For instance, a government might block a website and outlaw citizens from using virtual private networks (VPNs). It may still be *possible* for a citizen to acquire and use a VPN to access the blocked website. Nonetheless, I would consider the government not to be tolerating the website.

⁴Note that legality is not a part of my definition; what matters is whether the government allows the media outlet to function and citizens to access it, regardless of its legal status. Thus, an outlet could be legal in theory but not tolerated in practice, or it could be illegal in theory but tolerated in practice.

them are arrested, beaten, or killed. In addition, a protest movement that initially appears to be failing might ultimately succeed, or vice versa. Generally speaking, opposition leaders tend to prefer that their followers protest when success of some sort is very likely and to refrain from protesting when some sort of failure is very likely. The group's strength would be sapped if their supporters were imprisoned or killed en masse.⁵ In addition, a failed protest might make citizens less likely to protest in the future. Moreover, the government may retaliate by imprisoning or killing opposition leaders themselves (Ginkel and Smith 1999). If the government gives an opposition group a public platform when protest would be very likely to fail, the group will tend to use it to *discourage* its followers from protesting.⁶ Thus, dictators are most likely to allow opposition media when protest is least likely to succeed, in order to ensure that the opposition's message to its followers to stand down reaches as many of them as possible.⁷

What sort of factors will determine the likelihood that protest would succeed? One important factor is the extent of discontent with the current regime. If many citizens support the status quo and are opposed to changing current policies, leaders, or institutions, a protest movement will attract few followers.⁸ Gurr (1970: 13) argues that participation in collective action is often driven by a sense of "relative deprivation": when individuals' circumstances fall short of "the goods and conditions of life to which people believe they are rightfully entitled." The extent of grievances in a society, and thus the likelihood that many citizens

⁵An opposition movement may gain strength if repression provokes a public backlash (Tarrow [1994: 92]), but a group will hardly benefit if repression is so heavy that its movement is crushed.

⁶Different opposition groups may have different risk thresholds, with some groups willing to protest even when the odds of success are much lower than what other groups would accept. The key point is that most groups have some threshold at which failure is so likely that they prefer not to protest.

⁷As long as the probability that protest would succeed is not *zero*, it is in the interest of a dictator to convince opposition supporters not to protest.

⁸Throughout, I use the term "citizens" loosely to refer to all individuals that are subject to the rule of a particular government, whether or not they literally hold citizenship. In some countries, including many countries in the Persian Gulf region, large shares of the population are non-citizen migrants. (89 percent of the population of the United Arab Emirates are non-citizens.) At the same time, the vulnerability of these populations to deportation limits their ability to protest, relative to those with citizenship. See: Fargues (2015).

would join a protest movement once it began, may thus depend, for example, on the level of unemployment and other aspects of economic performance (Hendrix, Haggard, and Magaloni 2009; Caren, Gaby, and Herrold 2017; Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2018).

Another factor that affects the likelihood of successful collective action is how the security apparatus — the police, the army, and other armed instruments of the state — would respond if large numbers of citizens did join protests. If angry citizens fill the streets and the security forces are unwilling to stop them, a regime is very likely to fall; conversely, the regime is very likely to survive if the security forces are willing to use violence to crush the demonstrations (Brownlee, Masoud, and Reynolds 2015). (Whether or not protests are likely to meet with repression is a key factor in the “political opportunities” literature. See, for example, Tarrow [1994].) A number of factors in turn influence the willingness of the security apparatus to either stand by the regime or side with the protestors. Committing violence against civilians can harm the prestige, morale, and unity of the security apparatus, particularly militaries, which typically see themselves as the defenders of the nation (Bellin 2012). Thus, security officers will not take the decision to inflict violence on protestors lightly, but will weigh the risks of violence against the risks of political change. For instance, when the security forces are personally controlled by the dictator and promotions depend on loyal to him, security officers are likely to fear that a transition to a new regime would cost them their livelihoods, or worse. By contrast, if the security forces are controlled collectively by a large group of regime elites, or if the security forces enjoy considerable institutional autonomy, they are more likely to retain their jobs and privileges even if the dictator — or the whole regime — falls (Bratton and van de Walle 1997; Bellin 2012; Brownlee, Masoud, and Reynolds 2015). Other factors that influence the security forces’ ability and willingness to use violence include the state’s fiscal resources (Bellin 2012; Josua and Edel 2015) and diplomatic support from foreign governments (Bellin 2012). The security forces may also be less likely to use repression the larger the crowds of protestors (Bellin 2012), so more widespread grievances,

to the extent that they contribute to higher participation in protests, may also decrease the likelihood of state violence against protestors.

Leaders of the regime or the opposition are likely to have information about the level of support for the opposition and the regime's ability and inclination to repress to which ordinary citizens do not have access. For example, the level of support for the opposition may be high if there are many jobless citizens (or support may be low if there are few out of work). Yet, while an ordinary citizen knows if she, her family, and her friends are out of work, she may not know the national unemployment rate. Citizens may also be unaware of whether the dictator has established tight personal control over the military and thus whether the military would be likely to follow orders to use violence against protestors. Regime leaders have state bureaucracies to provide them with information on economic performance and networks of spies that can report on the level of dissent. Of course, as Wintrobe (1998) notes, a dictator's information about how well the government's economic policies are functioning and how discontent citizens are may be distorted by the incentives of subordinates to paint a rosy picture of their performance to the regime leader. Nonetheless, it is reasonable to assume that the machinery of state conveys some information to the dictator about these issues that citizens cannot directly observe. And while the dictator may not be certain whether the security forces would follow orders to shoot protestors — as Ben Ali and Mubarak learned the hard way — he certainly has an informational advantage over the person in the street, due to direct experience interacting with the security apparatus and other regime elites. Opposition leaders typically also have some insider information that citizens lack, stemming from greater education, resources, investment in gathering political information, and direct interaction with high government officials. So citizens who are discontent with the regime would have an interest in basing their decision to protest in part on cues from opposition leaders, who share some interests with discontent citizens, but have better information about some factors that affect the

chances for successful protest.

I therefore argue that, when exogenous factors that tend to foster support for the opposition are low and/or the regime has reliable repressive capacity, the government is more likely to allow opposition groups to have media outlets, so that opposition leaders can more widely send a message to their followers not to protest. This demobilizing message may be explicit or followers may read it between the lines if the opposition media do not mention protest and call for only modest governmental reforms.⁹ Conversely, if the regime's repressive capacity is low and support for the opposition is high, opposition leaders will prefer to mobilize their followers to protest. A ruler will not allow the opposition to publish such messages, so the opposition will prefer not to publish at all, since the citizens would interpret the publication of tame opposition media as a signal that the opposition leaders think they should not protest.

Therefore, the more likely protest is to succeed, the *less likely* we will see opposition media. It follows that, if an opposition group does not produce any media, citizens can infer that the group may have been *prevented* from doing so, precisely because conditions are propitious for collective action. However, the citizens cannot make such an inference with certainty, because it is also possible that the group did not produce any media because it simply lacked the necessary resources. Citizens' ability to infer the possibility (though not the certainty) of censorship from the absence of opposition media paradoxically explains the credibility of opposition media when they do appear and discourage protest. It may seem counterintuitive that such a message would ever be convincing to citizens, since I also argue that the government would not tolerate media that sent any other message. But when citizens see opposition media discouraging protest they know that opposition leaders had another option: if they had believed protest was likely to succeed, they could have refused to

⁹Presumably even the weakest opposition groups must engage in *some* public criticism of the government, lest they lose all credibility with their followers, or their followers stop consuming the group's media.

send a discouraging message at all. Such a stance would have compelled the government to prevent them from publishing their media, and citizens would infer from the lack of opposition media that such censorship may have occurred and raise their expectation that protest would succeed.¹⁰ Therefore, if opposition leaders do publish media discouraging protest, citizens know the opposition leaders genuinely believe the chances of success are too low to justify protesting. Thus, allowing the opposition to have media — provided the group is willing to send a demobilizing message — would most effectively persuade the group’s supporters not to protest. But if the opposition is not willing to send a demobilizing message, then not allowing them to have any media would be to the regime’s advantage, preserving some uncertainty about whether protest was likely to succeed (and so the regime prevented the group from publishing) or whether the group simply lacked the resources to produce any media.

It must be acknowledged that, in some cases, dictators may succeed in using some combination of bribes and threats to convince opposition leaders to publish demobilizing messages even when they would prefer to mobilize their sympathizers. However, such efforts are costly for the dictator. And the better the chances of successful protest, the more extensive and costly such efforts would have to be. If the chances of protest succeeding are high enough, the dictator may not be able to afford to co-opt or cajole opposition leaders into publishing demobilizing messages. Similarly, in the model of Guriev and Treisman (2019), an incompetent dictator can offer bribes to independent elites to report that he is actually competent. In some cases, the elites will accept the bribes and falsely report that the leader is competent. But in other cases, the cost of such co-optation is too high for the dictator. Therefore, if citizens observed opposition media discouraging

¹⁰If the government allowed the opposition to publish media that *encouraged* protest, citizens would have an even higher expectation of protest success: it would be certain, rather than merely probable, that opposition elites thought the chances of successful protest were at least high enough that protest was worth trying. Thus, when the chances of protest success are high, disallowing opposition media is partly effective at lowering citizens’ estimates of the chances of successful protest.

protest and knew it was possible that the opposition leaders had been coopted or coerced, their estimate of the probability of protest success would still be lower than if they had not seen such media, because they also know that the opposition leaders send sincere messages some of the time. The greater the dictator's ability to bribe and threaten the opposition elites, the more often we will see tolerated opposition media. But in some cases, we would still see governments ban opposition media, and those would still be the cases in which exogenous factors made protest most likely to succeed.

The logic of my theory is similar to that of Cowen and Sutter (1998) and Cukierman and Tommasi (1998), who argue that voters are more likely to support a policy proposal made by a politician whose ideological preferences make her the least likely to advocate the policy. For instance, with his long record as an anti-communist hawk, Nixon had particular credibility in advocating diplomatic relations with Mao's China (an example cited in both studies). Similarly, voters may be more willing to accept pro-market reforms when they are proposed by left-wing parties (Cukierman and Tommasi 1988: 180).

One might suppose that the main effects of opposition media on citizens' attitudes are to increase their dissatisfaction with the current regime, by reporting its abuses and failures, and to increase their support for the opposition, by highlighting the benefits of the opposition's proposals and the virtues of its leaders. But the same logic that implies that opposition media are particularly credible when they indicate that the regime is strong also implies that opposition media reports disparaging the regime and touting the opposition will have little effect on citizens' beliefs. Such messages do not convey new information, because citizens already assume opposition groups have negative views about the regime and positive views about themselves. This is not to say that all citizens will *disagree* with such reports from opposition media. However, if some citizens do agree with these reports, it will be because they *already* had a negative view of the regime and a positive view of the opposition. Such

reports from the opposition will not tend to *change* citizens' attitudes.

I do not mean to convey the impression that authoritarian governments *only* choose whether to allow or not allow opposition media on the basis I have described in my theory. Political calculations are almost always far more complex than that, and no doubt other factors often shape this policy choice as well. In particular cases, those factors may be of such importance that the empirical patterns my theory predicts (discussed in the last section of this chapter) are violated. In some types of regimes, other dynamics may *systematically* outweigh those of my theory, suggesting certain scope conditions. For example, I consider armed opposition groups beyond the scope of my theory and do not focus on them in the empirical chapters. DeNardo (1985) argues that groups that rely on violent tactics are generally not able to recruit as many participants as groups that rely on peaceful strategies (218), and at the time same time, violent groups have less need to recruit large numbers of participants in order to effectively threaten a state (189). Therefore, the ability of such groups to use media to encourage or discourage the public to take part in an uprising may be more limited and less important to a government, in comparison to peaceful groups. Thus, other incentives may have a bigger effect on rulers' willingness or unwillingness to allow such groups to have media. I also do not claim that the theory can explain whether authoritarian regimes allow opposition groups with very few members or sympathizers to produce media. The media of the smallest groups may be unable to convince many citizens either to protest or to refrain from protesting. So again, other considerations may dominate regimes' decisions to tolerate their media or not. For instance, a government might choose not to allow a tiny group to produce even a tame media outlet, for fear that such an outlet would increase the number of citizens who were even aware of the group and the group would begin to attract more followers.¹¹

¹¹Such groups may also be particularly unlikely to have the resources to produce media, in which case we would almost never observe them producing media even when the regime would have been willing to tolerate them.

I want to underscore that toleration of opposition media does not necessarily mean that a government does not manipulate its citizens' access to information. In general, there are a few broad ways that governments can manipulate citizens' access to information. First, they can *prevent* the media from reporting certain information that would harm officials' interests. Second, they can block individuals' access to such reporting. I refer to both types of efforts as censorship.¹² Thirdly, governments can also make media outlets — both the directly state-run media and private media — produce content that will *favor* state interests, including disinformation. Such efforts constitute propaganda. Not allowing opposition media at all — whether disrupting the operations of a media outlet or impeding citizens' access to its content — can be seen as an extreme form of censorship. However, tolerating an opposition media outlet, as I have defined toleration, does not necessarily mean it is completely uncensored: as noted, a government may allow an opposition group to regularly publish articles or other content, while compelling them not to cross certain red lines regarding what cannot be included in that content. Moreover, if a government follows the strategy I have described, it only tolerates opposition media selectively, when the opposition shares its interest in avoiding protest. When conditions differ, the government prevents opposition media in order to increase citizens' uncertainty about the chances of successful protest. Thus, the strategy involves limiting citizens' access to information at times, in order to manipulate their beliefs.¹³

¹²I define censorship more broadly than some, who use it to mean only the seizing or blocking of material that has already been produced. Efforts to induce what is often called “self-censorship” fall under my definition of censorship. As Sakr (2003: 31) argues: “Censorship is achieved not only through direct suppression of content, but also by more fundamental and less visible means, including regulation of media ownership, regulation of entry to the profession of journalism and regulation of printing and distribution, as well as extra-judicial intimidation of media practitioners and bars on access to information.”

¹³A government may also let some opposition groups produce media but not other opposition groups. Furthermore, the way a government treats opposition media outlets may be quite different from how it treats other, less partisan media outlets.

2.2 Literature Review

All governments place some limits on what the mass media can publish, but authoritarian regimes typically place much more onerous restrictions on the media than democracies do (Stein 2016). According to most studies, the primary reason for authoritarian governments to manipulate the media is to prevent citizens from engaging in collective action against the regime. For instance, the media can influence citizens' beliefs about the behavior, trustworthiness, or competence of government officials, and other factors that may make citizens more opposed to or supportive of the government. Censorship of negative information about the government, as well as propaganda touting its virtues, may lead more citizens to support the government, or at least to acquiesce in its rule (Geddes and Zaller 1989; Petrova 2008; Stockmann and Gallagher 2011; Cho, Lee, and Song 2017; Guriev and Treisman 2019). Even if many citizens are dissatisfied with their government, and want to bring about a change in its policies or even fundamental institutions, they may be unwilling to take part in collective action unless they believe that enough other citizens will also participate. Citizens may therefore only be willing to protest if it becomes common knowledge that grievances are widespread (Chwe 2001). As noted, the greater the number of citizens that participate, the more likely the protest is to end in a successful regime transition, rather than repression (Bellin 2012). Moreover, there is “safety in numbers”: conditional on the security forces using violence against the crowds, a protestor's probability of suffering violence personally declines in the number of participants (DeNardo 1985 [194]). By manipulating media reports about opposition to and support for the regime, a government can prevent citizens' dissatisfactions from becoming common knowledge (Kuran 1991; Lohmann 1994; Egorov, Guriev, and Sonin 2009; Lorentzen 2014). Finally, the media can potentially spread logistical information about collective action, for instance concerning the timing and location of a planned protest. By censoring such information, governments can make it less likely that citizens

will learn how they can participate in a protest or even that it is happening (Walgrave and Manssens 2000; Little 2016).

There is considerable debate over the role of the Internet and other modern communication technologies in shaping governments' ability to manipulate information. Some scholars argue that the Internet is making government interference in the media increasingly ineffective, because the Internet is more difficult for governments to control than print or broadcast media (Lorentzen 2014).¹⁴ Thus, the spread of Internet access may make it increasingly difficult for governments to censor information that casts them in a bad light or that reveals the public's grievances (Stein 2016). The Internet generally and social media in particular also make it easier for ordinary citizens to communicate with each other directly, which may facilitate logistical coordination of protests (Little 2016; Stein 2016). However, other studies note the myriad ways in which authoritarian governments are adapting to the spread of Internet access, deploying a wide range of tools for controlling what citizens can post and see online (Whitten-Woodring and Van Belle 2014; Rød and Weidmann 2015; King, Pan, and Roberts 2017). Moreover, governments themselves can use the Internet as a tool to more effectively disseminate propaganda to the public (Pearce 2014; Rød and Weidmann 2015). The rise of the Internet and other communication technologies certainly does not seem to have made government manipulation of information obsolete.

In particular, while opposition groups around the world have steadily expanded their online media presence, governments can and do block opposition websites and intimidate and arrest their authors (Sweis 2015; Devitt and Pinchuk 2018; OpenNet Initiative 2020). The use of

¹⁴Lorentzen (2014) however argues that governments can compensate for the difficulty of controlling online media to some extent by restricting traditional media more heavily. However, as legacy media outlets continue to migrate to online platforms, such a strategy may prove increasingly ineffective. Shadmehr and Bernhardt (2015) argue that a ruler would always be better off if he could commit to censoring slightly less than he does in equilibrium, because citizens would update less negatively after unfavorable news. In some cases, a higher cost of censorship — i.e. due to new information technologies — can make the ruler better off for this reason.

https by international social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter has lately been a boon to dissident groups, because governments can no longer block individual profiles without blocking the entire platform (Clark et al 2017: 4), which risks a public backlash (for example: Beaumont 2011). However, authoritarian governments' track record of adapting to technological advances suggests it may only be a matter of time before they develop a solution to this predicament. In any case, as local social media platforms proliferate in countries around the world, governments may increasingly be able to block platforms based outside their borders with relative impunity (BBC News 2017c).

Despite their incentives and ability to interfere with the media, there exists considerable variation among authoritarian regimes in the extent to which they do so. A growing literature examines the potential benefits to authoritarian regimes of allowing a modicum of media freedom and explaining why some regimes allow more media freedom than others. One set of theories argues that some authoritarian governments allow the media freedom to conduct investigative journalism into the behavior of low-ranking government officials, in order to deter corruption and shirking (Egorov, Guriev, and Sonin 2009; Lorentzen 2014). Similarly, Huang, Boranbay-Akan, and Huang (2019) argue that authoritarian governments may allow the media to report on protests against local officials precisely because the media can facilitate the growth of protests. Allowing protests on local issues to spread may deter abuses by local officials, limiting discontent with the regime as a whole that might otherwise lead to nationwide protests. Wintrobe (1998) has noted that limits on citizens' expression can produce a "dictator's dilemma": repressive governments may not learn how widespread public dissatisfaction is until it explodes into mass unrest. Thus, governments may allow some freedom of expression in order to uncover the extent of discontent and the issues that are feeding it, so they can adjust unpopular policies before citizens rise up against the regime (King, Pan, and Roberts 2013; Chen and Xu 2017).¹⁵

¹⁵Chen and Xu (2017) also argue that, if citizens observe that they are allowed to communicate their grievances publicly, but that few other citizens are doing so, they may realize that their grievances are not

Manipulation of the media can also backfire in various ways. Governments may be better off allowing the media to report some news that reflects unfavorably on the government, because in the absence of any bad news, citizens might assume the government's performance is even worse than it is (Shadmehr and Bernhardt 2015). Gelbach and Sonin (2014) argue that citizens can learn over time how much the government manipulates the news; if manipulation is too extreme, citizens will not believe favorable news about the government, and may even stop consuming news media altogether. Such developments would make it harder for the government to influence citizens' behavior. Thus, governments may want to occasionally allow some unfavorable stories to be reported so that citizens will believe the favorable reports. If citizens have access to alternative information sources, such as foreign media, censorship may be exposed and stoke opposition to the government (Gläsel and Paula 2019; Knight and Tribin 2019). Hobbs and Roberts (2018) also provide empirical evidence from China that, when the government begins to block previously uncensored information sources, it can inadvertently motivate citizens to seek out censorship-evasion technologies, such as virtual private networks (VPNs), which then allow them to discover other censored content.

These studies make the case that the existence of some media freedom in authoritarian regimes does not necessarily reflect an inability to control the media more thoroughly. Rather, some governments choose to exercise less interference with the media than they are capable of, because they derive a political benefit from allowing some media freedom.

Nonetheless, some factors do make the cost of manipulating the media higher for some governments, providing a financial incentive for some regimes to tolerate a degree of media freedom. Guriev and Treisman (2019) argue that when there are many elites who are informed about an autocrat's competence and could communicate their knowledge to the public, it can become too costly for the ruler to either block the elites' media or co-opt widespread, which would dissuade them from protesting.

them into reporting favorably. Besley and Prat (2006) similarly argue that governments are less likely to try to bribe the media into covering up bad news the more media outlets there are.

Some studies have tested some of these theories empirically, using data from countries around the world, and found empirical regularities regarding which authoritarian governments allow greater or lesser media freedom. Using an index of media freedom produced by Freedom House, Egorov, Guriev, and Sonin (2009) find that oil rich dictatorships allow less media freedom than those without significant oil wealth.¹⁶ Whitten-Woodring and Van Belle (2014) find a number of empirical patterns based on an original dataset on media freedom. In non-democratic countries, international and civil wars are both negatively correlated with media freedom, as are protests and strikes, while constraints on the executive from the legislature, judiciary, or military are associated with greater media freedom.¹⁷ In addition to these findings, the authors also discover that economic development and literacy are not correlated with the extent of media freedom in non-democracies.

My study adds to this literature on media freedom in authoritarian regimes by examining a particular aspect that has been underexamined: whether or not opposition groups are allowed to produce their own media. Not only has this phenomenon not been explicitly theorized, but empirical studies have primarily relied on indices that measure media freedom in a very general way, such as Freedom House’s “Freedom of the Press” Index (Freedom House 2017c) and Whitten-Woodring and Van Belle’s (2015) Global Media Freedom Dataset. This study contributes a new theory of why authoritarian regimes sometimes allow opposition media and sometimes do not.

¹⁶This finding is consistent with a hypothesis that emerges from their model: they assume that revenue from natural resources are less affected by the provision of public goods by bureaucrats. Since allowing investigative reporting on bureaucrats carries the risk of triggering protests, dictators with access to natural resource rents therefore have less reason to allow investigative reporting on their subordinates.

¹⁷Despite the finding about protests and strikes, the authors note that there are many cases in which unrest forced a dictator to make democratizing reforms that included greater media freedom.

I build on previous work that has argued that audiences are more likely to believe claims that run counter to the usual ideological leanings of a news source. Baum and Groeling (2009), employing an experiment in the United States, demonstrate that media consumers are more likely to believe information from a media outlet if it goes against what they perceive to be the outlet's partisan bias. For instance, criticism of a Republican president is particularly compelling if it comes from a conservative news source, while praise for a Republican president is most compelling when delivered by a liberal outlet. As noted above, this logic is similar to that of Cowen and Sutter (1998) and Cukierman and Tommasi (1998) about why politicians are more likely to be believed when they point to the benefits of a policy that deviates from their ideological inclinations.

Sobolev (2019) makes a similar claim to Baum and Groeling (2009) that is particularly relevant to this study. Sobolev argues that, in non-democratic regimes, media reports indicating the government is popular are more credible when they come from independent outlets rather than state-run media. Such reports from independent media can therefore be particularly effective at discouraging citizens from protesting. Employing data from a natural experiment in Russia, Sobolev provides evidence that reporting by the independent radio station *Echo of Moscow* on a large pro-government demonstration in 2012 was more convincing to the public than reports of the same information from state media. In cities that, by accidents of geography, had access to the independent station, the frequency and size of anti-government protests fell more after the pro-government rally than in cities that did not have access to the station. Sobolev's findings are consistent with evidence that citizens in authoritarian regimes can often distinguish between government-aligned and independent media and generally place greater trust in the latter. Analyzing World Values Survey data from countries around the world, Tsfati and Ariely (2014) find that, among non-democracies, trust in the media declines as the share of state ownership in the TV and

newspaper markets increases.¹⁸

By definition, independent media are only credible if they are willing to report both favorable and unfavorable news about the government, depending on the true state of the world. This leaves the question of why an opposition group, which by definition would like to change some of the regime’s policies and may even want eventually to end the regime, would send a message discouraging citizens from protesting against the regime. Sobolev describes *Echo of Moscow* as “an anti-government radio station” and does not address why the station would be motivated to report information that would serve the regime’s interests by dampening anti-government protests. My theory builds on this study by offering an explanation of why a group that favors political change would nonetheless use its media outlets to discourage its supporters from protesting. I also derive empirical implications from that model about when an authoritarian regime will or will not allow opposition media.¹⁹

My theory also contributes to the literature that has argued that authoritarian regimes — particularly in Arab countries — use opposition groups, paradoxically, to enhance regime stability (Zartman 1988; Albrecht 2005; Lust-Okar 2005). To these studies I add a new mechanism by which regimes use opposition groups to enhance their own power: they give a voice to the opposition when their opponents will credibly convey a message that it is not a good time to challenge the regime.

More generally, this study contributes to the literature on how authoritarian regimes defend themselves from threats of mass unrest. As Svobik (2012) explains, dictators face

¹⁸The results for state ownership of newspapers obtains only among the most authoritarian countries.

¹⁹Unlike Sobolev,(2019), this study treats the decision to allow oppositional media as the phenomenon to be explained, rather than taking it as given. Sobolev acknowledges that this decision is endogenous and that the government can benefit from an independent media outlet’s reporting if the facts it reports make dissidents less inclined to protest. Thus, he conjectures that more popular regimes will be more inclined to allow independent media. However, he does not model this decision or test the hypothesis empirically.

threats to their power from forces both inside and outside their regimes.²⁰ Historically, the most frequent way that authoritarian regime leaders have lost power has been through internal challenges, namely coups. However, mass protest movements by ordinary citizens have become an increasingly common way for dictators to fall in the post-Cold War era (Stein 2016). Kendall-Taylor and Frantz (2014: 39) report that almost half of dictators who lost power in the 1960s and 1970s were overthrown by coups, but that share fell to less than 10 percent in the decade to 2014. Meanwhile, the share of authoritarian rulers who lost power in mass revolts, initially less than 5 percent, more than doubled. The authors (pages 39-40) attribute this shift in the balance of threats dictators face to a few factors: American and European support for coups has declined since the end of the Cold-War, “hybrid” authoritarian regimes that allow greater civil liberties have proliferated, and the emergence of social media has facilitated collective action.

Manipulating the information citizens receive is just one of many implements in dictators’ toolbox for insulating themselves from the threat of mass unrest. They can also jail and kill dissidents (both opposition leaders and their followers) to disrupt and deter collective action, they can make policy concessions or redistribute resources to increase their popularity, and they can co-opt elites who might otherwise mobilize protests against them (Acemoglu and Robinson 2006; Gerschewski 2013). Implementing pseudo-democratic institutions and policies has become a very common way for authoritarian regimes to contain popular threats to their power in the last few decades, including establishing legislatures, holding multiparty elections, and allowing a degree of media pluralism (Brancati 2014). Brancati (2014: 313) argues that pseudo-democratic institutions enhance the stability of dictatorships in several ways: “signaling, information acquisition, patronage distribution, monitoring, and credible commitment.” In particular, my theory highlights how dictators can selectively allow media

²⁰Svolik (2012: 2) refers to dictators’ task of defending themselves against internal threats as the “problem of authoritarian power-sharing,” while he refers to the challenge of defending themselves against external threats as the “problem of authoritarian control.”

pluralism as a way to signal their strength.

Finally, this study contributes to the literature on the many ways that opposition leaders influence anti-government protest movements. Bueno de Mesquita (2010: 447-449) lists some of the mechanisms studies have highlighted by which opposition leaders can mobilize collective action, including making collective action focal and providing selective incentives to participants. Nonetheless, this study draws on the important insight that opposition leaders do not always want to mobilize protests against authoritarian governments, because some junctures are riskier than others (Tarrow 1994; Ginkel and Smith 1999; Stein 2008). Under some circumstances, opposition leaders actively discourage their supporters from engaging in collective action against the government (Lust-Okar 2005).

2.3 Model

In this section, I present a “cheap-talk” signaling model in which the presence or absence of opposition media is an endogenous outcome. There are two senders: a Regime Leader and an Opposition Leader. There is one receiver: a group of citizens who support the opposition, referred to as the Supporters, and treated as a unitary actor.²¹ The Supporters do not represent the entirety of the citizenry, but the subset of citizens who would prefer a regime led by the opposition and who would consume opposition media if it were produced. In other words, they are those citizens who are quite dissatisfied with the status quo and have the motivation to seek out alternative media. Other citizens and the security forces do not appear as players in the model, but considerations about how they would act are implicitly

²¹I assume a single opposition group for simplicity. In practice, a government often faces multiple opposition groups, often across a diverse ideological spectrum, and may tolerate some groups while repressing others (Lust-Okar 2005). And as Lust-Okar argues, the strategic interactions *among* opposition groups can be crucial to understanding why the government treats opposition groups the way it does. I will address these important issues in the concluding chapter when I discuss possible directions for future research.

captured by the state variable S , which I turn to now.

The Regime Leader and the Opposition Leader, but not the Supporters, observe the probability that protests would succeed in bringing about a regime transition, S , which is drawn from $(0, 1)$ with a CDF $F_S[S]$ and a PDF $f_S[S]$. S reflects factors such as how widespread grievances are — and thus how likely it is that other citizens would join in if the Supporters protested — and how likely the security forces are to use violence against a given number of protestors. The assumption that the Regime Leader and the Opposition Leader observe S is consistent with the empirical reality that dictators and opposition elites are sometimes surprised by the outcomes of protests. A protest can succeed even when S is low or fail when S is high. Also, while the leaders are strictly better informed about the probability of protest success than the Supporters in this model, this assumption is made only to simplify the analysis of the model. The logic of the theory only requires that elites have access to some sources of information about the probability of successful protest that citizens lack, not that they necessarily have *more* information than citizens overall. Even well-informed citizens can make their assessments about the likelihood of protest success even more accurate if they are able to factor in additional information from the elites' signals.

The Regime Leader and the Opposition Leader, but again not the Supporters, also observe whether the opposition has sufficient resources to produce a media outlet, $R = 1$, or lacks the resources, $R = 0$. The probability that $R = 1$ is $\rho \in (0, 1)$.²²

If $R = 1$, the Opposition Leader chooses a message $m \in \{0, 1\}$, which the Regime Leader sees but the Supporters do not. $m = 1$ represents a message encouraging the Supporters to

²²The assumption that R and S are drawn independently is made only for simplicity. In practice, the probability that protests would succeed is likely correlated with opposition groups' resources. A better-financed group may organize protests more effectively. And more widespread grievances impact not only citizens' willingness to join protests but also their willingness to donate resources to opposition groups.

protest. In substantive terms, this might be an explicit call to protest or it might take the form of calling for an immediate regime transition. $m = 0$ represents a message encouraging the Supporters *not* to protest. Such a message might take the form of explicitly calling on opposition supporters not to protest, or simply refraining from calling them to protest, and advocating incremental policy reforms only.

The Regime Leader then chooses whether to allow the opposition to have a media outlet, $M = 1$, or not, $M = 0$. If $R = 0$, then $M = 0$ by default.²³

The Supporters observe M . If and only if $M = 1$, the Supporters observe m .

The Supporters observe their cost of protesting, C , which is drawn from a distribution on $(-\infty, \infty)$, with CDF $F_C(C)$ and PDF $f_C(C)$.²⁴

The Supporters choose whether to protest, $P = 1$, or not to protest, $P = 0$. If they protest, there is a regime transition, $T = 1$, with probability S . With probability $1 - S$, the security forces crush the protest violently and the regime remains in place, $T = 0$. If the Supporters do not protest, the regime remains in place with certainty. As noted previously, protest success and failure can take many forms other than a regime transition or violent mass

²³The timing of the Regime Leader's choice to allow or disallow opposition media after the Opposition Leader's choice of a message reflects the idea that authoritarian regimes typically have the capacity to censor a media outlet quickly if it publishes content the regime doesn't want citizens to see. For instance, the government might stop the distribution of an issue of a newspaper with an article encouraging protest, or block access to a website after a post it considers too critical. Reversing the timing of these two moves would not affect the outcome of the model, because the Regime Leader and the Opposition Leader have the same information, so the former could perfectly predict the signal the latter would send. In an alternative version of the model, in which the Regime Leader is uncertain about the Opposition Leader's preferences or the two players see different signals about the probability that protest would succeed, the timing of these moves could affect the results. In such a model, it might make sense to assume that the Regime Leader first chooses whether to allow the Opposition Leader to operate a media outlet, the Opposition Leader chooses a message to publish, and then the Regime Leader chooses whether to try to censor it, and with some probability censorship fails and the Supporters see the message.

²⁴ C should be thought of as the total direct and opportunity costs of protesting minus any benefits that come from protesting — material, social, or psychological — regardless of the outcome of the protest. A negative value of C would denote that the inherent benefits of protesting outweigh the costs.

repression. I assume a binary set of outcomes only to simplify the analysis of the model. The theory itself applies regardless of whether the success or failure of a protest is likely to be dramatic or more limited.

The Regime Leader gets a payoff normalized to 0 if the regime survives and -1 if the regime is overthrown. That is, the Regime Leader's utility is simply $-T$.

The Opposition Leader gets a payoff normalized to 0 if there is no protest. She gets a payoff of 1 if there is a regime transition. She pays a cost $\pi_{OL} > 0$ if the Supporters protest but fail to overthrow the regime. Thus, the Opposition Leader's utility is $T - \pi_{OL}P(1 - T)$.

The Supporters also get a payoff normalized to 0 if they do not protest and a payoff of 1 if they succeed in overthrowing the regime. They pay a cost C if they protest, regardless of the outcome. They pay an additional cost $\pi_{sup} > 0$ if they protest but fail to oust the regime. Thus the Supporters' utility is $T - P(\pi_{sup}(1 - T) + C)$.

2.4 Equilibria

In this section, I derive the game's perfect Bayesian equilibria. Because the game has two senders, whose actions jointly determine the information that the receiver sees, if the receiver observes an out-of-equilibrium signal, it may be indeterminate which sender deviated, or whether both senders deviated. I propose as a refinement to employ a principle of least deviation. The basic idea is that deviations from equilibrium strategies are improbable, and deviations by more players are less probable than deviations by fewer players. In formal terms, if an out-of-equilibrium signal (or set of signals) could have been produced either by

deviations by a set of senders A or by deviations by a set of senders B, and B is a proper subset of A, then the receiver does not believe that the signal was caused by deviations by all the senders in A. In this model specifically, if an out-of-equilibrium signal could have resulted from either deviations by both senders or from a deviation by one sender only, the receiver believes that only a single sender deviated.

I will focus primarily on an equilibrium in which the Opposition Leader's signal m conveys information about S . In this equilibrium, the Opposition Leader chooses $m = 1$ if and only if S is greater than a threshold $S^\star \in (0, 1)$. The Regime Leader allows opposition media ($M = 1$) if and only if $m = 0$. Define $k \in \{0, 1, \emptyset\}$ as an index of the set of signals the Supporters can observe. $k = 1$ denotes that the Supporters observe $M = 1$ and $m = 1$. $k = 0$ denotes that they observe $M = 1$ and $m = 0$. $k = \emptyset$ denotes that they observe $M = 0$ and thus do not see m . The Supporters protest ($P = 1$) if and only if $C < C_k^\star$, where $C_0^\star < C_\emptyset^\star < C_1^\star$.

First, let us derive the Supporters' beliefs given the set of signals they observe. Define $\bar{f}_S[S|k]$ as the posterior density of S given the set of signals k . If they observe $M = 1$ and $m = 0$, they infer that $S \leq S^\star$. Thus, the posterior density of S is:

$$\bar{f}_S[S|0] = \frac{f_S[S]}{F[S^\star]} \quad (2.1)$$

for $S \leq S^\star$ and 0 for $S > S^\star$. If they observe $M = 1$ and $m = 1$, which is off the equilibrium path, they could believe either that the Opposition Leader and the Regime Leader both deviated or that the Opposition Leader played her equilibrium strategy but the Regime Leader deviated. By the principle of least deviation, the Supporters infer that the Regime Leader deviated but not the Opposition Leader, so $S > S^\star$. Thus, the posterior

density of S is:

$$\bar{f}_S[S|1] = \frac{f_S[S]}{1 - F[S^\star]} \quad (2.2)$$

for $S > S^\star$ and 0 for $S \leq S^\star$. Finally, if they observe $M = 0$, the posterior density of S is:

$$\bar{f}_S[S|\emptyset] = \frac{f_S[S](1 - \rho)}{1 - \rho F[S^\star]} \quad (2.3)$$

for $S \leq S^\star$ and:

$$\bar{f}_S[S|\emptyset] = \frac{f_S[S]}{1 - \rho F[S^\star]} \quad (2.4)$$

for $S > S^\star$.

Next, I will derive solutions for the thresholds C_k^\star . The expected payoff of protesting given signals k is:

$$\bar{S}_k - \pi_{sup}(1 - \bar{S}_k) - C \quad (2.5)$$

where \bar{S}_k is the expected probability of a successful protest given signals k . Specifically:

$$\bar{S}_k = \int_0^1 S \bar{f}_S[S|k] dS \quad (2.6)$$

The payoff to not protesting is 0, so at the thresholds C_k^\star , the expected payoff of protesting is exactly 0:

$$C_k^\star = -\pi_{sup} + (1 + \pi_{sup}) \bar{S}_k \quad (2.7)$$

$$= -\pi_{sup} + (1 + \pi_{sup}) \int_0^1 S \bar{f}_S[S|k] dS \quad (2.8)$$

Since C_k^\star is increasing in \bar{S}_k , and it can be shown (see Appendix 1) that $\bar{S}_0 < \bar{S}_\emptyset < \bar{S}_1$, it follows that $C_0^\star < C_\emptyset^\star < C_1^\star$.

If the Supporters play such a threshold strategy, the Regime Leader will play the strategy of choosing $M = 1$ if and only if $m = 0$. If the Regime Leader chooses $M = 0$, he gets an expected payoff of $-SF[C_\emptyset^\star]$, while if he chooses $M = 1$, he gets a payoff of $-SF[C_m^\star]$. Regardless of S : $-SF[C_0^\star] > -SF[C_\emptyset^\star] > -SF[C_1^\star]$. So if $m = 1$, the Regime Leader chooses $M = 0$, getting a payoff of $-SF[C_\emptyset^\star]$ rather than $-SF[C_1^\star]$. If $m = 0$, the Regime Leader chooses $M = 1$, getting a payoff of $-SF[C_0^\star]$ rather than $-SF[C_\emptyset^\star]$.²⁵

Finally, given the strategies of the Regime Leader and the Supporters, we can derive the Opposition Leader's threshold strategy. Given S and the set of signals k , the Opposition Leader's expected payoff is:

²⁵Note that the Regime Leader only has a move when $R = 1$.

$$F[C_k^\star](S - \pi_{OL}(1 - S)) = F[C_k^\star](S(\pi_{OL} + 1) - \pi_{OL}) \quad (2.9)$$

Thus, the Opposition Leader prefers the Supporters to base their protest decision on a higher threshold if and only if:

$$S > S^\star = \frac{\pi_{OL}}{\pi_{OL} + 1} \quad (2.10)$$

If the Opposition Leader chooses $m = 1$, the Supporters will see $M = 0$ ($k = \emptyset$), and the probability that they protest will be $F[C_\emptyset^\star]$. If she chooses $m = 0$, the Supporters will see $M = 1$ and $m = 0$ ($k = 0$), and the probability that they protest will be $F[C_0^\star]$. Thus, if and only if $S > S^\star$, the Activist chooses $m = 1$.

In addition to this equilibrium, there is also an equilibrium in which every player's strategy is reversed with respect to the signal m . In that equilibrium, if S is higher than S^\star , the Opposition Leader sends $m = 0$ and otherwise sends $m = 1$. The Regime Leader chooses $M = 1$ if and only if the Opposition Leader sends $m = 1$. And values of the thresholds C_0^\star and C_1^\star are reversed. However, this equilibrium does not differ substantively from the one already discussed: $m = 1$ and $m = 0$ simply have opposite meanings.

There is also a set of babbling equilibria, in which the probability that the Opposition Leader chooses $m = 1$ does not depend on S . In such equilibria, the Regime Leader's choice of M does not depend on m or S . Lastly, the Activist's decision to protest is based on a single threshold value that does not depend on M or m . This equilibrium is not particularly plausible, however, since the equilibrium with communication that I have focused on always

exists.

2.5 Empirical Implications

Focusing on the communicative equilibrium, we can derive testable empirical predictions in two ways: by looking at the range of outcomes that occur within the game while holding the parameters fixed and looking at the effects of change in the equilibrium as the parameters vary. The higher the likelihood that a protest would succeed (S), the lower the chance that the opposition will be willing to send a demobilizing message and thus the lower the chance that the regime will allow the opposition to have its own media. Thus, when citizens are likely to have higher than usual grievances, the model predicts that a regime will be less likely to allow opposition media, because the probability that protests would succeed (S) is higher. The model also suggests that a regime will be more likely to allow opposition media if there is a greater chance that security forces would crack down violently on protestors: the greater the willingness and ability of the security forces to repress protestors, the less likely protest is to topple the regime.

Furthermore, other factors that affect the likelihood of protest succeeding, but about which elites would not have an informational advantage, would also affect the probability of the government tolerating opposition media. Suppose higher values of a factor X made it more likely that a protest would succeed in overthrowing a regime, at a given level of popular grievances and repressive capacity, and that X was known by both elites and ordinary citizens. For instance, a successful uprising against an authoritarian regime in a nearby country could lead citizens and elites to revise up their estimates of the probability that collective action could bring down their own regime. Such a factor would shift the distribution of the

probability of successful protest (F_S) to the right, making it more likely that the opposition would be unwilling to send a demobilizing message (i.e. more likely that $S > S^\star$). Thus, X would be negatively correlated with a regime allowing opposition media.

Turning to comparative statics, the model predicts that, all else equal, opposition media is more likely to be allowed when the expected cost to the opposition elite of a failed protest is higher. The higher π_{OL} , the higher is the threshold S^\star , and thus the more likely the opposition is to send a demobilizing message ($m = 0$), which the regime would allow to be disseminated by opposition media ($M = 1$). Identifying empirical proxies for π_{OL} is complicated however, because factors that would increase the probability or severity of punishment for opposition leaders after a failed protest would also likely be correlated with factors that increase the probability or severity of repression of ordinary protestors, and thus would affect the the likelihood of a protest succeeding (S). However, the net effect of such factors is unambiguous. For instance, suppose a factor Y was positively associated with both the probability that the security forces would be willing to arrest or kill opposition leaders and the probability that they would use force against protestors. Such a factor would both raise π_{OL} (and thus S^\star) and lower S , increasing the chances that the opposition would send a demobilizing message and their media would be allowed. This finding thus reinforces the prediction that the chances of the government allowing opposition media are greater when it can rely on the security apparatus to carry out repression.

The model assumes the existence of an organized opposition group and citizens who believe their interests in political change are aligned with those of the group's leaders. Each of the following hypotheses I now derive is *conditional* on the existence of at least one such a group. I will return to this point below.

Grievances are likely to be more widespread when national economic performance is weaker. As noted, various studies suggest that negative economic shocks are correlated with anti-government protests (Hendrix, Haggard, and Magaloni 2009; Caren, Gaby, and Herrold 2017; Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2018). Mass unemployment and declining incomes are likely to be salient grievances, suggesting the first two hypotheses:

Hypothesis 1: Higher unemployment is *negatively* correlated with the existence of opposition media.

Hypothesis 2: Higher per capita GDP growth is *positively* correlated with the existence of opposition media.

Wantchekon (2002) argues that natural resource rents allow regimes to buy public support, and Cotet and Tsui (2013) find that greater non-tax-based revenue is associated with higher government spending on social services. Thus, rents from natural resources should allow a government to reduce citizens' grievances against it. Higher oil revenue, in particular, is also associated with greater military spending (Cotet and Tsui 2013; Wright, Frantz, and Geddes 2013) and a greater likelihood of violence against civilians (Bove, Platteau, and Sekeris 2017).²⁶ Thus, it is not surprising that non-tax revenue is associated with greater longevity of authoritarian regimes (Smith 2004; Cotet and Tsui 2013; Wright, Frantz, and Geddes 2013). Bueno de Mesquita and Smith (2010) also find specifically that an increase in protest is less likely to lead to democratization among dictatorships with greater oil revenue (as a percent of GDP). By both lowering grievances and raising the chances that protest will be met with repression, higher natural resource rents, particularly from oil and possibly natural gas, should increase the probability that opposition organizations — if there are any — are allowed to have their own media:

²⁶On the other hand, Smith (2004) finds that, while oil wealth reduces protest, this effect is not mediated by repression.

Hypothesis 3: Higher per capita revenue from extractable fuel sources is *positively* correlated with the existence of opposition media.²⁷

As discussed above, personalization of a regime, specifically personal control by the dictator of the security apparatus, should lead to a higher probability that security forces will use violence against protestors (Bratton and van de Walle 1997; Bellin 2012; Brownlee, Masoud, and Reynolds 2015), lowering the probability that protest would bring down the regime. This observation leads to the fourth hypothesis:

Hypothesis 4: The degree to which control of the security forces is concentrated in the hands of the dictator personally is *positively* correlated with the existence of opposition media.

Following from the premise that the demonstration effect of a successful revolution abroad can lead people to revise their beliefs about the chances for a successful revolt in their own country:

Hypothesis 5: The occurrence of successful uprisings against nearby authoritarian regime are *negatively* correlated with the existence of opposition media.

I believe that elites in authoritarian regimes generally have more information about the variables mentioned in these hypotheses than ordinary citizens. However, as noted previously, even if there were no information gap between elites and non-elites about a particular factor that affects the chances for successful protest, it would still affect the likelihood that the government would tolerate opposition media in the hypothesized direction, by shifting the distribution of S . For example, if a publicly observable factor made protest more likely to

²⁷I follow Wright, Frantz, and Geddes (2013) in focusing on the effects of fuel revenue per capita, rather than as a percent of GDP, to avoid confounding the effects of fuel rents with fluctuations in overall GDP.

succeed, then, holding all other factors equal, opposition leaders would be more likely to conclude, based on their private and public information, that citizens should protest. And therefore, the government would be more likely not to allow opposition media. Successful uprisings against nearby regimes are probably close to being such a publicly observable factor, since international media will tend to cover such dramatic events, and many citizens in authoritarian regimes would observe the coverage by satellite television channels.²⁸

The model's assumption that an organized opposition group exists and a non-negligible group of citizens believe the group shares their interests is an important scope condition. In practice, the existence of organized opposition groups with significant number supporters is not independent of the extent of grievances or the state's repressive capacity. Regimes with *extremely* low public discontent or *extremely* high repressive capacity may have no organized opposition groups at all. Or they may have only very small opposition groups, which, as I have argued, are beyond the scope of this theory. If we do not condition on the existence of significant opposition groups, we might therefore find an inverted-U relationship between the likelihood that protests could topple the regime — as proxied by economic performance, the dictator's personal control of the security apparatus, etc — and the likelihood that opposition media exist. However, once we condition on the existence of significant organized opposition groups — the set of cases to which the theory applies — we should find a strictly negative relationship between the likelihood of protest succeeding and the likelihood that opposition media will exist and be tolerated.²⁹

In the next two chapters, I explore these hypotheses empirically. Chapter 3 illustrates the

²⁸The news would also be likely to proliferate to social media accounts that governments can't selectively block and to too many websites for the government to identify and block them all.

²⁹Defining the line between negligible and non-negligible movements is obviously fraught with subjectivity and ambiguity. In the qualitative case study and the quantitative cross-national comparison, I base my decisions to focus on some opposition groups and not others on indicators of their support such as the numbers of followers they have been able to mobilize to protest or vote in the past. Identifying alternative measures of opposition group strength is an important direction for future research, in order to test further the robustness of my findings.

theory qualitatively, through a case study of Tunisia during the first half decade of Ben Ali's rule. Chapter 4 tests the theory quantitatively, through statistical analysis of data from ten Arab authoritarian regimes since the end of the Cold War.

Chapter 3

“A Weird Period”: Opposition Media in Tunisia, 1987-1992

When Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali seized power in Tunisia in November 1987, many observers inside and outside the country believed he would be a political reformer. One of the reforms he promised in the early morning hours after his coup was greater freedom of the press. And indeed, during the first three years of his rule, he allowed many opposition groups to launch new and previously banned newspapers, including the most popular opposition group, Hizb en-Nahda. Yet within four years of the coup, Ben Ali had reversed his own press reforms. He shut down Nahda’s newspaper in early 1991 (shortly before dismantling the group itself). By 1998, Ben Ali had made it onto a list of the world’s top ten “Enemies of the Press,” published by the Committee to Protect Journalists. Why did Ben Ali allow this opening for the opposition press and why did he subsequently revert to suppressing the media of the largest opposition group?

The early years of Ben Ali's presidency were, as his Minister of Information put it at the time, "a weird period" in Tunisian politics (Wright 1990a), marked by dramatic changes. In this chapter, I seek to explain the variation in Ben Ali's treatment of the opposition press, over time as well as across groups, during the first half decade of his rule, from 1987 to 1992. During this period, there was a great deal of variation in the key explanatory variables that my theory suggests are important, including the performance of the national economy and the distribution of power within the regime. I will show that the timing of changes in these variables can explain the variation in which opposition groups were or were not allowed to have their own media and when, in line with my hypotheses. For this case study I rely largely on news reports from the 1987-1992 period, reports by human rights organizations, and secondary sources. I also draw on interviews I carried out in Tunisia in 2016, with journalists, human rights activists, former officials from Ben Ali's government, and leaders and members of the groups that opposed that government. Tunisia is particularly fruitful setting for field research on authoritarian politics, because it combines a recent history under authoritarian rule with a currently open and democratic polity. Thus, when I conducted my fieldwork, I was able to meet with many individuals who had firsthand knowledge of events under the former authoritarian regime, and they had the safety to discuss their experiences frankly.

The theory suggests that dictators should be more likely to allow small, less popular opposition groups to have media than larger, more popular groups, since the latter are more likely to encourage their followers to protest. Across groups, Ben Ali was consistently more willing to allow the weaker secular parties to have their own newspapers compared to Nahda, which had greater potential to mobilize protests against his government.

The theory also suggests that dictators will be least likely to allow opposition groups to have their own media when grievances are widespread and their ability to repress protests is low.

This implication helps us make sense of the Tunisian case over time. Ben Ali's initial decision not to allow Nahda to have any media during his first two years in power, his subsequent decision to allow them to publish a newspaper in 1990, and finally his decision to shut down that same newspaper in early 1991, all correspond to shifts in factors that indicated the likelihood that Nahda could succeed in toppling Ben Ali's government by mobilizing protests. Similarly, these shifts help us understand why some secular opposition newspapers were briefly shut down around the same time as Nahda's but, unlike the latter, were allowed to reemerge soon after.

Hypothesis 3 (Higher per capita revenue from extractable fuel sources is positively correlated with the existence of opposition media) is not particularly relevant to the case. Tunisia did not exhibit large variation in its modest per capita revenue from oil production during 1987-1992, and its natural gas production was negligible (BP 2019). Nor does Hypothesis 5 (The occurrence of successful uprisings against nearby authoritarian regime are negatively correlated with the existence of opposition media) directly apply, since no Arab authoritarian regime was overthrown in a mass uprising during this period. However, events in neighboring Algeria at this time do support the more general claim that the strength of opposition groups in other regimes can lead elites to update their beliefs about the prospects of opposition groups in their own country.

Tunisia during this period did exhibit substantial variation in unemployment, economic growth, and personalization of the regime, making the other three hypotheses relevant. The case turns out to be consistent with each of them. Namely, we can better understand this episode in light of Hypothesis 1 (Higher unemployment is negatively correlated with the existence of opposition media), Hypothesis 2 (Higher per capita GDP growth is positively correlated with the existence of opposition media), and Hypothesis 4 (The degree to which control of the security forces is concentrated in the hands of the dictator

personally is positively correlated with the existence of opposition media).

In the next section I will provide some background information about the regime that Ben Ali inherited when he came to power in 1987, about Ben Ali himself, and about the key opposition groups in Tunisia at the time. In the succeeding section, I will describe in more detail what is to be explained: the variation in the government's toleration of opposition media across groups and over time. In the section after that, I will argue that Ben Ali allowed secular opposition groups to have media soon after he came to power but not Nahda because of the greater mobilization threat that Nahda posed. Next, I will show that Ben Ali's decision to allow Nahda to have a newspaper in 1990, after initially forbidding it, is explained by shifts in the economy and intra-regime politics that appeared to strengthen the dictator. Following that, I will explain how events later in 1990 led Ben Ali and Nahda to reevaluate their relative strength and motivated Ben Ali to shut down Nahda's newspaper. Finally, I will argue that the changing relationship between the secular opposition groups and Nahda explains variation over time in Ben Ali's treatment of their media as well.

3.1 Background

Between independence from the French in 1956, and the "Jasmine Revolution" of 2011, only two individuals ruled Tunisia: Habib Bourguiba and Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali. Having led the fight for independence, Bourguiba ruled the country for three decades as the head of the Destourian Socialist Party (Parti Socialiste Destourien or PSD), which monopolized power over the state. During Bourguiba's rule, Ben Ali rose through the military intelligence service and the security apparatus to the post of interior minister. Just a month before Ben Ali replaced Bourguiba in a bloodless coup, Bourguiba appointed Ben Ali as prime minister

(Erdle 2010: 196).

Tunisia had seen significant unrest since the late 1970s. Amid economic stagnation and the Bourguiba government's austerity measures, massive protests had broken out in 1978 and 1984. The former involved tens of thousands of participants, the latter half a million (Seddon 1986; Global Security 2020). Tunisia's 1986 agreement with the IMF and the World Bank to move further toward a market-based economy promised continued social tension (Murphy 1999: 104).

There were several small secular opposition parties in Tunisia when Ben Ali came to power, the most prominent of which was the Movement of Socialist Democrats (Mouvement des Démocrates Socialistes or MDS) (Bellin 1995: 131). There was also an opposition group known as the Islamic Tendency Movement (Mouvement de la Tendance Islamique or MTI), which would later rename itself the Party of the Renaissance (Hizb Nahda, often referred to simply as Nahda) (Waltz and Kéchichian 2009). I will refer to this group as both the MTI and Nahda, depending on the time period under discussion. Bourguiba arrested several of the MTI's leaders in 1987 and was on the verge of executing several of them when Ben Ali overthrew him. Ben Ali may have timed the coup to prevent these executions, for fear that they could provoke an uprising (Bellin 1995: 133).

3.2 Variation in state tolerance for opposition media across groups and time

In his first year in power, Ben Ali allowed several opposition parties to relaunch papers that had previously been banned. Within a few months of Ben Ali's coup, his government ended

the bans on the party newspapers of two legal opposition parties: *Al-Moustaqbal* of the MDS and *Tariq el-Jedid* of the Tunisian Communist Party (Parti Communiste Tunisien or PCT). (Africa Report 1988: 8; Murphy 1999: 168). However, the new government maintained tight controls on what these opposition papers could write. Khadija Cherif, a human rights activist, described the liberalization of the press during the early years under Ben Ali as “very controlled” (discussion with the author, May 2016). According to Amnesty International (1994: 4): “Amendments to the existing Press Code [in 1988] only very slightly curtailed the executive’s wide powers to control freedom of expression.” For example, the reform of the press code’s provisions on defamation did not extend to criticism of the president or his ministers (Harris 1989: 822). Samir Taieb, a member of the Movement of Renewal party (Harakat Ettajdid, the successor to the Tunisian Communist Party), which opposed Ben Ali, and an editor of its journal, confirmed that, even during relatively liberal first few years under Ben Ali, criticism of the president and his family was not tolerated (discussion with the author, May 2016). The journalist Slaheddine Jourchi of *Er-Rai* (Opinion), a journal which was aligned with the MDS, agreed with this assessment, and added that criticism of the defense ministry was also forbidden (discussion with the author, May 2016). Ahmed Mestiri, the leader of the MDS when Ben Ali came to power, reported that Ben Ali’s government did not interfere with the party’s weekly, *Al-Moustaqbal* during his first year in power, but began to harass it in 1989 after the first legislative elections (discussion with the author, May 2016). Alexander (2010: 55) writes of this period that:

While the government allowed a host of new newspapers and magazines to appear, it also began signaling limits to writers and editors. In December 1988, for example, the government seized copies of *Al-Maouqif*, the newspaper of the Progressive Socialist Rally (Rassemblement Socialiste Progressiste or RSP) after it published an article on Tunisia’s nonlegal movements and parties. A week later, the government seized copies of *Réalités*, a popular news weekly, for an

editorial that criticized the lack of judicial independence. These seizures marked the beginning of an insidious new form of press control. The government legalized many new publications and declared its respect for freedom of the press. It even provided funding to help some newspapers. But then security forces would jail a journalist or confiscate copies of publications because they wrote or published an article that did not sit well with the president. Because the government never laid out an explicit list of topics that journalists could not touch, they never knew exactly when they would cross the line into forbidden territory. This uncertainty forced members of the press to err on the side of caution when making decisions about their stories. The result was a wooden, self-censored press even though the government appeared to be relaxing the formal restrictions on it.

Thus, as in the theory presented in the previous chapter, even when dictatorships allow opposition media, they ensure that the content remains tame.

Only secular opposition parties were granted the right to publish newspapers during Ben Ali's first two years in power, while the MTI/Nahda remained excluded. It was not until January 1990 that Ben Ali's government finally gave Nahda permission to publish a journal, *El-Fajr*, which started appearing in April (Wright 1990b). However, the government prevented the distribution of an issue of *El-Fajr* in June 1990 (Middle East Economic Digest 1990b), and a week later a court suspended the journal for three months (Chouikha, Labidi, and Jouini 1992: 101). After *El-Fajr* began reappearing in the fall, the government stopped distribution of two more issues (Amnesty International 1991). In February 1991, the government shut down *El-Fajr* permanently (Donnadieu 1992: 39).

1990 also saw a crackdown on the secular opposition press. The government suspended the

journal *Al-Badil*, published by the Communist Party of the Workers of Tunisia (Parti Communiste des Ouvriers de Tunisie or PCOT), for six months in October 1990 and permanently suspended it the following April (Chouikha, Labidi, and Jouini 1992: 102.) The MDS stopped publishing its weekly *Al-Moustaqbal* in June 1990. An editorial in the final issue stated that the paper was closing because of financial difficulties, but also because of the “refusal to let the opposition newspapers work freely” (Chouikha, Labidi, and Jouini 1992: 103). Other secular opposition newspapers stopped publishing around this time, including *Al-Watan*, of the Unionist Democratic Union (Union Démocratique Unioniste or UDU), in August 1990 and the RSP’s *Al-Maouqif* in January 1991. While both of these closures were ostensibly due to financial problems, government interference may have exacerbated those problems: the government stopped distribution of two issues of each newspaper in 1990 (Legum 1992: B 520; Chouikha, Labidi, and Jouini 1992: 102-103). By 1991, the former (and by then exiled) prime minister Mohammed Mzali observed that in Tunisia “there no longer exists today an organ of opposition press” (Murphy 1999: 203).

In April 1991, however, the government announced that it would provide subsidies to the legal (all secular) opposition parties to publish their newspapers (Donnadieu 1992: 39). Beginning in November 1991, secular opposition papers began to reappear, while *El-Fajr* remained suppressed (Chouikha, Labidi, and Jouini 1992: 112).

The shutdown of *El-Fajr* would turn out to be the prelude to the dismantling of Nahda as an organization. Several thousand Nahda activists were arrested over the course of 1991 (Europa Publications 1994:879; Alexander 2010: 60). In July 1992, 279 Islamists were tried in the Tunis Military Tribunal, which ended in “heavy sentences for most of Nahda’s leading figures,” including life sentences for some (Murphy 1999: 198). That same month the Middle East Economic Digest (1992c) reported: “Police action has crushed Nahda, whose leadership is either exiled, in prison or has dropped out of active politics.” The article quoted a “former

Nahda official” as saying: “We entered into direct confrontation wanting to take over and we lost.” Europa Publications (1994: 880) observes regarding the July 1992 trials: “These mass trials were seen as the culmination of the Tunisian Government’s long campaign against al-Nahdah, whose organizational structures within the country were largely destroyed and its leaders imprisoned or forced into exile.”¹

3.3 Why the difference in media policies for the secularist and Islamist opposition?

Although Ben Ali repressed both the Islamist and secular opposition press in late 1990 and early 1991, overall he was more willing to tolerate secular opposition than the media of the MTI/Nahda. For the first two years he was in power, Ben Ali allowed the secular groups to publish newspapers, but not the MTI/Nahda. In late 1991, he allowed the secular opposition press to reemerge — even subsidizing some of it — but kept Nahda silent. This differential treatment of the MTI/Nahda and the other, secular, opposition groups was driven by the greater strength of the Islamists relative to the secularists. Ben Ali had reason to think the MTI posed the greatest threat to mobilize protestors, out of all the opposition groups, since he first came to power. The MTI had been prominent in organizing the demonstrations of 1984 (Shahin 1997: 88; Global Security 2020), after which Ghiles (1984) wrote that the Islamists “provide the most serious challenge to the Tunisian regime.” In the last year of Bourguiba’s rule: “The MTI proved its strength with its continued ability to preach against

¹Similarly, Willis (2012: 171-172) writes that “the Ben Ali regime rooted out what little remained of An-Nahda, making Tunisia one of the only states in the Arab world in which Islamism had no real institutional or organizational presence.” Murphy (1999: 199) writes: “Within two years, Nahda had virtually been demolished in Tunisia, at least in terms of organizational and operational structures. With those of its leaders still in Tunisia serving heavy prison sentences, and Ghannouchi exiled to London, what remained of the Islamist movement was decapitated and fragmented.”

the regime in the mosques and organize public demonstrations despite the hunting down and imprisonment of its leaders” (MacDonald 1988).

Zartman (1988: 82) writes that Tunisia’s secular parties in this period were organizations representing “professionals and intellectuals, a safety valve for dissatisfaction rather than a mass challenge to PSD.” By contrast: “The Islamic Tendency movement is another matter, being neither a Destourian [ruling party] offshoot nor a negligible safety valve” (*ibid*). Also writing in 1988, Boulby argued that “it is possible to hazard the speculation that the MTI has broader appeal than any of Tunisia’s other political movements (including, of course, the PSD!)” (Boulby 1988: 607). When Ben Ali came to power “many feared that Al-Nahda was about to take power by force” (Sagar 2009: 589). “Ben Ali did not want an all-out war with the Islamists in 1987. The MTI had developed a large organization ... Even Ben Ali could not be certain of its true capabilities. In light of the general disenchantment across the country, a war with the Islamists might produce a groundswell of support for them and overwhelm the new government” (Alexander 2010: 52-53).

3.4 Why Ben Ali first prohibited and later allowed Islamist media

The model presented in the previous chapter suggests that when an opposition group has significant capacity to mobilize protestors and the regime has little capacity to repress protests, the opposition group will refuse to publish media that discourages protest, and so the government will not allow them to publish at all. Ben Ali’s decision to deny the MTI permission to produce any media during his first two years in power is consistent with this prediction.

As noted previously, grievances were widespread in Tunisia in 1987 because of economic stagnation and the austerity measures the government had put in place to try to spur growth. This discontent had manifested in major incidents of collective action against the regime in 1978 and 1984. “By the 1980s, Tunisia’s growing economic problems were acute and were mirrored by deepening political tensions. . . . The January 1984 riots marked a watershed for the Bourguiba regime. They signaled the onset of a major political role for the Islamists, as well as warning of the dangers of economic austerity” (Mostyn and Hourani 1988: 431). The economic troubles underlying Tunisians’ dissatisfaction continued during the first two years of Ben Ali’s rule. The economy shrank in 1988 and 1989, with per capita GDP growth of -2.2% and -0.5%, respectively (World Bank 2019). The number of registered unemployed Tunisians peaked in 1988 at approximately 237,000. As a percentage of the labor force, the unemployment rate was 10.9% in 1988 (Rama 1998: 70). Although Ben Ali signed a “National Pact” in the fall of 1988 with the major opposition parties, including a representative from the MTI, in which he promised democratic reforms, the threat of an uprising persisted into 1989. “The National Pact failed to curb political dissent in the country, and tensions were exacerbated by the imposition of essential economic reforms” (Europa Publications 1994: 878).

The risk posed by these widespread grievances was compounded by Ben Ali’s weak control over the state itself. Many regime officials appointed by Bourguiba still held considerable power in the early years after the coup. When he seized the presidency, Ben Ali found himself in charge of a government in which he was, as Erdle (2010: 98) writes, an “outsider.” He had spent his career in the military and the ministry of interior, in a regime dominated by academics and party elites. Thus, when he became president, “the only real power bases he had were in the interior ministry and security apparatus, but not in the ruling party, or in the government bureaucracy as such” (*ibid*). Moreover, Tunisia’s military had historically played a very minimal role in politics (Barany 2011; Bellin 2012). As Alexander (1997: 37)

elaborates:

Many longtime party barons resented Ben Ali for preempting their own plans for stepping into the presidency. From the beginning of his rule, Ben Ali feared that one of these established politicians, or one of his own ministers, would use their networks in the party, the state bureaucracy, and other organizations to undermine him. As a relative newcomer to ruling party politics, Ben Ali lacked the social bases and patronage networks so vital to Bourguiba's style of political management. He did not have the political resources to referee and manipulate effectively an ongoing competition between powerful politicians and the social actors they rallied to their camps.

Three months after the coup, a Washington Post foreign correspondent portrayed a leader not fully in control of his regime: "Dominated for 30 years by the force of one man and the political institutions he created in his image, Tunisia is now adjusting to a government headed by a half-dozen strong personalities who are debating with each other over the directions this North African nation should take" (Hoagland 1988).

Ben Ali's weaknesses as a politician only made the challenge of asserting power over the government and society more difficult. As the journalist Manoubi Marrouki put it, Ben Ali was not "a political man": he lacked Bourguiba's skills for mobilizing the masses. He entered office with a "deficit of popularity" according to Rachid Khechana, an opposition journalist during the Ben Ali era. Even a high-level official who worked for both Bourguiba and Ben Ali implied that Ben Ali lacked Bourguiba's charisma (discussions with the author, May-June 2016).²

²When asked to contrast the two presidents' leadership styles, the former official described Bourguiba's charisma at length, and then declined to comment on that of Ben Ali.

Thus, although Ben Ali's background was in the security services, it was doubtful that the leaders of the security services initially thought their privileges depended on keeping Ben Ali in office, since he had to share power with many elites in the government appointed by Bourguiba. If faced by mass protests, they might have refused to use violence to suppress them. In addition, Ben Ali's initially weak control of the ruling party meant its mobilization capacity was not entirely in his hands. If, for instance, protests sparked a coup, party leaders might have refused to mobilize members of the party in demonstrations to stop the coup.³ Moreover, the party might even have mobilized its members to join protests against Ben Ali. Ben Ali was in such a weak political position when he first became president that Mestiri (leader of the MDS at the time) said "We thought he had no card to play but democracy" (discussion with the author, May 2016).

The relative strength of Nahda to mobilize protests and Ben Ali's doubtful ability to repress such protests explains why Ben Ali did not initially allow Nahda to have a newspaper. The fact that he ultimately did allow them to publish a newspaper in 1990 can be explained by the strengthening of his position over the intervening years. First of all, by 1990, he no longer had much reason to think that Tunisians were inclined to rise up against him. "By 1990 the regime in Tunisia was benefiting from a degree of economic stability" (Murphy 1999: 201). Whereas per capita GDP growth had been negative in the previous two years, it grew strongly in 1990, at 5.6% (World Bank 2019). The number of registered unemployed individuals fell from 237,000 in 1988 to 152,000 in 1990. As a percentage of the labor force, the unemployment rate fell from 10.9% in 1988 to 6.7% in 1990 (Rama 1998).

In addition, by 1990, Ben Ali had also solidified his control of the government and the ruling party, replacing most of the political elite with his own allies. His attempts to supplant Bourguiba's allies in government with his own began on the very day of the coup, when

³Geddes (2006) argues that ruling parties' ability to mobilize protests against a military coup is an important reason that many dictators create parties after they come to power.

Ben Ali appointed Hedi Baccouche, “a long-time ally,” as prime minister (Clayton 1987). Frequent cabinet shuffles replaced “PSD barons” with Ben Ali loyalists (Erdle 2010: 100). Military and security officials were brought into high positions in the government (Krieger 2003). Ben Ali also brought in “a younger generation of technocrats that answered to him” (Perkins 2016a: 196). The frequent cabinet shuffles and Ben Ali’s close involvement in the running of each ministry also helped him ensure that none of his ministers developed independent power bases (Alexander 1997).

While Ben Ali took some immediate steps to consolidate power, the entire process was gradual. On the eve of Ben Ali’s coup, there were twenty-one ministers in Bourguiba’s cabinet, besides Ben Ali himself. Only four were removed immediately. Nevertheless, through relentless reshuffling, Ben Ali ultimately excluded all but three of Bourguiba’s ministers from his cabinet during the first three years of his presidency (Reuters 1987a; Legum 1988: B 551-B 553; Middle East Economic Digest 1988; Reuters 1989b; Middle East Economic Digest 1990c; Murphy 1999:194). He took a crucial step in controlling the security apparatus in early 1990, when he placed “key supporters” in “the most sensitive security posts: Abdelhamid Escheikh was appointed Minister of the Interior, while Abdallah Kallel took office as Minister of Defence” (Murphy 1999:194). Not only did Ben Ali manage to stack his cabinet with loyalists, he also managed to reduce its power over time and take policy into his own hands. By early 1991, Africa Confidential (1991b) reported: “The cabinet as a whole is declining in influence as the presidency takes on new powers. ... The [presidential] Palace increasingly houses a shadow government” of advisors.

Ben Ali was also surprisingly adept at tightening his grip on the ruling party, which he quickly renamed the Democratic Constitutional Rally (Rassemblement Constitutionnel Démocratique or RCD) (Dick 1988). Within two weeks of the coup, he purged three members of the party’s political bureau that had been particularly close to Bourguiba

(Reuters 1987b; Reuters 1987c). A month after the coup, Ben Ali reduced the political bureau from twenty to twelve members, purging Bourguiba's son among several other individuals, leaving only three Bourguiba appointees. At the same time, he added several new members, many of whom had backgrounds in the military or the Interior ministry, including Habib Ammar, a former classmate of Ben Ali from the St. Cyr military academy in France (Reuters 1987c; Keesing's Record of World Events 1988; Africa Confidential 1988: 7). In July 1988, Ben Ali reduced the bureau to just six members, with Baccouche as the sole remaining Bourguiba appointee. For good measure, Ben Ali also added another classmate from St. Cyr to the bureau, former army chief-of-staff Abdelhamid Becheikh (Reuters 1988). At a February 1988 meeting, the RCD central committee confirmed Ben Ali as leader of the party (chairman), and his position was formally ratified at the party congress in July of that year (Erdle 2010: 99-100). He also removed the Director of the RCD Political Bureau from the cabinet that month (Europa Publications 1994: 878). That summer, Ben Ali also appointed an Interior ministry veteran, Abderrahim Zouari, as second-in-command (secretary-general) of the party (Africa Confidential 1988: 7; Erdle 2010: 100). The congress also selected a new central committee of the party, with Ben Ali personally appointing 122 of the 200 members (Erdle 2010: 100). Several former Bourguiba ministers were removed from the central committee, including Rachid Sfar, Ben Ali's predecessor as prime minister (Dick 1988). Nonetheless, Ben Ali's purge of the central committee was not yet complete, as "many other personalities linked with the Bourguiba era remained in the committee" (*ibid*). In 1989, the RCD renominated only 20 of the 125 incumbents in the National Assembly to run for reelection (Perkins 2016b: 218-220.). At the level of mass mobilization, Ben Ali expanded RCD membership from 900,000 to 1.5 million between 1987 and 1989, creating a large cohort who owed their new opportunities to him (Erdle 2010: 100)

Given the improved economy and his consolidation of personal power within the regime, Ben

Ali faced less risk of protest by 1990 and could count on the security forces to repress any that occurred. Thus, Ben Ali allowed Nahda to start publishing *El-Fajr* in 1990. Under these circumstances, the model suggests that an opposition group will want to discourage protest because it is too risky. It will agree to publish only mild criticism and so the government will allow it to have its own media. On the eve of *El-Fajr*'s first issue, its editor, Hamadi Jebali sought to convey just how moderate the journal would be, telling a reporter from Reuters: "I think it's of a really high standard and not at all inflammatory" (Wright 1990b).

One might argue that the MTI's behavior in 1988 and 1989 does not reflect the theory's prediction that, when an opposition group is strong enough that the government does not allow it to have media, the group would prefer their supporters to protest against the regime. The MTI initially displayed a cooperative attitude toward Ben Ali's new government. In April 1988, the jailed leaders of the MTI announced their support for the new government in the newspaper *As-Sabah* (Garon 2003: 30). In August of that year, the MTI's leader, "Rached Ghannouchi had announced that the MTI accepted the law on political parties and respected the Constitution" (Europa Publications 1994: 878).⁴ Even after the April 1989 legislative elections, which were manipulated in favor of the ruling party (Ghiles 1989; Guardian 1989; Wright 1989), Nahda "did not take to the streets to protest the election results" (Murphy 1999: 193). However, given the relative strength of Nahda, Ben Ali had reason to suspect in the first two years that these conciliatory public statements by the MTI were a ruse, and that, if allowed to produce a newspaper, they would have used it to incite their followers to overthrow the regime.

Another possible anomaly for the theory is that members of the General Union of Tunisian

⁴Shahin (1997: 100) observes: "Upon Ben Ali's coming to power and the declaration of his new policies on November 7 [1987], the MTI declared its full support for the removal of Bourguiba and its willingness to assist the new president in achieving the objectives included in the November 7 statement." Willis (2012: 166) writes: "Ben Ali's constitutional coup was received positively by the MTI leadership, who believed that the prime minister had not only acted to avoid a showdown with the movement but also wished to [develop] a less confrontational relationship with it."

Students (Union Générale des Etudiants Tunisiens or UGET), a group aligned with Nahda, engaged in protests against the government in January and February 1990 (Wright 1990a; Europa Publications 1994: 879). And yet, since Nahda had grown weaker relative to Ben Ali by 1990, my theory suggests that they should not have been inclined to protest at this point. However, it is not clear that these protests were supported by the Nahda leadership. In any case, the first few months of 1990 may have been a transitional period in which the balance of power between the regime and Nahda was somewhat uncertain. Indeed, although Ben Ali granted legal authorization for Nahda's journal, *El-Fajr*, in January 1990, the journal only appeared in April of that year, as the group initially could not find a printing house willing to publish it. Nahda's leaders accused Ben Ali of discouraging the printers from working with them (Reuters 1990g). If this accusation is true, it would indeed suggest that Ben Ali was vacillating due to uncertainty about just how weak Nahda had become. The capstone in Ben Ali's consolidation of control of the security forces was set in March 1990, when he placed Abdelhamid Escheikh, "a close ally," at the head of the Ministry of the Interior (Middle East Economic Digest 1990c), with Escheikh's "military background and frequent anti-Islamist statements suggesting a no-nonsense approach to Islamist agitation" (Legum 1992: B 519). Subsequently there was a hiatus in protests linked to Nahda and in April, *El-Fajr* was able to start appearing on the streets.

3.5 Why Ben Ali cracked down on Islamist media

By early 1990 Ben Ali appeared to be in a strong enough position relative to Nahda to allow them to have a newspaper. However, events later that year seem to have caused him to revise this assessment. First, elections in neighboring Algeria suggested that Islamist movements in the region could gain wide popularity and quickly. Algeria had been undergoing a period

of political liberalization since protests in October 1988. The Islamic Salvation Front (Front Islamique du Salut or FIS) was founded in February 1989 and legalized by the Algerian government in September of that year (Thielmann 2014). In March 1990, an article in Reuters observed: “Algeria has already recognized its own Islamic movement, the Islamic Salvation Front. The eyes of all Tunisian politicians are fixed on Algiers to see how the experiment develops” (Wright 1990a). On June 12, 1990, the FIS won landslide victories in municipal and regional elections (Ibrahim 1990). This event seems to have led both Nahda’s leaders and Ben Ali to conclude that Nahda posed a greater threat to the Tunisian regime than they had previously believed. Four days after the Algerian elections, an issue of *El-Fajr* went to press with an article by Ghannouchi accusing Ben Ali’s government of being undemocratic and calling for a “popular struggle” against the regime (Reuters 1990h). The government seized the issue and a week later a court suspended *El-Fajr* for three months. Murphy (1999: 194-195) writes: “Ben Ali became even more determined not to take the risks associated with either legalizing the Islamist opposition or providing it with serious room for political manoeuvres. The summer months of 1990 therefore witnessed a clear effort to clamp down on the dissemination of Islamist ideas. The Tunisian media was ‘discouraged’ from reporting on the FIS victories in Algeria and technical failures were blamed for the absence of radio and television coverage of the Algerian election results. Islamist criticism of the Tunisian government led to arrests, imprisonments and the seizing of supposedly libelous newspapers.” Similarly, Shahin (1997: 101) argues: “Confronted with a politically viable Islamist opposition party and alarmed by the stunning victory of the Islamic Salvation front (FIS) in the municipal and provincial elections in Algeria, Ben Ali decided to eliminate al-Nahda as a potential threat and suppress the movement.”⁵

The Gulf War may also have revealed that Nahda’s ability to mobilize protestors was greater than either side previously reckoned. Ben Ali was initially critical of Iraq when it invaded

⁵Cowell (1990) observed at the time of the Algerian election: “The Algerian result has greatly sharpened President Ben Ali’s problems over his country’s Islamic movement, En Nahda.”

Kuwait in August 1990 (Murphy 1999: 195). His position turned out to be very unpopular with Tunisians. Nahda sensed an opportunity. “The Islamists began to take to the streets to protest against both the government’s position and the lack of progress in domestic political openings. ... Ghannouchi developed a suddenly more belligerent tone, hoping that support for Iraq would bring anti-regime demonstrations out in the streets of Tunis” (*ibid*). The government cracked down on the protests violently, but this response initially provoked more widespread unrest throughout the autumn (Middle East Economic Digest 1990d; Wolf 2017: 73). Arrests of Nahda members prompted further protests in January 1991 (Middle East Economic Digest 1990f; Reuters 1991f). February protests by Islamists were “violently suppressed” (Europa Publications 1994:879). As Nahda flexed its mobilization muscles, Tunisia’s government seized individual issues of *El-Fajr* and in February 1991, shut it down permanently. As Willis (2012: 168) argues: “An-Nahda members demonstrated against the arrival of US troops in Saudi Arabia following Iraq’s invasion of Kuwait in August. In the view of some, this persuaded the Tunisian regime to move decisively against An-Nahda. The following months saw a gradual tightening against the movement, with restrictions on the party’s activities, the closure of its newspaper and eventually the arrest of large numbers of its activists and supporters.”

Thus, Ben Ali withdrew Nahda’s access to the media, I argue, because he concluded, from the example of the FIS and Nahda’s ability to mobilize protests in the fall of 1990, that the group posed a greater threat than it appeared to at the start of 1990. Although Ben Ali seemed to have a firm grip on the regime and its repressive apparatus at this stage, if Nahda could mobilize enough protestors, the security forces might become unwilling to use enough violence to suppress them. Rached Ghannouchi, leader of Nahda, confirmed that Ben Ali cracked down on the movement because he realized it was stronger than he had thought: “He changed his mind [about tolerating Nahda] once he saw that the popularity of this movement was very large” (discussion with the author, May 2016).

Why didn't Ben Ali allow *El-Fajr* to return after crushing Nahda? Perhaps he calculated that, while he had driven the movement underground, he had not eradicated its widespread support, and that the group would seek to topple the regime if he ever allowed it a voice again. Waltz and Kéchichian wrote as late as 2009 that Nahda “continues to enjoy popular support—perhaps more than ever in the wake of disappointment with the Ben Ali government. ... It remains the most significant opposition group in contemporary Tunisia.” As further evidence that Nahda remained the most popular opposition group, after Ben Ali was ousted in January 2011, Nahda came first in Tunisia's first free and fair elections and became the head of the governing coalition (EIU 2011X CR Tunisia December).

3.6 Why secular opposition newspapers were shut down, but only briefly

Ben Ali also cracked down on the newspapers of secular opposition groups in 1990, not because any one of them was individually strong enough to challenge the regime, but because they showed signs of forming a broad alliance with Nahda. As Alexander (2010: 59) wrote of the secular parties: “Their poor showing in the April [1989] elections gave them little bargaining power in their own right. But they could play on Ben Ali's fear of a united opposition front. By drawing closer to Ennahdha, they might force him to make concessions that they could not win on their own. ... Iraq's invasion of Kuwait reinforced this opposition unity.” There was a precedent for this cooperation. Ali Laarayedh, a leader in the MTI, remarked that ties between the Islamist and secular opposition groups grew stronger in the 1980s (discussion with the author May 2016), an observation echoed by numerous interviewees.⁶ As Perkins (2016a: 168) notes, discussing the years just before

⁶The leftist Samir Taieb, MTI official Abdelhamid Jelassi, and Nahda member Saadok Sghiri confirmed the existence of cooperation between the Islamist and secular opposition during the 1980s (discussions with

Ben Ali came to power: “The specter of an alliance, however unlikely, between the MTI and one or another of the secular opposition parties alarmed the government.”

Admittedly, there were some signs of a secular-Islamist divide in early 1990. Reuters reported in April 1990: “Three Tunisian leftist parties announced on Wednesday a common manifesto which they hope will serve as the rallying point for a broad front against both the ruling party and the powerful Islamic movement. ... The Tunisian left in general is worried that the growth of the Islamic movement, now the second political force in the country, will leave them permanently on the sidelines.” The joint statement said: “Our plan is ... to build a democratic civilian state and to reject any plan for a religious state.” However, it also “called for the recognition of all political parties”, implicitly criticizing the government’s refusal to legalize Nahda (Wright 1990c). Later that year, the secular opposition took bolder steps to coordinate with Nahda. All six legal opposition groups and Nahda boycotted the local elections held in Tunisia on June 11 (Legum 1992a: B 520). After the government arrested hundreds of Nahda supporters and leaders in the fall of 1990, MDS leaders condemned this repression of the Islamists at their party congress. In January 1991, the six legal parties issued a joint declaration, calling for a real democracy that would include secularists and Islamists alike (Legum 1992a: B 520). In this context, with the secular opposition parties lending their support to Nahda’s challenge to the state, Ben Ali closed down their newspapers as well as Nahda’s.

However, over the course of 1991, as the government began successfully dismantling Nahda’s organization, the secular parties realigned with the regime and their newspapers were restored. Whereas Nahda and the secular opposition had, in the words of Ghannouchi, once acted in “coordination against our government,” Ben Ali convinced the secularists to join “a sort of common war, total war against Nahda” (discussion with the

the author, May 2016).

author, May 2016). Early in 1991, the “government and the lay opposition parties which they recognised” acted in “joint opposition to the Islamic movement” (Donnadieu 1992: 39). “Although the secular opposition was vocal in its denunciation of the most repressive government measures, it was significantly ‘bought off’ by a coincidence of interests with the ruling regime” (Murphy 1999: 201). In July of 1991 “ Ben Ali decorated [opposition] party leaders for their services to the state” (Middle East Economic Digest 1991c). The secular opposition papers began to reappear in November 1991.

The legal opposition parties ultimately resigned themselves to working within Ben Ali’s democratic façade. The head of the MDS in 1992, Mohamed Moadda, publicly praised Ben Ali’s policies and moved the MDS program closer to the RCD’s (Murphy 1999: 210; Perkins 2016a: 195).⁷ The Tunisian Communist Party abandoned Marxism for a moderate social democratic program, renaming itself the Renewal Movement (Harakat Ettajdid) (Murphy 1999: 211). For the remainder of Ben Ali’s time in power, most of the legal opposition parties offered little serious challenge to Ben Ali and the RCD. Two former members of the RCD central committee, Abir Moussi and Raouf Khamassi, both referred to these parties as the “cartooneeya opposition,” literally the “cartoon opposition” (discussions with the author, May 2016).

3.7 Conclusion

The first half decade of Ben Ali’s dictatorship saw considerable variation in the government’s treatment of opposition media, both over time and across groups. This variation largely corresponded to patterns predicted by the model presented in the previous chapter. Ben Ali

⁷In 1995, Moadda began taking a more confrontational approach toward the RCD and found himself in jail within a few months (Murphy 1999: 215).

was more willing to allow the secular opposition to produce newspapers than the MTI/Nahda, because the secular groups were weaker than the Islamists, and thus unwilling to challenge his regime. Ben Ali briefly allowed Nahda to have a newspaper, but only after the country's economic performance had considerably improved and Ben Ali had consolidated his own power over the government and the ruling party. When it appeared that Nahda might be stronger than he had thought, and the group began consistently taking to the streets, he took away their newspaper and drove the group underground. In the next chapter, I will test how well these patterns generalize to countries across the Arab region and over multiple decades.

Chapter 4

“Constructive Criticism”: A Cross-National Study of Opposition Media in Arab Authoritarian Regimes

In May of 1990, the Yemen Arab Republic (North Yemen) united with the People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen (South Yemen) to form the Republic of Yemen (Europa World 2020). The new state decreed that multiple political parties would be allowed, and by the end of the year, more than 30 had formed (*ibid*). Moreover, the government passed a law allowing these new parties to publish their own newspapers (Rugh 2004: 105). But the law also placed strict limits on freedom of expression, forbidding the media from criticizing the head of state. The law made an exception only for what the state deemed to be “constructive criticism” (Jones 2001: 2674).

This episode in Yemen’s history epitomizes a trend in post-Cold War Arab countries: even

those that have allowed opposition groups to publish media maintain tight restrictions on the content of those media. As Sakr (2003: 35) remarks: “The authorities in a given country may say the country has a ‘free press’, because opposition parties are permitted to publish newspapers alongside the government-owned dailies. Yet analysis of the full range of laws relating to freedom of expression reveals that the media are not free.”¹ Opposition publications do sometimes criticize government policies or officials, but there are lines they generally do not cross. In particular, criticizing the regime leader is usually taboo, and thus generally avoided. For example, in Mubarak’s Egypt: “The partisan media featured critical coverage of prominent figures, though it faced more consistent repression when their criticism reached the president himself and as such exercised self-censorship accordingly” (Kamal 2018: 44).²

Governments often prevent opposition groups from disseminating their media at all, whether banning the distribution of newspapers (Motaouakal 2014: 68), jamming radio signals (Dow Jones International News 2003), or blocking citizens’ access to websites (U.S. Department of State 2011). So why do governments sometimes allow opposition groups to publish media, if they have the power to prevent them? The tamest opposition media, after all, is no opposition media. The answer, I have argued, is that tolerating opposition media can be a tool for managing threats of unrest and perpetuating the survival of authoritarian regimes. For a dictator, a dash of public criticism — as long as it is only a dash — can indeed be constructive: opposition media that is only mildly critical signal to dissident citizens that they are in no position to challenge their rulers.

¹Campagna (1998a) observed that, while in some parts of the Middle East and North Africa, no independent media were tolerated, even in countries in the region “where the press enjoys a greater degree of freedom, governments nevertheless use press laws and criminal defamation statutes to deter outspoken journalists.”

²Krämer (1992: 24) similarly observes that, even when Arab authoritarian regimes have allowed opposition groups to have newspapers: “Some topics remain taboo—primarily God, army, king or president.” These taboos have remained largely intact throughout the post-Cold War period in authoritarian Arab countries. Korany (2010: 80) writes: “There is a, sometimes unwritten, code whereby residents of each country know their red lines, and those who dare cross know they will have to bear the consequences.”

In this chapter, I present and analyze an original dataset on government toleration of opposition media in Arab authoritarian regimes during the years 1992 through 2017. In the next section, I discuss major trends in the region in this era that make it a fitting context in which to test my theory. In the following section, I discuss the construction of my dataset for measuring the environment for the opposition media in Arab authoritarian regimes. Next, I present the focal explanatory variables that I use to test the five hypotheses derived from my theory, along with the control variables I use. I then describe the empirical methodology and present the main results, using two dependent variables for measuring toleration of opposition media, drawn from the original dataset. To test the robustness of these findings, I also present results from alternative specifications of the empirical models and an alternative version of my data. I conclude with a discussion of the overall strength of the evidence these data provide for my theory.

I find that, in some times and places, Arab authoritarian governments since the early 1990s silenced opposition voices, but in other cases they allowed a degree of media pluralism, legalizing — or at least not preventing — the publication of opposition media. This bifurcation of approaches was manifest in regime’s treatment of opposition newspapers in the early 1990s and continued through their responses to opposition satellite TV channels and websites in the 2000s and 2010s. As my data show, whether a regime tolerated opposition media or not is largely consistent with the pattern my theory predicts. When regimes are strong, they signal and reinforce their strength by tolerating opposition media. When they are weak, they foster uncertainty by shutting out opposition voices.

4.1 The Arab Region Since the Cold War

The Arab region after the Cold War is a fruitful setting to test the theory laid out in Chapter 2. The region in this period has been characterized by both pervasive authoritarianism and widespread challenges to governments by opposition groups. Amid varying economic and political conditions, the region's governments have responded to these challenges with a wide range of repression and accommodation.

When the post-Cold War era began, there was not a single democracy among Arab countries (Korn 1993: 22). The regimes' hold on power was bolstered by a "vast expansion of the state apparatus and its power to control and coerce, which had occurred in the 1960s and early 1970s" across the region (Owen 1981). Yet many of these authoritarian governments faced calls for political change from new opposition movements that had emerged across the region in the 1970s and 1980s, particularly, though not exclusively, Islamist movements (Brown, Hamzawy, and Ottaway 2006: 5). These new opposition groups quickly showed their ability to mobilize protests and to win significant numbers of seats in elections (even rigged ones), posing a new challenge to the survival of Arab authoritarian regimes. A turning point came in December 1991, when the Islamic Salvation Front (Front Islamique du Salut or FIS) won 41.5% of the votes in the first round of Algeria's parliamentary election (Economist Intelligence Unit 1996d: 4). The country's panicked military leaders intervened, ousting the reformist president Chadli Benjedid, canceling the second round of elections, and initiating a devastating crackdown on the FIS that plunged the country into years of civil war (Aghrout and Zoubir 2019). The FIS's powerful showing in the election showed that opposition groups, particularly Islamist ones, could muster massive public support. Regimes would have to adapt to survive. This chapter will focus on the decades after this turning point.

The rise of new movements (and the revitalization of some old ones), with their demands for democracy, Islamic government, or both, grew in part out of the perceived economic and political failures of the ideologies on which the newly independent Arab states had based their popular appeal, in particular socialism and pan-Arab nationalism (Owen 1981; Haddad 1992; Krämer 1992; Murphy 1998; Muslih and Browsers 2014; Hamid 2017). Geopolitical events, such as the breakup of the union of Egypt and Syria in 1961 (Europa 2019a), Israel’s decisive defeat of its Arab neighbors in the Six Day War of 1967 (Hamid 2017), and the Israel invasion of Lebanon in 1982 (Murphy 1998: 78) took the sheen off of Arab nationalism. By the 1980s, the region’s economic woes had become pronounced as well, with Arab states facing crushing levels of debt, mounting corruption, swollen bureaucracies, and rapid population growth (Murphy 1998: 78). Even oil revenue, which had boomed for the major producers in the 1970s (Owen 1981), was flat-lining (Murphy 1998: 78). The “structural adjustment” policies that governments implemented to try to solve their economic troubles by reducing the role of the state in the economy did not endear them to their populations either (Murphy 1998: 79). Reduced subsidies for food provoked “bread riots” in Egypt in 1977, Morocco and Tunisia in 1984, Sudan in 1985, Algeria in 1988, and Jordan in 1989 (Sadiki 2000: 80).³

The growing discontent in Arab countries fueled the growth of opposition movements. For example, although Islamists did not spark the “bread riots” in Tunisia in 1984 and Algeria in 1988, they used the unrest as an opportunity to organize protests of their own (Zhang 2019; Global Security 2020). Opposition groups also benefitted indirectly from these episodes of unrest, in those situations where governments responded with political liberalization measures. For example, months after its own “bread riot” in 1989, Jordan held its first parliamentary election in over two decades (Europa World 2019f). Candidates affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood became the largest bloc in parliament (Schwedler

³Sadiki (2000: 82) argues that, while food price spikes triggered these protests, participants were driven by a wide range of frustrations, including “social inequality, corruption, nepotism, authoritarianism, and the regime’s incompetence.”

2015).⁴

In subsequent decades, continued mobilization reminded the region's dictators that they could not ignore the threat that opposition groups posed to their hold on power. In Mauritania, for example, the Front of Opposition Parties led demonstrations against the government involving thousands of people in 1997 and 1999 (Reuters 1997b; BBC Monitoring: Middle East 1999a). The frequency of protest in the region picked up considerably during the 2000s (Ottaway and Hamzawy 2011). Algeria's Socialist Forces Front and the Berber Cultural Movement led protests in favor of the rights of Berbers in 2001, some attracting tens of thousands of participants (Agence France Presse 2001a; Drummond 2001; Reuters 2001b). Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood led thousands into the streets to demand political reforms on multiple occasions in 2005 (Abou El-Magd 2005; Slackman 2005).

The "Arab Spring" uprisings of 2010 and 2011 posed the greatest threat to the region's authoritarian regimes in years, but they also raised doubts about the continued relevance of traditional opposition groups. Howard and Hussain (2011: 48) argue that social media and mobile phones enabled "distributed leadership" during the uprisings in Tunisia, Egypt, and elsewhere. The new protests, they argued, were not spearheaded by centralized opposition organizations with hierarchical leadership structures, but by networks of ordinary citizens. And yet, many opposition groups with identifiable leaderships *did* play an important role

⁴Sadiki (2000: 75) argues that "food protest was a leading factor in influencing government policy toward democratic reform in Sudan and Jordan in 1986 and 1989, respectively." Krämer (1992: 23-24) observes that in numerous countries in the region during this period, "Socioeconomic tension, accumulating over time and coinciding with reduced state-financed social services, erupted in urban riots which threatened the regimes' legitimacy and survival and were quelled by the army. Yet the response also included important concessions," including "greater political freedom." Nor were Islamists the only groups to benefit from liberalization. The exiled former Algerian president Ahmed Ben Bella launched the Movement for Democracy in Algeria (MDA) in 1984 (Naylor 2015: 117), but the Algerian state only legalized the group as a political party in March 1990, in the period of political opening triggered by the 1988 protests. A few months after it was legalized, the MDA flexed its new political muscles by organizing an anti-government demonstration attended by over 20,000 (Reuters 1990c).

in organizing “Arab Spring” protests. The April 6 Youth Movement issued the call for the massive January 25, 2011 protest against Hosni Mubarak’s government (Radio Free Europe 2011; Public Broadcasting Service 2019). That same month, thousands joined a demonstration in the Yemeni capital organized by the Joint Meeting Parties (Al-Masmari and Coker 2011), a coalition led by the Islah party and the Yemeni Socialist Party (Durac 2011: 343). The Rally for Culture and Democracy, an Algerian party founded in 1989 (Naylor 2015: 439), led a protest in Algiers in February 2011 attended by over 10,000 (Faucon 2011). Organized opposition groups have continued to mobilize their followers in the years since. In 2017, Morocco’s Justice and Charity, an Islamist group that has opposed the monarchy since the 1980s (Laremont 2009), led more than 10,000 protestors in Rabat (Errazzouki 2017).

Over the decades, regimes have responded to these opposition challenge with both repression and liberalization; in many cases, the same regime alternated between both (Buttorff 2019: 3). Generally speaking, both responses can be seen as strategies for “system maintenance” (Krämer 1992: 23-24.) There were early hopes that political liberalization might lead to full democratization across much of the region (Hudson 1991; Harik 1994). Indeed, a “wave of democratization” (Huntington 1991: 12) had begun in the mid 1970s and spiked just after the Cold War ended: numerous dictatorships gave way to new democracies in Latin America, Eastern Europe, sub-Saharan Africa, and East Asia (Møller and Skaaning 2013: 99-103). Yet authoritarian government has remained remarkably prevalent in the region, even after the hopes stirred by the revolutions of 2011 (Schmitter and Sika 2017; Freedom House 2019). If both repression and liberalization can keep regimes in power, why does a particular government in a particular time choose one strategy rather than the other?⁵

The theory presented in Chapter 2 offers an explanation of governments’ differing choices in

⁵A regime can of course engage in (and even increase) repression in some domains while liberalizing or making other concessions in other domains (Rasler 1996: 139; Inclán 2009: 795). Since I focus on the particular domain of whether a regime tolerates opposition media, such mixed strategies are less relevant. However, in the conclusion, I propose future research on why regimes sometimes tolerate one opposition group’s media but not another group’s and why they even tolerate some media outlets of a particular group while suppressing others produced by the same group.

either prohibiting opposition media or tolerating them.

Dramatic changes in media markets and communications technology in the post-Cold War era have led some scholars to question whether governments in the Middle East and North Africa can still control the flow of information to their citizens. Arab media have been transformed in many ways by satellite television and the Internet (Gunter and Dickinson 2013: 1). When these trends were beginning to emerge, many authors expressed optimism about their effects on freedom of expression in the Arab region. “In considering Arab censorship, we must pay attention to the recent advent of satellite TV and the Internet, which are paving the way for the easing of censorship, as they are proving impossible to control” (Khazen 1999: 89).

Egypt began broadcasting television channels across the region by satellite in 1990, and the privately-owned and London-based Middle East Broadcast Centre launched its satellite channel across the region the following year (Berenger 2006: 207). In 1996, Qatar-based Al-Jazeera became the first 24-hour Arab news channel (Korany 2010: 69). By the late 2000s, there were hundreds of satellite channels broadcasting across the Arab region and tens of millions of viewers (Campagna 2009). In some ways, the satellite revolution undercut censorship, as governments had to contend with an expanded volume of information flowing in across their borders. “Arab governments could no longer hide information from their publics, since the skies were by then virtually open, and the publics could receive the news via satellite from anywhere around the world” (Korany 2010: 67). Some Arab satellite channels have hosted talk shows that air discussions on topics like human rights and democracy (Ayish 2011: 97) and have had opposition leaders on as guests (Ghareeb 2000: 406).

Yet governments in the region have not been powerless to control the content that satellite channels broadcast. In 2008 , information ministers from across the Arab region signed a

charter to regulate their satellite broadcasters, calling on states to take legal action against broadcasters that had a “negative influence on social peace and national unity and public order and decency” or that insulted “leaders or national and religious symbols” (Campagna 2009; Ayish 2011: 96; Korany 2010: 82). Arab governments have often interfered with satellite broadcasters by shutting down their local bureaus or refusing to transmit them on government-controlled satellites (Campagna 2009). Moreover, many Arab satellite channels receive funding either directly from states or from close government allies (Korany 2010: 80).

Nonetheless, satellite broadcasters have no doubt made Arab citizens more aware of events in other countries in the region, including anti-government protests. In 2005, Al-Jazeera “reported extensively on ongoing political protests in countries like Lebanon and Egypt” (Hafez 2010: 332). Al-Jazeera and Al-Arabiya brought news of the “Arab Spring” protests to viewers across the region (Rosiny 2012: 4). Yet, as I will argue, this demonstration effect of the “Arab Spring” protests actually led governments to *reduce* media freedom, increasing the likelihood that they would not allow opposition media.

In the 2000s, access to the Internet spread rapidly in Arab countries, although with significant variation from one country to another. Internet use in the region increased from one-tenth of one percent in 2000 to nearly 20 percent by middle of the decade (El Gody 2007: 217). In 2017, an estimated 46.5% of individuals in all Arab countries used the Internet (International Telecommunication Union 2020). Across all authoritarian Arab regimes with populations over a million, the Internet use rate ranged from 21% in Mauritania to almost 100% in Kuwait *ibid*).

According to El Gody (2007: 218), the spread of Internet access enabled Arab citizens to circumvent state controls on information. As Korany (2010: 76) puts it, the Internet gave “users access to any news source they wanted, anywhere on the planet. These news sources

range from credible, brand-name news organizations (CNN, BBC, Reuters, and so on) to news items written by individual citizens (blogs). The mere presence of the Internet as a source of information therefore helps open up a freer space for public debate, and makes it much more difficult for governments to censor information since the same information will appear in a multitude of other sources in or out of the jurisdiction of the censoring country.” El Gody (2007: 221) also argues that the Internet has enabled opposition groups to organize anti-government protests more easily. Lim (2012), for example, traces Egyptian opposition groups’ use of online tools to mobilize protestors, from Kefaya’s use of blogs beginning in 2004 (237) to the April 6 movement’s use of Facebook and Twitter in 2008 (240) and the dissident Facebook group “We are all Khaled Said” that organized large protests in 2010 (241). In a survey of participants in the massive Tahrir Square protest in Cairo on January 25, 2011, Tufekci and Wilson (2012: 370) found that 28% of participants first learned the protests would occur through Facebook; only “face-to-face communication” was a more common way to learn of the protests, while less than 1% learned of the protests through radio or newspapers.

Yet, like authoritarian governments elsewhere in the world, Arab dictatorships have adapted to the growth of the Internet and found new ways to prevent citizens from using it against them. Governments frequently resort to blocking access within their borders to dissident websites (El Gody 2007: 225; World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers 2010: 669, 1059; OpenNet Initiative 2019a, 2019b, 2019c, 2019d, 2019e, 2019f). Some Arab citizens use tools such as virtual private networks (VPNs) to circumvent filtering of websites (World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers 2010: 697), but governments can also block sites that provide VPN services, as Egypt began doing in 2017 (Rohan 2017). Thus, when the Egyptian government later started blocking the news website Al Bedaiah, which often covered human rights abuses by the government, traffic to the site fell by 98% (Reporters Sans Frontières 2017). Some governments have even gone so far as to hack opposition websites

(BBC Monitoring: Middle East 2010a).

Arab governments also employ old-fashioned offline repression to control what dissidents post online, frequently arresting dissident bloggers and other online activists (Korany 2010: 82). Governments are unable to block opposition accounts on social media sites like Facebook and Twitter, without blocking the platforms entirely. Instead, governments have used heavy-handed tactics to deter opposition groups from posting highly critical content on social media. In 2013, for example, Kuwait “arrested at least a dozen persons for Twitter posts it deemed to be defaming to the emir,” imposing multi-year sentences on some (U.S. Department of State 2013). In 2014, Egypt’s government arrested the administrator of one of the Muslim Brotherhood’s Facebook pages (Freedom House 2014b). In 2015, Bahrain imprisoned a leading member of the Islamist group Al-Wefaq for criticizing the country’s elections on Twitter (Amnesty International 2015; Bahrain Mirror 2015).⁶ Not only do the region’s governments repress the *producers* of critical online content, they also intimidate would-be *consumers* of that content by monitoring citizens’ Internet use, from installing cameras in Internet cafes (World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers 2010: 638) to tracking the websites users visit (Committee to Protect Journalists 2009).⁷

So while the Internet has provided Arab citizens with new tools to learn about the abuses committed by their governments and to coordinate with their fellow citizens to protest those abuses, the region’s authoritarian regimes maintain considerable control over the flow of information. Rather than ending censorship in the region, the Internet has expanded the technological terrain on which dissidents and states compete to control information. Empirically, this means that, in order to measure government toleration of opposition

⁶According to Algerian dissidents, “even the slightest misstep in a Facebook update could result in arrest and questioning” (U.S. Department of State 2014).

⁷In some countries in the region, all Internet traffic is routed through government-run servers (Committee to Protect Journalists 2009), while in others governments force private Internet Service Providers (ISPs) to implement controls (World Association of Newspapers and News Publishers 2010: 267).

media over the entirety of the post-Cold War era, we must be attentive to the new media technologies by which opposition groups communicate with the public and the evolving means by which governments have sought to regulate opposition media.

4.2 A Dataset of Arab Opposition Media

In order to test my theory, I constructed a cross-national dataset on the media of all significant non-violent opposition groups under non-democratic Arab regimes (in countries with populations over a million) during the years 1992-2017. I will discuss how I define such groups and regimes below. This dataset contains the two dependent variables I examine in this chapter, each providing a measure of regimes' tolerance or intolerance of opposition media. Simply put, I aimed to measure when governments allowed opposition media outlets to operate and citizens to access them, and when they did not. Coding proceeded in three stages: 1) identifying the set of authoritarian regime-years in the region, 2) identifying all significant non-violent opposition groups in these regime-years, 3) identifying, for each country-year and each group, whether or not the government allowed the group to publish its own media. I considered both legal and illegal groups, some of which participated in elections and others which did not. I also include a wide range of media: print, broadcast, and online.

To code regimes, opposition groups, opposition media outlets, and whether or not regimes tolerated those outlets, I consulted country case studies, historical dictionaries and other encyclopedic sources, human rights reports from the U.S. State Department and non-governmental groups such as Amnesty International, media freedom reports from groups like the Committee to Protect Journalists and Freedom House, local and

international news media accounts, and archives of opposition websites, among other sources. Each of these sources has potential blindspots, but by consulting a wide array of sources, I aimed to minimize the chances of missing relevant evidence. For example, by consulting many rather than few sources, each with different expected biases, I had a better chance of coming across references to any opposition media outlets that existed in a particular time and place, as well as references to state intervention against those outlets.

I define Arab countries as those countries that are or have been members of the League of Arab States, more commonly known as the Arab League. There are 22 current or former members (BBC News 2017d).⁸ To identify authoritarian regimes, I apply the criteria developed by Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2018). They define a regime in general as “the set of very basic formal and informal rules for choosing leaders and policies” (5). An authoritarian regime specifically is a non-democratic regime in an independent country, in which the government controls most of the country’s territory.⁹ I use those authors’ regime codings for Arab regime-years included in their dataset (Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2014).¹⁰ I expanded the set of regime-years they coded in two ways. First, since their dataset ends in 2010, I applied their rules to code additional authoritarian regime-years in the region for 2011-2017. Second, two countries that had the authors excluded from their dataset because their populations were too small — Bahrain and Qatar — had populations over one million by 2018 (World Bank 2019)¹¹. Thus, I coded the regimes in both countries

⁸Syria’s membership in the league was suspended in 2011 (Batty and Shenker 2011).

⁹Authoritarian regimes begin when either 1) government leaders achieve power in some way other than through free and fair elections or constitutional succession to an elected government; 2) an elected government prevents subsequent elections from being free and fair; or 3) a government is chosen through an election but the military intervenes to prevent popular candidates from running or dictates important areas of government policy (Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2018: 5). An authoritarian regime ends when one of the following occurs: 1) a competitive executive election — or an election to the body that chooses the executive, like a parliament in some systems — is held, someone other than the incumbent or a close ally wins, and the winner is allowed to take power; 2) the government is forcefully ousted (e.g. by a coup, mass uprising, or invasion) and a new regime replaces it; or 3) regime elites substantially change the rules about who can become the leader or who can choose policies (Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2018: 6).

¹⁰The “Autocratic Regimes Data” can be found at <https://sites.psu.edu/dictators>.

¹¹Data from the World Bank’s “World Development Indicators” can be found at: <https://databank.worldbank.org/source/world-development-indicators>.

throughout 1992-2017. I did not include Comoros or Djibouti for any year, because the population of each state remained under one million in 2018 (World Bank 2019). I also modified the start and end years of some regimes. Whereas Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2014) code regime-years according to the regime that was in place on January 1 of that year, I code regime-years according to the regime that was in place for the majority of the year. Thus, for example, the regime I code for Algeria in 1992 is the regime that began on January 11 of that year, whereas Geddes, Wright, and Frantz group Algeria in 1992 with the regime that ended on that date. My approach enables me to consider the largest part of a given year possible when coding how each regime treated opposition media in that year. See Appendix 2 for a list of how I coded all regime-years across all Arab League members and all years 1992-2017, along with short narratives on the events that began and ended each authoritarian regime.¹²

Among the 20 Arab League members that had over a million inhabitants in 2018, numerous years were excluded because they failed to meet at least one criterion of Geddes, Wright, and Frantz's definition of an authoritarian regime. Some countries are excluded in some or all years because they did not have a de facto independent state, namely Iraq in 2003-2009, Lebanon in 1992-2004, and Palestine throughout the entirety of 1992-2017. Some countries are excluded in some or all years because no single government clearly controlled a majority of the country's territory: Libya in 2012-2017, Somalia throughout 1992-2017, and Yemen in 2015-2017. A few regime-years were excluded because a country had a democratic government for the majority of the year: Egypt in 2013, Lebanon in 2005-2017, Mauritania in 2007 and 2008, and Tunisia in 2012-2017. Finally, Tunisia in 2011 is excluded because the government that ruled between the ouster of Ben Ali in January and the holding of competitive elections in October meets the Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2018) definition of

¹²When available, the narratives are from the codebook for the Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2014) dataset (labeled "GWF"). For authoritarian regime start and end events not included in that dataset, I wrote additional narratives.

a “transitional administration.”¹³ Altogether, among Arab countries with 2018 populations over a million, I consider 416 regime-years as being authoritarian during this period.

I then identified all significant non-violent organized opposition groups that operated under these authoritarian regimes during 1992-2017. In each regime-year, I coded whether there was any major organized and nonviolent opposition group, and if so, whether there was one that was clearly the most popular. By “major”, I mean a group that has enough support to pose a non-negligible threat to the power of regime elites. If there was one major opposition group that was clearly the most popular, I coded it as the only significant opposition group. If there was no single clearly most popular group, then all major opposition groups were considered significant and included in the dataset. I will now define these terms in detail.

A group is considered oppositional if it seeks substantial changes in some aspects of national government policies and/or institutions.¹⁴ A group is not considered oppositional if any of its leaders hold high executive office, e.g. cabinet ministers. (Membership in the legislature does not preclude oppositional status.) A group is considered organized if it has an identifiable leader or leaders. Groups are considered nonviolent if sources do not describe them as insurgent, armed, etc and do not otherwise indicate that they persistently engage in violence or advocate violence. Incidental acts of violence (e.g. clashes between protestors and police) do not preclude coding the group as nonviolent overall. Nor do planned but isolated attacks carried out by rank-and-file members exclude the group if the attacks do not appear to have been directed by the group’s leaders.

¹³Even if this short-lived government were coded as an authoritarian regime, it would have to be excluded from the empirical analysis, since using regime fixed effects requires more than one observation per regime (Allison 2009: 2).

¹⁴Endorsing the incumbent executive for reelection (or endorsing the incumbent’s hand-picked successor) is considered evidence that a group supports the regime leader’s agenda and that the group is therefore non-oppositional. Separatist groups are excluded, since their goal is to withdraw from the jurisdiction of the regime in question, rather than change its policies throughout its territory.

If, among the groups that fit the above criteria, there is a single group that most sources describe as having more support than any other group, and the group had an active leadership that was able to coordinate its members during the year in question, that group is coded as the main opposition group and the only “significant” opposition group in that year. The idea is to identify the *focal* opposition group if there is one, which would likely play a leading role in coordinating any mass uprising against the regime and/or in governing a subsequent regime.¹⁵ If no such group can be identified, then I code a *set* of “significant” opposition groups. In the absence of a “main” opposition, an opposition group is considered “significant” if, in the prior seven years,¹⁶ the group fulfilled at least one of the following criteria: 1) participated in a national (legislative or executive) election and its candidate/candidates won more than 10% of the vote,¹⁷ 2) led an anti-government demonstration inside the country involving over a thousand participants,¹⁸ 3) was coded as the main opposition group, or 4) was the ruling party.¹⁹ A group which fits at least one of these criteria has demonstrated that it likely has

¹⁵Although a group can be coded as a major opposition group even if it is currently unable to mobilize collective action due to state repression, there can only be a focal opposition group if that group is currently able to mobilize collective action. Hence, a group must currently be able to mobilize protestors or voters to be considered the “main” group, but it can continue to be coded as a significant opposition group for another seven years (see description of “major” groups below) after losing the ability to mobilize, e.g. due to a government crackdown.

¹⁶The seven-year window is arbitrary, so in future research I will experiment with coding groups based on shorter and longer windows. Shorter windows should tend to produce more false negatives — excluding groups that have large followings — but fewer false positives — including groups that no longer have a large following — and the converse holds for longer windows.

¹⁷For legislatures with more than one chamber, the vote for the lower house will be used since such chambers typically are more representative and have greater policy powers, so they are a better gauge of voters’ support for different groups’ agendas. In multi-round elections, I use first-round results only if subsequent rounds are runoffs, and include all rounds in legislative elections in which different seats are voted on in different rounds.

¹⁸Participation in the planning of a protest only qualifies the group if the sources identify it as either the sole organizer, the leading organizer, or one of two leading organizers. The reason for this rule is that if a group is one of several that organized a protest and did not play a prominent role, the regime learns little from the demonstration about the group’s ability to mobilize. A demonstration that is described as spontaneous can also qualify a group if the demonstrators are principally advocating the rights of the group (e.g. the release of its leader from prison). Such a demonstration clearly indicates the group has support.

¹⁹An election or demonstration that qualifies the group as significant may have occurred under a previous regime, including democratic regimes. I consider opposition groups that used to be ruling parties as significant on the assumption that ruling parties usually build up support networks while they are in power that survive to some significant extent after their regime ends. Just two former ruling parties are subsequently coded as opposition groups: the National Liberation Front (FLN) in Algeria in 1993-1996 and the Yemeni Socialist Party in 1995-2000.

a non-negligible level of support. Even if the group subsequently decides not to mobilize its followers into the streets, the regime's leaders know the group probably has the *capacity* to mobilize large numbers or that its supporters might mobilize in large numbers without central direction.²⁰ A group may be included in some years but not others depending on its fulfillment of the above criteria in each year. In any year in which such changes occur, I include the group if it fulfilled the criteria for more than half of the year.

I coded 39 significant opposition groups across the region during the covered period. See Appendix 3 for a list of the significant opposition groups coded in each country and explanations of their coding. To illustrate the coding of groups, consider Egypt. When the dataset begins in 1992, I code the Muslim Brotherhood as Egypt's main opposition group. The Brotherhood "saw its membership soar" in the 1980s (Mattar 2004: 1622). The 1987 elections had made the Muslim Brotherhood the largest opposition group in Egypt's parliament (Ranko 2015: 109). The group also swept elections to the boards of many of the country's professional syndicates in the early 1990s (Goldschmidt 2013: 284; Ranko 2015: 109). Writing in 1996, the Economist Intelligence Unit (1996a: 8) observed: "The main challenge to the regime comes from the Islamic trend, which can draw on a significant groundswell of popular support. The largest, best-funded and organised Islamic group is the Muslim Brotherhood." The Brotherhood remained Mubarak's strongest opponents until he was overthrown in February 2011. Al-Anani (2016: 155) writes that "the Brotherhood was the key opposition group in Egypt under Mubarak."²¹ Given the expert consensus on the Brotherhood's preeminent support in the 1990s and 2000s, I code the

²⁰Thus a group which led a large protest in the last seven years, but which can no longer directly organize protests because, for example, the government has driven its leaders into exile, can still be counted as significant. I include such groups because, despite the leaders' inability to directly organize collective action, the government's decision to tolerate or forbid the group's media could still affect whether its supporters protest.

²¹Mattar (2004: 1622) refers to the Muslim Brotherhood during the 2000s as "the most important representative of the Egyptian masses." The Economist Intelligence Unit describes the group as "the best supported of the opposition movements, with a national reach" (2008c: 7) and "the only opposition force able to mobilise popular support" (2010X: 4).

group as Egypt's main opposition in 1992-2010.

I continue to code the Muslim Brotherhood as the main opposition group in 2011 and 2012, under the government led by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) that took power when Mubarak was ousted. Trager (2011) reports: "In the months since Mubarak's resignation, the Muslim Brotherhood has continued to demonstrate its unique capacity to mobilize supporters. Protests continue to be held in Tahrir Square on most Fridays, and those protests that are endorsed by the Muslim Brotherhood draw substantially larger crowds than those that are not." The group's continuing popularity was confirmed in 2012 when its Freedom and Justice Party won a large plurality of seats in the national assembly and its candidate Mohammad Morsi won the presidential election (Europa World 2019a).

Egypt is not in the dataset for 2013, because I code it as a democracy for the majority of that year. In July of 2013, a military coup toppled the Brotherhood-led government, and the new military regime cracked down harshly on the group, imprisoning most of its leaders and driving the rest into exile or hiding (Trager 2016: 230; Europa World 2019a).²² By the end of 2013, the Muslim Brotherhood could no longer effectively organize its followers. Sherif (2014: 7) reported that the Brotherhood "can no longer coordinate across Egypt." Thus, in 2014-2017, under the regime led by Sisi, I do not code the Muslim Brotherhood as Egypt's main opposition.

In the absence of a main opposition group during this period, I code all Egyptian opposition groups that meet one of the criteria as significant. This set includes the Muslim Brotherhood itself, since it was the ruling party until 2013.²³ The other significant opposition groups during this period are the April 6 Youth Movement, No to Military Trials for Civilians, and

²²Thousands of regular members of the Muslim Brotherhood were arrested or killed in this crackdown as well (France 24 2019).

²³It could also qualify as a significant group on the basis of having been the main opposition group until 2012.

(beginning in 2015) the Salafist Front. April 6 was founded in 2008, while the latter two groups were founded after Mubarak's ouster (Wedeman 2012; Al Arabiya 2013; Cousin 2014; Public Broadcasting Service 2019). April 6 and No to Military Trials qualify as significant opposition groups on the basis of large protests they organized in 2011 (Daily News Egypt 2011; Radio Free Europe 2011; Public Broadcasting Service 2019). April 6 continued to reject the legitimacy of Sisi's regime throughout the 2014-2017 period, while No to Military Trials continued to advocate the end of military trials for civilians during this period (Al Arabiya 2013; Guardian 2013; Cousin 2014). The Salafist Front organized a large protest against the Sisi regime in November 2014 and remained critical of the regime throughout the next three years (Shehata 2015; Salafist Front 2019a).

In the Egyptian case, the three new significant opposition groups in 2014-2017 all qualify as significant on the basis of protests they organized. In other cases, groups are included as significant because of their electoral performance. For instance, the Islamic Constitutional Movement won more than 10% of the vote in Kuwait's parliamentary elections in October 1996, qualifying it as significant during 1997-2003. In Morocco, the Democratic Bloc was a coalition of five parties that won a combined 32.5% of the vote in the June 1993 parliamentary elections, so it is coded as a significant opposition group during 1993-1997, until Justice and Charity is coded as the main opposition group.

Some groups are coded as significant for more than seven years on the basis of multiple qualifying events. For example, Algeria's Socialist Forces Front (FFS) won 20.5% of the vote in the first round of the December 1991 parliamentary elections and organized large anti-government demonstrations in July 1998 and May 2001, qualifying as a significant opposition group throughout 1992-2007.

There were groups that I coded as moving from non-oppositional status into opposition, and

vice versa. Yemen's Islah party illustrates both possibilities. The ruling General People's Congress (GPC) party established Islah in 1990 (Durac 2019). Until 1997, Islah held seats in Yemen's cabinet (Hamzawy 2009: 5-7; Schmitz and Burrowes 2018: 257), and in 1999 Islah endorsed President Saleh for re-election (Economist Intelligence Unit 2008b: 5; Durac 2019). However, according to the Economist Intelligence Unit (2002c: 10), "In early 2001, Islah underwent something of a renaissance: growing fiercely critical of the GPC-backed constitutional reforms, and opposing the government on other key issues." In response, the government began arresting Islah members of parliament and some of its supporters (*ibid*). The following year, Islah and other parties formed the opposition Joint Meeting Parties (JMP) coalition (Hamzawy 2009: 8; Durac 2011: 343-344). Starting in 2001, I therefore count Islah as an opposition group (and in fact, the main opposition).²⁴ However, after Saleh transferred power to vice president Hadi in November 2011, the JMP endorsed the confirmation of Hadi's presidency in a February 2012 plebiscite and entered into a coalition government with the GPC, with Islah taking seats in the cabinet (Reuters 2011c; Durac 2019). Thus, under the regime led by Hadi in 2012-2015, I once again code Islah as non-oppositional.

Other groups have left the dataset when they became violent or entered the dataset when they abandoned violence. The FIS in Algeria illustrates the first pattern: they appear in the dataset during 1992-1994, but they formed the insurgent Islamic Army of Salvation (AIS) in July 1994, so they no longer appear in the dataset starting in 1995 (Willis 1996: 327; Willis 2012: 174; Aghrout and Zoubir 2019).²⁵ Sudan's Umma Party (UP) went in the other direction. When a new regime came to power in 1989, the UP formed an alliance against the regime with armed groups such as the Sudan People's Liberation Army (BBC

²⁴Al Jazeera (2011a) describes Islah as "the main opposition party in Yemen." Schmitz and Burrowes (2018: 256) argue that Islah was "the most formidable challenger to the Saleh regime."

²⁵The FIS remains in the dataset for 1994 because it transitioned to violence after the mid point of the year. Thus, for most of the year I code it as a non-violent group. In determining whether the group had any media in 1994 and whether it was tolerated, I code on the basis only of the months before they formed the AIS.

Monitoring: Middle East 1990a; New Sudanese rebel radio heard following announcement by Radio SPLA; Berry 2015: 252; Woodside 2017). However, the UP left the alliance in March 2000 and turned to peaceful activism, so it began appearing in the dataset (Pineau 2000; Woodside 2019).

In all, the dataset covers 202 regime-years, spanning ten countries and thirteen regimes. Some authoritarian regimes in the region, such as Libya under Qaddafi and the Saudi monarchy, are not included in the dataset at all, because I did not find any organizations that met my definition of significant non-violent opposition groups. The panel is unbalanced for two reasons. First, some regimes began or ended during the 1992-2017 timespan. Second, some regimes entered the dataset after 1992 when they went from having no significant opposition groups to having at least one, or left the dataset before 2017 when they ceased to have any significant opposition groups. Table 1 lists the regimes that had at least one significant opposition group and which therefore appear in the dataset. Each regime is denoted by its beginning and end year. When a regime remained in power at the end of 2017, its end year is listed as “NA.” The second column lists the years during which the regime is included in the dataset. The third column lists the total number of opposition groups that I coded as significant under the regime during 1992-2017 and the last column lists the “main” opposition group associated with each regime, if any.²⁶ Four regimes (e.g. Algeria 1992-NA, Egypt 2013-NA, Kuwait 1961-NA, and Mauritania 2008-NA) did not have any identifiable “main” opposition group during the covered period. In some regimes that had a main opposition group, the group was not considered the main opposition throughout the entire period (e.g. Mauritania 1978-2005 and Tunisia 1956-2011).

There was a main opposition group in 57.4% of regime-years. In around 70% of regime-

²⁶In principle, a regime could have had more than one “main” opposition group in different years, but I did not find any such cases during the 1992-2017 timeframe.

Table 4.1: Regimes included in the dataset

Regime	Years Included	Groups	Main
Algeria 1992-NA	1992-2017	9	
Bahrain 1971-NA	2002-2017	1	Al-Wefaq
Egypt 1952-2011	1992-2010	1	Muslim Brotherhood
Egypt 2011-2012	2011-2012	1	Muslim Brotherhood
Egypt 2013-NA	2014-2017	4	
Jordan 1946-NA	1992-2017	1	Muslim Brotherhood
Kuwait 1961-NA	1997-2003, 2011-2017	6	
Mauritania 1978-2005	1992-2005	2	Union of Democratic Forces (UFD)
Mauritania 2008-NA	2009-2017	5	
Morocco 1956-NA	1992-2017	4	Justice and Charity (Ihsan)
Sudan 1989-NA	2000-2017	1	Umma Party
Tunisia 1956-2011	1992-1999	1	Nahda
Yemen 1978-2012	1992-2011	3	Yemeni Congregation for Reform (Islah)

years, there was a single significant opposition group.²⁷ The maximum number of significant opposition groups in a single regime-year was five.²⁸ Figure 1 shows the overall distribution across regime-years of the number of groups ($groups_N$).

For each opposition group, I looked for evidence that the group had ever published a newspaper, magazine, radio station, TV channel, or website during the 1992-2017 period. I did not include pages on major social media sites based outside the region, such as Facebook and Twitter, because in recent years it has been technically impossible for governments to block individual pages without blocking an entire platform. Thus, the

²⁷The 26 observations in which there was a single significant opposition group but I did not code it as the “main” opposition group fall into two sets. One set consists of cases like Nahda after 1993, in which a main opposition group was driven underground. The other set consists of cases like the Coordination des Arush, Dairat, et Communes (CADC) in Algeria in 2008-2010. The CADC was the only opposition group that met the protest or electoral criterion for significance in those years, but there was not a consensus among sources that the group was the most popular opposition movement in the country.

²⁸For example, in Mauritania in 2016, there was the Rally of Democratic Forces (formerly known as the Union of Democratic Forces), the National Front for the Defense of Democracy, the Coordination of Democratic Opposition, the National Rally for Reform and Development (Tewassoul), and the National Forum for Democracy and Unity.

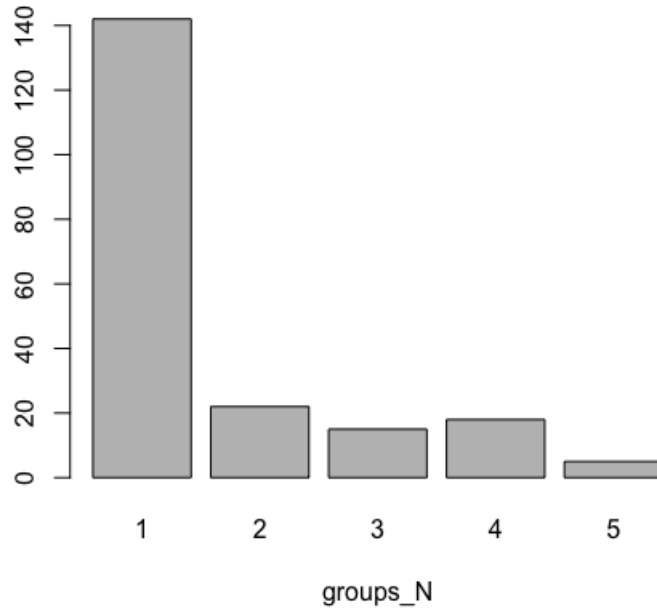


Figure 4.1: Significant opposition groups per regime-year

existence of opposition pages on these sites is not a clear indication that the government has *allowed* the opposition to have media. I excluded any media outlet that sources did not describe as being “owned” or “run” by the group or its top leader — leaving out publications produced by sympathizers if its content is not ultimately controlled by the group’s leaders — because I am interested in group leaders’ ability to communicate publicly.

I consider an outlet not to be permitted if the government compels or tries to compel it to stop producing any content (for example, shutting down the outlet’s main office or studio), prevents or tries to prevent the dissemination of content (for example, by blocking access to or hacking a website, jamming a broadcast signal, or trying to seize all copies of a newspaper),²⁹ or transfers control over the outlet to the state or regime allies. I refer to the

²⁹I do not count quotas imposed on the number of copies of a print publication that can be distributed as a banning, since the group is still allowed to distribute some copies. I did not find any cases in which a quota was so stringent as to make distribution of a publication negligible.

event that marks the beginning of a period in which an outlet is not permitted as a banning. A banning can happen to a media outlet that was previously permitted under the current or a previous regime, but can also happen to an outlet that was never permitted in the first place, if the government impedes it within two months after it begins publishing.³⁰

When determining if a group had any permitted outlets and if any of them were banned, I do not consider outlets that typically published less frequently than once every two weeks. I will refer to outlets that published sufficiently frequently as publishing “actively.” In some cases, evidence on frequency comes from references or other secondary sources, while in other cases there is more direct evidence, e.g. dated posts on a website. If an outlet begins in a given year or is banned for part of the year, I only base inclusion of the outlet in the dataset on the rate of publication after the outlet was launched and when it was not banned.

Radio and TV almost invariably broadcast daily, and so sources typically only mention how often the station broadcasts if it is less than daily. Thus, I assume that radio and TV outlets broadcast more frequently than once every two weeks unless specific evidence is found to the contrary.³¹

Print publications also tend to publish on a regular schedule and do not often change the schedule (although such changes do occur occasionally), but schedules vary considerably across publications, with dailies, annuals, and many types in between all common. Thus, I only include a print publication if I find specific evidence that it was typically publishing every two weeks or more often.³² If I find evidence that a print publication was publishing

³⁰If a radio or television channel initially broadcast from outside the country, I regard this as evidence that it is not tolerated by the government. In such a case, I code the beginning of the channel’s broadcasting as the banning event and code it as not permitted at the time it began.

³¹In principle, I would include a station that regularly broadcast once every two weeks, even if skipped one or two broadcasts during a year. In practice, I did not find any radio or TV stations that broadcast so infrequently.

³²A print publication that skips one or two issues in a year but otherwise appears every two weeks is still consider active.

actively in one year, I assume it was publishing frequently in previous and subsequent years, as long as there is evidence that it was publishing at all, unless I find specific evidence that the frequency changed before or after.

Websites often post irregularly within a given year and their frequency often varies considerably over multiple years. If there is specific evidence on the frequency of posts in a given year, a website is included if it posted at an average rate of at least once every 15 days, and excluded if it posted less frequently.³³ To determine which posts had appeared on a website's homepage, I relied on the Internet Archive (the Wayback Machine).³⁴ If no evidence is available for a given year, the site is considered active during the year only if it was posting frequently in the last year for which there was evidence and the first subsequent year for which there was evidence. In all other years, a website is assumed to

³³I use fifteen days to make the standard equivalent to that applied to other media. If, for example, a newspaper typically appeared once every two weeks, but skipped two of the possible 26 times it could have published, then it published at rate of about once every 15 days, averaged over the year.

³⁴Available at <http://web.archive.org>. Because the Internet Archive records "captures" of sites irregularly in most cases and often infrequently, it was not always possible to determine whether the site had posted at an average rate of at least once every 15 days during that year (specifically the part of the year after the site was launched and when it was not banned). In those cases, if site captures made it possible to determine the number of posts during at least 90 days out of the year, then the number of posts during this period was used to estimate the frequency of posting for the year. For example, suppose a site was only captured once in a year, on June 30, and there were ten dated posts on the home page on that day, the oldest of which was from Mar 1. (For simplicity, let's assume the group was coded as significant for the entire year and the regime did not change during the year.) Then we can infer that there were ten posts during the 122 days from Mar 1 to June 30. Thus, the average posting rate was once every 12.2 days, which is sufficiently frequent to qualify the site as active in that year. This estimate of the frequency of posting may be upwardly biased, since users may record more site captures during periods in which the site is being updated more frequently. If evidence was found that the site was down for part of the year, and there is no evidence that this was due to government interference, then the average rate of posting will be adjusted to reflect the assumption that there were no posts during that period. To continue the previous example, suppose captures on September 1 and November 30 both indicate that the site was down and there were either no captures in between these dates or all captures also indicate that the site was down. We therefore assume that the site had no new posts during the 91 days between September 1 and November 30, but was posting once every 12.2 days when the site was not down. This frequency is applied to the 274 days that the site was assumed to be not down (this may be an overestimate, if the site was down at other times that year that were not captured, or it may be an underestimate if the site was not down at a time during September 1 to November 30 that was not captured), minus any days before the site was launched and any days the site was banned. Call this number of days in which the site had been launched, was not banned, and is assumed not to have been down X . Thus, during the $X + 91$ days, the estimated posting frequency was: $\frac{X}{12.2(X+91)}$. In some cases, a site would redirect to another, very similar site for part of the year. For the purpose of assessing posting frequency, I treat the two sites in such a case as one media outlet, because the original site's URL will lead a user to a version of the site.

have posted infrequently.

I code a variable *banned* to record whether a banning, as defined above, occurred against at least one media outlet of any of the significant opposition groups in a given regime-year.³⁵ *banned* equals 1 if the government suspended or blocked any opposition outlet that either was launched in that year or that the government previously allowed and that was actively publishing up until the ban. *banned* also equals 1 if a new regime comes to power and blocks or suspends an actively publishing outlet that began in a previous year.³⁶ If the government did not ban any opposition publication in the given year, then *banned* equals 0. In order to identify years in which a ban could have taken place, *canban* equals 1 if there was any publication that could have been banned, i.e. if there had been an actively publishing opposition outlet that was allowed as of the beginning of the year, if a new opposition outlet was launched that year, or if a new regime came to power that year. If none of these conditions holds, *canban* equals 0.³⁷

An opposition group's media outlet is considered "suppressed" if, during the seven years prior to the start of the year, it was banned and as of the beginning of the year it was still not permitted. A group is considered "tolerated" in a given year if it actively published at least one outlet, none of its outlets were suppressed at the start of the year, and none were banned during the course of the year. *tolerated* equals 1 if at least one significant opposition group was tolerated in the regime-year and equals 0 if none of the groups were tolerated. *toleratedall* is more stringent: it equals 1 if *every* significant opposition group was tolerated

³⁵In years in which regimes changed, all variables in the dataset are coded only for the portion of the year in which the regime that ruled for most of the year was in power.

³⁶The banning may last any amount of time. For instance, if the government prevented a newspaper from distributing one issue, this would count as a banning. Censorship of specific articles or broadcast programs does not count as a banning if the outlet is still able to publish or broadcast some content. Likewise, the forced removal of a single post does not qualify as the banning of a website, but if a site is not allowed to post any new articles for a period of time, or if access to the site is blocked within the country, that is counted as a banning.

³⁷*canban* will not be used as a dependent variable, but rather to subset on cases in which *banned* could equal 1.

and equals 0 if at least one group was not tolerated. When there is only one significant opposition group, *tolerated* and *toleratedall* are necessarily equal. Among observations in which there were two or more significant opposition groups, it turns out that *toleratedall* equals 1 in only three regime-years, all from Yemen in the 1990s. Given this lack of variation, I do not treat *toleratedall* as a dependent variable in the empirical analyses. Instead, I focus on *banned* and *tolerated*.

tolerated may record some false negatives: it is possible that in a particular regime-year there were no opposition media not because the government *prevented* groups from publishing, but because groups lacked the resources to publish or chose not to do so. Nonetheless, we cannot be sure that a regime is tolerant toward opposition media if there are no such media. For example, Sudan's Umma Party closed its weekly newspaper *Sawt Al-Umma* in 2012, due to financial pressures. While the government did not directly shut the paper down, it seems likely that its closure was a result of the government's decision that year to impose a tax on printing after the press widely reported on anti-government protests (Freedom House 2013a). The *tolerated* variable puts the burden of proof on declaring that the government *does* tolerate opposition media. By contrast, because *banned* equals 1 only when I find direct evidence of regime interference with the media, it puts the burden of proof on declaring that the government does *not* tolerate opposition media.³⁸ For this reason, I use both variables to test my theory.

As an illustration of how I coded a wide range of media and varying levels of government tolerance over time, consider Jordan, which had a main opposition throughout 1992-2017, the Muslim Brotherhood. In 1991, the group launched a weekly newspaper, *Ar-Ribat*. Although an issue was seized in that first year (which does not appear in the dataset), the government did not interfere with it subsequently. In 1993, the Brotherhood replaced *Ar-Ribat* with a

³⁸In the Sudan example, *banned* equals 0 in 2012 and *tolerated* equals 1, but *tolerated* equals 0 in every year after 2012.

new weekly, *As-Sabeel*, which became a daily in 2009. *As-Sabeel* was published through 2017 without interference. An associated website, AsSabeel.net, was never blocked in this period. The Brotherhood launched www.IkhwanJo.com in 2002, and the group's political party, the Islamic Action Front, launched www.Jabha.net in 2004. From 1992-2006, *tolerated* is coded as a 1, but in January 2007, the government blocked access to Jabha.net inside Jordan, so *tolerated* equals 0 in that year. In 2008, 2009, and 2010, Jordan again gets a 1 for *tolerated*, but in 2011, regime supporters hacked Jabha.net and IkhwanJo.com. Moreover, the Muslim Brotherhood launched a satellite TV channel, Al-Yarmouk, that year, but the government initially did not permit in Jordan, forcing the channel to broadcast from Bahrain. *tolerated* is therefore 0 in 2011, as well as 2012, when Al-Yarmouk remained shut out of the country. In 2013, the government allowed the channel to begin broadcasting from Jordan, but later that year suspended the channel for five days, so I again code *tolerated* as a 0. The government did not interfere with any of the Brotherhood's media in 2014 (*tolerated* equals 1), but in 2015, the government shut down the channel's studios, temporarily forcing the channel off the air. In that year, *tolerated* therefore equals 0. It remains 0 in 2016 and 2017. Although Al-Yarmouk began broadcasting again later in 2015 with the help of some Jordanian companies, the following year the government pressured these companies to stop working with Al-Yarmouk, forcing the channel to resume broadcasting from outside of Jordan. *banned* equals 1 in 2007, 2011, 2013, 2015, and 2016. Although *tolerated* equals 0 in 2012 and 2017, *banned* does not equal 1 in these years, because Al-Yarmouk simply remained not permitted.

In the Jordanian example, *banned*= 1 necessarily implies *tolerated*= 0, because there is only one significant opposition group. In cases with more than one significant opposition group, it is possible for both *banned* and *tolerated* to equal 1 in the same regime year, if the media of one group is banned but the media of another group is tolerated. For instance, the Egyptian government blocked April 6's website, 6april.org in 2017, but continued to allow Egyptian

citizens to access the Salafist Front's only outlet, gabhasalafia.com. However, there are only three observations of this type, i.e. in which *banned* and *tolerated* both equal 1. There are, by contrast, 85 observations in which both variables equal 0, so the two variables are far from being perfectly negatively correlated. A regime-year in which there were no banning events, but which is not coded as one of toleration can occur, for instance, if the government banned all opposition media outlets in the prior year, and in the current year it does not allow any of them to resume publishing. In the current year, *banned* may equal 0 (if no opposition group tried to launch a new publication that the regime could have banned), but *tolerated* also equals 0, because there were no opposition media currently publishing. It is also possible for such cases to arise even if there has been no banning event in recent years, but no opposition groups are currently publishing any media. Of course, it is possible that all groups are refraining from publishing voluntarily, without any government pressure, and that the regime *would* have tolerated their media if the groups had chosen to produce any. It is also possible that the government *would not* have tolerated any attempts to launch opposition media.³⁹ I have chosen to handle such ambiguous observations by coding them as a 0 for *tolerated*. In other words, my rules require that, in order to code a regime-year as a 1 for *tolerated*, there must be tangible evidence of toleration, in the form of at least one actively publishing opposition media outlet.

Appendix 4 contains narratives on the media of all opposition groups in the dataset. Table 2 provides summary statistics for *banned* and *tolerated*. The middle column shows the percentage of all regime-years in which each variable equalled 1. In the case of *banned*, this value is calculated only over the 130 observations for which *canban* equals 1, while the share for *tolerated* is calculated over all 202 observations in the dataset. In typical years, regimes did not ban any opposition media: bans occurred in less than 17% of regime-years in which

³⁹The government may also have deterred opposition groups from trying to publish any media by privately intimidating them, so that *banned* equals 0 only because the government's actions to prevent opposition media were not publicly observable.

Table 4.2: Bans and Toleration of Opposition Media

	Variable = 1	Observations
<i>banned</i>	16.9%	130
<i>tolerated</i>	50.5%	202

there was any opposition media that could have been banned. In about half of regime-years governments tolerated the media of at least one opposition group.

Figures 2-4 show how *tolerated* varies over time within regimes. In some regimes *tolerated* remains constant at 0 or 1, but in most regimes there is notable variation. Figures 5-8 show the incidence of banning events over time with regimes. Blue bars denote years in which a regime could have banned some opposition media (*canban*=1) but did not (*banned*=0). Red bars denote years in which the regime did ban at least one opposition publication (*canban*=*banned*=1). In years without a bar there was no opposition media to ban (*canban*=0). Mauritania 1978-2005 and Tunisia 1956-2011 are not pictured, because *canban* was 0 during every year that those regimes appeared in the dataset.

4.3 Explanatory Variables

In this section, I describe the focal explanatory variables I use in the empirical analyses, as well as the control variables.

To test Hypothesis 1, I include the national unemployment rate (on a 0 to 100 scale), lagged by one year, *Lunemployment*. All variables that begin with “L” are lagged by one year. I lag the variables in order to avoid spurious findings due to reverse causality. Specifically, I use the International Labor Organization modeled unemployment rate, from the World

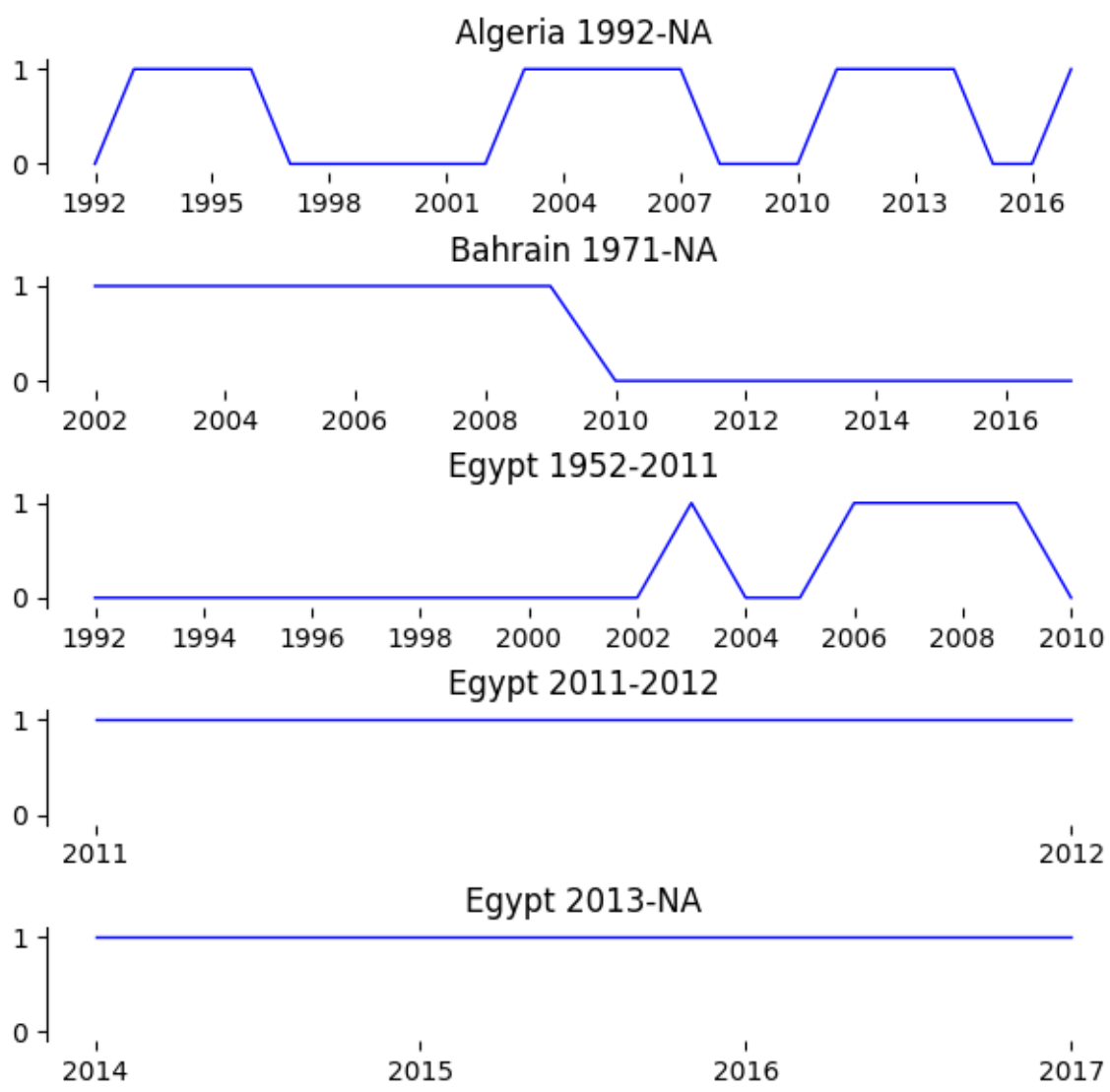


Figure 4.2: *tolerated* over time: Algeria-Egypt

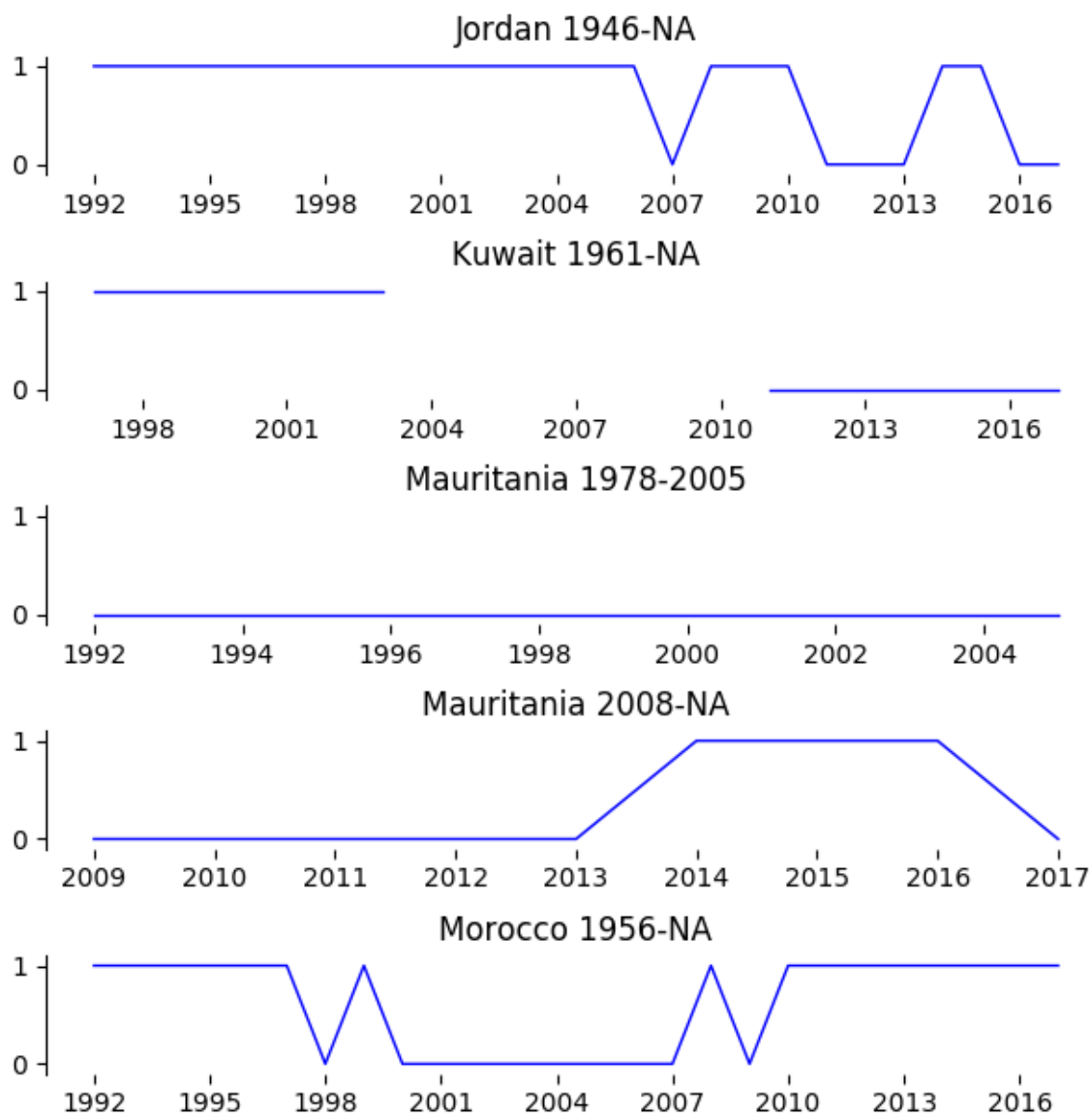


Figure 4.3: *tolerated* over time: Jordan-Morocco

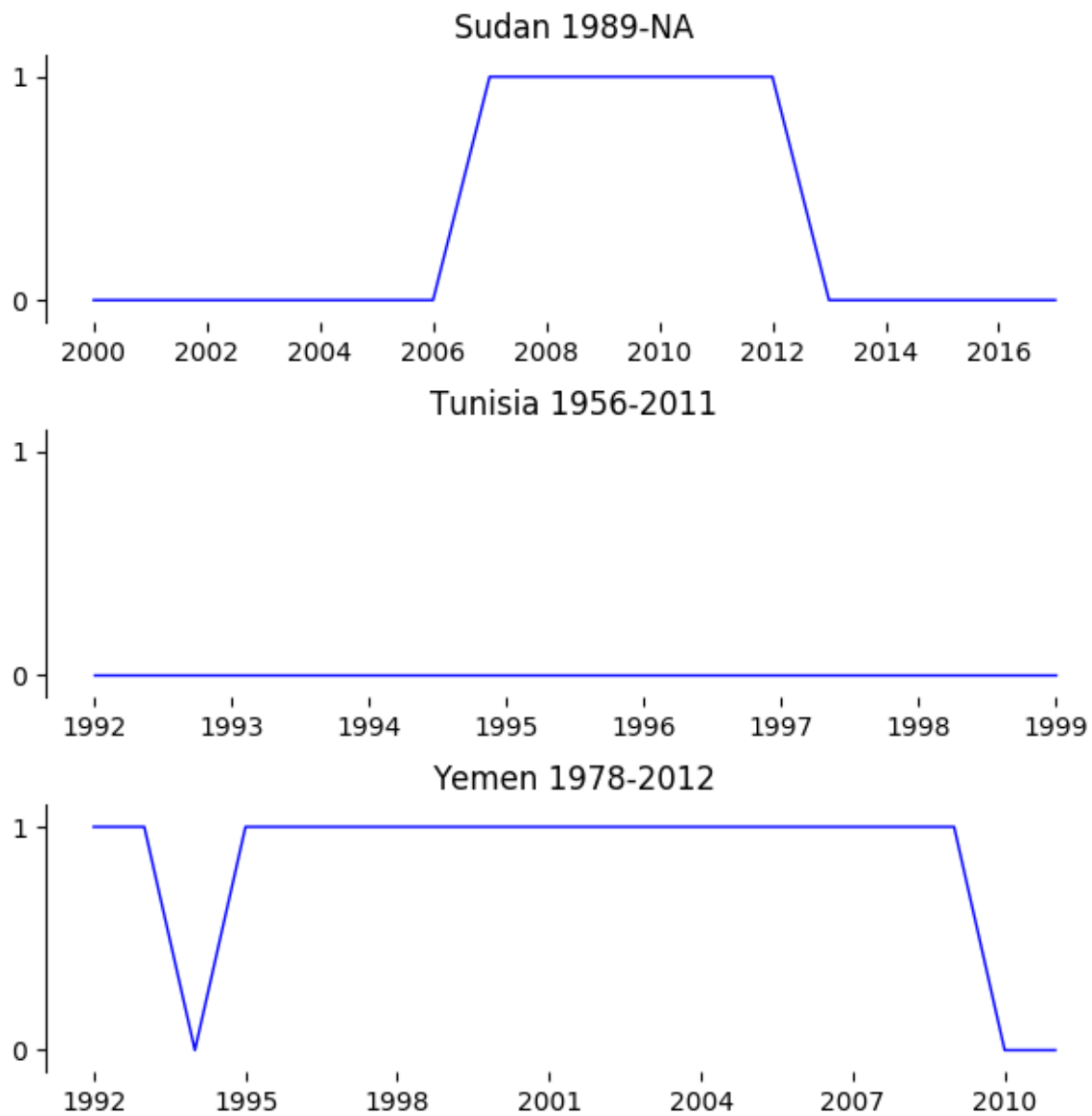


Figure 4.4: *tolerated* over time: Sudan-Yemen

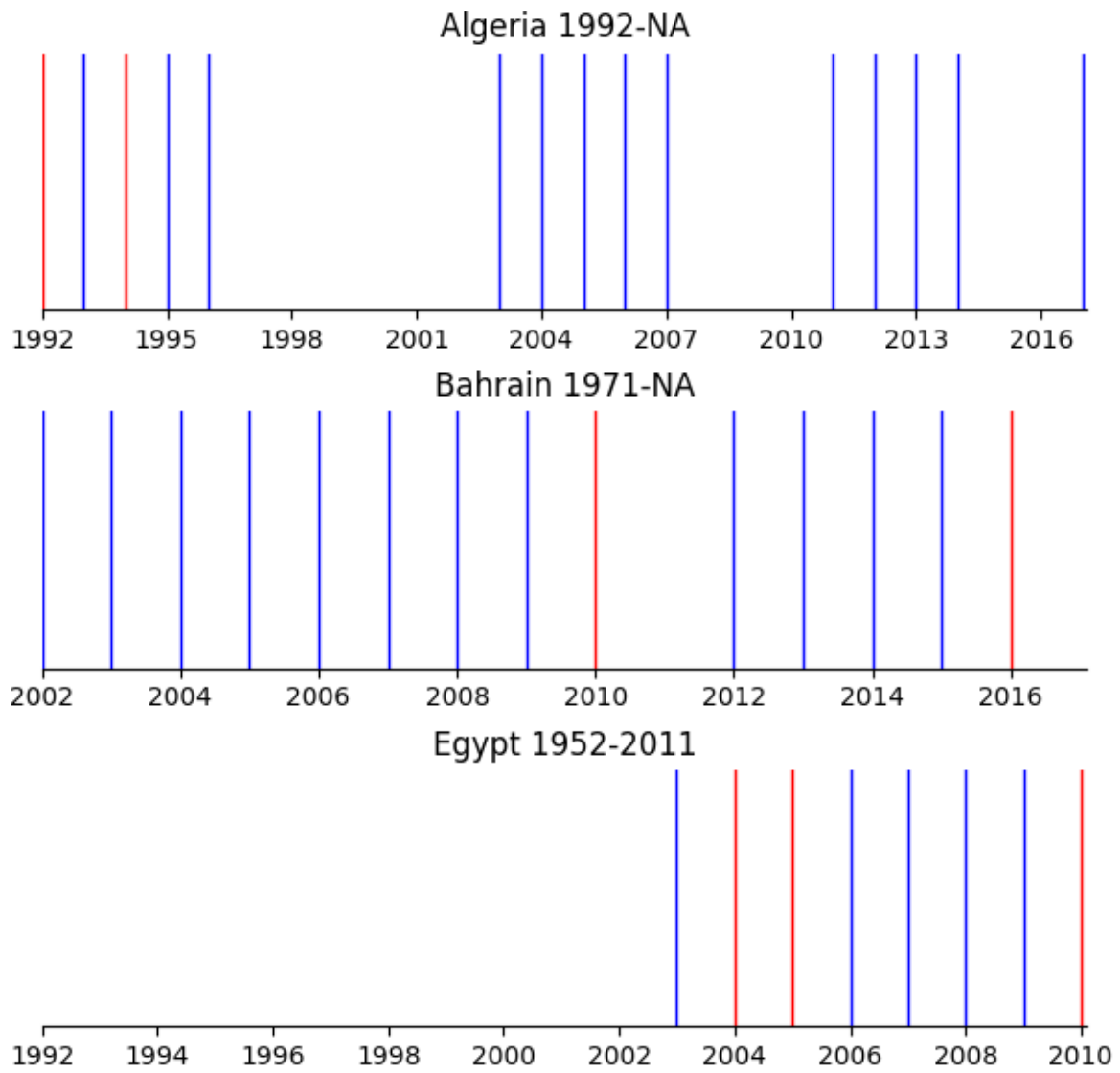


Figure 4.5: *banned* over time: Algeria-Egypt

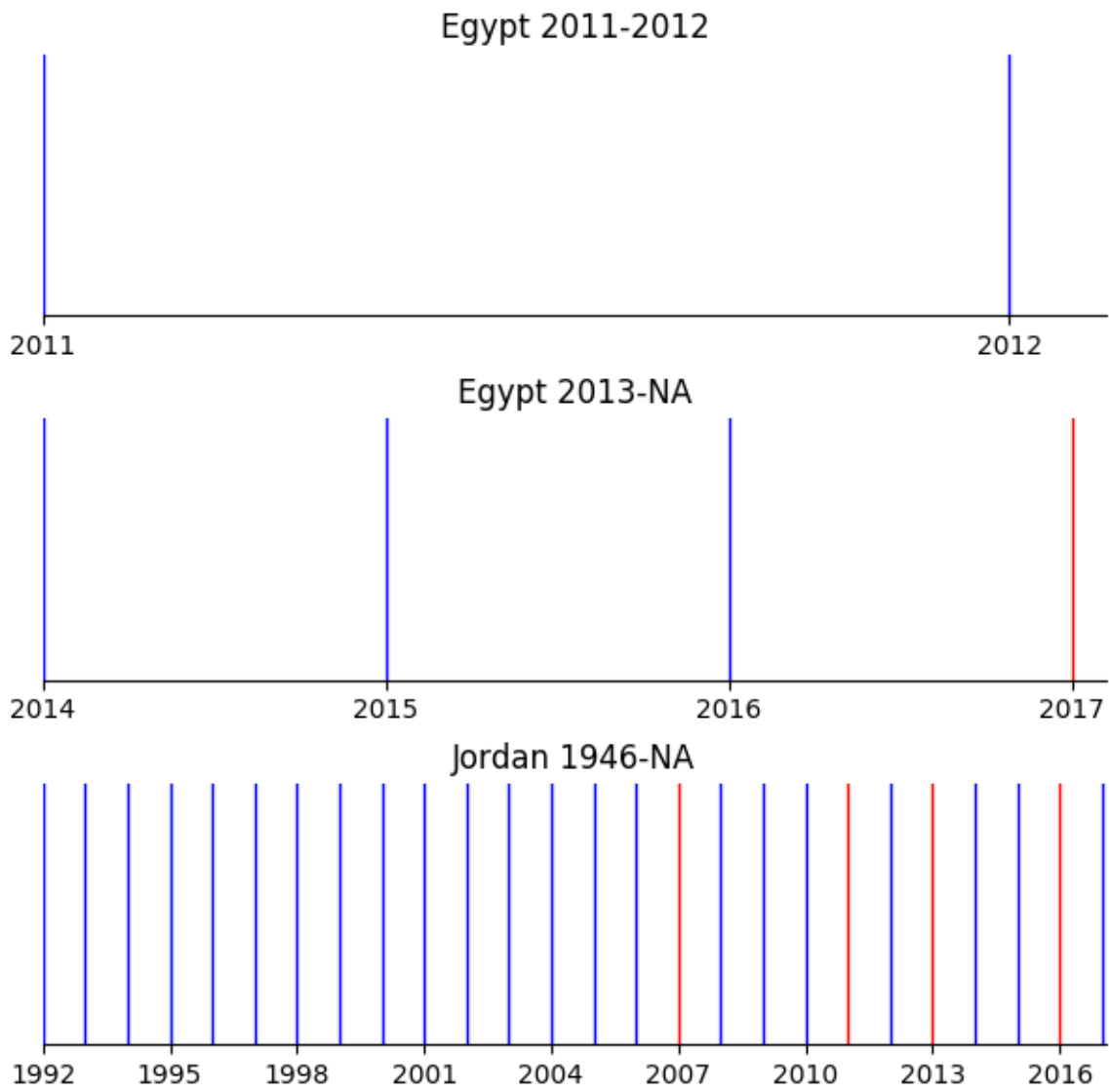


Figure 4.6: *banned* over time: Egypt-Jordan

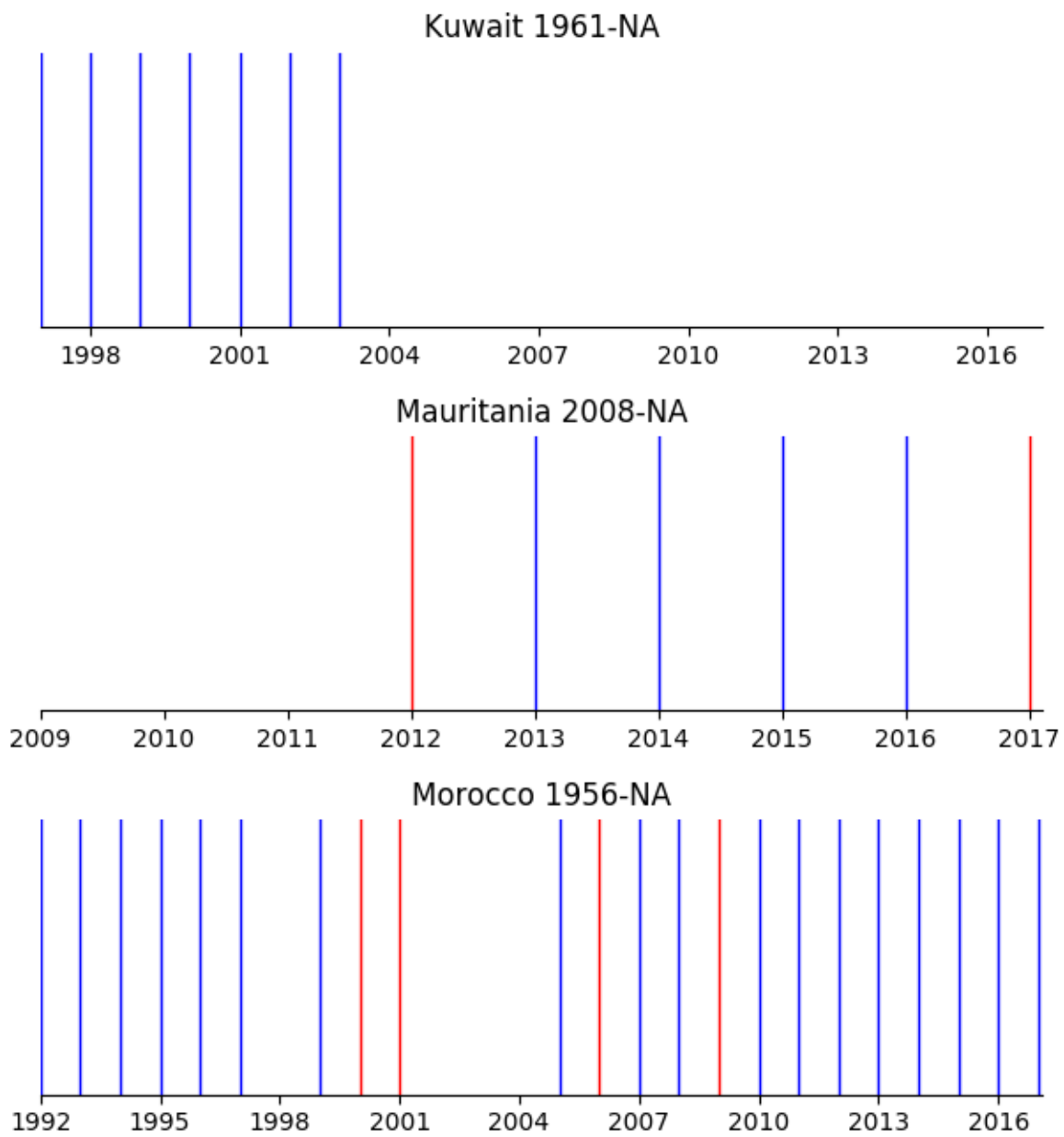


Figure 4.7: *banned* over time: Kuwait-Morocco

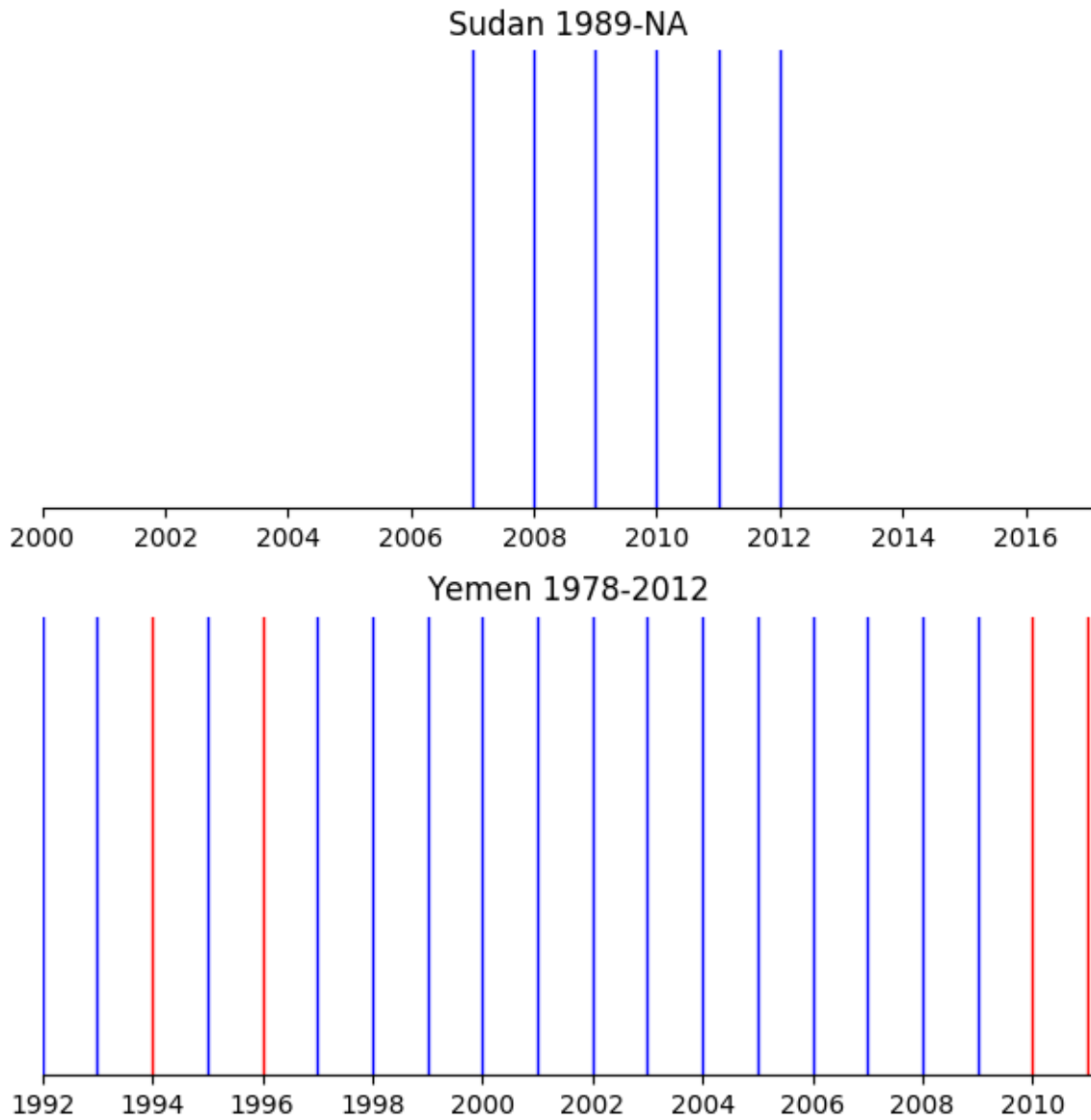


Figure 4.8: *banned* over time: Sudan-Yemen

Bank (2019).

I include annual growth in per capita GDP (lagged by one year), to test Hypothesis 2: $L_{GDP_{pc}growth}$.

To test Hypothesis 3, I include L_{fuel} , the per capita annual revenue from all oil and natural gas production, in 2018 USD, lagged by one year. This variable is the sum of L_{oil} and L_{gas} , the per capita revenue from oil and natural gas, respectively. Each of these variables was constructed by multiplying total production from the respective fuel sources by their prices at the time (obtained from BP 2019)⁴⁰ and dividing by total population (World Bank 2019).⁴¹ Some Arab countries that have never produced more than negligible amounts of oil or natural gas do not appear in the respective BP datasets. Countries that are in the dataset have missing values for years in which their production was below certain very small thresholds. For countries that do not appear in a dataset I assign values of 0 on the corresponding variable (L_{oil} or L_{gas}) for all years, and I also assign zeros for missing values in the dataset.⁴² Since I will use regime fixed-effects, regimes that have a 0 on L_{fuel} for all years do not contribute to the estimation of the coefficient on that variable, since they have no within-unit variation on it (Mummolo and Peterson 2018: 829).

In order to test Hypothesis 4, I use two rough proxies for the regime leader's personal control over the security apparatus. Not all dictatorships become highly personalized, but

⁴⁰The data from BP 2019 are available at: <https://www.bp.com/en/global/corporate/energy-economics/statistical-review-of-world-energy.html>.

⁴¹BP 2019 uses the Brent dated price of crude oil as its benchmark for world oil prices. Natural gas prices vary more than oil prices across the globe (U.S. Energy Information Administration 2011), so the natural gas component is probably noisier than the oil component. I use the U.S. Henry Hub price for natural gas. Since BP (2019) records gas prices in terms of US dollars per British thermal unit (Btu) of gas, but records gas production in terms of cubic feet, I used U.S. Energy Information Administration (2019) to convert between the two measures of gas production. Also, the price was listed in constant dollars, so I converted to 2018 dollars using deflator data from U.S. Bureau of Economic Analysis (2019).

⁴²There are 95 regime-years in my dataset in which L_{fuel} equals 0, 111 in which L_{oil} equals 0, and 121 in which L_{gas} equals 0.

those that do tend to become more personalized the longer an individual leader has been in power (Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2018: 87).⁴³ *leader_year_office* measures the number of years that the de facto regime leader has been in power. It equals 1 during the year the leader takes power, etc. In years in which there is a leader change, this variable refers to the leader who was in power for most of the year.⁴⁴ Founding leaders of regimes are also more likely to personalize power than their successors (Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2018: 86) and so presumably likelier to have firm control of the security forces.⁴⁵ *regime_firstleader* equals 1 if the regime leader was the first leader in the regime and 0 if he took power after the regime began.⁴⁶ These leader characteristic variables are based on my codings of de facto regime leaders, which mostly match those of Goemans, Gleditsch, and Chiozza (2009)⁴⁷ and Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2014), but depart from them in a few cases. See Appendix 5 for a list of regime leaders. Where my coding decisions differ from either Goemans, Gleditsch, and Chiozza (2009) or Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2014), or for regime-years that were not in either of their datasets, I provide the sources I used to code them.

I also include three period dummies — *yrs0005*, *yrs0611*, and *yrs1217* — each corresponding to a six-year period, with the reference category being the first eight years, 1992-1999. These dummies roughly capture the effects of time-varying factors that affected the whole region,

⁴³It could also be that more personalist dictators are less likely to lose power (Svolik 2012: 77-78) and so the relationship between personalism and time in power could be in part a selection effect. However, Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2018: 87-88) still find that personalism rises the longer a leader has been in power when they control for leader fixed effects. In any case, in selecting time in power as a proxy, the important thing is that it is correlated with personalism.

⁴⁴There were no cases in the covered regimes and years in which no single leader was in power for the majority of the year.

⁴⁵The Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2018) measure of personalism combines indicators of personal control of the security forces with control over the ruling party and high office generally.

⁴⁶The dataset of Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2014) includes regime-year indicators that measure aspects of personalism more directly, including whether the leader has direct control over the security apparatus. I applied their coding rules for several of these indicators to the regime-years in my dataset that were not included in theirs. However, I found almost no variation in these indicators within each regime over time, during the period each regime appeared in my dataset, except for a couple regimes. Thus, it was infeasible to use these measures of personalism in regime fixed-effects regressions, as any results would be driven almost entirely by one or two regimes.

⁴⁷The Archigos dataset of government leaders can be found at: <https://www.rochester.edu/college/faculty/hgoemans/data.htm>.

including the launching of Al Jazeera, the invasion of Iraq, and the emergence of social media.⁴⁸ Hypothesis 5 predicts that governments will be less likely to tolerate opposition media after a successful uprising against other authoritarian regimes in the same region. Unarmed protestors brought down the regimes in Tunisia and Egypt in early 2011, so I will test whether there is a post-“Arab Spring” effect using the *yrs1217* indicator. After all, the apparent contagion of the protests in Tunisia and Egypt to other Arab countries suggests that citizens across the region became more optimistic about their chances of bringing about political change through protest, given the social, cultural, and political parallels between those two countries and their own (Bellin 2012: 141-142).⁴⁹

I also include other factors that are likely to affect government toleration of opposition media as controls. Electoral authoritarian regimes often use control of the media to ensure their victories at the polls (Schedler [2002: 43]).⁵⁰ Also, elections can provide focal moments around which to coordinate protests (Stein 2016). *preselec* and *legelec* are dummy variables that equal 1 if there was an election for president or for the national legislature, respectively.⁵¹ I also include a dummy variable, *leaderfail*, based on my coding of de facto regime leaders, that equals 1 in years in which there was a change of regime leadership, since either new leaders or leaders at acute risk of overthrow may behave differently than leaders in normal years. Since Whitten-Woodring and Van Belle (2014) find that media freedom tends to decline in countries experiencing civil wars, I include an indicator for civil war, lagged by one year *Lcivilwar*. This variable is derived from data produced by Gleditsch et al (2002)⁵²:

⁴⁸Inclusion of time period effects also helps to control for measurement error in my coding that is correlated with time, e.g. if the accuracy of the sources I consulted improved over time.

⁴⁹The overthrow of Mubarak may also have inspired subsequent protests in Egypt against the SCAF and Sisi.

⁵⁰On the other hand, governments sometimes let up on controls of the media in order to make elections more credible. For example, the U.S. Department of State (1998) reports that, in the run-up to Mauritania’s 1997 presidential election, “the Government gave all five candidates equal access to its two newspapers and to the electronic media; for the first time, citizens heard or read criticisms of both the Government and the President in these media and not just in the private newspapers.”

⁵¹These variables are coded based on Europa World (2019a, 2019b, 2019d, 2019e, 2019t, 2019u, 2019v, 2019w, 2020), Inter-Parliamentary Union (2019), and International Foundation for Electoral Systems (2019).

⁵²The UCDP/PRIO Armed Conflict Dataset is available at www.prio.org/Data/Armed-Conflict/UCDP-

Table 4.3: Explanatory Variables (continuous and integer)

Variable	Mean	Min	Max	Stand. Dev.
<i>Lunemployment</i>	11.5	0.7	31.8	6.0
<i>LGDPpcgrowth</i>	1.4	-7.9	12.2	3.1
<i>Lfuel</i>	1,726.5	0	38,079.4	5607.6
<i>Loil</i>	1,448.0	0	37,643.0	5493.5
<i>Lgas</i>	278.6	0	4,279.3	672.5
<i>leaderyearoffice</i>	15.2	1	47	10.6
<i>groupsN</i>	1.6	1	5	1.1

it equals 1 if there was either an “internal armed conflict” or an “internationalized internal armed conflict” in which more than 1,000 people died in battle. Lastly, I include two variables based on my coding of opposition groups. *ismain* equals 1 if there was a “main” opposition group and 0 otherwise. *groupsN* equals the total number of significant opposition groups.⁵³

Table 3 provides summary statistics for the non-binary explanatory variables and Table 4 gives the means of all binary explanatory variables. There are no missing values for any of the explanatory variables.

As the histograms in Appendix 6 show, each of the continuous variables exhibits right-skewing.⁵⁴ I therefore use the natural logarithm of each of the non-negative continuous variables, adding a 1 to each of the fuel revenue variables, since these can take values of 0. Because income growth takes negative values for some observations, I opt for a different transformation that also reduces the influence of extreme values. For positive growth values, this transformed variable, *sqrtLGDPpcgrowth* equals the square root of *LGDPpcgrowth*. For negative growth values, *sqrtLGDPpcgrowth* equals: $-\sqrt{-LGDPpcgrowth}$.

PRI0 and has been updated to cover the period through 2018.

⁵³*groupsN* is always greater than or equal to 1: if there were no significant opposition groups, the regime-year was not included in the dataset. *groupsN* always equals 1 if *ismain* equals 1.

⁵⁴Appendix 6 also presents histograms for *Lfuel*, *Loil*, and *Lgas* with values of 0 dropped. Even among these subsets, each variable is highly right-skewed.

Table 4.4: Explanatory Variables (binary)

Variable	Mean
<i>regime.firstLeader</i>	0.18
<i>yrs0005</i>	0.25
<i>yrs0611</i>	0.23
<i>yrs1217</i>	0.23
<i>preselec</i>	0.11
<i>legelec</i>	0.22
<i>leaderfail</i>	0.04
<i>Lcivilwar</i>	0.09
<i>ismain</i>	0.57

4.4 Methodology

To test the effects of the focal variables on toleration of opposition media, I estimate linear probability models in which *tolerated* and *banned* are the dependent variables, with fixed effects by regime. There are many important differences between regimes that could confound the estimation of the effects of the focal variables on toleration of opposition media, including some I may not even be aware of and hence do not measure. Using fixed effects is useful for making causal inferences from observational data (Brüderl and Ludwig 2014: 327). By including regime fixed effects, specifically, we control for unmeasured variables that vary across regimes but not within regimes over time (Allison 2009: 4). Such regime-specific factors might include, for example, geography, colonial history, how the regime came to power, or the group from which regime leaders are drawn⁵⁵ (Derpanopoulos et al 2017: 2). Such unobserved heterogeneity may be correlated with the explanatory variables (Allison 2009: 4) or with the selection of cases into and out of the dataset (Mummolo and Peterson 2018: 829), introducing bias if we did not use fixed effects.

⁵⁵If leaders start coming from a different group than before, a new regime has by definition begun (Geddes, Wright, and Frantz 2018: 5).

Of course, using fixed regime effects cannot control for unobserved variables that change over time (Allison 2009: 4). The period dummies help to control for unobserved time-varying factors that affect countries across the region, as discussed in the previous section. Thus, whether the results for the focal explanatory variables are unbiased depends on whether I have included as controls all factors that vary from year to year within regime, which substantially affect government toleration of opposition media, and are correlated with either the focal variables or with the selection of regimes into and out of the dataset.

Although Horrace and Oaxaca (2006) argue that the linear probability model frequently provides biased and inconsistent estimates of the effects of explanatory variables, Kwak, Martin, and Woolridge (2018: 17) argue that a fixed-effects linear probability model can produce *less* biased estimates than a conditional logit regression in the presence of serial correlation, particularly when there are a small number of observations for each unit. Some of the regimes do have only a few years in the dataset, and Breusch-Godfrey/Wooldridge tests indicate serial correlation for both *tolerated* and *banned*.⁵⁶ Nonetheless, I will compare the results from the linear models with results from logit models. In order to account for this non-independence of results within regimes, I cluster standard errors by regime (Cameron and Miller 2015).⁵⁷

⁵⁶I test for second-order serial correlation, since two years is the minimum length of time that any regime appears in the dataset. The test of the null hypothesis of no serial correlation is rejected at the 1% level for *tolerated* and at the 5% level for *banned*.

⁵⁷I use “HC2” type clustering which are unbiased when errors are homoskedastic (Cameron and Miller 2015: 341). Studentized Breusch-Pagan tests did not indicate evidence of heteroskedasticity for either *tolerated* or *banned*.

4.5 Main Findings

Table 5 presents the main results for the focal variables. The findings in Table 5 are consistent with Hypotheses 1-5 from Chapter 2. Supporting Hypothesis 1, the rate of unemployment (*Lunemployment*) is negatively correlated with *tolerated*, with the effect significant at the 1% level. Providing partial support for Hypothesis 2, growth in per capita GDP (*sqrtLLGDPpcgrowth*) is positively correlated with *tolerated*. However, the effect is only significant at the 10% level. Consistent with Hypothesis 3, per capita revenue from oil and natural gas production (*Lfuel*) is positively correlated with the dependent variable, with the coefficient significant at the 1% level. The number of years the regime leader has been in office (*leaderyearoffice*) and whether the leader is the founding leader of the regime (*regimefirstleader*) are proxies for the regime leader's personal control over the security apparatus. Here we see partial support for Hypothesis 4: the leader's time in office is positively correlated with *tolerated*, albeit only at the 10% level of significance, while being the first leader of the regime is not statistically significant. Consistent with Hypothesis 5, the period after the "Arab Spring" uprisings, 2012-2017 (*yrs1217*), is negatively correlated with *tolerated* (relative to the years 1992-1999), significant at the 1% level. The period 2006-2011 is also negatively correlated with *tolerated* (significant at the 5% level), although the effect size is smaller.

Table 6 shows the results for the control variables. Presidential election years (*preselec*) are positively associated with toleration of opposition media, but the effect is only significant at the 10% level. Legislative election years (*legelec*), years in which the de facto regime leader changes (*leaderfail*), and years following civil wars (*Lcivilwar*) do not have a significantly higher or lower level probability of toleration of opposition media, all else equal.⁵⁸ The

⁵⁸The null result for *leaderfail* does not necessarily mean that changes in leadership have no effect on the existence of opposition media: leadership changes are generally associated with a decline in *leaderyearoffice*, which predicts a decline in the probability of tolerance of opposition media. The null result simply indicates

government is also more likely to tolerate opposition media when there is a clearly identifiable “main” opposition group, with *ismain* positively correlated with the dependent variable at the 1% level. Perhaps not surprisingly, the greater the number of significant opposition groups, the more likely it is that at least one of them will be allowed to have media: *groupsN* is positively correlated with *tolerated*, significant at the 1% level.

Figure 9 shows the histograms of the residuals. The residuals appear roughly normal, albeit with some right-skewing. Figure 10 displays the influence of each observation (regime-year) on the model. Each circle represents one regime-year, with the size of each circle proportional to the Cook’s distance, a measure of the observation’s influence. The five most influential observations are labeled in the plot, and are all from either the 1992-NA regime in Algeria or the 2011-2012 regime in Egypt. To see whether any single regime is driving the results, I re-estimated the model dropping one regime at a time.⁵⁹ Tables showing the results with each regime excluded are shown in Appendix 7.

Some of the results that appear in Tables 5 and 6 disappear or weaken when specific regimes are dropped. Consider first the focal explanatory variables. Dropping the Jordanian regime (1946-NA) causes economic growth to lose significance. *leader:year:office* is not significant if we exclude regimes from Egypt (1952-2011), Jordan (1946-NA), Kuwait (1961-NA), Morocco (1956-NA), or Yemen (1978-2012). The effect for *yrs1217* is only significant at the 10% level if the Kuwaiti regime is dropped (and the magnitude is reduced by more than half).

Turning to the non-focal variables, dropping certain regimes causes some unexpected results to go away. Dropping the Jordanian or Kuwaiti regimes causes *yrs0611* to lose significance. *preselec* is not significant if we drop either Egypt 2011-2012, Jordan 1946-NA, Mauritania

that there is not a departure in this trend for the first or final year a leader is in office, on average.

⁵⁹In most cases, this amounted to dropping all observations from a single country. Recall, however, that there are two Mauritanian regimes in the dataset and three Egyptian ones.

Table 4.5: Tolerated Opposition Media (Regime FE)

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	tolerated
log(Lunemployment)	−0.984*** (0.142)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth	0.042* (0.021)
log(Lfuel + 1)	0.366*** (0.078)
log(leader.year.office)	0.084* (0.047)
regimefirstleader	−0.083 (0.309)
yrs0005	−0.018 (0.084)
yrs0611	−0.253** (0.099)
yrs1217	−0.462*** (0.097)
Observations	202
R ²	0.369
Adjusted R ²	0.276

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 4.6: Tolerated Opposition Media (Regime FE), continued

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	tolerated
preselec	0.159* (0.091)
legelec	-0.080 (0.064)
leaderfail	0.118 (0.148)
Lcivilwar	0.225 (0.141)
ismain	0.333*** (0.122)
groupsN	0.303*** (0.052)
Observations	202
R ²	0.369
Adjusted R ²	0.276

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

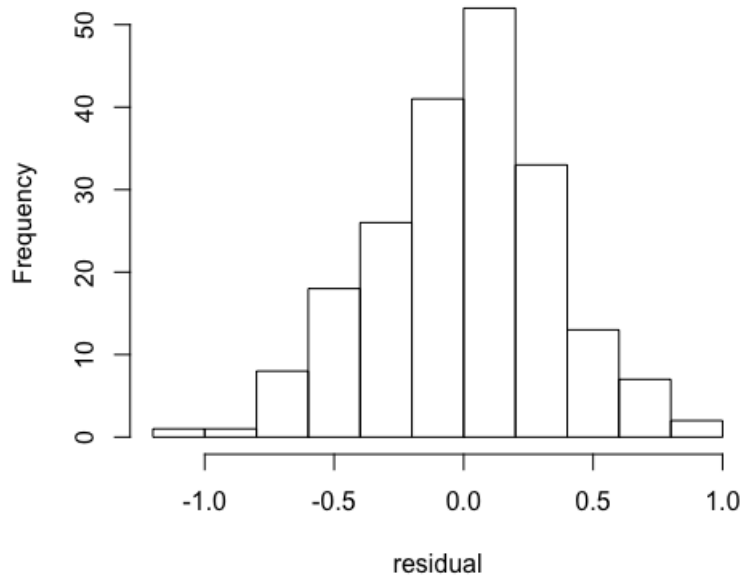


Figure 4.9: Residuals

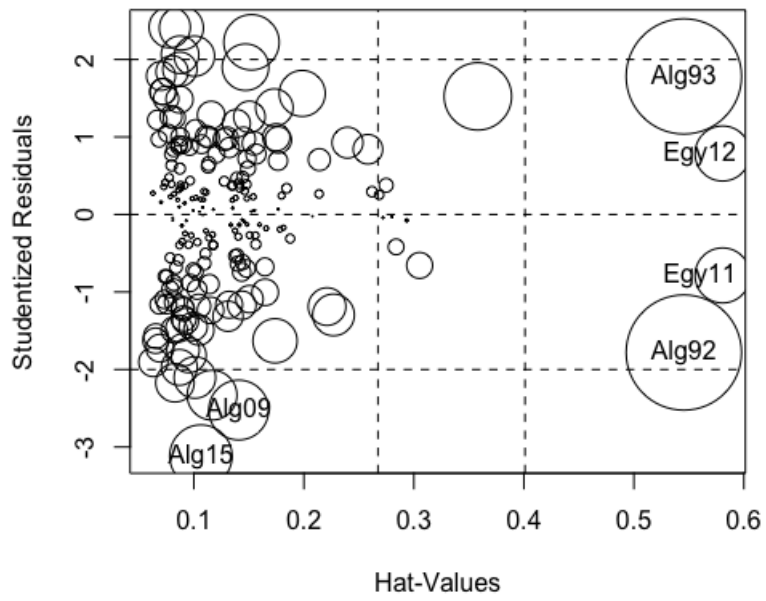


Figure 4.10: Cook's Distances

1978-2005, Mauritania 2008-NA, Sudan 1989-NA, Tunisia 1956-2011, or Yemen 1978-2012. Finally, *ismain* is not significant if we drop Yemen 1978-2012. The positive association of *groups_N* with *tolerated* remains significant at the 1% level with each regime excluded.

Thus, there are three results that are relatively robust and relate to the central theory of this study. First, when unemployment is low or fuel revenue is high, governments are more likely to allow opposition media, providing support for Hypothesis 1 and Hypothesis 3. It also appears that regimes were less likely to allow opposition media after 2011, all else equal, providing support for Hypothesis 5.⁶⁰ As predicted by the theory, regimes that can be expected to face the greatest threat of unrest are least likely to allow opposition media, while stronger regimes are more likely to allow opposition media.

Figures 11 and 12 show partial regression plots for unemployment and fuel revenue. These plots highlight that no individual observation or cluster of observations seem to account for these results.

The estimated effect sizes of unemployment, fuel revenue, and the post-2011 period are quite large. Because unemployment and fuel revenue are logged, we must interpret the effects in terms of increases in each predictor by a given ratio. For a point of reference, for each predictor, I take the ratio of the maximum value to the minimum across all observations for each regime, and then estimate the effect of increasing the predictor by the median of these ratios. For unemployment, the median max:min ratio is 1.4. The median regime is the one that existed in Egypt from 1952-2011, which is in the dataset for the years 1992-2010, and since unemployment is lagged, has unemployment data from 1991-2009. During this time, Egypt's absolute level of unemployment varied between 7.9% and 11.2%.⁶¹ Within a given

⁶⁰Four of the regimes in the dataset ended in 2011 or 2012, but because regime fixed effects allow us to examine changes within regimes over time, this "Arab Spring" effect cannot be driven by the selection of these regimes out of the dataset.

⁶¹The smallest ratio of maximum to minimum unemployment observed is for Tunisia, during the years

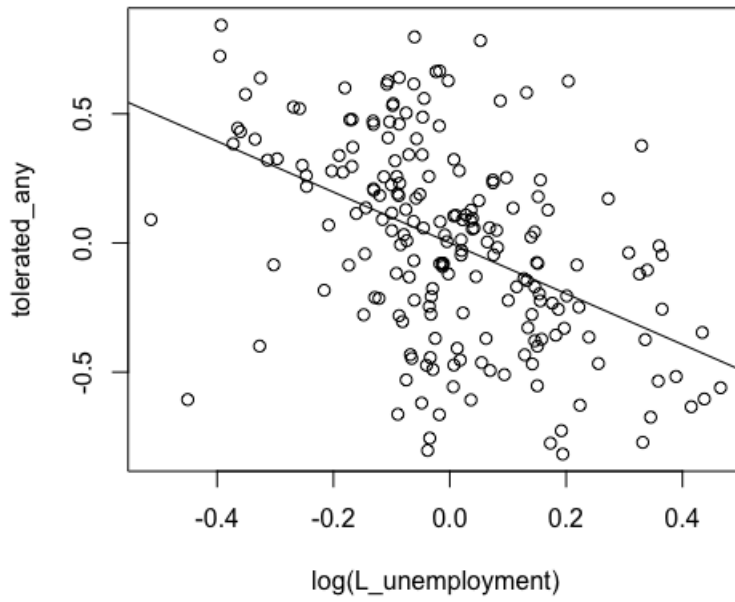


Figure 4.11: Partial regression plot: unemployment

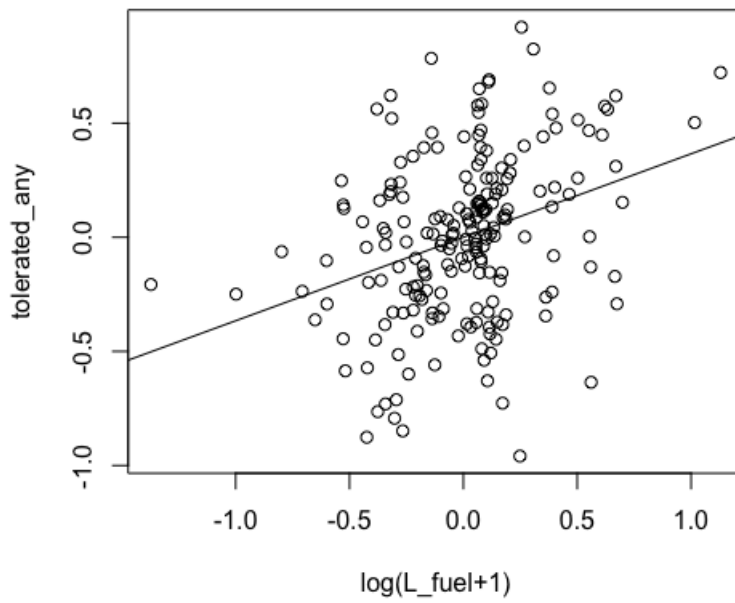


Figure 4.12: Partial regression plot: fuel revenue per capita

Table 4.7: Effect sizes of focal variables

	full sample effect	minimum effect
<i>Lunemployment</i>	-33.1%	-17.2%
<i>Lfuel</i>	35.0%	28.9%
<i>yrs1217</i>	-46.2%	-20.6%

regime, the results predict that increasing the unemployment rate by this ratio will lead to a 33.1% decrease in the probability that any opposition media will be tolerated.⁶² Of course, the estimated effect of unemployment varies notably when some regimes are excluded. The smallest point estimate is observed when Kuwait is excluded, in which case the estimated effect of increasing unemployment by a factor of 1.4 is a 17.2% decrease in the probability that any opposition media are tolerated. Although this estimate is much smaller, it is still a substantial effect. The median max:min ratio of fuel revenue per capita (plus \$1) is 2.6. The median regime is Tunisia, which had a max:min ratio of about 2.6. In absolute terms, Tunisia in the 1991-1998 period saw a minimum per capita fuel revenue of \$55 and a maximum of \$144.⁶³ The estimated effect of increasing per capita fuel revenue by this ratio is a 35% increase in the probability that a government tolerates some opposition media. The smallest estimated effect of fuel on *tolerated* is 28.9%, obtained when dropping Egypt 1952-2011. The probability that a regime would tolerate any opposition media is estimated to have fallen by 46.2% after 2011, with a minimum estimate of 20.6% when Kuwait is excluded. Table 7 summarizes the estimated effects.

It is possible that, in some cases in which an opposition group did not produce any media, the

1991-1998. It has a max:min ratio of approximately 1.06. Its minimum unemployment rate was 15.1% and the maximum was 16.0%. At the other end of the spectrum is Kuwait (over the years 1996-2002 and 2010-2016), with a max:min ratio of about 4.1. Kuwait's absolute levels of unemployment are much lower than Tunisia's however, varying between 0.7% and 2.9%.

⁶²The coefficient on *Lunemployment* is -0.984: multiplying that coefficient by the natural logarithm of 1.4 yields approximately -0.331.

⁶³Five regimes, as noted above, did not have any recorded fuel revenues, so their max:min ratios (after offsetting their observed values by \$1) are all 1. The maximum ratio was 24.1, for Sudan (observed 1999-2016), which had a minimum per capita revenue of \$20 and a maximum of \$505.

government did not *prevent* them from doing so, nor were they deterred by the expectation that the government would stop them. Instead, a group may have simply lacked the resources or chose not to publish. To further test the theory that regimes threatened with unrest are more likely to prevent opposition groups from publishing, we can use the variable *banned* to examine when regimes actively shut down some opposition media. I subset on regime-years in which there was some opposition media outlet — or an attempt to start one — that the regime could have intervened to stop. That is, I focus on those regime-years in which *canban* equals 1. These include both years that began with some opposition group publishing an outlet that the regime (or the previous regime) had tolerated up to that point and those years in which an opposition group began publishing a new outlet. Subsetting in this way shrinks the sample size by quite a bit, from 202 to 130 regime-years, reducing the statistical power of the estimations. And whereas the *tolerated* variable runs the risk of labelling regimes as not tolerant in cases when they would have allowed opposition media if the opposition had tried to publish, the *banned* variables runs the opposite risk: labeling cases in which the threat of interference deterred a group from even trying to publish media as instances without government interference with opposition media. If we find support for the theory using both measures, we have all the more reason to be confident in the results.

The explanatory variables are the same as in the previous models with one exception: I break the indicator for the period 2006-2011 into two, one for 2006-2010 (*yrs0610*) and one just for the year 2011 (*yr11*). The reason is that *banned* measures a discrete event — a regime receives a 1 only in the year in which a publication is first suspended or blocked — and the “Arab Spring” protests, which began in Tunisia in December 2010, may have led governments to crack down on their opposition media before the end of 2011.

The results are consistent with the theory: governments are more likely to ban existing opposition media when they face a greater threat of unrest. The higher the rate of per

capita GDP growth, the less likely governments are to ban opposition media, with sqrtLGDPpc.growth negatively correlated with *banned* and significant at the 1% level. This finding is consistent with Hypothesis 2. Governments are also less likely to ban opposition media when oil and gas revenues are higher: $L\text{fuel}$ also has a negative effect, significant at the 1% level, consistent with Hypothesis 3. Governments were *more* likely to ban opposition media in 2011, with the effect of yr2011 positive and significant at the 5% level, supporting Hypothesis 5. However, unemployment does not have a significant effect on the likelihood that governments ban opposition media, contrary to Hypothesis 1, nor did leader characteristics ($\text{leader_year_office}$ and $\text{regime_firstLeader}$) have any effect, contrary to Hypothesis 4.

To test the robustness of these results, I again re-estimated the model dropping one regime at a time. The full results with each regime dropped are shown in Appendix 8. The negative effects of income growth and fuel revenue are highly robust, remaining statistically significant at the 1% or 5% levels in all cases. However, the estimated effect of the year 2011 on bans, while remaining positive, loses statistical significance if we drop either Jordan (1946-NA) or Yemen (1978-2012). Thus, looking at cases in which governments banned existing opposition media lends partial support to the theory: bans are less common when governments preside over stronger economies.

4.6 Alternative Specifications

As further robustness checks, I also tested the hypotheses using different specifications of the models, as well as an alternative version of the dataset based on a different way of coding “main” opposition groups. First, I re-estimated the models using country fixed-effects rather

Table 4.8: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE)

		<i>Dependent variable:</i>
		banned
log(Lunemployment)		0.378 (0.246)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth		−0.083*** (0.026)
log(Lfuel + 1)		−0.473*** (0.146)
log(leader.year.office)		−0.073 (0.055)
regimefirstleader		0.043 (0.319)
yrs0005		0.042 (0.139)
yrs0610		0.262* (0.150)
yr11		0.442** (0.198)
yrs1217		0.114 (0.147)
Observations		130
R ²		0.282
Adjusted R ²	118	0.109

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 4.9: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), continued

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	banned
preselec	-0.071 (0.127)
legelec	0.072 (0.075)
leaderfail	0.175 (0.179)
Lcivilwar	-0.267 (0.195)
ismain	-0.419** (0.206)
groupsN	-0.226*** (0.080)
Observations	130
R ²	0.282
Adjusted R ²	0.109

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

than regime fixed effects. Most countries in the dataset are associated with a single regime, but there are two regimes in the dataset from Mauritania (1978-2005 and 2008-NA) and three from Egypt (1952-2011, 2011-2012, and 2013-NA). Nonetheless, using country fixed effects does not change the main results, as can be seen in Tables 10 and 11. Unemployment is negatively associated with *tolerated*, while fuel revenue is associated positively, and the post-2011 period is associated negatively, all at the 1% level. Likewise, using country fixed effects does not change the estimated effects of growth or fuel revenue on the probability that governments will ban existing opposition media, as shown in Table 12.

Second, I disaggregate fuel revenue into its two component sources: oil and natural gas. Cameron and Stanley (2017: 39) note that oil and natural gas differ in their transportation, financial risks, and infrastructural requirements. So it is possible that their political effects differ.⁶⁴ Tables 14-17 present the results with lagged oil and natural gas revenue per capita (L_{oil} and L_{gas}) disaggregated. Oil and natural gas both have positive effects on *tolerated*, significant at the 5% and 1% levels. The estimated effects of unemployment and the post-2011 period are not substantially changed by this alternative specification. The estimated effects of oil and gas on *banned* are both negative. However, the coefficient on oil is not significant, while the coefficient on natural gas is only significant at the 10% level. The effect of growth on *banned* is not substantially altered.

I also estimated logistic regression models, with all the same explanatory variables, as well as fixed regime effects and standard errors clustered by regime. As Beck (2020) notes, logit models with fixed effects drop any units that have no variation on the dependent variable. Thus, to compare a linear probability model with a logit model, the linear probability model should also be estimated on the subset of units with variation on the dependent variable. Tables 18 and 19 show results for linear and logit models of *tolerated* based only on the

⁶⁴I thank Yuree Noh for raising this point.

Table 4.10: Tolerated Opposition Media (Country FE)

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	tolerated
log(Lunemployment)	-0.888*** (0.142)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth	0.037* (0.022)
log(Lfuel + 1)	0.428*** (0.078)
log(leader.year.office)	0.052 (0.048)
regimefirstleader	0.331* (0.177)
yrs0005	-0.008 (0.086)
yrs0611	-0.244** (0.099)
yrs1217	-0.375*** (0.094)
Observations	202
R ²	0.371
Adjusted R ²	0.289

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 4.11: Tolerated Opposition Media (Country FE), continued

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	tolerated
preselec	0.170* (0.093)
legelec	-0.062 (0.065)
leaderfail	0.156 (0.148)
Lcivilwar	0.248* (0.142)
ismain	0.193 (0.118)
groupsN	0.259*** (0.051)
Observations	202
R ²	0.371
Adjusted R ²	0.289

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 4.12: Opposition Media Bans (Country FE)

		<i>Dependent variable:</i>
		banned
log(Lunemployment)		0.315 (0.242)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth		−0.083*** (0.026)
log(Lfuel + 1)		−0.553*** (0.140)
log(leader.year.office)		−0.057 (0.054)
regimefirstleader		−0.237 (0.238)
yrs0005		0.062 (0.135)
yrs0610		0.279* (0.144)
yr11		0.377** (0.189)
yrs1217		0.087 (0.127)
Observations		130
R ²		0.267
Adjusted R ²	123	0.108

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 4.13: Opposition Media Bans (Country FE), continued

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	banned
preselec	-0.116 (0.125)
legelec	0.055 (0.075)
leaderfail	0.139 (0.179)
Lcivilwar	-0.304 (0.195)
ismain	-0.400** (0.197)
groupsN	-0.199** (0.079)
Observations	130
R ²	0.267
Adjusted R ²	0.108

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 4.14: Tolerated Opposition Media (Regime FE), disaggregated fuel

		<i>Dependent variable:</i>
		tolerated
log(Lunemployment)		−0.964*** (0.142)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth		0.042* (0.021)
log(Loil + 1)		0.177** (0.086)
log(Lgas + 1)		0.325*** (0.080)
log(leader_yearoffice)		0.056 (0.048)
regimefirstleader		−0.126 (0.306)
yrs0005		−0.115 (0.089)
yrs0611		−0.312*** (0.102)
yrs1217		−0.476*** (0.098)
Observations		202
R ²		0.379
Adjusted R ²	125	0.282

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 4.15: Tolerated Opposition Media (Regime FE), disaggregated fuel, continued

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	tolerated
preselec	0.140 (0.091)
legelec	-0.089 (0.064)
leaderfail	0.080 (0.148)
Lcivilwar	0.127 (0.145)
ismain	0.371*** (0.122)
groupsN	0.319*** (0.052)
Observations	202
R ²	0.379
Adjusted R ²	0.282

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 4.16: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), disaggregated fuel

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	banned
log(Lunemployment)	0.491** (0.245)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth	−0.077*** (0.026)
log(Loil + 1)	−0.231 (0.196)
log(Lgas + 1)	−0.275* (0.145)
log(leader_yearoffice)	−0.076 (0.056)
regimefirstleader	0.018 (0.326)
yrs0005	0.042 (0.141)
yrs0610	0.278* (0.154)
yr11	0.471** (0.202)
yrs1217	0.155 (0.151)

Table 4.17: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), disaggregated fuel, continued

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
banned	
preselec	-0.076 (0.128)
legelec	0.073 (0.076)
leaderfail	0.188 (0.181)
Lcivilwar	-0.264 (0.200)
ismain	-0.439** (0.211)
groupsN	-0.226*** (0.082)
Observations	130
R ²	0.271
Adjusted R ²	0.087

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

regimes with changing values of *tolerated*.⁶⁵ As we can see in the first column, subsetting the data in this way does not notably change estimates of unemployment, fuel, and the post-2011 period, and all remain highly significant. Moving to the results from the logit model in the second column, we see the signs and significance of the coefficients on these variables remain the same. The logit results actually provide additional evidence in favor of the theory, with the positive effect of economic growth significant at the 1% level, consistent with Hypothesis 2. The effect of the leader's time in office is also positive and highly significant, supporting Hypothesis 4. However, contrary to the expectation of Hypothesis 4, founding regime leaders are less likely to tolerate opposition media, according to this model. Tables 20 and 21 show the results of linear and logit models for *banned*, dropping the regimes that do not vary on this measure.⁶⁶ The results for growth and fuel revenue remain essentially the same in the linear probability model when we subset the data, and moving to a logistic model yields effects of the same sign and significance.

In the data presented thus far, a group is no longer coded as a main opposition group after government repression substantially disrupts its ability to operate openly, as occurred with, for example, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt in 2013. After such events, all significant opposition groups are included in the coding of toleration of opposition media, including the former main group. However, one could argue that we should still consider such groups to be the main opposition groups even after they are driven underground, as long as there is no evidence that their popularity has substantially declined. If the government were to relent in its repression, such groups might reemerge as the largest and most popular opposition. And if a mass uprising were to overthrow the regime, such groups might still be the best placed to seize power or to win free and fair elections. If such a latent main opposition

⁶⁵The dropped regimes are Egypt 2011-2012, Egypt 2013-NA, Mauritania 1978-2005, and Tunisia 1956-2011.

⁶⁶The dropped regimes are Egypt 2011-2012, Kuwait 1961-NA, and Sudan 1989-NA. Recall that Mauritania 1978-2005 and Tunisia 1956-2011 are also dropped because *canban* always equals 0 for these regimes.

Table 4.18: Tolerated Opposition Media (Regime FE, OLS vs Logistic)

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	tolerated	
	<i>panel</i> <i>linear</i>	<i>logistic</i>
	(1)	(2)
log(Lunemployment)	-1.043*** (0.156)	-7.912*** (0.206)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth	0.046* (0.025)	0.385*** (0.019)
log(Lfuel + 1)	0.385*** (0.087)	3.319*** (0.099)
log(leader.year.office)	0.078 (0.053)	0.596*** (0.047)
regimefirstleader	-0.139 (0.334)	-1.023*** (0.223)
yrs0005	-0.038 (0.112)	-0.455*** (0.121)
yrs0611	-0.282** (0.121)	-2.496*** (0.165)
yrs1217	-0.494*** (0.113)	-3.869*** (0.213)
Observations	174	174
R ²	0.385	
Adjusted R ²	0.295	
Log Likelihood		-66.057

Table 4.19: Tolerated Opposition Media (Regime FE, OLS vs Logistic), continued

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	tolerated	
	<i>panel linear</i>	<i>logistic</i>
	(1)	(2)
preselec	0.135 (0.114)	0.492*** (0.109)
legelec	-0.086 (0.074)	-0.753*** (0.051)
leaderfail	0.144 (0.185)	1.091*** (0.205)
Lcivilwar	0.238 (0.152)	2.421*** (0.129)
ismain	0.444*** (0.167)	3.008*** (0.185)
groupsN	0.329*** (0.058)	2.665*** (0.072)
Observations	174	174
R ²	0.385	
Adjusted R ²	0.295	
Log Likelihood		-66.057
Akaike Inf. Crit.		178.113

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 4.20: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE, OLS vs Logistic)

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	banned	
	<i>panel linear</i>	<i>logistic</i>
	(1)	(2)
log(Lunemployment)	0.379 (0.277)	9.793*** (0.263)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth	-0.087*** (0.028)	-1.374*** (0.013)
log(Lfuel + 1)	-0.547*** (0.163)	-10.658*** (0.133)
log(leader.year.office)	-0.085 (0.071)	-3.078*** (0.077)
regimefirstleader	-0.027 (0.347)	-2.839*** (0.194)
yrs0005	0.071 (0.189)	-1.542*** (0.152)
yrs0610	0.308 (0.187)	4.353*** (0.143)
yr11	0.544** (0.245)	5.953*** (0.259)
yrs1217	0.099 (0.180)	3.051*** (0.116)
Observations	115	115

Table 4.21: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE, OLS vs Logistic), continued

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	banned	
	<i>panel</i> <i>linear</i>	<i>logistic</i>
	(1)	(2)
preselec	-0.050 (0.143)	0.167 (0.141)
legelec	0.111 (0.083)	2.106*** (0.130)
leaderfail	0.208 (0.264)	-2.319*** (0.353)
Lcivilwar	-0.403 (0.283)	-24.925*** (0.240)
ismain	-0.464* (0.235)	-5.032*** (0.238)
groupsN	-0.232*** (0.084)	-2.791*** (0.097)
Observations	115	115
R ²	0.316	
Adjusted R ²	0.152	
Log Likelihood		-28.444
Akaike Inf. Crit.		102.889

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

group exists, perhaps it remains unimportant whether or not other opposition groups are allowed to have their own media. For this reason, I constructed an alternative dataset in which any group that is coded as the main opposition group is still coded as such for seven years after a crackdown drives it underground. Appendix 9 lists the regime-years and groups (both the main group and other groups that would be excluded from the dataset if the first group kept its “main” status) that are affected by this alternative coding rule. In addition to the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, this alternative coding is affected by the crackdowns on Nahda and on Algeria’s Islamic Salvation Front in 1992 and on Al-Wefaq in 2016. Table 22 shows that using this alternative coding rule does not substantially change the estimated effects of unemployment, fuel, and the “Arab Spring” on *tolerated*. Table 24 shows that the alternative coding does not substantially alter the estimated effects of growth and fuel on *banned*.

4.7 Conclusion

The data on opposition media in Arab authoritarian regimes in the post-Cold War period provide substantial support for my theory. In particular, regimes were more likely to allow opposition media when they faced low unemployment and could draw on high revenues from oil and natural gas. They were less likely to tolerate opposition media after the revolutionary year of 2011. Among regimes where opposition groups decided to launch their own publications, governments were less likely to ban the publications when per capita GDP growth was high and their coffers were full of fuel revenue. With the partial exception of the effect of fuel revenue on bans of existing media, these results were robust to using country fixed effects rather than regime fixed effects, using a logit model rather than a linear probability model, disaggregating fuel revenue by source, and coding main

Table 4.22: Tolerated Opposition Media (Regime FE, alternative coding of main groups)

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	tolerated
log(Lunemployment)	-0.972*** (0.139)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth	0.041* (0.021)
log(Lfuel + 1)	0.397*** (0.078)
log(leader.year.office)	0.088* (0.047)
regimefirstleader	0.061 (0.307)
yrs0005	-0.022 (0.082)
yrs0611	-0.282*** (0.098)
yrs1217	-0.482*** (0.097)
Observations	202
R ²	0.391
Adjusted R ²	0.300

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 4.23: Tolerated Opposition Media (Regime FE, alternative coding of main groups), continued

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	tolerated
preselec	0.157* (0.089)
legelec	-0.074 (0.063)
leaderfail	0.136 (0.147)
Lcivilwar	0.238* (0.139)
ismain	0.397*** (0.134)
groupsN	0.290*** (0.055)
Observations	202
R ²	0.391
Adjusted R ²	0.300

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 4.24: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE, alternative coding of main groups)

		<i>Dependent variable:</i>
		banned
log(Lunemployment)		0.377 (0.244)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth		-0.070*** (0.026)
log(Lfuel + 1)		-0.428*** (0.146)
log(leader.year.office)		-0.039 (0.058)
regimefirstleader		0.457 (0.496)
yrs0005		0.086 (0.142)
yrs0610		0.279* (0.151)
yr11		0.469** (0.196)
yrs1217		0.117 (0.146)
Observations		128
R ²		0.279
Adjusted R ²	137	0.102

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 4.25: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE, alternative coding of main groups), continued

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	banned
preselec	-0.052 (0.126)
legelec	0.076 (0.074)
leaderfail	-0.030 (0.202)
Lcivilwar	-0.168 (0.203)
ismain	-0.473** (0.212)
groupsN	-0.258*** (0.084)
Observations	128
R ²	0.279
Adjusted R ²	0.102

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

opposition groups differently. Some results were only weakly supported. The correlations between toleration of opposition media and economic growth, leader tenure in office, and whether the leader was the regime founder were sensitive to the particular regimes included in the data. Unemployment was not correlated with bans on existing media specifically, while the effect of the “Arab Spring” on bans may have been driven by a couple regimes. The effects of unemployment and growth suggest that these proxies for grievance levels do affect toleration of opposition media in the way the theory predicts: regimes are less likely to allow opposition media in years when their economic performance is weaker. The positive relationship between fuel revenues and toleration of opposition media (measured by both dependent variables) may also reflect this negative effect of grievances on toleration, although an alternative mechanism is that fuel revenues increase the ability and willingness of the security apparatus to engage in violence. Finally, the lower probability of toleration after the Arab Spring supports the idea that shocks to the probability of successful protest that elites and ordinary citizens alike see can also affect toleration of opposition media.

Chapter 5

Conclusion

At the start of this study, I raised a question that has previously received little scholarly attention, although it relates to the ongoing debates about media freedom in authoritarian regimes: Why do dictators sometimes allow opposition groups to produce mass media and sometimes not? In Chapter 2, I proposed a theory that provides an answer to that question: dictators allow opposition media when their regimes are strong, in order to convince citizens not to protest. I formalized my claims in a signaling model. From that model, I derived empirical implications about the relationship between certain economic, institutional, and international variables, on the one hand, and on the other hand, the likelihood of observing tolerated opposition media outlets in an authoritarian country. In Chapter 3, I illustrated some of these implications by focusing on the details of one regime in a brief period — that of Tunisia in 1987 to 1992. I discussed the opposition groups that it faced, and how its treatment of their newspapers varied across groups and time, in response to changing economic conditions, international events, and Ben Ali’s consolidation of personal power over the regime. In Chapter 4, I described the construction of a new dataset measuring whether

governments tolerated opposition media. This dataset included all countries and years which had authoritarian regimes and in which I could identify any significant opposition groups, out of all Arab countries during the years 1992-2017. I used this dataset to test the model's implications quantitatively. For some hypotheses, some tests did not yield confirmatory evidence. However, I found some evidence in favor of all but one of them, the hypothesis about personalization of dictatorships. Overall, the quantitative investigation provides ample evidence for the overarching implication of the model, that regimes are most likely to allow opposition groups to produce media when the regimes are least at risk of being overthrown by mass protests.

5.1 Summary of Findings

In this section I summarize how the hypotheses derived from the model helped to explain the Tunisian case and were supported by the cross-national evidence.

Hypothesis 1: Higher unemployment is *negatively* correlated with the existence of opposition media.

This hypothesis was consistent with both the case study and the cross-national study. In Tunisia, Ben Ali did not allow Nahda, the strongest opposition group, to publish any media when he first came to power and the unemployment rate was nearly eleven percent. Two years later, with unemployment below seven percent, he allowed Nahda to begin publishing the newspaper *El-Fajr*. He did suppress *El-Fajr* from February 1991 on, but apparently because Nahda turned out to be stronger than they had appeared a year earlier, despite the improved economic situation. Unemployment, like all the other factors in these hypotheses,

is only one factor among many that affects elites' assessments of the relative strength of the opposition and the regime. These hypothesized patterns will not be born out in all times and places, but rather hold on average, controlling for other factors. When we turned to the cross-national analysis, and employed regression models that controlled for several key variables, we found that, although the unemployment rate was not significantly associated with the variable *banned*, it was negatively correlated with the variable *tolerated*. Consistent with Hypothesis 1, a given regime was less likely to allow any opposition groups to have media when the unemployment rate was higher than the average for that regime, all else equal. This effect was substantively large and robust to all the alternative model specifications and data coding.

Hypothesis 2: Higher per capita GDP growth is *positively* correlated with the existence of opposition media.

This hypothesis was also consistent with both the single-country case study and the cross-national data. During Ben Ali's first two years in power, per capita income in Tunisia declined. But economic growth was positive and strong in 1990, when Ben Ali decided to authorize *El-Fajr*. Of course, as noted, it also matched the improvement in the job market, so from this single-country study we cannot disentangle the effects of unemployment and income growth and be sure that — as the theory suggests — both contributed to his decision to allow Nahda's newspaper. In the cross-national analysis, we could estimate each effect separately. Per capita GDP growth is positively associated with *tolerated*, as predicted, but the effect is not very robust. Economic growth is negatively correlated with *banned*, in regime-years in which there was any opposition media to ban, as predicted. That is, in years when either some opposition media outlet was initially permitted or in which some opposition group tried to launch a new media outlet, a given regime was less likely to ban the outlet if economic growth was higher than that regime's average. This finding is robust to all the tests I tried.

Hypothesis 3: Higher per capita revenue from extractable fuel sources is *positively* correlated with the existence of opposition media.

Tunisia was not a substantial producer of oil or natural gas during the late 1980s and early 1990s, so this hypothesis could not contribute to our understanding of that case. But the cross-national evidence supported this hypothesis. Fuel revenues were positively correlated with *tolerated* and negatively correlated with *banned*, as predicted. The finding for *tolerated* is robust to all tests and the effect is substantively large. The finding for *banned* is robust with one exception: when fuel revenue is disaggregated into revenue from oil and natural gas, only gas has a statistically significant effect, and only at the 10% level.

Hypothesis 4: The degree to which control of the security forces is concentrated in the hands of the dictator personally is *positively* correlated with the existence of opposition media.

Ben Ali only allowed Nahda to publish *El-Fajr* after he had consolidated personal power within the Tunisian regime, consistent with this hypothesis. However, the cross-national results provide no clear evidence in favor of this hypothesis. The number of years the regime leader has been in power, which I use as a proxy for personalization, is positively correlated with *tolerated*, but this effect is only significant at the 10% level and is not robust to dropping certain regimes. Whether the leader founded the regime, another proxy for personalization, is not significantly correlated with *tolerated*, and neither measure is significantly associated with *banned*. However, leaders' time in power and whether they founded their regimes are very rough proxies for personalization, so the findings for this hypothesis are quite tentative.

Hypothesis 5: The occurrence of successful uprisings against nearby authoritarian regime are *negatively* correlated with the existence of opposition media.

This hypothesis does not directly help us understand the case study of Tunisia, since no Arab authoritarian regimes were overthrown by protests in 1987-1992. However, the sweeping electoral success of the FIS in Algeria in June 1990 did seem to lead to a crackdown on opposition media in Tunisia, consistent with the more general idea that when events in other authoritarian countries reveal that opposition groups there are popular and able to mobilize many citizens, dictators will be less likely to tolerate the media of similar opposition groups in their own countries. The cross-national analysis tests Hypothesis 5 using one particular historical juncture: the wave of uprisings that overthrew dictatorships across the Middle East and North Africa in 2011. The period after 2011 was negatively correlated with *tolerated* and the year 2011 is positively correlated with *banned*. The latter effect was not robust to dropping certain regimes, but the former effect was robust to this and all other tests I tried (albeit only significant at the 10% level when the Kuwaiti regime was dropped).

In summary, these hypothesis provide substantial insights into the Tunisian case and find much support in the cross-national data. There is particularly strong evidence for the effects of the economic variables: unemployment appears to negatively affect toleration of opposition media, while economic growth and fuel revenues affect it positively.

5.2 Contributions of this Study

This study contributes to the literature on variation in media freedom in authoritarian regimes by focusing on a previously understudied aspect of the phenomenon: when opposition groups are and are not allowed to produce their own media. Previous studies have either looked at media freedom very broadly — using indices such as Freedom House’s “Freedom of the Press” scores that combine many different aspects of media freedom (e.g. Egorov,

Guriev, and Sonin 2009) — or have looked at specific aspects of media freedom other than the one I study here, such as censorship of citizens' social media posts (King, Pan, and Roberts 2013). This study proposes a new theory and analyzes new data that specifically address the determinants of toleration for opposition media.

This study has contributed to the theoretical literature on this topic. Previous studies have suggested various motivations that sometimes lead authoritarian leaders to allow a degree of media pluralism. My theory proposes a new motivation: in some circumstances, dictators can signal their strength by allowing opposition groups to publish media. Empirically, this study has documented that, firstly, authoritarian regimes do often tolerate opposition media. Secondly, it has uncovered a number of factors that affect whether regimes tolerate opposition media or not. In particular, stronger economic growth and greater fuel rents make them more likely to tolerate opposition media, while higher unemployment and successful uprisings against other authoritarian regimes make them less tolerant.

This study sheds new light on certain empirical findings from previous research. King, Pan, and Roberts (2013) find evidence that even China, despite its high capacity to censor information, sometimes chooses not to. This suggests that variation in the extent of censorship is not driven only by variation in state capacity to censor, but is also driven by variation in the political benefits of allowing relative freedom of expression. My analysis of cross-national, multi-decade data provides evidence that, indeed, the existence of opposition media under some authoritarian regimes cannot be explained by a lack of state capacity. For it is precisely in years when countries experience strong economic performance and have access to high revenues from extracting oil and gas that we are most likely to see opposition media publishing openly.

My theory provides a possible explanation for the finding of Whitten-Woodring and Van Belle

(2014) that protests are associated with declines in media freedom. Organized protests can indicate that opposition elites believe their chances of success are high, while the outbreak of spontaneous protests may cause elites to think citizens are more willing to protest than they thought. In these circumstances, my theory suggests that opposition leaders will be unwilling to produce tame media content and dictators will be inclined to prohibit opposition media.

The results showing that higher fuel rents increase the probability that governments will tolerate opposition media complicates the finding of Egorov, Guriev, and Sonin (2009) that oil revenue is *negatively* correlated with media freedom. The difference in our findings is likely due to the fact that we measure media freedom differently. Those authors use a broad index of media freedom produced by Freedom House, which is based on questions about how countries' laws, extra-legal actions, economic conditions, and even non-state actors affect the ability of all types of media outlets to operate (Freedom House 2017c). By contrast, I measure the more specific phenomenon of whether governments allow opposition groups to operate media outlets and citizens to access them, or not. This study suggest that the logic of their theory, which addresses when and why dictators allow investigative journalists to report on the actions of low-ranking government officials, does not apply to the separate question of why dictators do or do not allow opposition groups to produce their own media. As I have argued, attempts by opposition media (as opposed to less partisan media) to expose the failings of authoritarian regimes are likely to be discounted as non-credible by citizens, whereas a message from an opposition media outlet that protest is unlikely to succeed is more credible, because it would not always be in the opposition's interest to send it. My findings do not invalidate those of Egorov, Guriev, and Sonin, but rather suggest that their findings do not generalize to all aspects of media freedom. My study also underscores the need for fine-grained measures of the distinct dimensions of media freedom.

5.3 Limitations of this Study and Suggestions for Future Research

As any model must, the one I have presented makes many simplifying assumptions that limit its realism. Extended versions of the model can determine whether the results depend on such strong assumptions, as well as yielding additional and more nuanced empirical predictions. The following are some extensions worth pursuing:

- Instead of assuming that the regime leader and opposition leader have the same information, assume that they see private but correlated signals of the probability of protest success. Such a model would yield insight into how the regime and the opposition might behave when the opposition believes protest is likely to succeed but the regime does not, and vice versa.
- In constructing the dataset, I came across many cases in which there were multiple significant opposition groups in a single regime-year. Often these groups differed significantly from each other in terms of their ideologies or their willingness to cooperate with the regime. An extended model could include multiple opposition leaders, each of whom has some chance of coming to power if the regime is overthrown. Some opposition players may prefer the continuation of the regime to a transition to rule by certain other opposition groups and their groups may have varying degrees of public support. In which cases will each opposition leader want to encourage or discourage protest, and when will the regime allow some of them to have media but not others? What inferences do citizens make if they see that some opposition groups have media and others do not?
- Lastly, the game could be repeated over multiple periods. We could assume that

whether the opposition has the resources to produce media in a given period is positively correlated with whether they had the resources in the prior period. In such a model, if the opposition have media in one period and not the next, citizens would put more weight in the later period on the probability that the government actively *prevented* the opposition from producing media, as opposed to the opposition lacking the resources, compared to a situation in which the opposition did not have media in either period. This effect may reduce the dictator's willingness to allow opposition media in the first place. Alternatively, allowing an opposition media outlet in one period might enable the regime leader to more credibly commit to allowing it in the future.

Further research is needed to address some limitations of my case study of Tunisia under Ben Ali. I was not able to obtain interviews with as many individuals who held high-ranking positions in the regime during 1987-1992 as I was with leaders of opposition groups from that period. More interviews with former regime officials could reveal whether their beliefs and goals at the time were consistent with those in my model. Content analysis of opposition media from this period would also be illuminating. When the government was tolerating certain opposition media outlets, did those outlets call only for limited policy reforms in the short-run (even if the groups' long-term goals included a regime transition or other sweeping change), as my theory predicts? Did they discourage or at least not actively call for anti-government protests? On occasions when opposition media did call for protests or immediate regime change, did Ben Ali's government invariably shut them down, as he did with *El-Fajr* in June 1990?

In order to estimate causal effects, the cross-national analysis made use of regime fixed effects and period dummies. However, this is not a perfect identification strategy, as it does not control for possible omitted variables that vary over time within regimes. Future

research should look for exogenous shocks to unemployment, growth, fuel revenue, and other explanatory variables in order to identify their causal effects on toleration of opposition media with greater confidence. By obviating the need for regime fixed effects, this approach would also make it possible to test the effects of time-invariant regime characteristics, such as how the ruling group came to power.

Since the unit of observation in the cross-national analysis was the regime-year, it did not measure variation in governments' treatment of media across different opposition groups in a given year, and how that such differential treatment is affected by group-specific variables, such as how recently the group was established, its ideological orientation (e.g. Islamist or secular), or whether the group advocated an eventual regime transition or only reform within the existing regime. Because I collected detailed information on the media of each of the opposition groups on which the dataset was based, it would be straightforward in future to expand the analysis to the regime-group-year level.

Again, content analysis is another promising avenue for research on this topic. For contemporary regimes, it would be instructive to analyze opposition groups' accounts on international social media platforms like Facebook and Twitter, which are difficult for regimes to control. A testable implication of my theory is that, if we compare groups that are allowed to have newspapers, unblocked websites, or other media that governments can cut off, with groups that are not allowed any such media, we would find the former posting relatively mild criticism on their social media accounts and not calling for protest, while the latter groups post more critical content and are more likely to call for protest. We can also compare the same group over time when it was and was not allowed to have media outlets. Automated methods would enable content analysis of large volumes of posts across many nations and years.

To further test the robustness of my findings from the cross-national chapter, it would also be useful to produce alternative versions of my dataset based on different coding rules. For instance, do the results change if we include all opposition groups that meet the electoral or protest criterion for significance, even in regime-years when there is also an identifiable “main” opposition group? Does it matter if we use lower thresholds to code groups as significant (e.g. winning 5% of votes rather than 10% or organizing protests with over 100 participants rather than 1,000)?

The cross-national evidence was limited to Arab countries. Do the findings from that region generalize to other regions? Eventually the dataset I collected for Arab countries should be expanded to include authoritarian regimes around the world.

With the theory, the case study, and the cross-national analysis, I deliberately focused on regimes in which there were opposition groups with non-negligible ability to mobilize citizens. I suspect that regime leaders’ incentives to allow or prohibit opposition media might differ when they face the smallest opposition groups, with almost no mobilization capacity. The potential benefit of giving such a group a public platform to discourage protest by its few followers may be small compared to the risk that allowing its media would make more citizens aware of the group’s existence, helping it to grow. Thus, when we consider the entire universe of authoritarian regimes and opposition groups, the relationship between an opposition group’s mobilization capability (relative to the regime’s repression capability) and the likelihood that the regime will let them have a media outlet may be an inverted U curve. This argument might explain the apparent absence of opposition media in certain stable states with only minuscule opposition groups, such as the United Arab Emirates.

Social scientists must remain humble about the longevity of the patterns they uncover. Technological changes — particularly in how people communicate and process information

— may have profound and rapid effects on the nature of opposition media in authoritarian regimes. As these changes unfold, they will raise new questions for political scientists on that topic and possibly change the answers to current questions. In the long-run, who will be most empowered by technological developments: opposition leaders, authoritarian regimes, or ordinary citizens? Will opposition groups gain increasing ability to communicate with citizens in ways that regimes cannot stop? Will citizens gain greater access to alternative sources of information — beyond those produced by governments or opposition groups — as well as becoming more able to communicate directly with each other? Or will regimes become increasingly adept at filtering their citizens’ access to information from all sources? How will these changes in the distribution of technical capacities affect governments’ policies regarding opposition media, opposition groups’ strategies for promoting political change, and citizens’ decisions to oppose, acquiesce to, or actively support their rulers?

5.4 Conclusion

From the perspective of those who value freedom of expression and democracy, my conclusions are in some ways pessimistic. They suggest that the existence of opposition media under an authoritarian regime does not imply a lively public sphere in which opposition groups fiercely challenge the regime. Nor is the toleration of opposition media necessarily a harbinger of further political liberalization: in fact, it can be a means for preventing political change. But what I have found also has at least one hopeful implication. Censorship, specifically governments’ efforts to stop opposition media outlets from functioning or to block the public’s access to them, is not completely effective at hiding a regime’s weakness. The very absence of opposition media can provide a strong clue to citizens that their rulers fear their collective power.

Appendix 1: Proof of result in model

Proof that $\bar{S}_0 < \bar{S}_\emptyset < \bar{S}_1$

$$\bar{S}_0 = \frac{\int_0^{S^*} S f_S[S] dS}{F[S^*]} \quad (5.1)$$

$$\bar{S}_\emptyset = \frac{(1 - \rho) \int_0^{S^*} S f_S[S] dS + \int_{S^*}^1 S f_S[S] dS}{1 - \rho F[S^*]} \quad (5.2)$$

$$\bar{S}_1 = \frac{\int_{S^*}^1 S f_S[S] dS}{1 - F[S^*]} \quad (5.3)$$

The equation for \bar{S}_\emptyset can be rewritten as:

$$\bar{S}_\emptyset = \frac{\bar{S} - \rho F[S^*] \bar{S}_0}{1 - \rho F[S^*]} \quad (5.4)$$

where \bar{S} is the prior expectation of S . It can be shown that $\bar{S}_0 < \bar{S}_\emptyset$ by contradiction. Suppose that $\bar{S}_0 \geq \bar{S}_\emptyset$:

$$\bar{S}_0 \geq \frac{\bar{S} - \rho F[S^\star] \bar{S}_0}{1 - \rho F[S^\star]} \quad (5.5)$$

This would imply that: $\bar{S}_0 \geq \bar{S}$, which cannot be the case, since \bar{S}_0 is the expectation of S when f_S is truncated to $(0, S^\star]$.

It can also be shown by contradiction that $\bar{S}_\emptyset < \bar{S}_1$. Suppose that: $\bar{S}_\emptyset \geq \bar{S}_1$:

$$\frac{(1 - \rho) \int_0^{S^\star} S f_S[S] dS + \int_{S^\star}^1 S f_S[S] dS}{1 - \rho F[S^\star]} \geq \bar{S}_1 \quad (5.6)$$

This inequality can be expressed as:

$$\frac{(1 - \rho) F[S^\star] \bar{S}_0 + (1 - F[S^\star]) \bar{S}_1}{1 - \rho F[S^\star]} \geq \bar{S}_1 \quad (5.7)$$

which implies that: $\bar{S}_0 \geq \bar{S}_1$. But this cannot be the case, since, as noted, \bar{S}_0 is the expectation of S when f_S is truncated to $(0, S^\star]$, while \bar{S}_1 is the expectation of S when f_S is truncated to $(S^\star, 1)$.

Appendix 2: Regime Narratives

Algeria

1992-2017: authoritarian (1992-NA)

Start: 1/11/1992 “Military coup. Benjedid was replaced by the High Council of State, and the constitution was suspended. Although the military had been an important pillar of the pre-1992 regime, the post-1992 period is considered a different regime because for the first several years after the coup the FLN, which had been the ruling party, was excluded from influence and office.” [GWF]

End: Regime continued in power as of December 31, 2017 (Economist Intelligence Unit 2018a; Aghrout and Zoubir 2019).

Bahrain

1992-2017: authoritarian (1971-NA)

Start: 8/15/1971 The Al Khalifa dynasty has ruled Bahrain as a monarchy since conquering the island in 1796 (with the exception of 1800-1802). Bahrain became independent from the United Kingdom in 1971 (Economist Intelligence Unit 2018b; Jones 2018; Lansford 2017).

End: Regime continued in power as of December 31, 2017 (Economist Intelligence Unit 2018b; Jones 2019).

Comoros

Less than 1 million population in 2018

Djibouti

Less than 1 million population in 2018

Egypt

1992-2012: authoritarian (1952-NA and 2011-2012)

2013: democracy

2013-2017: authoritarian (2013-NA)

Start: 7/23/1952 “Coup led by Lt Col Nasser and the Free Officers, an organization of junior and mid-level officers. They established the Revolutionary Command Council made up of members of the Free Officers’ executive committee to rule.” [GWF]

End/Start: 2/11/2011 Mass protests drove President Mubarak to resign, handing power to the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF). The SCAF is coded as a new regime, because it was completely dominated by the military leadership as a group, whereas they had a lesser political role under the somewhat personalist rulers of the previous regime (Economist Intelligence Unit 1996a, Lansford 2017, Europa World 2019a. “Contemporary Political History (Egypt).”).

End: 8/12/2012 Morsi forced the head of the SCAF (Tantawi) and several other top military leaders in the SCAF to resign and revoked the SCAF’s June decree expanding its powers. (After dissolving the parliament in June 2012, the SCAF had placed restrictions on the power of the president and assumed authority over law-making, the military budget, and the

drafting of a new constitution.) The dismissals were not challenged by the SCAF and are seen as the moment when the balance of power shifted from the SCAF to Morsi's government. Morsi had been elected president in elections considered mostly free and fair in June, so this event is coded as a transition to democracy (Freedom House 2013 "Freedom in the World" , Lansford 2017, Europa World 2019a. "Contemporary Political History (Egypt).").

Start: 7/3/2013 The military ousted Morsi in a coup and Egypt was thereafter ruled by General Abd al Fatah al Sisi, the Commander in Chief of the armed forces and Minister of Defense and Military Production. Al Sisi initially was a de facto ruler, having appointed a civilian president. After violently suppressing the Muslim Brotherhood (whose Freedom and Justice Party had won competitive legislative and presidential elections in 2012), Al Sisi was elected president in 2014 (Lansford 2017, Europa World 2019a. "Contemporary Political History (Egypt).").

End: The regime remained in power as of December 31, 2017 (Europa World 2019a. "Contemporary Political History (Egypt).").

Iraq

1992-2003: authoritarian (1979-2003)

2004-2009: foreign occupation

2010- 2017: authoritarian (2010-NA)

Start: 7/16/1979 “The formal transfer of power from Field Marshal al-Bakr to Saddam Hussein completed a gradual shift from a regime based mostly on Ba’thist military officers and the Ba’th party to one in which the group from which leaders could be chosen included few outside Saddam’s family and home region. Saddam had built his power base in the party and security service, not the officer corps. He exerted significant party control within the military through his control of party networks prior to al-Bakr’s retirement, but he was not a career officer. After al-Bakr’s retirement Saddam purged the party of anyone with an independent base of support and then reduced the party’s power and relevance. He executed several members of the ruling Revolutionary Command Council a few days after his accession to full power. Beginning in 1980, the party was subordinated to the military and security services. The party’s Regional Command was stacked with Saddam’s ministerial and security service subordinates, his advisors, and his relatives.” [GWF]

End: 4/7/2003 “The fall of Baghdad to invading U.S. and coalition forces. U.S. forces took control of presidential palace on April 7.” [GWF]

Start: 3/7/2010 The first parliamentary elections since the US transferred authority over security to Iraqi forces mark the emergence of a new authoritarian regime. Over 500 candidates (about 1 in 12) were banned from running because of alleged Baathist ties. Many prominent Sunni and secular Shia politicians were targeted, particularly from Iraqiya, a rival party to the State of Law Party of the incumbent prime minister Nuri al-Maliki. He was selected by the new parliament to remain as prime minister (Al-Jazeera

2010, Anderson 2019, Human Rights Watch 2010a. “Iraq’s 2010 National Elections: A Human Rights Platform for Candidates.” , Reuters 2010).

End: The regime remained in power as of December 31, 2017 (Anderson 2019, Dodge 2013).

Jordan

1992-2017: authoritarian (1946-NA)

Start: 5/25/1946 “Independence under a monarchy established by the British. King Adbullah of the Hashemite family was the son of the Ottoman amir of Mecca, who claimed a hereditary right to rule in the Hijaz. He was a leader of the Arab nationalist movement against Ottoman rule and sided with the British during World Wars I and II.” [GWF]

End: Regime continued in power as of December 31, 2017 (Economist Intelligence Unit 2018c; Freer 2019).

Kuwait

1992-2017: authoritarian (1961-NA)

Start: 6/19/1961 “Independence under the traditional al Sabah emirate.” [GWF]

End: Regime continued in power as of December 31, 2017 (Crystal 2019; Economist Intelligence Unit 2018d).

Lebanon

1992-2004: warlord/foreign-occupied

2005-2017: democracy

Sources on 2011-2017: Economist Intelligence Unit 2013a, Economist Intelligence Unit 2013b; Lansford 2017, Saouli 2019

Libya

1992-2011: authoritarian (1969-2011)

2012-2017: warlord

Start: 9/1/1969 “Coup by a small group of junior officers led by Capt Qadhaffi deposed the monarch and established the Revolutionary Command Council to rule.” [GWF]

End: 8/22/2011 The regime ends with the fall of the capital, Tripoli, to rebel forces. Qaddafi was captured and killed October 20, 2011. Libya is subsequently coded as being in a condition of warlordism, as the transitional government was unable to wrest control of the country from militias, and by 2016, the three governments were competing for control of Libya (Erdbrink 2011; Kirkpatrick 2012; Recknagel 2012; U.S. Department of State 2014; Freedom House 2017a. “Freedom in the World” ; St John 2019.

Mauritania

1992-2006: authoritarian (1978-2005 and 2005-2007)

2007-2008: democracy

2009-2017: authoritarian (2008-NA)

Start: 7/10/1978 “Coup by junior officers led by army commander Col Salek ousted the Daddah government and formed the Military Committee for National Recovery (CMRN) of 20 officers to rule. The regime was significantly civilianized under Col Taya, who succeeded the officer who succeeded Salek.” [GWF]

End/Start: 8/3/2005 “Coups by members of the presidential guard and the military ousted the Taya government.” [GWF]

End: 3/25/2007 “Competitive presidential election considered free and fair transferred power to civilians.” [GWF]

Start: 8/6/2008 “Coups led by active duty and recently dismissed senior officers from the President’s Security Battalion ousted the elected government and established the all-military High Council of State.” [GWF]

End: Regime remained in power as of December 31, 2017 (Economist Intelligence Unit 2018e).

Morocco

1992-2017: authoritarian (1956-NA)

Start: Start: 3/2/1956 “Independence under the rule of the traditional Sultan, Mohammed V.” [GWF]

End: Regime remained in power as of December 31, 2017 (Lansford 2017; Partrick 2019a).

Oman

1992-2017: authoritarian (1941-NA)

Start: 12/31/1741 “We date the start of the Al Said dynasty to 1741. With the previous dynasty weakened by civil war over the succession and poor leadership, in 1741 Ahmed bin Said al Busaidi, governor of Sohar on the coast of what is now of Oman, led the city’s defense against a Persian invasion. Although he did not become the formal leader of Oman until 1744 (probably—date of formal election is disputed) when he was named imam, Ahmed bin Said seems to have been the most powerful leader during a very chaotic time beginning in 1741. The Al Said have remained in power as traditional sultans since then.” [GWF]

End: Regime remained in power as of December 31, 2017 (Lansford 2017; Valeri 2019).

Palestine

1992-2017: not independent (Parsons 2019)

Qatar

1992-2017: authoritarian (1971-NA)

Start: 9/1/1971 With British support, the Al Thani dynasty achieved de facto control over Qatar in 1868 (Peck 2008). Qatar became independent from the UK under the Al Thanis on September 1, 1971 (Lansford 2017).

End: Regime remained in power as of December 31, 2017 (Europa World 2019c. “Contemporary Political History (Qatar)”).

Saudi Arabia

1992-2017: authoritarian (1927-NA)

Start: 5/20/1927 “The Treaty of Jeddah in which Great Britain recognized the independence of the Kingdoms of Hijaz and Najd was signed on this date. They were ruled by the monarchy that had been established during the previous 25 years through conquest by Adb al Aziz al Saud, leader of the al Saud family. In September 1932, the kingdoms were formally united under the name Saudi Arabia.” [GWF]

End: Regime remained in power as of December 31, 2017 (Peterson and Nonneman 2019).

Somalia

1992-2017: warlord

Sources on 2011-2017: Bacon 2018, BBC News 2017b, Danish Immigration Service 2017, Lewis and Janzen 2018, Reuters 2013; Freedom House 2018a. “Freedom in the World”

Sudan

1992-2017: authoritarian (1989-NA)

Start: 6/30/1989 “Coup led by Col al-Bashir and an Islamist faction of the military ousted the elected government, imposed a state of emergency, dissolved parties and unions, banned demonstrations, and established the 15 member, all military Revolutionary Command Council for National Salvation to rule. The new rulers dismissed much of the officer corps.” [GWF]

End: Regime remained in power as of December 31, 2017 (Woodside 2019).

Syria

1992-2017: authoritarian (1963-NA)

Start: “3/8/1963 Coup led by pro-Ba’thist officers ousted Gen Zahr al-Din’s government and its civilian allies. The March 1963 coup was led by officers sympathetic to the Ba’th but not actually members. The National Council of the Revolutionary Command set up immediately after the coup contained a minority of Ba’th members, and the first cabinet they chose was half Ba’th. Over the next few months of factional struggle within the new government and within the military, however, most non-Ba’th officers were excluded from leadership and many non-Ba’thist officers and NCOs were purged from the army, leaving the regime dominated by the Ba’thist faction of the military.” [GWF]

End: Regime remained in power as of December 31, 2017 (United States Central Intelligence Agency 2019d. “Syria” , Zisser 2019).

Tunisia

1992-2010: authoritarian (1956-2011)

2011: transitional

2012-2017: democracy

Start: “3/20/1956 Independence under the control of Neo-Destour and Bourguiba. Bourguiba and other Neo-Destour party insiders chose electoral rules without consultation, effectively eliminating opposition from the government and Constituent Assembly, which was elected March 25, 1956. Although the government was nominally a constitutional monarchy, Bourguiba and Neo-Destour had full control of decision making from the beginning. The Bey was formally deposed the following year.” [GWF]

End/Start: 1/14/2011 Mass protests forced Ben Ali to resign and flee the country. The new interim administration was headed by long-serving officials from the previous regime but the cabinet combined both former officials from the ruling RCD party and opposition and human rights leaders. On January 19, 2011, the former RCD members of the cabinet resigned from the party. The RCD itself was abolished by a court order on March 9, 2011 (Lansford 2017, Partrick 2019b).

End: 10/23/2011 Tunisia transitioned to democracy with the holding of elections for a

Constituent Assembly, which were widely regarded as free and fair by international observers. The Constituent Assembly chose a new prime minister and president (Freedom House 2018a “Freedom in the World” , Levinson 2011, Murphy 2013, National Democratic Institute 2011, Partrick 2019).

United Arab Emirates

1992-2017: authoritarian (1971-NA)

Start: 12/2/1971 “Formed when several sheikdoms along the Gulf united to create the independent UAE. The president is chosen by the Supreme Council of the Union, which is made up of the hereditary rulers of the initially six, now seven, emirates, from among its members. He serves as head of state, chair of the SCU, and commander of the military.”

[GWF]

End: Regime remained in power as of December 31, 2017 (Coates Ulrichsen 2019).

Yemen

1992-2014: authoritarian (1978-2012, 2012-2015)

2015-2017: warlord

Start: In 7/17/1978 “The four-man Presidential Council that led the 1974-78 regime briefly after earlier leaders’ assassinations chose Lt-Col Salih as president and commander-in-chief of the armed forces. The post-1978 regime is considered different from the 1974-78 regime because Salih began almost immediately to change the identity of those who could influence policy, reducing the military’s role and incorporating sheikhs. Beginning in late 1978, he purged important officers, narrowing the faction of the military included in the inner circle. He brought back to influence sheikhs who had been excluded since 1974 and gave his family and tribe a privileged place in decision making, distribution, and command positions in the military. Beginning in 1979, Salih began developing institutions to allow some participation in politics by ordinary citizens.” [GWF]

End/Start: 2/27/2012 Saleh resigns and formally transfers power to his vice-president, Abd Rabo Mansour Hadi in a plebiscite, who had won a plebiscite on February 21. Hadi led a coalition government in which the formerly dominant General People’s Congress party shared power with Joint Meeting Parties, a coalition of opposition parties. Hadi’s presidency marks the beginning of a new regime, as Hadi immediately begins systematically removing Saleh’s family members from the many leadership posts they held in the military and security apparatus (Mounassar 2012, Lansford 2017, Schmitz and Burrowes 2018, Durac 2019).

End 1/22/2015: President Hadi submitted his resignation, leaving the Houthi rebels in control of the capital, Sanaa (Agence France Presse 2015, Reuters 2015). However, the Houthis had not achieved control of most of Yemen's territory by the end of 2017, so Yemen is coded as in a state of warlordism in 2015-2017 (Baron 2016; Al Jazeera 2019; European Council on Foreign Relations 2019).

Appendix 3: Opposition Group Narratives

ALGERIA

The **Front Islamique du Salut** is coded as a significant opposition group during 1992-1994, having won 41.5% of the vote in the first round of the December 1991 parliamentary elections, a large plurality (Economist Intelligence Unit 1996d: 4). (The military mounted a coup in January 1992 and cancelled the second round of the elections [Aghrout and Zoubir 2019].)¹ During the years 1995-1999, the FIS is coded as an insurgent group, having formed an “armed wing” known as the Armée Islamique du Salut (Islamic Army of Salvation—AIS)

¹Although the FIS was clearly the most popular opposition group during 1990-1991, the new military regime cracked down on the group in 1992 to the extent that it could not function openly as an unarmed movement, so it is not coded as the main opposition group during the years in the dataset. After the ruling Front de libération nationale (National Liberation Front—FLN) allowed other parties to legally form for the first time in 1989, the FIS “quickly emerged as the only serious nationwide competitor to the FLN” (Aghrout and Zoubir 2019). Similarly, Entelis and Arone (1995: 416-417) write that “the FIS emerged as the only national contender to the political hegemony of the FLN” in 1989. The Economist Intelligence Unit (2002d: 12) observes: “After its establishment in 1989, the FIS quickly became the most potent opposition force in the country.” “The status of the FIS as the main opposition party was confirmed emphatically by the local elections held on 12 June 1990, the first free elections since independence” (Evans and Phillips 2007: 157), when the FIS won the majority of votes (Aghrout and Zoubir 2019) and control of the councils of Algeria’s three largest cities (Economist Intelligence Unit 1996d: 4). After the January 1992 coup, the new military systematically crushed the FIS (Aghrout and Zoubir 2019). Most of the FIS’s national leadership, hundreds of its local officials, and over 30,000 of its rank-and-file supporters were arrested (CQ Press 2006: 76-77).

in July 1994 (Willis 1996: 327; Willis 2012: 174; Aghrout and Zoubir 2019).² The FIS is therefore coded as one of several significant opposition groups in 1992-1994.³

The **Mouvement pour la Démocratie en Algérie** (Movement for Democracy in Algeria—MDA) was founded by former president Ahmed Ben Bella in 1984 to advocate for “a pluralistic and democratic Algerian government” (Naylor 2015: 117) The MDA is coded as a significant opposition group for the years 1992-1996, on the basis of anti-government protests it organized in June 1990 (Reuters 1990c).

The **Front des Forces Socialistes** (Socialist Forces Front—FFS) was founded in 1963 to advocate for the Berbers of the Kabylia region (Naylor 2015: 268). The FFS is coded as a significant opposition during 1992-2007, based on winning more than 10% of the vote in the first round of the December 1991 parliamentary elections (Economist Intelligence Unit 1996d: 4) and on organizing anti-government demonstrations in July 1998 (BBC Monitoring: Middle East 1998c. Thousands march in Algiers in protest at Berber singer’s death) and May 2001 (Reuters 2001b. Manifestation Ã Alger, troubles en petite Kabylie).

The **Mouvement Culturel Berbère** (Berber Cultural Movement—MCB) was founded in the 1980s to advocate for the official recognition and teaching of the Berber language, Amazigh, and the protection of the civil rights of the Berber population (Reuters 1989a.

²Aghrout and Zoubir (2019) and Smith (2004) also refer to the AIS as the “armed wing” of the FIS. Although other Islamist groups had taken up arms against the Algerian state before July 1994, the connection of these groups to the FIS was tenuous. Willis (2012: 173) notes that: “The nature and extent of links between the armed groups and the FIS itself were initially unclear, mostly because the FIS itself was in turmoil, its leadership broken up and divided between exile, hiding and imprisonment.” Willis (1996: 328) therefore argues that “The creation of the AIS differed from past attempts at uniting and unifying the Islamist struggle in that, for the first time, the armed struggle within Algeria was explicitly subordinated to the political leadership of the FIS.”

³One of the FIS founders, Ali Benhadj, participated in protests in January 2011 in Algiers (Naylor 2015: 271), but contemporaneous news accounts indicate that neither he nor the FIS as a group organized the event (Agence France Presse 2011a.201 Algerian Islamists’ former number two indicted). The former leader of the AIS and another high-ranking former FIS official endorsed the reelection of the incumbent president, Abdelaziz Bouteflika, in 2004, but the FIS leadership did not endorse Bouteflika, so I continue to code the FIS as an opposition group in this period (Agence France Presse 2004).

Algerian Berbers Take First Step Toward Political Party; BBC Monitoring: Middle East 1994b. “Shops Close in Tizi Ouzou in Response to Berber Cultural Movement’s Strike Call.” ; Chtatou 2019). The group is coded as significant in 1992-2007, having organized anti-government demonstrations in January 1990 (Reuters 1990a. About 50,000 Berbers Demonstrated in Central Algiers), April 1994 (Reuters. 1994b. “Berbers march in Algeria, towns paralysed.”), and April 2001 (Agence France Presse 2001a).

The **FLN**, despite being Algeria’s ruling party from independence until the January 1992 coup and part of the ruling coalition under Bouteflika, was effectively an opposition group for the years 1993-1996. The secretary-general of the FLN immediately declared the January 1992 coup to be unconstitutional (Middle East Economic Digest 1992d. “Front de Liberation Nationale deeply split over cancellation of elections”). The military marginalized the FLN from power during this period, even ordering the party to turn its headquarters over to the state (Reuters 1992). However, the Prime Minister, Sid Ahmed Ghazali, was a member of the FLN central committee until he resigned from both the committee and the premiership in July 1992. He was replaced by Belaid Abdessalem, who had “been in the political wilderness” since 1979. So I code the FLN as becoming oppositional only when Ghazali left the government. Entelis and Arone (1995: 416) write: “Now barred from political activity by military decree following the coup, the FLN became one of the regime’s strongest opposition groups.” Likewise, Naylor (2015: 267) observes that, after the coup “the FLN became part of the opposition to the growing authority of the Pouvoir” (the “power,” a common term in Algeria for regime elites). Likewise, Legum (1996: B 468) describes the FLN as one of the two “main opposition parties.”⁴ The FLN qualifies as a significant group, having been the ruling party until January 1992 (Baggaley 1992c; Aghrout and Zoubir 2019). I cease coding the FLN as an opposition party in 1997,

⁴Lansford (2017) argues: “By late 1994 the FLN was firmly in the opposition camp.” I begin coding the FLN as oppositional in 1992 because of the party secretary-general’s early public opposition to the coup.

because the party has been part of each Algerian cabinet since June 1997.⁵ Thus the FLN is considered a significant opposition group in the years 1993-1996.

The **Coordination des Aarchs, Dairas et Communes** (CADC⁶) is a pro-democracy group that advocates for the Berbers of Kabylia (Naylor 2015: 192), specifically for the removal of gendarmes from the region (Aghrout and Zoubir 2019). The CADC organized large anti-government demonstrations in June 2001 (Aghrout and Zoubir 2019) and April 2004 (All Africa 2004) and thus is coded as a significant opposition group for 2001-2010.

The **Rassemblement pour la Culture et la Démocratie** (Rally for Culture and Democracy—RCD) was legally established in 1989 and represents the Berber minority (Naylor 2015: 439).⁷ The party organized a large anti-government demonstration in February 2011 (Faucon 2011) and thus is coded as a significant opposition party in 2011-2017.

The **Coordination Nationale pour le Changement et la Démocratie** (National Coordination for Change and Democracy—CNCD) is an umbrella group that began in

⁵Parties' presence or absence in the cabinet are based on the following articles: BBC Monitoring: Middle East 1996c. HAMAS and the Algerian Renewal Party Given Portfolios in New Government; Middle East Economic Digest 1997; All Africa 1999; Touati 1999; Agence France Presse 2002; de Bubern 2004; BBC Monitoring: Middle East 2006; Agence France Presse 2008a Algerian president brings back Ouyahia for third stint as PM; BBC Monitoring: Middle East 2012; Economist Intelligence Unit 2012a; Aflou 2014; Asharq Al-Awsat 2017; Economist Intelligence Unit 2017a.

⁶“Aarch,” “daira,” and “commune” denote different levels of administrative units in Algeria (Agenzia Nazionale Stampa Associata 2004; Naylor 2015: 192).

⁷The RCD had an ambiguous stance toward the regime in the 1990s (see: Reuters 1995a; Financial Times 1997b; Khalaf 1997; Reuters 1997; Economist Intelligence Unit 2000: 15; Naylor 2015: 225, 452). However, since 2001, the party has been clearly oppositional. In May 2001, the RCD withdrew from the cabinet to protest the government's use of violence against Berber demonstrators (Reuters 2001a). The party boycotted elections in 2002, 2009, and 2014, and accused the government of rigging a 2005 referendum (Lansford 2012; Lansford 2017). In 2008, when President Bouteflika announced his intention to stand for a third term, the RCD accused him of trying to be a “president for life” and of having made “slaves of all Algerians” (Saleh 2008). Lansford (2017) writes that “the RCD was one of the most vocal opposition groups calling for constitutional overhaul and the ouster of the Bouteflika government in concert with the Arab Spring in the first half of 2011.” In 2014, the RCD's leader declared that the “regime no longer has a future” (BBC Monitoring: Middle East 2014).

2011, which called for the constitutional removal from office of Bouteflika (Naylor 2015: 192-193). The CNCND organized a large anti-government protest in February 2011 (BBC Monitoring: Newsfile 2011), and so it is coded as a significant opposition group for 2011-2017.

The **Coordination Nationale pour les Libertés et la Transition Démocratique** (National Coordination for Liberties and Democratic Transition—CNLTD) was formed shortly after the April 2014 presidential election, calling on Bouteflika to resign and advocating “democratization and political inclusion” more generally. Its members included MSP, Ennahda, RCD and leading figures from Jil Jadid, the Front de la Justice et le Développement (Justice and Development Front—FJD), and FIS (Naylor 2015: 193). The CNLTD organized a series of large anti-government demonstrations in early 2015 (Economist Intelligence Unit 2015a) and thus is coded as a significant opposition organization for 2015-2017.

BAHRAIN

Bahrain lacked a significant organized opposition in 1992-2001. Formed in November 2001 as a political bloc to compete in parliamentary elections, **Jam‘iyyat al-Wafaq al-Watani al-Islamiyya** (The Islamic National Accord Society, or al-Wafaq for short) called for a constitutional monarchy and an end to discrimination against the Shiite Muslims who make up the majority of Bahrain’s population, while most high-ranking government officials are Sunni (Lulu 2011; Valeri 2018: 168; U.S. Central Intelligence Agency 2019a). Al-Wafaq almost immediately emerged as the biggest opposition group. In 2002, the new group led

“widespread protest” (Zweiri 2007: 5). Menon (2002) observes that “the Shia political body, Wefaq, has emerged by far as the strongest political organisation in the kingdom.” Throughout the 2000s and 2010s, observers continued to report that Al-Wefaq was the largest opposition group. Abouyoub (2009) refers to it as “the most influential political society” and “the largest political society both in terms of its membership and its results at the polls.”⁸ Lansford (2017) describes Al-Wefaq as “the country’s largest opposition group.”⁹ In July 2016, a court ordered Al-Wefaq dissolved (Agence France Presse 2016a) and the group ceased to operate thereafter (EIU CR Jan 2018: 20). Al-Wefaq is thus coded as the main opposition group in Bahrain in 2002-2016 and a significant opposition group in 2017.

EGYPT

Under the rule of Hosni Mubarak (1981-2011), the **Ikhwan al-Muslimoun** (Muslim Brotherhood—MB) constituted the main opposition to the Egyptian government. The MB continued to be the most popular opposition organization under the transitional military government (led by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces or SCAF) that followed Mubarak’s ouster in 2011. Egypt briefly transitioned to democracy in 2012, with MB victories in the legislative and presidential elections. After the elected government was ousted by the military the following year, the coup leader, General Sisi, quickly crushed the Brotherhood, effectively ending its ability to organize collective action nationally.

⁸Likewise, Crystal (2014: 174) reports that “Al-Wifaq is the largest society with some 65,000 members.”

⁹The Economist Intelligence Unit (2002a: 8-9) reports: “Al-Wefaq, which has links with the BFM, has emerged as the main opposition group.” BBC News (2006) refers to Al-Wefaq as “the main Shia opposition group,” in a country where Shia are a large majority of the population. Economist Intelligence Unit (2006) refers to Al-Wefaq as “the main opposition group” (3) and “the biggest political group in Bahrain” (12). Agence France Presse (2016a) describes Al-Wefaq as the “main opposition group” in Bahrain. Valeri (2018: 166) describes Al-Wefaq as “the most important Bahraini political society.”

The Muslim Brotherhood was founded in Egypt in 1928 and banned by Nasser in 1954 (Economist Intelligence Unit 1996a: 8). Nonetheless, the group was generally tolerated by Mubarak. Al-Anani (2016: 155) writes that “the Brotherhood was the key opposition group in Egypt under Mubarak.” The MB “saw its membership soar” in the 1980s, as Mubarak adopted a more tolerant stance toward the group than his predecessors had (Mattar 2004: 1622). Technically running on the tickets of the Socialist Labor and Socialist Liberal parties in the 1987 elections to the People’s Assembly (the national legislature), the MB won 35 out of 448 elected seats (Sela 2002: 624; Inter-Parliamentary Union 2019), making it “the biggest opposition in the new parliament” (Ranko 2015: 109). Furthermore, the organization won elections to control the boards of many of the country’s professional syndicates in the early 1990s (Goldschmidt 2013: 284; Ranko 2015: 109).¹⁰ Thus, by the 1990s, the Economist Intelligence Unit (1996a: 8) could write: “The main challenge to the regime comes from the Islamic trend, which can draw on a significant groundswell of popular support. The largest, best-funded and organised Islamic group is the Muslim Brotherhood.”

The MB won 17 seats in the 2000 elections and 88 seats in the 2005 elections (Goldschmidt 2013: 284).¹¹ Thus, Mattar (2004: 1622) refers to the MB during the 2000s as “the most important representative of the Egyptian masses.” The Economist Intelligence Unit describes the group as “the best supported of the opposition movements, with a national reach” (2008c: 7) and “the only opposition force able to mobilise popular support” (2010b: 4).

After the uprising that overthrew Mubarak, Egypt was ruled by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (Sullivan and Verticelli 2017). Trager (2011) notes that, under the interim SCAF administration, the MB remained “Egypt’s most cohesive political movement, with

¹⁰Sela (2002: 624) writes that “the Brotherhood won almost complete control” of the “professional and worker’s syndicates.”

¹¹On the Brotherhood’s 2005 result, Ayubi, Kéchichian, Sullivan, Lawson, and Boulby (2009) point out: “What was even more remarkable was that this gain was made despite clear violations of process, including the physical prevention of citizens from casting their ballots, and the arrest of thousands.”

an unparalleled ability to mobilize its followers,” noting that the group had approximately 600,000 members despite its “highly selective membership process.”¹² The MB launched a formal political party, the Freedom and Justice Party, which quickly became “Egypt’s most popular political party” (Goldschmidt 2013: 284).¹³ This status was confirmed in 2012, when the Brotherhood won a large plurality of seats in the People’s Assembly and the MB candidate, Mohammad Morsi, won the presidential election (Sullivan and Verticelli 2017). However, a military coup in July 2013, led by General Abd al-Fatah al-Sisi, removed Morsi from power (*ibid*). The military swiftly cracked down on the MB, imprisoning most of the top tiers of its leaders and driving the rest into exile by the end of 2013 (Trager 2016: 230).¹⁴ Thus, the new military government “shattered the group’s hierarchy” (Kirkpatrick 2014) and “effectively decapitated the Brotherhood” (Trager 2016: 230).¹⁵

Although local protests by Brotherhood supporters continued in the face of this heavy repression in the years after the coup (Abdelaziz 2014, Benhaida 2014, Al-Anani 2016), the removal of the group’s leadership ended the MB’s ability to coordinate protests nationally. El-Sherif (2014: 7) reports that “the regime’s ongoing suppression of the group has forced the Brotherhood to decentralize,” which “limits the Brotherhood’s ability to mobilize resources nationwide and maintain cohesion since the group can no longer coordinate across Egypt.” Al-Anani (2017) reports that “the Brotherhood has been largely paralysed and lost much of its organisational and mobilising capabilities.”¹⁶

¹²Trager (2011) elaborates: “In the months since Mubarak’s resignation, the Muslim Brotherhood has continued to demonstrate its unique capacity to mobilize supporters. Protests continue to be held in Tahrir Square on most Fridays, and those protests that are endorsed by the Muslim Brotherhood draw substantially larger crowds than those that are not.”

¹³The Freedom and Justice Party is treated here as an extension of the Muslim Brotherhood, rather than a separate organization.

¹⁴Specifically, Trager (2016: 230) writes:By the end of 2013, most of the Brotherhood’s Guidance Office was in prison, and its other top leaders were either in exile or hiding. The regime similarly arrested many of the Brotherhood’s General Shura Committee and provincial leaders, thereby shutting down the top two tiers of the Brotherhood’s chain of command and disrupting its ability to make and execute decisions.

¹⁵In addition to decimating the MB’s leadership, Sisi’s government also “imprisoned more than 16,000 of its supporters and killed more than a thousand others at street protests” (Kirkpatrick 2014).

¹⁶Multiple sources argue that the combination of the MB’s record in office and the Sisi regime’s post-coup media campaign against the group have substantially reduced public support for the Brotherhood (Economist

Thus, the Brotherhood's political influence was essentially destroyed by the end of 2013, and no other opposition group took on a comparable role: "The Muslim Brotherhood is crushed and largely discredited, while secular opposition forces are marginalised and in disarray" (Economist 2014). Trager (2016: 234) writes: "The Brotherhood no longer represents a political challenge for al-Sisi's regime." Brennan (2018) argues that the Muslim Brotherhood is "effectively vanquished" and more generally, "the opposition has been silenced."¹⁷

Egypt is excluded from the opposition dataset for 2013, because the country is coded as a democracy. In 1992-2012, the Muslim Brotherhood is the main opposition group. In 2014-2017, under the regime headed by Sisi, the Muslim Brotherhood is one of several significant opposition groups. The following organizations constitute the rest of the significant opposition.

Harakat Shabab 6 Abril (April 6 Youth Movement) was founded in 2008 to advocate for workers' rights (Public Broadcasting Service 2019). The group has consistently opposed the post-2013 military regime (Guardian 2013). Having led the organization of the January 25, 2011 protest against Mubarak (Radio Free Europe 2011; Public Broadcasting Service 2019), April 6 is coded as a significant opposition group during 2014-2017.

La lil-Muhakamat Al-Askeriyya lil-Madaniyin (No to Military Trials for Civilians) is a human rights organization founded in 2011 to oppose the prosecution of civilians through military courts and continued to advocate for this cause after the coup (Al Arabiya 2013; Cousin 2014). The group staged a protest against the SCAF government in July 2011 (Daily

Intelligence Unit (2014a: 3; Al-Anani 2016: 161).

¹⁷Lynch (2016) writes of the Muslim Brotherhood: Its organization has been shattered, with its leadership either in prison, exiled or dead and the survivors "divided" between multiple power centers inside Egypt and abroad. It is no longer deeply embedded in society... It no longer has a robust internal organization, vast financial resources, a clearly defined ideology, or a tightly disciplined membership. Although the Economist Intelligence Unit (2018f: 4) counts the Muslim Brotherhood among "the government's most active opponents," it acknowledges that it has been "much-weakened" by the government's crackdown.

News Egypt 2011), so it is coded as a significant opposition group during 2014-2017.

Al-Gabhat As-Salafiyya (Salafist Front) is a fundamentalist Islamist group founded after Mubarak's ouster (Wedeman 2012). The Salafist Front organized an anti-government protest in November 2014 (Shehata 2015) and remained critical of Sisi's government through 2017 (Salafist Front 2019a), so it is coded as a significant opposition group during 2015-2017.¹⁸

JORDAN

The **Muslim Brotherhood**, the dominant organization within the Islamic Action Front coalition, was the main opposition group in Jordan throughout 1992-2017.¹⁹ Although the group has often sought tactical cooperation with the Hashemite monarchy,²⁰ Schwedler (2015) observes: "Since the late 1980s, the Islamic Action Front has been the leading opposition movement in Jordan, often boldly challenging the monarchy's domestic and foreign policies." The group has sought democratic reforms, an overhaul of the education system along Islamic lines, and a more interventionist economic policy, and they have been particularly critical of what they see as the state's overly-accommodating relationship with Israel (Hamid 2013; Suwaed 2016: 260).

The Jordanian Muslim Brotherhood was founded in 1946 and through the 1970s was highly

¹⁸The group has remained opposed to the post-coup regime since. For example, in an April 6, 2019 post to its Facebook page, an administrator of the page writes (translation by Facebook): "I am here to stress that the # front continues to reject and fight the regime, within its revolutionary framework and the well-known attitude that has not changed . . . and that we will be at the forefront of the nation and the # Egyptian people if they move to bring it down" (Salafist Front 2019c).

¹⁹On the dominance of the Muslim Brotherhood within the Islamic Action Front, Schwedler (2015) writes: "A year after its creation the Front was regarded as the de facto political party of the Muslim Brotherhood."

²⁰As Schwedler (2015) notes, the IAF has referred to itself as a "loyal opposition."

supportive of the monarchy (Tachau 1994: 290). However, after a stunning electoral victory in 1989 that made them the largest group in parliament (Tachau 1994: 290; Seddon 2004: 382; Hiro 2013: 446), the MB shifted toward a more oppositional stance. After that election, “the Muslim Brotherhood formed the largest bloc and the real opposition in parliament—their allies controlled more than one-third of the legislative body—and disagreed with the government on a number of important policies” (Seddon 2004: 382).²¹ From this new position of strength, “in the 1990s, the party became a menace to the regime since it adopted the coloring of a political movement and provided a nonleftist alternative for opposition politics” (Tachau 1994: 290). Although five Muslim Brotherhood politicians were given cabinet positions in January 1991, they refused to join the new cabinet formed in June 1991, because of their disagreement with the king’s rapprochement with Israel (Brinkely 1991; Tachau 1994: 290) and subsequently they have rejected all offers to join the government (Hamid 2013). Shortly after political parties were legalized in late 1992, the Islamic Action Front was founded as an official political party, with the Muslim Brotherhood at the helm (Anzalone 2009).

The Muslim Brotherhood/Islamic Action Front has remained the most popular Jordanian opposition group since the early 1990s. The Economist Intelligence Unit (1996a) describes the MB as “the largest political movement in the country” (8) with “a large grass-roots following” (7). This assessment continued in the 2000s. The Economist Intelligence Unit (2002d: 9; 2008d: 13), describes the MB as the “only group with significant popular support.” Likewise, Anzalone (2009) refers to the IAF as “Jordan’s most influential political opposition movement.”²² The Brotherhood’s political sway has persisted into the 2010s. In 2011, the

²¹The Economist Intelligence Unit (1996e: 4) writes: “The election for the National Assembly in November 1989, which was regarded as free and fair, saw the emergence of Islamists as a significant and well-organised body in Jordanian politics. With around 34 deputies out of 80 either aligned with, or sympathetic to, the Islamists, the group had eclipsed radical nationalists and leftists as the chief opposition to the regime and its traditional supporters.”

²²Although the IAF’s parliamentary representation declined to six seats in the 2007 elections, Hamdi (2013) observes that this setback was likely the result of manipulation by the regime: “The 2007 elections, arguably the most fraudulent in Jordan’s history, marked the culmination of regime efforts to marginalize

group appears to have pressured King Abdullah II into calling for Syria's President Assad to step down (Hiro 2013: 447). Hamid (2013) describes the IAF as "Jordan's largest and most organized political party." The Economist Intelligence Unit (2016: 3) calls the MB "the dominant Islamist opposition group" and (2018c: 5) claims that "the IAF is the most successful party" in Jordan. In December 2017, the MB led "the largest protest Jordan has seen in nearly a decade" (Luck 2017).

Thus, I code the Muslim Brotherhood as the primary opposition movement in Jordan throughout 1990-2017. (Although the group participated in the cabinet in 1991, they left before half a year had elapsed, so I do not code that year as an interruption in the MB's opposition status.)

KUWAIT

In Kuwait in 1992-2017, there was no one opposition group that was clearly the most popular. However, the country did have several groups that are coded as significant opposition organizations.

The Muslim Brotherhood has been active in Kuwait at least since the 1960s, when the Brotherhood-affiliated Social Reform Society (Jam'iyya al-Islah al Ijtima'iyya) was founded (Tachau 1994: 91). In 1991, Kuwait's Muslim Brothers founded the Islamic Constitutional Movement (**al-Haraka ad-Dusturiyya al-Islamiyya** or Hadas [Schmidmayr 2010: 159]).²³

the Islamic movement."

²³Although Kuwait does not officially allow political parties, HADAS and other political coalitions function effectively as parliamentary parties (Lansford 2017).

Hadas advocates both Islamic cultural values, the implementation of Shari'a as the basis of the legal system, and electoral reform (Tachau 1994: 77; Swiney 2009). Hadas candidates won more than 10% of the vote in parliamentary elections October 1996 (Herb 2019). Thus, Hadas is coded as a significant opposition organization for the years 1997-2003.

Kafi (Enough) is a youth group that formed in early 2011 to call for the resignation of the prime minister and for greater political freedoms (Murphy 2011; Reuters 2011b. Kuwaiti protests on Tuesday aim to remove PM). In March 2011, Kafi co-led a protest against the government with **as-Soor al-Khames** (Fifth Wall), another youth group that sought the prime minister's resignation and that started in early 2011 (The Gulf 2011). Each group is coded as a significant opposition group in 2011-2017.

Nahj (Path) is a coalition of young Islamists, formed in 2011, that advocates constitutional monarchy (Agence France Presse 2012; Ghabra 2014; Dazi-Heni 2015). The group organized an anti-government rally in August 2012 (Agence France Presse 2012), and thus is coded as a significant opposition group during 2011-2017.

Karamat Watan (A Nation's Pride or A Nation's Dignity) was formed in October 2012 to oppose changes by the emir to the electoral system and to call for parliament to have the right to appoint the prime minister (Albloshi and Herb 2018: 414). That same month the group organized an anti-government demonstration (Albloshi and Herb 2018: 418), so Karamat Watan is coded as a significant opposition group during 2013-2017.

Kutlat Al-Amal Ash-Shabii (Popular Action Bloc) is a "populist" and "nationalist" electoral coalition (Lansford 2017). A large protest against the conviction of a leading Popular Action Bloc figure, Musallam al-Barrak, occurred in April 2013 (Ingram 2013a). Thus the bloc qualifies as a significant opposition group during 2013-2017.

MAURITANIA

The **Union des Forces Démocratiques** (Union of Democratic Forces—UFD) is coded as the main opposition party for the years 1992-1996. UFD was authorized in October 1991, and in its first public statement it called on Taya to resign so that a government of national unity could oversee truly democratic elections (Pazzanita 2008: 511).²⁴ In the January 1992 presidential election, the UFD candidate, Ahmed Ould Daddah won almost 33% of the vote, despite alleged electoral interference by the ruling party (Pazzanita 2008: 512). “Before long, it was apparent that the UFD was the most significant opposition group facing the incumbent Mauritanian president’s” party (Pazzanita 2008: 511) and it remained “Mauritania’s most prominent opposition party during much of the 1990s” (Pazzanita 2008: 409-410). In its 1996-1997 Country Profile of Mauritania, the Economist Intelligence Unit (1997: 29) observed: “The Union des forces démocratiques (UFD) is generally considered to be the second political force in Mauritania” after the ruling party. Both BBC Monitoring: Middle East (1996a) and Phythian (1996) refer to UFD as the “main opposition.”

However, a new party, Action pour le Changement (Action for Change—AC) was founded in August 1995 and “relatively quickly surpassed the UFD’s prior level of backing among the politically aware populace” (Pazzanita 2008: 513). The Economist Intelligence Unit (1997: 32) speculated that AC leader Messaoud Ould Boulkheir would pose “a more serious challenge” to Taya in the upcoming presidential election. However, some sources (BBC Monitoring: Middle East 1998b; BBC Monitoring: Middle East 2000a) continue to refer to the UFD as the “main opposition.” Given this mixed evidence, I stop coding the UFD as the single most popular opposition group after 1996 and code all significant opposition groups in subsequent years.²⁵

²⁵Pazzanita (2008: 187) argues that AC “evolved into Mauritania’s most significant and most broadly based political party, which opposed President Ould Taya,” but other sources do not confirm this, so I do

The UFD — which was reconstituted as the Rassemblement des Forces Démocratiques (Rally of Democratic Forces—RFD) in 2001²⁶ — is coded as one of these significant opposition groups throughout 1997-2004 and 2009-2016, based on having been the main opposition group until 1997, co-organizing an anti-government demonstration in May 2009 (Agence France Presse 2009d), and its presidential candidate, Ahmed Ould Daddah, winning more than 10% of the vote in July 2009 (International Foundation for Electoral Systems 2019).²⁷ (Mauritania is excluded from the dataset in 2007 and 2008, because it is coded as a democracy for those years.)

Front des Partis de l’Opposition (Opposition Parties Front—FPO) is a coalition of five opposition parties established in March 1997 (BBC Monitoring: Africa 1997). The coalition organized anti-government demonstrations in October 1997 (Reuters 1997b. Mauritanian opposition stages protest march) and January 1999 (BBC Monitoring: Middle East 1999). The FPO is therefore coded as a significant opposition group during 1998-2005.

Front National pour la Défense de la Démocratie (National Front for the Defense of Democracy—FNDD) is a coalition of parties and civil society organizations that formed to oppose the 2008 coup (Agence France Presse 2008e) The coalition organized a protest in the capital against the coup in August 2008 (Agence France Presse 2008d). The coalition’s candidate for president in the July 2009 election won over 10% of the vote (Agence France Presse 2009c; Economist Intelligence Unit 2009b). The coalition is thus coded as a significant opposition group in 2009-2016.

not count the AC as the main opposition party at any point.

²⁶The Mauritanian government banned the UFD in 2000. The following year, the former leaders of the UFD established the RFD as a “successor party” (Pazzanita 2008: 426).

²⁷Although the RFD was supportive of the military’s ouster of the elected government in 2008 (Maimone 2019), the party opposed the plans of members of the junta to run in subsequent elections (Agence France Presse 2008b) and by February 2009, the RFD was calling for the junta to resign in favor of a transitional government (All Africa 2009a). Thus, I still code the RFD as oppositional in 2009-2017. Note that Ould Daddah also won more than 10% of the vote in the first round of the March 2007 presidential election (International Foundation for Electoral Systems 2019).

Coordination de l'Opposition Démocratique (Coordination of the Democratic Opposition—COD) began in December 2009, when it organized a large protest over price increases and the authoritarian nature of the regime (Lansford 2017). The coalition also organized a large anti-government demonstration in July 2012 (Agence France Presse 2014). The coalition of numerous parties seeks to promote a “peaceful struggle” to force Abdelaziz from power (BBC Monitoring: Middle East 2013). The coalition is coded as a significant opposition group for 2010-2017.

Rassemblement Nationale pour la Réforme et le Développement (National Rally for Reform and Development—RNRD, known in Arabic as at-Tajmua‘ al-Watani lil-Islah wa at-Tanmiya, or Tewassoul for short) is an Islamist party formed in 2007 (Lansford 2017). Although Tewassoul allied itself with Abdel Aziz after he was elected president in 2009 (All Africa 2009b), the party joined the COD in 2011 (All Africa 2011d). The party organized an anti-government demonstration in February 2013 (BBC Monitoring: Middle East 2013b). Tewassoul is therefore coded as a significant opposition group during 2013-2017.

Forum National pour la Démocratie et l'Unité (National Forum for Democracy and Unity—FNDU) is an umbrella coalition of parties and trade unions that was formed in early 2014 to call for a boycott of the upcoming presidential election (Lansford 2017) and has advocated for electoral reforms in general (PANAPRESS 2014b. “Mauritania: Radical opposition, civil society demand direct dialogue with gov’t.”). The coalition staged large demonstrations calling for greater electoral transparency in June 2014 (PANAPRESS 2014a. Mauritania: Opposition protests ahead of 21 June election). The FNDU is therefore coded as a significant opposition group for 2014-2017.

MOROCCO

The banned Islamist group **al-Adl wal-Ihsan** (often shortened to Ihsan, the group's name is variously translated as Justice and Charity, Justice and Benevolence, and Justice and Spirituality) has consistently opposed the Moroccan government since before the 1990s. There is some ambiguity about whether, in the early 1990s, Ihsan had a greater following than two legal, secular parties: the **Parti Istiqlal** (PI, the Independence Party, usually referred to as Istiqlal) and the **Union Socialiste des Forces Populaires** (USFP, Socialist Union of Popular Forces). However, these two parties entered the government in 1998, making Ihsan the clearly most significant opposition group subsequently. Although both Istiqlal and the USFP returned to opposition status at various points in the 2010s, sources generally agree that the Ihsan remained the most popular opposition group in these years.

Sources mention two major Islamist opposition groups that were active in Morocco in the 1990s: Ihsan and the **Parti de la Justice et du Développement** (PJD: Party of Justice and Development). Ihsan was founded in 1987 (Laremont 2009), but its leader, Abdesselam Yassine, had been politically active since the 1970s (Boum and Park 2016: 25). The PJD was founded in 1998 but it was the successor to **at-Tawhid wal-Islah** (Unity and Reform), which was founded in 1992 and was itself the successor to **al-Jama'a al-Islamiyya** (Islamic Group), which began in the early 1980s (Willis 1999: 45-47). Ihsan has consistently been seen as the more radical of the two groups (Financial Times 1997a. *Moroccans Learn Algeria's Lessons*). Ihsan rejects the legitimacy of the monarchy and thus has always refused to take part in elections (Varadarajan 1996; Laremont 2009; Partrick 2019a), while the PJD has consistently participated since 1997 (Partrick 2019a).²⁸

²⁸In 1997, the activists who would found the PJD ran under the banner of the **Mouvement Populaire Constitutionnelle et Démocratique** (MPCD, Constitutional and Democratic Popular Movement [Partrick 2019a]).

Some sources refer to these groups jointly as Morocco's main Islamist opposition groups in the 1990s (Reuters 1994d. "Islamic fundamentalist groups active in Morocco" ; Willis 2009). However, most sources assert that Ihsan has always had a larger following than the PJD or its predecessors. (No sources found made the opposite claim.) For instance, Layachi (2009) relates that, of all the Islamist groups in Morocco in the early 1990s, "the most popular one was that of the al-'Adl wa al-Ihsan." This view is not merely one made in hindsight, but was voiced by contemporary news accounts. For instance, (Africa Confidential 1991a: 2-3), refers to Ihsan as the "largest movement" among Islamist groups²⁹ and the Financial Times (1995) also refers to Ihsan as "Morocco's largest Islamic movement." ³⁰

In absolute terms, there is evidence that Moroccan Islamists had amassed considerable support by the 1990s. Africa Confidential (1992: 5) reports that "the Islamist movement is giving cause for concern" to the Moroccan monarchy. The Economist Intelligence Unit (1996b: 6) says: "In recent years the inability of the moderate opposition parties to win genuine participation in government has fostered the emergence of illegal opposition movements. The most feared of these are the Islamic dissidents." ³¹ And there is evidence that Ihsan in particular had a large support base by the 1990s. Yassine had recruited "thousands" of followers by the mid 1980s and during that decade "Yassin became a popular symbol of antiestablishment Islam" (Tachau 1994: 407). Willis (2007, 156) argues that, by the 1990s, "it was clear to the regime that by far the biggest and best organized movement in the country was of Yassine's al-Adl wal-Ihsan." Ihsan's strength in this period was reflected in its ability to organize mass collective action. For example, to protest the trial of 15 activists in 1991, Ihsan organized a sit-in at the courthouse in Casablanca by

²⁹This assertion is repeated in other Africa Confidential articles over the next few years, including in 1993 (5) and 1994 (7).

³⁰Middle East Economic Digest (1992e) describes Ihsan's leader, Yassine, as "the kingdom's best-known Islamist leader" and the Economist Intelligence Unit (1996b: 7) mentions Yassine among Morocco's "main political figures."

³¹Africa Confidential (1990: 6) predicts that, if Morocco held free elections, "Islamists would win substantial votes." Africa Confidential (1991a: 2-3) reports that 30,000 Islamists took part in a demonstration in February 1991 against the Western intervention against Iraq.

about 2,000 participants, followed by a march which drew 5,000 (Reuters 1991d. Morocco Offers to Legalise Moslem Party on Certain Conditions).³²

However, some sources claim that Moroccan Islamists generally, and Ihsan in particular, were not yet a significant force in the early 1990s. The Middle East Economic Digest (1991a. A critical year for the kingdom) and Africa Confidential (1993) describe Islamist opposition in Morocco as “limited.”³³ Tessler, Entelis, and White (1995: 380) argue that “Islamist opposition does not enjoy mass support” (although “its presence is growing”). Regarding Ihsan specifically, Tachau (1994: 407) writes: “Observers have differed in their sense of the ability of movements such as Yassin’s to attract widespread support given the plethora of legal Moroccan parties and the real Islamic legitimacy King Hassan has enjoyed among important segments of the Moroccan population.” Waltz (1995: 125) argues that by the mid-1990s no Moroccan Islamist movement, including Ihsan, had “grown to the proportions known by the FIS in Algeria or al-Nahda in Tunisia.”³⁴

At the same time, some sources point to Istiqlal and the USFP as the main opposition forces in the early 1990s. The Economist Intelligence Unit (1996b: 6) writes: “The opposition is dominated by two moderate left-wing parties, the Union socialiste des forces populaires (USFP) and the Parti Istiqlal (PI).”³⁵ The USFP and Istiqlal accounted for almost all the seats won by opposition parties in the 1984 and 1993 (consecutive) parliamentary elections (Tessler, Entelis, and White 1995: 381).³⁶ Both parties have

³²When six of Ihsan’s leaders were arrested in 1990, about 2,000 supporters demonstrated in Rabat (Boum and Park 2016: 25).

³³Africa Confidential (1994: 6) also refers to a “lack of a visible Islamist challenge.”

³⁴Waltz (1995: 126) notes that Ihsan’s influence was hindered in the early 1990s by the imprisonment for two years of Ihsan’s “complete executive bureau.”

³⁵Legum (1992a: B487) also describes the USFP and Istiqlal as the “main opposition” parties.

³⁶Sources disagree about which of the two parties was more popular in the 1990s. Tachau (1994: 402) claims: “The Istiqlal is historically Morocco’s most important party, and it remains, with the Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP), a vital political unit for the legal articulation of opposition views.” Lust-Okar (2005: 183) by contrast, argues that the USFP was “considered the most important legal opposition party” around this time.

tended to support social-democratic policies, the Istiqlal with a nationalist and moderately Islamist bent (Economist Intelligence Unit 1996b: 6; Lust-Okar 2005: 179), and both have advocated gradual democratic reforms (Maghraoui 2001: 81). The USFP and Istiqlal have their own trade unions (Economist Intelligence Unit 1996b: 6) and have supported anti-government collective action. For example, both parties' unions were involved in general strikes in 1990 (Tachau 1994: 420; Boum and Park 2016: 392).

However, in February 1998, the USFP and Istiqlal entered a coalition government, led by the USFP's Abd al-Rahman al-Youssoufi as prime minister and alongside other smaller parties (Partrick 2019a). Meanwhile, the influence of Ihsan only continued to grow during the 1990s and early 2000s. "From 1989 until 2000, Yassine was under house arrest but his movement grew bigger and his reputation became global" (Bouasria 2015: 104). The Bouzerda (2000b. "Morocco's Islamist chief free, group still shackled.") describes Ihsan as "Morocco's main Moslem fundamentalist group" and the Economist Intelligence Unit (2002b: 8) describes Ihsan as "Morocco's largest Islamist group." Reuters (2000) describes it as not only "the country's biggest Islamist group," but "the main opposition movement" more generally.³⁷

In 2002, the PJD performed surprisingly well in the parliamentary elections, increasing its seats from 9 to 42, making it the third largest party in parliament (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2019).³⁸ In 2007, the PJD increased its representation to 46 seats (*ibid*). Nonetheless, Ihsan appears to have remained the largest opposition movement throughout the 2000s. Karam (2003) describes Ihsan as "the main source of popular opposition to Morocco's monarchical government." Multiple sources refer to Ihsan, not the PJD, as the most popular Islamist group in this decade (Fakihani and Pettit 2003; Ghanmi 2004; Thorne 2006; Charlton 2007; Economist Intelligence Unit 2008a: 12; Laremont 2009). (No sources I found make the

³⁷Bouzerda (1999) describes Yassine as Morocco's "most prominent Islamist leader" and Legum (2000: B639) writes: "Yassine commands respect and support in a significant portion of Moroccan society."

³⁸Moreover, it was not far behind Istiqlal — 48 seats — and the USFP — 50 seats (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2019).

opposite claim or report any non-Islamist opposition group being more popular than Ihsan.)

From 2011-2017, the PJD led coalition governments, while the USFP and Istiqlal were each out of government for part of this period, the former exiting in 2011 and returning in 2017, the latter exiting in 2013 and not returning by the end of 2017 (Economist Intelligence Unit 2008a: 9-10; Middle East Reporter 2012; Benmehdi 2013; Al Jazeera 2017c. Morocco's king names new coalition government; Partrick 2019a). Yet the USFP had suffered major losses in parliament by the time it left government in 2011, slumping from first place in 2002 to fifth place in 2007 and 2011 and sixth place in 2016 (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2019). The Parti Authenticité et Modernité (PAM, Authenticity and Modernity Party), founded in 2008 (Boum and Park 2016, 389), became a major electoral player in the 2010s, winning the fourth largest bloc in the 2011 elections and reaching second place in 2016 (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2019). Some sources describe the PAM as the “main opposition” party during this period (BBC Monitoring: Middle East 2016; Agence France Presse 2016b. Opposition vows to rid Morocco of Islamists in Oct vote), yet this designation seems to refer to the PAM's electoral rivalry with the PJD rather than any reformist agenda. The PAM was founded by an advisor to King Mohammed VI (Boum and Park 2016: 389) and seems designed to advance royal interests, with sources describing it as “loyalist” (Masbah 2014), “palace-aligned” (Economist Intelligence Unit 2017a.: 3), and “close to the palace” (Naoum 2017). Istiqlal, which has been more successful than the USFP — it came in second in 2011 and third in 2016 (Inter-Parliamentary Union 2019) — while retaining more distance from the palace than the PAM,³⁹ seems to have the best claim to lead the legal opposition during this period, after it left the governing coalition in 2013.⁴⁰

Nonetheless, Ihsan remained the largest opposition group throughout the 2000s and 2010s.

³⁹For instance, the Economist Intelligence Unit (2017b: 17) lists the PAM among the “loyalist” parties, but not Istiqlal.

⁴⁰On the other hand, Boum and Park (2016, 392) argue that the Istiqlal has been characterized throughout its history by “a continued opposition to any major political change.”

At the time of his death in 2012, Yassine was still regarded as “the country’s biggest opposition figure” and tens of thousands attended his funeral (Schemm 2012). The movement persisted after its founder’s passing, remaining “the most popular and powerful Islamist movement in Morocco” (Bouasria 2015: 100). Throughout the 2010s, sources continued to describe Ihsan as the largest Islamist movement (Economist Intelligence Unit 2010a: 25; Schemm 2013; Sakthivel 2014; Economist Intelligence Unit 2016a: 17). Multiple sources also describe Ihsan as the main opposition group overall in this period. Schemm (2013) argues that Ihsan “has largely become the voice of the opposition.” Motaouakal (2014: 101) describes the group as “the best organised social and political movement in Morocco.” Reuters (2016) describes Ihsan as “the main opposition.” Bouasria (2015: 100) estimated Ihsan’s membership to be in the tens of thousands by the 2010s, while others sources estimate it to have had hundreds of thousands of supporters since as early as the mid 2000s (Thorne 2006; Economist Intelligence Unit 2008a: 12; Schemm 2013) or even nearly a million by the end of that decade (BBC Monitoring: Media 2009a “Morocco: Websites of Islamic movement inaccessible since 17 January.”).⁴¹ The group was “a major player in the 2011 protests” (Errazzouki 2017) and in 2017 led the “largest protests since 2011” in Morocco’s capital, with at least tens of thousands of participants (BBC Monitoring: Middle East 2017).

Given the ambiguous evidence for the early 1990s, there is no single main opposition group at the start of the coding period. However, sources point to Istiqlal, the USFP, and Ihsan as the main opposition forces in the 1990s and the first two entered government in late 1997. Among the remaining opposition groups, there was a clear consensus that Ihsan was the most popular by this time. By the time the USFP and Istiqlal left the governing coalition in the 2010s, they clearly had less support than Ihsan. Thus Ihsan is coded as the main

⁴¹The Economist Intelligence Unit (2008a: 12) specifically addresses the group’s capacity for collective action, relating: “It has hundreds of local branches and can mobilise hundreds of thousands of supporters.” Schemm (2013) indicates the geographic and socioeconomic breadth of its support, noting that Ihsan “can be found across the country, with members ranging from blue collar workers to doctors and engineers.”

opposition organization for the years 1998-2017.

Throughout 1992-1997, each of these three parties is coded as a significant opposition group. The USFP and Istiqlal co-led a large anti-government demonstration in February 1991 (Reuters 1991c. Morocco Bans Mass Pro-Iraqi Demonstration in Casablanca).⁴² Ihsan's supporters engaged in large demonstrations in May 1990 in response to the trial of six of the group's leaders (BBC Monitoring: Middle East 1990; Boum and Park 2016: 25) and the group organized another anti-government protest in August 1991 (Reuters 1991e. Moslem Fundamentalists March Through Casablanca Streets).

Bloc Democratique (Democratic Bloc, known in Arabic as Al-Koutlat At-Tajammu'a Ad-Dimuqrati or Koutla, for short) was an electoral coalition formed in May 1992 by Istiqlal, USFP, and three smaller parties. It also called for reduction in minimum ages to vote and run for office (Daadaoui 2010: 197; Boum and Park 2016: 385). The parties of the coalition won a combined 32.5% of the vote in the June 1993 election (Montabes Pereira and Parejo Fernández 2003; Interparliamentary Union 2019). Thus the Koutla is coded as a significant opposition group for 1993-1997.

SUDAN

The **Umma** (Community) Party (UP, later known as the Umma National Party), was the main opposition group in Sudan during the period 2000-2017. The UP is an Islamist party. The UP and another Islamist party, the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) are typically

⁴²Each party also won over 10% of the vote in the 1993 parliamentary elections (Montabes Pereira and Parejo Fernández 2003).

described as having been the largest two parties in recent decades, other than the ruling National Islamic Front (NIF, later known as the National People's Congress). For instance, Tachau (1994: 488) writes: "Both the Umma and PDP/DUP have been able to draw upon the mass following and hierarchy of their associated sects." The Economist Intelligence Unit (1996c: 6), notes that: prior to the NIF regime, "Sudan's periods of parliamentary rule have been dominated by two political parties: the Umma Party and the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP)." ⁴³ Elbagir and Karimi (2012) refer to the UP and DUP as "Sudan's two largest opposition parties." ⁴⁴

The UP won the most seats in the 1986 parliamentary elections, while the DUP finished in second place (Tachau 1996: 486-487). The leader of the UP, Mahdi, became prime minister, forming a coalition government with the DUP; in 1989, the government was overthrown in a military coup led by Omar al-Bashir (Woodside 2019).⁴⁵

Soon after the coup, the UP, DUP, and other opposition groups formed an umbrella organization called the National Democratic Alliance (NDA), in order to resist Bashir's government. The NDA also included armed groups, such as the Sudan People's Liberation Army (BBC Monitoring: Middle East 1990a; Berry 2015: 252; Woodside 2019).⁴⁶ So although the NDA was "the main opposition group" in the 1990s (Kramer, Lobban, and

⁴³On the ideological outlook of the UP and DUP, see for example Cudsi and Voll (2009) and the Economist Intelligence Unit (1996c: 6)

⁴⁴However, the Economist Intelligence Unit (2009a: 6) observes that the two parties "have been weakened and divided by the long rule of the NCP and its efforts to co-opt them, which led to the formation of pro-government splinter factions. . . ." Another opposition party frequently mentioned in news reports is the Popular National Congress, founded by Turabi, the former head of the ruling party, after he fell out with President Bashir. However, the Economist Intelligence Unit (2002b: 6) says that "the group enjoyed little influence" and "as a political player, [Turabi's] influence seems to be spent."

⁴⁵It is worth noting that, despite the large following the UP has generally retained, at the time of the coup, "public confidence in [Mahdi's] government had dissolved" (Kramer, Lobban, and Fluehr-Lobban 2013: 437).

⁴⁶The SPLA was the "main southern military resistance force" and fought the Sudanese state even before the coup (Tachau 1994: 497). "Since the start of the second civil war in 1983, the SPLA has been the major armed opposition to successive Khartoum governments" (Economist Intelligence Unit 1996c: 6). In addition to involving the SPLA, "the NDA controlled its own military wing of northerners" (Kramer, Lobban, and Fluehr-Lobban 2013: 312).

Fluehr-Lobban 2013: 437), the organization and its constituent groups cannot be considered nonviolent in this period.

However, in March 2000, the UP left the NDA (Pineau 2000). The UP has engaged in peaceful activism since then, and has refused to accept any cabinet posts (Economist Intelligence Unit 2002b: 8; Economist Intelligence Unit 2009a: 6-7; BBC Monitoring: Middle East 2010b; All Africa 2011b; BBC Monitoring: Africa 2013; Middle East North Africa Financial Network 2015b. “Sudanese Pres. announces new cabinet lineup.” ; Economist Intelligence Unit 2018f: 22; Woodside 2019).⁴⁷ Throughout this period, sources indicate that the UP was the most popular opposition group in Sudan. Reuters (2005) writes that the UP is “widely considered to be Sudan’s largest political party.” All Africa (2011b. Country’s Largest Opposition Party Formally Rejects Participation in New Government) describes it as the “largest opposition party” in Sudan, as does the Sudan Tribune (2018), while the U.S. Department of State (2011a. “Background Notes: Sudan.”) describes the Umma Party as the “single largest political grouping” and Agence France Presse (2018) refers to it as “the main opposition.”

During 1992-1999 there was no significant (nonviolent) opposition group in Sudan.

TUNISIA

Hizb an-Nahda (Party of the Renaissance or Nahda for short), an Islamist movement that

⁴⁷In December 2014, the UP issued a joint communiqué with some armed groups, calling for democracy in Sudan. However, the communiqué did not endorse armed resistance. The UP and the armed groups did not set up a joint organization and the UP did not become involved in the armed groups’ violent activities (Eljak 2014; Sudan Tribune 2014; Woodside 2019).

sought but was never granted legal recognition as a political party by the Ben Ali government, was the main opposition group in Tunisia in the early 1990s. The movement was effectively crushed in 1992, and no other opposition party with a broad base of support emerged before the regime was overthrown in 2011.

At the time of Tunisia's parliamentary elections in 1989, the Mouvement des Démocrates Socialistes (Movement of Socialist Democrats—MDS) was considered “the main opposition party” (Perkins 2016b: 185). Hizb al-Nahda, though not legally recognized, ran candidates as nominal independents in most districts (*ibid*). Nahda won approximately 13% of the vote (Murphy 1999: 180), compared to about 4% for the MDS (Montabes Pereira 2003), thus “replacing the MDS as the main opposition force” (Partrick 2019b).⁴⁸

In late 1990, however, the Ben Ali government began cracking down on the Nahda movement, and over the course of 1991, thousands of their members were arrested (Erdle 2010: 109). In July of 1992, nearly 200 top Nahda activists were put on trial, effectively ending Nahda's ability to operate for the remainder of Ben Ali's time in power (Partrick 2019b). “These mass trials were seen as the culmination of the Tunisian Government's long campaign against al-Nahdah, whose organizational structures within the country were largely destroyed and its leaders imprisoned or forced into exile” (*ibid*). Similarly, Erdle (2010: 109) writes that after these trials, “the Islamist opposition had effectively ceased to exist as an organized force on the ground.”⁴⁹ Thus, I code Nahda as Tunisia's main opposition group in 1992,

⁴⁸Likewise, Murphy (1999: 180) argues that, after the 1989 elections, “it was clear that Nahda represented the only genuinely challenging opposition to the RCD,” the ruling party.

⁴⁹Perkins (2016b: 17) observes that, by 1992, the Tunisian government “had effectively crushed the [Nahda] movement.” Willis (2012” 171-172) writes that “By the middle of 1992, authorities in both Tunisia and Algeria had succeeded in banning and repressing their countries' main Islamist movements, which a matter of months earlier had appeared to present serious challenges to the rule and legitimacy of the existing regimes.” Contemporary sources also gave such an account. For instance, the Middle East Economic Digest (1992c. “An uneasy balance of political forces.”) reported in July of that year: “Police action has crushed Nahda, whose leadership is either exiled, in prison or has dropped out of active politics. ‘I honestly see no point in carrying on,’ says one former Nahda official. ‘We entered into direct confrontation wanting to take over and we lost.’”

and a significant opposition group in 1993-1999.

YEMEN

At-Tajammu'a al-Yamani lil-Islah (the Yemeni Congregation for Reform, commonly known as Islah), is a coalition of Islamists and tribal leaders, and is generally regarded as the main opposition group during the period from the unification of North and South Yemen in 1990 to the end of Saleh's rule (2012). For instance, Suwaed (2016: 552) observes that, of all the legal political organizations in Yemen since unification, "only three are of national significance — the GPC [General People's Congress the ruling party under Saleh], Islaah, and YSP [the Yemeni Socialist Party]" and claims that "the second largest political organization in Yemen [after the GPC] is the Islaah Party." Al Jazeera (2011a) describes Islah as "the main opposition party in Yemen." Schmitz and Burrowes (2018: 256) argue that Islah was "the most formidable challenger to the Saleh regime."

However, some sources describe Islah's oppositional status as ambiguous, noting its gradual evolution from an ally of the Saleh regime in the early 1990s to a foe in the 2000s. For instance, Schmitz and Burrowes (2018: 256-257) denote Islah as:

the party with the most ambiguous relationship to that regime and its General People's Congress (GPC). Regarding the ambiguity, Islah when not in government has often acted and been treated as if it were; when in the government, it has often behaved as if in the opposition. In short, it often has been difficult to describe Islah's behavior as oppositional, even when it

was formally in opposition. . . . Between its creation in 1990 and the 2006 election, Islah had evolved from being something of an uncertain, ambiguous appendage of President Saleh to being part of an increasingly credible and formidable opposition.

Specifically, Schmitz and Burrowes (2018: 364) note that: “In the 2000s, Islah led the formal opposition and was the most important party in the opposition coalition, Joint Meeting Parties.”

Hamzawy (2009: 1) presents a similar narrative: “Islah did not enter the political scene as part of the opposition. Rather, it began its participation in 1990 as an ally of the ruling General People’s Congress (GPC), before turning against it and becoming the leading opposition party by the end of the decade.”⁵⁰ Islah was in fact created by members of the General People’s Congress in 1990 (Durac 2019) and from 1990 to 1997, some of its representatives held cabinet positions (Hamzawy 2009: 5-7; Schmitz and Burrowes 2018: 257).

However, most sources indicate that Islah entered the opposition after the 1997 parliamentary elections, when it left the cabinet. For instance, the Economist Intelligence Unit (2002c: 6) notes that, after 1997, “Islah became the only significant parliamentary opposition.” Schmitz and Burrowes (2018: 257) write: “In the 1997 elections, having made a slightly poorer showing than in 1993, Islah went into the opposition.” Hamzawy (2009: 5) observes that “in

⁵⁰These accounts are also echoed by Bonnefoy (2007): “Calling al-Islah an opposition party has also long been inexact, as its relations with the government of President ‘Ali ‘Abd Allah Salih were ambivalent. Indeed, in the context of the unification of North and South Yemen in the early 1990s, al-Islah became an alternative ally of the General People’s Congress (GPC), the ruling party, which experienced tensions with the Socialists. Between 1993 and 1997, al-Islah participated in government, controlling important ministries. Its leader, ‘Abd Allah al-Ahmar, was consistently elected speaker of Parliament between 1993 and 2007 with the support of the ruling party, and in 1994, al-Islah’s militants assisted the national army in its war against southern secessionists headed by former socialist rulers. Starting at the end of the 1990s and becoming more overt in the mid-2000s, al-Islah experienced a slow and hesitant transformation, accepting its role as an opponent of ‘Ali ‘Abd Allah Salih’s rule.”

1997 Islah switched sides and joined the Yemeni Socialist Party and other parties in opposing the GPC.”⁵¹ In one indication of the new discord between Islah and the ruling party, the GPC nationalized some of the religious schools run by Islah in the late 1990s (Hamzawy 2009: 7).⁵²

However, the relationship between Islah and the GPC remained ambiguous for a time after 1997. As Hamzawy (2009: 6-7) notes, Islah’s transition to the opposition “has been far from complete because of Islah’s unwillingness to break with the GPC at all levels and because influential leaders within Islah have remained critical of its alliance with the opposition.” Notably, Islah supported Saleh’s reelection for president in 1999 (Economist Intelligence Unit 2008b: 5; Durac 2019).

The Economist Intelligence Unit (2002c: 10) suggests that 2001 was a turning point, in which Islah became more clearly an opposition party: “In early 2001, Islah underwent something of a renaissance: growing fiercely critical of the GPC-backed constitutional reforms, and opposing the government on other key issues.” The government began arresting Islah MPs and activists, and toward the end of 2001, Islah’s leader “described the regime’s dealings with his party as hostile” (*ibid*). Islah also joined the Co-ordination Council of Opposition Parties in 2001 (Sagar 2009: 651), and the following year it co-founded of the opposition Joint Meeting Parties coalition (Hamzawy 2009: 8; Durac 2011: 343-344).⁵³

⁵¹Likewise, Durac (2019) writes that after the 1997 elections “al-Islah began to move closer to other opposition parties and increasingly to espouse commitment to democratic ideals.”

⁵²Hiro (2003: 584) also notes that this move “further soured relations” between Islah and the GPC.

⁵³“The JMP developed a collective electoral platform, making the GPC their common enemy and demanding the introduction of democratic safeguards and significant political reforms. They also coordinated on candidates” (Hamzawy 2009: 8). (As an indication of the JMP’s popular support, its 2006 presidential candidate won 22% of the vote [Economist Intelligence Unit 2008b: 6].) After co-founding the JMP, Islah’s agenda was clearly reformist, as the party called for “constitutional amendments aimed at a fairer distribution of power between the government and the opposition, reforms in electoral laws and laws pertaining to political rights, improving parliament’s oversight of the government’s socioeconomic policies, and a reduction in corruption” (Hamzawy 2009: 14).

However, after Saleh transferred power to his vice president, Hadi, in November 2011, the Joint Meeting Parties endorsed the confirmation of Hadi's presidency in a February 2012 referendum and entered into a coalition government with the GPC (Durac 2019), with Islah taking seats in the cabinet (Reuters 2011c). Thus, Islah's time in the opposition ended in late 2011.

Sources indicate that the Yemeni Socialist Party has always had less support than Islah since unification. As the former ruling party of South Yemen, its base was limited to the less populous southern region, and its ability to organize was severely hampered after a crackdown by the government in the wake of the 1994 civil war.⁵⁴

Although many sources argue that Islah entered the opposition when it left the government in 1997, its support for Saleh's reelection in 1999 precludes coding it as an opposition party during the late 1990s. Since Islah became clearly critical of the regime in 2001, and continued to oppose the regime until the end of Saleh's rule, it is coded as the main opposition party for 2001-2011, its opposition role ending after it entered the Hadi government in late 2011 (Durac 2019).

No group is coded as a significant opposition group in Yemen during 1990 and 1991. The following groups are coded as the significant opposition parties during 1992-2000.

At-Tajammu'a Al-Wahdawi (Yemeni Unionist Gathering) was founded in January 1990

⁵⁴For instance, the Economist Intelligence Unit (2002c: 10), reports: "The YSP ruled the one-party PDRY [People's Democratic Republic of Yemen, also known as South Yemen] before unification and won almost all of the seats in the south in the 1993 election. However, following the 1994 civil war, during which the YSP fought against the government, its leadership went into exile and the party lost much of its support." The Economist Intelligence Unit (2008b: 5) likewise notes that the YSP's "poor showing in the 2003 parliamentary election and subsequent local elections reflects the party's waning political clout." The Economist Intelligence Unit (2001) also describes the YSP as "the main opposition party of the south" (12-13, emphasis added) and concludes that the YSP "does not pose a sufficient threat to the ruling GPC's position" to concern the government (15).

to advocate for human rights and democracy (Middle East Economic Digest 1990a.: Formation of the Yemeni Unionist Party) and was critical of the Saleh regime thereafter (Schmitz and Burrowes 2018: 266). The party led an anti-government demonstration in November 1991 (Middle East Economic Digest 1991b. Riots hit Sanaa as tensions mount — shooting dead of traffic policeman by army colonel acts as catalyst), so it is coded as a significant opposition group during 1992-1998.

The former ruling party of the People’s Democratic Republic of Yemen — which ceased to exist in 1990 when the South and North were united as the Republic of Yemen (Schmitz and Burrowes 2018: 486) — **Hizb al-Ishtiraki al-Yemeni** (Yemeni Socialist Party—YSP) won over 10% of the vote in the April 1993 parliamentary elections Tachau 1994: 625). The party also organized an anti-government demonstration in March 2000 (BBC Monitoring: Middle East 2000b. Opposition rally urges release of Socialist Party leaders). Upon unification in May 1990, the YSP formed a unity coalition with the GPC that lasted until the outbreak of civil war between the North and the South in February 1994 (Schmitz and Burrowes 2018: xxxiii- xxxvii). Thus the YSP is not considered an opposition party during 1990-1993. The civil war lasted until July 1994 (Schmitz and Burrowes 2018: xxxvii), so the YSP is considered an armed group in 1994. The YSP was not included in subsequent governments under Saleh and became an opposition party (Schmitz and Burrowes 2018: xxxvii, 527). Thus, the YSP is coded as a significant opposition group during 1995-2000.

Appendix 4: Opposition Media Narratives

ALGERIA

Islamic Salvation Front: 1992-1994

The FIS weekly newspapers *El Mounqidh* and *El Fourqan* were permanently banned in February or March 1992 (sources vary on the timing). (Europa Publications 1989; Shehadi 1989; Reuters 1991b; Baggaley 1992a; Human Rights Watch 1993, 1994, 1995, 1997a, 1997b; Europa Publications 1999; Willis 1999, 226; Rugh 2004; Willis 2012: 172).

Movement for Democracy in Algeria: 1992-1996

Throughout the 1992-1996 period, the MDA published the fortnightly newspapers *Al-Badil*

and *Tribune d'Octobre*, apparently without interference. (Europa Publications 1989; Reuters 1990d. “Ben Bella Supporters Stage Hunger Strike in Algeria.” ; Reuters 1990e. “Ben Bella’s Party Launches Newspaper in Algeria.” ; Reuters 1990b. “Algerian Court Ends Seizure of Ben Bella Party Magazine.” ; Human Rights Watch 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997a. World Report 1997; Committee to Protect Journalists 1996, 1997; U.S. Department of State 1997; U.S. Department of State 1998; Europa Publications 1999; Rugh 2004; Moussa 2015: 38 [FNs: 22, 23, 24, and 27])

Socialist Forces Front: 1992-2007

The FFS appears not to have had any media during 1992-2002. Beginning in September 2003, the party had an active website (www.ffs-dz.com)⁵⁵, which does not appear to have been blocked during this period. (Europa Publications 1989; Human Rights Watch 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997a. World Report 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003; Committee to Protect Journalists 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2005, 2019; U.S. Department of State 1996-2008; Europa Publications 1999; Rugh 2004; Sagar 2009; Noman 2010; Europa Publications 2013; Europa World 2019l. Society and Media (Algeria); Front des Forces Socialistes 2019; Reporters Sans Frontières 2019; Whois 2019j. “ffs.dz”)

⁵⁵The site is not currently active, but records from the Internet Archive show that the site had at least 24 posts on its home page during 2003, 2006, and 2007. Because of infrequent snapshots in some years, and in some cases undated posts, there was no definitive evidence on frequency during 2004 or 2005, but they are assumed to have been sufficiently frequent, since posting was frequent in 2003 and 2006.

Berber Cultural Movement: 1992-2007

The Berber Cultural Movement (MCB) does not appear to have had any media outlets during this time frame. (Europa Publications 1989; Human Rights Watch 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997a. World Report 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003; Committee to Protect Journalists 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2005, 2019; U.S. Department of State 1996-2008; Europa Publications 1999; Rugh 2004; Europa Publications 2013; BBC News 2017a; Europa World 2019l. Society and Media (Algeria); Kabyle Universel 2019; Reporters Sans Frontières 2019; Whois 2019k. “kabyleuniversel.com”)

National Liberation Front: 1993-1996

The FLN had two newspapers, El Moudjahid and Ech Cha’ab, when it was the ruling party, but under the new military regime, these papers were taken over by the state in May 1992 and do not appear to have been returned to FLN control until after it ceased to be an oppositional group in 1997. The FLN founded the daily newspaper El Hiwar in April 1994. The government suspended it in November 1994 and does not appear to have reauthorized it while the FLN remained in the opposition. (Baggaley 1992a; Reuters 1992; Human Rights Watch 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997s; Reuters 1994a; Reuters 1994c. Deux Autres Journaux Suspendus en Algérie; Committee to Protect Journalists 1996, 1997; Reuters 1996a; U.S. Department of State 1997; U.S. Department of State 1998; Immigration and Refugee Board of Canada 2000)

Coordination of Aarchs, Dairas, and Communes: 2001-2010

The CADC appears to have had no media outlets during this period. (Human Rights Watch 2002, 2003, 2009, 2010, 2011; U.S. Department of State 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010; 2011b; Rugh 2004; Committee to Protect Journalists 2005, 2019; Europa Publications 2013; BBC News 2017; Europa World 2019l. Society and Media (Algeria); Reporters Sans Frontières 2019)

National Coordination for Change and Democracy: 2011-2017

The CNCD appears to have had no media during this period. (Freedom House 2012a. Freedom of the Press, 2013a. Freedom of the Press, 2014a. Freedom of the Press, 2015a. Freedom of the Press, 2016a. Freedom of the Press; Human Rights Watch 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; U.S. Department of State 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; Committee to Protect Journalists 2019; Europa World 2019l. Society and Media (Algeria); Reporters Sans Frontières 2019)

Rally for Culture and Democracy: 2011-2017

During this period, the RCD maintained a website: www.rcd-algerie.org.⁵⁶ There is no

⁵⁶By the end of 2010, the site was redirecting visitors to a new site, <http://rcd-algerie.net>, but by the end of 2011, the latter site was directing visitors back to the earlier site. Because www.rcd-algerie.org redirected to <http://rcd-algerie.net> when the former was temporarily inactive, I treat the two sites as effectively a single site (Rassemblement pour la Culture et la Démocratie 2019a; Rassemblement pour la Culture et la

evidence that the site was blocked in Algeria during this period. The site was active in each year except 2015 and 2016. (Freedom House 2012a. Freedom of the Press, 2013a. Freedom of the Press, 2014a. Freedom of the Press, 2015a. Freedom of the Press, 2016a. Freedom of the Press; Human Rights Watch 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; U.S. Department of State 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; Europa Publications 2013; Committee to Protect Journalists 2019; Europa World 2019l. Society and Media (Algeria); Rassemblement pour la Culture et la Démocratie 2019a; Rassemblement pour la Culture et la Démocratie 2019b; Reporters Sans Frontières 2019)

National Coordination for Liberties and Democratic Transition: 2015-2017

The CNLTD appears to have had no media during this period. (Freedom House 2016a. Freedom of the Press; Human Rights Watch 2016, 2017, 2018; U.S. Department of State 2016, 2017, 2018; Committee to Protect Journalists 2019; Europa World 2019l. Society and Media (Algeria); Reporters Sans Frontières 2019)

Démocratie 2019b). 24 or more posts were found through the Internet Archive in each year during 2011-2014, as well as 2017. Specific evidence was found that the site posted infrequently in 2016. Due to a paucity of Internet Archive captures during 2015, and the fact that the site did not post frequently in 2016, the site was assumed not to have continued to post frequently in 2015.

BAHRAIN

The Accord National Islamic Society: 2002-2017

The Accord National Islamic Society (Al-Wefaq) maintained the websites AlWefaq.org and AlWefaq.net since 2002. In 2013, the former began redirecting to the latter. Prior to that the sites seemed to have hosted the same content or the .net site redirected to the .org version. Thus, I treat them as different versions of a single site. At least one version of the site was active throughout 2002-2016.⁵⁷ They were blocked from September 2010 until January 2012. They were blocked again in 2016 and remained blocked at the end of 2017. The group's weekly newspaper, Al-Wefaq, began publishing during or before 2008.⁵⁸ It was banned in September 2010 and does not appear to have begun publishing again subsequently.⁵⁹ (Freedom House 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009a. "Freedom of the Press 2009" , 2010, 2011a. "Freedom of the Press 2011" , 2011b. "Freedom on the Net 2011" , 2012a. "Freedom of the Press 2012" , 2012b. "Freedom on the Net 2012" , 2013a. "Freedom of the Press 2013" , 2013b. "Freedom on the Net 2013" , 2014a. "Freedom of the Press 2014" , 2014b. "Freedom on the Net 2014" , 2015a. "Freedom of the Press 2015" , 2015b. "Freedom on the Net 2015" , 2016a. "Freedom of the Press 2016" , 2016b. "Freedom on the Net 2016" , 2017a. "Freedom of the Press 2017" , 2017b. "Freedom on the Net 2017" , 2018b; Committee to Protect Journalists 2003, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011b. "Attacks on the Press in 2010." , 2012, 2013b. "Attacks on the Press in 2012." , 2014a.

⁵⁷At least 24 posts were added to AlWefaq.org in every year from 2002 through 2004 and 2006 through 2012. There was insufficient evidence to determine the number of posts in 2005, but the site was assumed to be active, since it was known to be active in 2004 and 2006. AlWefaq.net posted at least 24 times in every year from 2013 through 2016 (before the site was blocked in the last case). After being blocked in 2016, but AlWefaq.org and AlWefaq.net were inactive.

⁵⁸I did not find any reports about the paper prior to 2008.

⁵⁹The latest report on the paper that I found (Al Ayam 2012), was published in October 2012 and stated that the paper was still banned.

“Attacks on the Press in 2013.” , 2019; U.S. Department of State 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011b. “Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2010.” , 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; OpenNet Initiative 2005, 2009a. “Bahrain” , 2019a. “Internet Filtering in Bahrain in 2006-2007.” ; International Research & Exchanges Board 2006, 2008, 2009, 2010; Human Rights Watch 2007, 2009, 2010b. “World Report 2010.” , 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; Reporters Sans Frontières 2008; Kenyon 2010; Toorani and Singh Grewal 2010; Energy Compass 2011; Al Ayam 2012; Reporters Sans Frontières 2012; Europa Publications 2013; Al Ayam 2016; Gulf Daily News 2016; Europa World 2019m. “Society and Media (Bahrain).” ; Accord National Islamic Society 2019a, 2019b; Reporters Sans Frontières 2019)

EGYPT

Muslim Brotherhood: 1992-2012, 2014-2017

Between 1992 and 2002, the Muslim Brotherhood had no frequently published media of its own.⁶⁰ The Brotherhood launched a website, IkhwanOnline.com, which was actively posting in every year from 2003-2012 and 2014-2017.⁶¹ For parts of 2004 and 2005, the government blocked the site in Egypt and also blocked the other versions of the site: ikhwaonline.net and ikhwaonline.org.⁶² In December 2010, the government blocked

⁶⁰The Muslim Brotherhood did have a monthly newspaper during the 1990s, Liwa’ al Islam, the successor to the monthly ad Dawah, which had been banned in 1981. Brotherhood members also often published their views in Ash Shaab, the newspaper of the Labor Party until it was suspended in 2001 (Zahid 2012, 64).

⁶¹Recall that Egypt 2013 is not in the dataset, because the country is coded as a democracy for the majority of the year, although it reverted to authoritarianism in July of 2013.

⁶²It was not possible to determine whether the Muslim Brotherhood’s English-language website

IkhwanOnline.com,⁶³ but did not block IkhwanOnline.net, which was actively posting that year, particularly while IkhwanOnline.com was blocked.⁶⁴ After the ousting of Mubarak in February 2011, the Muslim Brotherhood launched many new media outlets under the SCAF government, many of these outlets officially led by its Freedom and Justice Party. These outlets were the website klmtly.net, the newspaper *Al Huriya wal Adala*, and the satellite TV channel Misr 25. The new military regime permanently shut down *Al Huriya wal Adala* and Misr 25 in 2013, but in 2014-2016 IkhwanOnline.com and klmtly.net were both active and not blocked. In 2012-2017, the Freedom and Justice Party actively maintained www.fj-p.com. In addition, the Brotherhood also ran a website called horriapost.net, which was active and not blocked in 2015 and 2016. However, all four of these websites were blocked in 2017, although alternative versions of some sites remained accessible inside Egypt and actively posted, including IkhwanOnline.info and horiapost.de.⁶⁵ (Europa Publications 1989; Human Rights Watch 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; Abed-Kotob 1995; Abed-Kotob 1995; Committee to Protect Journalists 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011b. “Attacks on the Press” , 2012, 2013b. “Attacks on the Press in 2012.” , 2014a. Attacks on the Press; U.S. Department of State 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011b. Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; Europa Publications 1999; Freedom House 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009a, 2009b. Freedom on the Net 2009, 2010, 2011a, 2011b, 2012a, 2012b. Freedom on the Net 2012, 2013a, 2013b.

ikhwanweb.com was either actively posting or blocked while the IkhwanOnline sites were blocked. Since all Muslim Brotherhood sites known to be active were blocked, each of these events is coded as a silencing of the group.

⁶³The government also blocked ikhwanweb.com at this time.

⁶⁴According to the Internet Archive, for most of 2010, IkhwanOnline.net redirected to IkhwanOnline.com. However in December it ceased redirecting while IkhwanOnline.com was blocked, and posted over 23 times in this period alone.

⁶⁵The Freedom and Justice Party also had an English-language site fjponline.com, but it stopped posting after 2012.

Freedom on the Net 2013, 2014a, 2014b. Freedom on the Net 2014, 2015a, 2015b. Freedom on the Net 2015, 2016a, 2016b. Freedom on the Net 2016, 2017b. Freedom on the Net 2017, 2018b; International Research & Exchanges Board 2006, 2008, 2009, 2010; Rugh 2004; OpenNet Initiative 2009b. “Egypt” ; Sagar 2009; Reporters Sans Frontières 2011b. “Egypt” ; Shenker 2011; Ahram Online 2013; Europa Publications 2013; Sakr 2013; Mada Masr 2015; Ranko 2015; Aishima 2016; All Africa 2017; Mellor 2017; El-Taher et al 2018; Kamal 2018; Europa World 2019n. “Society and Media (Egypt).” ; Freedom and Justice Party 2019a; Freedom and Justice Party 2019 “Freedom and Justice Party” ; Klmtynet 2019; Muslim Brotherhood 2019a, 2019b, 2019c, 2019d; OpenNet Initiative 2019b. “Internet Filtering in Egypt in 2006-2007.” ; Oxford Islamic Studies Online 2019)

April 6 Youth Movement: 2014-2017

The April 6 Movement had a website, www.6april.org, which was actively posting in 2014.⁶⁶ In 2015 and 2016, the page was posting insufficiently frequently to qualify the group as having media. In 2017, the page was updated frequently, and the government blocked access to it within Egypt. The group also had an affiliated news website, elmasdr.com, which was active 2013, 2014, and 2017, and was not blocked during this time. (Committee to Protect Journalists 2014a Attacks on the Press; Committee to Protect Journalists 2014b. Egypt jails two journalists, renews detention of another; Freedom House 2014a, 2014b. Freedom on the Net 2014, 2015a, 2015b. Freedom on the Net 2015, 2016a, 2016b. Freedom on the Net 2016, 2017b. Freedom on the Net 2017, 2018b; Human Rights Watch 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; U.S Department of State 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; April 6 Youth Movement 2019;

⁶⁶It is important to note that April 6 began its organizing through a Facebook group, so this outlet has been an important component of the group’s communication strategy. However, as discussed in the coding rules, international social media platforms are not counted in determining whether governments allowed opposition groups to have their own media.

Committee to Protect Journalists 2019; El Masdar 2019; Europa World 2019n. “Society and Media (Egypt).” ; Reporters Sans Frontières 2019)

No to Military Trials for Civilians: 2014-2017

The group “No to Military Trials for Civilians” had a website during this period (www.nomiltrials.org), but during 2014-2017, the group did not actively post to it. (Committee to Protect Journalists 2014a. Attacks on the Press; U.S Department of State 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; Freedom House 2014a, 2014b. Freedom on the Net 2014, 2015a, 2015b. Freedom on the Net 2015, 2016a, 2016b. Freedom on the Net 2016, 2017b. Freedom on the Net 2017, 2018b; Human Rights Watch 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; Committee to Protect Journalists 2019; Europa World 2019n. “Society and Media (Egypt).” ; No to Military Trials for Civilians 2019; Reporters Sans Frontières 2019)

Salafist Front: 2014-2017

The Salafist Front ran the website www.GabhaSalafia.com, to which it actively posted in 2014-2017. The site was not blocked during this period. (Committee to Protect Journalists 2014a; U.S Department of State 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; Freedom House 2014a, 2014b. Freedom on the Net 2014, 2015a, 2015b. Freedom on the Net 2015, 2016a, 2016b. Freedom on the Net 2016, 2017b. Freedom on the Net 2017, 2018b; Human Rights Watch 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; Committee to Protect Journalists 2019; Europa World 2019n. “Society and Media (Egypt).” ; Reporters Sans Frontières 2019; Salafist Front 2019a, 2019b)

JORDAN

Muslim Brotherhood: 1992-2017

In 1991, the Muslim Brotherhood launched a weekly newspaper, *Ar-Ribat*, an issue of which was seized in the first year, but which was not interfered with subsequently. In 1993, the Brotherhood replaced *Ar-Ribat* with a new weekly, *As-Sabeel*, which became a daily in 2009. *As-Sabeel* was published through 2017 without interference. (An associated website, asSabeel.net, was never blocked in this period.) The Islamic Action Front, the Brotherhood's political party, maintained a website, www.Jabha.net, since as early as 2004, which was blocked in January 2007 and hacked by regime supporters in March 2011.⁶⁷ The site was actively posting in both 2007 and 2011. The Muslim Brotherhood website www.IkhwanJo.com (which began in 2002) was also hacked in August 2011 and it was actively posting in that year.⁶⁸ The Muslim Brotherhood launched a satellite TV channel, Al Yarmouk in 2011, but it was initially not permitted in Jordan, forcing the channel to broadcast from Bahrain. In 2013, the Jordanian government allowed the channel to begin broadcasting from Jordan, but later that year suspended the channel for five days. In 2015, the government shut down the channel's studios. Al Yarmouk began broadcasting with the help of other Jordanian companies, but in 2016, the government pressured these companies to stop working with Al Yarmouk, forcing the channel to resume broadcasting from outside of Jordan. (A site associated with the channel, Yarmouk.tv, was not blocked during this period.) (Europa Publications 1989; Department of State 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995,

⁶⁷I assume that the 2011 hacking was done with the support of the Jordanian regime, although it was not possible to verify this assumption. The hackers posted messages on the site critical of the Islamic Action Front and in support of King Abdullah II.

⁶⁸Although a version of the site was also blocked in 2006, there was insufficient evidence to determine if the site was actively posting in that year.

1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011b. Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; Sabbagh 1991; Murphy 1992; Committee to Protect Journalists 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2019; Al Abed 1997; Awadat 1997; Campagna 1998b; Europa Publications 1999; Freedom House 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009a. Freedom of the Press 2009, 2010b. Freedom of the Press 2010, 2011a. Freedom of the Press 2011, 2011b. Freedom on the Net 2011, 2012a. Freedom of the Press 2012, 2012b. Freedom on the Net 2012, 2013a. Freedom of the Press 2013, 2013b. Freedom on the Net 2013, 2014a. Freedom of the Press 2014, 2014b. Freedom on the Net 2014, 2015a. Freedom of the Press 2015, 2015b. Freedom on the Net 2015, 2016a. Freedom of the Press 2016, 2016b. Freedom on the Net 2016, 2017b. Freedom on the Net 2017, 2018b. Freedom on the Net 2018; Index on Censorship 2002; Ryan 2002; BBC Monitoring: Media 2006; Human Rights Watch 2006, 2007, 2009, 2010b. World Report 2010; 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; International Research & Exchanges Board 2006, 2008, 2009, 2010; Schwedler 2006; BBC Monitoring: Media. 2007; BBC Monitoring: Middle East. 2007; Noman 2007; BBC Monitoring: Media 2009d; OpenNet Initiative 2009c; Agence France Presse 2011b; Ammon News 2011; Jordan Times 2011, 2014, 2015a, 2015b, 2016, 2017; BBC Monitoring: Middle East 2013a; El-Shamayleh 2013; Europa Publications 2013; BBC Monitoring: Newsfile 2015; Middle East Monitor 2016; Europa 2019s; Europa 2019f; Islamic Action Front 2019; Muslim Brotherhood 2019e; OpenNet Initiative 2019c; Reporters Sans Frontières 2019)

KUWAIT

Islamic Constitutional Movement: 1997-2003

The Social Reform Society, the precursor to the Islamic Constitutional Movement (Hadas) founded the weekly Al-Mujtama in 1970, and published it without interruption throughout 1997-2003.⁶⁹ (Ghabra 1991; Reuters 1994e. “Kuwaiti magazine urges Moslems to boycott Russia.” ; Ersan 1996; Ghabra 1997; U.S. Department of State 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004; Fouad 1999; Fouad 2001; Human Rights Watch 2001; Freedom House 2002, 2003, 2004; Selvik 2011; Brown 2012; Brown 2019; Committee to Protect Journalists 2019; Reporters Sans Frontières 2019; Social Reform Society 2019; Whois 2019i. “eslah.com”)

Enough: 2011-2017

The “Enough” (Kafi) movement had a blog (<http://kafiq8.blogspot.com>), but never posted to it at a rate of 24 or more posts per year. The group had no other media in this period. (Al Jazeera 2011b; Committee to Protect Journalists 2012; Freedom House 2012a. Freedom of the Press, 2013a. Freedom of the Press, 2014a. Freedom of the Press, 2015a. Freedom of the Press, 2016a. Freedom of the Press; Human Rights Watch 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; U.S. Department of State 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; Committee to Protect Journalists 2013b. “Attacks on the Press in 2012.” ; Nordenson 2017; Committee to Protect Journalists 2019; Enough 2019; Reporters Sans Frontières 2019)

⁶⁹The Social Reform Society also founded a website, www.eslah.com, in 2002, but there was insufficient evidence to determine its posting frequency in 2002 and 2003.

Path: 2011-2017

The “Path” (Nahj) movement did not have any media during this period. (Committee to Protect Journalists 2012; Freedom House 2012a. Freedom of the Press, 2013a. Freedom of the Press, 2014a. Freedom of the Press, 2015a. Freedom of the Press, 2016a. Freedom of the Press; Human Rights Watch 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; U.S. Department of State 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; Committee to Protect Journalists 2013b. “Attacks on the Press in 2012.” ; Committee to Protect Journalists 2019; Reporters Sans Frontières 2019)

A Nation’s Dignity: 2013-2017

“A Nation’s Dignity” (Karamat Watan) had a blog (<https://karametwatan.wordpress.com>) but did not post to it frequently. The group had no other media. (Freedom House 2014a. Freedom of the Press, 2015a. Freedom of the Press, 2016a. Freedom of the Press Human Rights Watch 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; U.S. Department of State 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; Nordenson 2017; Committee to Protect Journalists 2019; Nation’s Dignity 2019; Reporters Sans Frontières 2019)

Popular Action Bloc: 2013-2017

The Popular Action Bloc had no media in this period. (Freedom House 2014a. Freedom

of the Press, 2015a. Freedom of the Press, 2016a. Freedom of the Press Human Rights Watch 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; U.S. Department of State 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; Committee to Protect Journalists 2019; Europa 2019g. “Political Organizations (Kuwait)” ; Popular Action Bloc 2019; Reporters Sans Frontières 2019)

MAURITANIA

Union of Democratic Forces/Rally of Democratic Forces: 1992-2004, 2009-2017

Beginning in 2003, the UFD/RFD had a website (www.rfd-mauritanie.org), but did not post to it frequently during any of the years it was coded as a significant opposition group.⁷⁰ The group does not appear to have had any other media outlets during this period. (Human Rights Watch 1993; Europa Publications 1995; U.S. Department of State 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2009, 2010b. “World Report 2010” , 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017; Committee to Protect Journalists 1997, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2019; Freedom House 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009a, 2010, 2011a, 2012a. Freedom of the Press, 2013a. Freedom of the Press, 2014a. Freedom of the Press, 2015a. Freedom of the Press, 2016a. Freedom of the Press; Europa Publications 2005; International Research & Exchanges Board 2010, 2011b. Development of Sustainable Independent Media in Africa; Europa World 2019o. Society

⁷⁰Due to a paucity of successful captures by the Internet Archive for 2003 and 2004, these years did not qualify the RCD as having media. There was also a lack of evidence for 2009. Although the site had at least 24 posts in 2008 (when Mauritania was a democracy), in 2010, there were only five posts over the 249 days for which there was evidence from the Internet Archive, a rate of approximately one every seven weeks. Thus 2009 was not counted. In 2011 and 2012 there were no posts. There was a lack of sufficient captures in 2013-2017; therefore, the latter years were not counted.

and Media (Mauritania); Rassemblement des Forces Démocratiques 2019; Reporters Sans Frontières 2019)

Opposition Parties Front: 1998-2005

The FPO does not appear to have had any media outlets during this period. (Committee to Protect Journalists 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003; U.S. Department of State 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005; Freedom House 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006; Europa Publications 2005; Reporters Sans Frontières 2019)

National Front for the Defense of Democracy: 2009-2016

The FNDD does not appear to have had any media outlets during this period. (Freedom House 2010, 2011a, 2012a, 2013a, 2014a, 2015a, 2016a; International Research & Exchanges Board 2010, 2011b. Development of Sustainable Independent Media in Africa; U.S. Department of State 2010, 2011b. Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017; Committee to Protect Journalists 2019; Europa World 2019o. Society and Media (Mauritania); Reporters Sans Frontières 2019)

Coordination of Democratic Opposition: 2010-2017

The COD does not appear to have had any media outlets during this period. (Freedom House 2011a, 2012a, 2013a, 2014a, 2015a, 2016a; International Research & Exchanges Board 2011b. Development of Sustainable Independent Media in Africa; U.S. Department of State 2011b. Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2010, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; Committee to Protect Journalists 2019; Europa World 2019o. Society and Media (Mauritania); Reporters Sans Frontières 2019)

National Rally for Reform and Development: 2013-2017

The RNRD (Tewassoul)-affiliated satellite TV channel Al Mourabiton was launched in 2012, initially broadcasting illegally from outside the country. The government gave Al Mourabiton a license to broadcast from within Mauritania in May 2013. Although some programs were suspended, the channel was allowed to broadcast until the government shut down its offices and prevented broadcasting in October 2017.⁷¹ By 2013, the party also had a website (<http://tewassoul.org>), to which it posted actively in 2013 and 2014, but abandoned in 2015.⁷² That year, the party launched a new website (<http://tewassoul.mr>), on which it posted frequently during 2015-2017.⁷³ Neither site appears to have been blocked while it

⁷¹The channel had an associated website (<http://elmourabiton.tv>) since 2012, but evidence from the website and the Internet Archive was insufficient to determine how often the site was updated in any year in 2012-2017 (El Mourabiton 2019a; El Mourabiton 2019b; Whois. 2019h).

⁷²The site had more than 23 posts in 2013 and 2014. In 2015, evidence from the Internet Archive is only available from January 1 through April 29, but during that time, there were only 2 new posts. At the only other snapshot that year (July 18), the site displayed a “Service Temporarily Unavailable” error. In 2016 and 2017, the site had been taken over by another organization, publishing in a foreign language.

⁷³Evidence from the Internet Archive indicates that there were more than 23 posts in each year in this period.

was active. (L'Expression 2012; Gueye 2013; All Africa 2014; Freedom House 2014a, 2015a, 2016a; BBC Monitoring: Middle East 2015; Agence Ecofin 2016; APANews 2017; Morgan 2017; BBC Monitoring: Middle East 2018; Committee to Protect Journalists 2019; Europa World 2019o. Society and Media (Mauritania); Rassemblement National pour la Réforme et le Développement 2019a, 2019b; Reporters Sans Frontières 2019; U.S. Central Intelligence Agency. 2019c. "Mauritania.")

National Forum for Democracy and Unity: 2014-2017

The FNDU does not appear to have had any media outlets during this period. (Freedom House 2015a, 2016a; U.S. Department of State 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; Committee to Protect Journalists 2019; Europa World 2019o. Society and Media (Mauritania); Reporters Sans Frontières 2019)

MOROCCO

Independence Party: 1992-1997

The Parti de l'Istiqlal founded a daily newspaper, *Al-Alam*, in the 1940s. The party founded another daily newspaper, *l'Opinion*, in the 1960s. Neither paper was suspended during the period 1992-1997. (Damis 1972; Europa Publications 1989; Drost 1991; U.S.

Department of State 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998; Human Rights Watch 1992; Reuters 1995b. “Press Digest — Morocco.” ; Human Rights Watch 1996; Reuters 1997c. “Press Digest — Morocco.” ; Europa Publications 1999; Rugh 2004; Boum and Park 2016; Independence Party 2019)

Socialist Union of Popular Forces: 1992-1997

The Socialist Union of Popular Forces (USFP) founded a daily called *Libération* in 1964 and another daily called *Al-Ittihad Al-Ichtiraki* in 1983. Neither publication was suspended during 1992-1997. (Europa Publications 1989; Drost 1991; U.S. Department of State 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998; Human Rights Watch 1992; Reuters 1995b “Press Digest — Morocco.” ; Human Rights Watch 1996; Reuters 1997c. “Press Digest — Morocco.” ; Europa Publications 1999; Rugh 2004; Boum and Park 2016; Europa World 2019p. “Society and Media (Morocco).” ; Socialist Union of Popular Forces 2019a, 2019b)

Justice and Charity: 1990-2017

Justice and Charity (al-Adl wal-Ihsan, commonly known as Ihsan for short) had no media during 1990-1998. In 1983, it had attempted to launch a twice-monthly magazine, *As-Subh*, but it was banned after its second issue. Thus, the group is coded as having a suppressed media outlet in 1990. In 1999, the group received authorization to print the weekly *Risalat al-Fotowa* (Message of the Youth), the official publication of Ihsan’s youth wing, but the government banned the newspaper in 2000 and it remained banned through 2017. In 2000,

the group tried to print a weekly entitled *al-Adl wal-Ihsan*, but the government immediately prevented its distribution, and the publication remained banned through 2017. Ihsan's leader, Sheikh Abdesslam Yassine, launched the website Yassine.net in 2000, although it remained under construction until 2004. The site was active during 2004-2008 and 2011-2017.⁷⁴ Ihsan launched a website with multiple versions in 2000: AlJamaa.org, AlJamaa.net, and AlJamaa.com (Whois 2019b., 2019c., 2019d., 2019e.).⁷⁵ Typically one site was active at any given time, with the other versions redirecting to it, so I treat AlJamaa as a single site with multiple versions. There was insufficient evidence for posting frequency on any version of the site in 2000, but at least one version of the site posted actively in each year during 2001-2017.⁷⁶ Ihsan launched a site for its female followers, Mouminate.net, in 2005 and it posted actively throughout 2006-2016.⁷⁷ Nadia Yassine, daughter of Abdesslam Yassine and a spokesperson for the group, launched a website, nadiayassine.net in 2005. In most years there was either insufficient evidence on posting frequency or the evidence indicated that the site posted less than 24 times in a year, except 2011, when the site was active.⁷⁸ Ihsan launched an online TV channel, Chahed.tv, in 2013, and the site was active throughout 2013-2017.⁷⁹ The Moroccan government blocked access in the country to all of Ihsan's active

⁷⁴In 2009, it was only possibly to determine the number of posts during a 123-day period, during which time 8 posts were added to the site. The annualized rate is slightly less than 24, so the year is treated as inactive. In 2010, there was insufficient evidence to determine frequency, so that year is also treated as inactive, since it was inactive in 2009.

⁷⁵AlJamaa.info was added in 2004.

⁷⁶AlJamma.org posted at least 24 posts in 2001, AlJamaa.com posted sufficiently frequently in 2002-2005, and AlJamaa.net posted frequently throughout 2006-2017.

⁷⁷There was insufficient evidence to determine posting frequency in 2005. In 2008, there were 20 posts during the 120-day period for which there was evidence, an annualized rate of more than 23. There was insufficient evidence to directly assess posting frequency in 2010, but the site was assumed to be active in this year, since it was active in both 2009 and 2011. Similarly, despite sufficient direct evidence to determine 2014 posting frequency, this year was assumed to be active because the site was active in 2013 and 2015. There was insufficient evidence to determine posting frequency in 2017, but that year was assumed inactive, because starting in July 2017 and persisting through 2018, all captures of the site by the Internet Archive resulted in 403 errors.

⁷⁸In 2005-2007, 2009-2010, and 2012-2017, there was insufficient evidence on posting frequency. In 2008, there were 5 new posts in the 165-day period for which there was evidence, which is an annualized rate of only 11 posts. During March 2016, all Internet Archive captures of the site encountered 404 errors, and there were no further captures of the site. The site is currently inactive as of October 2019. It appears that the site was no longer in operation from March 2016 on.

⁷⁹The group also launched the website fotowa.com in 2000, but it never posted sufficiently frequently to qualify.

websites from April 2001 until 2005, and for parts of 2006 and 2009. (Europa Publications 1989; Drost 1991; U.S. Department of State 1991, 1992, 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011b. “Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2010.” , 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; Human Rights Watch 1992, 1996, 2002, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010b. “World Report 2010” , 2011, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; Kokan 1994; Bouzerda 1995; BBC Monitoring: Middle East. 1998a. “Islamist movement denounces ‘repression’.” ; Committee to Protect Journalists 1999, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2014a. Attacks on the Press in 2013; Europa Publications 1999; Bouzerda, Ali. 2000a. “Moroccan Islamist says to end 10-year-house arrest.” ; Bouzerda, Ali. 2000b. “Morocco’s Islamist chief free, group still shackled.” ; Khalaf 2000; Reuters 2000; BBC Monitoring: Media 2001; BBC Monitoring: Middle East 2001; Reuters. 2001c. “Morocco bans access to radical Islamists’ websites.” ; Freedom House 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009a. Freedom of the Press 2009; 2010b. Freedom of the Press 2010; 2011a. Freedom of the Press 2011; 2012a. Freedom of the Press 2012; 2013a. Freedom of the Press; 2013b. Freedom on the Net 2013; 2014a. Freedom of the Press 2014a.; 2014b. Freedom on the Net 2014; 2015a. Freedom of the Press 2015; 2015b. Freedom on the Net 2015; 2016a. Freedom of the Press 2016; 2016b. Freedom on the Net 2016; 2017. Freedom of the Press 2017; 2017b. Freedom on the Net; 2018b. Freedom on the Net 2018b; International Research & Exchanges Board 2006; Thorne 2006; BBC Monitoring: Media 2009a “Morocco: Websites of Islamic movement inaccessible since 17 January.” ; Rubin 2010; BBC Monitoring: Middle East. 2013c. “Morocco’s Islamist party reportedly launches TV channel.” ; Europa Publications 2013; Motaouakal 2014; Al-Chahed 2019; A. Yassine 2019; Europa World 2019h. “Political Organizations (Morocco).” ; Europa World 2019p. “Society and Media (Morocco).” ; Justice and Spirituality 2019a, 2019b, 2019c, 2019d; N. Yassine 2019; Partrick, Neill 2019a. “History (Morocco).” ; Sisters of the Hereafter 2019; Whois 2019b “aljamma.com” ; Whois 2019c “aljamma.info” ; Whois 2019e “aljamma.org” ; Whois 2019d “aljamma.net” ; Whois 2019o. “yassine.net” ; Whois

2019m. “nadiayassine.net” ; Whois 2019l. “mouminate.net” ; Whois 2019g. “chahed.tv”)

Democratic Bloc: 1993-1997

The Democratic Bloc did not have any media of its own. It is nonetheless coded as having permitted media during this period its leading members, Istiqlal and the USFP, were significant opposition parties that had legally permitted media. (U.S. Department of State 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998; Human Rights Watch 1996; Europa Publications 1999; Rugh 2004; Boum and Park 2016)

SUDAN

Umma National Party: 2000-2017

The Umma National Party launched a website, umma.org, in 1998. However, it was only intermittently active, posting 24 or more times per year only in 2010 and 2017. The website was never blocked.⁸⁰ The party started legally publishing a weekly newspaper, Sawt Al Umma, in 2007 and it published without interference until closed due to financial difficulties in 2012.⁸¹ (Committee to Protect Journalists 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005,

⁸⁰Previously, the Umma National Party (then the Umma Party) had a daily newspaper, Al Umma, but it was not published during 2000-2017.

⁸¹Sawt al-Umma had previously been banned in 1989, but this is outside the seven-year window, so the group is not coded as having suppressed media in any year.

2008, 2009, 2010, 2011b. Attacks on the Press in 2010, 2012, 2013b. Attacks on the Press in 2012, 2014a. Attacks on the Press in 2013; Human Rights Watch 2001, 2002, 2003, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010b. “World Report 2010” , 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; U.S. Department of State 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011b. “Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2010.” ; 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018; Freedom House 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009a. Freedom of the Press 2009, 2010b. Freedom of the Press 2010, 2011a. Freedom of the Press 2011, 2012a Freedom of the Press, 2013a. Freedom of the Press, 2013b. Freedom on the Net 2013, 2014 Freedom of the Press 2014a., 2014b. Freedom on the Net 2014, 2015a. Freedom of the Press 2015, 2015b. Freedom on the Net 2015, 2016a. Freedom of the Press 2016, 2016b. Freedom on the Net 2016, 2017b. Freedom on the Net 2017, 2018b. Freedom on the Net 2018; Europa Publications 2005; OpenNet Initiative 2009d. “Sudan.” ; Deckert 2012; International Research & Exchanges Board 2013; Kramer, Lobban, and Fluehr-Lobban 2013; Committee to Protect Journalists 2019; Cover SD 2019; Elawad 2019a; Elawad 2019b; Europa World 2019 “Media and Society (Sudan).” ; Europa World 2019i. “Political Organizations (Sudan).” ; Gallab 2019; OpenNet Initiative 2019d. “Internet Filtering in Sudan in 2006-2007.” ; Reporters Sans Frontières 2019; Shaib 2019; Umma National Party 2019; Whois 2019n. “umma.org”)

TUNISIA

Renaissance Party: 1992-1999

The Renaissance Party (Nahda) did not publish any media during 1992-1999.⁸² (Donnadiou 1992; U.S. Department of State 1993, 1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000; Kr'amer 1994)

YEMEN

Yemeni Unionist Gathering: 1992-1998

Shortly after it was founded in 1990, the Yemeni Unionist Gathering began publishing a weekly newspaper, *At-Tajammu*. The newspaper was temporarily suspended in 1994 and 1996, but otherwise published throughout 1992-1998. (Reuters 1991a. "500 Somali Refugees Try Their Luck in Aden" ; Index on Censorship 1992; Human Rights Watch 1993; Youssef 1993; BBC Monitoring: Middle East 1994a. "Coeducation in South Yemen Abolished; Press Censorship Reportedly Introduced." ; "Tachau 1994; BBC Monitoring: Middle East 1996c. "Newspapers Report Increased Opposition Activity in the South." ; Committee to Protect Journalists 1996; Index on Censorship 1996; Committee to Protect Journalists 1997; Human

⁸²Nahda began publishing a weekly, El-Fajr, in 1990. In 1991, the government permanently closed El-Fajr.

Rights 1997; U.S. Department of State 1997; Committee to Protect Journalists 1999; Europa Publications 1999; Rugh 2004)

Yemeni Socialist Party: 1995-2000

The Yemeni Socialist Party launched *Ath-Thawri* as its official weekly journal when it was the ruling party of South Yemen, prior to the 1990 unification. Although the paper was suspended temporarily in 1994 after the outbreak of the civil war that pitted the YSP against the ruling GPC, it was operational again by 1995. Though its journalists were subjected to regular harassment, *Ath-Thawri* was not suspended during the 1995-2000 period. (Cigar 1990; BBC Monitoring: Middle East 1995; Reuters 1995c. “Yemen opposition party says members being arrested.” ; Committee to Protect Journalists 1996; Reuters 1996b. “Yemeni tribesmen release kidnapped oilmen — paper.” ; Committee to Protect Journalists 1997; Human Rights Watch 1997; U.S. Department of State 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001; Committee to Protect Journalists 1999; Europa Publications 1999; Human Rights Watch 2000; Rugh 2004; Schmitz and Burrowes 2018)

Yemeni Congregation for Reform: 2001-2011

The Yemeni Congregation for Reform (Islah) founded a weekly newspaper, *As-Sahwa*, in 1985. It published continuously during 2001-2010, so is coded as permitted in those years. The publication was actively printing and allowed during the first few months of 2011, but on May 25, 2011 armed supporters of Saleh attacked the newspaper’s headquarters and

the publication of the print edition was halted, so this event is coded as a banning. The party launched a website affiliated with the paper, www.alsahwa-yemen.net, in 2001, and the site published actively throughout 2001-2010, without interference. On May 25, 2011, armed supporters of Saleh attacked the office of the website, delaying posts to the site for a few days. Later that year, the government blocked access to the site within Yemen.⁸³ Islah launched the website www.al-islam.net in 2003 and it posted actively in 2004-2011 without interference.⁸⁴ Islah launched a satellite television channel, Suhail, which began broadcasting regularly in January 2010. I code the channel as not permitted by the Saleh government in 2010, as it was broadcast from outside Yemen, but by 2011, the channel had an office in Sana'a. Armed supporters of Saleh attacked the Sana'a office on May 25, 2011 and its transmission was halted until the next day. A website affiliated with Suhail TV, www.suhail.net, was launched in 2009 and actively posted in 2010.⁸⁵ (Europa Publications 1999; Human Rights Watch 2002, 2009, 2010b. "World Report 2010." , 2011, 2012, 2016, 2017, 2018; Freedom House 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009a. "Freedom of the Press" , 2010, 2011a. "Freedom of the Press" , 2012a. "Freedom of the Press" , 2016a. "Freedom of the Press" ; U.S. Department of State 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011b. "Country Reports on Human Rights Practices for 2010." , 2012, 2016, 2017, 2018; BBC Monitoring: Middle East 2003; Seddon 2004; Committee to Protect Journalists 2005, 2008, 2009, 2010 "Attacks on the Press in 2009." , 2011b. "Attacks on the Press in 2010." , 2012; Browers 2007; BBC Monitoring: Media 2009b "Yemen: Suhayl satellite television channel launches news website." ; BBC Monitoring: Middle East 2009b. "Paper reports on trial broadcasting of new Yemeni satellite channel." ; BBC Monitoring: Middle East 2009a. "Kuwait-based Yemeni TV shut down on official orders." ; Salmoni, Loidolt, and Wells 2010; BBC Monitoring: Middle East 2011; Committee to Protect Journalists 2011a. "Yemen shells TV station, news

⁸³Prior to the May 25, 2011 attack, the website was publishing at an annualized rate of at least 24 posts per year, so it is regarded as active at the time of the effective banning of the site.

⁸⁴There was insufficient evidence to determine posting frequency in 2003. During most of 2007, the site redirected to www.islah-forums.net.

⁸⁵There was insufficient evidence to determine the frequency of posting to the site in 2009 or 2011.

agency, online newspaper” ; Reporters Sans Frontières 2011a; Reuters 2011a ; Reporters Sans Frontières 2011c; Yemen Post 2011; BBC Monitoring: Media 2012; CDAC Network 2012; Dubai Press Club 2012; Europa Publications 2013; ForeignAffairs.co.nz 2014; Yadav 2014; Committee to Protect Journalists 2015; Bakhsh 2017; Fanack 2017; Schmitz and Burrowes 2018; Al-Islah 2019; Al-Sahwah Net 2019; Anonymous Yemeni journalist 2019; OpenNet Initiative. 2019e. “Yemen.” Suhail Net 2019; Whois 2019f. “alsahwa-yemen.net” ; Whois 2019a. “al-islam.net”)

Appendix 5: Regime Leaders

The following is a list of all the de facto regime leaders who ruled during the regime-years in the dataset. This information was used to construct the variables *leader_year_office* and *regime_first_leader*. Goemans, Gleditsch, and Chiozza (2009)⁸⁶ and Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2014) also code de facto regime leaders. Where my coding of leaders differs from either of theirs, I explain my reasoning in the footnotes and provide sources.

⁸⁶The Archigos dataset of government leaders can be found at: <https://www.rochester.edu/college/faculty/hgoemans/data.htm>

ALGERIA

Nezzar

Start: January 11, 1992⁸⁷

End: January 31, 1994

Years in dataset: 1992-1993

First leader of regime: Yes

Zeroual

Start: January 31, 1994

⁸⁷My coding for this period departs from Goemans, Gleditsch, and Chiozza (2009), who code Mohamed Boudiaf and Ali Kafi as Algeria's leaders from January 14, 1992 to June 29, 1992 and July 2, 1992 to January 31, 1994, respectively. My coding is consistent with the Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2014). Naylor (2015, 407) observes: "Nezzar played the most prominent role in plotting and executing the deposal of President Benjedid by the coup of January 1992. He subsequently became recognized as the most powerful figure within the Haut Conseil d'état (HCE), the collegial executive that took over the government." This view of Nezzar as first among equals in the junta was observed in numerous contemporaneous accounts. An article in the *Middle East Economic Digest* (1992f. "Political Crisis Reaches Climax with Resignation of President Chadli") observed two weeks after the coup that "The dominant figures in the military leadership are Defence Minister General Khaled Nezzar and chief-of-staff Abdelmalek Guenaizia" and a Reuters (1993) article argued in February of the following year that "Nezzar is seen as the strongman in the army-backed presidency." This view did not alter after Nezzar resigned as defense minister in July 1993. Ghanmi (1993) reported the following month that Nezzar was still "widely regarded as the strongest figure" on the ruling council and the *Middle East Economic Digest* (1993b. "Nezzar to Withdraw from Political Life When Mandate of Higher Council of State Expires") reported in October of 1993 that "Nezzar has been regarded as the directing force within the HCS [High Council of State]." See also: Baggaley (1992f. "Five-Man Body Takes Charge of Algeria") and *Middle East Economic Digest* (1993a. "Military Shake-Up Strengthens Hard Line.").

End: April 27, 1999

Years in dataset: 1994-1998

First leader of regime: No

Bouteflika

Start: April 27, 1999

End: Remained in power December 31, 2017⁸⁸

Years in dataset: 1999-2017

First leader of regime: No

BAHRAIN

Hamad Isa Ibn Al-Khalifah

Start: March 6, 1999

⁸⁸Economist Intelligence Unit 2018a.

End: Remained in power December 31, 2017⁸⁹

Years in dataset: 2002-2017

First leader of regime: No

EGYPT

Mubarak

Start: October 14, 1981

End: February 11, 2011

Years in dataset: 1992-2010

First leader of regime: No

Tantawi

Start: February 11, 2011

⁸⁹Economist Intelligence Unit 2018b.

End: August 12, 2012⁹⁰

Years in dataset: 2011-2012

First leader of regime: Yes

As-Sisi

Start: July 3, 2013⁹¹

End: Remained in power December 31, 2017⁹²

Years in dataset: 2014-2017

First leader of regime: Yes

⁹⁰President Mohammed Morsi forced Tantawi and several other top military leaders in the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) to resign and revoked the SCAF's June decree expanding its powers. (After dissolving the parliament in June 2012, the SCAF had placed restrictions on the power of the president and assumed authority over law-making, the military budget, and the drafting of a new constitution.) The dismissals were not challenged by the SCAF and are seen as the moment when the balance of power shifted from the SCAF to Morsi's government. (Freedom House 2013 "Freedom in the World" ; Lansford 2017; Europa World 2019a. "Contemporary Political History (Egypt).")

⁹¹The military ousted Morsi in a coup and Egypt was thereafter ruled by General Abd al Fatah As-Sisi, the Commander in Chief of the armed forces and Minister of Defense and Military Production. As-initially was a de facto ruler, having appointed a civilian president. After violently suppressing the Muslim Brotherhood, As-Sisi was elected president in 2014 (Lansford 2017; Europa World 2019a. "Contemporary Political History (Egypt).").

⁹²Europa World 2019a. "Contemporary Political History (Egypt)" .

JORDAN

Hussein Ibn Talal Al-Hashemi

Start: August 11, 1952

End: February 7, 1999

Years in dataset: 1992-1998

First leader of regime: No

Abdullah Ibn Hussein Al-Hashemi

Start: February 7, 1999

End: Remained in power December 31, 2017⁹³

Years in dataset: 1999-2017

First leader of regime: No

⁹³Economist Intelligence Unit 2018c.

KUWAIT

Jabir As-Sabah

Start: January 1, 1978⁹⁴

End: September 21, 2001⁹⁵

Years in dataset: 1997-2003

First leader of regime: No

⁹⁴From August 8, 1990 to April 20, 1991, Goemans, Gleditsch, and Chiozza (2009) reasonably code Saddam Hussein as the de facto leader of Kuwait, due to the Iraqi occupation of the country. Nonetheless, I code the leader year in office variable for Jabir As-Sabah with reference to his ascension to the throne in 1978, because this variable is meant to capture how long a ruler has had to consolidate his support base. I assume that the king did not have to completely start over in this respect after the Iraqi withdrawal in 1991.

⁹⁵The end date of Jabir As-Sabah's rule/the start date of Sabah Al-Ahmad's rule is different from Goemans, Gleditsch, and Chiozza (2009) and Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2014), who code the former as ruling until his death in 2006 and the latter as beginning his rule soon after when he was formally crowned as emir. Numerous sources report that Sabah Al-Ahmad became Kuwait's "de facto" ruler when his predecessor had a stroke on September 21, 2001 (Agence France Presse 2001b; Economist Intelligence Unit 2003; Agence France Presse 2006; Fattah 2006; Global Security 2019). Goemans, Gleditsch, and Chiozza (2009) also code Saad Abdullah As-Salem As-Sabah as ruling from January 15, 2006, when he was formally crowned, until January 24, 2006, when the ruling family forced Saad to abdicate, transferring power to Sabah Al-Ahmad (Economist Intelligence Unit 2003; Fattah 2006). Saad was in extremely poor health during the brief period he held the title of emir, and there is no indication that he exercised any meaningful power during this time. (During the 2001-2006 period, Saad had been the crown prince, but by the time of the emir's stroke in 2001, "due to [Saad's] health problems," Saad had "delegated extensive authority to Sheikh Sabah al-Ahmad al-Sabah" [Agence France Presse 2001b].) In any case, if this period were treated as a genuine interregnum, it would not affect the coding of Sabah Al-Ahmad as the leader of Kuwait for most of 2006. Nor would it be sensible to code the leader year in office variable as resetting to 1 when Sabah Al-Ahmad was crowned, for reasons similar to the coding of his predecessor after 1990. (See previous footnote.) Underscoring that Sabah Al-Ahmad had built up power since 2001 that he continue to wield on formally becoming emir, the Economist Intelligence Unit (2003: 3) said of Sabah Al-Ahmad a couple months after the succession that "power is firmly in his hands, as confirmed by his choice of two members of his branch of the family as crown prince and prime minister, and by his appointments to the new government."

Sabah Al-Ahmad

Start: September 21, 2001

End: Remained in power December 31, 2017⁹⁶

Years in dataset: 2011-2017

First leader of regime: No

MAURITANIA

Ould Taya

Start: December 12, 1984

End: August 3, 2005

Years in dataset: 1992-2005

First leader of regime: No

⁹⁶Economist Intelligence Unit 2018d.

Ould Abdel Aziz

Start: August 6, 2008

End: Remained in power December 31, 2017⁹⁷

Years in dataset: 2009-2017

First leader of regime: Yes

⁹⁷Goemans, Gleditsch, and Chiozza (2009) code Ba Mamadou M'Baré as Mauritania's leader from April 15 to August 5, 2009. Abdel Aziz resigned from the presidency and the military on April 15, 2009, in order to be legally eligible to run in the upcoming presidential election (Agence France Presse 2009b "Mauritanian junta leader to run for president"). Senate President M'Baré was appointed the interim president (BBC Monitoring: Middle East 2009c. "Senegal's foreign minister meets ousted Mauritanian leader behind closed doors."). As Boucek (2009) writes, "It is unclear, however, whether Abdel-Aziz ever truly resigned from the military junta" and the junta continued to govern in the form of the High Council of State, which was led by an ally of Abdel Aziz (Agyeman-Togobo, Kissy 2009b "Election 2009: Mauritanian Junta Alters Timetable for Presidential Candidates, Opposition Cries Foul." ; Reuters 2009; Voice of America 2009a. Mauritania Military and Politicians Agree to Postpone Saturday's Election). In particular, it controlled state media, which promoted Abdel Aziz as "the poor people's president" (Ould Sadi 2009). Abdel Aziz also became the head of the new ruling party within weeks of resigning (Agence France Presse 2009a "Former Mauritanian junta chief elected party head."). In June, a few weeks before the election, a transitional government was formed that included members of the opposition. However, Abdel Aziz appointed half of the ministers in the cabinet, including the prime minister (Voice of America 2009b. "Power-Sharing Deal Signed in Mauritania."). Moreover, Abdel Aziz retained clear control of "the machinery of state" as he campaigned for president, for instance, "lowering prices on electricity, water, sugar, and gas" (Pitman 2009). Abdel Aziz won the presidential election on July 18, but the head of Mauritania's election commission resigned soon after over concerns over "the reliability of the election" (Agyeman-Togobo 2009a. Election 2009: Court Confirms Former Junta Leader Mauritanian President) and Freedom House (2010a. Freedom in the World 2010) notes: "Serious doubts have been raised about the legitimacy of the 2009 presidential election." Thus, I code Abdel Aziz as remaining in power throughout 2009.

MOROCCO

Hassan II

Start: February 26, 1961

End: July 23, 1999

Years in dataset: 1992-1999

First leader of regime: No

Mohammed VI

Start: July 23, 1999

End: Remained in power December 31, 2017⁹⁸

Years in dataset: 2000-2017

First leader of regime: No

⁹⁸Europa World 2019b. "Contemporary Political History (Morocco)"

SUDAN

Al-Bashir

Start: December 12, 1999⁹⁹

End: Remained in power December 31, 2017¹⁰⁰

Years in dataset: 2000-2017

First leader of regime: No

TUNISIA

Ben Ali

Start: November 7, 1987

⁹⁹Although Goemans, Gleditsch, and Chiozza (2009) code Al-Bashir as the ruler of Sudan since the 1989 coup, numerous sources indicate that Hassan At-Turabi, leader of the National Islamic Front, was the “power behind the throne” in the first decade of the regime (Joffe 2016; Human Rights Watch 2019). (See also Woodward 2009.) In 1999, the National Assembly, of which At-Turabi was the speaker, introduced legislation to restrict the power of the presidency, which Al-Bashir held (Europa World 2019d. “Contemporary Political History (Sudan)” ; Human Rights Watch 2019). Al-Bashir dissolved the assembly on December 12, 1999, before the vote could be held and imposed emergency rule (Europa World 2019d. “Contemporary Political History (Sudan)”). Thus, I follow Geddes, Wright, and Frantz (2014) in coding this episode as the leadership transition from At-Turabi to Al-Bashir.

¹⁰⁰Economist Intelligence Unit 2018f.

End: January 14, 2011

Years in dataset: 1992-1999

First leader of regime: No

YEMEN

Saleh

Start: July 17, 1978

End: February 27, 2012

Years in dataset: 1992-2011

First leader of regime: Yes

Appendix 6: Histograms of continuous explanatory variables

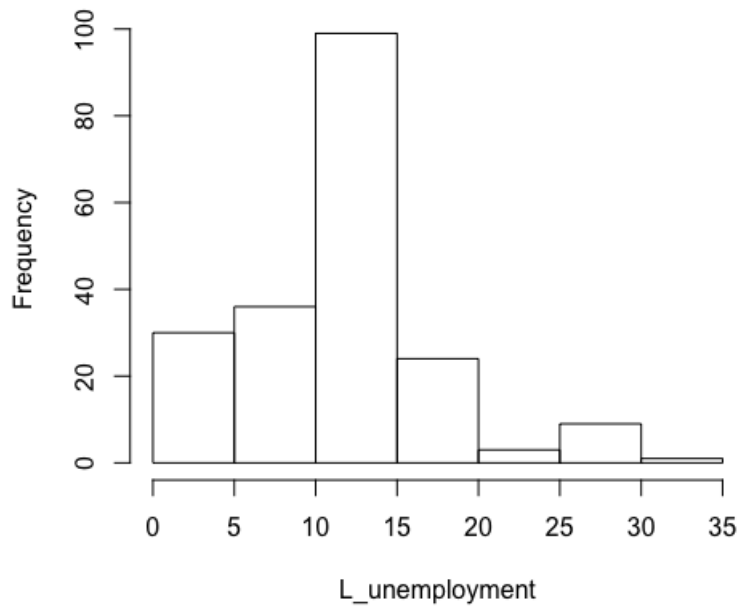


Figure 5.1: Distribution of unemployment rate (percentage)

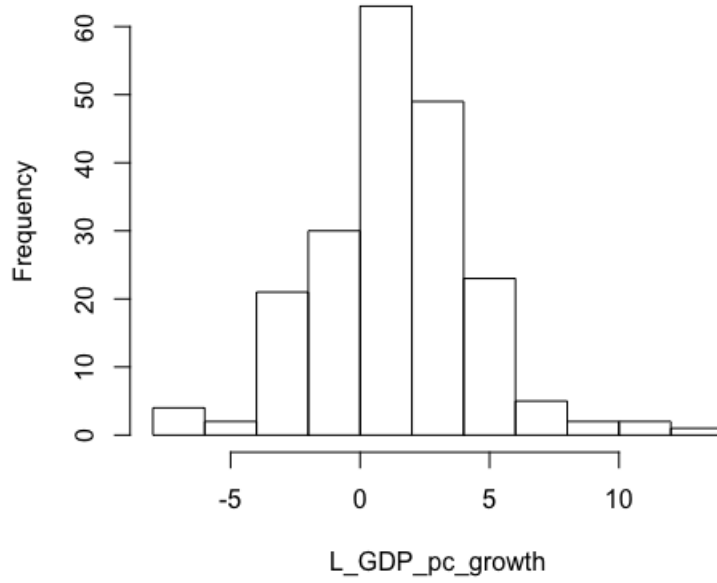


Figure 5.2: Distribution of annual GDP per capita growth (percentage)

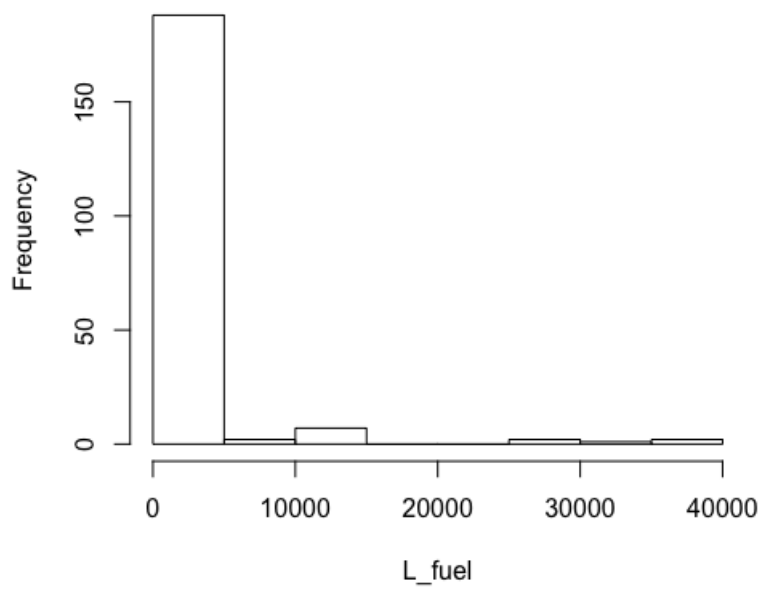


Figure 5.3: Distribution of fuel revenue per capita (2018 USD)

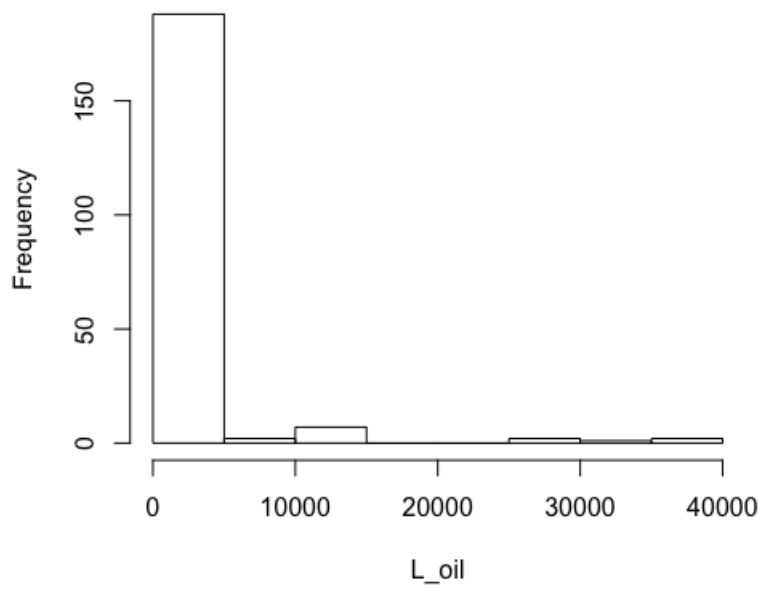


Figure 5.4: Distribution of oil revenue per capita (2018 USD)

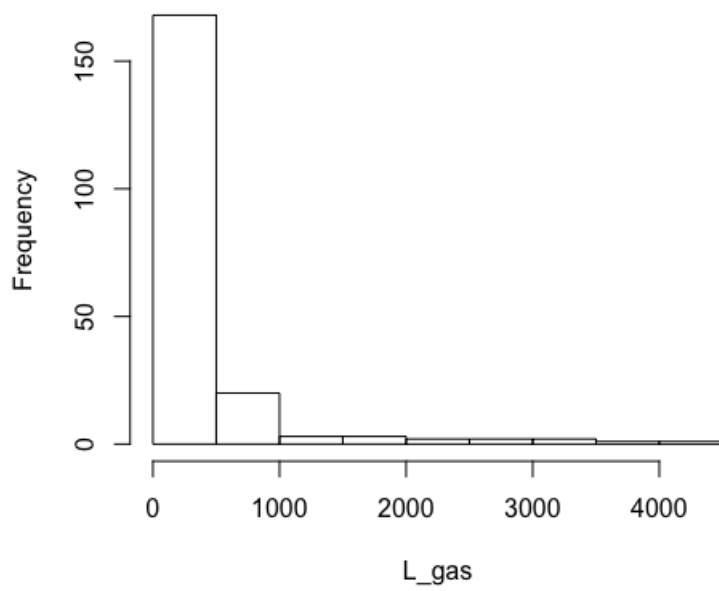


Figure 5.5: Distribution of natural gas revenue per capita (2018 USD)

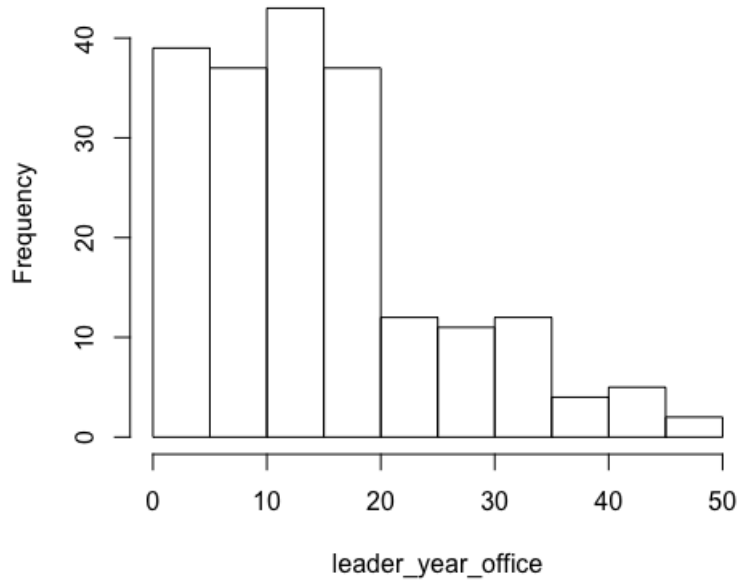


Figure 5.6: Distribution of years regime leader has been in power

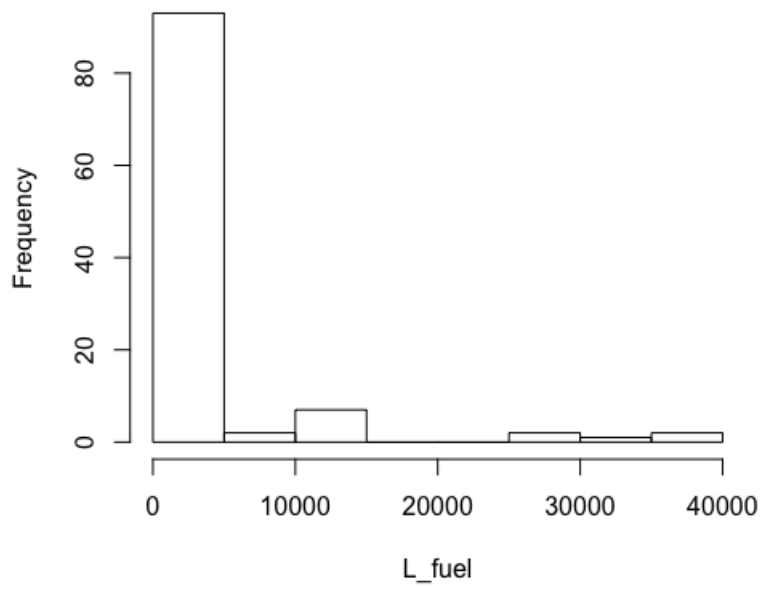


Figure 5.7: Distribution of fuel revenue per capita (2018 USD), given greater than 0

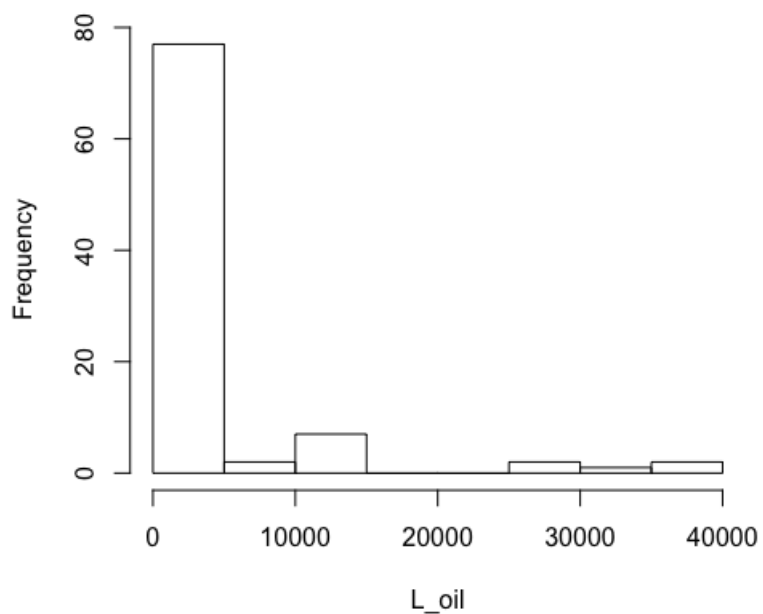


Figure 5.8: Distribution of oil revenue per capita (2018 USD), given greater than 0

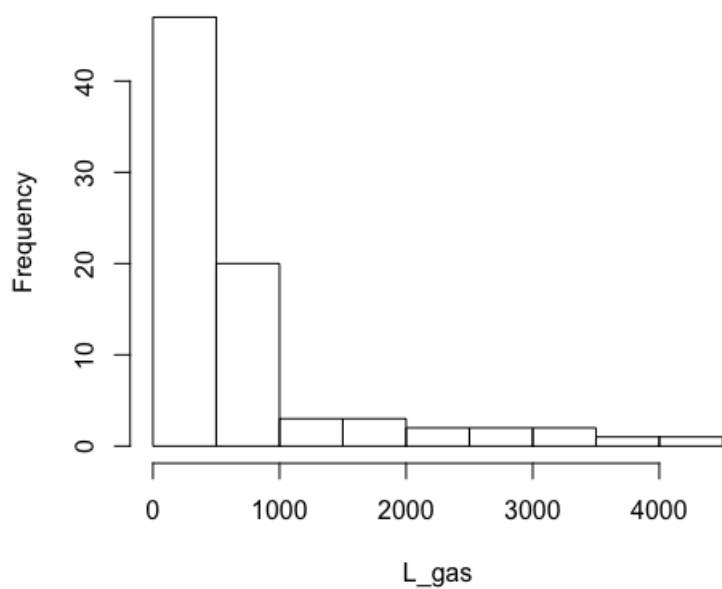


Figure 5.9: Distribution of natural gas revenue per capita (2018 USD), given greater than 0

Appendix 7: Dropping one regime at a time: *tolerated*

This appendix shows the results of re-estimating the linear probability model of *tolerated*, with one regime dropped at a time.

Table 5.1: Tolerated Opposition Media (Regime FE), dropped Algeria 1992-NA

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	tolerated
log(Lunemployment)	-1.202*** (0.168)
sqrt(LGDPpc.growth)	0.050** (0.021)
log(Lfuel + 1)	0.463*** (0.078)
log(leader.year.office)	0.140*** (0.047)
yrs0005	0.038 (0.083)
yrs0611	-0.205** (0.094)
yrs1217	-0.397*** (0.094)
Observations	176
R ²	0.447
Adjusted R ²	0.359

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.2: Tolerated Opposition Media (Regime FE), continued, dropped Algeria 1992-NA

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	tolerated
preselec	0.170* (0.097)
legelec	-0.090 (0.063)
leaderfail	0.101 (0.169)
Lcivilwar	0.081 (0.164)
ismain	0.234* (0.120)
groupsN	0.237*** (0.060)
Observations	176
R ²	0.447
Adjusted R ²	0.359

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.3: Tolerated Opposition Media (Regime FE), dropped Bahrain 1971-NA

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	tolerated
log(Lunemployment)	−0.913*** (0.154)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth	0.055** (0.023)
log(Lfuel + 1)	0.308*** (0.090)
log(leader.year.office)	0.102** (0.049)
regimefirstleader	−0.074 (0.319)
yrs0005	−0.040 (0.088)
yrs0611	−0.229** (0.106)
yrs1217	−0.467*** (0.107)
Observations	186
R ²	0.324
Adjusted R ²	0.219

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.4: Tolerated Opposition Media (Regime FE), continued, dropped Bahrain 1971-NA

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	tolerated
preselec	0.158* (0.094)
legelec	-0.081 (0.069)
leaderfail	0.117 (0.153)
Lcivilwar	0.188 (0.148)
ismain	0.335** (0.136)
groupsN	0.295*** (0.056)
Observations	186
R ²	0.324
Adjusted R ²	0.219

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.5: Tolerated Opposition Media (Regime FE), dropped Egypt 1952-2011

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	tolerated
log(Lunemployment)	-1.061*** (0.141)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth	0.052** (0.021)
log(Lfuel + 1)	0.298*** (0.079)
log(leader.year.office)	0.074 (0.047)
regimefirstleader	-0.190 (0.303)
yrs0005	-0.075 (0.092)
yrs0611	-0.386*** (0.102)
yrs1217	-0.582*** (0.097)
Observations	183
R ²	0.422
Adjusted R ²	0.329

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.6: Tolerated Opposition Media (Regime FE), continued, dropped Egypt 1952-2011

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	tolerated
preselec	0.239** (0.095)
legelec	-0.058 (0.065)
leaderfail	0.072 (0.144)
Lcivilwar	0.136 (0.141)
ismain	0.414*** (0.119)
groupsN	0.323*** (0.051)
Observations	183
R ²	0.422
Adjusted R ²	0.329

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.7: Tolerated Opposition Media (Regime FE), dropped Egypt 2011-2012

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	tolerated
log(Lunemployment)	-0.979*** (0.143)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth	0.049** (0.022)
log(Lfuel + 1)	0.358*** (0.079)
log(leader.year.office)	0.087* (0.047)
regimefirstleader	-0.101 (0.311)
yrs0005	-0.024 (0.085)
yrs0611	-0.252** (0.100)
yrs1217	-0.502*** (0.097)
Observations	200
R ²	0.375
Adjusted R ²	0.286

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.8: Tolerated Opposition Media (Regime FE), continued, dropped Egypt 2011-2012

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	tolerated
preselec	0.145 (0.093)
legelec	-0.064 (0.065)
leaderfail	0.151 (0.155)
Lcivilwar	0.215 (0.142)
ismain	0.338*** (0.123)
groupsN	0.306*** (0.053)
Observations	200
R ²	0.375
Adjusted R ²	0.286

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.9: Tolerated Opposition Media (Regime FE), dropped Egypt 2013-NA

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	tolerated
log(Lunemployment)	−0.971*** (0.144)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth	0.046** (0.022)
log(Lfuel + 1)	0.373*** (0.081)
log(leader.year.office)	0.085* (0.048)
regimefirstleader	−0.080 (0.312)
yrs0005	−0.025 (0.085)
yrs0611	−0.264*** (0.100)
yrs1217	−0.498*** (0.098)
Observations	198
R ²	0.374
Adjusted R ²	0.283

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.10: Tolerated Opposition Media (Regime FE), continued, dropped Egypt 2013-NA

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	tolerated
preselec	0.171* (0.094)
legelec	-0.073 (0.065)
leaderfail	0.115 (0.150)
Lcivilwar	0.220 (0.143)
ismain	0.339*** (0.123)
groupsN	0.303*** (0.053)
Observations	198
R ²	0.374
Adjusted R ²	0.283

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.11: Tolerated Opposition Media (Regime FE), dropped Jordan 1946-NA

	<i>Dependent variable:</i>
	tolerated
log(Lunemployment)	-1.033*** (0.154)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth	0.021 (0.025)
log(Lfuel + 1)	0.357*** (0.081)
log(leader.year.office)	0.063 (0.061)
regimefirstleader	-0.096 (0.317)
yrs0005	0.016 (0.090)
yrs0611	-0.161 (0.115)
yrs1217	-0.337*** (0.118)
Observations	176
R ²	0.377
Adjusted R ²	0.273

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.12: Tolerated Opposition Media (Regime FE), continued, dropped Jordan 1946-NA

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	tolerated
preselec	0.149 (0.091)
legelec	-0.045 (0.070)
leaderfail	0.143 (0.159)
Lcivilwar	0.268* (0.143)
ismain	0.306** (0.124)
groupsN	0.309*** (0.055)
Observations	176
R ²	0.377
Adjusted R ²	0.273

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.13: Tolerated Opposition Media (Regime FE), dropped Kuwait 1961-NA

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
tolerated	
log(Lunemployment)	-0.508*** (0.177)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth	0.048** (0.022)
log(Lfuel + 1)	0.503*** (0.084)
log(leader.year.office)	0.066 (0.051)
regimefirstleader	-0.171 (0.302)
yrs0005	-0.031 (0.086)
yrs0611	-0.158 (0.102)
yrs1217	-0.250** (0.113)
Observations	188
R ²	0.401
Adjusted R ²	0.308

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.14: Tolerated Opposition Media (Regime FE), continued, dropped Kuwait 1961-NA

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	tolerated
preselec	0.177** (0.088)
legelec	-0.065 (0.065)
leaderfail	0.146 (0.159)
Lcivilwar	0.234* (0.138)
ismain	0.335*** (0.121)
groupsN	0.356*** (0.053)
Observations	188
R ²	0.401
Adjusted R ²	0.308

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.15: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), dropped Mauritania 2008-NA

		<i>Dependent variable:</i>
		banned
log(Lunemployment)		0.237 (0.266)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth		−0.083*** (0.028)
log(Lfuel + 1)		−0.454*** (0.149)
log(leader.year.office)		−0.078 (0.056)
regimefirstleader		−0.019 (0.328)
yrs0005		0.061 (0.142)
yrs0610		0.264* (0.155)
yr11		0.456** (0.202)
yrs1217		0.179 (0.150)
Observations		124
R ²		0.256
Adjusted R ²	261	0.076

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.16: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), continued, dropped Mauritania 2008-NA

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
banned	
preselec	-0.056 (0.140)
legelec	0.069 (0.078)
leaderfail	0.178 (0.183)
Lcivilwar	-0.269 (0.199)
ismain	-0.292 (0.227)
groupsN	-0.133 (0.097)
Observations	124
R ²	0.256
Adjusted R ²	0.076

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.17: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), dropped Morocco 1956-NA

		<i>Dependent variable:</i>
		banned
log(Lunemployment)		0.233 (0.262)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth		-0.092*** (0.030)
log(Lfuel + 1)		-0.455*** (0.154)
log(leader.year.office)		-0.038 (0.065)
regimefirstleader		0.084 (0.324)
yrs0005		0.043 (0.148)
yrs0610		0.246 (0.161)
yr11		0.560** (0.218)
yrs1217		0.231 (0.157)
Observations		108
R ²		0.320
Adjusted R ²	263	0.123

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.18: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), continued, dropped Morocco 1956-NA

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
banned	
preselec	-0.042 (0.128)
legelec	0.103 (0.083)
leaderfail	0.274 (0.205)
Lcivilwar	-0.232 (0.198)
ismain	-0.343 (0.232)
groupsN	-0.176 (0.106)
Observations	108
R ²	0.320
Adjusted R ²	0.123

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.19: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), dropped Sudan 1989-NA

		<i>Dependent variable:</i>
		banned
log(Lunemployment)		0.354 (0.258)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth		−0.094*** (0.027)
log(Lfuel + 1)		−0.498*** (0.156)
log(leader.year.office)		−0.078 (0.058)
regimefirstleader		−0.005 (0.338)
yrs0005		0.048 (0.147)
yrs0610		0.286* (0.158)
yr11		0.473** (0.218)
yrs1217		0.144 (0.156)
Observations		124
R ²		0.290
Adjusted R ²	265	0.117

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.20: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), continued, dropped Sudan 1989-NA

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	banned
preselec	-0.027 (0.140)
legelec	0.069 (0.079)
leaderfail	0.174 (0.187)
Lcivilwar	-0.393 (0.263)
ismain	-0.425* (0.215)
groupsN	-0.217** (0.083)
Observations	124
R ²	0.290
Adjusted R ²	0.117

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.21: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), dropped Yemen 1978-2012

		<i>Dependent variable:</i>
		banned
log(Lunemployment)		0.393 (0.271)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth		−0.097*** (0.026)
log(Lfuel + 1)		−0.526*** (0.148)
log(leader.year.office)		−0.060 (0.063)
regimefirstleader		0.184 (0.323)
yrs0005		0.156 (0.161)
yrs0610		0.365** (0.169)
yr11		0.342 (0.228)
yrs1217		0.200 (0.157)
Observations		110
R ²		0.335
Adjusted R ²	267	0.147

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.22: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), continued, dropped Yemen 1978-2012

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
banned	
preselec	-0.016 (0.144)
legelec	0.097 (0.079)
leaderfail	0.266 (0.180)
Lcivilwar	-0.222 (0.227)
ismain	-0.763** (0.352)
groupsN	-0.321*** (0.109)
Observations	110
R ²	0.335
Adjusted R ²	0.147

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Appendix 8: Dropping one regime at a time: *banned*

This appendix shows the results of re-estimating the linear probability model of *banned*, with one regime dropped at a time.

Table 5.23: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), dropped Algeria 1992-NA

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	banned
log(Lunemployment)	0.424 (0.317)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth	−0.084*** (0.029)
log(Lfuel + 1)	−0.530*** (0.177)
log(leader.year.office)	−0.068 (0.068)
yrs0005	0.045 (0.165)
yrs0610	0.273 (0.165)
yr11	0.505** (0.226)
yrs1217	0.131 (0.162)
Observations	115
R ²	0.253
Adjusted R ²	0.064

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.24: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), continued, dropped Algeria 1992-NA

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
banned	
preselec	-0.045 (0.160)
legelec	0.062 (0.083)
leaderfail	-0.029 (0.217)
Lcivilwar	-0.080 (0.249)
ismain	-0.428* (0.238)
groupsN	-0.235** (0.094)
Observations	115
R ²	0.253
Adjusted R ²	0.064

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.25: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), dropped Bahrain 1971-NA

		<i>Dependent variable:</i>
		banned
log(Lunemployment)		0.439 (0.274)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth		−0.083*** (0.030)
log(Lfuel + 1)		−0.445** (0.189)
log(leader.year.office)		−0.085 (0.058)
regimefirstleader		0.032 (0.336)
yrs0005		0.038 (0.147)
yrs0610		0.258 (0.164)
yr11		0.482** (0.213)
yrs1217		0.228 (0.171)
Observations		116
R ²		0.264
Adjusted R ²	272	0.070

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.26: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), continued, dropped Bahrain 1971-NA

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	banned
preselec	-0.079 (0.133)
legelec	0.059 (0.086)
leaderfail	0.179 (0.188)
Lcivilwar	-0.288 (0.211)
ismain	-0.430* (0.223)
groupsN	-0.215** (0.085)
Observations	116
R ²	0.264
Adjusted R ²	0.070

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.27: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), dropped Egypt 1952-2011

		<i>Dependent variable:</i>
		banned
log(Lunemployment)		0.429* (0.250)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth		−0.088*** (0.026)
log(Lfuel + 1)		−0.414** (0.158)
log(leader.year.office)		−0.089 (0.054)
regimefirstleader		0.001 (0.313)
yrs0005		0.011 (0.140)
yrs0610		0.305** (0.148)
yr11		0.467** (0.194)
yrs1217		0.200 (0.145)
Observations		122
R ²		0.308
Adjusted R ²	274	0.137

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.28: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), continued, dropped Egypt 1952-2011

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
banned	
preselec	-0.186 (0.133)
legelec	-0.005 (0.076)
leaderfail	0.156 (0.175)
Lcivilwar	-0.283 (0.191)
ismain	-0.443** (0.203)
groupsN	-0.216*** (0.079)
Observations	122
R ²	0.308
Adjusted R ²	0.137

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.29: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), dropped Egypt 2011-2012

		<i>Dependent variable:</i>
		banned
log(Lunemployment)		0.325 (0.254)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth		−0.087*** (0.027)
log(Lfuel + 1)		−0.484*** (0.150)
log(leader.year.office)		−0.072 (0.056)
regimefirstleader		0.025 (0.326)
yrs0005		0.071 (0.142)
yrs0610		0.292* (0.154)
yr11		0.510** (0.208)
yrs1217		0.170 (0.150)
Observations		128
R ²		0.284
Adjusted R ²	276	0.118

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.30: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), continued, dropped Egypt 2011-2012

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
banned	
preselec	-0.093 (0.132)
legelec	0.069 (0.078)
leaderfail	0.242 (0.192)
Lcivilwar	-0.257 (0.199)
ismain	-0.428** (0.211)
groupsN	-0.211** (0.082)
Observations	128
R ²	0.284
Adjusted R ²	0.118

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.31: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), dropped Egypt 2013-NA

		<i>Dependent variable:</i>
		banned
log(Lunemployment)		0.417 (0.254)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth		−0.091*** (0.026)
log(Lfuel + 1)		−0.384** (0.161)
log(leader.year.office)		−0.085 (0.056)
regimefirstleader		0.060 (0.324)
yrs0005		0.044 (0.142)
yrs0610		0.268* (0.153)
yr11		0.467** (0.201)
yrs1217		0.192 (0.149)
Observations		126
R ²		0.277
Adjusted R ²	278	0.106

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.32: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), continued, dropped Egypt 2013-NA

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	banned
preselec	-0.055 (0.135)
legelec	0.073 (0.078)
leaderfail	0.187 (0.181)
Lcivilwar	-0.248 (0.198)
ismain	-0.417** (0.210)
groupsN	-0.214*** (0.081)
Observations	126
R ²	0.277
Adjusted R ²	0.106

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.33: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), dropped Jordan 1946-NA

		<i>Dependent variable:</i>
		banned
log(Lunemployment)		0.282 (0.284)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth		-0.070** (0.032)
log(Lfuel + 1)		-0.476*** (0.155)
log(leader.year.office)		-0.101 (0.070)
regimefirstleader		-0.098 (0.335)
yrs0005		-0.043 (0.178)
yrs0610		0.147 (0.208)
yr11		0.237 (0.256)
yrs1217		-0.032 (0.217)
Observations		104
R ²		0.305
Adjusted R ²	280	0.094

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.34: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), continued, dropped Jordan 1946-NA

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
banned	
preselec	-0.079 (0.130)
legelec	-0.034 (0.088)
leaderfail	0.220 (0.197)
Lcivilwar	-0.322 (0.200)
ismain	-0.341 (0.230)
groupsN	-0.224** (0.088)
Observations	104
R ²	0.305
Adjusted R ²	0.094

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.35: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), dropped Kuwait 1961-NA

		<i>Dependent variable:</i>
		banned
log(Lunemployment)		0.394 (0.275)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth		−0.091*** (0.028)
log(Lfuel + 1)		−0.483*** (0.158)
log(leader.year.office)		−0.084 (0.068)
regimefirstleader		0.042 (0.340)
yrs0005		0.095 (0.180)
yrs0610		0.320* (0.182)
yr11		0.502** (0.220)
yrs1217		0.213 (0.175)
Observations		123
R ²		0.288
Adjusted R ²	282	0.114

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.36: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), continued, dropped Kuwait 1961-NA

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
banned	
preselec	-0.076 (0.134)
legelec	0.073 (0.082)
leaderfail	0.172 (0.240)
Lcivilwar	-0.265 (0.212)
ismain	-0.465** (0.234)
groupsN	-0.219** (0.084)
Observations	123
R ²	0.288
Adjusted R ²	0.114

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.37: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), dropped Mauritania 2008-NA

		<i>Dependent variable:</i>
		banned
log(Lunemployment)		0.237 (0.266)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth		−0.083*** (0.028)
log(Lfuel + 1)		−0.454*** (0.149)
log(leader.year.office)		−0.078 (0.056)
regimefirstleader		−0.019 (0.328)
yrs0005		0.061 (0.142)
yrs0610		0.264* (0.155)
yr11		0.456** (0.202)
yrs1217		0.179 (0.150)
Observations		124
R ²		0.256
Adjusted R ²	284	0.076

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.38: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), continued, dropped Mauritania 2008-NA

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
banned	
preselec	-0.056 (0.140)
legelec	0.069 (0.078)
leaderfail	0.178 (0.183)
Lcivilwar	-0.269 (0.199)
ismain	-0.292 (0.227)
groupsN	-0.133 (0.097)
Observations	124
R ²	0.256
Adjusted R ²	0.076

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.39: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), dropped Morocco 1956-NA

		<i>Dependent variable:</i>
		banned
log(Lunemployment)		0.233 (0.262)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth		−0.092*** (0.030)
log(Lfuel + 1)		−0.455*** (0.154)
log(leader.year.office)		−0.038 (0.065)
regimefirstleader		0.084 (0.324)
yrs0005		0.043 (0.148)
yrs0610		0.246 (0.161)
yr11		0.560** (0.218)
yrs1217		0.231 (0.157)
Observations		108
R ²		0.320
Adjusted R ²	286	0.123

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.40: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), continued, dropped Morocco 1956-NA

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
banned	
preselec	-0.042 (0.128)
legelec	0.103 (0.083)
leaderfail	0.274 (0.205)
Lcivilwar	-0.232 (0.198)
ismain	-0.343 (0.232)
groupsN	-0.176 (0.106)
Observations	108
R ²	0.320
Adjusted R ²	0.123

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.41: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), dropped Sudan 1989-NA

		<i>Dependent variable:</i>
		banned
log(Lunemployment)		0.354 (0.258)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth		−0.094*** (0.027)
log(Lfuel + 1)		−0.498*** (0.156)
log(leader.year.office)		−0.078 (0.058)
regimefirstleader		−0.005 (0.338)
yrs0005		0.048 (0.147)
yrs0610		0.286* (0.158)
yr11		0.473** (0.218)
yrs1217		0.144 (0.156)
Observations		124
R ²		0.290
Adjusted R ²	288	0.117

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.42: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), continued, dropped Sudan 1989-NA

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
banned	
preselec	-0.027 (0.140)
legelec	0.069 (0.079)
leaderfail	0.174 (0.187)
Lcivilwar	-0.393 (0.263)
ismain	-0.425* (0.215)
groupsN	-0.217** (0.083)
Observations	124
R ²	0.290
Adjusted R ²	0.117

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.43: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), dropped Yemen 1978-2012

		<i>Dependent variable:</i>
		banned
log(Lunemployment)		0.393 (0.271)
sqrtLGDPpcgrowth		-0.097*** (0.026)
log(Lfuel + 1)		-0.526*** (0.148)
log(leader.year.office)		-0.060 (0.063)
regimefirstleader		0.184 (0.323)
yrs0005		0.156 (0.161)
yrs0610		0.365** (0.169)
yr11		0.342 (0.228)
yrs1217		0.200 (0.157)
Observations		110
R ²		0.335
Adjusted R ²	290	0.147

Note:

*p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 5.44: Opposition Media Bans (Regime FE), continued, dropped Yemen 1978-2012

<i>Dependent variable:</i>	
	banned
preselec	-0.016 (0.144)
legelec	0.097 (0.079)
leaderfail	0.266 (0.180)
Lcivilwar	-0.222 (0.227)
ismain	-0.763** (0.352)
groupsN	-0.321*** (0.109)
Observations	110
R ²	0.335
Adjusted R ²	0.147

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Appendix 9: Alternative coding of main opposition

The following four main opposition groups are affected by the alternative coding rule in which main opposition groups that are driven underground by repression continue to be coded as the main opposition group for seven years. In each case, I list the additional years after a crackdown in which the group continues to be coded as the main group under the alternative rule, but not under the original rule. I also list other major opposition groups, which appear in the dataset during the affected years under the original rule but not under the alternative rule.

Algeria: 1992-1994

Regime: 1992-NA

Main Group: Islamic Salvation Front (FIS)¹⁰¹

¹⁰¹Unlike the other main groups affected by the alternative coding, the FIS does not appear as a main opposition group in the original dataset, because the first year it appears is also the year it was driven underground. However, as it was clearly the main opposition group during 1990 and 1991, it would count as a repressed main opposition group starting in 1992 under the alternative coding rule. The FIS is coded as an armed group after 1994.

Other Major Groups: Berber Cultural Movement, Movement for Democracy in Algeria, National Liberation Front, Socialist Forces Front

Bahrain: 2017

Regime: 1971-NA

Main Group: The Accord National Islamic Society (Al-Wefaq)

Other Major Groups: None

Egypt: 2014-2017

Regime: 2013-NA

Main Group: Muslim Brotherhood

Other Major Groups: April 6 Youth Movement, No to Military Trials, Salafist Front

Tunisia 1993-1999

Regime: 1956-2011

Main Group: Party of the Renaissance (Ennahda)

Other Major Groups: None

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