Egypt Civil–Military Relations 1952–2011

Introduction

In order to examine the central role played by the military in Egyptian politics, this chapter explores the roots of Egypt's civil–military relations from 1952 to 2011. This was the period that the Egyptian armed forces extended its reach into domestic politics and consolidated its status and privileges. The reach of the Egyptian armed forces extends all the way to the top as practically all Egyptian presidents since the overthrow of the monarchy has been the former military. The theoretical section of this chapter offers an overview of the Civil–Military Relations theories in general and Civil–Military Relations patterns and frameworks in Egypt and the Middle East in particular. After the theoretical discussion, this book will go on to analyze the reasons behind the Egyptian military's intervention into politics and explore the unique coup-proofing strategies employed by different Egyptian presidents since 1952 to control (i.e., appease) the armed forces.

Mubarak's coup-proofing strategy was different from his predecessors and it is argued in this chapter that it directly led to his downfall. His strategy was a combination of purging the military of those with extremist views or ambition, diversifying the security sector, and offering 'loyalty allowance' payments. The 'loyalty allowance' scheme required building a parallel military economy, which, when threatened, led to the intervention of the military and Mubarak's removal from power.

CIVIL–MILITARY RELATIONS: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

A Literature Review

The coup-proofing strategies employed by different Egyptian presidents to control the armed forces were not explored in any of the previous researches including this book. The literature on Egypt's Civil–Military Relations (CMR) was actually very limited before the Arab spring. However, since this time however, there has been a great deal of research dealing with the military's behavior during the crisis. However, before exploring Egypt's CMR before the 2011 revolution, an overview of Civil–Military Relations theory is presented and CMR patterns and frameworks in Egypt and the Middle East are examined.

CMR refers to the relationship between civil and military authority in a given society. Samuel Huntington and Morris Janowitz have been pioneers of the contemporary study of CMR in the age of liberal democracy and champion the generally accepted normative belief that "to maintain the liberal values intrinsic to democracy",[1] civilian authority is preferable to military control of the state.

Huntington views civilian control in terms of either 'objective' or 'subjective' control.[2] Subjective control means more control rests with civilians,[3] while objective control requires improving military professionalism,[4] meaning that the military is politically neutral, but free to make decisions on military matters.[5] For Huntington, the likelihood of military intervention in politics is much diminished by military professionalization[6] and is therefore a healthier and more effective approach.[8] However, Huntington's theory is not readily applicable in the Middle East. For instance, despite the relative professionalization of the Turkish and Egyptian armed forces, they frequently intervene in domestic politics and assume a guardian role to justify their interventions.

On the other hand, Morris Janowitz proposes what is commonly referred to as a 'Civic Republican Theory' of democratic civil–military relations. According to Janowitz's theory, "civilian control comes from greater civic participation by both soldiers and civilians alongside one another."[7] Janowitz's theory, as with Huntington's, paid attention to professionalization and its relationship and effect on the politicization of the military. Janowitz maintains that the role of the professional soldier in the modern world has become "inevitably more political."[8] Huntington suggested that it is the uneven pace of political

and economic development during a country's modernization which is the primary cause of incursions by the military into affairs of state.[9] The main difference between the two theorists is that Janowitz did not advocate separation between the military and civilian spheres in order to achieve civilian control of the military, but rather "convergence" between the two to ensure that the values and expectations of society remain present within the military establishment. For this reason, Janowitz was a supporter of general conscription, which he saw as a key instrument in ensuring a convergence.[10]

Janowitz's model can be applied readily to the Egyptian context, especially in terms of conscription. Egypt's military has grown and become established as a conscript army. One can hardly separate the military from society as most Egyptian youth have spent between 1–3 years as conscripted soldiers in the military. This is why some argue that Egyptians have maintained a deep-rooted respect for their armed forces.

Another, equally important theory is Peter Feaver's 'principal–agent theory' which can be considered an alternative to Huntington's. He believes that military agents and civilian principals are in a "game of strategic interaction"[11] and that there is a contract between them to develop the ability to use force in defense of the civilian's interests. According to this contract, the civilian principal monitors the military agent to make sure that the agent follows the orders of the civilians and tries to mitigate the risk of abuses of power.[12] According to Feaver, military intervention in politics is generally more likely and more extensive in countries with what he called 'low political culture,' as opposed to countries with a 'developed political culture.' Political culture, in Finer's analysis, refers to the existence of functioning state institutions and procedures regulating the exercise of political power.

According to Feaver's definition, Egypt and Turkey have high political culture, which is interesting because the armed forces have steadily intervened in politics over the years. However, it is not the cultural dimension that motivated both armies to intervene. In the Turkish case, it was the guardian role adopted by the armed forces, and in the case of Egypt, it was the strong linkage between the armed forces and society and the military's autonomy and ability to survive after removal of the regime that motivated the armed forces to become involved in politics.

A model with a completely different focus is the one developed by Alfred Stepan; it concentrates on creating tools to effectively assess objective civilian control. Stepan outlines eleven military 'prerogatives.'[13]

Stepan outlines two dimensions for assessing CMR: military 'contestation,' or the degree to which the military opposes the constraints on its power and influence imposed by civilian leaders; and military 'prerogatives,' in which the military feels justified utilizing or advancing its own position.[14] Whether or not the military enjoys a constitutionally protected role in the politics of the state or the degree to which the military controls its own budget, to name just two, can reveal much about the size and scope of the military's role in a given state. Stepan's work represents an improvement over both the Huntington and Feaver frameworks in terms of clarity and specificity. However, it remains premised on two normative assumptions: civilian control of the military is preferable to military dominance of the government, and democratic civilian control is preferable to non-democratic control mechanisms.[15]

The Pion-Berlin model is markedly different from the ones of Huntington and Stepan's. Pion-Berlin states that civilians must manage the military since it is "the coercive arm of the state and a politically minded corporate interest group seeking benefit for itself."[16] Huntington maintains there must be a strict division of labor between military and civilian matters, but he also argues that the military's subordination hinges on its professionalism.

Building on Pion-Berlin's emphasis on civilian control, Thomas C. Bruneau develops another model for understanding civil–military relations. Bruneau conceptualizes civil–military relations as a trinity: democratic civilian control, effectiveness, and efficiency.[17] Bruneau suggested that democratic civilian control of the armed forces boils down to controlling power, which should be institutionalized and accomplished through the ministry of defense, oversight, and civilian control of military promotions, and the like.[18] According to Bruneau, 'Effectiveness' is defined as being able to fulfill roles and carry out missions as deemed necessary by democratically elected civilians and efficiency is achieved when the roles and missions are performed at the least possible cost in lives and resources.[19]

Deborah Norden uses Huntington's theory as a springboard in her discussion of CMR in Latin America and specifically Venezuela. Her theory of civilian control is based on the military sharing political ideology and breaks down the idea of control into three elements: domination (who commands the armed force); management (who directs the armed forces); and authority (what militaries believe). A government need not possess all three dimensions of control; the more facets achieved, however, the more control the civilian authority has over the military.[20]

Based on Janowitz's theory, Rebecca Schiff offers an alternative model, the 'theory of concordance,' in which she proposes that the military, political elites, and citizens should aim for a cooperative relationship.[21] To achieve a high level of unity, the partners must be in agreement on four key indicators: "social composition of the officer corps, the political-decision making process, recruitment method and military style."[22] She maintains that the agreement between partners is more important than the style of CMR adopted.[23] Concordance theory is useful as it explains the institutional, historical, and cultural conditions affecting levels of cooperation between partners[24] and it predicts that if there is cooperation then domestic military intervention is less likely to occur.[25]

The theories of both Norden and Schiff reveal that a wide range of complex variables affect CMR in developing societies, including a state's national ethos, the military's sense of purpose and role, the prevalence of stable or unstable institutions within the state, the type of government in place, and the state's historical legacy.[26]

The final framework to be discussed was developed by Cottey et al., who argue that civilian leaders and military officers should engage in 'shared responsibility' to ensure civilian democratic control.[27] They argue that this democratic control depends upon key state capabilities, such as the ability to obtain information and provide analysis to the political leaders (e.g., technical support). In addition, political leaders need to have the correct estimates of resources to enable informed choice, and politicians also need skilled and trained high- and low-level civil servants to assist in policy implementation.[28]

CMR in Egypt and the Middle East

Samuel Huntington suggested a useful typology in the context of CMR in the Middle East. He identified three types of possible relationships between the military and the regime in autocracies. The first type is the military regime, where no civilian control can be found and the military engages in a series of activities traditionally not related to military functions and missions. The second type is when the military is controlled by those loyal to the dictator. The third type is when the military is treated as an instrument of the regime, where officers have to be loyal to the regime and not to the state.[29] Huntington also identifies specific methods for non-democratic control and a reduction of military

power, including (1). breaking the officer corps up into competing units, (2). establishing party armies and special military forces, and (3). infiltrating the military hierarchy with independent chains of command.[30] Huntington also discusses the challenges of CMR in developing countries, especially those emerging from authoritarian regimes. He argues that new democracies face four fundamental challenges which are all applicable to the Egyptian context: defining the military's specific roles; political intervention by the military; pre-existing military privileges; and the development and diffusion of new military technology.[31]

Juan Linz conducted an analysis of the relationship between regime type and civil–military pattern. He argues that while most Arab monarchies are examples of 'sultanistic' regimes as opposed to authoritarian ones, the Mubarak regime bears a strong resemblance to both types. Mubarak-era Egypt coupled the limited plurality of authoritarianism with the intensely personal exercise of authority and nepotism of sultanistic regimes.[32] Both these types of rulers are forced to maintain the loyalty of subordinates through a mixture of patronage and coercion, often paving the way to cronyism. This is why it is more common for militaries in authoritarian and sultanistic regimes to dominate major industries and business sectors, benefit from exclusive government contracts, and acquire government employment after retirement than in ideological or totalitarian regimes.[33]

Alfred Stepan offers a similarly useful framework for understanding the Middle East civil–military relations. He claims that you may not really understand a military unless you understand the society in which it is imbedded and the interaction and political dynamism involved. Stepan contends that if the military-as-government upsets the status quo for any reason, then military-as-institution may move to remedy the situation, especially if their privileges are threatened. If the military-as-institution does seize power, for whatever reason, they must feel it is in their best interests to transition power to civilians, otherwise another military-as-government could emerge.[34]

Amos Perlmutter, in discussing the characteristics of military-based regimes in the Middle East, suggests a distinction between military 'ruler' and military 'arbitrator' regimes. The two concepts basically refer to different degrees of intensity and length of military intervention in politics. Military ruler regimes exercise state control for extended periods of time, while arbitrator regimes seek to limit their amount of involvement.[35] There are currently no Middle Eastern countries qualifying as

military ruler regimes, where the military directly and openly controls political decision making. Rather, in most countries in the region policymaking is left to governments which are nowadays largely civilianized arbitrator regimes. Nevertheless, the armed forces remain key actors in overseeing the political process from behind the scenes, and in times of crisis or when core interests are threatened, the military is likely to seize direct control of the political decision making.[36] In no other part of the world is domestic politics so influenced by the military as in the Middle East.[37]And this could be due to these countries meeting conditions for what or what Amos, called 'praetorianism,' a state Perlmutter describes as political decision making controlled or heavily influenced by the military. These include a limited social cohesion, the existence of internally divided social classes, a politically powerless middle class, and low political mobilization.[38]

According to Eva Bellin, the distinction between the military establishment and civilian institution is often difficult to draw, even with civilian heads of state (for example, Egypt, Syria, and Algeria), because the head of state is often closely allied with the coercive apparatus and highly dependent on coercion to survive.[39] In a 2012 study, the effect of institutionalization (established rules of functioning) on armed forces loyalty at times of crisis was analyzed.[40] Institutionalization she argues does not mean professionalization nor is it 'patrimonialism' where ethnic/communal ties, cronyism, corruption, etc. are the components of the military establishment and its relations to civilians,[41] but rather a "rule-governed, predictable, and meritocratic" entity. For Bellin, the Egyptian military had strong economic ties with the Mubarak regime through crony capitalism, but was also institutionalized. This could be further contrasted with Bahrain, where the military had strong communal ties with the regime, but had none with protesters.[42]

Influenced by Bellin's arguments, Gregory Gause III suggested two factors that determined the reactions of Arab militaries to the Arab spring: the social connections between the protesters and the regime and the institutionalization and professionalism found in the army.[43] According to Gause, Egypt and Tunisia, the countries in which the military sided with the protesters, are two of the most homogeneous societies in the Arab world. Both are overwhelmingly Sunni. In addition, both the Egyptian and the Tunisian armies are relatively professional, with neither serving as the personal instrument of the ruler. Army leaders in both nations realized that their institutions could play an important

role under new regimes and thus were willing to risk ousting the old guard.[44] In countries with less institutionalized armed forces such as Yemen and Libya where regimes utilize the military as if privately controlled, there was much dissent during recent events.[45] In divided countries dominated by minorities, the armies have backed their regimes for fear of what may come if their regimes fail. For example, the Sunni security forces in Bahrain stood their ground against Shiite-majority demonstrators to preserve the Sunni monarchy. The Jordanian army remains loyal to the monarchy despite unrest among the country's Palestinian majority.[46]

Similarly, Michael Makara's model highlights the role of military survival after the removal of the current regime as the prime determiner of remaining loyal. He identified three types of CMR in the Middle East and North Africa: 'autocratic officer-politician regimes' such as Algeria, Egypt, and Syria[47]; 'tribally dependent monarchies' such as oil-producing nations of the gulf, Morocco, and Jordan; and regimes with 'dual militaries' (possessing a secondary security force to keep the military in check) as found in Iran, Iraq (prior to 2003), and Libya under Qaddafi.[48]

Makara examines 'coup-proofing' strategies implemented by the Middle East authoritarian regimes,[49] including dual militaries, distributing incentives and exploiting communal ties.[50] However, according to Makara, differing levels of military loyalty to their regimes during the Arab Spring make it clear that coup-proofing strategies during periods of stability are not necessarily effective when regimes are faced with uprisings.[51] Makara argues that both cultural affinity and institutionalization played a role in explaining military behavior during the Arab Spring; however, the military's desire to strengthen its post-transition political position in the case of Tunisia and Egypt at times overrode its cultural affinity with the general population, as when the Egyptian military cracked down on protesters unhappy with their role in the transition.[52]

Building on Bellin's and Makara's arguments, Lutterbeck argued that institutionalized armed forces can survive regime change, but tribally based and ideological security forces may not due to their strong connection with the regime.[53] He also states that institutionalization, and its associated military–societal bonds, lowers the chance of the military using force on its citizenry.[54] A widely used method of developing these bonds is through broad-based conscription, which leads to 'civilianization' of the military and prevents interference in politics.[55] Lutterbeck

argues that openness to reform in Egypt and Tunisia can be explained by the high levels of institutionalization, which were higher in Egypt and the less strong bonds with the regime.[56]

The Holger Albrecht model deals with the efficacy of coup-proofing strategy during periods of severe regime crisis. Albrecht argues that integrative coup-proofing (binding officers to regimes) is more effective than segregation (removing officers from politics) during times when the regime is threatened. To test his assumptions, Albrecht examined officer appointments, economic coup-proofing strategy, and the social composition of the officer corps to determine why it was that Egypt's military turned on Mubarak while Assad's remained mostly loyal.

As far as officer appointments are concerned, Mubarak's constant reshuffling of military posts and early retirement age meant that there was a large generational gap between him and the highest ranking officers, which meant he had no strong ties with the armed forces.[57] On the other hand, Bashar Al-Assad had strong personal connections to the military apparatus and therefore had backing when he needed it most.[58]

Another interesting comparison between the two countries is that while both countries witnessed the establishment of parallel military–business economies, in Egypt, where the military operated autonomously in terms of economic activities, this leads to conflict, but it actually strengthened ties in Syria where officers believed that on an individual level Al-Assad's fall would be financially disastrous.[59]

The third major difference between the two countries concerns recruitment patterns of the officer corps. Syria has long adopted Strategies of Ethnic Preference, whereby the ethnic identities of soldiers are used as a strategy to keep a regime in power.[60] At times, 90% of the higher officers were Alawis, the Islamic faith of the Asad family and large parts of the political elite, who comprise only 10–12% of the population.[61] On the other hand, in Egypt officers were a varied group recruited based on merit from all over the country. Because these recruits were mostly lower middle class, they found the opulent lifestyle of Gamal and his business associates difficult to relate to.[62]

Steven Cook, who analyzed the motivation behind the intervention of armed forces in politics, described Turkey, Algeria, and Egypt as all having militaries that "ruled but did not govern." He argues that the military only intervenes in politics when its core interests or broader political order are threatened.

Nasser's Civil–Military Relations

On July 23, 1952, a group of Egyptian army officers called the Free Officers Movement led in part by the young officer Gamal Abdel-Nasser staged a bloodless coup and took control of the Egyptian state. The coup was provoked by widespread discontent with Egypt's lack of independence. Egypt under King Farouk's monarchical rule was viewed as nothing more than a British colonial puppet state. Interestingly, throughout the British occupation of Egypt, the Egyptian military was placed under civilian control (not democratic control). The 52 Ministers of War (Defense) in Egypt under the British occupation (1882–1952) were all civilian political elites. However, the 1952 revolution signaled a break from this aspect of Egyptian CMR and began the military's privileged position in Egyptian society and domestic politics. Nasser created a series of intimately interconnected military–political institutions which eventually formed a "dense security grid reaching to every layer of society."[63]

Nasser's CMR was built on three successive pillars of coup-proofing strategy: politicization, purging, and professionalization. The politicization was far reaching and immediate as he assigned military personnel roles in all areas of government.[64]

Other facet of Nasser's coup-proofing strategy was to purge the army of oppositional elements and install his loyalists within the army higher echelons. Accordingly, Nasser nominated his closest confidant and friend Abdul Hakim 'Amer as a commander in chief of Egypt's armed forces.[65] However, after the June war of 1967 their relationship was severed and 'Amer was arrested and later committed suicide in military custody.[66] 'Amer's absence signaled the start of a new approach by Nasser regarding civil–military relations as he developed a promised mechanism for the third pillar of the Nasser's coup-proofing strategy—the professionalization of the Egyptian armed forces and a lessening of its political role.

To professionalize his military, Nasser requested help from the Soviet Union and received improved training, equipment, and advice.[67]

To conclude, Nasser's regime was responsible for beginning the militarization of Egyptian politics. Civil–military relations under Nasser can be considered a regression from that of the civil–military relations under the British occupation 1882–1952. For instance, among the 10 ministers of defense appointed by Nasser, no one has a civilian background, and all of them were among Nasser's closest confidants and friends. Nasser's coup-proofing strategy kept him in power, unchallenged to some extent,

for 16 years. However, the effectiveness of his attempts at military professionalization and institutionalization was dubious, and a lack of professionalization of the armed forces was considered the main reason for the defeat of the Egyptian army in the 1967 war against Israel. Nasser's policies not only led to losing a war and severely dented national pride but also had far reaching implications for his successors.

Sadat's Civil–Military Relations

Anwar Al-Sadat came into office after Nasser's death on September 28, 1970 and undertook large-scale restructuring of the military that represented an ideological and political shift from his predecessor. The military still occupied its central role, yet the strategies he used for controlling it were a complete departure from before. His domination of the military was made possible through strategies of 'professionalization' and 'depoliticization' combined with 'divide and rule' tactics.[68]

Two interrelated variables determined Sadat's civil–military relations: first, the preparation for the 1973 war; second, signing the 1979 Peace Treaty with Israel and replacing the Soviet Union alliance by the United States, which greatly affected the professionalization of the Egyptian armed forces. Both variables were also used as a justification to purging the armed forces from the oppositional and politicized elements, especially high-ranking officer corps.

The clearest example of professionalization during Sadat's presidency is the amount of attention paid to improving recruitment, equipment, and training.[69] In preparation for the 1973 surprise attack on Israel, Sadat pressured the Soviet Union—Egypt's strongest great power ally at the time—to supply the Egyptian military with the most up-to-date arms technology to match that of Israel.[70] A greater effort was made to recruit university graduates to fill the ranks of junior officers and tank commanders, and the implementation of a more rigid training program reestablished confidence and legitimacy in the military.[71]

As for depoliticization, Sadat sought to manipulate the entire officer corps and used individual officers against each other. He also occasionally used his constitutional powers to dismiss top brass if they dared disagree with him. Comprehensive ongoing purges of all those who were opposed to him and his regime were conducted.[72] For instance, in May of 1971, Sadat conducted a massive purge he called the "Corrective Revolution." From 1973, he dismissed his Minister of War, chief of staff,

and many other military officers such as the Commanders of the Navy, Central Military, and the Director of Military Intelligence.[73] Sadat loyalists such as vice president Hosni Mubarak and Minister of Defense ʿAbd Al-Halim Abu Ghazala were promoted after the former high-ranking officers voiced disagreement over the 1973 war, completely loyal to the president, and Mubarak and Abu Ghazala became the model for promotion in Sadat's military.[74] Those who disagreed with Sadat to an extent that he deemed inappropriate were dismissed from their positions. For instance, Sadat jailed General Fawzi, arrested General *Mohamed Sadiq*, exiled General Al-Shazli, and retired General Mohamed ʿAbd al-Ghani al-*Gamassi* (1921–2003), because he saw these individuals directly threatening his supreme command.[75] This policy of removing anyone voicing disagreement made the military totally subordinate to the president.[76] Further depoliticization came about through limiting military personnel involvement in the cabinet. Under Nasser, approximately one-third of the political/ruling elite was composed of military officers; in Sadat's later years, only one in ten elites had originated from the officer corps. Sadat's political reorientation essentially ended the assumption that a military career presented a direct pathway into the political elite.[77]

A testament to the military's subordination under Sadat was the military's reaction to being called upon to restore order during the bread riots of 1977. As a direct result of its professionalization and depoliticization, the armed forces complied and "obediently returned to their barracks shortly after the uprising."[78]

To conclude, through the processes of depoliticizing and professionalizing the military, Sadat was able to exclude military elite from political decision making, yet simultaneously hold the military establishment completely under his control. As a result, the military society that flourished under the rule of Nasser declined, transforming its role from protector of the revolution into a functional security apparatus that kept order in the Egyptian state. By the time Sadat was assassinated in 1981, he had established a military that was "strong enough to do anything the civilians ask them to but subordinate enough to do only what civilians authorize them to do."[79]

Mubarak's Civil–Military Relations

Sadat's presidency came to an abrupt end on October 6, 1981, when he was assassinated by Islamist junior officers during a military parade marking Egyptian successes during the October War of 1973. Vice president

Hosni Mubarak swiftly took over without any resistance and quickly came to realize that the increase in political Islamism and its infiltration into the military was his prime concern.[80] Consequently, Mubarak's coup-proofing strategy was built on four interrelated pillars: first, preventing extremists from infiltrating into the armed forces, especially those belonging to the MB, al-Gama`a Al-Islamiyya (Islamic Society), and Salafism; second, purging the military of ambitious high-ranking officers was used as a preemptive mechanism for avoiding an 'Amer-like personality inside the military. Removing the dynamic Defense Minister 'Abd Al-Halim Abu Ghazala was a blatant example of this tactic; third, diversifying the political actors in the regime's security sector by strengthening the role of the Ministry of Interior (MoI) in dealing with domestic affairs and in turn lessening the dependency of the regime on the armed forces in such matters. In this respect, Mubarak empowered the Central Security Force (CSF) (*Al-amn Al-markazi*), to counterbalance the military's power. Unlike his predecessors, who basically depended on the General Intelligence Directorate (GID), Mubarak diversified to depend on three rival secret directorates: Security Investigations Services (SIS) (*mabahesamn al-dawla*), the Military Intelligence Directorate (MID), and the GID; fourth, connecting the armed forces to his crony patronage system by offering what was called 'loyalty allowance.' This involved senior officers being promised an extra allowance upon retirement, which normally came in the form of guaranteed careers in the state sector.[81] Investing in a 'loyalty allowance' required building a parallel (military) economy and led to the involvement of military retirees in every corner of the state administrative apparatus.

Two variables determined Mubarak's strategy in controlling the armed forces. The first was the 1979 Peace Treaty with Israel, which necessitated increasing military professionalization and provided the army with the appropriate opportunity to enhance its role in Egyptian economy. The second was Mubarak's shift toward the privatization and neoliberal policies which opened the door for the military to control 25% of the national economy.

Purging the Armed Forces of Extremist Elements

The assassination of president Sadat during a military parade on October 6, 1981 by members of the armed forces belonging to clandestine Islamist groups was testament to the danger facing Mubarak's regime.[82]

And the first thing he had to determine as a leader was whether the armed forces would remain loyal to the regime or side with the extremists.

In fact, militant Islamic fundamentalism and/or Islamists in general were present in the Egyptian army as early as 1952. Nasser, Sadat, and 'Amer were all affiliated with the MB, at some stage. There were purges by Nasser in the 1960s in an attempt to remove fundamentalists from the ranks of the military as they were becoming increasingly violent in their approach.[83] In the 1970s, infiltration was becoming widespread and in April 1974 a *coup* d'état was attempted but thwarted.[84] Likewise, Salafists and Salafist sympathizers were though make up a large proportion of the lower ranks, but this is hard to accurately verify.[85]

After Sadat's assassination, the dynamic Defense Minister Field Marshall Abu Ghazala issued a statement in the name of the Armed Forces High Command dismissing charges of widespread disaffection in the military. This served to demonstrate both the army's loyalty to the new president and its willingness to fight fundamentalist elements within the armed forces.[86] Within days, about 30 officers and more than 100 enlisted men were discharged from service for their sympathetic views toward the fundamentalists,[87] going so far as exempting relatives of suspected individuals from the draft.[88] Housing projects for military personnel were also established to try and stop infiltration by keeping civilian and military personnel separated.[89]

The attempts at safeguarding against infiltration did not stem the tide of extremists entering the armed forces. For example, there was an attempted assassination of the former Interior Minister Hassan Abu Basha in 1987, and in August 1993, a calling itself 'Vanguards of the New Jihad' attempted to kill the interior minister.[90] This prompted Defense Minister Tantawi to declare that the military was ready to intervene, as a last resort, to fight terrorism.[91] This declaration was prompted by the fear that extremists were growing in numbers and targeting officers due to their ability to create change in the status quo.[92] Similarly, an al-Gama`a Al-Islamiyya member was arrested and later shot when a plan to assassinate Mubarak was uncovered.[93] Extremist groups began using trials to get their message across, yelling slogans and taunts to the military from the docks that it was time to rise up against the repressive regime.[94]

Because the Egyptian military has always been wary of Islamist infiltration within its ranks, it monitors its soldiers to ensure their loyalty.

According to a 2012 Jane's Sentinel report, known Islamists are not permitted to join the army, and individuals with Islamist links are given exemption status from military service based on security grounds. The main role of Military Intelligence under Mubarak was "guaranteeing the political reliability of the armed forces," which meant ensuring loyalty and neutralizing Islamist extremists. The influence and infiltration of the Islamist extremists into the armed forces remains negligible.[95] For example, 2012 *Reuters* report quoted mid-ranking army officers as saying that the military has generally succeeded in keeping extremist groups such as the MB out of its ranks and, in fact, does not let any religious groups set up within its ranks.[96]

Parallel Paramilitary Forces

As a part of his strategy to control the armed forces and clear the way for the succession of his son Gamal, Mubarak weakened the military establishment even more than his predecessors by enhancing the power of the police.[97] He built a tight security grid around his regime consisting of several military and paramilitary branches that were constantly competing for power, thus ensuring that none would become too powerful.[98] To this end, Mubarak invested heavily in strengthening the CSF,[99] turning it into a paramilitary force consisting of mostly poor, illiterate rural military applicant rejects.[100] It was tasked with counterterrorism and riot control and often used excessive force in dispersing dissenters and gained a reputation for violent, thuggish behavior.[101] As a paramilitary institution, the CSF answered directly to the Ministry of Interior[102] and retained military and civilian properties, reaching into both the military and political spheres of the Egyptian state system.[103]

Under Mubarak, the MoI's size and influence grew markedly, due partly to the increase in violent confrontations between the government and Islamist insurgents in the 1990s and partly to the need to contain growing political and socioeconomic discon-tent. The number of those employed by the MoI started at 124,000 in 1951, but by 2011 the MoI's budget was growing at triple the rate of the military and employed 1.4 million people.[104] Access to the president was also lopsided. Habib Al-'Adli, the then minister of Interior and Omar Suleiman, the veteran director of the Egyptian Intelligence Services, enjoyed greater rapport with the president than any army figure.[105]

Under Mubarak's rule, the police and all domestic security organizations were devoted to preserving the regime and its interests rather than protecting Egyptians and providing for their security. Through the SSIS, the MoI was heavily involved in a host of repressive practices, including the intimidation and arrest of political dissidents, surveillance of political parties and activists, subversion of their activities through secret agents, and electoral rigging and fraud. The SSIS is believed to have played a large role in influencing appointments and promotions in a host of government bureaucracies, state institutions, and public universities and contributed to the professional marginalization of many individuals whom the regime deemed politically threatening.[106]

Yet another tactic to weaken the influence of the armed force was making sure that no former military heads became Prime Minister.[107] According to a 2001 study, only 8% of Mubarak's ministerial appointees emerged from the military, and this percentage was reduced further after a technocratic cabinet took over in July 2004.[108]

However, Mubarak's tactic to weaken the influence of the armed forces in domestic affairs by depending on parallel paramilitary forces ran into problems as far back as 1986 when 20,000 men of the CFS rebelled.[109] The rebellion was ostensibly caused by a rumor that their mandatory term of service was to be extended from 3 to 4 years. However, there is widespread suspicion that infiltration of extremist groups was a motivation for this rebellion. Reluctantly, the state called in the military to quash the rebellion.[110] The troops carried out their instructions with a high degree of professionalism and restraint, even when asked to fire on other uniformed security forces. Even more importantly, for Mubarak at least, the army returned to its barracks just as soon as their job was done.[111] As a result of the dissent, and to try and eradicate Islamic extremists 20,000 CFS members were removed from service.[112] The incident served to demonstrate convincingly the professionalization of the armed forces and their subordination to the regime. The CSF rioting was an early signal that the CSF would prove to be unreliable force and would not be able to counter domestic political difficulties.

The intervention of the armed forces in 2011 reveals the extent to which Mubarak's tactic to sideline the armed forces had failed and showed that the military remained at the center of power in Egyptian politics as it provided the power base for the president and protection for the regime. Tellingly, the three military interventions prior to 2011 all

involved the MoI handling domestic security in some way, in 1977 they protected Sadat from dissenters, in 1986 they were called into disperse rioting CFS members, and in 1996 they intervened after the CFS failed to prevent terrorists attacking tourist targets.[113] The military's participation in these crises led the public to perceive the army as the ultimate safeguard against threats to the regime. Yet, despite the effectiveness of the military in these crises, the Ministry of the Interior retained primary responsibility for domestic security.[114] In hindsight, this was a blunder that came to a head in 2011 when the CFS failed dismally in protecting the regime in the face of massive demonstrations.[115]

MUBARAK'S "LOYALTY ALLOWANCE"

Mubarak's crony patronage system gave the military significant economic, institutional, and judicial autonomy in exchange for political obedience and loyalty to his regime.[116] Mubarak's 'Loyalty Allowance' can be divided into three elements. First is 'regulated patronage,' which, according to Daniel Silverman, is the way Mubarak cultivated military loyalty by providing corporate "goodies," i.e., budgets, salaries, arms, or equipment.[117] This corporate reward system is common throughout the literature on civil–military relations, both in the Middle East and elsewhere.[118] The second element is 'unregulated patronage,' which refers to the benefits, ranging from private sector contracts, to the right to extort local businesses, to expensive cars and imported goods which find their way to current and retired high-ranking officers. The third is the establishment of a *Parallel Military Economy.*

The Parallel Military Economy

In contrast to either the Algerian or Turkish officer corps, the Egyptian military establishment became directly involved in manufacturing and the provision of commercial services.[119] They became a primary producer of a range of products including military equipment household goods and operators of hotels and tourist ventures.[120] The resulting military economy was one of the pillars of Mubarak's coup-proofing strategy. Five factors determined the role of the armed forces in the economy and its position within the state. The first was the end of hostilities with Egypt (causing a more internal focus) and the passing of laws allowing the military to become truly autonomous and could gain benefits for

military personnel such as improved healthcare, access to scarce goods, and increased salaries.[121]

The second factor was the decision of the powerful Minister of Defense, Abu Ghazala, to lessen the reliance of the Egyptian armed forces on American military aid. This resulted from Abu Ghazala's failure to raise the level of American aid to the Egyptian armed forces,[122] and his subsequent desire to strengthen the military's involvement in the state economy instead of trying to solicit more American aid.[123]

The third factor was Mubarak's desire to establish additional financial resources for the armed forces by creating a parallel economy that could offset any future decline of the military budget. Mubarak knew he could invest these resources in buying the loyalty of the officer corps as well. This was common throughout the Middle East and was usually justified as striving for 'self-sufficiency' (*al-iktifa'a al-thati*) and that the armed forces needed "to supplement civil institutions in working to 'institutionalize' (taqnin) the state."[124] Equally important for Mubarak was the drive to use the military's manpower in times of peace and stability to undertake major civilian projects such as building infrastructure and housing that could ultimately help ignite economic growth.[125]

The fourth, and very convenient factor for the regime, is the insistence by the Egyptian armed forces to keep all military industry under military control to safeguard the security and ensure that no secrets are leaked.[126] The military's monopoly over military production was moreover guaranteed by emergency legislation that effectively prevents any possibility of monitoring the industry by the legislature and the press.[127]

The fifth and final factor is Mubarak's privatization and neoliberal policies which opened the door for increasing officer corps' involvement in the economy.[128]

The military economy comprises four main sections: the defense industry in the form of the Ministry of Military Production; the state-owned Arab Organization for Industrialization; the NSPO; and the military's own income-generating enterprises, including its military clubs and hotels as well as civilian public work contracts undertaken by its Military Engineering Authority, Military Works Department, and Water Department. It has become incredibly diverse and since the 1990s has developed a more and more sophisticated array of commercial undertakings such as partnering with private companies and seeking investment opportunities abroad.[129]

The military economic institutions enjoyed unique privileges with respect to taxes, permits, and contracting, as well as remaining outside the jurisdiction of monitoring bodies. In addition to revenues from commercial enterprises, military leaders had *carte blanche* regarding procurement budgets and particularly the 1.3 billion in aid from the U.S.[130] Evidence has been produced revealing that the benefit of the armed forces' economic activities was actually overstated considerably. As Robert Springborg notes, the militaries' economic activities were subsidized so heavily that they were actually a burden to the state financially.[131] Nevertheless, the military's control over economic interests has grown to an estimated 25% of the entire Egyptian economy.[132] However, these percentages are likely to be overestimations. The military-controlled economy undoubtedly makes up significant part of the Egyptian economy, and while this percentage is not known exactly, it is thought to be somewhere around 5–10% of the Egyptian economy.

However, it was the economic autonomy of the military and the distancing of the officer corps from politics that determined the end of the Mubarak regime. In brief, it was Mubarak's own coup-proofing strategy that contributed to his regime's collapse.

Military Ambiguity Toward the 2011 Uprising

The 2011 uprising was a practical test of Mubarak's coup-proofing strategy. Motivated by both domestic grievances as well as Tunisia's successful uprising against Zine El-Abdine Ben Ali, the Egyptian uprising began on Tuesday, January 25, 2011, a national holiday that was officially a day of commemoration to honor the police. The plan was to demonstrate in Tahrir Square, in front of the Ministry of Interior, with the protest beginning at 2:00 P.M. and disbanding by 5:00 P.M. The protest, according to revolutionary youth, Asmaa Mahfouz, sought to demand "human rights," not "political rights."[133] However, what had been planned as an afternoon protest extended into an open revolution to overthrow Mubarak. Initially relying on security services to repress the protesters, he was forced to request military support when their numbers grew too large. The military's refusal to confront the protesters led to the eventual stepping down of the long-time leader.[134] Mubarak transferred his powers to the SCAF under the leadership of his long-time companion Defence Minister Field Marshall Mohamed Hussein Tantawi.[135] It is hard to tell when and where the loyalty shift

occurred and to what extent the military took part in any violence urging the uprising. However, it is clear that the military's position shifted gradually: starting out passive (January 25–28) and ending in a semi-positive position from February 11 onwards as the military sided ostensibly with protesters demands while at the same maintaining the pillars of Mubarak's regime. It can be assumed therefore that the sole reason behind the military's betrayal of Mubarak's regime was mounting popular pressure from the masses.

During the first week of the uprising, the military stood by the regime and supported the police in their efforts to suppress protests.[136] For example, the armed forces stood neutral on February 2, 2011, when armed Mubarak supporters riding on camels and horses charged into Tahrir square and attacked the protesters. Even though the pro-Mubarak thugs killed several demonstrators, the army units present on the square did not intervene, calling instead upon the protesters to leave the square and go home.[137] In fact, the army fired on neither the demonstrators nor the thugs who attacked them,[138] trying to appear neutral. At this point, it was clear that at least some high-ranking officers sided with President.[139] The rank-and-file and middle-rank officers, on the other hand, expressed unmistakable sympathy with the protesters. The attack by Mubarak's supporters on the peaceful protesters on February 2, 2011 was an important event that, according to the U.S. State Department, marked a distinct change in the military's behavior.[140] On Friday February 4, after two days of violence and uncertainty over the turnout for planned demonstrations and the army's response to them, hundreds of thousands of people again filled Tahrir Square for peaceful protests. The army continued to stand aside and allow demonstrations to proceed.[141] One could conclude that because of the protesters' steadfast refusal to bow to repression and their obvious disgust with Mubarak, the military felt that they had no choice but to side with the people.[142] Accordingly, on February 10, the military issued a communiqué, stating that the SCAF was in an "open-ended session to see what measures and procedures can be taken to protect the homeland and achievements and the ambitions of the great people of Egypt."[143] The army also stressed the need to resume regular work in state institutions and to restore normal public life.[144] The communiqué mentioned neither the president nor the vice president, making it the first outward sign that

the military had made up its mind to overthrow Mubarak. Eventually, faced with no solution to the crisis and no military backup, the president had little choice but to transfer his powers to the SCAF.

However, the military alignment with protesters was more likely due to a desire for self-preservation and a fear of weakened influence and power than a matter of ethical responsibility.

There were in fact three interlinked factors which determined the military's stance toward the 2011 revolution: military autonomy; hereditary succession (Mubarak's plan to hand over power to his son Gamal)[145]; and the strong link between the armed forces and society.

To begin with, the military's autonomy, which was part of Mubarak's coup-proofing strategy, determined the military's behavior and contributed to the leader's fall. According to MacFarlane, if the military had not been as economically, institutionally, and judicially autonomous as it was under Mubarak's rule, it would have had a harder time making the definitive decision to refuse Mubarak's orders.[146] The military's capacity to survive with or without Mubarak was a major factor shaping its response to the uprising. Its decision to side with the Egyptian people demonstrated that the military was deeply politicized, despite Mubarak's shallow strategy of depoliticization. Although Mubarak's military did not engage in politics as in Nasser's day, it cannot be said that they were fully disengaged.[147]

The rift that came to exist between the generals and Mubarak was not a sudden occurrence but had been developing for some time. The political rise and growing economic influence of Gamal Mubarak and his capitalist cronies had caused resentment among many Egyptians and alienated the military. Over the past decade, the regime had begun to balance its reliance on the armed forces by cultivating a class of crony capitalists. The generals felt their influence slipping away as Mubarak disregarded their economic interests, ignored their advice on ministerial appointments, and organized a campaign to transfer power to his son, Gamal, against their wishes.[148] The military saw Gamal Mubarak's ties to the NDP's younger business elite as a threat to its economic privileges, a point exacerbated by the fact that he would be the first Egyptian president without a military background.[149] The uprising gave the military an opportunity to restore its central position[150] by delivering the coup de grâce to the Mubarak regime when it became apparent that the regime was on its last legs.[151]

The strong link between the armed forces and society also greatly influenced the actions of the military. The Egyptian army is highly institutionalized and professionalized, and is strongly linked to society through its practice of conscription. Because every family has a member connected to the military in some way, the Egyptian army is a truly national army, formed from all layers of society. It is not an army of mercenaries in the eyes of the people, but rather a familiar institution with shared principles.[152] According to the calculations of Stephen Gotowicki, 12.3% of the young male population is conscripted yearly; when you take into consideration the young age of the majority of the protestors, it is not surprising to hear of "the fraternization between the two sides that occurred quite soon after the protests began."[153] Therefore, many believe that even if generals had given the order to fire on protesters, many of the rank and file, who are conscripts and reservists, would have refused to obey.[154] In fact, the majority of the young soldiers at Tahrir square, earning between $10 and $40 a month, could empathize with the protesters and their grievances regarding social and economic injustices.[155] The notion held by both the military and Egyptian society regarding the military's 'guardian role' is not insignificant in this context. The military sees itself and is still seen by the majority of Egyptians as the protector of the nation. The idea that Egypt as a state is in danger looms large in the discourse of the military.[156] Spreading the idea of the military's guardian role has lent the military unmistaken popularity. According to Robert Springborg, during the days before Mubarak stepped down, the military was enjoying wide, popular support while other elements of the regime were hated by the public, despite being subordinate to the military.[157] Importantly, the 1971 constitution gave the military the right to intervene in domestic politics.[158]

As a result of the welcome intervention by the armed forces, the revolutionaries negotiated solely with them immediately following the fall of Mubarak. This reflected their faith in the institution,[159] but also the fact that the military appeared to be the only entity left that could possibly govern in the absence of the regime.[160]

Comparing the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions reveals the dissimilar nature of the military intervention. While the Tunisian military sided with protesters from the first day of the uprising, the Egyptian military gradually adopted a neutral position neither supporting the protesters nor displaying support for Mubarak's regime. When, finally, the military moved against Mubarak, it sacrificed Mubarak to preserve Mubarakism.

The situation in Egypt was certainly much more complex than in Tunisia. They had some key similarities prior to the Arab Spring including the fact that they were both oppressed homogenous societies under Western educated autocrats and the militaries were both largely autonomous with large budgets.[161] However, it is clear that the key difference between the two militaries is the 'unregulated patronage' that the Egyptian, but not Tunisian, military has enjoyed over the past several decades. Supported by its control over a vast economic empire, the Egyptian military has been showered with benefits such as residence in gated communities, access to a variety of special goods and services, and lucrative positions in business and government. The Tunisian army has enjoyed none of these privileges and has, on the contrary, been economically marginalized throughout this time period.[162] Ben Ali's coup-proofing strategy was to marginalize the military and depend on police and the ministry of interior by establishing parallel paramilitary and security institutions. It is not surprising, then, that when Ben Ali ordered the Tunisian army's chief of staff, Rachid 'Ammar, to fire on the protesters, the general refused. Likewise, Ben Ali's order to dismiss 'Ammar was ignored. The military instead turned its guns on the security and intelligence forces and the gangs of hooligans that Ben Ali loyalists had sent into the streets to sow panic,[163] meaning Ben Ali had no choice but to flee. Soon after the coup, 'Ammar stepped aside to allow a civilian government to form.[164]

By way of contrast, in Egypt the army was considerably closer to the regime. Closer, but due to its autonomous nature, which had been cultivated since the beginning of Mubarak's regime, it was capable of survival with or without Mubarak. Additionally, because the military was a conscript army, it had strong links to society and, unlike Egyptian police and other security forces, enjoyed the respect and appreciation of the Egyptian people—who referred to it proudly as "our army." Overall, the Egyptian military showed less desire for reform than their Tunisian counterparts and, despite eventually siding with demonstrators and removing the president, were much more reluctant than the Tunisian military to intervene.[165]

Conclusion

Nasser's regime was the very beginning of the militarization of Egyptian politics. The cornerstone of Nasser's coup-proofing strategy was an unwritten agreement that is still in force between the regime's civilian leadership and the armed forces guaranteeing that military prerogatives would be always protected in return for the loyalty of the armed forces.

Sadat's coup-proofing strategy was built on two interrelated pillars: depoliticization and professionalization. Throughout his rule, Sadat was able to reduce the military's political role.[166] Consequently, through the processes of depoliticizing and professionalizing the military, Sadat was able to exclude military elites from political decision making, yet simultaneously hold the military establishment completely under his control. By the time Sadat was assassinated in 1981, he had come close to completely subordinating the Egyptian military and had transformed the military into a popular and effective fighting force.[167]

When Mubarak took over, he was able to develop the existing coup-proofing strategies of his predecessors and based them on professionalization, depoliticization, and cooptation. He cleverly controlled the armed forces with his crony-based system and attempted to lessen the military's political role in exchange for giving them an autonomous economic role.[168] Theoretically, the military role in the economy befitted both the regime and high-ranking officers, and as long as it was able to have full control over its economic empire, the military was happy to leave domestic politics alone. However, it was the economic autonomy enjoyed by the military that distanced the officer corps from politics and determined the end of Mubarak regime. Ironically, it was Mubarak's own coup-proofing strategy that contributed to the end of his regime.

The actions of the military during the 2011 revolution were often hard to predict. Throughout the protests, the army played a consistently ambiguous role, purportedly standing with the people while at the same time being an integral part of the regime they were confronting. It found itself almost literally on both sides of the barricades. Four interrelated factors determined the military's behavior toward the 2011 revolution: the military's economic autonomy; Mubarak's plan to hand over power to his son Gamal; the link between the armed forces and society; and the intellectual composition of the military leadership, especially in terms of reform. Comparing the Syrian and Tunisian uprisings with the one in Egypt can help explain the outcomes. In the end, it is not the

increased economic involvement of the military in itself that guaranteed the officers' loyalty to the president, but rather how the economic dependency on the regime was structured. Whereas the Egyptian military was not hurt financially by a regime change (nor the Tunisian as they received no benefit), the Syrians were totally financially reliant on the Asaad regime.[169] Additionally, the deep economic penetration of the Egyptian military is another factor leading to differences in the way the Egyptian and Tunisian situations ended; the Egyptian army acted as an agent of continuity by blocking a democratic transition, while the Tunisian military has acted as an agent of change by backing a democratic transition.[170] And while in Tunisia the military removed Ben Ali and attempted to aid the transition to democracy, the Egyptian military, in order to preserve their economic interests, removed Mubarak but then tried to manipulate the transition to best serve their interests.[171]

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