

From Spring to Summer? Democratisation in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya

Imad El-Anis and Ashraf Hamed¹

Abstract

The reform movements that have swept across the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) since December 2010 are transforming the region's political landscape. The *Arab Spring* has now reached a critical stage for Tunisia, Egypt and Libya as political transitions are underway. While there are similarities in the political direction that these states may take, the experiences of regime change and the nature of political transition vary greatly. In Tunisia, the Ben Ali regime was removed from power, elections have been held and a new transitional government has been formed. However, Ben Ali and many of the governing elite fled the country and have not faced trial or investigation. In Egypt, Hosni Mubarak and many of his governing elite have been investigated, detained and put on trial but the military has maintained its position in economic matters and furthered its influence in political affairs although parliamentary elections have been held. Libya experienced over eight months of civil war before the Gadhafi regime was ousted and a new civilian transitional government has emerged.

This paper explores how the political transitions taking place in these states are likely to develop over the coming years and considers if there will be significant differences in their future governments. Drawing on Raymond Hinnebusch's (2006) understanding of potential post-authoritarian politics in the MENA, as well as a large number of interviews conducted with citizens and politicians in these states (including interviews with the former Prime Minister of Libya's National Transitional Council, Mahmoud Jibril, and other high-level government officials), this paper argues that the nature of regime change influences the pace and outcome of political transition. In particular we consider if pre-revolution political structures and international relationships have changed or remained the same following regime change and what impact this has had on the pace and extent of democratisation. As such this analysis offers insights into how democratic transitions in the wider MENA may unfold over the coming years. The findings of this project suggest that the process of regime change has directly affected the pace of political change in these three states with Egypt having the slowest pace of change and being the least likely to transition to democracy.

Key words: Democratisation, Regime Change, Arab Spring, Tunisia, Egypt, Libya

¹ Imad El-Anis is a Lecturer in International Relations at The Nottingham Trent University, UK. Ashraf Hamed is a PhD candidate in International Relations at The Nottingham Trent University, UK. Email: imad.el-anis@ntu.ac.uk & N0231184@ntu.ac.uk

Introduction

The Arab Spring, as the reform movements and changes in governing regimes that have been taking place across the Arabic parts of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) have come to be known, is significantly altering the political landscape of the MENA region. It can be argued that these changes represent the most dramatic geo-political development since the 1989-91 period. Understanding the complexities of the Arab Spring, how it is shaping peoples' lives in the region, and what is going to happen in the future have become the focus of much academic study. In this study we investigate the regime changes in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya and explore what this is meaning for people in these states. These three case studies have been chosen for a number of reasons. Primary among them is that they are the only states so far to have experienced significant or total regime change as part of the Arab Spring. Tunisia, Egypt and Libya were also the first states in the region to experience sustained revolutionary or reform movements/uprisings in the region (apart from Yemen, which is still in a revolutionary phase) and these three states have progressed farther down the line of political transition than any other state in the region. However, they express many of the same political and economic characteristics (discussed below) as the other states in the region that have been affected by the Arab Spring. As such this analysis offers insights into how political/democratic transitions in the wider MENA region may unfold over the coming years, giving us a guide of what to expect if/when regime change is experienced in Syria, Yemen, Algeria and so on.

This study examines how the political transitions taking place in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya are likely to develop over the coming years and considers if there will be significant differences and similarities in their future governments. We do this by considering the nature of the regime change that took place in each case and the processes of political transition that have unfolded since. In particular we consider if pre-revolution political and economic structures and international relationships have changed or remained the same following regime change and what impact this has had on the pace and extent of democratisation. We also consider the perceptions, concerns and interests of ordinary citizens and what this tells us about how they experience the changes taking place in their states.

In carrying out this investigation we test the following hypothesis: the nature of regime change in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya directly influences the pace and outcome of the political transition in each case. Furthermore, we argue that as a result of the process of regime change in Libya and the ways in which pre-revolution structures and relationships are changing,

Libya is the most likely to experience a successful political transition to representative government, followed by Tunisia and then Egypt.

Literature Review

The literature on democracy and authoritarianism in the MENA region is quite extensive in terms of the quantity of monographs, refereed journal articles, reports and other research outputs. However, there are a limited number of over-arching themes that are engaged with and drawn upon. In addition to this there are significant limitations with regards to the range of questions that get asked, with a traditional focus on western-centric questions. These realities represent a problem for the analysis of forms of governance in the MENA region and regime change, and specifically in the current environment, the Arab Spring.

Raymond Hinnebusch (2006) offers a useful overview of the dominant themes (but does not aim to break from them entirely) and provides us with a clear starting point for such an investigation as this. Amongst the most widely explored themes are those which we can term culture-specific, namely, discussions of the role of Islam (and other MENA religions to some extent) and ethnicity (primarily Arab and Persian but also minority groups in regional terms, such as the Kurds, Berbers and Turkomen) in the form of governance witnessed in the region. Bernard Lewis (2003), Samuel Huntington (1984), Thomas Friedman (for a useful discussion of Friedman's positions vis-à-vis governance in the Arab world see: Fernandez, 2011), and Elie Kedourie (1992) have discussed forms of governance in the MENA region predominantly through the culture-specific lens and their works have been influential in some parts of the academic and policy-making communities. The general arguments and conclusions that these and other scholars make are often very similar and hinge on the beliefs that Islam (and other MENA religions) and ethnicity (predominantly Arab and Persian, which get used interchangeably) determine what form of governance a state/community has. Bernard Lewis in particular has been a long-time advocate of the belief that Islam is more of a political ideology than a religion and that it is an ideology which is inherently incompatible with democracy (which he assumes to be one thing for the entire world over: Western/American democracy) (Lewis 2003). At the same time Elie Kedourie has focused on the Arab culture as being one supportive of patriarchy, paternalism, and autocratic rule (1992). Again, the assumption here is that all Arabs, just as all Muslims for Lewis, are the same and represent one monolithic and unitary community.

A second theme in the literature that reinforces this culture-specific one is ahistoricism. This is the belief that history for the MENA region is static and unchanging, in so far as one could examine a series of events, processes and structures from one era, say around 1000C.E. and find general laws applicable to the region today. Samuel Huntington adopts this theme to support his understanding of international relations as being characterised by an endless balancing act between different religio-cultural groups (1996). These scholars have been critiqued in detail elsewhere (see: Hinnebusch, 2006; El Badawi and Makdisi, 2006, 2011; ...) and they are often seen as overly subjective in their treatment of the MENA region in general (and the authors of this article find little merit in any of their work dealing with governance in the MENA region).

However, they are not the only ones who have adopted a culture-specific and ahistorical approach to understanding governance in the MENA region. Even scholars who are more objective in their analyses or who are subjective, but offer a measure of respectful understanding and interest in the MENA region often add to the literature that uses these two themes. Amaney Jamal (2006), for example, has written about the relationship between Islam and governance as well as on perceptions of and support for democracy and Islam. Jamal's work offers a more balanced and effective analysis of the dynamic and varied nature of Islam and how it can influence political discourse (and when it does not), but at the same time and perhaps in response to those more critical of Islam's influence, Jamal still engages with a culture-specific (but not ahistorical) approach. In *Overstating the Arab State* Nazih Ayubi (1995, p. 399) engages with this debate also, highlighting that within Islam (and any other monotheistic religion) there are many interpretations, practices and discursive elements which encourage mass engagement with politics, and representative government, such as *ijtihad* (interpretive judgement), *ijma* (consensus) and *shura* (consultation). While directly challenging the arguments of Lewis, Huntington, Kedourie, Friedman and others, Ayubi nonetheless still approaches governance in the MENA region by drawing on culture-specific epistemology. Fadia Faqir (1997), Tariq Ismael and Jacqueline Ismael (2011), Sami Baroudi (2004), and Muqtader Khan (2003) have all offered coherent analyses that focus on religion and/or ethnicity and governance. The culture-specific theme seems to be a dominant theme in discussions of governance in the MENA region. At the same time, however, there are alternative themes which are also important in this area of study.

Analyses which consider aspects of political economy offer another type of approach to understanding and explaining forms of governance and tend not to engage with culture-specific themes and are not ahistorical in approach. At the same time as discussing Islam and

politics, AmaneyJamel (2005), for example, has also explored the relationship between economic reform and democratisation in the Arab world, concluding that economic and political reform are essential pre-requisites. On the other hand SamihFarsoun and Christina Zacharia (in Brynen et al, 1995) offer a discussion outlining the ways in which liberal economic reform does not necessarily lead to democracy in the short term, but may in fact reinforce authoritarianism. Elsewhere, BurhanGhalioun (2004) has argued that as governments in the MENA region, and in Tunisia and Egypt in particular, renege on their state-society social contracts established in the first post-independence decades, by adopting IMF-inspired structural adjustment programmes (SAPs) and liberal economic reform, thus reducing their national legitimacy, they cannot democratise. As has been demonstrated throughout the experiences of the Arab Spring, media technologies from satellite TV, the internet and mobile communications devices are increasingly important as *tools* to be used in political reform. Lawrence Pintak (2008) offers a good discussion of how the changing political economy of these *tools* is having a significant impact on opening up space for political discourse. Pintak argues that ownership structures are highly significant here. One compelling study by Ibrahim El Badawi and Samir Makdisi (2007; expanded upon in Badawi and Makdisi, 2011) concludes that the political economy of hydrocarbons and conflicts in the region represent an Arab ‘dummy’ effect which is unique to the region in terms of how it impacts patterns of governance. They argue that it is these factors which determine forms of governance in the MENA and not religion or other cultural features. The existence of effective state services, the rule of law, economically dynamic middle classes, high levels of literacy and educational enrolment have also been seen to be key features of the region’s political economy that need to be realised in order for representative government to be established (Perthes, 2009).

In some respects we can find faults with the key elements of the political economy theme as well as with the culture-specific and ahistorical themes in discussions of governance in the MENA region. Nevertheless, it is not within the remit of this study to engage with these debates. We will simply acknowledge their dominance in the existing literature and move on to outlining the theoretical and methodological approach used in this study, which reflects closely a political economy approach but differs from existing analyses in that we consider socially-constructed perceptions as well as economic and political discourse to be key variables.

Theory & Methodology

We adopt Hinnebusch's (2006) understanding of the potential for post-authoritarian politics in the MENA. This model suggests that there are two possible paths towards democratisation in the region. Firstly, if authoritarian governments can 'deliver increased rule of law, better regulatory frameworks, educational reforms and merit-based recruitment to the bureaucracy, they would precipitate the investment and economic growth needed to expand the middle class, civil society and an independent bourgeoisie' (*Ibid*, pp.391-392) necessary for democracy to take root. Outside of the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) states governments have thus far been largely unable to provide any of these things and the Arab Spring has demonstrated that time is likely up for this path to democracy to materialise. This leads us to the second potential path to representative government: regime change/collapse could provide the setting for cross-society coordination and participation in politics – but this needs to be a domestic process without significant involvement by external actors (*Ibid*, p. 392). Underlying both of these possibilities is the political economy of employment, poverty reduction and economic advancement.

A key problem faced by each of our three case studies is unemployment. While unemployment levels are very high in the MENA region as a whole, the states that have been most heavily affected by revolutionary or reform movements since December 2010 have the highest percentages. In particular, youth unemployment is exceptionally high (with approximately 80% of all unemployed workers in Egypt being less than 30 years old). There are underlying historical and structural issues that are the real causes of the Arab Spring but the catalysts seem to have been concerns over unemployment, elite/government corruption, and poverty. The former and the latter in particular have been compounded by the 2008 financial crisis and subsequent global recession. The issue of high (and rising) levels of poverty has been compounded by the 2008 global food price crisis which was worsened further following the environmental catastrophes that struck Russia in 2010, destroying over 1/3 of the Russian agricultural harvest in wheat and other food staples – which led to halting of Russian exports of these products in that year (See: Zurayk, 2011).

Elbadawi and Makdisi (2011) argue that Modernisation Theory does not explain all that much when considering the democracy deficit in the MENA region. However, it is useful to employ the theoretical assumptions found within this approach when considering the respective impacts of the private and public sectors on economic growth in this region. LarbiSadiki (2004) offers a useful discussion of the failures of state-led development and

modernisation programmes in the region in the past five decades or so and critiques the reliance on the 'state' held by much of the region's population. It is common-place for many MENA governments to be amongst the largest employers (if not the largest employer as in Egypt) in their respective states (Richards and Waterbury, 2008). The high percentages of the workforce employed directly by governments as well as those working indirectly in the public sector demonstrate a number of symptoms facing MENA economies. Perhaps one of the most important features is an over-whelming reliance on the state as the most sort-after employer. For most MENA states there is a well-documented tendency for people seeking jobs to view employment by the government as either 1) the most stable form of employment, 2) the most prestigious form of employment, and/or 3) the right of all citizens (See: West, 2011).

As has been discussed elsewhere (Noueihed and Warren, 2012) and has been a recurring theme in the interviews and discussions conducted for this project in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya, there is a common perception in MENA states of the private sector being the abode of those who are corrupt (oligarchs, corrupt officials and so on). This leads to a distrust of and a lack of desire to be involved with the private sector. This compounds the problem of reliance on the public sector. However, we argue here that the private sector is more productive and efficient, in other words more effective at economic activity and is, therefore, the real engine of economic growth in any market. Public sectors in MENA states are often inefficient, unproductive, offer little real human development for those working in them, and ultimately offer little incentive for greater advancement. Adopting Modernisation Theory's premise that the private sector should be relied upon for economic development while the public sector should seek to support private sector counterparts, the existence of large public sectors in MENA states and the tendency of a large part of the workforce (and in particular those unemployed) to seek employment in the public sector reinforce the three key catalysts of the Arab Spring as mentioned above.

The Polity IV is the most widely used method to identify levels of democratic governance and while it has some short-comings it is the most effective approach. To study developments on the ground as it were, we have conducted media analysis (national and international sources in Arabic and English) and field research in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya. In order to gain a sense of the interests, experiences and perceptions (the three variables we consider) of citizens in our three case study states a large number of interviews, discussions and meetings were conducted over a number of weeks in late 2011 and early 2012 (critical periods in each state). Individual and group interviews were conducted varying in length from

approximately 30 minutes to three hours. These included structured and unstructured interviews some of which remain anonymous at the request of the interviewees while others were more forthcoming. In each interview/discussion our three variables were prominent to some extent.

Interviews were also conducted with politicians as well as public and private sector policy-makers (including interviews with the former Prime Minister of Libya's National Transitional Council (NTC), Mahmoud Jibril, and other high-level government officials). These were conducted in order to gain information and insight on the policies being developed and implemented in the transitional phases these states are going through. Again structured and semi-structured interviews were held but these were predominantly one-on-one sessions (in some cases interviewees seemingly did not wish to hold discussions with peers and colleagues present). In conducting these interviews we are able to build on media analysis to further our understanding of how these political transitions are taking shape. We have identified six key variables that we use in our comparative study of the three case studies. These are: 1) duration of the uprising up to regime change, 2) outcome (with three possibilities – revolutionary/rebel victory and successful un-negotiated regime change, a negotiated settlement for the regime to remain but reform, and finally a negotiated regime change), 3) number of deaths and casualties, 4) post-regime change status of former governing elite, 5) elections, and 6) international involvement (ranging from low levels (international media coverage, diplomatic activity and so on) to high levels (external military involvement)). Following the first round of field research interviews and discussions a number of variables have been identified as being the key perceptions, concerns and/or interests of ordinary citizens in the three case study states. Here, we define 'ordinary citizens' as those not involved directly in government or 'big business'. The six core themes that have been identified so far are: security, employment, corruption in the public sector, representation, corruption in the private sector, and justice vis-à-vis the former governing elite (trial or otherwise). We do not seek to quantify the information gained through interviews with government officials and business elite, rather we use these as sources of authoritative information on the political changes taking place.

Regime Change and Transition

The catalyst of the broader region-wide process commonly referred to as the Arab Spring began in Tunisia which was the first state in the MENA region to experience a campaign of

civil resistance and regime change. The events leading up to the self-immolation of Mohammed Bouazizi in the small central town of SidiBouzid have been recounted in detail elsewhere (West, 2011) and will not be done so here, suffice it to recount that this event occurred on 17th December 2010 and by the following day significant protests had started in SidiBouzid. Heavy-handed repression of the peaceful protests that began on the 18th December 2010 and wide-spread police brutality helped to encourage wide-spread protests and civil resistance across Tunisia in the following week with protests and strikes reaching Tunis by the 27th December 2010. By the start of January 2011 wide-spread strikes by worker's unions across the spectrum of the economy had begun. For example, on the 6th January 2011 the chairman of the national bar association announced that virtually all of Tunisia's lawyers had gone on strike in protest to government repression of peaceful protests and more specifically the beating of lawyers during the preceding week. National teachers' and other labour unions had joined the strike within days of this announcement.

The key motivations of the protesters and revolutionaries were rooted in historical political, social and economic processes which have shaped the relationship between the Tunisian government and its citizens as well as between the domestic and international markets. Government repression and brutality, unconstitutional detentions, torture, restrictions on freedom of speech and media censorship, government corruption, lack of accountability and transparency, political repression, poverty, and unemployment have long been major features of Tunisia's political and economic landscape. During the interviews conducted so far in Tunisia for this research project, as well as similar research done for other studies (Noueihedand Warren, 2012), concerns with these issues were consistently expressed. Certainly, a quantitative review of Tunisia's key economic indicators over the past three two decades or so (coinciding with the Ben Ali regimes existence) demonstrates that while there has been significant economic growth in Tunisia in this time, poverty and unemployment levels have actually increased significantly in both absolute and relative terms. At the same time income disparity has also grown. These facts do give credit to the concerns expressed by ordinary citizens living in Tunisia regarding economic well-being.

As the protests progressed the governmental response was characterised by two overarching features. The first was ever-intensifying police brutality and physical repression of protests. The second was half-hearted attempts at appeasing the demands of the protesters and the erection of a façade of promised reforms. These tactics would ultimately prove ineffective in stemming the revolutionary process and on the 14th of January 2011 President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali officially resigned after fleeing to Saudi Arabia. But the removal from

power of Ben Ali (the first such modern experience of a MENA dictator being removed from power by a civil movement) did not end the revolution. The motivating factors behind the revolution were much deeper than just the leadership of one man. Immediately following Ben Ali's departure a caretaker government was installed and Fouad Mebazaa and Mohamed Ghannouchi were confirmed as President and Prime Minister respectively. However, the inclusion of Ghannouchi and other members of Ben Ali's Constitutional Democratic Rally (CDR) party as the majority in the new government reinforced the revolution as protesters called for the disbandment of the RCD and the removal of all RCD members from the government, as well as the holding of free and fair elections. Following further civil resistance Prime Minister Ghannouchi removed all RCD members from the government and then resigned on the 27th February 2011, and the RCD was dissolved on 9th March 2011. The outcome of this revolution can be classified as the first of our three categories: revolutionary victory and un-negotiated regime change. On the 23rd October 2011 national elections were held for the constituent assembly which has been responsible for re-writing the constitution and ushering in further democratic processes. These elections have been widely acclaimed as transparent and fair by both Tunisian and international observers and commentators. In the spring of 2011 all formerly banned political parties were legalised which subsequently led to the victory of *Ennahda* in the October elections (with 41% of the total vote).

We can argue that the most important single mile stone of the Arab Spring revolutions (but certainly not the only key event) is the removal of the incumbent leader; this took eighteen days in Tunisia, but the revolution carried on throughout 2011 and aspects of the revolution continue at the time of writing. According to the most reliable governmental and media figures the revolution resulted in approximately 220 deaths (mostly civilians) and 100 casualties (again, mostly civilians). These are relatively small figures for a revolution that resulted in regime change, especially when compared to our other two case studies. This would suggest that reconciliation within Tunisia in the post-regime change transition would not be as deeply affected as in Egypt or Libya as discussed below.

One of the key influences on post-regime change transition, as discussed above, is the status of the former governing elite. If this elite mostly maintains the same political and economic status and the status quo relationships are preserved then the transition to a new system of governance will be negatively affected with the emergence of a counter-revolutionary movement likely. In the Tunisian case a significant amount of the core governing-elite have left Tunisia all-together. Ben Ali and his closest relatives and aides have fled to Saudi Arabia, France and other Euro-Med states, taking with them vast amounts of

money and resources. At the same time other former leading political and economic actors have also moved elsewhere, albeit perhaps only temporarily in some cases. There are a significant number of former RCD members still in Tunisia but not all are now politically active and these tend to be bureaucrats and technocrats as opposed to formerly central figures (Dabeshi, 2012). At the same time as members of the former governing elite have sought refuge abroad international relationships in the opposite direction have also been evident. During the key stages of the revolution itself international support for the civil movement came from both civil society and governments in the MENA region, Europe and beyond. However, there was not a significant level of international involvement leading up to the point of regime change (with President Sarkozy of France offering to send French paramilitary forces to help suppress the uprising!). The regime change in Tunisia was rather isolated from international influences and it has only been in the post-regime change phase that significant international financial, political and civil society relationships have emerged, with the overwhelming majority coming in support of democratisation.

While the revolution in Tunisia was in its early stages a civil movement for change emerged in Egypt, the second state in the region to experience the Arab Spring (with Yemen almost simultaneously experiencing the start of its revolution). As with the discussions of Tunisia's revolution it is not necessary to revisit the events of the revolution thus far in Egypt in detail, rather it is necessary to highlight some of the key events and stages leading up to regime change and the subsequent transition period. The revolution started in earnest on 25th January 2011 in cities across Egypt with peaceful mass protests, demonstrations, civil disobedience and large scale labour strikes and the occupation of key locales like Cairo's Tahrir Square continuing through February 2011. The government's response was similar to that of Ben Ali's regime in Tunisia: heavy-handed suppression of the peaceful demonstrations using the police and higher thugs, the arbitrary arrest, detention and torture of up to 12000 civilians, and imposition of curfews as well as the enforcing of emergency laws (which having been in place since 1981 had been relaxed somewhat in recent years). The government also tried to appease the protest movement as well in much the same way as Ben Ali tried to do in Tunisia, and as in Tunisia the Mubarak regime in Egypt was unsuccessful in stemming the tide of public frustration and anger. The more the government responded with force while at the same time using the same language of democratisation and change that the protesters themselves were using, the more cynical and brutal the regime looked.

Following several days of massive labour strikes which were organised by Egypt's main trade and labour unions Hosni Mubarak was compelled to step down from the

Presidency on the 11th of February 2011, just eighteen days after the protests started (compared to the 28 days it took for Ben Ali to flee Tunisia). His newly appointed vice president Omar Suleiman also stepped down from his position (Mubarak had not appointed a vice president since he took office). Since his resignation, Mubarak's former ruling party, the National Democratic Party (NDP), was dissolved and all its assets transferred to the state, the parliament was dissolved pending democratic elections, the constitution suspended pending the creation of a new one by a democratically elected assembly, the state security investigations service was disbanded, and Mubarak and many of his former governing elite have been put on trial. The military forces, through the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) took over the reins of power following Mubarak's resignation and have maintained their position to the time of writing. As in Tunisia, the revolution in Egypt has led to a form of negotiated regime change with the military acting as the mediator and then the incumbent regime.

While the revolutionary movement required less time to bring the Mubarak regime down than it took in Tunisia to remove Ben Ali from power, the number of deaths and casualties was much higher in Egypt with approximately 850 deaths and 6000 casualties up until Mubarak's resignation and then several hundred of each category since as the civil movement continues in protest to the SCAF's domination. One would expect that these higher numbers of deaths and casualties would have a negative influence on the transitional period and this appears to have been the case with many in Egypt blaming the SCAF for failing to protect civilians adequately and as even being responsible for further deaths and casualties once it took power.

Unlike the experience of Ben Ali's former governing elite, the former governing elite from Mubarak's Egypt have largely remained in Egypt and either been side-lined by the SCAF and the civil movements or have been arrested and put on trial for various crimes relating to the governments behaviour during the revolution or crimes dating back over the Mubarak regimes rule. Mubarak himself has been under arrest since March 2011 when his arrest and trial for ordering the killing of protestors was ordered. Accountability of the former governing elite for corruption, police brutality, lack of transparency and openness, political censorship, electoral fraud, high poverty and unemployment levels, and lack of social welfare was the key factor driving the revolution. These concerns have been confirmed by almost all of the interviews conducted with ordinary citizens in Egypt so far as part of this study. The parliamentary elections that have been held in several rounds since September 2011 have

appeased some of the main concerns of the masses and presidential elections are scheduled for the summer of 2012.

Several days after Mubarak stepped down in Egypt protests broke out in Benghazi in eastern Libya. Protesters were concerned by police brutality, governmental censorship, restrictions on media, freedom of speech, representation, mass arrests and torture, as well as economic corruption, unemployment and poverty. The response of the Gadhafi regime was to brutally suppress the peaceful demonstrations in Benghazi and elsewhere in Libya. While in Tunisia and Egypt the military forces never engaged in putting down protests, in Libya the military forces were the primary actors involved in combatting the civil movements. This precipitated a military response from the revolutionaries who took up arms against the government forces. Within a month the opposition had organised a rebellion across the country and organised a National Transitional Council (NTC) to act as an opposition government. By late February 2011 the international community got involved with Arab League states condemning the Gadhafi regime's response to the protests and offering financial and other support to the revolutionaries. The United Nations Security Council (UNSC) passed a resolution placing sanctions on Gadhafi and his regime members in late February 2011 less than two weeks after the protests began. A further UNSC resolution authorised the establishment of a no-fly zone over Libya and action to protect civilian populations. Following these resolutions an international coalition of states provided military forces to enforce the no fly zone and assist the rebel movement as it slowly gained control of all of Libya. This has been discussed elsewhere in detail and will not be elaborated here at this stage in this study as the purpose of this brief discussion is to highlight the key variables as outlined above.

The conflict that emerged in Libya lasted for just over eight months until Tripoli, Sirte and Sabha were taken by the rebels and the former governing elite were either arrested, killed or had gone into exile. Muammar Gadhafi himself was killed on the 20th of October 2011 as he tried to escape from Sirte. Several of his closest relatives and elite were also killed during the conflict. The resulting regime change with the NTC taking power and the Gadhafi regime overthrown is exemplary of a rebel victory and un-negotiated regime change. The intense level of international involvement in the Libyan revolution was greater than in the other two case studies and continues at the time of writing in the transition period in the form of financial, political and technical support for a transition to democratic government.

Table.1: Summary of initial regime change in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya

	Tunisia	Egypt	Libya
Duration	28 days	18 days	8.5 months
Outcome	1	3	1
Number of deaths & casualties	c.310	c.1100	10,000-20,000
Status of former elite	Exile	Trial, Status Quo	Deceased, Exile, Trial
Elections Held	Yes	Yes, on-going	Planned
International Involvement	Low	Medium	High

Conclusions

The findings of this project so far suggest that the process of regime change has directly affected the pace of political change in these three states with Egypt having the slowest pace of change and being the least likely to transition to democracy. At the same time, initial indications are that both Tunisia and Libya will experience more successful and continuous moves towards democratic governance but with Tunisia moving more swiftly. In the long-term Libya is also likely to move to an embedded form of representative government due to the deep-rooted changes that have taken place in the regime change phase with new political and economic relationships being formed as well as the significant re-structuring of Libya's international relationships. Satisfaction with regime change and the transition to new forms of governance in the three case studies discussed here is likely to rest upon the key concerns of the masses being met. These concerns, as highlighted above and confirmed through a multitude of interviews in each country that have been conducted so far, rest on negotiated changes in the relationship between the government and society, progress towards socio-economic stability and greater public engagement in the political and economic sectors. However, this is a study that is very much still underway and a further round of field work in each country is necessary and will certainly lead to further valuable information and insight. A deeper analysis of the nature of the regime change in each case study and the transitions so far will also help to advance our analysis.

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