The Phoenix of Power:

The Reconstruction of Political Authority following Revolutionary Regime Change



Thesis submitted in partial fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of DPhil in International Relations in the department of Politics and International Relations at the University of Oxford.

Word Count: 100,790

Christopher Thornton,

Harris Manchester College,

September 2022

Abstract

Periods following revolutionary regime change are often governed by Transitional Administrations (TAs). Such bodies are seldom elected or even selected in any formal process. As such the political authority they enjoy is *a priori* deeply puzzling. This thesis seeks to understand the factors which affect the likelihood that a TA will successfully be able to establish its authority. It closely examines two cases of political transition in Libya and Tunisia, as well as the broader universe of TAs. The research concludes that the composition of the TA, in particular its relative inclusivity of the principal socio-political components of the society, greatly impacts the prospects that the TA will establish its authority. However, the research also finds that the inclusivity of the TA is conditioned by other factors, including historical socio-institutional legacies, pre-existing social ties between elites, chance contingencies leading to path-dependent outcomes, and the agency of leaders. As such the thesis proposes a novel socio-institutional explanation of authority-building in political transitions.

“It ought to be remembered that there is nothing more difficult to carry out, nor more doubtful of success, nor more dangerous to handle, than to initiate a new order of things.**”**

- Niccolò Machiavelli, *The Prince*, Chapter 6.

“I'll tip my hat to the new Constitution
Take a bow for the new revolution
Smile and grin at the change all around
Pick up my guitar and play
Just like yesterday
Then I'll get on my knees and pray
We don't get fooled again**”**

- Pete Townsend, *Won’t get fooled again.*

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Acknowledgments

I would like to express my profound gratitude to all those who were interviewed as part of this research. The interviewees freely gave their time and often came back to me with additional information, documents and clarifications. I hope this work does them justice. The critical observations in this work should not be taken to detract from the commitment and integrity of the interviewees.

I would also like to thank my supervisor, Richard Caplan, for his steadfast support, patience and encouragement. This research also benefitted from the critical feedback of Stathis Kalyvas and the members of the T.E. Lawrence Graduate Workshop on the study of conflict at All Souls' College, Oxford. Michael Willis at the Middle East Studies Centre at St. Anthony's College, Oxford also welcomed me upon my arrival at Oxford and read and commented on several chapters of this thesis. Adam Roberts, Rory McCarthy, Juan Masullo, Ezequiel González Ocantos, Wolfram Lacher, Patrick Haimzadeh, Katia Papagianni and Christina Murray also provided feedback on my work and listened to my ideas in all their nascent forms. John Gledhill and Peter Bartu deserve thanks for agreeing to act as examiners for the thesis, as well as for the insights and knowledge I gained from their work. I must also thank the Economic and Social Research Council (ESRC), the Grand Union Doctoral Training Partnership and the benefactors who funded the Scatcherd scholarship for providing the financial assistance which allowed me to write this thesis.

Without the help and support of my colleagues at the Centre for Humanitarian Dialogue (HD) in Geneva this research would not have been possible: this research is based on the ten years' experience I gained with HD and used many of the contacts and knowledge I developed over my professional career. Thank you to Romain Grandjean and David Harland for allowing me to leave HD to pursue the DPhil on the understanding that I would always be welcome back! Special thanks to Omeyya Seddik, who taught me so much about the region and life in general; Nohad Chebaro, for her personal and professional assistance, her moral integrity and quiet devotion to humanitarian principles; Walid Haddouk, my friend and guide to Tunisian culture, society and food; and Sahar Ammar, who was always available to help me with any last-minute requests!

My friends Joe, Felix, Ben and Wolfgang deserve thanks for listening to my grumbles and insecurities, as well as my ideas. I would also like to thank Andrew Smith for giving me something other than work on which to focus my energies.

My greatest appreciation must be reserved for my family, who have supported me throughout this journey. Thanks to my parents, David and Elizabeth Thornton, who encouraged me to pursue my (sometimes esoteric) interests. My beautiful children, Rowan, Laurie and Cleo, who remind me daily what is important in life. And to my wife, Joanna, who has been by my side through all the experiences which led me here.

Chapter 1: Introduction

1. Introduction

On 11 April 2019, as mass protests raged across the capital, Omar Al-Bashir, the president of Sudan, was forced from power. An Army General announced that the Parliament, Government and state governments and legislatures were dissolved, the Constitution suspended, and that Sudan would be governed by a Transitional Military Council (TMC) until 'free and fair' elections could be held.[1] Would these moves be accepted by those protesting in the streets? Would Bashir's National Congress Party (NCP) and the rest of the state bureaucracy work with the newly announced authorities or mobilize to frustrate their efforts? How would opposition activists in Sudan and abroad react to the new developments in their country? In other words, would the Transitional Administration (TA) in Sudan succeed in establishing its authority or be swept away by a continuing tide of unrest, protest and revolution? These are the questions which motivate this research, which seeks to understand the conditions under which a TA is likely to be able to establish its authority to govern.

Since the Cold War, many countries undergoing dramatic periods of political change have been governed by so-called Transitional Administrations (TAs).[2] These entities are characterised by their explicitly transitory nature: they do not purport to establish a permanent new order but rather to prepare the ground for a new regime following revolutionary regime change. TAs are given the monumental task of shepherding their countries from conflict and unrest to stability and, one may hope, democracy. Their decisions are fundamentally important, shaping the transition which follows and the trajectory of the country for years to come. They take decisions on international relations, transitional justice, the economy and electoral system which tie the hands and shape the composition of future authorities. Despite this, they are never elected, nor often appointed in any formal sense. Formed in the throes of revolutionary upheaval, TAs often seem to be cobbled together from among those available at the time or those who seize the initiative. Given this apparent lack of a formal legitimating process, the authority which they enjoy is *a priori* puzzling.

My research seeks to explain the success and failure of TAs to establish their authority: their ability to govern during contentious political transitions. My research examines the strategies and mechanisms deployed by TAs to establish, maintain and expand their authority.

[1] International Crisis Group (ICG) (2019), *Safeguarding Sudan's Revolution*, Africa Report N°281, pp.6-7.
[2] I have identified 40 cases of TAs from 1991-2018. See Annex 1.

Authority is not a binary variable, but I broadly define failure of authority-building as cases where there is significant contestation of the TA's right to govern *such that it renders their decision-making ineffective*. The ability to establish a permanent new political order, for example through elections accepted by all major constituencies, is one observable implication of a TA's authority, along with absence of significant contestation and the longevity of their legislative decisions.

I propose a novel explanation of authority-building, drawing on insights from relational sociology and social movement theory, as well as the literature on political transitions. I argue that authority in political transitions is a function of the socio-institutional composition of the TA and how this maps onto the composition of the society as a whole. The more inclusive a TA is of the principal socio-political components of the society the greater the probability it will be capable of establishing its authority.

The argument is illustrated through the in-depth examination of two recent cases of political transition in Libya and Tunisia, focusing on within-case comparison and attempting to explain temporal and geographic variation in the authority of the TA. The research relies on detailed process-tracing to reconstruct the creation, institutionalization and day-to-day functioning of the TAs under examination. The data is derived from field research, in-depth semi-structured interviews with political leaders, and detailed historical and sociological studies of the pre-revolutionary context, the revolution and the post-revolutionary transition. In keeping with the methodology of process-tracing, I have given equal attention to exploring alternative explanations as to testing my own explanation in the cases studied.

This approach requires deep contextual knowledge and is therefore qualitative and focused on a small number of cases. However, the thesis concludes with an examination of comparative evidence from a broad range of cases using secondary literature to evaluate my argument and examine the impact of potentially confounding variables, including level of violence, foreign intervention and the presence or absence of an 'elite pact'. This permits a claim to a degree of generalizability which can be further explored in future research.

2. Main Concepts

2.1 Revolutions

Revolutions are times of "rapid, often erratic, change in the relative power of social classes, ethnicities, regions, political parties, legislatures, military groups, royal or noble lineages and

so on."[3] Revolutions involve extra-constitutional changes of political regime: the ouster of one leader and the introduction of a new regime. However, revolutions are more than simple *coup d'etats*, because, as Elster notes, in a *coup d'etat* the fight takes place "within the border of the possible", while in a revolution "the fight concerns how those borders should be drawn."[4]

As such, revolutions always entail a challenge to the authority of the regime and the legitimacy of the governing system in a way that other forms of regime change do not necessarily.

2.2 Political transitions

When a revolution occurs, there is typically a hiatus between the demise of the old regime and the establishment of the new order. I define this hiatus as a *political transition*.[5] Such a hiatus may last only a few hours or days or may take years as processes of reform and reconstruction are undertaken.

The transition ends with the instauration of an ostensibly permanent new political order. A transition may end 'democratically' through elections, as in Spain on 15 June 1977, they may end with the restoration of an authoritarian regime, or with the inauguration of an alternative form of regime, e.g., such as the creation of the Islamic Republic of Iran on 3 December 1979.[6] Transitions also may give way to a new cycle of revolution and transition, such that it is difficult to ascertain when one transition is completed and a new one begins: for example, Niger had four military coups, four political transitions, and eight presidents in its first fifty years as an independent nation.[7]

This definition is ambivalent regarding the end point of the transition, avoiding a teleological definition of political transitions as transitions *from* authoritarianism *to* (liberal) democracy.

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[3] Stinchcombe, Arthur (1999), "Ending Revolutions and Building New Governments", *Annual Review of Political Science* (Vol.2), p.51. There are many other definitions of "revolution" including those which require a long-lasting change to the political system. Tilly and Tarrow, for example, state that "A full revolution combines a revolutionary situation with a revolutionary outcome." Tilly, Charles, and Sidney G. Tarrow (2015), *Contentious Politics* (Oxford: Oxford University Press.), p.184. I have eschewed such teleological definitions, because they assume that the retrenchment of the old order cannot be the outcome of a revolution.

[4] Elster, Jon (1978), *Logic and Society: Contradictions and Possible Worlds* (New York: Wiley), p.50.

[5] Shain, Yossi and Juan Linz (1995), *Between States: Interim Governments and Democratic Transitions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.), p.4.

[6] Stinchcombe identifies six possible ends of revolutionary cycles: conservative authoritarianism, independence, occupation government, totalitarianism, democracy, and *caudillismo*. Stinchcombe, "Ending Revolutions and Building New Governments", p.49.

[7] Baudais, Virginie and Gregory Chauzal (2011), "The 2010 Coup d'état in Niger: A Praetorian Regulation of Politics", *African Affairs* (Vol. 110, No. 439), p.295.

Traditional studies of ´transitology´ are often criticised for being excessively teleological,[8] although this is somewhat unfair.[9]

2.3 Transitional Administrations (TAs)

Political transitions are typically governed by interim or caretaker governments, also known as *Transitional Administrations (TAs).*[10] TAs are established *during or following* an extra-constitutional change of political regime, assume legislative and/or executive functions of government, and explicitly declare their intention to remain for *a finite time period*. Besides these unifying characteristics, there is significant variation among TAs.

While most modern TAs define their principal objective as the organization of democratic elections, historically TAs have governed the interregnum before the instauration of all forms of political regime. In addition to the example of the Islamic Republic of Iran highlighted above, the French Provisional Government of 1814 held power before the restauration of the Bourbon Monarchy, and the Algerian Provisional Government gave way to a single-party authoritarian state in 1962.

Shain and Linz identify four ideal types of TA: Revolutionary, Incumbent, Power-sharing, and International. This typology emphasises variation in the *composition* of TAs' leadership: *revolutionary* TAs led by opposition figures, *incumbent* TAs headed by figures from the previous regime, *power-sharing* TAs involve a combination of the two, while International TAs are run by a foreign State(s) or a multilateral organization, like the United Nations (UN).

TAs may also be thought of as differing according to the *context* of their creation. TAs may emerge from the violent context of civil war or a relatively peaceful popular uprising; they may be created following a foreign occupation or military defeat, or a domestic succession crisis.[11] Similarly, TAs may be the product of formal political settlements (e.g. peace agreements) or may coalesce in an *ad-hoc* and dynamic manner during or after a change of regime.

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[8] Carothers, Thomas (2002), "The End of the Transition Paradigm", *Journal of Democracy* (Vol. 13, No. 1); De Groof, Emmanuel (2020), *State Renaissance for Peace: Transitional Governance under international law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press). p.67. The error of this criticism is pointed out by Gans-Morse, Jordan (2004), "Searching for Transitologists: Contemporary Theories of Post-Communist Transitions and the Myth of a Dominant Paradigm", *Post-Soviet Affairs* (Vol. 20, No.4), p.322.

[9] The seminal text of 'transitology' states that it concerns "transitions from certain authoritarian regimes towards an uncertain 'something else'". O'Donnell, Guillermo and Philippe Schmitter (1986), *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press), p.3.

[10] Although others use the term 'interim governments', I prefer the term TAs, because it covers both legislative and executive branches of government.

[11] De Groof, *State Renaissance for Peace*, p.2.

A very limited number of political transitions have been administered by so-called International TAs (ITAs).[12] ITA's are defined by Zaum as "established by international organizations – mainly the United Nations (UN) – to exercise governmental functions, and in some cases to engage in the establishment or reform of political, administrative and economic institutions."[13] Despite their relative rarity, ITAs, rather than other forms of TA, have received the bulk of recent academic research.[14] As De Groof highlights, although it is common for international actors to play an important and active role in political transitions, it is now less likely than ever that they will assume full responsibility for the administration of a political transition.[15]

2.4 Authority

Most research on political transitions and TAs has studied democratization: looking to identify factors which produce successful transitions to democracy. My research, however, is interested in the steps prior to the instauration of any permanent new political order. I seek to understand how TAs arise and establish their ability to govern effectively: under what conditions are TAs able to establish their authority in other words.

Authority is a complex concept sitting at the intersection of legitimacy and power, which is fully explored in Chapter 2. However, put simply authority is *legitimized power*.[16] Given the difficulty of measuring authority directly, I have sought to identify several observable implications of a TA's possession of authority: the absence of significant protests or violence which inhibits the effectiveness of the TA's decision-making; the longevity of decisions taken by the TA, and the ability to establish a permanent new political order, for example through widely-accepted elections. An entity may be said to enjoy authority if its decisions are largely accepted by the population over which it claims authority during the period of its existence and afterwards. This lack of significant contestation of decisions is a defining feature of authority.

[12] There have been 6-7 ITAs to date: Namibia, Cambodia, Eastern Slavonia, Bosnia-Herzegovina, Kosovo, and East Timor. Bonacker, Thorsten and André Brodocz (2017), "Introduction: Authority Building in Internationally Administered Territories", *Journal of intervention and Statebuilding* (Vol. 11, No. 4), p.397.
[13] Zaum, Dominik (2017), "International Transitional Administrations and the Politics of Authority Building", *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* (Vol.11, No.4), p.410.
[14] Caplan, Richard (2005), *International Governance of War-torn Territories* (Oxford: Oxford University Press); Chesterman, Simon (2004), *You, the People: The UN, Transnational Administrations and Statebuilding* (Oxford: Oxford University Press); Paris, Roland (2004), *At War's End* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press); Guttieri, Karen and Jessica Piombo, eds. (2007), *Interim Governments: Institutional Bridges to Peace and Democracy?* (Washington D.C.: United State Institute of Peace Press).
[15] De Groof, *State Renaissance for Peace*, pp.12-14.
[16] Hurd, Ian (1999), "Legitimacy and Authority in International Politics", *International Organisation* (Vol.53, No. 2), p.400.

Authority is not a binary variable, however, and, in each case, I describe, analyse and explain the degree of authority enjoyed by the TA, as well as variations in the TA's authority across time and space.

3. Scope Conditions

My explanation of authority-building in political transitions should apply to the full spectrum of TAs, irrespective of their composition and the manner of their creation. This means that the argument applies across Shain and Linz's four ideal types of TA: revolutionary, incumbent, power-sharing and international. The argument also applies to TAs created in contexts of civil war, or those which emerge following mass popular protests or constitutional crises. Although the argument contributes most to our understanding of authority-building in contexts where the distribution of power and roles is fluid, chaotic and contentious, rather than contexts were a pre-negotiated 'Government-in-waiting' seamlessly assumes power, the same dynamics of coalition-building are often also at play in such contexts. I therefore expect my argument to apply to 'pacted' transitions and TAs established under formal political settlements, as well as in contexts of 'leaderless' revolutions and chaotic transitions.

The key scope condition of the argument is that it requires revolutionary regime change, as defined above. It is less likely to apply in contexts of a classic *coup d'état* or 'succession crisis' where the identity of the leader changes but the authority of the regime is never fundamentally questioned. For political authority to be *re*-constructed, it must first be *de*-constructed. My research therefore applies only to contexts which have undergone a significant challenge to the authority of the state, such as a revolution or revolutionary civil war.

In the same vein, the argument is not intended to be applied to insurgent groups, opposition movements or 'Governments-in-exile' which fail to unseat the regime, although sometimes such groups self-identify as TAs, such as the Syrian National Council (SNC).[17] However, the argument does apply to cases where a rebel movement succeeds in toppling the regime and forms the embryonic core of the TA. In such cases, the TA's origins as a rebel movement have important effects on its subsequent process of authority-building, as I shall demonstrate.

This analysis ends with the TA handing over power to a new regime, following a clear legitimating event, often the conduct of elections. This means that the analysis of Tunisia ends with National Constituent Assembly (NCA) elections of 23 October 2011, and the analysis of

[17] Lynch, Marc (2017), *The New Arab Wars: Uprisings and Anarchy in the Middle East* (New York: Public Affairs), p.120.

Libya with the handing over of power to the General National Congress (GNC) on 8 August 2012. I have favoured this narrow definition of political transitions, rather than a definition which considers the entire period of revision and reform, including constitutional and transitional justice processes, as part of the political transition. I chose this narrower definition for three reasons. Firstly, for clarity of definition: with a broad definition of political transition, one may endlessly debate whether a nation is currently still in a political transition many years after the former regime fell. Second, much work has already been conducted on processes of constitutional reform, transitional justice and other 'transitional processes' such as security sector reform, including in the case study countries. Third, the authority of government is *a priori* vastly more puzzling prior to the holding of elections. After the conduct of elections, the regular processes of government formation can be expected to proceed; prior to elections the question of where the government derives its authority to govern from is still very much up for debate.

These scope conditions limit the contexts in which my argument can be applied. However, I hope my argument can shed light on a significant number of historical, contemporary, and future contexts which have hitherto defied explanation.

4. Contribution to the field

My research hopes to contribute to the study of political transitions, authority in fragile and conflict-affected states, and the Libyan and Tunisian revolutions and their aftermath.

TAs are understudied, particularly through the lens of political science and international relations. The study of political transitions fell out of favour in the mid-1990s, following a shift to the study of "authoritarian resilience",[18] and while there has been a certain resurgence since the 2011 'Arab Spring' revolutions, most studies are either country-specific histories, or legal analyses.[19] This lack of attention is problematic given the increasing frequency with which revolutions are considered threats to international peace and security and international actors

[18] Posusney, Marsha and Michele Angrist, eds. (2005), *Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Regimes and Resistance* (London: Lynne Rienner); Anderson, Lisa (2006), "Searching Where the Light Shines: Studying Democratization in the Middle East", *Annual Review of Political Science* (Vol. 9); Lust-Okar, Ellen (2004), "Divided They Rule: The Management and Manipulation of Political Opposition", *Comparative Politics* (Vol.36, No 2).

[19] Notable exceptions include Mohamedou, Mohammad-Mahmoud Ould and Timothy Sisk (2013), "Bringing Back Transitology: Democratisation in the 21st Century.", *GCSP Geneva Papers* (No. 13); Pace, Michelle and Francesco Cavatorta (2012), "The Arab Uprisings in Theoretical Perspective: an Introduction", *Mediterranean Politics* (Vol. 17, No. 2); Volpi, Frederic (2013), "Explaining (and Re-explaining) Political Change in the Middle East during the Arab Spring: Trajectories of Democratization and of Authoritarianism in the Maghreb", *Democratization* (Vol. 20, No. 6); Volpi, Frederic (2014), "Framing Political Revolutions in the Aftermath of the Arab Uprisings", *Mediterranean Politics* (Vol 19. No.1).

are called upon to support (if not administer) political transitions. It is important for international actors to understand the factors which contribute to a TA's ability to govern successfully.

This lack of a deep theoretical understanding of the processes of authority-building is more evident in so-called 'leaderless revolts', as the Tunisian revolution has been described,[20] or 'fragmented conflicts',[21] such as Libya. Most existing studies of political transitions assume a relatively clear balance of power between relatively well-defined forces of the regime and opposition,[22] while my research sheds light on the dynamics at play in more contentious contexts. As barriers to entry for revolutionary action are reduced by ease of communications and organizing, facilitated by modern technology, such leaderless revolutions may become the norm rather than the exception to the rule.[23]

My research introduces a new dependent variable to the so-called 'transitology' literature. The existing literature on political transitions rarely tackles the puzzle of a TA's *authority*, instead focusing on the process of democratization.[24] Authority is an important dependent variable for several reasons. First, the focus on democratization internalises the normative assumption that only democratic systems are legitimate; however, non-democratic systems may also be considered legitimate by the population.[25] TAs which successfully establish their authority to govern without leading to democratic elections are *a priori* interesting objects of study. Second, the focus on democratization introduces a selection bias: findings may be skewed by only considering cases where a TA successfully passes the first hurdle of establishing its authority.

[20] Kaboub, Fadhel (2013), "The Making of the Tunisian Revolution". *Middle East Development Journal* (Vol. 5, No. 1), p.1. Willis also identifies the absence of an identifiable leadership as a feature of the Tunisian revolution. Willis, Michael (2016), "Revolt for Dignity: Tunisia's Revolution and Civil Resistance", in Roberts, Adam and Michael J. Willis, Rory McCarthy & Timothy Garton Ash, eds, *Civil Resistance in the Arab Spring: Triumphs and Disasters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p.32.

[21] Carboni, Andrea and James Moody (2018), "Between the Cracks: Actor Fragmentation and Local Conflict Systems in the Libyan Civil War", *Small Wars and Insurgencies* (Vol. 29, No.3), p.458; Romanet Perroux, Jean-Louis (2019), "The Deep Roots of Libya's Security Fragmentation", *Middle Eastern Studies* (Vol. 55, No.2), p.200.

[22] Rangwala, Glen (2015), "The Creation of Governments-in-waiting: the Arab Uprisings and Legitimacy in the International System.", *Geoforum* (Vol.66), p.217.

[23] Beissinger, Marc (2013), "The Semblance of Democratic Revolution: Coalitions in Ukraine's Orange Revolution", *American Political Science Review* (Vol. 107, No.3), pp.574-5; Howard, Philip, and Hussain Muzammil (2011), "The Role of Digital Media", *Journal of Democracy* (Vol. 22. No 3.), pp.35-6; Mohamedou and Sisk, "Bringing Back Transitology", p.10.

[24] The exception is the work on ITAs mentioned above. Shain and Linz devote a few pages to "interim governments and their legitimating myths" but their general conclusion is that a transitional government's legitimacy is suspect until democratic elections are held. Shain and Linz, *Between States*, pp.7-10.

[25] Beetham identifies three ideal types of legitimate regime: traditional monarchies, "mobilization regimes" and liberal-democratic systems. Beetham, David (2013), *The Legitimation of Power*, (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan), p.238.

Successful authority construction is a distinct but necessary preliminary step towards the establishment of a stable new political order and should therefore be considered separately from the process of democratization.

In addition to the contribution to the study of political transitions, my research hopes to make a modest contribution to our understanding of authority and legitimacy. There is a dearth of *empirical* work on the authority-building and legitimation practices of governance actors in conflict, post-conflict and revolutionary states, as highlighted by several recent studies. Bonacker and Brodocz, for example, point to "a general absence of studies on the empirical process of authority building in the literature on international statebuilding."[26] Works on authority-building in conflict and post-conflict situations tend to focus on International Transitional Administrations[27] (ITAs) or rebel groups.[28] My research helps build the body of empirical work on authority-building in fragile and conflict-affected states.

In focusing on authority-building as a *process,* I examine and explain temporal and geographic variation in authority. This approach stands in contrast to more static theories which focus on *sources* of authority. My research therefore presents a novel approach to the study of authority-building, which I hope will spur further research.

Finally, my findings centre upon the inclusivity of a TA as an explanatory factor of a TA's authority. This, in itself, is not ground-breaking, as inclusivity has long been identified as an important factor for the legitimacy of governing institutions, political settlements and processes

[26] Bonacker and Brodocz, "Authority Building in Internationally Administered Territories", p.395; See also Risse, Thomas and Eric Stollenwerk (2018), "Legitimacy in Areas of Limited Statehood", *Annual Review of Political Science* (Vol.21), p.407; von Billerbeck, Sarah and Birte Julia Gippert (2017), "Legitimacy in Conflict: Concepts, Practices, Challenges", *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* (Vol. 11, No. 3), p. 274; Schoon, Eric (2017), "Building Legitimacy: Interactional Dynamics and the Popular Evaluation of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in Turkey", *Small Wars and Insurgencies* (Vol 28. No.4-5), p.146.

[27] Caplan, Richard (2004), "International Authority and State Building: The Case of Bosnia and Herzegovina", *Global Governance* (Vol. 10, No.1); Gippert, Birte Julia (2016), "The Sum of its Parts? Sources of Local Legitimacy", *Cooperation and Conflict* (Vol.54, No.1); Travouillon, Katrin (2017), "Moderator or Manipulator? How International-local Relations Emerged as a Function of UN Authority-building in Cambodia", *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* (Vol. 11, No.4); Zaum, "International Transitional Administrations and the Politics of Authority Building"; Zaum, Dominik (2006), "The Authority of International Administrations in International Society", *Review of International Studies* (Vol. 32, No. 3).

[28] Schoon, Eric (2014), "The Paradox of Legitimacy: Resilience, Successes and the Multiple Identities of the Kurdistan Workers' Party in Turkey", *Social Problems* (Vol. 62, No.2); Weigand, Florian (2017), "Afghanistan's Taliban- Legitimate Jihadists or Coercive Extremists", *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* (Vol. 11, No.3); Podder, Sukanya (2012), "Legitimacy, Loyalty and Civilian Support for the Moro Islamic Liberation Front: Changing Dynamics in Mindanao, Philippines", *Politics, Religion and Ideology* (Vol. 13, No.4); Brenner, David (2017), "Authority in Rebel Groups: Identity, Recognition and the Struggle over Legitimacy", *Contemporary Politics* (Vol. 23 No.4).

in post-conflict contexts and countries undergoing political transitions.[29] However, my research has brought to light several structural factors which limit and condition the potential inclusivity of TAs. Such an understanding of these enabling and constraining factors may help actors devise policies to better reach sufficiently inclusive TAs in the future.

5. Existing explanations of authority-building

An examination of political theories on legitimacy and authority and empirical studies of political transitions and revolutions yields several explicit and implicit explanations of the authority of TAs.

Many casual observers of political transitions treat the authority of a TA as natural and unsurprising. They assume that the leaders of the transition emerged as leaders of the revolution or were long-standing opposition leaders. It is their 'revolutionary legitimacy' which explains the authority they subsequently enjoy to lead the transition. A related explanation suggests that leaders of the transition enjoy control of coercive forces, either of the state or armed revolutionary groups, which they then translate into political authority during the transition. This view is summed up by Mao Tse Tung's axiom that "Political power grows out the barrel of a gun".[30]

Others have suggested that ontological characteristics of the leaders explains their authority to govern. Two of Weber's "three pure types of legitimate domination"[31] centre on the ontology of leaders as central to their political authority: 'traditional' and 'charismatic' legitimacy. Others have pointed to 'religious authority' or 'knowledge-based legitimacy'[32] to explain the authority enjoyed by governing bodies. Such explanations suggest that the members of the governing entity possess some inherent qualities or characteristics which mean that the

[29] Papagianni, Katia (2008), "Participation and State Legitimation" in Call, Charles and Vanessa Wyeth, *Building States to*
Build Peace (Boulder, CO; Lynne Reiner); Bell, Christine and Jan Pospisil (2017), "Navigating Inclusion in Transitions from Conflict: the Formalised Political Unsettlement", *Journal of International Development* (Vol. 29, No. 5); Stewart, Frances, ed. (2008), *Horizontal Inequalities and Conflict: Understanding Group Violence in Multiethnic Societies* (Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan); De Groof, *State Renaissance for Peace*, pp. 227-232.
[30] C.f. Tyler, Tom (2006), "Psychological Perspectives on Legitimacy and Legitimation", *Annual Review of Psychology* (Vol. 57), p.376.
[31] Weber, Max (1978), *Economy and Society* (Berkeley: University of California Press), p.215. In "Politics as a vocation" Weber calls them "three basic legitimations of domination". Weber, Max (1921), "Politics as a Vocation" in Gerth, H.H and Wright Mills, C., Trans. and eds., (1946) *From Max Weber: Essays in Sociology* (New York: Oxford University Press), p.2.
[32] Risse and Stollenwerk, "Legitimacy in Areas of Limited Statehood", p.414.

community accepts the rules they promulgate. These categories have been applied to explain the authority of TAs in diverse contexts from Cambodia to Liberia.[33]

Weber's third category of "legitimate domination" is legal-rational authority. This is roughly analogous to the concept of input legitimacy developed by Sharpf. This explanation suggests that authority is derived from the process of an actor's selection and the manner of their decision-making.

Yet others have suggested that populations accept a government's authority for self-interested reasons. Sharpf also developed the idea that public service provision, including security, generates legitimacy for the state and secures its authority.[34] He terms this 'output legitimacy'. This explanation too has been applied in contexts of violent contestation of state authority. Weigand, for example, suggests that the Taliban's authority derived from its provision of public goods, including security and dispute resolution, rather than popular support for the Taliban's ideology, while the Afghan Republic's lack of authority results from their failure to provide these public goods.[35] Some scholars have also suggested that authority may be derived from international recognition or support.[36]

In each of the empirical chapters on Tunisia and Libya I will critically examine the role played by 'revolutionary legitimacy'; 'charismatic, traditional and knowledge-based authority'; 'Legal-rational authority and input legitimacy'; 'output legitimacy'; and 'international recognition and support'. However, existing explanations also suffer from several definitional and methodological problems which are explored further in Chapter 2. After a close examination of the processes of authority-building in Libya and Tunisia, I concluded that existing explanations are neither necessary nor sufficient to explain successful authority-building in political transitions. This is not to say that such explanations do not have a role to play in the maintenance of stable political orders or may help TAs to compensate for

[33] Bonacker and Brodocz, "Authority Building in Internationally Administered Territories", pp.399-400. Gerdes, Felix (2015), "The Interplay of Domestic legitimation and Foreign Relations: Contrasting Charles Taylor and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia", *Civil Wars* (Vol.17, No.4).

[34] Scharpf, Fritz (2003), "Problem-Solving Effectiveness and Democratic Accountability in the EU", *MPIfg Working Paper* No.3.

[35] Weigand, "Afghanistan's Taliban", p.372. See also Flanigan, Shawn Teresa (2008), "Nonprofit Service Provision by Insurgent Organizations: the Cases of Hizballah and the Tamil Tigers", *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* (Vol. 31, No.6).

[36] Remmer, Karen (1995), "New Theoretical Perspectives on Democratization", *Comparative Politics* (Vol.28, No.1); Janos, Andrew (2001), "From Eastern Empire to Western Hegemony: East Central Europe Under Two International Regimes", *East European Politics and Societies* (Vol. 15, No.2); Gerdes., "The Interplay of Domestic Legitimation and Foreign Relations".

weaknesses in other areas. However, I suggest that they are less decisive than other factors during this critical first phase of a new regime's construction.

6. Alternative explanation

My alternative explanation suggests that the authority of a TA will be significantly determined by the composition of the domestic coalitions aligned in support of the TA and against it. These coalitions are often stabilized through institutionalization, specifically the incorporation of the composite elements of the governing coalition into the structures of the TA as members. The authority of a TA is thus a function of the socio-institutional composition of the TA, relative to the composition of the society as a whole.

The greater the inclusivity of a TA, the greater the likelihood that it will be able to successfully establish its authority. The argument is probabilistic rather than deterministic as intervening events may prevent a TA from successfully establishing its authority despite its composition.

I define inclusivity across two dimensions: the *breadth* of the governing coalition, and the *depth* of the networks of their composite parts. A TA can be considered inclusive if it incorporates representatives of the principal socio-political constituencies in the society, and if these representatives are anchored within their respective constituencies.

The inclusivity of the TA must be considered relative to the broader society, and specifically to possible alternative governing coalitions. As Kurzman highlights, "people evaluate the 'legitimacy' of a regime on a relative scale, not an absolute scale."[37] Even an un-inclusive body composed of weakly-rooted elements may garner a degree of authority if there is no viable alternative coalition, or until such an alternative coalition emerges.

Four factors condition the inclusivity of the governing coalition. First, although revolutions create critical junctures which restructure society,[38] historical *socio-institutional legacies* condition the potentially available components of the TA. For example, corporatist authoritarian regimes may be more likely to leave institutionalized, hierarchical organizations

[37] Kurzman, Charles (2004), *The Unthinkable Revolution in Iran* (London: Harvard University Press), p.136.
[38] Karl, Terry L. (1990), "Dilemmas of Democratization in Latin America", *Comparative Politics* (Vol. 23, No.1), p.19; Krasner, Stephen (1984), "Approaches to the State: Alternative Conceptions and Historical Dynamics", *Comparative Politics* (Vol. 16, No.2.), p.240. Wood describes 6 ways in which civil war transforms society, which may also apply to other revolutionary contexts: political mobilization, military socialization, polarization of social identities, militarization of local authority, transformation of gender roles, and fragmentation of the local political economy. Wood, Elizabeth Jane (2008), "The Social Processes of Civil War: The Wartime Transformation of Social Networks." *Annual Review of Political Science* (Vol. 11). p.539.

from which to construct the TA than atomised totalitarian states.[39] That pre-revolutionary legacies condition post-revolutionary trajectories and institutions has been noted since the study of political transitions began. De Toqueville, for example, argued in "the *ancien régime* and the revolution" that many of the structures created after the revolution originated under the old regime.[40]

Second, the existence or absence of *pre-existing social ties* between elites will facilitate or complicate processes of coalition-building respectively. States in which socio-political elites are connected to one another across political or identity divides, or have undergone processes of establishing social ties through negotiations or dialogue within joint opposition platforms, for example, are more capable of forming broader coalitions than contexts where leaders have newly emerged or have not engaged with one another. The importance of elites and elite pacts features in much of the transitology literature.[41] However, such elite pacts are more difficult to reach in the absence of pre-existing social ties between elites.

Third, initial chance contingencies set in motion path dependent processes which condition the potential inclusivity of the TA. Tilly writes that "*when* things happen within a sequence affects *how* they happen."[42] In the context of political transitions, the final composition of the TA is highly contingent on its initial composition. The initial composition may be dictated by chance, geography, opportunity, or individual initiative, but this then shapes the ongoing pattern of authority recognition and contestation. The process of authority recognition (and authority contestation) is self-reinforcing in other ways. Pierson notes that path-dependency in institutions results from four obstacles to revision: coordination problems, veto points, asset specificity, and positive feedback.[43] All these factors are at play to disincentivise actors from contesting the authority of a TA once they are incorporated therein. For example, the high start-up costs of creating an institution combine with uncertainty about the benefits of alternative

[39] Zhang, Baohui (1994), "Corporatism, Totalitarianism, and Transitions to Democracy", *Comparative Political Studies* (Vol. 45, No.1).
[40] Toqueville, Alexis de (1853), *L'Ancien Régime et La Révolution* (2nd Edition) (Paris, Michel Lévy Frères).
[41] O'Donnell and Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule*, p.39; Di Palma, Guiseppe, (1990) *To Craft Democracies: An Essay on Democratic Transitions.* (Oxford: University of California Press); Stepan, Alfred and Juan Linz (1996), *Problems of Democratic Consolidation and Transition* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press).
[42] Tilly, Charles (1984), *Big Structures, Large Processes, Huge Comparisons* (New York: Russell Sage Foundation), p.14. c.f. Mahoney, James (2000), "Path Dependence in Historical Sociology", *Theory and Society* (Vol. 29, No.4), p.51.
[43] Pierson, Paul (2004), *Politics in Time: History, Institutions, and Social Analysis* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), p.153.

systems to disincentivise actors from altering their behaviour unilaterally.[44] Once a group has recognized the authority of the TA, withdrawing their recognition will entail costs, which discourages withdrawal of authority-recognition.

Finally, close examination of the cases reveals that, in spite of structural constraints, the agency of leaders still plays an important role in deciding to pursue a more or less inclusive TA. In Libya, the NTC squandered the initial advantage derived from their inclusion of members of the former regime by taking decisions designed to alienate this constituency. By contrast, the Tigray Peoples' Liberation Front (TPLF) in Ethiopia engaged in the type of "pro-active connection-making" that Malthaner suggests can help build connections across social and political divides.[45]

Contrary to popular wisdom focusing on the role of strong and charismatic leaders, in many cases of political transition it is 'weak', consensual leaders, without a strong autonomous base of support and willing to build alliances with all parties who come to lead successful TAs. Borrowing from chemistry and psychoanalysis, I have used the term valency to describe an individual or group's ability to form alliances with others.[46] Highly 'valent' leaders with connections to many groups play an important role in political transitions.

In brief, my theory thus suggests that the composition of the TA is an underappreciated explanatory variable in determining authority. The likelihood that a TA will be able to successfully establish its authority is partly determined by its inclusivity: more inclusive TAs have a greater chance of successfully establishing their authority. However, I highlight typical ways in which the inclusivity of the TA is facilitated or constrained by structural factors and the agency of leaders.

7. Methodology and Case Selection

Both the research question and proposed explanation of authority-building present significant methodological challenges because they rely on nuanced, contestable, and somewhat amorphous variables. There is no universal, quantifiable measure of authority (DV); nor is there a way to place a numerical value upon the inclusivity of a TA (IV). These challenges have largely dictated the methodological approach taken. Determining the degree of authority

[44] *Ibid,* p.33 and p.24.
[45] Malthaner, Stefan (2018), "Spaces, Ties, and Agency: The Formation of Radical Networks", *Perspectives on Terrorism* (Vol. 12, No. 2), p.32.
[46] I arrived at this analogy independently, but it has also been developed by Med Hafsi. Hafsi, Med (2005), "The Chemistry of Interpersonal Attraction: Developing further Bion's concept of "valency""; Hafsi, Med (2014), "Bion's Ideal Society: Germinating the Seed of a Social Psychoanalytical Theory".

possessed by a TA demands data-intensive, historical analysis; establishing the degree of inclusivity of a TA requires detailed sociological knowledge of a given context. A large volume of empirical evidence must be marshalled to trace the process through which the TA is constructed, institutionalized and projects its authority in order to establish a causal link between the TA's authority and its inclusivity. Given these factors and constraints of time and space, I adopted the inductive qualitative approach based on a small number of detailed case studies, combined with cross-case comparison, outlined below.

7.1 Case selection

The research is structured around the detailed examination of two cases of political transition in North Africa during the so-called 'Arab Spring', and a cross-case comparative study of successful and unsuccessful TAs in ten countries. The two major cases allow for within-case comparisons, while the cross-case comparison provides maximum variation geographically, temporally and across other potential confounding variables.

The major cases are Libya and Tunisia during 2011-12. In Tunisia, the transition began after mass protests lead to the ouster of Ben Ali on 14 January 2011. There were two distinct phases of the transition, the first 'constitutional' phase, led by PM Mohamed Ghannouchi; and a second 'consensual' phase led by Beji Caid Essebsi.[47] The transition ended with the election of a National Constituent Assembly on 23 October 2011. The TA in Libya traces its origins to the Qaddafi regime's loss of control over the East of the country in February 2011, following popular protests that quickly turned into an armed uprising. The first phase of the transition ran until 23 October 2011, when the National Transitional Council (NTC) announced the 'liberation' of the country. The second phase of the transition ended when the NTC handed over power to an elected General National Congress (GNC) on 8 August 2012.

The two major cases were used to develop my explanation of authority-building using an inductive approach. They provide both cross-case and within-case variation. Between the cases there is significant variation despite geographic and temporal proximity. Tunisia is a state with relative strong, hierarchical politicized networks, while Libya is the quintessential example of an atomized, neo-patrimonial society. The NTC in Libya arose in a context of civil war. The Tunisian TA was created following a relatively swift and pacific transfer of power.

[47] Ben Ashour, Rafaa and Sana Ben Ashour (2012), "La Transition Démocratique en Tunisie: Entre Légalité Constitutionelle et Légitimité Revolutionnaire", *Revue Francaise de Droit Constitutionnel* (No. 92), p.722.

Within each case the authority of the TAs fluctuated over time, and both cases witnessed a change of TA at the executive level. This offers a degree of *within-case* variation. Tunisia was first governed by the TA of Prime Minister (PM) Mohamed Ghannouchi between 14 January 2011 and 27 February 2011, before then being led by PM Beji Caid Essebsi between 28 February and 24 December 2011. The Libyan interim PM was Mahmoud Jibril from 5 March 2011 until 23 October 2011. The NTC then appointed Abdurahim El-Kieb to run the country from 24 November 2011 until 14 November 2012. *Within-case* variation allows me to explore temporal fluctuation in the TAs authority and establish whether these temporal variations are explained by my argument: does authority co-vary with the relative inclusivity of the TA over time?

Using secondary sources, I identified the universe of cases of TAs: I identified forty cases of TAs since the Cold War.[48] In some cases, there were tentative, failed or aborted attempts to establish a TA before a TA was successfully established. In such cases I identified multiple TAs within a single case study country. This allowed me to identify a pool of 'negative cases' in accordance with the "possibility principle":[49] the subsequent or preceding success of authority-building suggests that causal factors existed which meant successful authority-building could have occurred but did not.

Following this categorization, I selected a range of cases to provide maximum variation, including across potential confounding variables. However, in several cases, countries have been governed by multiple TAs since the end of the Cold War (Afghanistan, Iraq, Liberia and Madagascar). In such cases, all TAs are examined. This introduces a *Most Similar Different Outcome* (MSDO) element to the research design.[50]

While I cannot control for all extraneous variables, the choice of case studies allows me to demonstrate to some extent that the context of the TA's creation does not determine the success of the TA's authority-building: I find variation in the level of violence witnessed during the regime change process, the level of foreign intervention, and the role of 'elite pacts' in the creation of the TA. These are all factors one may expect to act as confounding variables in the process of authority-building. The cases selected also provide variation across Shain and Linz's

[48] See Annex 1. This list may not be exhaustive.
[49] Mahoney, James and Gary Goertz (2004), "The Possibility Principle: Choosing Negative Cases in Comparative Research", *American Political Science review* (Vol. 98, No.4).
[50] De Meur, Gisèle and Alain Gottcheiner (2009), "The Logic and Assumptions of MDSO-MSDO Designs", in Byrne, David and Charles Ragin, eds., *The SAGE Handbook of Case-based Methods* (London: SAGE Publications).

typology of *Revolutionary, Incumbent, Power-sharing* and *International* TAs. The cases examined also span multiple regions and continents and more than twenty years. This introduces a *Most Different Similar Outcome* (MDSO) element to the research design.[51]

While one must be tentative about drawing conclusions from a limited number of cases, I believe that my theory offers useful insights into the processes of authority-building in these widely varying cases of political transition.

Table 1: Cross-case comparisons

Country	**Date**	**Type**	**Context**	**Authority-building**
Afghanistan	2001-2005	Revolutionary	Internationalized Civil War	Failure
Burundi	2000-2005	Power-sharing	Peace Agreement	Failure
Cambodia	1992-1993	International	Peace Agreement	Success
DRC	2002-2006	Power-sharing	Peace Agreement	Failure
Ethiopia	1991-1994	Revolutionary	Civil War	Success
Iraq	2003-2005	International	Internationalized Civil War	Failure
Liberia	1990-1994	Power-sharing	Civil War	Failure
Liberia	2003-2006	Power-sharing	Peace Agreement	Success
Madagascar	1991-1993	Power-sharing	Popular Protests	Success
Madagascar	2009-2013	Revolutionary	Popular Protests	Failure
Peru	2000-2001	Power-sharing	Constitutional Crisis	Success
Yemen	2011-2022	Incumbent	Popular Protests	Failure

[51] *Idem.*

7.2 Methods

The research uses a range of qualitative methods to examine the legitimation and authority-building strategies of TAs. Detailed process-tracing was deployed to examine the establishment of the TAs, their institutionalization and the manner in which they exercised their authority.[52] The methodology of process-tracing allowed me to examine a range of possible alternative explanations as well as demonstrate the causal link between the inclusivity of the TA and its authority. This explanation of authority-building was arrived at using an inductive approach: when the research began, I had a range of possible factors which I suspected would contribute to successful authority-building, most of which were subsequently eliminated to arrive at the relatively parsimonious explanation outlined above.

The research began after almost a decade of living in and working on the major case study countries. During this time, I regularly wrote public, private, and internal notes for my employer on the political developments in Tunisia and Libya. This period also served to build close connections to some of the principal political protagonists in these countries. Without these relationships and detailed knowledge, the research would have been impossible to conduct, particularly in the context of the Covid-19 crisis and attendant limitations on travel and fieldwork.

To correct and corroborate my personal recollections of the period and the socially imbibed narrative of the transition, I began by consulting secondary sources which provided historical accounts of the transitional period in the case study countries. I then used primary sources, including contemporaneous news reports, statements and press releases by institutions, the government and political groups, reports by domestic and international institutions, published interviews and accounts by participants to reconstruct the process whereby the TAs emerged, were institutionalized and undertook decisions, as well as contestations of their authority from within and without.[53] At the same time, I conducted interviews with leading political figures to elaborate, corroborate and expound upon the motivations of those involved.

I conducted over 50 semi-structured elite interviews with members of the TAs in Libya and Tunisia, as well as other relevant national figures. Long-term relationships with many of the participants increased their trust and willingness to share sensitive insights, as well as access

[52] Mahoney, James (2015), "Process Tracing and Historical Explanation", *Security Studies* (Vol.24, No.2), pp.207-210.
[53] Sources were consulted in English, French and Arabic. Quotes in the thesis have been translated by the author into English. Original language titles are in the footnotes.

to the highest political levels.[54] In addition to "snowball sampling",[55] purposive sampling was used to ensure all relevant political and social sub-groups were interviewed. For example, in both Libya and Tunisia, I sought out Salafist leaders from the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG) and *Jabhat Al-Islah* respectively to gain insights from this small but active minority on the political transitions in their countries. In both countries I purposefully interviewed members of the TA who had resigned and subsequently criticized the TA. In Libya, I conducted interviews with NTC members from all regions of the country and ethnic groups. In Tunisia, I conducted interviews across the political spectrum, from Trotskyists to members of the RCD via Ennahda. Interviews were mainly conducted in French and English; some interviews were conducted in Arabic. Although I speak conversational Arabic, interpreters were used for the Arabic interviews to ensure full comprehension and nuance.

The decision was made not to anonymize interviewees in order to allow readers to evaluate the credibility of the sources and the evidence they provided. All interviewees were public figures and had significant experience speaking publicly and on the record, mitigating ethical concerns demanding anonymity. Their informed oral consent was sought before interviews took place and all interviewees were aware that this formed part of my doctoral research at the University of Oxford, in accordance with the research ethics approval received from the Departmental Research Ethics Committee (DREC) on 18 November 2018.

To better understand the composition of the TA, I drew upon a range of secondary sources from sociology, anthropology, history and political science, as well as autobiographies to understand the socio-political and institutional origins of the TA members. This allowed me to identify, not only the principal social groups and constituencies, and their historical connections, but also the personal socio-political origins and trajectories of leading figures.

7.3 Limitations of the research

As with all research in the social sciences, this thesis suffers from several limitations. Firstly, questions will remain regarding the generalizability of my findings. I have attempted to demonstrate a degree of generalizability through the cross-case analysis in Chapter 7. Moreover, I have attempted to give adequate consideration to alternative explanations,

[54] See Annex 2 for full list of interviews conducted. Unless otherwise indicated, all interviews cited in this thesis were conducted by the author.
[55] A method for generating, "a study sample through referrals…particularly applicable when the focus of study is on a sensitive issue." Biernacki Patrick and Dan Waldorf (1981), "Snowball Sampling: Problems and Techniques of Chain Referral Sampling", *Sociological Methods and Research* (Vol. 10, No.2), p.141.

highlighting evidence which does not conform to my argument. However, any study which does not examine the applicability of the argument to the universe of cases may be criticized for cherry-picking cases and evidence to confirm to the initial research findings. However, I have chosen to privilege the development of a robust and richly detailed argument in a smaller number of cases over a potentially cursory and shallow examination of a broader number of cases. It will fall on later research to identify cases which support or confound my explanation and thereby further refine my argument and its scope conditions.

The problem of generalizability is compounded by the detailed historical and sociological knowledge required to ascertain whether a given case fits my scope conditions, let alone conforms to my overall explanation of authority-building. Whether a given case is one of revolutionary regime change or a *coup d'état* is a matter of historical and political debate. Although I have outlined a reasonably clear set of definitions of revolution, political transition and TA, these definitions nevertheless require a high degree of contextual knowledge to determine if the definitional barriers have been met. My only consolation in this regard is that the same critique can be levelled at many of the leading works in the field.[56]

Finally, my argument is probabilistic, rather than deterministic, which may be unsatisfying for some. I suggest that TAs which are more inclusive of the principal socio-political components of the society are more likely to be successful in establishing their authority. However, this does not mean that extraneous factors or other intervening variables will not prevent successful authority-building or conversely prevent a TA's collapse. Foreign military interventions, for example, may serve to topple or prop up a TA irrespective of its inclusivity. My argument simply suggests that greater inclusivity will help the TA compensate for any deficits and better weather challenges from all quarters.

8. Conclusion

While much attention has been expended on evaluating the successes and failures of TAs to provide security, stability and prosperity, little attention has been paid to how these institutions end up in a position to make such important decisions in the first place.

It is often assumed that the TA is simply a translation of the domestic and international balance of power, and that the authority it enjoys is therefore unsurprising. However, a cursory examination of recent cases of TAs seems to suggest that this is not necessarily the case. In

[56] For example, there is often debate as to whether a 'revolution' is a 'social revolution', one of Skocpol's scope conditions. Skocpol, Theda (1979), *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp.4-5.

neither Tunisia nor Libya were the TAs composed exclusively of leaders of the revolutionary forces, nor the most powerful groups in society to the exclusion of others. No one voted for the members of the TA and the TA often struggled in vain to provide services to the population. It is therefore difficult to determine from where these TAs derived their authority to govern. Why did it become widely accepted that these institutions had the right to take decisions with far-reaching consequences for their nations and its peoples? Why was their rule not more contested?

My research hopes to offer an answer to this important question: under what conditions, will a TA be able to successfully establish its authority to govern? In responding to this question, I point to the composition of the TA, suggesting that the more inclusive the TA is of the principal socio-political components of a society the more likely it will be to successfully establish its authority. However, I also highlight important and recurring ways in which the composition of the TA is conditioned and constrained by structural factors and the agency of leaders.

Chapter 2: A socio-institutional process of authority-building

1. Introduction

This chapter outlines my definition of authority and the observable implications of successful authority-building in political transitions, before summarizing some prominent existing explanations. Existing explanations vary from public service delivery to the charisma of leaders. Although, in keeping with the methodology of process tracing, I give equal weight to these alternative explanations in the two detailed case studies, I also highlight some problems with existing explanations in this chapter.

The chapter continues with a detailed outline of my alternative explanation of authority-building in political transitions. This explanation was arrived at through an inductive process, through an examination of the case studies and the broader universe of cases. However, this explanation is situated within a broader theoretical framework drawn from rational choice, social movement theory, historical institutionalism, relational sociology and the literature on political transitions and statebuilding.

I argue that the composition of a TA is fundamental to the process of its authority-building and the likelihood that a TA will successfully establish its authority. The more inclusive a TA is of the principal socio-political components of a society the more likely it will be able to establish its authority. However, several factors typically facilitate or constrain the creation of inclusive TAs: socio-institutional legacies, pre-existing relations between elites, chance contingencies, and the agency of leaders. Contexts in which these factors enable the TA to be formed of a broadly inclusive coalition are more likely to result in successful authority-building.

2. Defining authority

Drawn from Hurd, my definition of authority is "the condition in which power is married to legitimacy, where most compliance is unproblematic and only occasional deviance needs to be policed."[1] The concepts of authority and legitimacy are therefore deeply intertwined. Put simply authority is *legitimized power*.

Legitimacy is defined as "a generalised perception or assumption that the actions of an entity are desirable, proper, or appropriate within some socially constructed systems of norms, values, beliefs and definitions."[2] This definition falls within the empirical or sociological tradition,

[1] Hurd, Ian (1999), "Legitimacy and Authority in International Politics", *International Organisation* (Vol.53, No. 2), p.400.
[2] Suchman, Mark (1995), "Managing Legitimacy: Strategic and Institutional Approaches", *The Academy of Management Review* (Vol.20, No.3), p.574.

which considers legitimacy as a social construct and seeks to examine the concrete mechanisms and rhetorical devices through which actors justify their rule and populations accept them. There are many notable recent works in this empirically grounded tradition, particularly relating to the legitimacy of non-state armed groups.[3]

This view differs from the positivist tradition, which suggests that there are some universal attributes associated with legitimate rule. The normative view dates to Aristotle and Plato, who "were more concerned with how power ought to be justified than with a descriptive, empirical theory."[4] The normative view continues to have its implicit and explicit proponents, including among those who view representative democracy as the only legitimate form of the state.[5] This positivist perspective is also implied in much of the work on political transitions. Shain and Linz suggest, for example, that the legitimacy of all interim governments is inherently suspect, until 'founding elections' provide the government with "democratic legitimacy".[6]

The positivist position is, however, ahistorical. Perhaps monarchies, empires, and theocracies are illegitimate in the current socio-political context; however, it seems unjustifiable to categorically suggest that they were never legitimate, particularly in the eyes of the populations who lived under them. Categorising such regimes as 'illegitimate' elides debates regarding the optimal and most legitimate form of government. Similarly, it seems unimaginative to consider a system of governance which is normatively superior that our current representative democracy as impossible, notwithstanding the current system's legitimacy.[7] Legitimacy is rather a social construct which can be empirically observed.

Turning to the second component of authority, following Dahl, power is simply an actor's ability to influence outcomes.[8] This approach differs from the 'power-as-resources' definition,

[3] Duyvesteyn, Isabelle (2017), "Rebels & Legitimacy; An Introduction", *Small Wars & Insurgencies* (Vol. 28, No.4-5); Schoon, Eric (2017), "Building Legitimacy: Interactional Dynamics and the Popular Evaluation of the Kurdistan Workers' Party (PKK) in Turkey", *Small Wars and Insurgencies* (Vol 28, No.4-5); Podder, Sukanya (2017), "Understanding the Legitimacy of Armed Groups: A Relational Perspective", *Small Wars and Insurgencies* (Vol. 28, No.4-5); Brenner, David (2017), "Authority in Rebel Groups: Identity, Recognition and the Struggle over Legitimacy", *Contemporary Politics* (Vol. 23 No.4).

[4] Zelditch, Morris (2001), "Processes of Legitimation: Recent Developments and New Directions", *Social Psychology Quarterly* (Vol. 64., No.1), p.4.

[5] Fukuyama, Francis (2004), *Statebuilding, Governance and World Order in the 21st Century* (London: Profile Books); Rotberg, Robert *et al.* (2004), *When States Fail* (Princeton: Princeton University Press).

[6] Shain, Yossi and Juan Linz (1995), *Between States: Interim Governments and Democratic Transitions* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p.7.

[7] Grayling, Anthony Clifford (2017), *Democracy and its Crisis* (London: Oneworld Publications). Beetham attempts to bridge the gap between positivist and sociological positions in Beetham, David (2013), *The Legitimation of Power* (Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan).

[8] Dahl, Robert (1957), "The Concept of Power", *Behavioral Science* (Vol.2, No.3), pp.202-3.

which associates power with the possession of specific resources, such as wealth, coercive means, population or even knowledge or symbolic capital.[9] Power may have multiple sources and be based on both objective and subjective factors.[10] The important characteristic is the agent's ability to influence outcomes in their favour.

Authority is not a binary variable, but exhibits temporal and geographical variation, as well as varying between audiences. A TA may possess authority at one time, place and among a specific population, but not enjoy authority as these conditions change. One of the advantages of my detailed and chronological study of the TAs in Tunisia and Libya is that it allows me to explore this variation in a way which more static approaches have failed to do. It is not enough to state that a TA has or does not have authority, as the TA's authority will fluctuate between audiences, and over time and space, as I will demonstrate.

However, for purposes of classification it is necessary to define where a TA can be said to have succeeded or failed to establish its authority. Hurd and Cronin have noted that authority entails "a relation among actors within a hierarchy in which one group is recognised as having both the right and the competence to take binding decisions for the rest of the community."[11] An entity may be said to enjoy authority if its decisions are largely accepted by the community over which it claims authority. This lack of significant contestation of decisions is a key feature of authority. This definition provides several observable implications which can be used to determine whether a TA has authority. These include *inter alia* the presence or absence of significant protests or violence which inhibits the effectiveness of the TA's decision-making, the longevity of the TA's decisions, and a TA's ability to establish a permanent new political order, for example through elections accepted by all major constituencies.

In contexts of political transitions, the presence of low-level violence and isolated protests is not sufficient to suggest that a TA has failed to establish its authority. I consider a TA to have failed to establish its authority when contestations impede its ability to function and take decisions. Similarly, if the decisions of a TA are reversed by subsequent legislatures, this is not

[9] Baldwin, David (2002), "Power and International Relations", *Handbook of International Relations* (London: SAGE Publishers), p.274.

[10] The distinction between different "faces of power", while useful in examining how an actor projects power, has been overplayed since these 'faces' fundamentally reflect different means for an actor to influence an outcome in their favour. Bachrach, Peter and Morton Baratz (1962), "Two Faces of Power", *American Political Science Review* (Vol.56, No.4); Lukes, Steven (2005), *Power: A Radical View* (2nd edition) (New York: Palgrave Macmillan).

[11] Cronin, Bruce and Ian Hurd, eds. (2008), "Introduction" in *The UN Security Council and the Politics of International Authority*. (Oxford: Routledge Taylor & Francis Group), p.6.

evidence *per se* of the TA's lack of authority to take these decisions, as long as the revisions are undertaken in legal continuity and with reference to the legal framework established by the TA. Given the difficulty in measuring authority directly, the absence of significant contestation of a TA's rule is a suitable proxy for authority.

3. Significance of Authority

Authority, and the related concept of legitimacy, is important for several reasons. The first is the short-term practical reason of promoting compliance with the TA's rules and edicts. The alternatives to voluntary compliance based on belief in the regime's legitimacy is compliance achieved by coercion or motivated by self-interest.[12] Many TAs have limited access to means of coercion and limited resources to provide material benefits to populations; they are therefore typically more reliant on legitimation strategies. Fragile or weak states also by definition have limited capacities to monitor and sanction noncompliance, therefore increasing the utility of voluntary compliance.[13] Even in cases where populations do not openly challenge a government considered illegitimate, they may act to frustrate its objectives.[14] Yet, cases of political transition demand more than mere compliance from the population; they require enthusiastic support. Legitimate bodies provoke more enthusiastic approval than the use of coercion and self-interest.[15]

The second more long-term significance of authority is the need for certain key decisions of TAs to be accepted by the population and subsequent governments. TAs take decisions of fundamental importance, affecting the future of the state.[16] In Libya, for example, the NTC produced the Constitutional Declaration, which plotted the trajectory of the transition, as well as setting out fundamental rights, freedoms and principles of the state. The Constitutional Declaration remains the principal legal reference in Libya until today. In Tunisia, the HIROR established several foundational laws which remained in force a decade later including laws on political parties and associations, and freedom of the press and censorship. The interim government passed legislation dissolving the ruling party, expropriating property of the former regime, amnestying prisoners, and entering international treaties. Conversely, in Madagascar,

[12] Hurd defines "three currencies of power": legitimacy, coercion and self-interest. Hurd, Ian (1999), "Legitimacy and Authority in International Politics", *International Organisation* (Vol.53, No. 2), p.379.
[13] Risse, Thomas and Eric Stollenwerk (2018), "Legitimacy in Areas of Limited Statehood", *Annual Review of Political Science* (Vol.21), p.406.
[14] Scott, James (1985), *Weapons of the Weak: Everyday forms of Peasant Resistance* (New Haven: Yale University Press).
[15] Hurd, Ian, "Legitimacy and Authority in International Politics", p.388.
[16] Shain and Linz, *Between States*, p.4; Henneberg, Sabrina (2020), *Managing Transition: The First Post-Uprising Phase in Tunisia and Libya* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp.9-11 and p.218.

the *Haute Autorité de la Transition* (HAT) conducted a national consultation, proposed amendments to the Constitution and organized a referendum to validate these amendments. However, in this case, the HAT's authority to do so was contested and the amended Constitution did not stand.[17] Without a sufficient degree of authority, key decisions of TAs are likely to be contested, overturned and the subject of ongoing and future conflict.

Perhaps the most important decisions undertaken by TAs concern the establishment of the framework for the construction of a new political and constitutional order. If the TA does not enjoy the requisite authority, this is likely to negatively impact the authority of the new regime, as I will show in the Libyan case. Without a recognized political authority it is impossible to conduct successful elections. Successful authority-building is therefore a necessary preliminary step before democratization, and indeed central to the success of the transition as a whole.

4. Existing explanations of authority-building

4.1 Existing theories

While much research exists on the *consequences* of authority, there is little academic consensus about the *sources* of authority and little empirical studies of how authority is accrued.[18]

It is often assumed that the leaders of the transition derive their authority to govern from their performance on the battlefield or the struggle against the regime: their 'revolutionary legitimacy' *per se*. As though the act of toppling the leader permits the new regime to step onto a vacant pedestal and be recognized by the population as their new leaders. This source of authority may be summed up in Mao Tse Tung's axiom that "Political power grows out the barrel of a gun".[19] In the context of political transitions, Guttieri and Piombo argue that "in the immediate aftermath of conflict, power grows from the barrel of a gun – whether held by a local tribal chieftain or a blue-helmeted soldier."[20]

Other scholars, however, have identified alternative explanations of authority-building. Weber provides the most well-known typology of the sources of authority. Weber describes "three pure types of legitimate domination"[21]:

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[17] Call, Charles (2012), *UN Mediation and the Politics of Transition after Constitutional Crises* (New York City: International Peace Institute), pp.19-23; ICG (2010), *Madagascar: Sortir du Cycle de Crises*, Africa Report N°156, p.21.
[18] McLoughlin, Claire (2015), "When Does Service Delivery Improve the Legitimacy of a Fragile or Conflict-affected State?", *Governance* (Vol. 28), p.342.
[19] C.f. Tyler, Tom (2006), "Psychological Perspectives on Legitimacy and Legitimation", *Annual Review of Psychology* (Vol. 57), p.376.
[20] Guttieri, Karen and Jessica Piombo. eds. (2007), *Interim Governments: Institutional Bridges to Peace and Democracy?* (Washington D.C.: United State Institute of Peace Press), p.349.
[21] Weber, Max (1978), *Economy and Society* (Berkeley, University of California Press), p.215.

- Traditional authority resting on the belief that an actor's rule is legitimate because it is part of an "immemorial tradition" (some theorists also distinguish "religious authority",[22] which I suggest is typically a sub-form of traditional authority);
- Charismatic authority, based on the leadership qualities of an actor and the concomitant correctness of the orders ordained by him/her (more recent work has added the related category of "knowledge-based legitimacy");[23]
- Rational-legal authority, derived from the processes and rules by which a governance actor is placed in a position of authority.

Another framework for understanding the construction of legitimacy, is that of *input* versus *output* legitimacy.[24] Output legitimacy, sometimes called 'performance legitimacy', is the idea that service provision to citizens, including security above all, generates legitimacy for the state.[25] The hypothesis that service delivery contributes to legitimacy has become so axiomatic that it is the theoretical underpinning of billions of dollars of aid, development and stabilization spending.[26] Although output legitimacy has recently attracted academic criticism,[27] it also has strong academic proponents. Skocpol, for example, writes that "If state organizations cope with whatever tasks they already claim smoothly and efficiently, legitimacy…will probably be accorded to the state's form and rulers by most groups in society."[28]

Some scholars have suggested that authority may be derived from international recognition or support.[29] However, the causal mechanism here is often close to that proposed under output legitimacy: international recognition facilitates access to aid and funds, which facilitates provision of services to the population. Gerdes, for example, argues that Liberian President

[22] Risse and Stollenwerk, "Legitimacy in Areas of Limited Statehood", p.414.
[23] *Idem.*
[24] Scharpf, Fritz (2003), "Problem-Solving Effectiveness and Democratic Accountability in the EU", *MPIfg Working Paper* No.3.
[25] McLoughlin, "When Does Service Delivery Improve the Legitimacy of a Fragile or Conflict-affected State?", p.341.
[26] McLoughlin cites official DFID, OECD and NORAD guidelines. *Idem.*
[27] *Idem.* See also Mcloughlin, Claire (2017), *When Does Service Delivery Undermine State Legitimacy? Evidence from Sri Lanka,* Research Paper No. 44 (Birmingham: Developmental Leadership Program).
[28] Skocpol, Theda (1979), *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China.* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp.31-2. See also Lipset, Martin Seymour (1959), "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy", *American Political Science Review* (Vol.53, No.1), p.89.
[29] Remmer, Karen (1995), "New Theoretical Perspectives on Democratization", *Comparative Politics* (Vol.28, No.1); Janos, Andrew (2001), "From Eastern Empire to Western Hegemony: East Central Europe Under Two International Regimes", *East European Politics and Societies* (Vol. 15, No.2). This is contested in Whitehead, Laurence (1991), "International Aspects of Democratization" in O'Donnell, Guillermo, Philippe Schmitter and Laurence Whitehead, eds., *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press), p.4.

Sirleaf's legitimacy in international circles enabled her to secure foreign financial support which in turn allowed her to increase her domestic legitimacy.[30] International opprobrium is, however, often seen as *de*-legitimising for regimes, which may lead one to argue that, *vis-à-vis* some domestic constituencies at least, international recognition *per se* may reinforce the authority of the regime.[31]

Output legitimacy is contrasted with *input legitimacy*, which suggests that citizens will be willing to accept a lower degree of performance from a governance actor if they participated in that actor's selection or decision-making processes (either through an election or a form of "discursive participation."[32]). Input legitimacy is roughly analogous to Weber's concept of legal-rational authority. Schmidt developed the related idea of *throughput* legitimacy, sometimes called 'procedural justice', through which an actor or rule becomes legitimate through the systematic application of transparent processes.[33]

Both Weber's and Scharpf's typologies have been used to examine the authority-building practices of actors from the UN to the Taliban. Bonacker and Brodocz, for example, write about how the UN Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC) supplemented its legal-rational authority, as derived from a UN Security Council mandate, with traditional authority, coming from the former king.[34] Weigand suggests that the Taliban's authority derives from its effectiveness in justice and security provision (*Output* legitimacy), rather than ideological beliefs or the procedures of their selection (*Input* legitimacy).[35] Gerdes examines the charismatic legitimacy of Charles Taylor in the Liberian social context and the role of international recognition in shoring up the authority of Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf.[36]

In my examination of the authority of the TAs in Tunisia and Libya, I will seek to establish whether revolutionary legitimacy; legal-rational authority; charismatic, traditional and

[30] Gerdes, Felix (2015), "The Interplay of Domestic Legitimation and Foreign Relations: Contrasting Charles Taylor and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia", *Civil Wars* (Vol.17, No.4), pp.460-461.
[31] Risse, Thomas, Stephen Ropp and Kathryn Sikkink (1999), *The Power of Human Rights: International Norms and Domestic Change* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press).
[32]Caprini, Michael, Fay Cook and Lawrence Jacobs (2004), "Public Deliberation, Discursive Participation and Citizen Engagement.", *Annual Review of Political Science* (Vol. 7), pp.318-319.
[33] Schmidt, Vivien (2013), "Democracy and Legitimacy in the European Union Revisited: Input, Output *and* 'throughput'", *Political Studies* (Vol. 61), p.4; Tyler, "Psychological Perspectives on Legitimacy and Legitimation", p.382.
[34] Bonacker, Thorsten and André Brodocz (2017), "Introduction: Authority Building in Internationally Administered Territories", *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* (Vol. 11, No. 4), pp.399-400.
[35] Weigand, Florian (2017), "Afghanistan's Taliban- Legitimate Jihadists or Coercive Extremists", *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* (Vol. 11, No.3), p.372.
[36] Gerdes, "The Interplay of Domestic Legitimation and Foreign Relations", pp.450-453 and pp.455-460.

knowledge-based authority; output legitimacy; and/or international recognition can account for variation in the TA's authority.

4.2 Problems with the existing theories

Existing theories exhibit several problems. The first set of problems are definitional: the proposed explanatory variables are vague and amorphous. It is difficult to define concepts such as 'charisma'. Anthropologists and historians have long-since problematized notions of 'traditional authority', demonstrating that traditions are often defined *ex post facto* to justify *de facto* rule.[37] Legal-rational justifications can be contested or used to support diametrically opposed situations. Even concepts central to output legitimacy, such 'performance' and 'service delivery' are relative, and highly subjective. Public policy experts, politicians and the general public disagree endlessly about whether a government's performance is good or bad based on varying criteria. McLaughlin identifies five obstacles to performance contributing to the legitimacy of the state, including shifting expectations and problems with attribution.[38] Definitions of these terms are also often tautological. For example, charismatic leaders are defined as leaders who people follow, and people are said to follow them because they have charisma.

Secondly, none of the purported sources of legitimacy are *sufficient* to explain the outcome of authority-building efforts. Countless actors exhibit qualities such as charisma, technocratic expertise and traditional titles, but do not find themselves in positions of authority or find their authority highly contested. Such ontological characteristics cannot therefore be considered sufficient to explain political authority. Moreover, notwithstanding the definitional problems highlighted above, many would suggest that neither are such qualities *necessary* for successful authority-building. In post-revolutionary contexts, it is easy to identify those who are affronted that their 'leaders' do not possess the requisite 'qualities', but nonetheless the authority of the leadership is largely recognised (including by those who criticise them).

Finally, there are questions related to causality. That several TAs which possess coercive capabilities and provide services to their population also enjoy political authority, does not mean that coercive capabilities and public service delivery *caused* their political authority. As we will see, in many cases their political authority *predated* their control over coercive

[37] Hobsbawn, Eric and Terence Ranger, eds. (1983), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press); Anderson, Benedict (1983), *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso Books).
[38] McLoughlin, "When Does Service Delivery Improve the Legitimacy of a Fragile or Conflict-affected State?", pp.347-352.

capabilities or ability to provide public services. Indeed, it may be argued that it is their authority which provided them access to the coercive resources and other capabilities of the state, rather than the other way around.

An exclusive focus on the ontology of a governing body elides the processes through which these very endowments are acquired and successfully deployed to construct authority. For example, service delivery will only accrue legitimacy to an actor if the target audience attributes the delivery of this service to this actor. This necessitates both the conceptualization of the actor as a discrete entity, and discursive practices to communicate the linkage between the entity and the service.

Taken together these problems severely weaken the explanatory power of existing explanations.

5. An alternative explanation of authority-building

My alternative explanation examines how the process of a TA's construction impacts its authority. Closely analysing how the TA relates to the society it seeks to govern, I conclude that the composition of the TA is central to successful authority-building, and that more inclusive TAs are more likely to be successful in establishing their authority in political transitions. However, my argument is probabilistic, rather than deterministic, as intervening variables and other confounding factors may reduce the authority-building advantages derived from inclusivity, or conversely compensate for weaknesses in this regard.

5.1 TAs as coalitions

Most studies present TAs as above and distinct from society, interacting with its environment as a discrete actor with its own interests and agency. In this characterization, the TA may be instrumentally exercising force on the population, providing them with services, and making rhetorical arguments and policy decisions in order to secure its rule; the population may be evaluating the TA as an institution based on the charisma or qualifications of the members or submitting to its rule out of fear or apathy. I suggest, however, that this view elides the true process of the TA's construction.

At the outset, a TA is a 'project' to use Banfield's term, rather than an 'entity': for a project to emerge "a number of distinct elites with distinct powers had to come together to form a coalition around the project."[39] TAs do not arise fully formed and begin to interact with a

[39] C.f. Stinchcombe, Arthur (1968), *Constructing Social Theories* (New York: Harcourt, Brace and World Inc.), p.190.

population but tend to be composed in a dynamic and iterative process from a coalition of pre-existing socio-political components from within the society. As such, TAs are built from, and interacting within, an existing web of social relations.[40]

Like most governments, TAs tend to be coalitions rather than monolithic entities. Even in cases where a government appears monolithic, for example the hegemonic party in a single party state, there is usually diversity in the group supporting it. Within the ruling party there may be various constituencies brought together: different regions, prominent families, tribes or ethnicities, each with their own nested set of relations. Sisk, for example, notes that "in some postcolonial African regimes an informal balancing act by autocratic regimes resulted in a roughly proportional allocation of power and resources to ethnic groups."[41] Lines of fracture in the regime's coalition are often exposed during revolutions and other forms of regime change. Alienation of their base and fragmentation of the governing coalition are often cited as preconditions for the breakdown of authoritarian regimes.[42] For example, the fragility of the Ben Ali regime stemmed from his alienation of his traditional support base within the Tunisian "neo-Destourian" nationalist movement, among the business elite and with secular women, as well as conflicts with the Association of Tunisian Magistrates and the Association of Tunisian Journalists, two professions which had long been loyal to the regime. Angrist convincingly describes this "narrowing of the regime" as one of the principal causes of the revolution.[43] A similar narrowing of support was witnessed in Libya prior to Qaddafi's fall.[44] Thus, in situations of political transition, the coalition of forces backing the former regime has broken down leading to a fatal contestation of the regime's authority, culminating in regime change. The task of the TA is then to form a new coalition, which assembles the requisite base of support to establish its authority.

This constitutive process of coalition-building has a fundamental impact on the political authority of a TA. As Andersen writes, "Things are not *first* entities, and *then* start interacting…the meaning and identity of the entities come as a direct result of the changing

[40] Emirbayer, Mustafa (1997), "Manifesto for a Relational Sociology", *American Journal of Sociology* (Vol. 103, No. 2); Jackson, Patrick and Daniel Nexon (1999), "Relations before States: Substance, Process and the Study of World Politics*", European Journal of International Relations* (Vol.5, No.3).
[41] Sisk, Timothy (1996), *Power Sharing and International Mediation in Ethnic Conflicts* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press), p.28.
[42] Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions*, pp.47-51.
[43] Angrist, Michele Penner (2013), "Understanding the Success of Mass Civic Protest in Tunisia", *Middle East Journal* (Vol. 67, No.4), pp.550-554.
[44] ICG (2011), *Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East (V): Making Sense of Libya*, Middle East/North Africa Report No.107, p.2.

roles they play within relations and transactions."[45] Authority is a product of the constitutive process of the TA and the web of relations of support and opposition this process of constitution creates. TAs are hewn from the existing socio-institutional fabric of the society, and the constituent elements of a society, including those represented within the TA as well as those excluded from it, are continuously re-evaluating their position *vis-à-vis* the TA itself. Understanding that a TA is a coalition, rather than a monolithic entity, is central to understanding the process of a TA's construction and how this impacts the subsequent process of authority-building.

5.2 Inclusivity

From this basic understanding of a TA as a 'project' which brings together a coalition of pre-existing socio-political components, I argue that the more inclusive a TA is of the principal socio-political components of a society the more likely it will be to establish its authority.

The role of inclusive institutions in promoting stability was observed by Lijphart in his seminal article, "Typologies of Democratic Systems".[46] Lijphart observed that countries where power was shared between the principal competing groups in the society, such as Belgium and the Netherlands, tended to enjoy higher levels of political stability, compared with diverse societies which imposed majoritarian systems.[47] He termed these countries "consociational democracies".[48] Although Lijphart was sceptical about prescriptive use of his observations, models of consociationalism were subsequently deployed by academics and practitioners to propose solutions for deeply divided societies and contexts of civil war. Many States emerging from civil war such as Lebanon, Bosnia-Herzegovina and Afghanistan have attempted to put in place consociational institutions with varying degrees of success.[49] Hartzell and Hoddie demonstrate that such post-conflict power-sharing arrangements produce more enduring peace,[50] and, contrary to the expectations of many critics of consociationalism, result in

[45] Andersen, Morten Skumsrud (2012), "Legitimacy in State-building: A review of the IR Literature", *International Political Sociology* (Vol.6), p.215.
[46] Lijphart, Arend (1968), "Typologies of Democratic Systems", *Comparative Political Studies* (Vol.1, No.1), pp.17-22
[47] Lijphart, Arend (1969), "Consociational Democracy", *World Politics* (Vol.21, No.2), p.213.
[48] *Idem.*
[49] Zahar, Marie-Joelle (2021), "Power Sharing and Peace Settlements" in Weller, Marc, Mark Retter and Andrea Varga, eds., *International Law and Peace Settlements* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p362.
[50] Hartzell, Caroline and Matthew Hoddie (2007), *Crafting Peace: Power-sharing Institutions and the Negotiated Settlement of Civil Wars* (University Park, Pennsylvania: Pennsylvania State University Press), p.19 and p.84.

democratization more often than settlements which do not include such provisions.[51] Critics of consociational institutions suggest that they ossify social divisions, stunt democratic development, paralyze decision-making,[52] and may further exclude marginalized communities from political decision-making.[53]

Such research typically concerns post-electoral arrangements, where it is agreed, for example, that parties will rule in a "grand coalition" government with their rivals, introduce systems of proportional representation for legislatures, grant minorities decision-making rights on specific questions (e.g. segmental autonomy) and mutual vetoes over key issues.[54] The use of power-sharing mechanisms in post-electoral contexts has the advantage that representation and decision-making can be distributed to self-selected groups, rather than using ascriptive criteria which assume fixed identities, such as ethnicity. This distinction has been termed "liberal" versus "corporate" consociationalism.[55] Research on consociationalism and power-sharing does not typically concern transitional arrangements but focuses on constitutionally enshrined and ostensibly permanent institutional arrangements, contrary to the cases examined in this thesis. The creation of broadly inclusive TAs presents a different set of challenges and advantages to the use of post-electoral consociational institutions, firstly because they are explicitly temporary arrangements and secondly because they are formed prior to the conduct of elections. Furthermore, most research on consociationalism examines the influence of such inclusive systems of governance on risks of conflict and democratization, rather than the perceived legitimacy or authority of the institutions.

However, the importance of inclusivity in political transitions more specifically has also been highlighted by international organizations, practitioners, and academics. Papagianni advocates for statebuilding processes that are "inclusive of all major political forces and open to the participation of the public".[56] Bell and Pospisil suggest that "ensuring that political settlements are inclusive is key to the attempts of negotiating transitions from conflict."[57] Sisk links the

[51] Hartzell, Caroline and Matthew Hoddie (2015), "The Art of the Possible: Power Sharing and Post-Civil War Democracy", *World Politics* (Vol.67, No.1), p.38 and p.56.
[52] Zahar, "Power Sharing and Peace Settlements", p.356; Wolff, Stefan (2011), "Post-Conflict State Building: The Debate on Institutional Choice", *Third World Quarterly* (Vol.32, No.10), p.1789.
[53] Hartzell and Hoddie, "The Art of the Possible", p.44.
[54] Sisk, *Power Sharing and International Mediation in Ethnic Conflicts*, pp.36-38; Zahar, "Power Sharing and Peace Settlements", p.357.
[55] Wolff, "Post-Conflict State Building", p.1798.
[56] Papagianni, Katia (2008), "Participation and State Legitimation" in Call, Charles and Vanessa Wyeth, *Building States to Build Peace* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Reiner), p.50.
[57] Bell, Christine and Jan Pospisil (2017), "Navigating Inclusion in Transitions from Conflict: the Formalised Political Unsettlement", *Journal of International Development* (Vol. 29, No. 5), p.576.

inclusivity of TAs to the legitimacy of the transition as a whole,[58] and Rangwala suggests that the need for "a broad-based coalition of political actors" was one of the "key lessons from the Iraq episode."[59]Arato uses the term "plurality" to refer to the same principle of "drawing in as broad a range of significant political participants into the negotiation process as possible, and by using a decision rule that allows all of their voices to count" and suggests this is central to successful transitions.[60] Under certain conditions, exclusionary politics has been linked to conflict onset and political instability, and inclusion has been seen as critical to preventing conflict resurgence.[61] Gledhill concludes that "captured transitions" in which elites "privilege power over inclusiveness" are "fundamentally unstable."[62] De Groof suggest that inclusive transitional governance may be a customary principle of international law, linking inclusivity to the legal principle of self-determination.[63]

However, it is important to introduce greater nuance and sociological understanding to the definition of inclusivity. When analysing the inclusivity of a TA one must consider inclusivity across two dimensions: I have dubbed these the breadth and depth of inclusivity. The breadth of inclusivity refers to the diversity of constituencies a TA includes within its structures. The depth of inclusivity refers to the strength with which a representative is connected to their purported constituency: the extent to which including a given individual is considered commensurate with including his or her constituency.

The diversity and character of the constituencies which may be included in a TA will be determined by the pre-existing structure of society. TAs have been composed of representatives of political parties and trends; ethnic groups and indigenous peoples; civil society organizations (CSOs); cities, tribes and regions; armed groups and factions; or a combination of these. Generally, one may distinguish between societies primarily composed of *Gemeinschaft* or *Gesellschaft* networks: networks based on personal ties and identity and networks based on

[58] Sisk, Timothy (2013), "Elections and Statebuilding after Civil War: Lurching Towards Legitimacy", *Routledge Handbook of International Statebuilding* (London: Routledge), p.259.
[59] Rangwala, Glen (2015), "The Creation of Governments-in-waiting: the Arab Uprisings and Legitimacy in the International System", *Geoforum* (Vol.66), p.218.
[60] Arato, Andrew (2004), "Interim Imposition", *Ethics and International Affairs* (Vol.18, No.3), p.29.
[61] Stewart, *Horizontal Inequalities and Conflict*; Lindemann, Stefan and Andreas Wimmer (2018), "Repression and Refuge: Why Only Some Politically Excluded Ethnic Groups Rebel", *Journal of Peace Research* (Vol. 55, No.3).
[62] Gledhill, John (2013), "Conclusion: Managing (In)security in Post-Arab Spring Transitions", *PS: Political Science & Politics* (Vol.46, No.4), p.738.
[63] De Groof, Emmanuel (2020), *State Renaissance for Peace: Transitional Governance under International Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp.227-232.

impersonal ties and institutions respectively.[64] The extant networks in Libya prior to the revolution, like in many neo-patrimonial countries were *Gemeinschaft* networks, based on region, tribe and kinship ties. In Tunisia, while *Gemeinschaft* networks existed, the dominant structure of society was based on impersonal, political networks: *Gesellschaft* structures. An analysis of the inclusivity of the governing coalition must follow the structuring logic of the society. Where the principal structuring logic of society is around region or kinship ties, the composition of the TA should be considered in terms of the regions or tribes included; where the structuring logic is around political parties, the coalition should be viewed from the point of view of its politically inclusivity.

This analysis must be independent of the rhetorical justification of a TA's composition: the inclusion of a group may be ostensibly based on political criteria but closer contextual analysis may reveal that a group has been included on the basis of ethnicity or *vice versa*. For example, the main components of the TA in Burundi were the *Front Pour la Démocratie au Burundi* (FRODEBU), and the *Union Pour le Progrès National* (UPRONA). However, these innocuous 'nationalist' political names belied the ethnic basis of these parties: FRODEBU being almost homogenously Hutu and UPRONA dominated by Tutsis.[65] Conversely, a seeming plethora of political parties included in a TA may obscure the fact that these parties all represent the same small, homogenous constituency, as we shall see in the case of Tunisia. Thus, a surface inclusivity may conflict with the true socio-political base of a TA's coalition, underlining the importance of deep sociological knowledge to understand a TA's genuine inclusivity.

Several scholars have noted that considering the breadth of inclusivity is inadequate; one must understand how those present, typically at the elite level, are connected to the broader society.[66] I have used the term depth of inclusivity to refer to the extent to which a given representative on a TA can speak and indeed be representative of his/her purported constituency. Lijphart uses the term "internal political cohesion" to describe the relationship between constituencies and their political representatives and notes the importance of this relationship in facilitating the

[64] Crawford, Beverly and Arend Lijphhart. (1995), "Explaining Political and Economic change in Post-communist Eastern Europe: Old Legacies, New Institutions, Hegemonic Norms, and International pressures", *Comparative Political Studies* (Vol. 28, No.2), p.186; Giddens, Anthony and Philip Sutton (2013), *Sociology* (7th Edition) (Cambridge: Polity Press), pp.206-208.

[65] The history of these parties is explained and ethnic categories problematized in Daley, Patricia (2006), "Ethnicity and Political Violence in Africa: The Challenge to the Burundi State", *Political Geography* (Vol. 25, No. 6), pp.666-669.

[66] Bell and Pospisil (2013), "Navigating Inclusion in Transitions from Conflict"; Papagianni, Katia (2005), "Transitional Politics in Afghanistan and Iraq: Inclusion, Consultation, and Public Participation.", *Development in Practice* (Vol. 15, No.6).

emergence of inclusive institutions.[67] A broad inclusivity of the spectrum of groups present in a society may be undermined if representatives are only weakly anchored within the constituencies they are intended to represent. This problem is particularly acute with ill-defined, amorphous and/or diverse constituencies, such as 'women' or 'youth': it is quasi-impossible for an individual to effectively represent so broad a 'constituency'.

Effective representation is facilitated by the inclusion of representatives of organizations with hierarchical, institutionalized networks. Such organizations possess four key resources: 1) members; 2) established structures of solidarity incentives; 3) communication networks; and 4) leaders.[68] Each of these resources contributes to the depth of inclusivity of a TA. The larger the membership of an organization, the larger the proportion of a society which is represented through that organization's representative. Moreover, such organizations can induce their members to support the TA through established structures of solidarity incentives. They can also engage with an even larger number of sympathizers though their communication networks, allowing the TA to be responsive to the demands of a mobilized section of the population, and their leaders form recognised poles around which support can be concentrated.

Gesellschaft structures may lend themselves to the production of such hierarchical, institutionalized organizations; however, it is by no means the case that *Gemeinschaft* networks cannot be organized along such lines. Gellner has identified tribes which are segmentary organizations with clear hierarchical lineages and concepts of collective responsibility, while acknowledging that in other contexts tribes do not have this structure and function.[69]

One must therefore consider to what extent a TA is inclusive of the spectrum of components of a given society, and the extent to which the members of the TA are able to effectively represent their supposed constituencies. I argue that a TA which is inclusive of the principal socio-political components of a society will be more likely to establish its authority than a TA which excludes major components of a society or contains members only weakly connected to their supposed constituencies.

[67] Lijphart, "Consociational Democracy", pp.221-222.
[68] McAdam, Doug (1982), *Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930-1970* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press), pp.43-48.
[69] Gellner, Ernest (1990), "Tribalism and the State in the Middle East", in Khoury, Philip and Joseph Kostiner, eds., *Tribes and State Formation in the Middle East* (Berkeley: University of California Press), p.11.

5.3 Strong and weak validation

Inclusivity contributes to the successful authority-building of TAs through the mechanisms of strong and weak validation. Strong validation comes from constituencies who are invested in the TA's success either for reasons of self-interest or conviction. Those who accord the TA strong validation are willing to take action to defend and uphold the institution and its decisions. The constituencies who come together to form a TA at the outset are likely to accord the body strong validation. Suchman, notes the importance of integration into an organization's decision-making structures, over "immediate results", for producing stable authority recognition.[70] Inclusion in the TA is a common way to ensure a constituency's strong validation of a TA's authority.

However, not all groups need to accord a TA strong validation to successfully establish their authority. If those constituencies who accord strong validation to the TA represent a critical mass of the principal socio-political components of a society, other groups will naturally align themselves to the TA, regardless of whether they subscribe to the TA's principles, values and project. This process is described by Zelditch as weak validation.[71] A similar process is outlined by Stinchcombe and subscribed to by Tilly.[72] Weak validation occurs when an individual or group perceives contesting an entity's authority as futile, due to the array of constituencies supporting the entity, and therefore acquiesces to its authority. Individuals and groups do not need to believe in the correctness of the TA or support its cause, if they believe that its position is insurmountable. This process is similar to "bandwagoning" in the rational choice literature.[73] Groups align their position to the position of the strongest actor in a given context. Zelditch highlights "the powerful effect of even weak validation", which he defines as behaviour which does not challenge the authority of the entity, even if it does not signal explicit support.[74]

Thus, the greater the inclusivity of a TA the greater the aggregate proportion of a society that will accord the body strong validation, precipitating the process of weak validation from other components of the society.

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[70] Suchman, "Managing Legitimacy", p.578.
[71] Zelditch, "Processes of Legitimation", p.4.
[72] Stinchcombe, *Constructing social theories*, pp.160-163; Tilly, Charles (1985), "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime" in Evans, Peter, Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol, *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p.171.
[73] Christia, Fotini (2012), *Alliance Formation in Civil Wars* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.), p.20 and p.53.
[74] Zelditch, "Processes of Legitimation", p.13.

5.4 Uncertainty

The inherent instability and uncertainty of political transitions is another reason why more inclusive TAs are more successful than narrow TAs which exclude key constituencies.[75]

Theoretically as the number of groups included in a coalition increases, the benefits of membership will be increasingly dispersed and the risks of fragmentation increased. In established democracies, according to Riker, this leads to the logic of the "minimum winning coalition", where the optimal coalition is a coalition composed of the minimum number of actors required to secure an objective, in this case recognition of a TA's authority.[76] Fotini has suggests that the logic of the minimum winning coalition also applies to situations of civil war alliance formation.[77]

However, in political transition, successful TAs tend to favour increased inclusivity over the logic of the minimum winning coalition. Elser has a similar finding regarding constituent assemblies, suggesting that "a system that tends to reflect, in miniature, the diversity of the nation is preferable to one that risks excluding significant groups."[78]

One reason minimum winning coalitions are not observed during successful political transitions is the violation of Riker's assumption of perfect information.[79] In situations of political transition, there is inherent uncertainty, information asymmetry, and fluidity in the interests and the relative power of specific constituencies, organizations and networks.[80] It may be impossible to ascertain with certainty the strength of an organization; a group may even have little understanding of their own popular support, or this support may shift quickly over time. The Muslim Brotherhood-inspired Tunisian political party, *Ennahda*, for example, had been illegal in Tunisia for almost 20 years prior to the revolution, its networks repressed, and leaders forced into exile. According to one Ennahda leader, the party had no idea about its popular support or mobilizing capacity on the eve of the revolution.[81] Despite this, Ennahda became the principal political force following the revolution, winning the largest number of

[75] Gledhill, John (2013), "Introduction: Assessing (In)security after the Arab Spring: Editor's Introduction", *PS: Political Science & Politics*, (Vol.46, No.4), p.710.
[76] Riker, William (1962), *The Theory of Political Coalitions* (New Haven: Yale University Press), pp.32-33.
[77] Christia, *Alliance formation in Civil Wars*, p. 21 and p.53.
[78] Elster, Jon (2013), *Securities against Misrule: Juries, Assemblies, Elections* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p.223.
[79] Riker imposes 2 conditions: rationality and perfect information. Riker, *The Theory of Political Coalitions*, p.32.
[80] See Frohlich, Norman (1975), "The Instability of Minimum Winning Coalitions", *American Political Science Review* (Vol. 69, No. 3); Hardin, Russel (1976), "Hollow Victory: The Minimum Winning Coalition", *American Political Science Review* (Vol. 70, No.4), for other criticisms of Riker's theory.
[81] Interview with Abdelhamid Jlassi (Tunis, 25 June 2019).

seats in the 2011 NCA elections. Similarly, the *Rassemblement Constitutionnel Démocratique* (RCD) once had more than 2 million members, or around one-fifth of the Tunisian population.[82] Yet it was unable to organize a single significant demonstration in support of the regime during the 2011 revolution.[83] These examples underline the difficulty of assessing the strength and weight of different constituencies in contexts of revolutionary regime change. The problem is more acute for more diffuse networks: it is difficult to assess the organizational strength of an ethnic or tribal structure or an identity-based network. Such networks may remain dormant during times of stability and only become active in periods of crisis.[84]

Given these factors, successful TAs tend towards being more inclusive, rather than focusing on reaching a 'minimum winning coalition'. A minimising formula would be inherently unstable in the context of a political transition where the power of actors is uncertain and fluid.

5.5 Relativity

Although greater inclusivity increases the probability that a TA will successfully establish its authority, this does not mean that a TA can or must be fully inclusive. The necessary inclusivity of the TA is determined by the context and, in particular, the composition of any alternative claimant of political authority.

The inclusivity of the TA must be considered in relative terms, as compared to existing or potential alternatives. Constituencies evaluate whether to support a TA based on possible viable alternatives, rather than any absolute values or principles. The likelihood a TA's authority-building will be successful is therefore also partly determined by the existence or absence of possible alternative governing coalitions. This finding is in line with Emerson's power-dependence theory, which suggests that an entity's power is a function of the availability of alternative sources for goal satisfaction.[85]

If there are multiple viable coalitions aiming to govern the transition, then there will likely be a contestation of authority, rather than a smooth process of integration of key constituencies into the TA. Conversely, in the absence of a viable alternative, groups may still elect to accept

[82] Murphy, Emma (2011), "The Tunisian Uprising and the Precarious Path to Democracy", *Mediterranean Politics* (Vol. 16, No.2.), p.299.
[83] ICG (2011), *Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East (IV): Tunisia's way*, Middle East/North Africa Report No.106, p.9.
[84] Sambanis, Nicolas and Moses Shayo (2013), "Social Identification and Ethnic Conflict", *American Political Science Review*, (Vol. 107, No.2), p.319; Dukhan, Haian. (2021), "The End of the Dialectical Symbiosis of National and Tribal Identities in Syria", *Nations and Nationalism* (Vol.28, No.1), p.149.
[85] Emerson, Richard (1962), "Power-Dependence Relations", *American Sociological Review*, (Vol. 27, No.1),p.32.

the authority of a TA from which they are excluded. The inability of others to form a coalition is therefore as important for successful authority-building as the formation of a broad coalition by the TA. In Tunisia, for example, I found that the creation of a viable alternative to PM Ghannouchi's TA, in the form of the National Council for the Protection of the Revolution (NCPR) did much to undermine the authority of the TA. Conversely, in Libya the conflict raging in Western Libya precluded constituencies in the West of the country from creating a viable alternative to the NTC and encouraged them to initially accept its authority.

The factors which prohibit or facilitate the creation of a viable alternative coalition to contest a TA's authority are often the same as the factors which condition a TA's inclusivity: historical socio-institutional legacies, pre-existing social relations between elites, chance contingencies leading to path dependency and the agency of leaders.

5.6 Accounting for variation

Keen observers of governing institutions have noted that authority is not uniform but fluctuates temporally and geographically.[86] Authority also varies depending on the audience of the authority claims: an institution may have significant authority among one constituency while its authority remains highly contested among others. Schlichte and Schneckener distinguish three different audiences for an entity's authority claims: i) active supporters and followers; ii) specific local communities or a wider national audience; and iii) "the international arena, comprising of states, international organizations, transnational NGOs and the media."[87] Duyvesteyn notes variation in authority over time, between different social strata, the centre and periphery, as well as geographic and territorial variation.[88]

One of the advantages of my explanation is that it helps account for such variation. Geographic variation and variation in the authority of the TA between audiences is partly explained by the composition of the TA, with regions or constituencies unrepresented or ill-represented in the composition of the TA more likely to contest the TA's authority. Temporal fluctuations in the authority of the TA can be accounted for by modifications to the TA's composition, or by

[86] Mann, Michael (1984), "The Autonomous Power of the State: Its Origins, Mechanisms and Results", *European Journal of Sociology* (Vol. 25, No. 2); Migdal, Joel (1988), *Strong Societies and Weak States: State-Society Relations and State Capabilities in the Third World* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press); Herbst, Jeffrey (2000), *States and Power in Africa: Comparative Lessons in Authority and Control* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press); Risse, Thomas, ed. (2013), *Governance without a State: Policies and Politics in Areas of Limited Statehood* (New York: Colombia University Press).

[87] Schlichte, Klaus and Ulrich Schneckener (2015), "Armed Groups and the Politics of Legitimacy", *Civil Wars*, (Vol 17, No.4), p.419.

[88] Duyvesteyn, Isabelle (2017), "Rebels & Legitimacy; An Introduction", *Small Wars & Insurgencies* (Vol. 28, No.4-5), p.676.

changes in the socio-institutional make-up of the society, as new constituencies emerge and coalesce, and elect to form alternative viable coalitions to contest the TA's authority.

5.7 Conclusion

My explanation of the outcome of authority-building in political transitions relates to the composition of the TA. I suggest that the greater the inclusivity of the TA the more likely it will be to successfully establish its authority. The inclusivity of the TA must be considered in terms of the breadth of constituencies included in the TA and the depth of these representatives' networks within the society.

Inclusivity contributes to successful authority-building through strong and weak validation. If a group is included in the TA, it will be likely to accord the body strong validation. Subsequently, if the TA represents a critical mass of the principal socio-political components of a society, other elements of the society will accord the TA weak validation. The uncertainty and instability witnessed in most contexts of political transition is a further reason why more inclusive TAs are better able to weather the storms precipitated by the fluctuations in the political fortunes of different constituencies. However, the evaluation of a TA's inclusivity must be considered in relative terms based on the existence or absence of viable alternative governing coalitions. Even an un-inclusive body composed of weakly organized elements may garner a degree of authority if there is no viable alternative competing coalition, or until such an alternative coalition emerges.

Finally, it is worth re-stating that my theory is dynamic: I would expect to observe that changes to the composition of the TA, or changes in the coalition challenging the TA's authority, precipitate changes to the authority of the TA.

6. Factors conditioning inclusivity

I have argued that the more inclusive a TA is of the principal socio-political elements of a given society the more likely the TA will be able to establish its authority. In the forthcoming chapters, I will show how TAs in various contexts have succeeded or failed to establish their authority and how this process is intimately linked to the composition of the TA. However, I also find that the form and structure of the TA is determined by other variables: the potential to create an inclusive TA is facilitated or constrained by these factors. While the agency of the TA's leadership plays an important role in determining the composition of the TA and its degree of inclusivity, there are other structural factors which affect a TA's inclusivity. These other factors are:

a) Historical socio-institutional legacies;
b) Pre-existing relations between elites;
c) Contingencies leading to path-dependent outcomes.

These factors will determine whether a TA is likely to form a sufficiently broad coalition to establish and thereby consolidate its authority.

6.1 Historical socio-institutional legacies

As I have argued, TAs are hewn from the pre-existing structures and institutions within a given society. These structures and institutions are the raw materials and building blocks from which the coalition united within the TA is built. As such, pre-existing structures and institutions within the society condition and limit the options for composing a coalition of support for the TA.

It has long been known that the pre-existing structure of society, including legacies of the former regime, fundamentally alter the nature of the transition and its outcome.[89] De Toqueville argued in *The* Ancien Régime *and the French revolution* that the structures created after the revolution originated under the old regime.[90] Karl writes that "the decisions made by various actors respond to and are conditioned by the types of *socioeconomic structures and political institutions* already present".[91] The socio-economic structures and political institutions already present in the society shape the nature of the transition and composition of the transitional institutions.

As noted above, strong hierarchical, institutionalized organizations are more adept at producing effective representatives than diffuse, amorphous networks. The existence or absence of such organizations and representatives therefore has fundamental importance for the composition of the TA and its process of authority-building. However, whether a society possesses such structures and institutions is often a result of specific historical policies and legacies, rather than a result of choice, chance or culture. For example, French colonial rule retained and built the state bureaucracy in Tunisia, leading to the creation of organizations for policy brokerage and interest aggregation, while Italian colonialism was particularly destructive of local

[89] Crawford and Lijphhart, "Explaining Political and Economic Change in Post-communist Eastern Europe"; Bratton, Michael and Nicolas Van de Walle (1994), "Neopatrimonial Regimes and Political Transitions in Africa", *World Politics* (Vol.46, No.4); Zhang, Baohui (1994), "Corporatism, Totalitarianism, and Transitions to Democracy", *Comparative Political Studies* (Vol. 45, No.1).
[90] Toqueville, Alexis de (1853), *L'Ancien Régime et La Révolution* (2nd Edition) (Paris: Michel Lévy Frères).
[91] Karl, Terry L. (1990), "Dilemmas of Democratization in Latin America", *Comparative Politics* (Vol. 23, No.1), p.6 (Emphasis added).

administration in Libya, preventing the rise of domestic bureaucratic structures.[92] Qaddafi, furthermore, upended and destroyed most organized hierarchical organizations, including some of the central organs of state, in an idiosyncratic strategy to consolidate his highly personalized rule.[93] Elsewhere the variation between 'corporatist' dictatorships and totalitarian authoritarian regimes, which prohibit the creation of corporatist institutions, has been used to explain variation in the success of democratic transitions.[94] The same totalitarian tendencies frustrate the smooth process of authority construction during the political transition itself. Thus, the available socio-institutional building-blocks for the TA are conditioned by historical legacies. Strong hierarchical institutionalized organizations cannot be wished into existence but must already exist in the pre-revolutionary socio-political landscape.

The same historical socio-institutional legacies also impact the relationship between organizations and the population at large: the extent to which socio-economic structures and political institutions are founded on popular bases of support is conditioned by historical factors. Scholars studying political transitions, particularly in Europe and Latin America, observe that successful transitions often result from an 'elite pact' between moderates within the regime and the opposition.[95] However, several commentators have criticised this model of 'transitology' because it assumes the existence of a strong bureaucratic regime and a mass popular opposition. This socio-institutional landscape does not reflect the socio-political topography of many countries undergoing transition. For example, Bratton and van de Walle highlight that "in neopatrimonial regimes political leaders may represent no more than a tiny coterie of clients and may be unable to build a political consensus around any interelite agreement".[96] In such a context, they argue, forging a deal between the moderate opposition and regime may be insufficient. In such contexts, the regime and opposition do not form a sufficiently inclusive coalition to establish their authority. Such a dynamic played out in Yemen

[92] Anderson, Lisa (1986), *The State and Social Transformation: Tunisia and Libya 1830-1980* (New Jersey: Princeton University Press); Anderson, Lisa. (1990) "Tribe and state: Libyan Anomalies." In Khoury, Philip, and Joseph Kostiner, eds., *Tribes and State Formation in the Middle East* (Berkeley, University of California Press), p.294.
[93] Anderson, Lisa (2011), "Demystifying the Arab Spring: Parsing the Differences Between Tunisia, Egypt and Libya", *Foreign Affairs* (Vol.90, No. 3), p.6.
[94] Zhang, Baohui, "Corporatism, Totalitarianism, and Transitions to Democracy".
[95] O'Donnell and Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule*, p.39; Di Palma, Guiseppe (1990), *To Craft Democracies: An Essay on Democratic Transitions* (Oxford: University of California Press); Stepan, Alfred and Juan Linz (1996), *Problems of Democratic Consolidation and Transition* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press).
[96] Bratton and Van de Walle, "Neopatrimonial Regimes and Political Transitions in Africa", p.465. See also Wood, Elizabeth Jean (2001), "An Insurgent Path to Democracy: Popular Mobilization, Economic Interests, and Regime Transition in South Africa and El Salvador", *Comparative Political Studies* (Vol. 34, No.8.), pp.865-866.

where attempts to forge an 'elite pact' between regime and opposition moderates failed to garner the requisite support because both the regime and the opposition were deemed to be unrepresentative of the broader population and part of the same corrupt system.[97]

Similarly, in many authoritarian contexts, opposition political parties and CSOs are deracinated and only have weak links to the population. O'Donnell and Schmitter have suggested that this is a result of strategies deployed by authoritarian regimes to depoliticize and atomize societies to forestall effective opposition to their rule.[98] Such tactics were seen in Libya, where Qaddafi banned and repressed all forms of political and civil society organizations and relied on *gemeinschaft* structures, such as the family or tribe, to rule.[99] Prior to 2011, only 22 Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) were authorised to operate in Libya, and even these were tightly controlled and far from being mass organizations.[100] The political opposition which did exist was necessarily clandestine and restricted to operating in small, closed circles, often abroad.[101] They therefore would not have the necessary popular base to make any 'elite pact' with the regime. In addition to regime efforts to prevent political opposition from gaining popular support, incentive structures in many authoritarian regimes do not encourage opposition organizations to establish strong domestic bases because popular support cannot be translated effectively into influence, through democratic elections for example, encouraging an overreliance on external support and lobbying. This was the case with the legal opposition to the regime in Tunisia, according to Willis.[102]

In cases where opposition structures are not deeply rooted in the society, a TA may struggle to identify possible organizations with any popular base from which to build its coalition. The body may be composed of members with small, atomized constituencies, or representatives who have limited influence over their purported constituencies.

Although parties, groups, organizations, and networks which existed prior to the change of regime will shape the form the TA takes, the process of regime change may transform these

[97] Lackner, Helen (2017), *Yemen in Crisis: Autocracy, Neo-Liberalism and the Disintegration of a State* (London: Saqi Books), p.52.
[98] O'Donnell and Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule*, p.48.
[99] Anderson, Lisa, "Demystifying the Arab Spring", p.6.
[100] Joffé, George (2016), "Civil Resistance in Libya during the Arab Spring" in Roberts, Adam, Michael J. Willis, Rory McCarthy and Timothy Garton Ash, eds., *Civil Resistance in the Arab Spring: Triumphs and Disasters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp.118-119.
[101] Vandewalle, Dirk (2012), *A History of Modern Libya* (2nd Edition) (New York: Cambridge University Press), pp.122-128.
[102] Willis, Michael (2014), *Politics and Power in the Maghreb: Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco from Independence to the Arab Spring* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p.147.

entities or allow new entities to emerge and coalesce.[103] For example, a revolution may destroy the formal structures of the ruling party, but networks between these actors and their constituencies may persist. Similarly, regime change may allow previously clandestine networks of opposition activists to become overt and connect to one another. In all cases, however, the structures of the past condition the institutions of the future.

In sum, TAs are necessarily established from pre-existing structures and institutions, and consequently historical socio-institutional legacies will impact the nature of the TA and the process of its authority-building. TAs comprising a manageable number of hierarchical organizations with popular nationwide bases may be more easily able to establish their authority than TAs seeking to function in contexts where the population is atomized and depoliticized, and existing organizations only have weak bases within the society.

6.2 Pre-existing relations between elites

As well as impacting the socio-institutional landscape, historical legacies also impact the relations between elites and between the different constituencies which make up a society. This has subsequent effects on the potential composition of TAs. As I have argued, for TAs to successfully establish their authority they should be inclusive of the principal socio-political components of a society. However, for these groups to be able to come together and work constructively in the TA, pre-existing social relations between these different groups, particularly at the elite-level, are helpful.

At its most basic level, the notion of a shared sense of national identity and engagement in a shared national project is important for facilitating the establishment and functioning of a TA. Rustow argued that a sense of nationhood among citizens was a necessary pre-condition for democracy.[104] The "incomplete process of nation-building" has been identified as a determinant of failed political transitions to democracy.[105] For the purposes of this research, the recognition of other socio-political constituencies as co-nationals and faith that others represented inside the TA are engaged in a shared national project seems to be necessary to promoting the smooth functioning of the TA. While in Libya, national identity was suppressed

[103] Wood discusses these changes in the analogous context of civil war. Wood, Elizabeth Jane (2008), "The Social Processes of Civil War: The Wartime Transformation of Social Networks", *Annual Review of Political Science* (Vol. 11), p.539.
[104] Rustow, Dankwart (1970), "Transitions to Democracy: Toward a Dynamic Model", *Comparative Politics* (Vol. 2 No.3), pp.350-352.
[105] Crawford and Lijphhart, "Explaining Political and Economic change in post-communist Eastern Europe", pp.186-190.

and ill-defined apart from references to Islam and loyalty to the regime;[106] in Tunisia, President Bourguiba sought to replace Tunisian pre-political identities with a national identity.[107] This notion of a shared national identity and patriotic purpose goes some way to facilitating the construction and operation of an inclusive TA.

At a more practical level, when initiating the establishment of a TA, leaders tend to engage those with whom they have worked previously or who form part of their extended social network. Lijphart, for example, notes the importance of strong inter-group relations between elites in the emergence of inclusive consociational institutions.[108] As we shall see in detail in the case studies, factors such as geographic proximity, family ties, shared professional and educational experience and past experiences of negotiation and dialogue play an important role in determining who will be approached to join the TA. When the leaders' networks and contacts are relatively homogenous and drawn from a narrow sociological pool, the coalitions they bring together will also tend to be narrow and homogenous. Conversely, when the 'address book' of the social and political elites engaged in the transition transcends factional boundaries the probability of them forming a broader coalition increases.

The role of social ties in forming organizations and networks has long been studied by sociologists. Sociologists differentiate between 'weak' and 'strong' ties. Weak ties (even based on a few chance encounters) assist in the formation of broad networks linking otherwise un-connected clusters, while strong ties help generate trust and loyalty and play a greater role in the form of clandestine organizing often seen between opposition leaders in pre-revolutionary contexts.[109] Additionally, Malthaner identities four basic types of social ties: *utilitarian ties, ties of traditional loyalty, defensive solidarity, and political mobilization.* These ties are not mutually exclusive and often coexist in stable relationships. Utilitarian ties are based on "stable and mutually rewarding exchange". Ties of traditional loyalty are based on kinship, patron-client relationships, and personal (family-friendship) relations, and "include deeply engrained, customary loyalty obligations as well as close emotional ties and personal trust." Ties of defensive solidarity emerge when a community is under threat and revolve around the notion of a shared enemy. Finally political mobilization may lead to the formation of powerful

[106] Vandevalle, Dirk (2015), "Libya's uncertain revolution" in Cole, Peter and Brian McQuinn. *The Libyan Revolution and its Aftermath* (London: Hurst), p.25.
[107] Haugbølle, Rikke (2016), "'Together for Tunisia': Tribal Structures and Social and Political Mobilization", *Middle East Institute*.
[108] Lijphart, "Consociational Democracy", pp.216-219; Lijphart, "Typologies of Democratic Systems", p.23.
[109] Malthaner, Stefan (2018), "Space, Ties and Agency: The Formation of Radical Networks", *Perspectives on Terrorism* (Vol. 12, No. 2), p. 34.

collective identities.[110] All of these forms of ties assist elites in the construction of a broad TA. So, for example, ties of traditional loyalty assisted Ennahda and those associated with the former regime to overcome their political differences and institutional enmity in Tunisia. Ties of defensive solidarity facilitated the construction of a broad alliance between the secular and Islamist opposition to the regime under the Coalition of 18 October.

Numerous factors may contribute to the existence of social ties between elites, including the practice of exogamy, shared educational and professional experiences, common experiences of exile, and participation in prior negotiations and dialogue efforts. Ksibi, drawing on the work of Emmanuel Todd, points to the role of exogamy in revolutions and democratization.[111] The case studies confirm that family relations across political, geographic and social divides have played a role in facilitating inclusion of diverse constituencies in TAs. In Tunisia, it was family connections between leaders from Ennahda and the RCD that allowed the first discussions on the integration of Ennahda into the TA to take place, for example.[112] Educational establishments such as the Sadiki College in Tunisia served as training grounds for elites which created close relations which transcended family and kinship networks. Exiled and diaspora communities also often form bonds based on a shared national identity, irrespective of parochial local distinctions. This was the case with the National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NFSL), whose members' close connections to one another transcended regional, tribal and kinship boundaries in contrast to the broader society.[113] Participation in prior negotiations and dialogue platforms has also played a role in building connections between elites. For example, the experience of the 18 October Coalition in Tunisia is contrasted by the failure to assemble similar inclusive opposition platforms in Libya, as discussed in Chapter 5. Such factors encourage the inter-elite connections which facilitate the creation of inclusive TAs.

Past social relations between groups shape trust and evaluations of risk. In the same way as pre-existing social ties facilitate the emergence of a coalition, negative pre-existing relations may also prejudice an individual or constituency against participation in the TA and thus pre-determine any process of enlargement or reform. For example, if the initial composition of a TA is dominated by actors from a particular ethnic group due to the pre-existing social

[110] Malthaner, Stefan (2015), "Violence, Legitimacy, and Control: The Microdynamics of Support Relationships between Militant Groups and their Social Environment", *Civil Wars* (Vol. 17, No. 4), p.430.
[111] Ksibi, Yassine (2021), "Libye: la guerre et les cousins - Taux d'Endogamie et Conflit en Libye", *SMALA review- Cercle des Etudes Todiennes*. (Vol.3), pp.35-41.
[112] Baccouche, Hedi (2018), *En Toute Franchise* (Tunis, Tunisia: Sud Editions), p.471. See Chapter 4.
[113] Lacher, Wolfram (2020), *Libya's Fragmentation: Structure and Process in Violent Conflict* (London: I.B. Tauris), p.111.

networks between these actors, it may be difficult to enlarge the coalition to include actors from an ethnic group which has historically been in conflict with the first group. Such patterns of path-dependent reform are observed in the processes of constitution of every TA.[114]

Pre-existing social relations facilitate coalition-building but equally important, the absence of social bonds undermines the formation of broad alliances among those who may contest a TA's authority. Shared interests are no guarantee of successful coalition formation in the absence of pre-existing social ties. History is replete with examples of multiple groups with shared interests which fail to form coalitions and alliances due to the absence of pre-existing social ties. In Tunisia, for example, the *Muhammashin*, which mobilized to catalyse the fall of Ben Ali, failed to form a cohesive group, and were incorporated or co-opted into existing political structures.

Groups must be able to identify one another and enjoy a minimal level of trust, understanding and common language to be able to form a successful coalition. Although such bonds can arise during a transition or revolution, pre-existing relations will still enjoy precedence and shape the constellation of relations which emerge.

6.3 Chance Contingencies leading to path-dependent outcomes

The initial composition of a TA may also be determined by somewhat random factors such as geographical proximity and ease of access: 'being in the right place at the right time' in common parlance. Individuals are incorporated because they are present or because better alternative representatives are not available. For example, the conflict in western Libya rendered the formal selection of representatives from western Libya impossible and justified the inclusion of individuals claiming to 'represent' western Libyan constituencies based on their mere presence in eastern Libya where the TA was situated. The importance of chance encounters and socio-spacial proximity has also been noted by scholars studying the group formation.[115] These initial chance contingencies subsequently impact the process of a TA's constitution due to path dependency. Although revolutions are times of great institutional change, the usual 'stickiness' of institutions may quickly re-establish itself once the regime has been deposed and the TA created. Given this, initial decisions taken for reasons of expediency have important effects on the TA's future composition and consequent authority.

[114] Kalyvas has examined how personal and parochial interests often trump political and ideological interests in civil war. Kalyvas, Stathis (2003), "The Ontology of 'Political Violence': Action and Identity in Civil Wars.", *Perspectives on Politics* (Vol.1, No. 3).
[115] Malthaner, "Spaces, Ties, and Agency: The Formation of Radical Networks", p.35.

Path dependency results from four obstacles to revision: coordination problems, veto points, asset specificity, and positive feedback.[116] Coordination problems imply that high start-up costs in coordinating with one another to create an institution combine with uncertainty about the benefits of alternative systems (described by Pierson as the non-linear relationship between effort and effect) to disincentivise actors from altering their behaviour unilaterally.[117] Veto points are institutional rules and structures which disincentivise change, such as nested decision-making or super-majority requirements. Asset specificity generates institutional resilience when actors invest in assets specific to one use or setting and therefore have an interest in the continuation of the activity where these assets are applicable. Positive feedback englobes various effects which mean that "the *relative* benefits of the current activity compared with once-possible options increases over time",[118] including learning effects, coordination effects and adaptive expectations.[119]

These four factors are clearly at play in contexts of political transition. Coordination problems discourage actors from seeking to set-up new institutions once a TA is established. Positive feedback loops further encourage actors to work through the system, rather than overturning it. Veto points, such as consensus rules, allow existing members to retain their posts and resist replacement, even if they are manifestly unable to represent their purported constituency, just as asset specificity strengthens the position of some representatives within their organization and broader constituency. Taken together these factors mean that the composition of a TA is likely to stabilise over-time and be resistant to significant revision and reform.

This path-dependency has two possible, although not mutually exclusive, outcomes. Either constituencies will continue to support the TA, even if produces sub-optimal outcomes for them, because of the difficulty and uncertainty surrounding possible alternatives. Thus, for example, the *Conseil National Pour le Defense de la Démocratie - Forces pour le Defense de la Démocratie* (CNDD-FDD) in Burundi accepted to be a minor partner in the TA despite their strength and popular support, because the TA was already established and had international backing.[120] Alternatively, the authority of the TA may decline (or conceivably increase) as the popular support of the coalition backing it changes faster than the composition of the institution

[116] Pierson, Paul (2004), *Politics in Time: History, Institutions, and Social Analysis* (Princeton: Princeton University Press), pp.142-153. See also Hall, Peter and Rosemary Taylor (1996), "Political Science and the Three New Institutionalisms", *Political Studies* (Vol. 44, No. 5), pp.936–957.
[117] Pierson, *Politics in Time*, p.33.
[118] *Ibid*, p.21.
[119] *Ibid*, p.24.
[120] See Chapter 7.

itself. This may eventually precipitate the collapse of the TA or a move to rejuvenate authority through elections. For example, in Libya, the NTC failed to adapt its composition to new political realities and incorporate emerging socio-political and military constituencies, resulting in the terminal decline of its authority in the winter of 2011/12.[121] In Tunisia, for example, when Ennahda's electoral strength became clear, they sought to limit the authority of the HIROR and move towards elections, rather than negotiate a greater number of seats within the TA, as discussed in Chapter 4.

Thus, the composition and inclusivity of the TA may emerge partly as a result of chance contingencies and subsequently become ossified due to the obstacles to revision common to all institutions.

6.4 Agency of leaders

Taken together these three factors may imply that the composition of the TA is pre-ordained and that leaders have little agency in making it more or less inclusive: the subsequent success or failure of authority-building being determined by the pre-existing socio-political structure of the society combined with elements of chance. However, this should not be overstated: if leaders are cognisant of the need to establish broad coalitions and include key constituencies, institutional workarounds can be devised to compensate for socio-institutional weaknesses. These may include processes of negotiation with particular constituencies, public consultation, and others forms of participation in transitional processes. Conversely, leaders can alienate constituencies and find themselves atop an increasingly isolated TA with a narrowing base of support, irrespective of opportunities presented by history and chance.

For example, in Ethiopia, the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) reached out to a broad spectrum of ethnic and political constituencies after unseating President Mengistu, despite their narrow social origins as a minority-dominated insurgent group. They established the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF) formed the inclusive Council of Representatives (CoR) and the Transitional Government of Ethiopia to run the transition.[122] By contrast, in Libya the NTC managed to alienate the goodwill and support it initially enjoyed from segments of the population associated with the former regime through an array of liberticidal and punitive laws and decisions.[123]

[121] See Chapter 6.
[122] See Chapter 7.
[123] See Chapter 6.

Although path dependency renders this difficult, the direction of a TA can also be adapted with decisive and responsive leadership. The TA may produce changes to its authority based on its policies and actions, and these policies and actions can be devised in a dialectic with the broader environment. This adaptive behaviour has been observed in other conflict-affected contexts. Malthaner demonstrates that "pro-active connection-making" can create opportunities for the creation of social ties between otherwise unconnected groups.[124] Schoon, for example, shows that "rather than insurgents' adopting strategies independent from their broader environment, their behaviours are often informed and constrained by their audiences' responses."[125] In contexts of political transition, the development and adaptation of policies to secure support from key constituencies may spell the difference between the success or failure of authority-building efforts. For example, some of the constituent members of the TA in Tunisia initiated dialogue with members of the security services to shore up fragile support from this crucial constituency.[126]

Contrary to popular imagination, in political transitions, successful leaders are not necessarily the 'strongest' figures but may be rather 'weak' characters without a strong base of support. Such leaders are prized for their ability to unite a broad coalition. Drawing on chemistry and psychoanalysis, particularly the work of Wilfred Bion, such figures are described as highly valent: valency is defined as an individual's or group's ability and willingness to combine with others.[127] Beji Caid Essebsi in Tunisia was seen to be a weak unifying figure, without an autonomous base of support, as was interim Prime Minister Omar Beriziky in Madagascar's 2011-14 transition.[128] Given the importance of inclusivity in ensuring successful authority-building in political transitions, the importance of consensual actors with a broad appeal over polarizing (even if highly popular) figures is evident.

While factors such as historical socio-institutional legacies, pre-existing social relations and path dependency may conspire to render the creation of a broad and inclusive coalition behind the project of a TA more difficult, leaders retain a degree of agency in shaping their policies and decisions, and indeed the composition of the TA, to garner support from key constituencies.

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[124] Malthaner, "Spaces, Ties, and Agency: The Formation of Radical Networks", p.32.
[125] Schoon, "Building Legitimacy", p.739.
[126] Hanlon, Querine (2012), "Security Sector Reform in Tunisia: A Year after the Jasmine Revolution", *United States Institute of Peace Special Report* No.304. p.7.
[127] Hafsi, Med (2005), "The Chemistry of Interpersonal Attraction: Developing Further Bion's Concept of "Valency""; Hafsi, Med. (2014) "Bion's ideal society: Germinating the Seed of a Social Psychoanalytical Theory".
[128] Historically figures such as Alexander Kerensky and Francisco Madero may be considered such "weak" unifying figures. See Chapter 7.

Conversely, they are also capable of taking decisions to alienate key constituencies and ensure their opposition to the transitional project, as I shall demonstrate.

6.5 Conclusion

The ability of a TA to be inclusive of the major socio-political components of a society is conditioned and constrained by several factors. Leaders have some degree of agency in deciding to form more or less inclusive coalitions, but historical socio-institutional legacies, pre-existing social relations between elites, and path dependency resulting from chance contingencies limit their freedom in this regard. Contexts where historical regimes have permitted or been forced to accept the creation of strong, hierarchical organizations rooted within the society are more fertile ground for the emergence of TAs which can smoothly establish their authority through existing networks and institutional links. Situations where elites are linked to one another across social and political divides are more propitious environments for the creation of the type of broad coalitions needed in political transitions. Chance contingencies also condition the composition of the TA, but often quickly lead to the composition becoming established due to path dependency.

7. Conclusion

Authority is difficult to define and more difficult to measure. However, a TA can be said to enjoy authority if its decisions are largely accepted by the community over which it claims authority. Observable implications of authority include the absence of significant protests or violence which inhibits the effectiveness of the TA's decision-making, the longevity of decisions, and the ability to organize elections accepted by all major constituencies.

The authority of a TA is based to a large extent on its composition. TAs which are more inclusive of the main socio-political components of a society are more likely to have their authority claims accepted by the population. Inclusivity contributes to successful authority-building through the mechanisms of strong and weak validation, which are catalyzed by the inclusion of the principal socio-political components of a society in a TA. Moreover, the acute fluidity of power in political transitions renders the logic of the minimum winning coalition invalid in such contexts.

However, TAs are not unconstrained in their potential inclusivity. Across different contexts the potential inclusivity of TAs is shaped by historical socio-institutional legacies, pre-existing social relations between groups and elites, and chance contingencies leading to path-dependent outcomes, as well as the agency of leaders.

This explanation of the success and failure of authority-building in political transitions was arrived at as part of an inductive process based on the close examination of several case studies and comparative examples. I will outline in detail the empirical evidence which produced this understanding of authority-building in the subsequent chapters.

Chapter 3: The Transitional Administration of Mohamed Ghannouchi

1. Introduction

Prime Minister Mohamed Ghannouchi took the reins of power in Tunisia on 14 January 2011. He tried to stem the tide of revolution by creating a Government of National Unity, by acceding to some of the social and political demands of protesters and promising further reforms, all while re-establishing the state's monopoly of the use of force. However, his TA failed to establish its authority and he was compelled to resign on 28 February 2011. This chapter explores why the authority-building efforts of PM Ghannouchi failed. The chapter begins with a brief synopsis of the revolutionary period, followed by the timeline of Ghannouchi's short reign. I then assess what existing explanations of authority-building tell us about the difficulties faced by Ghannouchi, before presenting my alternative explanation.

I suggest that the TA of Mohamed Ghannouchi failed to establish its authority because it failed to assemble a sufficiently inclusive coalition to support its authority claims. The coalition it assembled was narrow and overlapping, and had shallow roots in Tunisian society. Against it was arrayed a broad coalition of organized political forces, connected to one another, with institutional roots extending down through Tunisian social strata. This coalition formed a viable alternative which would come to govern Tunisia during the next period of the transition, as discussed in Chapter 4.

2. Context

2.1 The short revolution (17 December 2010-14 January 2011)

The spark for the Tunisian revolution came on 17 December 2010, when a frustrated fruitseller, Mohamed Bouazizi, self-immolated in the town of Sidi Bouzid. The regime was already brittle: Ben Ali's base was narrowing and the party leadership were searching for an opportunity to remove him; social and economic elites were alienated; and the masses were frustrated.[1] Social media provided a means of mobilizing and frustrating regime tactics of 'locking down' restive areas.[2]

By late December, protests had spread from Sidi Bouzid to other areas of the country's interior. As it had successfully done before, the regime pursued a two-pronged strategy of repression

[1] Interview with Mohamed Ghariyani (Tunis, 1 July 2019); Angrist, Michele Penner (2013), "Understanding the Success of Mass Civic Protest in Tunisia", *Middle East Journal*. (Vol. 67. No.4), pp.550-554.
[2] Howard, Philip and Muzammil Hussain (2011), "The Role of Digital Media" *Journal of Democracy* (Vol. 22, No.3), p.41; ICG (2011), *Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East (IV): Tunisia's way*, Middle East/North Africa Report No.106, pp.6-8.

and signalling moderate reforms. On 24 December, police fired on protesters in Menzel Bouzaiane, killing two. Ben Ali then announced on 28 December that he would respond to protesters' demands with reforms.[3] On 10 January, Ben Ali made a second speech promising 300,000 new jobs and the regime began reaching out to the moderate political opposition to test their willingness to engage in a 'national unity government' with Ben Ali still at its head.[4]

The revolutionary movement had no discernible national leadership. Political parties were notably silent, although their members engaged in the street protests.[5] Local trade union leaders were active in the protests and central to providing support and shelter to protesters, but the central leadership of the powerful *Union Générale Tunisienne du Travail* (UGTT) initially sought to mediate between protesters and the regime.[6] It was not until 11 January that the UGTT Central Committee relented to pressure from its base and announced that it recognized "the right of regional trade union structures to observe the protests."[7] Following the UGTT communiqué, protests accelerated. On 12 January, a general strike was held in Sfax and approximately 30,000 people took to the streets. On 14 January, a nationwide general strike was launched by the UGTT, thousands of protesters swamped the capital and Ben Ali fled to Saudi Arabia.[8]

Studies of the composition of the protesters note that the revolution in Tunisia was formed of a broad "cross-class coalition".[9] On the other hand, the coalition behind the regime had fragmented. Ben Ali's once-hegemonic party, the *Rassemblement Constitutionnel Démocratique* (RCD), failed to organize a single major counter-protest during the revolutionary period. Angrist describes how the ruling family's monopolization of the spoils of rule had alienated traditional supporters of the regime, and interviews suggest that the leadership of the RCD were considering jettisoning the president from early January at the

[3] ICG, *Tunisia's Way*, p.4.
[4] Interviews with Mustapha Ben Jaafar (Gammarth, 24 June 2019), Ahmed Najib Chebbi (La Marsa, 6 July 2019) and Mohamed Ghariyani (Tunis, 1 July 2019).
[5] Interviews with Abdelhamid Jlassi (Tunis, 25 June 2019) and Omeyya Seddik (Sidi Bou Said, 14 July 2019); Willis, Michael (2016), "Revolt for Dignity: Tunisia's Revolution and Civil Resistance" in Adam Roberts, Michael J. Willis, Rory McCarthy and Timothy Garton Ash, eds., *Civil Resistance in the Arab Spring: Triumphs and Disasters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p.32.
[6] Interviews Houcine Abbassi (Tunis, 16 July 2019) and Abdelrazak Kilani (Tunis, 8 July 2019); Yousfi, Hèla (2015), *L'UGTT: Une Passion Tunisienne* (Tunis: Institut de Recherché sur le Maghreb Contemporain), p.65 and pp.81-86.
[7] Cf. ICG, *Tunisia's Way*, p.6.
[8] *Idem.*
[9] Beissinger, Marc, Jamal Amanay and Kevin Mazur (2015), "Explaining Divergent Revolutionary Coalitions: Regime Strategies and the Structuring of Participation in the Tunisian and Egyptian Revolutions", *Comparative Politics* (Vol. 48, No.1), p.2.

latest.[10] The Army *de facto* withdrew its support from the regime on 12 January when it refused orders to fire on demonstrators.[11] It was the Chief of Staff of the Army, Rachid Ammar, who told Ben Ali that it was time for him to leave on 14 January.[12]

In little under a month the 24-year-old regime of Zine El-Abdine Ben Ali had ended. The question was now who would govern in his place?

2.2 A first TA (14 January 2011-27 January 2011)

When Ben Ali fled Tunisia on 14 January 2011, he threw the country into an unprecedented political and constitutional crisis. In the ensuing chaos, Prime Minister Mohammed Ghannouchi first announced that he would assume the post of interim president, before quickly reversing his position, invoking Article 57 of the 1959 Constitution, and declaring that the speaker of Parliament, Fouad Mbazaa, would become interim president until elections could be held. Ghannouchi had served as Ben Ali's prime minister since 1999, but he was widely considered a technocrat rather than a hard-line regime *apparatchik*.[13]

To begin to address the demands of protesters, PM Ghannouchi announced the creation of three Independent Commissions, composed of Tunisian experts, on 17 January.[14] The third Commission, on political reform, led by Professor Yadh Ben Ashour, is the most significant for my question. This commission was tasked with proposing the reforms required to permit free elections within six months. The composition of the Commission was announced on 29 January and consisted of 12 legal experts.[15]

At the same time, PM Ghannouchi attempted to form a Government of National Unity (GNU) to act as a transitional executive. The cabinet Ghannouchi envisaged was composed of figures from the regime, leaders of opposition parties which had been legalized by Ben Ali, and UGTT leadership. The composition of the planned cabinet closely resembled the members of the type of 'elite pact', composed of soft-liners from the regime and opposition, recommended by much

[10] Interview with Mohamed Ghariyani (Tunis, 1 July 2019).
[11] Brooks, Risa (2013), "Abandoned at the Palace: Why the Tunisian Military Defected from the Ben Ali Regime in January 2011", *Journal of Strategic Studies* (Vol. 36, No. 2), p.206; ICG suggest the split happened on 10 January. ICG, *Tunisia's Way*, p.11.
[12] Maclean, William, "Tunisian Army Pivotal to Ben Ali Ousting", *Reuters* (17 January 2011).
[13] Ben Achour, Yadh (2016), "La Révolution Tunisienne dans ses Manifestations Constitutionelles: La Première Phase de Transition (14 Janvier 2011-16 Décembre 2011)", *La Constitution de la Tunisie: Processus, Principes et Perspectives* (Tunis: United Nations Development Programme), p.49.
[14] Commission of Inquiry on Corruption and Misuse of Public Funds; Commission of Inquiry into the Events of 17 December-14 January; Commission for Political Reform.
[15] See Annex 3.

of the literature on 'transitology'.[16] Sovereign ministries and key posts were retained by RCD members, including Ahmed Fréa, the Minister of the Interior, and Kamel Morjane, the Foreign Minister, under Ben Ali. Out of 39 members of the government, 15 were from the RCD.[17]

It was announced that the UGTT would have three ministries. The presidents of the *Forum Démocratique pour le Travail et les Libertés* (FDTL), the *Parti Démocratique Progressive* (PDP) and *Ettajdid* were offered ministerial portfolios. Mustapha Ben Jaafar (FDTL) would be Minister of Health, Ahmed Najib Chebbi (PDP) Minister for Regional Development, and Ahmed Brahim (*Ettajdid*) Minister of Higher Education. All three parties had been legalized by the Ben Ali regime and formed part of the democratic opposition. Slim Amamou, a young blogger and activist, became Secretary of State for Sport and Youth.[18] Other political forces, including the illegal leftist parties and the moderate Islamist party, *Ennahda,* were not consulted or included in the GNU. Following the cabinet announcement, Mustapha Ben Jaafar immediately claimed that he had not agreed to join the government. Others quickly resigned, including the three UGTT members, while Chebbi and Brahim remained part of the GNU.[19]

Seeking to placate protesters in the wake of these resignations and denouncements, the RCD ministers resigned their membership of the party. The RCD dissolved its Central Committee on 20 January.[20] Members of Ben Ali's family were arrested, along with hated figures such as General Ali Seriati (the Head of Presidential Security) and Rafik Belhaj Kacem (the former Interior Minister).[21] The government also adopted a general amnesty on 20 January, releasing political prisoners held by the regime and announcing that all political parties that requested authorization would be legalized.[22] This was another attempt to respond to the demands of protesters.

2.3 The second TA of Mohamed Ghannouchi (27 January-28 February 2011)

A week-long sit-in before the prime minister's office, in the Kasbah square of Tunis, forced PM Ghannouchi to revise the GNU and on 27 January he announced a new cabinet composed

[16] Interview with Ahmed Najib Chebbi (La Marsa, 6 July 2019).
[17] ICG, *Tunisia's Way*, p.15.
[18] *Idem.*
[19] Interviews with Mustapha Ben Jaafar (Gammarth, 24 June 2019) and Ahmed Najib Chebbi (La Marsa, 6 July 2019).
[20] *Reuters,* "Tunisia's RCD party dissolves its governing body", (20 January 2011).
[21] *BBC News*, "Tunisian PM Mohamed Ghannouchi pledges to quit politics" (22 January 2011); Murphy, Emma (2011), "The Tunisian Uprising and the Precarious Path to Democracy", *Mediterranean Politics* (Vol. 16, No.2), p.303; Kirkpatrick, David, "Military Backs New Leaders in Tunisia", *New York Times* (16 January 2011).
[22] *Le Monde*, "Tunisie: le Gouvernement Adopte un Projet de Loi d'Amnistie Générale" (20 January 2011).

primarily of technocrats. Only two former RCD ministers remained, Mohamed Atif Chelbi as Minister of Industry and Mohamed Nouri Jouini as Minister of Planning. The sovereign ministries were given over to technocrats.[23] In a public declaration, PM Ghannouchi stated that the government was formed following "consultations with all political parties and the components of civil society who accepted to participate".[24] At the same time, police were used to disperse the protesters from Kasbah Square on 28 January.

It was also announced that a Council of Wise Men would be created to supervise the political transition. Ahmed Mestiri, founder of the *Mouvement des démocrates socialistes* (MDS), was proposed as president of this Council, and other figures associated with the Bourguiba regime, such as Ahmed Ben Saleh and Moustafa Elfilali, were suggested as members.[25]

2.4 The National Council for the Protection of the Revolution (NCPR)

Just as Ghannouchi's TA sought to distance itself from the RCD and dissolve party structures, organized political contestation of the authority of the GNU had begun to coalesce. As protests continued in Kasbah Square, on 20 January a group of radical leftist political parties and UGTT activists formed the 'Front of 14 January.'[26] This group was opposed to cosmetic reforms based on the 1959 Constitution and the holding of early presidential elections. They favoured a more radical restructuring of the Tunisian state and demanded the election of a Constituent Assembly to redraft the Constitution. In their first declaration they committed to toppling the TA and "constructing a popular alternative based on the committees for vigilance created in several parts of Tunisia". Concretely, however, the Front of 14 January proposed that the interim government be composed of "Militant progressive political, civil society, trade unionist, and youth forces."[27]

The Front of 14 January was the first articulation of an alternative governing coalition to the one which was then in place. However, the leaders of the Front of 14 January quickly

[23] Naudé, Pierre-François, "Remaniement en Tunisie : Ghannouchi Reconduit, pas les Anciens Ministres de Ben Ali", *Jeune Afrique* (27 January 2011).
[24] Agence France Presse (AFP), "Tunisie: le Premier Ministre Reconduit" (27 January 2011).
[25] 20 Minutes, "Tunisie: Mohamed Ghannouchi Conserve le Poste de Premier Ministre" (27 January 2011).
[26] Front of 14 January, *Declaration on the Founding of the Front of 14 January* (20 January 2011). See also ICG, *Tunisia's Way*, p.13.
[27] *Idem.*

recognized that they would be unable to achieve these objectives alone and began reaching out to other political parties and CSOs to build a broader coalition against Ghannouchi's TA.[28]

This broader coalition would emerge on 11 February: the National Council for the Protection of the Revolution (NCPR). The NCPR brought together, not only the radical leftists and trade unionists of the Front of 14 January, but also civil society leaders, the legal opposition parties, and the moderate Islamist, Ennahda party. The NCPR assembled a truly broad coalition of the principal organized political forces in Tunisia. Their agenda mapped closely to that of the Front of 14 January, stripped of its leftist rhetoric. This group boldly announced in their first communiqué that they:

> - Possess decision-making powers for the elaboration and adoption of legislation concerning the transitional period (the abrogation of laws contrary to liberties etc.)
>
> - Oversee the actions of the provisional government, which is charged with managing daily affairs and will submit senior nominations for the approval of the Council…[29]

The NCPR was composed of 28 political parties, plus several civil society organizations (CSOs) with national reach, including the UGTT and the Bar Association (*Organisation Nationale des Avocats Tunisiens* – ONAT). It was therefore much more politically and socially inclusive than either the Front of 14 January or the GNU.

The participation of the Islamist Ennahda party in this group was historic and controversial. Several of the leftist and ardently secular members doubted Ennahda's democratic credentials. Saida Garrache, from the feminist *Association Tunisienne des Femmes Démocrates* (ATFD), noted that there was an intense debate on the inclusion of Ennahda.[30] Hamma Hammami, the leader of the *Parti ouvrier communiste tunisien* (POCT) made a statement expressing his concern that Ennahda would divide the revolutionary forces through polemical theological debates, describing the revolution as "secular".[31] However, although Ennahda's leader, Rached Ghannouchi, had only returned to Tunis on 30 January 2011 after 20 years in exile, it was clear

[28] Interview with Houcine Abbassi (Tunis, 16 July 2019).
[29] Full text quoted by Ben Ashour, Yadh (2016), "La Révolution Tunisienne dans ses Manifestations Constitutionelles", p.51.
[30] Interview with Saida Garrache (Carthage, 17 July 2019).
[31] *Al-Jazeera*, "Opposition Leaders Excluded" (18 January 2011).

that Ennahda were one of the principal political forces in the country.[32] Ennahda had officially won 14.5 percent of the vote in the 1989 elections, the only elections in which they had participated, coming second to the RCD in spite of repression and fraud.[33] Willis suggests their actual result may have been closer to 30 percent.[34] As I shall explore later, Ennahda's participation in the NCPR was only possible due to the process of reconciliation between Tunisian Islamist and secular opposition forces launched in 2001 and the subsequent opposition dialogue process, known as the 18 October Coalition. Without this process, the construction of such an inclusive coalition to contest the authority of the GNU would have been unthinkable.

The GNU entered negotiations with the NCPR and proposed fusing this body with the Committee for Political Reform. Through this fusion the High Authority for the Realization of the Objectives of the Revolution (known by the French acronym, HIROR)[35] was born on 18 February 2011. The *de jure* authority of the HIROR was extremely limited: the institution was designed as a weak, consultative body, to review legislation, while all power officially remained with Tunisia's president and prime minister.[36] Gradually, however, this would change over the coming months, as I will demonstrate in Chapter 4. The HIROR would not have its first meeting until 17 March, by which point PM Ghannouchi had been forced from office.

2.5 Continued street protests

Outside of Tunis, on 2 February Ghannouchi appointed 24 new governors for Tunisia's regions. Many of these individuals had also served under the former regime.[37] On 5-6 February, there were fresh clashes between the police and protesters in Kef, Kebili and Gafsa, in which 5 protesters were killed.[38] This led to the suspension of the RCD's authorization to operate as a political party. On 15 February, the Governors of Gafsa, Sidi Bouzid, Siliana and Bizerte were again replaced following popular protests.[39]

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[32] *France 2 TV*, "L'opposant Islamiste Tunisien Rached Ghannouchi est Arrivé Dimanche Midi à Tunis Après Plus de 20 Ans d'Exil" (30 January 2011).
[33] Wolf, Anne (2017), *Political Islam in Tunisia. The History of Ennahda* (London: Hurst Publishing), p.71.
[34] Willis, Michael (2014), *Politics and Power in the Maghreb: Algeria, Tunisia and Morocco from Independence to the Arab Spring* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p.167.
[35] Formally named the *Haute Instance pour la Réalisation des Objectifs de la Révolution, de la Réforme Politique et de la Transition Démocratique.*
[36] *Décret-Loi n° 2011-6 du 18 Février 2011, Portant Création de L'instance Supérieure pour la Réalisation des Objectifs de la Révolution, de la Réforme Politique et de la Transition Démocratique,* Article 2.
[37] *France 24*, "Le Gouvernement Intérimaire Poursuit sa Bataille Contre l'Ex-parti au Pouvoir" (7 February 2011).
[38] *BBC News*, "Tunisia suspends Ben Ali's RCD party" (6 February 2011).
[39] ICG, *Tunisia's Way*, p.16.

On 20 February protesters returned to Kasbah Square. They called for the resignation of PM Ghannouchi and his government, as well as the election of a Constituent Assembly. Contrary to those who wanted continuity with the old constitutional regime, the protesters were clearly demanding a rupture with the past.[40] By 25 February almost 100,000 people were participating in what was called the Kasbah II protest.[41] Many of these protesters had travelled to the capital from the country's interior in so-called "liberation caravans."[42]

PM Ghannouchi's attempt to establish the authority of his TA had clearly failed and on 28 February he announced his resignation.

3. Existing explanations of political authority

The preceding narrative has shown that the authority of PM Mohamed Ghannouchi and the administration he led was fatally contested throughout its short reign. Ghannouchi faced persistent large-scale protests in the capital and unrest throughout much of Tunisia's territory. Ghannouchi's efforts to address the demands of the protesters and enlarge political participation in the government fell flat. His political authority was challenged first by the Front of 14 January and then the NCPR. His attempts to engage the UGTT and incorporate them into his government failed, as did his efforts to include the FDTL.

Why was PM Mohamed Ghannouchi unable to establish his authority? What would existing explanations predict should have occurred in January and February 2011?

3.1 Revolutionary legitimacy

A cursory examination of this case in isolation may lead one to conclude than Ghannouchi's downfall was inevitable. Ghannouchi was a figure of the former regime, and the new forces unleashed by the revolution would never recognise his authority. This case may seem to confirm the hypothesis that revolutionary legitimacy is central to authority-building in the post-revolutionary political transition.

To wit, Mohamed Ghannouchi was a Ben Ali regime insider, RCD members held important posts in his first government, governors of the regions were mainly RCD figures and many of Ghannouchi's actions seemed designed to preserve as much of the old order as possible.

[40] Riahi, Mouldi (2016), "La Création d'une Assemblée Nationale Constituante et le Lancement de ses Travaux", *La Constitution de la Tunisie: Processus, Principes et Perspectives* (Tunis: United Nations Development Programme), p.128.
[41] *AFP*, "Manifestation à Tunis contre le Gouvernement de Transition" (25 February 2011).
[42] Murphy, Emma, "The Tunisian Uprising", p.303.

Ghannouchi repeatedly signalled 'reform', not revolution, in his statements; and his exhortations to avoid chaos and maintain order may have done more to undermine his authority among those looking for revolutionary change than bolster it.

Similarly, those elevated to prominent positions by him, such as Yadh Ben Ashour, were known as moderate reformers. His "Government of National Unity" sought to exclusively include members of the moderate legal opposition,[43] who had been tolerated under Ben Ali precisely because they were not advocating for revolutionary rupture with the regime.

If examined alone, the case of PM Mohamed Ghannouchi may therefore suggest that revolutionary legitimacy is a necessary condition for authority-building in political transitions. However, comparative evidence from Adolfo Suarez in Spain to Abdelfattah Al-Burhan in Sudan demonstrates that leaders of post-revolutionary administrations have often been deeply implicated in the structures of the former regime.[44] Moreover, we will see in Chapter 4 that this hypothesis does not hold for the administration of PM Beji Caid Essebsi. A closer look reveals that revolutionary credentials are neither sufficient nor necessary for successful post-revolutionary authority-building.

3.2 Legal-rational authority or Input legitimacy

If Ghannouchi could not rely on revolutionary legitimacy to establish his authority, what mechanisms and rhetorical devices did he deploy? The primary justification deployed by Ghannouchi's TA was its legal-rational legitimacy.

Ghannouchi suggested that his authority stemmed from powers granted to him by the 1959 Constitution of Tunisia, specifically Article 57.[45] In accordance with this Article, the Constitutional Council met, held a somewhat quixotic debate as to whether Article 56 or 57 of the Constitution should apply, and then ruled that, since Ben Ali's departure was permanent, Article 57 would apply making the President of the Chamber of Deputies Fouad Mbazaa interim president and preserving the government intact with Ghannouchi as prime minister.[46]

[43] With the exception of Slim Amamou.
[44] O'Donnell, Guillermo, Philippe Schmitter and Laurence Whitehead (1986), *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Comparative Perspectives* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press); *France 24*, "Abdel Fattah al-Burhan, the general who leads Sudan" (25 October 2021).
[45] *The 1959 Constitution of Tunisia*
[46] Ben Achour, "La Révolution Tunisienne dans ses Manifestations Constitutionelles"; see also Ben Ashour, Rafâa and Sana Ben Ashour (2012), "La Transition Démocratique en Tunisie: Entre Légalité Constitutionelle et Légitimité Revolutionnaire", *Revue Francaise de Droit Constitutionnel* (No. 92), pp.718-719.

On 3 February, the Constitutional Council also ruled on the dissolution of the two chambers of Parliament and the accumulation of their powers in the hands of the interim president, declaring their decision "in perfect harmony" with the Constitution (somewhat bewilderingly).[47]

Evidence suggests that these legal gymnastics were perceived by some as pivotal to establishing the authority of the TA. Key stakeholders expressed their preoccupation with maintaining the "thread of legality"[48], and the need for a "transition with continuity, based on constitutional legality,"[49] to "preserve the state."[50] Some scholars have referred to Ghannouchi's premiership as the "Constitutional phase" of the transition.[51]

However, although these legal-rational justifications seem to have been important to some legal opposition leaders and other members of the secular elite, the mobilized masses of the revolution had little interest in constitutional niceties, as evinced by their continued mobilization and specific demand for a constituent assembly to produce a new constitution, rather than constitutional continuity. Legal-rational legitimacy was not sufficient to establish PM Ghannouchi's authority.

3.3 Charismatic, traditional and knowledge-based authority

Ghannouchi did not rely on legal-rational legitimacy alone. Ghannouchi also sought to bolster his authority claims through traditional and charismatic means, as well as what Risse and Sollenwerk have termed "knowledge-based legitimacy".[52]

Ghannouchi's second cabinet, announced on 27 January, made great efforts to establish the 'technocratic' credentials of its members, in an attempt to bolster its authority.[53] Ghannouchi himself was widely considered a technocratic appointee, rather than a political player.[54] Sociologically Ghannouchi came from a prominent Sahelien family, like Tunisia's founding President Habib Bourguiba.[55] The interim President Fouad Mbazaa was from a prominent

[47] Full text quoted by Ben Ashour. "La Revolution Tunisienne dans ses Manifestations Constitutionelles" pp.45-46.
[48] Interviews with Ahmed Najib Chebbi (La Marsa, 6 July 2019) and Omar Mestiri (La Marsa, 3 July 2019).
[49] Interview with Mustapha Ben Jaafar (Gammarth, 24 June 2019).
[50] Interview with Saida Garrache (Carthage, 17 July 2019). See also Interviews with Khadija Sherif (Sidi Bou Said, 4 July 2019) and Samir Dilou (Tunis, 26 June 2019).
[51] Ben Ashour, Rafâa and Sana Ben Ashour. "La Transition Démocratique en Tunisie", p.717.
[52] Risse, Thomas and Eric Stollenwerk (2018), "Legitimacy in Areas of Limited Statehood", *Annual Review of Political Science* (Vol.21), p.414.
[53] Naudé, "Remaniement en Tunisie".
[54] Black, Ian, "Tunisia: The Wikileaks Connection", *The Guardian* (15 January 2011) .
[55] *Tuniscope,* "Biographie De M. Mohamed Ghannouchi" (6 March 2018).

Tunis family, and had played an important role in the country's struggle for independence from the French.[56] While neither fits the caricature of a charismatic leader, they possessed traditional authority derived from generations of uncontested rule.

The President of the Commission for Political Reform, Yadh Ben Ashour, possessed many of the quintessential characteristics associated with traditional legitimacy. He was from an aristocratic family from Tunis; his father was Mufti of the Republic and Dean of the Faculty of Sharia and Theology at the historic University of Zitouna; he and his family were reputed for their "culture, humanism and piety".[57] Ben Ashour had an illustrious academic career both in Tunisia and abroad, as well as occupying senior roles in international organizations, such as legal adviser to the United Nations Mission for the Referendum in Western Sahara (MINURSO), President of the Administrative Tribunal of the African Development Bank, and member of the Institute for International Law. Ben Ashour thus possessed both traditional and knowledge-based authority.

The Council of Wise Men should also be seen as an appeal to charismatic and traditional authority to bolster the regime. Ahmed Mestiri, founder of the *Mouvement des démocrates socialistes* (MDS), was proposed as president of this Council, and other figures associated with the regime of Tunisia's founding President Habib Bourguiba, including Ahmed Ben Saleh and Moustafa Elfilali were suggested as members.[58] Although these figures maintained legendary status in the Tunisian political pantheon, their endorsement did not seem to bolster the authority of the regime.

The support of traditional, charismatic and experienced leaders failed to convince the Tunisian people of the legitimacy of the regime or significantly increase its authority. Opposition continued and even accelerated following these attempts to reinforce the legitimacy of the regime. Charismatic, traditional authority and knowledge-based legitimacy were not sufficient to establish authority in post-revolutionary Tunisia.

[56] CV on file with author.
[57] *Leaders*, "Who's Who, Yadh Ben Ashour" (21 August 2011).
[58] *20 Minutes*, "Mohamed Ghannouchi Conserve le Poste de Premier Ministre".

3.4 Output legitimacy

Can Ghannouchi's failed political authority be attributed to a failure to deliver public services or the expected socio-economic benefits of the revolution? Did his regime fail because of a lack of 'output legitimacy'?

In part, it is difficult to evaluate PM Ghannouchi's record on public services and socio-economic issues because of his short tenure. On the one hand, PM Ghannouchi clearly signalled a continuation of the economic policies of Ben Ali which had produced growth in the 1990s, while stripping back the nepotism and corruption which had blighted his later reign. Ghannouchi's first minister of finance, Mohamed Ridha Chalghoum, had served in senior positions in Ben Ali's ministry of finance, including as chief of staff.[59] He was replaced by Jalloul Ayed, who, while unconnected to the former regime was a neo-liberal, former Citibank executive. Most importantly, the newly installed governor of the Tunisian Central Bank, Mustapha Kemal Nabli, who assumed office on 17 January 2011, had served in several senior ministerial posts during Ben Ali's economic heyday (1990-5). Writing about the TA, Hibou *et. al.* state that "If all had not had official responsibilities under Ben Ali, they nevertheless shared a neoliberal and mainstream macro-economic vision in total continuity with past orientations."[60]

For some, like Anderson, this continuity leads to the conclusion that "Tunisia's government institutions were relatively healthy, raising the prospects for a clean, efficient and technocratic government to replace Ben Ali."[61] The TA's capacity to generate output legitimacy, therefore, was presumably rather high. However, the very composition of Ghannouchi's government, while reassuring to some, would have been sufficient to give pause to those looking for a more fundamental revision of the socio-economic posture of the state, rather than those who felt nostalgic for the neoliberal policies of Ben Ali's early government.

However, the short empirical record of PM Ghannouchi's government also suggests a readiness to respond to the concrete demands of protesters, including on the socio-economic front. On 22 February 2011, the government announced the *Amel* (Hope) programme to provide public

[59] *Leaders*, "Who's Who, Mohamed Ridha Chalghoum*"* (18 January 2011).
[60] Hibou, Beatrice, Hamza Meddeb, and Mohamed Hamdi (2011), *La Tunisie d'après le 14 Janvier et son Economie Politique et Sociale: Les Enjeux d'une Reconfiguration de la Politique Européenne* (Copenhagen: Euro-Mediterranean Human Rights Network), p.51.
[61] Andersen, Lisa (2011), "Demystifying the Arab Spring: Parsing the Differences Between Tunisia, Egypt and Libya", *Foreign Affairs* (Vol. 90, No.3), p.3.

sector jobs to the educated unemployed.[62] It also established incentives for private sector companies to employ educated unemployed Tunisians. As early as April 2011 the scheme had created 20,000 new posts in the public sector, and instituted exams for a further 20,000 to be employed by mid-July 2011.[63] The public sector grew by 29,000 people in 2011, many of these drawn from the educated unemployed in Tunisia's interior. By mid-2011, 127,000 Tunisians had benefitted from these subsidies.[64] However, five days after the *Amel* programme was launched PM Ghannouchi was forced from office. His attempt to improve the living conditions of those who most notably drove the revolution had failed to provide him with legitimacy in their eyes.

It may have been that PM Ghannouchi did not remain in office long enough to benefit from any boost to his authority precipitated by these measures, which potentially accrued instead to his successor. This, however, underlines the weakness of 'output legitimacy' as an explanatory factor for political authority, as highlighted in Chapter 2: it is difficult for the public to properly ascribe blame and reward to public entities for their socio-economic woes and gains. Similarly, as Ghannouchi's case shows, what may be considered effective performance by some constituencies may be dimly viewed by other constituencies. Output legitimacy is too vague a concept to explain the failure of Ghannouchi's authority-building efforts.

It is reasonable to contend that Ghannouchi's failure had nothing to do with legitimacy, and everything to do with the state's lack of coercive force. It is generally accepted that the collapse of Ben Ali's regime was a result of his loss of control over the Army.[65] The failure of PM Ghannouchi's administration may too stem from a lack of control over the coercive apparatus of the state.

However, the TA's lack of political authority was not paralleled by a lack of coercive power. Contrary to popular depictions of the revolution, the government quickly re-established its monopoly on the use of force after Ben Ali fell. Police continued to clash with protesters on 17 January and, on 28 January, police forcibly displaced the protesters who were congregated in

[62] *WebManagerCenter*, "Tunisie: Les 200 Dinars du Programme AMAL attirent les Jeunes Chômeurs!" (8 March 2011).
[63] *Business News*, "Tunisie: Déblocage des Subventions pour 127 Mille Chomeurs dans les Prochains Jours" (4 April 2011).
[64] El-Almi, Taher and Ezzedine Larbi (2021), *Étude de L'évolution des Salaires Réels en Tunisie: Avant et Après la Revolution* (La Marsa: Frederic Ebert Stiftung), p.35.
[65] Brooks, Risa, "Abandoned at the Palace", p.207; Maclean, "Tunisian Army Pivotal to Ben Ali Ousting".

Kasbah Square.[66] More importantly, on 20 January, the *army* fired warning shots at protesters who were trying to occupy the RCD headquarters.[67] This indicates that coercive power had returned to the side of the government following Ben Ali's removal. Even Rachid Ammar, the Chief of Staff of the Army and hero of the revolution, struck a conservative chord in his exhortations to protesters on the dangers of a political vacuum and subsequent chaos. In his famous speech of 24 January, widely reported as expressing his support for the protesters,[68] he notably stated "we must be vigilant and cautious, our revolution, your revolution, will be lost, others will get their hands on the revolution, there are forces calling for creating a vacuum. But the vacuum results in terror, and terror results in dictatorship."[69]

In fact, the TA's capacity for coercion was greater than Ben Ali's at the end of his reign. Ghannouchi's failed political authority cannot therefore be attributed to a lack of coercive means. A scenario in which the majority of protesters demobilize, satisfied with the departure of Ben Ali and the other reforms of the government, and the security services respond with force to those who remain, is plausible. Indeed, this dynamic played out in July 2011 during the failed Kasbah III protests.[70]

3.5 International recognition and support

Another possible explanation for the weak political authority of PM Ghannouchi's regime could be international reactions to his rule, deemed as signalling weak support for his administration. The EU Parliament, for example, issued a resolution on 3 February 2011 in which it "Expresses its solidarity with the Tunisian people" before emphasizing "how important it is that all political, social, civic and democratic forces in Tunisia should be represented in the interim government, as this is the only way to secure for that government the confidence of the people and endow it with the legitimacy it needs to prepare elections and the transition to democracy."[71] This may be read as a thinly-veiled criticism of the Ghannouchi government. Assistant United States Secretary of State Jeffrey Feltman also struck an ambivalent tone during his visit on 26 January 2011 in which he called on the government to

[66] *BBC News*, "Tunisia Unrest: Renewed Anti-government Protests" (17 January 2011).
[67] *Associated Press (AP)*, "Tunisian Army Fires Warning Shots at Protesters" (20 January 2011).
[68] Kirkpatrick, David, "Chief of Tunisian Army Pledges His Support for 'the Revolution'", *New York Times* (24 January 2011)
[69] At 5 mins 8 secs. Video available at: https://youtu.be/sakFPJVWg7k.
[70] *Tuniscope*, "Kasbah 3 est Illegitime, il est Orchestré par des Extremists qui Veulent Freiner les Elections" (6 March 2018); *Business News*, "Kasbah 3 : les Raisons d'un Echec Annoncé" (18 July 2011).
[71] European Parliament, "Situation in Tunisia: European Parliament Resolution of 3 February 2011 on the Situation in Tunisia" (3 February 2011).

meet the demands of the people.[72] This was in keeping with the line taken by President Obama in which he praised protesters and called on the TA to meet their demands.[73]

However, by and large, the international community expressed strong support for Ghannouchi's administration both politically and financially. The position and actions of Tunisia's primary international partners, including the EU, Italy and France, were clearly supportive. During her visit to Tunisia on 14 February 2011, EU High Representative Catherine Ashton promised 17 million Euros in assistance to the TA in addition to existing commitments. She also offered the prospect of up to 1 billion Euros from the European Investment Bank in 2011 alone.[74] Other states also committed additional funds to support the TA.[75] Hibou *et al.* conclude that, "The day after 14 January, the Europeans strongly supported Mohamed Ghannouchi in the name of stability and in the desire to find a reliable and known interlocutor as soon as possible."[76]

More importantly Tunisians strongly *believed* that the international community, and particularly France, supported Ghannouchi's administration. Abdelrazak Kilani, President of ONAT, believed that the President of the Commission for Political Reform, "Ben Ashour received his orders from France." [77] Zuhoor Abid, a leading member of the *Congrès pour la République (CPR)*, spoke of the Tunisian elite which made up the TA as "the rear guard of France" and Salafi political leader, Sofian Ben Ramadan, suggested that "in fragile states it is big businessmen and big embassies that are the real powers."[78]

If international support was a sufficient condition for authority-building in transitional contexts, one would expect Ghannouchi's TA to have succeeded in establishing its political authority, but it did not.

[72] Rogin, Josh, "Feltman: 'What Happened in Tunisia Strikes Me as Uniquely Tunisian'", *Foreign Policy* (26 January 2011).
[73] The White House: Office of the Press Secretary, "Statement of the President on Events in Tunisia" (14 January 2011).
[74] European Commission, "Remarks by the High Representative/ Vice President Catherine Ashton at the End of her Visit to Tunisia" (14 February 2011).
[75] Notably France on 24 January. Sarkozy, Nicolas, "Conférence de Presse de M. Nicolas Sarkozy, Président de la République, Notamment sur les Défis et Priorités du G20 et du G8 et sur la Position de la France face aux Événements Politiques en Tunisie et au Terrorisme" (24 January 2011).
[76] Hibou et. al., *La Tunisie d'après le 14 Janvier et son Économie Politique et Sociale,* p.55.
[77] Interview with Abdelrazak Kilani (Tunis, 8 July 2019).
[78] Interviews with Zuhoor Khorda Abid (Tunis, 14 July 2019) and Sofian Ben Ramadan (Tunis, 18 July 2019).

3.6 Conclusion

Existing explanations do not offer an adequate explanation for the failure of the TA under PM Mohamed Ghannnouchi to establish its political authority. From the perspective of output legitimacy, the government of Mohamed Ghannouchi made significant promises to the Tunisian people, backed by international commitments, which suggested he would address their most pressing socio-economic demands. He also enacted important political reforms, including a general amnesty and the legalization of opposition political parties. His government enjoyed restored control over the state's coercive forces, and the backing of the Army as well as the Police. The members of the government, and affiliated bodies such as the Council of Wisemen and the Commission for Political Reform, sought to mobilize charismatic and traditional authority to back up their authority claims, as well as 'knowledge-based' legitimacy by casting themselves as technocrats. The interim government of Mohamed Ghannouchi rested on more solid legal and constitutional grounds than its successor, and, while his 'revolutionary credentials' were certainly wanting, so too were those of his successor.

None of these authority-building efforts proved successful, however, and Ghannouchi was forced to resign amid widespread protests.

4. Alternative explanation

My socio-institutional theory suggests that Ghannouchi's failure to establish his authority was due to the narrowness of his coalition of support, and the weak social base of the institutional components which made up this coalition. The TA thus lacked both the breadth and depth necessary for successful authority-building. This fragility was compounded by the emergence of a viable alternative governing coalition composed of strong institutionalized hierarchical organizations.

The governing coalition which Ghannouchi assembled was composed of the remnants of the RCD party, the secular elite, and part of the legal political opposition. Ghannouchi reached out to the UGTT but was unable to bring them into the TA. The UGTT maintained an ambivalent position, while the radical left and the disenfranchised youth who drove the revolution, known as the *Muhammashin* (the Marginalised), were opposed to his administration. Ennahda's initial neutrality towards the TA had turned to opposition by mid-February.

I will begin by exploring the socio-institutional strengths and weaknesses of the component parts of Ghannouchi's coalition. I will explain the factors which produced this coalition and

limited Ghannouchi's options for developing a more inclusive governing coalition. I will then explore the socio-institutional characteristics of those excluded from Ghannouchi's governing coalition, before explaining how they successfully managed to establish an alternative competing governing coalition in the form of the NCPR.

4.1 Governing coalition

4.1.1 Rassemblement Constitutionnel Démocratique (RCD)

With brief interludes of political pluralism, from independence until 2011 Tunisia had been a strong single-party state, resembling the "classic communist model".[79] Bourguiba endowed his Neo-Destour party with a formidable national network of party structures, which "mirrored the structures of local and regional government administration" creating "an effective fusion of party and state."[80] This party structure provided the regime with "institutional ballast, legitimacy and protection."[81] The Neo-Destour party was deeply rooted at all levels of Tunisian society and during much of Bourguiba's reign brought together a broad spectrum of social components under a single umbrella, thus, providing a broadly inclusive base of support for the regime.

Following his 1987 coup, Ben Ali established the RCD as both the inheritor party of Bourguiba's Neo-Destour party and a machine of patronage with roots throughout the country. At its height the RCD had more than 2 million members, or around a fifth of the Tunisian population,[82] and party structures throughout the nation. Willis describes how Ben Ali revitalized party structures inherited from Bourguiba, recruiting "significant sections of the population that had become alienated from the regime under Bourguiba: businessmen, intellectuals, professionals, women and the young."[83]

However, this once incontrovertible base of support had been weakened by 2011 due to the ruling family's increasingly brazen monopolization of the spoils of rule. Anderson cites the staggering statistic that "more than half of Tunisia's commercial elites were personally related to Ben Ali though his three adult children, seven siblings, and second wife's ten brothers and sisters."[84] Even longstanding members of the RCD were unable to extract benefits from the

[79] Willis, *Politics and Power in the Maghreb,* p.71 and p.122.
[80] *Ibid,* p.65.
[81] *Ibid,* p.122.
[82] Murphy, "The Tunisian Uprising", p.299.
[83] Willis, *Politics and Power in the Maghreb,* p.132.
[84] Anderson, "Demystifying the Arab Spring", p.3.

state. Similarly, the business elite, a traditional bulwark of the regime, represented in the *Union Tunisienne de l'industrie, du commerce et de l'artisanat* (UTICA), had become disenchanted with Ben Ali's rule and his family's interference in their business interests.[85] Like in many longstanding authoritarian systems, the party had transformed from a mass organization generating popular support in return for patronage, into a machine for the personal gain of a few party *apparatchiks* with a narrow social base. This narrowing of its base of support partly explains the fatal contestation of Ben Ali's authority in January 2011.

Recognising that the RCD had an insufficient popular base to govern alone, Ghannouchi sought to broaden the governing coalition, while retaining as much of the old structures as possible. The RCD constituency retained key posts, and the enlargement of the government was only to constituencies which were not seen as fundamentally inimical to their interests: the legal opposition, the secular elite and the UGTT. The existing legal framework allowed for the organization of presidential and parliamentary elections and a process of reform was initiated to placate demonstrators. The army and the police remained loyal, and efforts were made to restore order using the state's coercive force.

Unfortunately, this myopic attachment to the old order prevented Ghannouchi and his supporters from making the alliances necessary to sufficiently broaden the coalition upon which the government's authority rested.

4.1.2 Secular elite

When Ghannouchi sought to expand his governing coalition beyond the RCD, the first constituency approached were the 'secular elite'.[86] This group dominated the Commission for Political Reform, as well as the proposed Council of Wise Men.

The 'secular elite' rose to prominence in the state bureaucracy under the Ottoman and then French colonial periods. They formed the nation's first *gesellschaft* networks, based on impersonal ties and institutions, such as the *Jeunes Tunisien*s and the *Parti Evolutionniste*, as well as the informal network of students at the prestigious Sadiki college and similar

[85] Angrist, "Understanding the Success of Mass Civic Protest in Tunisia", pp.551-552.
[86] Ayari names this sociological constituency the *Élite Médinale* and differentiates it from the *Publicienne* and *Extra-muros* constituencies. Ayari, Michael (2016), *Le Prix de L'engagement Politique dans la Tunisie Autoritaire: Gauchistes et Islamistes sous Bourguiba et Ben Ali (1957-2011)* (Paris: Karthala), pp.66-67.

educational establishments.[87] In 2011, the secular elite were still perceived as powerful and linked to strong international players, notably France, as well as domestic and international economic interests.[88]

The composition of this sociological constituency has a strong regional dimension. The secular elite predominantly came from Tunis. Mohamed Ghariyani, the then secretary-general of the RCD, described the transition as "the revenge of the *Tunisois*" and the "hunt of the Sahelians", due to the prominent role played by Tunis-born elites like Yadh Ben Ashour.[89] However, this is an oversimplification of the sociology of the secular elite, which not only contained traditional elite families from Tunis, but also others who had integrated into this group more recently.

Ben Ashour is the quintessential figure of the secular elite. As mentioned above, Ben Ashour was from the Tunis aristocracy. He studied law but found employment as an academic rather than a practicing lawyer, allowing him to advance professionally while remaining above the corruption of the Ben Ali judicial system. Of the 12 members of the Commission for Political Reform, ten were current or former professors of Law. Seven worked at the University of Tunis, another at the University of Sousse. Two others had a legal academic background: Ghazi Ghrairi, was Secretary-General of the International Academy of Constitutional Law in Tunis, and Sadok Marzouk, was head of the Tunisian section of Amnesty International.[90] The Council of Wisemen was also dominated by figures associated with the secular elite. Ahmed Mestiri was also a member of the Tunis aristocracy, and, although not born in Tunis, both Ahmed Ben Salah and Mustapha El-Filali attended Sadiki College.[91]

Thus, a large percentage of members of the TA were drawn from this tiny sociological pool. The lack of social breadth represented in these institutions could have been justified had the numerical representation of this small elite reflected their power within contemporary Tunisian

[87] Anderson, Lisa (1986), *The State and Social Transformation: Tunisia and Libya 1830-1980*. (New Jersey: Princeton University Press), pp.160-161 and p.167.
[88] Interviews with Layla Riahi (via Whatsapp, 9 May 2020), Abdelrazak Kilani (Tunis, 8 July 2019), Zuhoor Khorda Abid (Tunis, 14 July 2019) and Sofian Ben Ramadan (Tunis, 18 July 2019).
[89] Interview with Mohamed Ghariyani (Tunis, 1 July 2019).
[90] See Annex 3.
[91] *WebManagerCenter*, "Biographie du Militant Tunisien feu Ahmed Mestiri" (24 May 2021);
Leaders, "Décès du Syndicaliste et Ancien Ministre de Bourguiba, Mustapha Filali, 97 ans" (20 January 2019); Dahmani, Frida, "Mustapha Filali, l'un des Bâtisseurs de la Tunisie Moderne, est Décédé", *Jeune Afrique* (21 January 2019); *Leaders*, "Mohamed Kilani: Mustapha Filali, une Vie Riche et Altruiste" (25 February 2019).

society. However, the secular elite's relative socio-institutional strength had diminished under Bourguiba and Ben Ali.

Firstly, Bourguiba undermined alternative sources of authority such as the Ottoman Bey. Seeing Beyical institutions as a potential competitor, Bourguiba compelled the Bey to relinquish power, disbanding the office of the Bey in 1957 to become president.[92] Then as president, he began to fundamentally reform Tunisian society. He succeeded in completing the process begun under the French to practically eradicate Tunisian pre-political identities based on tribe and kinship, through family law reforms, national education and other means. Pre-political identities were replaced by a nation-state-centric identity.[93] An unintended side-effect of the eradication of *gemeinschaft* networks was the proliferation and popularization of the *gesellschaft* networks which previously existed only at the elite level of society.

Mass political organizations like the UGTT and Ennahda's predecessor, the *Mouvement de la Tendance Islamique* (MTI), as well as national organizations without explicit political aims such as the *Ligue Tunisienne des Droits de l'Homme* (LTDH), evolved after independence. By contrast, the networks and support base of the secular elite did not grow much beyond the small coterie of middle-/upper-class residents of Tunis and other major coastal cities. The secular elite was further marginalised under Ben Ali.[94] While Bourguiba was from a prominent elite Sahelian family, Ben Ali's family were not part of the regional elite and this constituency's role in politics and the economy further declined.

While the secular elite had once been in the vanguard of the creation of Tunisian *gesellschaft* networks, by 2011 they were isolated, insular and outnumbered by larger and better-organized national political constituencies. The rest of the country were not supporters of the secular elite. Therefore, the support of this constituency did little to shore up Ghannouchi's failing authority. Ghannouchi went to great lengths to represent a constituency in the TA which had neither the numeric weight, nor the social anchorage nor the political power to justify this representation. The secular elite did little to render Ghannouchi's TA more inclusive.

4.1.3 Legal political opposition

[92] Willis, *Politics and Power in the Maghreb,* p.40.
[93] Haugbølle, Rikke, (2016) "'Together for Tunisia': Tribal Structures and Social and Political Mobilization" *Middle East Institute*.
[94] Interviews with Zuhoor Khorda Abid (14 July 2019) and Mohamed Ghariyani (Tunis, 1 July 2019).

When Bourguiba became president in 1957 he fell quickly into authoritarianism, banning political parties which challenged the hegemony of his neo-Destour party. However, during the latter period of his reign, as his stranglehold on power weakened, new life was breathed into existing political networks, such as the UGTT (in conflict with the regime from 1963) and the *Parti Communiste Tunisien* (banned in 1962). Some of the aforementioned political groups also emerged during this period. They covered the full political spectrum from the radical leftist *Groupe d'études et d'action socialiste en Tunisie* (GEAST), established in 1963; the MDS, founded in 1978; the forerunner of Ennahda, the MTI, founded in 1981; and the Progressive Socialist Rally, founded in 1983, which would become the PDP.[95] Many of these political parties remained active when Bourguiba was forced from power in November 1987, but the two decades of Ben Ali's rule altered them fundamentally.

In 1988, in order to bolster the authority of his new regime by broadening the ruling coalition, Ben Ali signalled a significant democratic opening in the form of the National Pact.[96] However, the National Pact and the 1989 elections the following year represented a false dawn. When his power was consolidated, Ben Ali turned to the classic tools of authoritarianism to deal with extant Tunisian political networks: repression and co-option. Several political parties were banned, including the newly named Ennahda party, and its militants were subjected to intense repression: many were exiled, such as the movement's founder Rached Ghannouchi, or imprisoned, including leaders such as Ali Larayadh and Abdelhamid Jlassi. Other parties were co-opted, such as the MDS, and by 2011 were barely distinguishable from the ruling party. Several parties, however, managed to tread the line between opposition and accommodation with the regime. *Ettajdid*, the successor of the *Parti Communiste Tunisien*, was legalised in 1981. The PDP was legalised in 1988 and the FDTL, created in a schism with the MDS in 1994, was legalised in 2002.[97] Although tolerated by the regime, these legal opposition parties were subject to continual harassment and deprived of political representation through electoral fraud. For example, Mustapha Ben Jaafar was prohibited from standing in the 2009 presidential elections.[98]

[95] Perkins, Kenneth (2004), *History of Modern Tunisia* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp.157-185.
[96] *Ibid.* pp.187-188. McCarthy, Rory (2019), "The Politics of Consensus: Al-Nahda and the Stability of the Tunisian Transition", *Middle Eastern Studies* (Vol. 55, No.2.), p.265.
[97] ICG, *Tunisia's Way*, p.13; Perkins, *History of Modern Tunisia*, p.201.
[98] Chouikha, Larbi and Eric Gobe (2009), "La Tunisie entre la « Révolte du Bassin Minier de Gafsa » et L'échéance Électorale de 2009", *L'Année du Maghreb*, CNRS Editions, pp.16-17.

It the last days of his rule, when Ben Ali recognized the need to expand his governing coalition, it was to the legal opposition that he turned. PM Ghannouchi continued this outreach. He offered Mustapha Ben Jaafar (FDTL), Ahmed Najib Chebbi (PDP), and Ahmed Brahim (*Ettajdid*) positions in his GNU. Both *Ettajdid* and the PDP accepted this proposition while the FDTL refused.

Chebbi justified his participation through his belief, reinforced by his study of political transitions in other contexts, that successful transitions require compromise between soft-liners in the regime and opposition.[99] Others, however, suggested that Chebbi was motivated by an interest in early presidential elections (under the 1959 constitution) in which he believed he would triumph, due to the PDP's superior organization and Chebbi's personal name recognition.[100] Members of the PDP suggested that the party's 'inclusive' approach was also motivated by Chebbi's belief in a "silent majority" of Tunisians who were opposed to a revolutionary project and in favour of more moderate reforms.[101] The PDP hoped their position vis-à-vis the government of Ghannouchi would demonstrate moderation and appeal to this electorate.

Although he also wished to ensure a smooth and bloodless transition, Ben Jaafar refused to participate in the government of Ghannouchi because he doubted the government's commitment to genuine reforms, and believed 'the street' would refuse to accept the composition of the government. The refusal of UGTT to enter the government also signalled to Ben Jaafar that the TA had little chance of success.[102]

Whether they elected to participate or not, the legal opposition's participation was not a major boon for the inclusivity of the TA. The coalition was not significantly broadened or deepened by inclusion of the legal opposition. The networks of the legal opposition had been stifled or degraded by years of repression and harassment. The authorities effectively prevented legal opposition parties from establishing strong bases of support throughout the country. At the same time, electoral fraud reduced the incentive to broaden their popular base, since this could not be translated into political power.[103] Parties instead focused on exposing the human rights

[99] Interview with Ahmed Najib Chebbi (La Marsa, 6 July 2019).
[100] Interviews with Mustapha Ben Jaafar (Gammarth, 24 June 2019), Omeyya Seddik (Sidi Bou Said, 14 July 2019) and Ramadani Massoud (Tunis, 10 July 2019).
[101] Interview with Omeyya Seddik (Sidi Bou Said, 14 July 2019).
[102] Interview with Mustapha Ben Jaafar (Gammarth, 24 June 2019).
[103] Willis, *Politics and Power in the Maghreb,* p.147.

abuses of the regime internationally and negotiating gradual political reforms domestically. Thus, in 2011, none of these organizations could be considered strong, well-rooted national institutions.[104] The largest opposition party, the PDP, only had approximately 1000 members throughout Tunisia. The active membership of the FDTL and *Ettajdid* only numbered in the hundreds.[105]

More importantly, these active members also came from a small, overlapping and tightly-knit network, described by Ayari as the *élite médinale*. In what he aptly describes as the "saturation" of the opposition by this relatively homogenous network, Ayari shows how the plethora of opposition organizations and parties, including CSOs such as the LTDH, *Conseil National pour les Libertés en Tunisie* (CNLT)[106] and ATFD,[107] as well as political parties, largely came from the same narrow social base.[108] Outside of Tunis they were relatively unknown. The president of *Ettajdid*, Ahmed Brahim, was described in 2008 as "totally unknown by Tunisian citizens".[109] While Chebbi and Ben Jaafar were certainly more widely known, they clearly belonged to the Tunis elite.

The social base of the legal opposition, thus, significantly overlapped with that of the secular elite *and*, importantly, with part of the RCD's constituency, namely the liberal branch of neo-Destour/ *Parti Socialiste Destourien* (PSD), represented by figures such as Ahmed Mestiri and Hassib Ben Ammar.[110] These longstanding social ties, dating to the 1970s, explain PM Ghannouchi's decision to reach out to this constituency when seeking to enlarge his GNU. But they also show that the legal opposition's involvement did little to expand the inclusivity of the TA.

[104] Boubekeur, Amel (2016), "Islamists, Secularists and Old Regime Elites in Tunisia: Bargained Competition", *Mediterranean Politics*, (Vol. 21, No. 1), p.110.
[105] Ayari, *Le Prix de L'Engagement Politique dans la Tunisie Autoritaire*, p.285; WhatsApp communication with Mustapha Ben Jaafar (18 March 2021).
[106] Founded in 1998 by Mustapha Ben Jaafar and several other opposition activists such as Sihem Bensedrine and Omar Mestiri.
[107] Founded in 1989, the ATFD had leading feminists such as Sana Ben Ashour, Khadija Sherif, Ahlem Belhaj and Saida Garrache as its Presidents. Many of these figures came from the same extended social circle. Sana Ben Ashour is the sister of Yadh Ben Achour, for example.
[108] Ayari, *Le Prix de L'Engagement Politique dans la Tunisie Autoritaire*, pp.291-293; see also Murphy, "The Tunisian Uprising", p.304. There are notable exceptions, for example Moncef Marzouki, who, while a graduate of Sadiki College, is from Nabeul governorate.
[109] Geisser, Vincent and Eric Gobe (2008), "Un si Long Règne…le Regime de Ben Ali Vignt Ans Après", *L'Année du Maghreb*, CNRS Éditions, p.14.
[110] Ayari, *Le Prix de L'Engagement Politique dans la Tunisie Autoritaire*, p.293.

Without a strong party machinery and mass movement behind them, the legal opposition parties were unable to significantly reinforce the authority of the Ghannouchi administration, despite their decades of opposition politics and strong personal credentials. Their networks outside of the capital were too weak. Moreover, while seemingly diversifying the base of the TA, they in fact came from the same small coterie of urban(e) coastal elites. A picture emerges of the TA exhibiting a Potemkin diversity, obfuscating a narrow political base. As I have suggested, this is not conducive to the widespread recognition of political authority during such a contentious transition.

4.1.4 Union Générale Tunisienne du Travail (UGTT)

Over the past eight decades, the UGTT has remained the foremost nationwide political organization, deriving support and legitimacy from its role in the struggle for independence, its resistance to the Bourguiba regime and the struggle for workers' rights.[111] The UGTT is also a mass organization with structures throughout Tunisia, rivalled only in its organizational strength by Neo-Destour and then the RCD. In 2011 the UGTT had 150 offices covering every governorate and district, and over 680,000 active members.[112] Local UGTT structures acted as engines of the revolution in 2011: providing shelter to protesters, communicating with international media, and providing political direction to the protest movement.[113]

PM Ghannouchi's preoccupation with bringing the UGTT into the government is therefore understandable. Incorporating the UGTT into the TA would have neutralized the protest movement nationally, as well as providing a strong institutional structure through which to project the TA's authority. A coalition incorporating the UGTT could have enjoyed the strong validation of the organization's 680,000 politically mobilized members, thereby encouraging the weak validation of other social constituencies.

However, after initially accepting three positions within the GNU, the UGTT withdrew from the TA. Leftist parties, close to the UGTT, then participated in the Front of 14 January,[114] and the UGTT as an organization became part of the NCPR, represented by Houcine Abbasi. The UGTT thus switched from signalling tentative support for the TA to *de facto* opposition. The

[111] Bessis, Juliette (1974), "Le Mouvement Ouvrier Tunisien: de ses Origines a l'Independance.", *Mouvement Social* (Vol. 85); Omri, Mohamed Salah (2015), "No Ordinary Union: UGTT and the Tunisian Path to Revolution and Transition", *Workers of the World: International Journal on Strikes and Social Conflict* (Vol. 1, No.7), p.19.
[112] Omri, "No ordinary union", p.20.
[113] *Idem;* Yousfi, *L'UGTT*, pp.65-70; Interview with Houcine Abbassi (Tunis, 16 July 2019).
[114] Omri describes the links between these parties and the executive bureau of the UGTT. Omri, "No ordinary union", p.25.

position of the UGTT vis-à-vis the TA can only be understood in light of internal divisions within the organization.

The first line of fracture was between the leadership and the base. The UGTT played a role in Tunisian independence only rivalled by that of Bourguiba's neo-Destour party.[115] The UGTT entered into conflict with the regime in 1963, culminating in major contestations of Bourguiba's authority by the UGTT, including the General Strike of 1978 and the Bread Revolts of 1983-4.[116] Following the Bread Revolts, the regime of Bourguiba sought to bring the UGTT under control, Ben Ali continued this policy. In 1989, Ben Ali succeeded in placing Ismaïl Sahbani as Secretary-General of the UGTT, and during the decade of his leadership the UGTT was quasi-indistinguishable from the regime. The link between the UGTT and the regime was such that in 1999, Ben Ali opened the UGTT national conference.[117]

However, as Hibou has noted, the UGTT was never totally under the control of the regime due to its anchorage at all levels of the society.[118] The leadership of the UGTT was obliged to listen to the demands of its base, leading to a certain degree of tension with the regime, as well as within the organization itself. Naccache describes this tension between collaboration and opposition, as the "two faces of the UGTT", which have existed throughout modern Tunisian history.[119] This tension was less during the period of dramatic economic growth during the 1990s but increased during the 2000s as Tunisia's economy slowed and the ruling family began to engage in more predatory economic behaviour. The conflict within the UGTT was laid bare during the 2008 revolt in the Gafsa mining basin: over six months the leadership of the UGTT resisted pressure from its base to support the revolt, but ultimately was compelled to denounce the regime's repressive response to the uprising.[120]

Regional UGTT structures played a key role in mobilizing, structuring and protecting protesters during the revolution, while the leadership initially remained ambivalent. However, the UGTT were keen to avoid repeating the "mistakes of Gafsa" in 2011.[121] With the fall of Ben Ali, the

[115] Bessis, "Le Mouvement Ouvrier Tunisien: de ses Origines a L'independance."
[116] Perkins, *History of Modern Tunisia,* pp.164-165 on the General Strike and pp.169-171 on the Bread Revolts.
[117] Yousfi, *L'UGTT,* p.53.
[118] Hibou, Beatrice (2006), *La Force de L'obéissance : Économie Politique de la Répression en Tunisie* (Paris : Éditions La Découverte), p.150; Yousfi, *L'UGTT,* p.118.
[119] Interview with Gilbert Naccache (La Goulette, 18 July 2019).
[120] Chouikha and Gobe, "La Tunisie entre la « Révolte du Bassin Minier de Gafsa » et L'échéance Électorale de 2009", p.12; ICG, *Tunisia's Way*, p.6.
[121] ICG, *Tunisia's Way*. p.6.

leadership, and particularly the UGTT's secretary-general, Abdessalam Jrad, needed to demonstrate their revolutionary credentials to maintain the organization's cohesion.[122] With the presence of RCD ministers in the first transitional government provoking continued criticism from the street, Jrad was compelled to alter his position to maintain the support of regional UGTT structures.

As well as the division between leadership and base, the UGTT was also divided ideologically between so-called Ashourists, such as Noureddine Tabboubi and Kamel Saâd, and Leftists, such as Sami Tahri, Belgacem Ayari, and Samir Cheffi. The Ashourists, named after the UGTT's founder Habib Ashour, believe that the organization should refrain from politics and focus on traditional trade union activities concerning workers' rights and salaries. The Leftists felt that a more radical reform of the Tunisian state was required, necessitating a frontline political role for the UGTT. The Ashourists were generally more prone to compromise both with the regime and with moderate Islamists, given their more practical orientation. The Leftists were more militantly secular, but more internally divided, with Communists, Trotskyites, and Ba'athists.[123] While the Ashourists were keen to work with the government of Mohamed Ghannouchi, they did not think that it was wise to participate directly in the government. Houcine Abbasi summed up this view: "We were not a political party to participate in Government."[124] The Leftists were more directly opposed to the TA's reformist agenda, and saw this an incompatible with their interests. They pushed for a more radical split and the opportunity to fundamentally revolutionize the Tunisian state offered by a constituent assembly.

Thus, the short-term political necessity of demonstrating to their base that the UGTT's leadership was supportive of the revolution combined with the natural reticence of the Ashourists to enter government and the ideological opposition of the Leftists to the reform process proposed by Ghannouchi to discourage the UGTT from serving in the TA. As Yousfi concludes, the role of the UGTT in this phase was limited by the lack of internal and external consensus on what its role should be.[125] Had Ghannouchi succeeded to integrate the UGTT into the TA, his authority would likely have been greatly reinforced, but pre-existing dynamics

[122] Interview with Omeyya Seddik (Sidi Bou Said, 14 July 2019).
[123] Sadiki, Larbi. "Political Peddlers; Vending Tunisia", *Al-Jazeera* (23 December 2012).
[124] Interview with Houcine Abbassi (Tunis, 16 July 2019).
[125] Yousfi. *L'UGTT*, p.104.

within the leadership of the UGTT and between the UGTT and its base meant that this was impossible.

4.1.5 Conclusion

PM Ghannouchi's TA rested on support from the RCD, the secular elite, and elements of the legal opposition. According to my theory, this strategy was practically doomed to fail. The organizational strength and popular support of the RCD had been weakened during the final years of Ben Ali's regime by his family's rapacious practices and was yet to return to full strength. The secular elite's power, once unassailable during the French and Ottoman periods, had been decimated during decades of rule by Bourguiba and Ben Ali, which not only elevated others to positions of power but also created *gesellschaft* networks among the masses. The legal opposition, prohibited from becoming mass movements due to regime harassment, did not have a strong popular base nationally. Most importantly, despite their political and ideological diversity, these three constituencies were rooted in the same narrow social network of coastal urban elites and enjoyed little support outside the capital. Divisions between the base and leadership of the UGTT and ideological diversity within the organization prevented the UGTT from taking a clear stance in support of Ghannouchi.

Thus, Ghannouchi's TA was insufficiently broad, and lacked the deep social networks to establish its political authority. The illusion of inclusivity, created by the moniker "Government of National Unity" and the inclusion of non-RCD members, was a façade without the institutional backing to effectively generate authority recognition from the population.

4.2 Emergence of an alternative coalition

The TA of Mohamed Ghannouchi failed to bring in three key Tunisian constituencies: the illegal left, the Islamists, and the so-called *Muhammashin*. The illegal left and Islamists then formed a competing coalition for political authority with members of the legal opposition and the UGTT. This spelt the end of Ghannouchi's authority-building project. The competing coalition was more inclusive than the TA of Ghannouchi, and contained organizations with deeper networks in Tunisian society. I will explain how this alternative coalition emerged, as well as the strengths and weaknesses of its composite parts.

The *Muhammashin* found themselves outside any governing coalition and would remain so for the next eight years, for reasons outlined below, until united behind presidential candidate Kais Saied in 2019.[126]

4.2.1 The Illegal Left

As noted, Tunisia's radical leftist parties largely grew out of the trade union movement in the 1970-80s and were never legalized by the regime. The illegal left included the POCT of Hamma Hammami, the Tunisian *Ba'ath* movement, and *Al-Watad* of Chokri Belaid. These radical leftist parties in Tunisia suffered from fragmentation and ideological division, as well as the discrediting effects of the collapse of the USSR and the failure of Nasserism. Most importantly, however, Resta describes "the rupture with their natural constituencies which occurred during the 1980s and 1990s".[127] The co-option of the UGTT by the regime deprived leftist parties of their traditional channels for mobilization and politicization through trade unionism, and left them as vanguardist organizations with shallow social roots.[128] The illegal leftist parties in Tunisia were therefore relatively weak organizationally and fragmented politically.

Given this, I would not expect the illegal left to be capable of forming a viable alternative to contest the authority of the TA. And, indeed, working alone the illegal left did not have the requisite organizational strength, as seen by the failure of the Front of 14 January to successfully contest the regime's authority unilaterally. However, the illegal left played an important role in forming the first structured political contestation of the TA's authority. Unlike during the early period of Ben Ali's reign (and shortly after the NCA elections), in 2011 the radical left recognized the need to form part of a broader coalition. They thus facilitated the creation of the NCPR. They signalled their new openness by moving their meeting place from the Union of Arab Maghreb Workers to the more neutral venue of the Tunisian Bar Association Headquarters.[129]

4.2.2 Ennahda

Following the 1989 elections, Ennahda was subject to severe repression. Party leaders were imprisoned and/or forced into exile. Party structures were decimated. In the early 2000s

[126] Allahoum, Ramy, "Kais Saied: Who is Tunisia's New President?", *Al-Jazeera* (23 October 2019).
[127] Resta, Valeria (2018), "Leftist Parties in the Arab region before and after the Arab Uprisings: 'Unrequited Love'" in Cavatorta, Francesco and Lise Storm, eds., *Political Parties in the Arab World: Continuity and Change* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press), p.26.
[128] *Ibid*, pp.24-29.
[129] Interviews with Houcine Abbassi (Tunis, 16 July 2019) and Saida Garrache (Carthage, 17 July 2019).

Ennahda leaders began to be released from prison: Ali Larayadh was released in 2004, Hamedi Jebali in 2006 and Abdelhamid Jlassi in 2007.[130] Jlassi was responsible for clandestinely rebuilding the party's structures throughout the country,[131] while Larayadh played a key role in establishing contacts with other parties of the opposition through the 18 October process.[132] Ennahda leaders, including Jebali, also conducted outreach to the regime through personal contacts.[133] By 2011, Ennahda had thus begun to re-establish a nationwide network of supporters, address the intra-opposition competition which had diminished its resilience to regime repression during the 1990s, and signal a willingness to compromise with the regime in return for democratic concessions. By 2011, Ennahda was thus well-positioned to build alliances and engage in broad cross-ideological coalitions.

Similarly, while Ennahda remained institutionally weak, analysts predicted that any democratic opening would result in Ennahda taking a significant share of the electorate.[134] The 1989 elections had shown Ennahda's popular appeal, particularly in the country's interior and south, and the interceding years had seen an increase in religiosity, particularly among those opposed to the Ben Ali regime.[135]

Some of Ennahda's leadership came from the same social elites as the other political parties: Abdelfattah Mourou was from the Tunis elite and Hamedi Jebali from a prominent Sahelian family. However, the vast majority of Ennahda's members and supporters traditionally came from the South and interior of the country.[136] Rached Ghannouchi, for example, came from El-Hamma in Gabes Governorate. Houcine Jaziri is from Zarzis in Medenine Governorate.[137] This meant that Ennahda's network did not significantly overlap with Ghannouchi's coalition but did extend to the population which were playing a central role in the protest movement against him. Ennahda leaders note that, while they did not participate as an organized political

[130] WhatsApp communication with Abdelhamid Jlassi (24 March 2021).
[131] Interview with Abdelhamid Jlassi (Tunis, 25 June 2019); Wolf, Anne, *Political Islam in Tunisia,* p.116.
[132] Wolf, Anne, *Political Islam in Tunisia,* p.107; WhatsApp communication with Omeyya Seddik (19 July 2021).
[133] Boubekeur, "Islamists, Secularists and Old Regime Elites in Tunisia", p.110.
[134] A notable exception was Geisser and Gobe who described Ennahda as "a bloodless phantom of itself". Geisser and Gobe, "Un si Long Règne…", p.8.
[135] Cavatorta, Francesco and Rikke Haugbolle (2012), "The End of Authoritarian Rule and the Mythology of Tunisia under Ben Ali", *Mediterranean Politics* (Vol. 17, No 2.), p.189.
[136] Ayari, *Le Prix de L'engagement Politique dans la Tunisie Autoritaire,* p.136; Wolf, *Political Islam in Tunisia,* p.36.
[137] Ayari, *Le Prix de L'engagement Politique dans la Tunisie Autoritaire,* p.360; Wolf, *Political Islam in Tunisia,* xvi.

movement in the revolution, their leaders and supporters were present at the forefront of almost all protests and revolutionary events.[138]

PM Ghannouchi made no efforts to include Ennahda in his government, and did not consult the party on its programme. This was unsurprising. A CPR activist told me that:

> At the time, we didn't know if Ennahda would be authorized to participate in the elections. I remember the debates. It was not clear to the political class that Ennahda *should* be allowed to compete. A meeting between state representatives and the leadership of Ennahda was unimaginable at that time, so it was unthinkable that they would be in the government.[139]

Hedi Baccouche wrote that initial conversations between the TA and Ennahda focused on the party's legalization, a general amnesty, and allowing Rached Ghannouchi to return to Tunisian soil.[140] Bringing Ennahda into the TA was not on the table, depriving the TA of an important potential source of authority.

Despite this exclusion, Ennahda was initially silent regarding the TA and did not participate in early challenges to its authority. This may seem to run counter to my argument. Ennahda's weak validation during the initial transitional phase is explained by two interlinked factors. Firstly, Ennahda were deeply scarred by their experience of repression in the 1990s.[141] This contributed to their characteristic caution at this time. Zuhoor Abid stated that "Ennahda was afraid. They were strong, but they wanted to show that they were good children, progressive et cetera., particularly to the international community."[142] At this stage, Ennahda did not have the ambition to play a leading role in the transition. Ennahda returned to overt political life in early 2011, but their expectations were extremely low and they did not wish to pursue their interests too firmly for fear of precipitating a backlash or dividing the revolutionary coalition.

[138] Interviews with Samir Dilou (Tunis, 26 June 2019), Abdelhamid Jlassi (Tunis, 25 June 2019) and Farida Labidi (Tunis, 26 July 2019); Wolf, *Political Islam in Tunisia*, pp.130-131.
[139] Interview with Walid Haddouk (via WhatsApp, 6 May 2020); Several meetings did, however, take place between Ennahda and PM Ghannouchi, as noted by Baccouche, Hedi (2018), *En Toute Franchise* (Sud Editions; Tunis, Tunisia), pp.471-472.
[140] *Idem.*
[141] McCarthy, "The Politics of Consensus", p.6; Boubekeur, "Islamists, Secularists and Old Regime Elites in Tunisia", p.112.
[142] Interview with Zuhoor Khorda Abid (14 July 2019).

Second, Ennahda's external leadership were disconnected from realities on the ground, and the internal leadership knew their networks had been degraded during years of repression. As such, Ennahda were unsure of their actual level of popular support during the first period of the transition.[143] Other political forces were also uncertain about Ennahda's strength: Baccouche writes that in January 2011, "we were far from thinking that Ennahda would soon become a significant and determinant political force in the regime emerging from the revolution".[144] Other political activists expressed a similar uncertainty: "We did not know the weight of each political mass. How much were the Islamists? How much were the left? How much were the former regime? …There was a lot of uncertainty at this time."[145] Ennahda thus had a very low estimation of their relative power, and this uncertainty complicated bargaining around political representation at the early stage of the transition.

PM Ghannouchi's failure to engage Ennahda left them open to being incorporated into the coalition contesting his political authority, namely the NCPR. Even within the NCPR, Ennahda, along with the UGTT, played a moderating role: moving the coalition away from a policy of direct confrontation with the regime. For example, when the government proposed merging the NCPR with the Commission for Political reform, the illegal leftist members remained opposed, but the UGTT and Ennahda advocated accepting this compromise.[146] This led to the creation of the HIROR on 18 February 2011.

Given their low expectations and conciliatory posture, had PM Ghannouchi undertaken efforts to include Ennahda in his governing coalition, it is likely that they would have accepted this compromise and his authority would have been significantly reinforced. Instead, Ennahda was excluded and encouraged to challenge the authority of the TA.

4.2.3 The Muhammashin (Marginalised)

Bourguiba's policy of public investment in education was continued by Ben Ali. Ben Ali further invested in technology and the diffusion of the internet throughout the country, through initiatives such as the Tunisian Internet Agency (established in 1996), and Publicnet, a

[143] Interview with Abdelhamid Jlassi (Tunis, 25 June 2019).
[144] Baccouche, *En Toute Franchise*, p.472.
[145] Interview with Layla Riahi (via Whatsapp, 9 May 2020).
[146] Boubekeur, "Islamists, Secularists and Old Regime Elites in Tunisia", p.111.

government-run and subsidized chain of "internet cafés" (established in 1998).[147] This created a class of well-educated, technologically savvy, and networked youth, including in the country's interior. In 2011 Tunisia had one of the highest internet penetration rates in the Arab world.[148]

However, as the strong economic growth of the 1990s stalled during the mid-2000s, unemployment rose. Graduates were disproportionately affected (45% were unemployed), and there were wide regional disparities (the Centre-West, for example, had a poverty level of approximately 30%, compared to a national average of an estimated 10%).[149] The public sector and state-owned companies were major employers in Tunisia's interior. However, corruption augmented feelings of economic injustice and deprivation. For example, the supposed 'competition' (*Concours*) for employment in state-owned companies was frequently manipulated to favour recruitment of friends and offspring of the regime (or the UGTT).[150] These policies created a large class of individuals known as the *Muhammashin* (the marginalised): typically from the interior, educated, and connected via social media and the internet, but without economic opportunities.[151]

The existence of this constituency was in evidence during the 2008 protests in Gafsa, where the protest movement largely operated independently of the UGTT and the organized parties of political opposition. Chouikha and Gobe note that, "2008 flagrantly demonstrated that a hiatus existed between the extremely weak political opposition forces and a faction of the Tunisian population which neither the President's party nor the central trade union were able to control."[152] The weakness of opposition political networks, which were either dismantled by the regime or confined to the coastal elites, meant that the *Muhammashin* were excluded from traditional structures and mechanisms for political mobilization.[153] They, in turn, were

[147] Cavatorta and Haugebolle, "The End of Authoritarian Rule and the Mythology of Tunisia under Ben Ali", p.186.
[148] Murphy, "The Tunisian Uprising", p.300.
[149] *Hibou et al. La Tunisie d'apres le 14 Janvier et son Économie Politique et Sociale*, p.14.
[150] Interview with Layla Riahi (via Whatsapp, 9 May 2020); See Gobe and Chouikha, "La Tunisie entre la « Révolte du Bassin Minier de Gafsa » et L'échéance Électorale de 2009", p.4 on the spark of the Gafsa insurrection.
[151] Zemni, Sami (2015), "The Extraordinary Politics of the Tunisian Revolution: The Process of Constitution Making", *Mediterranean Politics* (Vol. 20, No.1), p.9.
[152] Chouikha and Gobe, "La Tunisie entre la « Révolte du Bassin Minier de Gafsa » et L'échéance Électorale de 2009", p.1.
[153] Volpi, Fréderic (2013), "Explaining (and Re-explaining) Political Change in the Middle East during the Arab Spring: Trajectories of Democratization and of Authoritarianism in the Maghreb", *Democratization* (Vol. 20, No. 6), p.984.

suspicious of participation in formal politics and trade unionism, which they perceived as the elite, aloof, or complicit with the regime.

In 2011, the *Muhammashin* were the engine of the revolution which toppled Ben Ali;[154] they were not an organized political force and did not have a unified ideology. This would later come to undermine their political power, however; the truncated timeline of the revolution meant that the *Muhammashin* remained mobilized and concentrated in the capital in January and February 2011. The 'liberation caravans' saw thousands of demonstrators travel from Tunisia's interior to participate in the sit-ins of Kasbah I and II.[155] At this time they remained a potent and identifiable constituency in their own right. It would have been challenging but possible to engage them; it was perilous to ignore them.

Although, Ghannouchi initiated programmes and reforms designed to benefit the *Muhammashin*, such as the *Amel* programme, this was done in a patrician and non-consultative manner. This did little to bring this constituency into Ghannouchi's coalition of support. PM Ghannouchi could have initiated a process of engagement and consultation with the *Muhammashin;* brought their leaders into the TA; or created an advisory organ from among their cadre.[156] But he did not, and the *Muhammashin* remained mobilized against Ghannouchi's administration, eventually leading to his downfall.

4.2.4 18 October Coalition

Failing to bring *Ennahda* and the *Muhammashin* into his governing coalition was an avoidable mistake which robbed Ghannouchi of potential allies in the struggle to establish his authority. However, had the contestation of Ghannouchi's TA remained disparate and no viable alternative coalition emerged he may yet have succeeded. Ghannouchi's regime was doomed when an alternative governing coalition emerged in the form of the NCPR. The NCPR fatally contested the authority of Ghannouchi's TA and assembled a coalition of organizations which rivalled Ghannouchi's own.

[154] Beissinger, Jamal and Mazur, "Explaining Divergent Revolutionary Coalitions", pp.4-10; Willis, "Revolt for Dignity", pp.32-34.
[155] Murphy, "The Tunisian Uprising", p.303.
[156] Similar successful efforts to engage diffuse, mobilized constituencies have been witnessed in other political transitions. For example, in the French 1848 Provisional Government of Alphonse de Lamartine and the Workers' Parliament of Louis Blanc.

The NCPR was composed of 28 parties and CSOs from across the political spectrum. It brought together the illegal leftist and some of the legal opposition parties (notably the FDTL), the UGTT, and Ennahda. The NCPR was therefore far more inclusive than the TA of Ghannouchi and consisted of organizations with more significant networks and organizational structures throughout Tunisian society. As I have argued, this is central to successful authority-building. The creation of the NCPR was facilitated by pre-existing social ties dating from the early 2000s and concretised in the 18 October Coalition.

Like many dictators, Ben Ali remained in power by sowing division between elements of the opposition to his rule.[157] In Tunisia, the principal line of division was between Islamists and secular opposition forces. As they became cognisant of this strategy, Tunisian opposition figures sought to overcome this divide. In 2001, Moncef Marzouki founded the CPR: one of the first political parties to attempt to integrate leftists and Islamists. In 2004-5, several meetings took place between the PDP's leader, Najib Chebbi, and Ennahda's leader, Rached Ghannouchi. Chebbi announced that he had moderated his earlier secular Marxist positions and was convinced that Ennahda had also evolved in a democratic direction.[158] Ennahda had also integrated its members into apolitical national organizations such as the LTDH, ONAT and CNLT.[159] Thus, initial 'weak' ties were established between Islamist and secular elements of the opposition.

Then in 2005, the 18 October Coalition was established between parties from across the political spectrum. The 18 October Coalition was established in support of those undertaking a hunger strike to protest the holding of the 2005 World Summit on the Information Society in Tunisia. Over subsequent years and intense rounds of dialogue in Tunisia and abroad, the 18 October Coalition elaborated a common platform against the regime, and conducted sustained dialogue between opposition leaders on contentious issues, including women's rights, freedom of conscience and the relationship between religion and the state.[160]

The 18 October Coalition eventually fractured because of disagreement over how best to contest the 2009 presidential elections, but strong ties based on defensive solidarity and political mobilization remained. While Wolf suggests that the 18 October Coalition was

[157] Willis, *Politics and Power in the Maghreb,* p.132.
[158] Angrist, "Understanding the Success of Mass Civic Protest in Tunisia", p.557.
[159] *Idem.*
[160] Collectif 19 Octobre pour les Droits et les Libertés en Tunisie (2010), *Notre Voie vers la Démocratie*; Interviews with Ayyachi Hammami (Tunis, 2 July 2019) and Omeyya Seddik (Sidi Bou Said, 14 July 2019).

ineffective because of its relative anonymity among average Tunisians,[161] Angrist suggests that this Islamist-secular cooperation was central to the success of the Tunisian revolution:

> It is hard to imagine masses of citizens responding to the calls to demonstrate against the Ben 'Ali regime had there existed widespread concern among the elite and broader society over the possibility that a subsequent political vacuum might lead to extremist Islamist rule or civil war.[162]

The 18 October Coalition also facilitated contacts between political parties post-14 January 2011 and laid the foundation for the subsequent broad-based TA both politically and personally.[163]

The importance of the 18 October Coalition in facilitating the creation of the NCPR cannot be overstated. The 18 October Coalition nurtured nascent contacts between opposition political parties from 2005 and helped establish a degree of trust between the leftist, legal opposition and Islamist politicized constituencies. Without the 18 October Coalition process, the post-January 2011 coalition would have been unthinkable, due to Ben Ali's extensive efforts to sow distrust between secular and Islamist elements of society. The pre-existing social ties created by the 18 October Coalition laid the foundations for the broad political coalition that would fatally contest the authority of PM Ghannouchi's TA. It would also form the basis of the successful coalition united in the HIROR.

5. Conclusion

The failure of PM Ghannouchi's authority-building efforts was not pre-ordained. It was not an inevitable result of his association with the former regime, his lack of charismatic authority, or failure to deliver public services.

The failure of the TA to secure recognition of its authority was a result of its failure to establish a broad base of support among Tunisia's principal organized political constituencies. As I have shown, this failure of coalition-building was itself partly a result of pre-revolutionary institutional and social divisions and ties combined with unimaginative thinking and leadership.

[161] Wolf, *Political Islam in Tunisia*, p.103.
[162] Angrist, "Understanding the Success of Mass Civic Protest in Tunisia", p.559.
[163] Interviews with Ayyachi Hammami (Tunis, 2 July 2019) and Omeyya Seddik (Sidi Bou Said, 14 July 2019).

When Ghannouchi recognised the need to expand his base of support beyond the RCD, he turned to the 'usual suspects': the secular elite, legal opposition and UGTT. However, the secular elite and the legal opposition came from a narrow social pool and lacked the institutional strength to deepen and broaden the regime's base of support. As the main organized force in the country, the UGTT's refusal to support him was the first nail in the coffin of Ghannouchi's authority-building efforts. However, much of the UGTT was not opposed to his premiership, and the UGTT itself was not unified enough to propose a viable alternative to the Ghannouchi administration. Ghannouchi's TA might have been salvaged if it had managed to secure the authority recognition of Ennahda and/or the *Muhammashin*.

Ennahda by this time had already proven itself to be highly accommodating and willing to compromise. Their significant weight could have been brought to the side of the government through relatively small concessions. However, the history of distrust and antagonism between the RCD and Ennahda meant that this alliance was not proposed. The *Muhammashin*, due to their diffuse nature, may have been more difficult to engage; however, their geographic concentration in Tunis at this time would have made identifying and negotiating with their leadership (or even creating a leadership) feasible. Ghannouchi did not even attempt this task, preferring to try to placate them with unilateral policy decisions and periodic use of violence. Thus, the importance of the agency of leaders in forming inclusive TAs is highlighted.

The final death knell for Ghannouchi's regime, however, was the creation of an alternative governing coalition in the form of the NCPR. The NCPR fatally contested the authority of Ghannouchi's government and assembled a coalition of organizations which rivalled Ghannouchi's own. The NCPR brought together the illegal leftist and legal opposition parties, the UGTT, and Ennahda, creating a viable coalition to challenge the authority of Ghannouchi's government. The creation of the NCPR was facilitated by pre-existing social ties in the form of the 18 October Coalition.

In sum, Ghannouchi's TA failed to establish its authority because the coalition he assembled was insufficiently broad and lacked deep roots in the society relative to the coalition arrayed against it in the form of the NCPR.

Chapter 4: the Tunisian Transitional Administration of Beji Caid Essebsi

1. Introduction

In the aftermath of Ghannouchi's resignation, long-retired politician Beji Caid Essebsi was selected as the new interim prime minister. The TA under PM Essebsi succeeded where Ghannouchi failed, establishing its authority and guiding the country to the 23 October 2011 elections. This chapter begins by outlining the evidence that PM Essebsi and the transitional legislature, the *Haute Instance pour la Realisation des objectifs de la Révolution* (HIROR), possessed political authority. As previously, I then assess what existing explanations of authority-building lend to our understanding of the authority of these transitional institutions, before presenting my alternative explanation.

Due to Essebsi's personal valency, alterations to the composition of the HIROR and reassuring policy decisions, the TA was able to assemble an inclusive coalition of the principal political forces in Tunisia. This brought not only the strong validation of these political groups but also the weak validation of those left outside of the governing coalition. As the situation and interests of key constituencies evolved, these constituencies sought to exert limitations on the authority of the TA. However, path dependency ensured that these challenges remained within the framework of the existing bodies rather than fundamentally contesting their authority.

2. Context

2.1 Beji Caid Essebsi

On 28 February 2011, Beji Caid Essebsi was plucked from 20 years of obscure retirement to replace Mohamed Ghannouchi as interim prime minister. Essebsi set to work quickly, announcing on 3 March a new roadmap to the election of a National Constituent Assembly (NCA) and his primarily technocratic cabinet on 7 March. On 23 March, a new law to replace the 1959 Constitution and govern the transitional period was promulgated.[1] Although this law gave sweeping powers to the interim President Fouad Mbazaa, all Tunisians knew that under Essebsi the real power sat with the prime minister.

While the legitimacy and legal basis of his premiership was initially questioned by some,[2] the country's key constituencies were quickly brought round to supporting Essebsi. During his tenure as prime minister, he faced no major challenges to his authority.

[1] *Décret-Loi n° 2011-14 du 23 Mars 2011, Portant L'organisation Provisoire des Pouvoirs Publics.*
[2] Interviews with Abdelhamid Jlassi (Tunis, 25 June 2019) and Walid Haddouk (via WhatsApp, 6 May 2020).

For example, the attempt to organize a third Kasbah sit-in in July 2011 was largely unsuccessful. The government forcibly dispersed the 300-400 people who had gathered and arrested 34 protesters. Unlike the dispersal of protesters from Kasbah Square in late January and violence against protesters in Kef, Kebili and Gafsa in early February, no government officials were forced to resign following the Kasbah III protests, and the authority of the government was maintained.[3] The Kasbah III protests elicited less popular support; participant numbers were fewer; and protesters were unable to find political allies to champion their cause.

At a political level, the HIROR attempted to rein in Essebsi's authority on two notable occasions: compelling him to appear before the body on 5 April and 14 July. The first appearance occurred following the nomination of Habib Essid on 28 March as minister of the interior. Essid's nomination elicited fierce criticisms both in terms of substance, since Essid had served as permanent secretary to the minister of interior from 1997-2001 at the height of Ben Ali's repression,[4] and procedure because the HIROR had not been consulted on the nomination.[5] On this occasion the executive prevailed and Essid stayed in his post.[6] Similarly, on 14 July Essebsi appeared before the HIROR to respond to questions around the appointment of Khemaies Jhinaoui, a senior diplomat under Ben Ali, as secretary of state in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Again, Essebsi prevailed and Jhinaoui remained in post. Additionally, Essebsi refused to answer questions around the detention of Ministry of Interior whistle-blower Samir Feriani. When asked whether the HIROR might interview other members of the government, Essebsi responded that he was "not in favour".[7] No further interviews were held.

The HIROR was more successful in delimiting Essebsi's authority on legislative issues. For example, the HIROR triumphed in its battle with Essebsi concerning Article 15 of the electoral law on eligibility of candidates for the 2011 NCA. This Article was the subject of intense debate within the HIROR.[8] The Article proposed by the HIROR excluded all senior officials from the

[3] *Tuniscope*, "Kasbah 3 est Illegitime, il est Orchestré par des Extremists qui veulent Freiner les Élections" (6 March 2018) ; *Business News*, "Kasbah 3 : les Raisons d'un Échec Annoncé" (18 July 2011).
[4] *Leaders*, "Who's Who: Habib Essid" (28 March 2011).
[5] Bras, Jean-Philippe and Eric Gobe (2017), "Légitimité et Révolution en Tunisie: Les Lecons Tunisiennes de la Haute Instance pour la Réalisation des Objectifs de la Révolution", *Revue des Mondes Musulmans et de la Méditerranée* (Vol. 142), p.12. Choukri Belaid, Ayyachi Hammami and Adnane Hajji all protested his nomination. Interview with Ayyachi Hammami (Tunis, 2 July 2019).
[6] *Leaders*, "Caid Essebsi: la Désignation d'Habib Essid Relève de L'intérêt National, mais je demeure dispose a vous écouter" (5 April 2011). Video available at: https://vimeo.com/22032764.
[7] *Espace Manager*, "Tunisie : Béji Caid Essebsi devant la Haute Instance de Iyadh Ben Achour" (14 July 2011).
[8] Ben Achour, Yadh (2017), *Tunisie: Une Revolution en Pays d'Islam* (2nd Edition) (Tunis: Ceres Editions). pp.115-118.

government of Ben Ali, his cabinet, the RCD, as well as those who had officially called for his re-election in 2004 (in violation of Constitutional term limits),[9] from being candidates in the NCA elections. The government opposed this formula since it would exclude several of its own members and aggravate the RCD constituency. Instead, on 26 April, they proposed the exclusion of only "members of the President's cabinet, advisers of the President and attachés to the Cabinet" from the last decade of Ben Ali's rule.[10] The HIROR resisted, particularly in its session of 28 April, and the government relented and passed the law as it was.

Notwithstanding such limitations, while Ghannouchi's short-lived premiership was beset by continual challenges to its authority from political elites and the Tunisian public, Essebsi enjoyed relative freedom in deploying the extensive powers of his office. Under *Decrét Loi No.14* Essebsi was denied the right to stand for election in the NCA, but 23 October 2011 did not spell the end of Essebsi's political career. After forming the political party *Nida Tounes* as a magnet for anti-Islamist sympathy in 2012, Essebsi rode to victory as Tunisia's first directly and democratically-elected president in 2014. He died while in office on 25 July 2019.

2.2 The HIROR

Unlike PM Ghannouchi who governed through executive fiat, Essebsi did not govern alone: the HIROR became a "half-parliament, half-legislative" body.[11] Although only given a weak consultative role by *Decrét-Loi No.6*, the HIROR proposed legislation which was typically adopted without amendment (when amendments were attempted they precipitated political crises, as mentioned above). The HIROR elaborated key pieces of legislation including the electoral law for the NCA, the creation of the *Instance Supérieure Indépendente pour les Elections* (ISIE), the laws regulating political parties, civil society organizations (CSOs), the liberty of the press, and oversight of the media.[12] The HIROR thus enjoyed political authority far in excess of its legal remit.

[9] Known as *Al-Munashidin*: the implorers.
[10] Ben Achour, Yadh (2016), "La Révolution Tunisienne dans ses Manifestations Constitutionelles: La Première Phase de Transition (14 Janvier 2011-16 Décembre 2011)", *La Constitution de la Tunisie: Processus, Principes et Perspectives* (Tunis : United Nations Development Programme), p.65.
[11] *Ibid*, p.56.
[12] *Ibid*, p.57.

Much legislation adopted at this time continued to shape Tunisia in the decade which followed: the laws regulating political parties,[13] civil society,[14] and the press remained in force in 2021.[15] The oversight bodies created for the elections (the ISIE)[16] and audio-visual media (HAICA-*Haute Autorité indépendante de la communication audiovisuelle*)[17] remained in existence for over a decade. The 2014 electoral law, while modified to correspond to the new Constitution of 2014, was largely inspired by the 2011 law elaborated by the HIROR.[18] The choice was made in 2011 to signal a clear rupture with the past; the legislative approach from 2011-2019 was one of continuity, even as the political scene transformed dramatically. Many of the members of the HIROR I spoke to were understandably proud of their work and felt that their legacy was a clear sign of the legitimacy of the institution.[19] The longevity of work of the HIROR is indicative of the political authority enjoyed by the TA.

However, unlike Essebsi's executive authority, the legislative authority of the HIROR was not uncontroversial, but ebbed and waned over the organ's existence. As we shall see, initial contestation of the HIROR's authority came from political parties on the left who felt that they were under-represented in the HIROR. The body was expanded from 72 to 155 members by 5 April, mollifying opposition based on its composition. During the next phase contestation came from the larger organized political parties, notably Ennahda, who felt that the HIROR was overstepping its mandate and unnecessarily prolonging the transition. When Ennahda and several other parties withdrew from the HIROR on 30 May 2011, Ben Ashour engaged in a confidential side-process with 12 political parties, resulting in the 'Declaration on the Transitional Process' being signed on 15 September. This declaration limited the authority of the HIROR but allowed its work to resume, permitting elections to be organized on 23 October 2011. Although occurring outside the official transitional organs, the importance of this

[13] *Decret-Loi No. 87 du 24 Septembre 2011, Portant L'organisation des Partis Politiques.*
[14] *Décret-Loi n° 2011-88 du 24 Septembre 2011, Portant L'organisation des Associations.*
[15] *Décret-Loi n° 2011-116 du 2 Novembre 2011, Relatif à la Liberté de la Communication Audiovisuelle et Portant Création d'une Haute Autorité Indépendante de la Communication Audiovisuelle (HAICA).*
[16] *Décret-Loi n° 2011-27 du 18 Avril 2011, Portant Création d'une Instance Supérieure Indépendante pour les Élections*, formed the basis of *Loi Organique n° 2012-23 du 20 Décembre 2012, Relative à L'instance Indépendante pour les Élections.*
[17] *Décret-Loi n° 2011-116 du 2 Novembre 2011, Relatif à la Liberté de la Communication Audiovisuelle et Portant Création d'une Haute Autorité Indépendante de la Communication Audiovisuelle (HAICA).*
[18] Democracy Reporting International (2017), *Le Cadre Juridique des Élections en Tunisie en 2017*, p.9.
[19] Interviews with Khadija Sherif (Sidi Bou Said, 4 July 2019), Tarek Ben Hiba (Tunis, 28 June 2019) and Farida Labidi (Tunis, 26 June 2019).

declaration in restoring the authority of the HIROR has been underlined by Ben Ashour and others.[20]

Why was Essebsi able to successfully establish his political authority when Ghannouchi was not? Why was it accepted that the HIROR play a role so far beyond that envisaged in *Décret-Loi No.6*? What explains variations in the HIROR's authority during its existence?

3. Existing explanations of political authority

3.1 Revolutionary legitimacy

The variation between Essebsi's and Ghannouchi's political authority cannot be explained by revolutionary legitimacy. Like PM Ghannouchi, Beji Caid Essebsi was not a revolutionary leader. He had served as Bourguiba's Minister of Interior, Defence and Foreign Affairs.[21] As Bourguiba's Director of National Security, Essebsi was implicated in human rights abuses.[22] He served as an Ambassador and Speaker of Parliament under Ben Ali, before retiring from public life in 1991. His tenure as Speaker of Parliament began after the rigged and repressive elections of 1989.

His 20-year hiatus from public life provided him with critical distance from the worst excesses of the Ben Ali regime, but also meant that he was not a well-known public figure at the time of the revolution. Rached Ghannouchi is rumoured to have asked, "from which archive have they taken him", when Essebsi's name was announced as Prime Minister. [23]

As I have shown, Essebsi also elevated several figures associated with the former regime, such as Essid and Jhinaoui, into senior positions.[24] Moreover, opposition leaders, including Chebbi and Brahim, were compelled to resign from Essebsi's government following the adoption of *Décret-Loi No.14* on 23 March, to stand for election to the NCA.[25] This deprived his

[20] Ben Achour, "La révolution Tunisienne dans ses Manifestations Constitutionelles", p.71; Interview with Mouldi Riahi (Tunis, 11 July 2019).
[21] Boubekeur, Amel (2016), "Islamists, Secularists and Old Regime Elites in Tunisia: Bargained Competition", *Mediterranean Politics* (Vol. 21, No. 1), p.111.
[22] Gall, Carlotta, and Lilia Blaise, "Béji Caïd Essebsi, President Who Guided Tunisia to Democracy, Dies at 92", *New York Times* (25 July 2019).
[23] Interview with Abdelhamid Jlassi (Tunis, 25 June 2019) and Walid Haddouk (via WhatsApp, 6 May 2020).
[24] *GNet News*, "Biographies des Nouveaux Ministres du Gouvernement Provisoire" (8 March 2011).
[25] *Décret-Loi n° 2011-14 du 23 Mars 2011, Portant L'organisation Provisoire des Pouvoirs Publics*, Article 15; Interview with Omeyya Seddik (Sidi Bou Said, 14 July 2019). Ahmed Najib Chebbi and Ahmed Ibrahim were both elected in the district of Tunis 2 in October 2011.

government of even a veneer of revolutionary credentials. Essebsi's government therefore had an even less 'revolutionary' colour than the second Ghannouchi government.

In contrast, the HIROR was dominated by those who had been in opposition to the regime of Ben Ali. However, it was not composed of those who had played a leading role in the revolution *per se*. Willis notes the "absence of the country's political parties from the protests of December 2010-January 2011…"[26] and yet, as Lieckefett highlights, "…through the various commissions, and above all the HIROR, it is the parties of the former opposition, academics, lawyers, magistrates, unions and 'national personalities' who took the driving seat." Lieckefett concludes that "revolutionary points of view were marginalised in the transitional institutions."[27] The HIROR was not a revolutionary organ, but primarily an inclusive assembly of Tunisian political and social leaders.

The success of Essebsi and the HIROR confirms my contention that revolutionary legitimacy is not a necessary condition for successful authority-building in post-revolutionary contexts.

3.2 Legal-rational authority or input legitimacy

Essebsi's authority also rested on more shaky legal grounds than the administration of PM Ghannouchi. Unlike Ghannouchi there was no constitutional justification for Essebsi's rule, nor was his appointment the product of any election or formal selection process. There was no consultation on who should replace Mohamed Ghannouchi. Many seemed surprised by Essebsi's nomination, as indicated by the above quote from Rached Ghannouchi. As one activist told me: "The power of Beji was totally arbitrary. It came from nowhere. At least Mohamed Ghannouchi's appointment was based on the Constitution."[28] There was *prima facie* no input legitimacy *per se* for his appointment. Apart from processes within political parties, nor was there any formal selection process for representatives in the HIROR either. Although some spoke of the UGTT and LTDH recommending names for inclusion,[29] most independent

[26] Willis, Michael (2016), "Revolt for Dignity: Tunisia's Revolution and Civil Resistance" in Roberts, Adam, Michael Willis, Rory McCarthy and Timothy Garton Ash, eds., *Civil Resistance in the Arab Spring: Triumphs and Disasters* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p.38.
[27] Lieckefett, Michael (2012), "La Haute Instance et Les Élections en Tunisie: Du Consensus Au 'Pacte Politique'?", *Confluences Méditerranée* (No. 82.), p.141.
[28] Interview with Walid Haddouk (via WhatsApp, 6 May 2020).
[29] Interviews with Khadija Sherif (Sidi Bou Said, 4 July 2019) and Tarek Ben Hiba (Tunis, 28 June 2019).

members I spoke to described "receiving a call from Ridha Belhaj",[30] Essebsi's *de facto* Chief of Staff, asking them to join the HIROR.

Nor did the HIROR derive its authority from legal-rational justifications. As noted, *Décret-Loi No.6* gave the HIROR only a weak consultative role. In reality, the HIROR exerted far greater *de facto* decision-making powers. The crisis around Article 15 of the electoral law demonstrates that the government did not have the political authority to reject legislative decisions taken by the HIROR. On occasions where there was not political consensus within the HIROR, attempts to justify the HIROR's actions on legal grounds failed spectacularly. For example, during the crisis surrounding the adoption of the law governing political parties, in which several parties suggested the HIROR did not have the legitimacy to adopt such far-reaching legislation, Ben Ashour offered an elaborate and convincing legal justification defending the HIROR's role.[31] This legal gymnastics was, however, unsuccessful and the draft law was not adopted.

Legal-rational justifications, therefore, do not explain the authority of the TA during this period.

3.3 Charismatic, traditional, and knowledge-based authority

Despite the aforementioned weaknesses of charismatic authority as an explanatory variable, Essebsi could be said to possess charismatic and/or traditional authority. Several interviewees spoke of Essebsi as "re-assuring" and noted the way his mannerisms, speech and dress evoked the 'father of the nation', Habib Bourguiba.[32] Essebsi hailed from the secular elite, descended from the Husainid dynasty of Beys, was born in Tunis and was educated in Paris.[33] His long experience in government, particularly under Bourguiba, meant that many, including his ideological opponents, considered him a technocrat.[34] Essebsi maintained many of the technocratic ministers from Ghannouchi's second government in their posts, including the Ministers of Defence, Justice and Foreign Affairs. Ben Ashour also retained his position as

[30] Interview with Mustapha Tilili (12 July 2019), Abdelsitar Ben Moussa (Tunis, 12 July 2019) and Ramadani Massoud (Tunis, 10 July 2019).
[31] Details of the argument are outlined in Bras and Gobe, "Légitimité et Révolution en Tunisie", p.11.
[32] Interviews with Mohamed Ghariyani (Tunis, 1 July 2019), Saida Garrache (Carthage, 17 July 2019) and Ramadani Massoud (Tunis, 10 July 2019).
[33] Kerrou, Mohamed, "Remembering Essebsi, the Late Maestro of Tunisian Politics", *The Conversation* (27 August 2019).
[34] Interview with Walid Haddouk (via WhatsApp, 6 May 2020).

President of the HIROR and Mbazaa remained interim president. This appealed to the same knowledge-based authority that Ghannouchi had sought unsuccessfully to channel.

However, in addition to the problems with such explanations of authority highlighted in Chapter 2, the continuity between the TAs of Essebsi and Ghannouchi suggests that these ontological characteristics cannot explain the *variation* in the authority of the two entities. Charismatic, traditional and knowledge-based justifications of authority were not sufficient for PM Ghannouchi's administration to establish its political authority, so nor would I expect them to be sufficient for Essebsi's government.

3.4 Output legitimacy

There is also a great deal of continuity between the socio-economic approach of Essebsi and Ghannouchi. As noted in Chapter 3, many of the measures undertaken by Ghannouchi to address the socio-economic ills of the population, such as the *Amel* programme, began to take effect under Essebsi. The government also increased the statutory minimum wage in July 2011 by 4.8-5%.[35]

The *Amel* programme does seem to have had an appreciable impact on the mobilizing capacity of the *Muhammashin.* An activist told me that that this public sector employment programme "dealt a terrible blow to the movements of contestation. Many of those who were hired were from the UDC [*Union des Diplômés-Chômeurs*] and the UGET [*Union Générale des Étudiants Tunisiens*], had been the pillars of the protest movement across the country."[36] These organizations were decapitated by the integration of their leaders into public sector employment.

A priori this may lead one to suggest that Essebsi's successful authority-building *is* explained by his successful response to the socio-economic demands of the population. However, the mechanism at work in the aforementioned example is different to the mechanism envisaged in the literature on output legitimacy.[37] Rather than the positive mechanism of the public recognizing the government's actions undertaken on their behalf; this evidence points to a

[35] El-Almi, Taher and Ezzedine Larbi (2021), *Étude de L'évolution des Salaires Réels en Tunisie: Avant et Après la Revolution* (La Marsa, Frederic Ebert Stiftung), p.37.
[36] Interview with Layla Riahi (via WhatsApp, 9 May 2020).
[37] E.g. Scharpf, Fritz (2003), "Problem-Solving Effectiveness and Democratic Accountability in the EU." *MPIfg Working Paper* (No.3); Flanigan, Shawn Teresa (2008), "Nonprofit Service Provision by Insurgent Organizations: the Cases of Hizballah and the Tamil Tigers", *Studies in Conflict and Terrorism* (Vol. 31, No.6).

negative mechanism whereby the mobilizing capacity *against* the government is undermined by the co-option of its leadership, as explored in more depth below.

Moreover, the failure to deliver on the socio-economic demands of protesters is an oft-cited conclusion of analyses of post-revolutionary Tunisia,[38] and activists at the time had the distinct impression that the socio-economic demands of protesters were being ignored in pursuit of the political objectives of elites.[39] For example, Ramadani Massoud told me that "the revolution was caused by a failure of the economic and social system, but economically and socially the revolution failed."[40] This further indicates the weakness of output legitimacy as an explanatory variable: there is no acceptable *objective* measure of good delivery of public services or adequate response to the demands of protesters.

The perceived neglect of the socio-economic demands of protesters did not preclude the successful authority-building of Essebsi's administration or other post-revolutionary administrations in Tunisia, further undermining the argument that improved service delivery is a necessary condition for successful authority-building.[41] Essebsi's government was able to secure authority recognition despite its failure to redress the socio-economic demands of the population.

3.5 International recognition and support

The international community continued support for Essebsi in the same way that they supported PM Ghannouchi. US Secretary of State, Hillary Clinton made a high-profile visit to Tunisia on 17 March 2011.[42] In May 2011, the G8 pledged $20 billion in loans and aid to Tunisia and Egypt, in addition to $10 billion in bilateral aid and $10 billion from the Gulf states.[43]

The international approach to Essebsi and the HIROR was not qualitatively different to the support received by PM Ghannouchi. Therefore, international recognition cannot explain the variation in the authority of Essebsi and Ghannouchi.

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[38] See, for example, World Bank (2014), *La Révolution Inachevée: Créer des Opportunités, des Emplois de Qualité et de la Richesse pour Tous les Tunisiens* (Washington, D.C.: World Bank).
[39] Interviews with Abdelrahman Hatheeli (Tunis, 8 July 2019), Ahlem Belhaj (La Marsa, 11 July 2019) and Abdelrazak Kilani (Tunis, 8 July 2019); Yousfi, *L'UGTT*, p.112.
[40] Interview with Ramadani Massoud (Tunis, 10 July 2019).
[41] Failure to deliver improvements on the socio-economic front does seems to have delegitimized political parties and legitimated the July 2021 Coup by President Kais Saied. However, this is outside the scope of our research.
[42] *Al-Jazeera*, "Hillary Clinton Arrives in Tunisia" (17 March 2011).
[43] Willsher, Kim, and Patrick Wintour, "Tunisia and Egypt Promised G8 help on Path to Democracy", *The Guardian* (27 May 2011).

3.6 Conclusion

The successful authority-building of the TA under PM Essebsi is *a priori* puzzling. Essebsi did not emerge as a leader of the revolution. In fact, he had very weak revolutionary credentials, and had retired from public life long before the revolution. Nor did the revolutionary constituency enjoy greater representation in his government. The HIROR was dominated by opposition figures, but not representatives of the revolutionary protesters. His appointment seemed arbitrary to many, and no one pretended that there was any legal, constitutional or democratic justification for his appointment. The authority of the HIROR also rested on weak legal and constitutional grounds; and the selection process for members was opaque and *ad-hoc*.

Essebsi was deemed to possess the undefinable quality of charisma by some, and he could derive some traditional authority from his family background; however, this does not notably distinguish his administration from that of PM Ghannouchi. Essebsi neither had noticeably more or less international support than Ghannouchi. Like Ghannouchi too, Essebsi made some efforts to address the socio-economic grievances which had motivated many to participate in the revolution, while continuing many of the same neo-liberal macro-economic policies. Ultimately both were deemed by many to have failed to address the socio-economic demands of the protesters.

None of these factors can explain the dramatic variation in the success of Essebsi's authority-building efforts compared to those of PM Ghannouchi.

4. Alternative explanation

Scholars have argued that with Essebsi's appointment, Tunisia moved from the "Constitutional phase", where decisions were justified using legal references to the 1959 Constitution, to the "Consensual phase" of the transition, which relied exclusively on the acquiescence of the Tunisian society and political class.[44] This process of broad consensus-building was the successful catalyst of the TA's political authority. The TA succeeded in establishing its authority because it was able to assemble a broadly inclusive coalition of support encompassing the principal organized political constituencies in Tunisia. This coalition dwarfed those capable of contesting its authority. Essebsi was able to retain the support of the RCD and the secular

[44] Ben Ashour, Rafâa and Sana Ben Ashour (2012), "La Transition Démocratique en Tunisie: Entre Légalité Constitutionelle et Légitimité Revolutionnaire", *Revue Francaise de Droit Constitutionnel* (No. 92), pp.722-727.

elite, while expanding the governing coalition to include Ennahda. Through the HIROR, the TA found an acceptable role for the UGTT and was able to neutralize the threat posed by the illegal left.

The coalition of support was institutionalized in the HIROR, rendering it less transient and volatile. Although Ennahda and the legal opposition parties eventually sought to limit the authority of the HIROR, they did not fundamentally contest it because of a path-dependent process set in motion by their initial participation in the body. The coalition assembled inside the TA was sufficiently strong and inclusive that even those who may have been inclined to oppose the TA nevertheless granted it weak validation.

Essebsi was able to build such a broad coalition because of his personal 'valency': his ability and willingness to form alliances with others. This valency came from being considered 'acceptable', although not necessarily 'ideal', by many constituencies, and stemmed as much from his weakness, as from his pragmatism. The TA also benefitted from the pre-existing social ties between the components of the 18 October Coalition, as explored in Chapter 3.

4.1 Governing Coalition

The socio-institutional structure of Tunisian society provided a distinct advantage to those trying to establish their political authority during the transition. As discussed in Chapter 2, in atomised societies, TAs must seek to identify, engage and ascribe weight to a plethora of weakly structured constituencies. By contrast, Tunisian society had long since developed and institutionalized *gesellschaft* networks for collective decision-making and interest aggregation. The TA could thus be assembled from a limited number of ready-hewn building blocks which represented a significant mass of the politicized Tunisian society, including Ennahda and the UGTT, but also the RCD. Once brought into the TA, these deeply-rooted networks could ensure the authority recognition of their members, and therefore a majority of politically-active Tunisians. The existence of these established institutions makes the process of authority construction more like completing a jigsaw and less like attempting to piece together a shattered glass.

4.1.1 The radical left and the UGTT

The most significant challenge to the authority of the TA initially came from the parties of the radical left.

During its first meeting on 17 March, Tunisian leftist legend Gilbert Naccache (one of the founders of the militant leftist organization, GEAST), resigned from the HIROR. His initial protest was due to a perceived lack of transparency and the exclusion of journalists from HIROR debates.[45] However, more generally, he expressed concerns about the legitimacy of the body: "The forces of the former regime created the HIROR. We don't know who and on what basis the people in this institution were named, and who they were reporting to. They were named by a Prime Minister without legitimacy and a President without legitimacy."[46] Such concerns were echoed by representatives of the illegal leftist parties who nevertheless remained inside the institution.[47] Chokri Belaid, President of the leftist Arab Nationalist party, *Mouvement des Patriotes Démocrates (MPD)*, denounced the HIROR as "illegitimate" in its original form and said that the manner of the nomination of its members was marked by "authoritarianism".[48] The UGTT representative, Moncef Yaacoubi, stated that "The Street will not accept the compromises coming out of this institution with its current composition."[49] Ennahda, the CPR, and the LTDH also took up this refrain. Such narratives demonstrate a clear link between composition and political authority: the latter stemming directly from the former.

The TA neutralized this challenge to their legitimacy by changing the composition of the HIROR. Namely they provided the radical left and the UGTT, along with all political parties, additional representation in the body. The negotiation of this shift in the composition of the TA was spearheaded by Ridha Belhaj, Essebsi's *de facto* Chief of Staff.[50] Many interlocutors told me that they "received a call from Ridha Belhaj" to join the HIROR, and he was the main interlocutor of political parties and CSOs in the Prime Minister's office. [51]

Under Belhaj's direction, the HIROR was expanded from its initial 72 members to 155 members by 5 April, ostensibly to ensure a better representation of "youth, women, regions,

[45] Interview with Omar Mestiri (La Marsa, 3 July 2019).
[46] Interview with Gilbert Naccache (La Goulette, 18 July 2019).
[47] Interviews with Omar Mestiri (La Marsa, 3 July 2019), Ahlem Belhaj (La Marsa, 11 July 2019) and Zuhoor Khorda Abid (14 July 2019).
[48] Bras and Gobe, "Légitimité et Révolution en Tunisie*",* p.6.
[49] Cf. *ibid,* p.7.
[50] Belhaj returned with Essebsi to power in 2014 following Essebsi's success in the presidential elections. *Tunis Agence Presse (TAP).* "Biographie de Ridha Belhaj, Nouveau Ministre Délégué auprès du Premier Ministre" (2 July 2011); *Leaders*, "Qui est Ridha Belhadj, le Directeur de Cabinet Présidentiel" (4 January 2015).
[51] Interview with Mustapha Tilili (12 July 2019), Abdelsitar Ben Moussa (Tunis, 12 July 2019) and Ramadani Massoud (Tunis, 10 July 2019). Mestiri said that "Belhaj was extremely influential" in determining the composition of the HIROR, as did Houcine Abbassi. Interviews with Omar Mestiri (La Marsa, 3 July 2019) and Houcine Abbassi (Tunis, 16 July 2019).

and families of martyrs of the revolution."[52] However this oft-cited logic does not stand up to greater scrutiny. Of the initial 72 members announced on 14 March, 17 or 23.5% were women; by 5 April the HIROR had 155 members, with 36 women among them, or 23%.[53] From each region representatives were theoretically added, but no representatives were found from 12 governorates.[54] The representatives of families of martyrs were Mongi and Ali Bouazizi, both from the extended family of the famous martyr Mohamed Bouazizi. The Bouderbala report identified 338 Martyrs and 2147 injured from across the country,[55] but it was not these families that were represented in the HIROR. Lieckefett estimates that only four members of the HIROR directly represented the protesters of Kasbah I and II.[56] The excuse of better representation of youth, women, regions and families of martyrs was used to increase the representation and inclusion of organized political parties and the powerful UGTT. Political parties were each given three representatives, justified by the additional members being a young person and a woman. However, as I have argued, it is the representation of organized socio-political constituencies which matters most for successful authority-building: thus, the authority of the TA soared with the inclusion of these additional members.

In this context, the fissiparous nature of Tunisian leftist politics worked to their advantage, as the multiple leftist parties enjoyed three representatives each. Of the 12 parties in the HIROR, five would end up becoming members of the radical leftist Popular Front after October 2011: the *Mouvement des democrates socialistes* (MDS), the *Parti du Travail patriotique et démocratique de Tunisie* (PTPD, known as *Al-Watad*), the *Parti Tunisie Verte*, MPD, and the *Parti d'Avant-Garde Arabe Démocratique* (PAAD). The *Parti Socialiste de Gauche* (PSG) was also firmly on the left of Tunisian politics and enjoyed three representatives in the HIROR. More than half the political parties represented in the HIROR were therefore from the radical left of Tunisian politics. Additionally, the UGTT's direct representation was increased from two to five, and many of the other additional members were proposed by UGTT structures.[57]

[52] Riahi, Mouldi (2016), "La Constitution: Elaboration et Contenu.", *Pouvoirs* (Vol. 156), p.32; Interview with Mouldi Riahi (Tunis,11 July 2019); Also Henneberg, Sabrina (2020), "Governing Uncertainty: Challenges for the First Tunisian Provisional Administration of 2011 and its Impacts in 2012-14", *British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies* (Vol.47, No.3), p.346.
[53] See Annex 4.
[54] Zaghouan, Ben Arous, Ariana, Manouba, Mahdia, Monastir, Sousse, Kairouan, Beja, Kef, Tozeur and Siliana. *Leaders*, "La Liste Complète des Membres du Conseil de la Haute instance pour la Réalisation des Objectifs de la Révolution", (7 April 2011).
[55] Bouderbala Commission Report, April 2012, available at : https://www.leaders.com.tn/uploads/FCK_files/Rapport%20Bouderbala.pdf.
[56] Lieckefett, "La Haute Instance et Les Elections en Tunisie", p.140.
[57] Interview with Tarek Ben Hiba (Tunis, 28 June 2019) and Khadija Sherif (Sidi Bou Said, 4 July 2019).

Ironically, for a move justified in the name of diversity, there were no women in the UGTT delegation.[58]

The reasons for the left's extraordinary representation in the TA were two-fold. As I have argued above, as the main structuring force of the revolution and the principal national organization, the UGTT was an essential part of the governing coalition. The UGTT was therefore able to exact a high price in return for integrating into the TA. While the Ashourist elements of the organization remained opposed to direct participation in government, they were not opposed to representation in the HIROR. On the other hand, as was shown in Chapter 3, the divisions within the Tunisian left, and within the UGTT itself, were real, and the vast number of representatives was required to represent and satisfy all internal constituencies. Their representation on the HIROR ensured that the UGTT remained unified and that all its constituencies recognized the TA's authority and were invested in its success.[59]

Through increasing their representation in the HIROR the TA effectively neutralized the threat posed to their authority by the radical left and the UGTT, and brought this powerful constituency into the governing coalition. After the restructuring of the HIROR, public challenges to the 'legitimacy' of the TA from the radical left, such as those cited above, disappeared. The left and the UGTT also withdrew their support from protest actions challenging the authority of the TA, such as the Kasbah III protests in July 2011. Thus, one sees how the composition of the TA conditioned patterns of authority recognition and denial. This transformation of the left's position vis-à-vis the TA, and its concomitant impact on both the authority of the TA and the efficacy of protest action, is a perfect illustration of how authority recognition is a function of the composition of the transitional coalition and its inclusion of the principal socio-political elements of the society.

4.1.2 Secular elite

Like Mohamed Ghannouchi, Essebsi hailed from the secular elite: a descendant of the Ottoman rulers of Tunisia, Essebsi was educated at the Sorbonne in Paris.[60] The secular elite continued to occupy prominent positions in the TA under Essebsi, including Ben Ashour, the President of the HIROR, but their influence notably declined during his administration. Despite his

[58] See Annex 4.
[59] The POCT was the only political party who refused to participate in the HIROR officially, although its leadership were close to many members of the HIROR.
[60] Pantheon-Sorbonne, "Hommage à Béji Caïd Essebsi, Président de la République de Tunisie" (26 July 2019).

sociological origins, Essebsi, unlike Ghannouchi, was creative in the pursuit of alliances beyond the traditional clique of the secular elite.

The relative representation of the secular elite declined through the enlargement of the HIROR which so bolstered the representation of the radical left and reinforced the position of Ennahda. The intellectuals and secular elites close to Ben Ashour, who had formed the core group of the initial HIROR, lost their majority. Despite this, as Bras and Gobe note, this reduction only saw their representation reduced from 59% to 45%.[61] This constituency remained well-represented in the HIROR.

However, other factors reduced the secular elite's influence further. For example, all members of the HIROR were unpaid. This privileged the participation of individuals with organizations behind them. After the initial sessions, participation dwindled to a core group of approximately 50 people, mainly seconded by established organizations.[62] Thus, the influence of the major political parties and the UGTT in the HIROR was further increased.

Most importantly, however, in the absence of formal rules of procedure, decision-making in the HIROR tended to rely informally upon consensus among the main political parties. This non-majoritarian decision-making can be seen in the debate around the 'Republican Pact', for example. The idea of a Republican Pact came from the secular elite, including Ben Ashour and his expert committee, who, cognisant of their weak electoral chances, favoured a more expansive interpretation of the HIROR's mandate.[63] They argued that the function of the HIROR was to establish a democratic state, suggesting that this required more than just elections: a democratic state required guarantees of fundamental human rights and freedoms, including gender equality, for example. They hoped to use the HIROR's legislative powers to prevent a 'tyranny of the majority' in a future democratic phase, in which the Islamist Ennahda party was likely to dominate. To this end, the representatives of the secular elite, backed by the smaller parties, proposed a Republican Pact to outline key principles which would guide the

[61] Bras and Gobe, "Légitimité et Révolution en Tunisie", p.8.
[62]Interview with Mustapha Ben Jaafar (Gammarth, 24 June 2019); confirmed in interviews with Tarek Ben Hiba (Tunis, 28 June 2019) and Samir Dilou (Tunis, 26 June 2019).
[63] Interviews with Khadija Sherif (Sidi Bou Said, 4 July 2019), Mouldi Riahi (Tunis,11 July 2019) and Omar Mestiri (La Marsa, 3 July 2019). Others suggest that it was pushed by parties associated with the former regime. E.g. Ben Achour, Yadh (2017), *Tunisie: Une Revolution en Pays d'Islam* (2nd edition) (Tunis: Ceres Editions), p.69. The radical left were also pushing for a Republican Pact. Bras and Gobe, "Légitimité et Révolution en Tunisie", p.10.

work of the NCA on the Constitution.[64] However, the major political parties within the HIROR, notably Ennahda but also CPR and PDP, argued that it was illegitimate for an unelected body to tie the hands of a future elected assembly.[65] Signalling the reduced influence of the secular elite, those opposed to the 'Republican Pact' won the day and the idea was shelved.

More strikingly, extra-institutional negotiation occurred among political parties, the outcomes of which were then imposed upon the HIROR. The most notable example of this is the Declaration on the Transitional Process, which was negotiated in a discreet mediation process between 5 August and 12 September 2011. This process was initiated following the withdrawal of Ennahda and others from the HIROR over a dispute about the postponement of the elections. In this declaration, the 11 main political parties in the HIROR agreed to maintain the date of 23 October for the elections and outlined the steps to hand over power from the HIROR to the National Constituent Assembly (NCA). [66] The Declaration also clarified that, in addition to drafting the Constitution (with an overly ambitious timetable of one year), the NCA would assume legislative functions. This countered those from within the secular elite who had proposed that the NCA concentrate exclusively on the task of elaborating the Constitution, suggesting that the TA should remain in place to manage quotidian affairs of government.[67] The Declaration thus formally reasserted the limits of the authority of the HIROR, imposed upon the TA by the main Tunisian political parties.

The elaboration of the Declaration on the Transitional Process notably took place outside of the HIROR and without the participation of the secular elite constituency. Members of the secular elite such as Khadija Sherif, Hela Abdeljaouad and Abdelmajid Charfi, objected to the Declaration due to their exclusion from the process of its elaboration.[68] Naccache decried the "transfer from a dictatorship of one man to the dictatorship of several parties who agreed amongst themselves."[69] Their objections fell on deaf ears: the myth of fully inclusive decision-making was once again revealed to be a sop to Cerberus with little actual import. The real power in the TA lay with the organized, hierarchical and institutionalized political networks: principally Ennahda and the UGTT, as well as the other political parties. The support of these

[64] Interview with Mouldi Riahi (Tunis,11 July 2019).
[65] Bras and Gobe, "Légitimité et Révolution en Tunisie", p.10.
[66] The CPR were in the negotiations but refused to sign because of the time limitations that it placed on the work of the NCA. Interview with Walid Haddouk (via WhatsApp, 6 May 2020).
[67] Ben Achour, *Tunisie,* pp.71-73; Interview with Mustapha Tilili (12 July 2019).
[68] Bras and Gobe, "Légitimité et Révolution en Tunisie", p.14; Interview with Khadija Sherif (Sidi Bou Said, 4 July 2019).
[69] Interview with Gilbert Naccache (La Goulette, 18 July 2019).

constituencies was deemed essential for the authority of the HIROR to be recognised; the consent of the secular elite was not.

While this may seem to contradict my argument, it instead introduces an important clarificatory point. This example illustrates the importance of integrating an understanding of *depth* of inclusivity into my definition of inclusivity, as well as breadth. The TA was broadly inclusive in that it represented Tunisia's diverse political trends. However, the inclusion of the secular elite in decision-making processes during the transition could be sacrificed, because this constituency lacked institutional strength and strong networks among the population, (i.e. *depth*) as was demonstrated in Chapter 3. Despite this relative marginalization, the secular elite could not withdraw their authority recognition from the TA itself. They were cognisant that any alternative governing coalition was likely to accord them less of a role. The secular elite were not able to parlay their representation at the top of the institutional hierarchy of the TA into longer term political power or secure their long-term goals because of their weak institutional strength and lack of broad popular base.

4.1.3 Ennahda and Essebsi

Essebsi was serving as Minister of Foreign Affairs during the major crackdown on Ennahda's precursor, the MTI, in 1981. This crackdown saw Rached Ghannouchi sentenced to 11 years in prison, along with other party leaders, including Abdelfattah Mourou.[70] Essebsi was serving as Speaker of Parliament during Ben Ali's major repression of Ennahda in 1990-91, following the 1989 elections. As noted earlier, Essebsi was serving as Director of National Security in 1963 during a major crackdown on political opposition to Bourguiba. He thus not only had former regime links but also a long anti-Islamist and authoritarian history.[71] Ennahda would have good reason to distrust and oppose Essebsi's premiership.

However, Ennahda was adroitly integrated into the TA under Essebsi. This was partly achieved through pre-existing social ties. Since 1984, through the Sahelien regional network, the former Tunisian Prime Minister, Hedi Baccouche, was connected to Hamedi Jebali, Ennahda's leader inside Tunisia, having met through Najib and Hamed Karoui.[72] Baccouche and Essebsi had

[70] Wolf, Anne (2017), *Political Islam in Tunisia: The History of Ennahda*. (London: Hurst Publishing), p.57.
[71] Boubekeur, "Islamists, Secularists and Old Regime Elites in Tunisia", p.111. Essebsi's role as suppressor of opposition was also highlighted in interview with Zuhoor Khorda Abid (Tunis, 14 July 2019).
[72] Interview with Seifeddine Trabelsi (via WhatsApp, 8 May 2020), WhatsApp communication with Abdelhamid Jlassi (24 March 2021); Baccouche, Hedi (2018), *En Toute Franchise* (Tunis: Sud Editions), p.471.

worked closely together since the 1950s.[73] Essebsi was also personally connected to prominent Ennahda leader, Abdelfattah Mourou, through the kinship network of the Tunis elite. Through these connections, Essebsi provided specific assurances to Ennahda that he would allow them to form an integral part of Tunisian political life.[74] Thus, pre-existing social ties between the Tunisian political class facilitated the beginning of trust-building between Ennahda and Essebsi.

However, social ties alone were not enough to integrate Ennahda into the TA. What was required was mutual dependence. Ennahda believed they could trust Essebsi because a mutual dependence existed between them: Ennahda felt that they could not govern directly without eliciting opposition from domestic and international forces;[75] Essebsi was attractive because Ennahda judged that he had no strong autonomous base of support and could therefore not usurp power.[76] This differentiated Essebsi from Baccouche, for example: "Essebsi had experience but he didn't scare Ennahda. Someone like Hedi Baccouche scares you. He could potentially decide to stay!"[77] Essebsi and Ennahda needed one another. Several interlocutors spoke to me of a confidential pact between Essebsi and Rached Ghannouchi. Some suggested that Essebsi had agreed to allow Ennahda to freely compete in the NCA elections, with the understanding that Essebsi would become president after 23 October 2011 should Ennahda win.[78] Others suggested that it was agreed that Essebsi would remain as prime minister.[79] This did not transpire, but the mutual dependence between Ennahda and Essesbi lasted through the transition and ensured the mutual recognition of political authority. Ennahda would steadfastly support Essebsi in most of his controversial decisions. For example, Ennahda was not part of the 70 members of the HIROR who signed a petition opposing the nomination of Habib Essid as Essebsi's Minister of Interior.[80]

Essebsi's political authority at this time rested not on his personal strength but paradoxically on his ability to command a broad base of support by not threatening and thereby alienating

[73] Baccouche, *En Toute Franchise.* Photos of Baccouche and Essebsi together. *No page numbers.*
[74] Interview with Seifeddine Trabelsi (via WhatsApp, 8 May 2020).
[75] Interviews with Abdelhamid Jlassi (Tunis, 25 June 2019), Samir Dilou (Tunis, 26 June 2019) and Zuhoor Khorda Abid (14 July 2019).
[76] Interviews with Walid Haddouk (via WhatsApp, 6 May 2020) and Seifeddine Trabelsi (via WhatsApp, 8 May 2020).
[77] Interview with Walid Haddouk (via WhatsApp, 6 May 2020).
[78] Interviews with Abdelhamid Jlassi (Tunis, 25 June 2019) and Samir Dilou (Tunis, 26 June 2019).
[79] Boubekeur, "Islamists, Secularists and Old Regime Elites in Tunisia", p.113.
[80] Bras and Gobe, "Légitimité et Révolution en Tunisie", p.11 and p.18.

key constituencies, including Ennahda. I have termed this characteristic his "valency": the ability to form alliances with others. Valency is distinct and often conflicting with so-called 'charisma' as a source of authority, as those with charisma are often polarising. As with Essebsi, I find that actors with high valency (i.e. those who are not strong polarising figures) are better able to assemble the broad coalitions necessary for effective authority-building in political transitions.

With Ennahda inside the governing coalition, the TA enjoyed the strong validation of the most organized and powerful political force in the country. Ennahda's position vis-à-vis the HIROR, however, was more complex as we shall see.

4.1.4 RCD

Despite its institutional capacities, the RCD did not organize a single major counter-protest during the revolution against Ben Ali. However, this points more to dissatisfaction within the party regarding the leadership of Ben Ali and his family, than a total collapse of party networks. The 'deep state' and the pillars of the regime did not disappear on 14 January 2011.

The RCD saw the departure of Ben Ali in much the same way that it perceived the departure of Bourguiba in 1987: an opportunity to rid itself of a sclerotic leader and his corrupt family. Mohamed Ghariyani, the then Secretary-General of the RCD, told me that the initial transitional plan was to remove Ben Ali and replace him with another figure from the regime, as it had in 1987.[81] With the failure of Ghannouchi's authority-building efforts, the RCD plan was disrupted, and the organization needed time to regroup.

Early in his tenure Essebsi undertook some actions which may have risked alienating the RCD. For example, on 7 March the decision was made to disband Ben Ali's hated 'political police',[82] and on 9 March a Tunisian court formally disbanded the RCD.[83] Prominent regime figures were arrested and prosecuted, and RCD property and assets were confiscated. As already noted, the most high-profile RCD members had already been expelled from the cabinet under Ghannouchi.

[81] Interview with Mohamed Ghariyani (Tunis, 1 July 2019).
[82] *BBC News*, "Tunisia Interim Leaders Dissolve Secret Police Agency" (7 March 2011); Interview with Ahmed Najib Chebbi (La Marsa, 6 July 2019).
[83] *BBC News*, "Tunisia Court Dissolves Ousted President's Party" (9 March 2011).

However, while they did not enjoy prominent ministerial roles, several former regime figures enjoyed newly restored access to PM Essebsi. The influence of those linked to the former regime was so great that several opposition figures feared that the TA was dominated by a 'shadow government' of those from the former regime.[84] Essebsi also appointed figures who had occupied less high-profile positions under the former regime into positions in the TA. Habib Essid, who had served as Permanent Secretary to the Minister of Interior from 1997 to 2001, was appointed as Minister of Interior for example. This move was calculated specifically to reassure the security services.

Moreover, closer examination of Essebsi's policies demonstrate that they represented a more surgical approach than a wholesale exclusion of the former regime. For example, while disbanding the political police, it was decided to keep the vast majority of Tunisia's estimated 49,000 police officers on the public payroll.[85] Similarly, Boubekeur identifies a reconciliatory approach to the former regime, noting that only 23 security officers were tried for attacks on civilians and, after May 2011 crimes committed before or during the revolution were tried by military courts which handed down short sentences. She adds that "only second-rank RCD members and businessmen were in fact tried for corruption; the majority of Ben Ali's close associates were allowed to exit the country".[86] Ennahda also pursued a strategy of conciliation and consensus-building with the former regime. For example, a series of discreet meetings were held by Ennahda with senior Ministry of Interior officials and officials from Tunisia's two main Police Unions in the summer of 2011 to reassure the security forces that an Ennahda electoral victory would not spell their dismissal or prosecution.[87] These moves mollified this potentially explosive constituency.

At the political level, the strategy of conciliation with the former regime also prevailed. Article 15 of the electoral law, which excluded senior regime officials from standing for the 2011 elections, for example, was relatively limited in targeting only senior regime figures. The total number of persons concerned was, according to some estimates, not more than 3,000 persons.[88]

[84] Interviews with Omar Mestiri (La Marsa, 3 July 2019), Gilbert Naccache (La Goulette, 18 July 2019), Zuhoor Khorda Abid (Tunis, 14 July 2019) and Ahlem Belhaj (La Marsa, 11 July 2019).
[85] Hanlon, Querine (2012), "Security Sector Reform in Tunisia: A Year after the Jasmine Revolution", *United States Institute of Peace Special Report No.304*, p.6.
[86] Boubekeur, "Islamists, Secularists and Old Regime Elites in Tunisia", pp.112-113.
[87] Hanlon, "Security Sector Reform in Tunisia", p.7.
[88] Interviews with Mustapha Tilili (Tunis 12 July 2019) and Mouldi Riahi (Tunis,11 July 2019). Riahi estimated that 2800 people were affected.

Other estimates place the figure at approximately 8,000 persons.[89] The head of the committee inside the HIROR charged with the application of Article 15, Mustapha Tilili, said, "We were not in a logic of revenge or eradication. We were not trying to tarnish the honour of people. We refused to make the list public, for example. We tried to rationalize the criteria. We permitted those excluded to defend themselves."[90] While such claims of fairness and justice are common in post-revolutionary contexts, in Tunisia these claims seem to have strong merits. Several leading figures from the former regime were allowed to establish political parties and contest the 2011 elections, for example. This included the *Moubadara* party of Kamel Morjane, former Minister of Defence and Foreign Affairs under Ben Ali, which won 5 seats in the NCA. Allowing them to compete, albeit through proxies, in the 2011 elections, ensured that the former regime constituency maintained an interest in the success of the transition and did not turn into spoilers. The former regime constituency thus had an interest in recognizing the political authority of the TA, and certainly not in challenging it.

Elements of the RCD were cognisant of the relative alignment of the administration with their long-term goals, and their interest in maintaining this administration lest a more radical one replace it. Mohamed Ghariyani stated that the HIROR was "the shock absorber of the revolution". Even Article 15 was viewed relatively favourably by RCD components: "The exclusion was to absorb tensions. We had to make sacrifices to ensure that there wasn't violence. Better to be excluded than to have 'popular justice.'"[91] Members of the opposition also felt that the HIROR was a mechanism to vitiate the most virulent anti-regime sentiments. Tilili echoed the view that "the creation of the HIROR was part of ensuring that radical claims were contained."[92] Ahlem Belhaj described the opposition as being "confined to barracks" (*caserner)* in the HIROR. Omar Mestiri also described the HIROR as a "shock absorber" of the revolution.[93]

For those associated with the former regime, the surgical approach to lustration, combined with the appointment of Essebsi (and Habib Essid as Minister of Interior), was reassuring. They began to suspect that the transition was not fundamentally inimical to their interests. This

[89] Lieckefett, "La Haute Instance et les Elections en Tunisie*"*, p.138.
[90] Interview with Mustapha Tilili (Tunis, 12 July 2019).
[91] Interview with Mohamed Ghariyani (Tunis, 1 July 2019).
[92] Interview with Mustapha Tilili (Tunis, 12 July 2019).
[93] Interview with Omar Mestiri (La Marsa, 3 July 2019).

encouraged them, if not to actively support the new authorities, then to withhold their opposition. Thus, the TA sidestepped the risk of the RCD challenging their political authority.

4.1.5 Conclusion

The governing coalition which backed the TA of Beji Caid Essebsi was far more inclusive than that assembled by Ghannouchi, and contained the principal organized political forces in the country, including Ennahda, the UGTT and the radical left. This enlargement was secured while maintaining the support of the secular elite and the non-opposition of the RCD. Essebsi's ability to form a such broad coalition was a result of his personal valency, which was itself a function of his perceived weakness, as well as the pre-existing ties between the components of the TA described in Chapter 3.

The inclusiveness of the TA was a source of legitimacy according to many. As Chebbi told me, "the legitimacy of the transitional administration came from its representivity".[94] This was echoed by others who said that the legitimacy of the TA stemmed from the fact that "everyone was there".[95] In accordance with my theory, increasing the breadth of the TA provoked a concomitant increase in the authority it enjoyed.

However, as we have seen, the views of some constituencies clearly weighed more than others within the HIROR. This was reflected not only in the revised composition of the HIROR, which favoured hierarchical political organizations over diffuse constituencies, but also in the manner that decisions, such as the adoption of the Declaration on the Transitional Process, were taken. Decisions in the HIROR were, according to one member, the "fruit of a political accord…the result of a compromise between all the parties, all the political tendencies, and those who had the power, who had arms."[96] The inclusion of major political forces inside the HIROR and the augmentation of their influence within this institution encouraged their recognition of its authority; they saw the HIROR as a vehicle for advancing their interests and were invested in its success. Thus, it was also the depth of inclusivity of the TA, which included strong national organizations well anchored among the population, which ensured the smooth recognition of the TA's political authority.

[94] Interview with Ahmed Najib Chebbi (La Marsa, 6 July 2019); Khadija Sherif said "the HIROR drew its legitimacy from its composition" in interview with Khadija Sherif (Sidi Bou Said, 4 July 2019).
[95] Interviews with Saida Garrache (Carthage, 17 July 2019) and Tarek Ben Hiba (Tunis, 28 June 2019).
[96] Interview with Tarek Ben Hiba (Tunis, 28 June 2019).

The TA under Essebsi enjoyed a high degree of political authority because it was composed of a broad coalition of hierarchical politicised organizations with strong roots in the Tunisian society.

4.2 Absence of an alternative coalition

With such a formidably broad coalition composed of the strongest organizations in the country, my theory suggests that other constituencies should at least accord weak validation to the TA, irrespective of their belief in the correctness of the administration, because they see no interest in ineffectually contesting its authority. This holds true in the case of Tunisia. The legal opposition largely continued to recognize the authority of Essebsi's TA despite their weakened position, much like the secular elite. The *Muhammashin* were also unable to mount an effective challenge to the TA's authority, with parts of this constituency recognizing the authority of the transitional regime.

As was shown in Chapter 3, the final death knell for Ghannouchi's authority-building project came with the emergence of a viable alternative governing coalition in the form of the NCPR to contest the authority of his TA. The coalition backing Essebsi was far more inclusive than that developed by Ghannouchi, leaving fewer potential constituencies to form the core of a competing coalition for political authority. No viable coalition to contest the authority of the TA under Essebsi emerged.

Theoretically, the *Muhammashin* were the most likely constituency to form the core of an alternative to Essebsi's governing coalition: they were not represented in the government and had a negligible presence in the HIROR. They were therefore not invested in the success of these institutions. However, the socio-institutional weaknesses of the *Muhammashin*, accentuated by explicit government policies, prevented such a coalition from emerging.

Ennahda and the legal opposition had a shared interest in early elections, which differentiated these two constituencies from the other members of the governing coalition, namely the radical left, secular elite and RCD. These diverging interests may have led Ennahda and the legal opposition to create a competing claimant for political authority. However, they did not. As noted earlier, Ennahda and the legal opposition did contest the authority of the HIROR in the summer of 2011, withdrawing from the body in protest at the postponement of the elections. However, in a classic case of path dependency: high start-up costs combined with uncertainty about the benefits of an alternative system disincentivized Ennahda and the legal opposition

from attempting to create an alternative TA. Thus, the legal opposition and Ennahda continued to recognize the authority of the TA, while exerting limits on its authority under the terms of the Declaration on the Transitional Process.

4.2.1 The Muhammashin

The *Muhammashin*'s potential to contest the political authority of Essebsi's TA, as they had contested the authority of Ghannouchi's administration, was diminished by the challenges of fragmentation, weak institutionalization and entropic demobilization.

During PM Ghannouchi's tenure, the *Muhammashin* formulated their policy prescriptions in negative terms ("Ghannouchi must go.", "No to the Former regime", "No to the 1959 Constitution".) Once these objectives had been obtained, the obfuscated ideological differences within the constituency were laid bare, and they were unable to articulate a coherent political programme.[97] Leading social activist, Abdelrahman Hatheeli, told me that "The people in the street were poor. The martyrs and injured of the revolution were from the poorer classes. They cannot have a political programme; they simply have direct demands."[98] The lack of a political programme produced fragmentation of the coalition and subsequently led to either absorption into existing political parties, notably Ennahda and CPR,[99] a return to action on parochial local concerns, or a focus on extra-institutional activism.[100] Zemni describes this process as the "gradual unravelling of 'the people' as a unitary actor."[101]

The *Muhammashin* had not enjoyed the benefits of the process of dialogue enjoyed by constituent parties of the 18 October coalition, through which the spectrum of opposition parties established shared goals and articulated a programme, while developing interpersonal social ties between leaders. The truncated timeline of the revolution precluded the establishment of strong interpersonal ties and the emergence of a recognized leadership.[102] The *Muhammashin's* renewed focus on extra-institutional activism and local concerns was driven by a generalized

[97] Interview with Ahmed Najib Chebbi (La Marsa, 6 July 2019).
[98] Interview with Abdelrahman Hatheeli (Tunis, 8 July 2019).
[99] Interview with Seifeddine Trabelsi (via WhatsApp, 8 May 2020).
[100] Interview with Layla Riahi (via WhatsApp, 9 May 2020).
[101] Zemni, Sami (2015), "The Extraordinary Politics of the Tunisian Revolution: The Process of Constitution Making", *Mediterranean Politics* (Vol. 20, No.1), p.10.
[102] Yaghi, Mohammad (2018), "Why did Tunisian and Egyptian Youth Activists Fail to Build Competitive Political Parties?" in Cavatorta, Francesco and Lise Storm, eds., *Political Parties in the Arab World: Continuity and Change* (Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press), p.319.

distain for formal politics,[103] and a feeling of impotence at the national political level. As political analyst and activist, Walid Haddouk, reported to me:

> You can mobilize in your village against corruption or against repression. But not for representation in parliament. In the imagination of the people, those elected are people in Tunis, people who are on TV, those who have a political/media legitimacy. Those who are not part of this sphere will not be effective in parliament, because they are not integrated in the political system. Even practically speaking, they don't live in Tunis, they don't know anyone in Tunis. How can they be effective? How can they even stay there?[104]

Attempts to institutionalize the *Muhammashin* such as the New Generation Youth Movement (NYGM), and the Coalition for the Youth of the Revolution (CYR), failed to garner significant momentum.[105] Neither party secured representation in the HIROR, nor in the elected NCA. Without formal institutionalized representation, the *Muhammashin* were unable to press their demands. As Tarrow notes generally: "Movements are not based on networks alone; without some degree of formal organization, movements frequently fade away or dissipate their energies".[106] Without formal organizations, the *Muhammashin* were unable to form a viable alternative governing coalition to contest the TA's authority, or to even demand inclusion into the TA.

As noted earlier, the TA also successfully mollified (or co-opted) the leaders of the *Muhammashin* through the *Amel* programme. Many of those newly employed in the public sector were from the ranks of the *Muhammashin*.[107] Sofian Ben Ramadan, former Vice-President of the Salafist *Jabhat Al-Islah,* for example, was working in the public administration when I met him, having been hired following the revolution.[108] This co-option of their putative leadership demobilized the movement.[109] This demobilization was accelerated by the limited financial resources of the *Muhammashin,* and the physical distance between the social bases of

[103] *Ibid.* p.322.
[104] Interview with Walid Haddouk (via WhatsApp, 6 May 2020).
[105] Yaghi, "Why did Tunisian and Egyptian Youth Activists Fail to Build Competitive Political Parties?", p.319.
[106] Tarrow, Sidney (2011), *Power in Movement: Social movements and Contentious Politics* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p.124.
[107] *Business News,* "Tunisie: Déblocage des Subventions pour 127 Mille Chomeurs dans les Prochains Jours" (4 April 2011).
[108] Prior to the revolution he was in prison on terrorism charges. Interview with Sofian Ben Ramadan (Tunis, 18 July 2019).
[109] Interview with Layla Riahi (via WhatsApp, 9 May 2020).

these groups in the Tunisian interior and the capital. As highlighted in the above quote, it was not feasible for activists from Tunisia's interior to spend prolonged periods in Tunis.[110] Without institutionalized networks, the *Muhammashin* could not sustain their mobilization.

Thus, by early April the *Muhammashin* had demobilized or begun to focus on more parochial concerns. They were no longer a viable pole to contest the authority of the TA. The Kasbah III protest of July 2011 was emblematic of the diminished mobilization capacity of the *Muhammashin*. The protests only drew a few hundred people and were quickly quashed without consequence.[111]

4.2.2 Withdrawal from the HIROR

Those who had the most to lose from the shift from PM Ghannouchi to Essebsi were the parties of the former legal opposition. Firstly, the decision in *Décret-Loi No.14* of 23 March to prohibit ministers in the interim government from running for election forced the parties to relinquish the ministerial posts they had acquired under PM Ghannouchi. More importantly, the legal opposition, particularly the PDP, believed it had a strong interest in early elections. Chebbi calculated that he would be likely to prevail in early presidential elections (under the 1959 constitution), due to his personal name recognition and the fact that Ennahda would not have time to re-establish their organizational presence on the ground.[112] PM Ghannouchi had planned to hold elections by 24 July 2011[113] but PM Essebsi decided on 3 March to abandon the option of organizing a presidential election according to Article 57 of the 1959 Constitution and instead opted for the election of the NCA.

Ennahda's position evolved over the course of the transition. In the beginning their position was reinforced by the creation of the HIROR: for the first time in their history, they were formally represented in the institutions of government. During April this representation increased. When Ennahda entered the HIROR, they held one seat out of a total of 72 seats. Their official representation subsequently rose to three seats by 5 April, along with the increase secured by all political parties represented in the HIROR. In addition to this official representation, Ennahda successfully lobbied for affiliated CSOs and 'national personalities'

[110] Interview with Walid Haddouk (via WhatsApp, 6 May 2020).
[111] *Tuniscope*, "Kasbah 3 est Illegitime, il est Orchestré par des Extremists qui Veulent Freiner les Élections" (6 March 2018); *Business News*. "Kasbah 3 : les Raisons d'un Échec Annoncé" (18 July 2011).
[112]Interviews with Mustapha Ben Jaafar (Gammarth, 24 June 2019), Omeyya Seddik (Sidi Bou Said, 14 July 2019) and Ramadani Massoud (Tunis, 10 July 2019).
[113] Ben Ashour and Ben Ashour, "La Transition Démocratique en Tunisie", p.719.

to be included, such as the *Association Internationale de Soutien aux Prisonniers Politiques* (AISPP), the *Association Liberté et Equité*, and Ridha Bettaieb and Néjib Achouri, who represented Tunisians abroad.[114] Despite this increase, Ennahda's representation in the HIROR did not correspond to their presumed popular weight. Ennahda accepted this because at the time they felt that "…the simple fact of being allowed to participate was extraordinary."[115]

However, by mid-May 2011 Ennahda had begun to re-establish its electoral machinery,[116] and polling was suggesting that they would receive the greatest number of votes in the upcoming elections.[117] As Ennahda's strength became evident, Ennahda's preferences evolved: they began to favour earlier elections and a more limited role for the HIROR in the transitional phase. Still Ennahda and the parties of the legal opposition agreed to integrate into the HIROR, assuming their allocated seats. This allowed them to participate in the elaboration of the legislation vital for the organization of the elections, namely the electoral law (*Decrèt-Loi No. 35*) and the law establishing the ISIE (*Decrèt-Loi No.27*). However, once this legislation was adopted, these parties saw little interest in the HIROR continuing to have broad authority and decision-making powers. Rather, Ennahda and the legal opposition saw an interest in limiting the authority of the HIROR and moving to elections.

The ISIE was appointed by the HIROR on 9 May 2011. When it began its work in mid-May, it quickly ascertained that the proposed date of 24 July was utterly unrealistic for logistical, technical and organizational reasons, and announced on 24 May that the elections would need to be delayed. The delay precipitated a major crisis in the HIROR. The PDP suspended their participation on 30 May, and Ennahda followed suit. [118] By withdrawing from the HIROR in protest at the postponement of the elections, these parties signalled the contingency of their authority recognition of the TA. This decision was motivated by their view that the TA was unnecessarily prolonging the transition to the advantage of their opponents.

[114] Interview with Seifeddine Trabelsi (via WhatsApp, 8 May 2020); Ayari, Michael (2016), *Le Prix de L'engagement Politique dans la Tunisie Autoritaire : Gauchistes et Islamistes sous Bourguiba et Ben Ali (1957-2011)* (Paris: Karthala), p.290; Geisser, Vincent and Eric Gobe. "Un si Long Règne…le Regime de Ben Ali Vignt Ans Après", *L'Année du Maghreb*, CNRS Éditions, p.21. Samir Dilou was also included in the original membership of the HIROR as the representative of the *Association Internationale de Soutien aux Prisonniers Politiques* (AISPP).
[115] Interview with Samir Dilou (Tunis, 26 June 2019).
[116] Interview with Abdelhamid Jlassi (Tunis, 25 June 2019).
[117] International Republican Institute (2011), *Survey of Tunisian Public Opinion: May 14-27, 2011*.
[118] Ben Achour, *Tunisie*, p.122.

This crisis was resolved following the intervention of PM Essebsi, who held a "national conference" on 8 June, and proposed the date of 23 October for the elections.[119] However, tensions remained and the respite was short-lived. Ennahda again withdrew from the HIROR along with the CPR and the Party for Reform and Development on 15 June, during a debate on the political party law. These parties again felt the HIROR was overstepping its political authority and tying the hands of a future elected assembly.

Further underlining the connection between composition and authority, the withdrawal of these parties was sufficient to hamstring the HIROR. Without a broad and inclusive political base, the HIROR did not feel they had the authority to propose legislation. No legislation was proposed by the HIROR between 10 May and 24 September 2011.

It was only when it seemed in doubt that elections would be able to be held on 23 October 2011 that the political parties agreed to return to the HIROR and move ahead. They did so only after clearly delimiting the political authority of the HIROR through the Declaration on the Transitional Process. As described above, the Declaration on the Transitional Process was elaborated in an informal parallel process between the principal political parties and adopted as a *sui generis* agreement between 11 political parties outside of the formal transitional governance framework.

However, Ennahda and the parties of the legal opposition did agree to return to the HIROR, curtailing but not fundamentally contesting the authority of this TA. Why? Gobé and Bras describe, "the game of permanent equilibrium which the Nahdaouis engage in vis-à-vis the HIROR: it was useful to them up to a certain point, in particular to limit the government's actions, but they neither wish it too legitimate, nor too decisive."[120] The other established political parties adopted a similar position.

The initial recognition of the authority of the HIROR by these parties set up a path dependent process whereby the HIROR became the most viable vehicle for the realization of the parties' goal of elections. The parties and the HIROR were thus mutually dependent: the HIROR needed the parties to constitute its authority, and the parties needed the HIROR to reach their goal of democratic elections. Although the parties did not think the HIROR was perfectly

[119] Republique Tunisienne, *Conférence de Presse de Mr Béji Caïd Essebsi du 8 juin 2011,* available at : http://www.pm.gov.tn/pm/channelvideo/video.php?id=26&lang=fr&.
[120] Bras and Gobe, "Légitimité et Révolution en Tunisie", p.18.

aligned with their interests there was no viable alternative. The benefits of an alternative system were uncertain and the set-up cost prohibitively high. For Ennahda in particular, they were believed to have felt that "the train was leaving the station and they wanted to be on board"[121] and "it is better to be in the game than on the margins"[122]. Ennahda representatives felt that "the policy of the empty chair leads nowhere."[123] Ennahda and the parties of the legal opposition sought to limit the authority of the HIROR but could not risk destroying its authority. Their initial recognition of the TA's authority, through both active participation in the deliberations of the HIROR and vocal support for the decisions adopted by the institution on the elections, created a path dependency which tied the parties to the TA.

The crisis over the summer of 2011 highlights both the way in which the authority of a TA is a function of its composition as well as highlighting the limits on authority contestation created by initial authority recognition. The withdrawal of key parties from the TA reduced its inclusivity and produced a resultant reduction in its authority: without Ennahda and the other legal opposition parties inside, the TA, by its own admission, did not have the authority to adopt legislation. Ennahda and the other parties could not, however, simply establish a new TA. Their initial investment ensured that the TA remained the most viable vehicle for the realization of their goals.

4.2.3 Other emerging constituencies

The position of Essebsi's TA as the only viable avenue to democratic elections also precipitated the weak validation of the TA by groups in an even worse position than Ennahda and the legal opposition. *Jabhat al-Islah*, the Salafist political party were not represented in the HIROR, and the Essebsi government twice denied them the legal status required to run for the 2011 election based on national security grounds.[124]

However, although they did not recognize the correctness of the TA, they nevertheless accorded the institution weak validation. For example, by formally requesting legal authorization to compete in elections, they implicitly recognized the TA's authority. Sofian Ben Ramadan, the Salafi leader, told me that "the Tunisia of Essebsi and Ben Ashour was not our Tunisia; it is your [westernized] Tunisia. Given Ben Ashour's position at the head of this

[121] Interview with Zuhoor Khorda Abid (Tunis, 14 July 2019).
[122] Interview with Saida Garrache (Carthage, 17 July 2019).
[123] Interview with Samir Dilou (Tunis, 26 June 2019).
[124] Zelin, Aaron (2012), "Who is Jabhat al-Islah?", *Carnegie Endowment for International peace*; Interview with Sofian Ben Ramadan (Tunis, 18 July 2019).

institution we were not at ease…but the essential thing was that they organized the elections. For us the elections were the most important."[125] This constituency was excluded from the TA. However, they evaluated that it was counterproductive to challenge the institution at this juncture, rather than wait for the elections, and therefore granted the TA weak validation.

Here weak validation created by the recognition of the TA's authority by key constituencies. The prospects of successfully challenging the authority of the transitional government were low, due to the broadly inclusive coalition united inside the TA, and the wider public support it enjoyed; the potential risks of contestation were high, including imprisonment and the denial of the right to participate in the elections. Given these calculations (and the presumably temporary nature of the authorities), constituencies such as *Jabhat Al-Islah* deemed it apposite to tacitly recognize the authority of the institution. This example illustrates how inclusivity need not be absolute to achieve successful authority recognition, as long as a critical mass of the society's principal socio-political constituencies are represented in the TA.

4.2.4 Conclusion

The TA of Essebsi was able to consolidate its political authority by building a sufficiently broad base that other parties felt was unassailable and therefore accorded it weak validation. Even as the interests of parties diverged from the goals of the TA, the administration retained their support because there was no viable alternative governing coalition to contest its authority.

However, the composite members of the TA could limit its authority by withdrawing their participation, as Ennahda and some parties of the legal opposition did during the summer of 2011. This withdrawal undermined the authority of the HIROR to such a degree that it could not continue with its core legislative functions until these parties returned. This example further highlights how political authority is a clear function of the composition of the TA.

5. Conclusion

PM Ghannouchi failed to build a sufficient coalition to support his government. His efforts to bolster his authority through legal-rational means, populist policies, the use of charismatic and traditional leaders, and the use of force therefore failed. At the same time the NCPR emerged as an embryonic alternative governing coalition to contest the authority of Ghannouchi's government, bringing together Ennahda, the illegal left and the UGTT, along with CSOs.

[125] Interview with Sofian Ben Ramadan (Tunis, 18 July 2019).

This need not have been the case: Tunisia enjoyed an important advantage in the process of authority-building due to the long-term presence of institutionalized *gesellschaft* networks for collective decision-making and interest aggregation. Unlike many authoritarian contexts, Tunisian society was not atomized and, even if supressed or co-opted, national organizations existed, including Ennahda and the UGTT, as well as the RCD. These deep-rooted organizations provided the necessary building-blocks for Essebsi's TA. These organizations brought the necessary depth to the TA, allowing it to successfully establish its political authority.

The TA successfully married the coalition behind the NCPR and the coalition backing Ghannouchi, thus securing its authority to govern. Essebsi was able to do this despite his lack of revolutionary credentials or input legitimacy. It was Essebsi's personal 'valency', rather than his charismatic leadership qualities, that allowed him to unite such a broad coalition. Essebsi was deemed unthreatening by Ennahda and reassuring by the RCD, and was thus able to bring both into his governing coalition. Ironically, Essebsi in 2011 (in contrast to the role he played in 2014) was a weak, unifying leader: such a figure had, Chouikha and Gobe have noted, been wanting since the mid-2000s amidst the competition between the charismatic leaders of the political opposition: Najib Chebbi, Mustapha Ben Jaafar and Rached Ghannouchi.[126]

As many of Tunisia's political leaders highlighted, it was the inclusivity of the HIROR which generated its political authority to legislate, but this was not a popular inclusivity. It was rather a representativeness of the principal organized political forces of the nation. By mid-April, the composition of the HIROR rebalanced, against the secular elite, in favour of organized political forces, including the UGTT, securing the strong validation of these hierarchical national organizations. The composition of the TA was thus sufficiently inclusive to secure its political authority.

A shift in the balance of power of the governing coalition precipitated a crisis of legitimacy in the summer of 2011. Ennahda had strengthened and re-established its organizational structures and was thus able to be more assertive in its demands in return for recognition of the TA's authority. When Ennahda withdrew from the TA, the authority of the TA was so reduced that

[126] Chouikha, Larbi and Eric Gobe (2009), "La Tunisie entre la « Révolte du Bassin Minier de Gafsa » et L'échéance Électorale de 2009", *L'Année du Maghreb*, CNRS Editions, p.14. Also interview with Ahmed Najib Chebbi (La Marsa, 6 July 2019).

it ceased taking decisions. A shift in the TA's composition clearly precipitated a shift in its authority.

This crisis was resolved by a small clique of political leaders, demonstrating the importance of these structured political groupings to successful authority-building. However, the relatively limited nature of Ennahda's contestation of the HIROR's authority is indicative of the path dependency I have identified. The uncertain benefits and high start-up costs for Ennahda (and other established political parties) of attempting to build an alternative system encouraged the negotiation of a political compromise in the form of the Declaration on the Transitional Process.

The *Muhammashin* were the losers of the struggle for post-revolutionary power. This was a result of their weak organizational structures and the absence of intra-group social ties. They were thus never able to form an alternative governing coalition to contest the authority of the TA under Essebsi.

Chapter 5: The National Transitional Council of Libya

1. Introduction

The story of the political transition in Libya is messier and less clear cut than the process witnessed in Tunisia. This is a product of the context of civil war in which the TA in Libya was established, as well as the unique sociology of Libya itself.

The Libyan revolution which would eventually end the 42-year regime of Muammar Qaddafi began on 15 February 2011. Cognisant of the need for an interlocutor for the international community and an administration to run the 'liberated' areas of the country, revolutionaries quickly established the National Transitional Council (NTC) on 26 February.

The TA in Libya enjoyed none of the advantages of the TA in Tunisia. The country had almost no extant national networks for collective decision-making and interest aggregation, and the *gemeinschaft* structures of family, clan and tribe had been highly politicized during the Qaddafi regime. Elites residing inside Libya were largely disconnected from one another and those outside the country did not enjoy strong roots inside. Qaddafi sought to cling to office and drew the country into a bloody civil war which would last for 9 months until his death on 20 October 2011. These factors complicated the process of the TA's construction of a sufficiently inclusive coalition to allow it to establish its authority.

However, despite this difficult beginning, the NTC was able to quickly establish itself as the political voice of the revolution during the first half of 2011. Following the regime's retreat from the East the NTC served as the *de facto* authority in Cyrenaica, as Eastern Libya is known.[1] The NTC's authority was always weak and contingent, but it was nonetheless relatively uncontested in this period, despite the challenges the NTC faced in providing services to the population and the proximity of some of its members to the former regime.

After closely examining alternative explanations offered by the existing literature, I conclude that both the weakness and the strength of the NTC can be explained by its socio-political composition. The pre-existing social fragmentation of Libya, combined with the ongoing conflict, complicated the process of the NTC's authority-building but also rendered the creation of a viable alternative impossible. The NTC assembled a coalition of the most organized socio-institutional components in Eastern Libya at this time, bringing together a vanguard of civil society activists, representatives of Eastern tribes, elements of the former regime, and the

[1] Also known as *Barqa* by some Libyans.

Islamist political opposition. It thus brought together both the best organized and the most deeply rooted socio-political structures in the society.

Its representation of Western (and Southern) Libyans was far more *ad-hoc* and piecemeal. The process of expansion of the NTC to include Western Libyans failed to adequately represent the dominant socio-institutional structures in Western Libya. This explains the geographic variation in the NTC's political authority, and, as I shall demonstrate in the following chapter, explains the challenges the NTC faced once the revolution was won and the NTC relocated to Tripoli.

2. Context

2.1 A shaky regime

The Libyan revolution took place against the backdrop of revolution and regime change in Libya's immediate neighbours: Ben Ali was forced from power in Tunisia on 14 January, and Mubarak resigned on 11 February 2011 in Egypt. The Qaddafi regime anticipated similar unrest in Libya but planned to weather the storm through a combination of largesse and repression. Beginning in January 2011, Qaddafi personally conducted 'public consultations', announced salary increases, and showered tribal elders with gifts for their loyalty; he simultaneously ordered the security presence in historically restive Cyrenaica increased, and issued threats that tribes would bear collective responsibility for any actions of their members against the state.[2]

Qaddafi had faced previous challenges to his regime: some challenges, such as Omar Meheishi's 1975 coup attempt, came from within the regime, others such as the unrest in the 1980s, stemmed from popular frustration with the regime's economic policies and international isolation. Some plots were foreign-backed, including the 1993 mutiny by officers from Bani Walid, others were homegrown, such as the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG)'s November 1996 assassination attempt.[3] However, 2011 was different: the mirage of invulnerability had been broken by the successful ouster of Ben Ali and Mubarak, and hopes that the regime would reform under the leadership of Qaddafi's son, Seif Al-Islam, had faded. Like in Tunisia, in the last decade of his reign, Qaddafi's family had been engaged in increasingly economic predatory behaviour and monopolized political power, which alienated

[2] Pargeter, Alison (2012), *Libya: The Rise and Fall of Qaddafi* (New Haven: Yale University Press), pp.217-218.
[3] For descriptions of the various coup attempts, mutinies, and uprisings from 1975-2011 see Pargeter, *Libya*, pp.158-160 and p.169; St John, Ronald Bruce (2008), *Libya: From Colony to Independence* (Oxford: Oneworld Publications), pp. 221-224.

even the most loyal regime supporters. Qaddafi elevated his sons and members of his own tribe, the Qadadhfa, and side-lined long-term supporters.[4] Qaddafi could no longer depend on his deep personal popularity: his regime had lost its mass appeal and depended on an increasingly narrow base of support.

2.2 Days of rage

On 15 February 2011 the regime pre-emptively arrested lawyer and activist Fathi Terbil in Benghazi in a misjudged attempt to forestall the 'day of rage' planned for 17 February. Protests calling for Terbil's release ensued, leading to clashes between the regime and protesters. Over the next days, other Libyan towns and cities erupted in protest: in Zintan (Tripolitania) and Al-Bayda (Cyrenaica) on 16 February, Derna (Cyrenaica) on 17 February; in the Nafusa mountains (Tripolitania) on 18 February; Misrata (Tripolitania) on 19 February; and the capital of Tripoli on 20 February.[5] The pattern was one of protest, regime repression, and further protest mobilization around the funerals of those killed, as seen in other revolutionary contexts.[6]

On 20 February, protesters in Benghazi seized the base of the Fadhil Bu Omar brigade, following the evacuation of much of the base's troops. The same day the commander of the Tobruk military region, General Suleiman Mahmoud Obeidi, defected. The regime signalled its refusal to accede to any of the protesters' demands, with Qaddafi giving a violent speech on 22 February in which he vowed to "cleanse Libya house by house".[7] This defiance prompted the Minister of Interior, General Abdelfattah Younes to announce his defection. General Younes was subsequently appointed head of the revolutionary military forces, with another former regime figure, Omar Hariri, as his deputy. With these developments, the regime lost control over Cyrenaica. By 24 February, the regime had also lost control of the western coastal cities of Zawiya and Zwara, as well as much of the Nafusa Mountains region.

As the regime's decision to deploy outright repression became clear, high-level regime officials abroad also defected, such as the former Foreign Minister and Libyan Ambassador to the UN,

[4] ICG (2011), *Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East (V): Making Sense of Libya*, Middle East/North Africa Report No.107, p.2. Qaddafi began to side-line the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) as early as 1975 when he foiled Meheishi's coup attempt. Vandewalle, Dirk (2012), *A History of Modern Libya (2nd Edition)* (New York: Cambridge university press), pp.99-104.
[5] Lacher, Wolfram (2020), *Libya's Fragmentation: Structure and Process in Violent Conflict* (London: I.B. Tauris). pp.19-21.
[6] Notably Iran. Kurzman, Charles (2004), *The Unthinkable Revolution in Iran* (London: Harvard University Press).
[7] *BBC News*, "Libya Protests: Defiant Gaddafi Refuses to Quit" (22 February 2011).

Abdelrahman Shalgam, and Libyan Ambassador to India, Ali Issawi. Many of these figures had long established ties with the regime but would go on to play central roles in the TA.

Those who defected were closely linked to other members of the emerging revolutionary leadership,[8] but they were also embedded within their *gemeinschaft* networks inside Libya. Shalgam noted that patterns of defection tended to mimic tribal affiliation inside Libya, and that the decision to defect was often undertaken in consultation with one's tribe. He cited the example of Ajeli Brini, the Ambassador to Spain, who announced his intention to defect to Shalgam, before backtracking as it became clear that his tribe in Warshafana would remain loyal to the regime.[9] Lacher also notes that "political mobilization and military organization largely occurred along tribal or local lines."[10]

2.3 The National Transitional Council (NTC)

With the regime losing control of the East and defections gathering pace, the first revolutionary structures began to be established. In Benghazi, a group of lawyers, academics and professionals formed the 17 February Coalition on 20 February. Although the 17 February Coalition formed spontaneously, the members of the coalition had pre-existing social ties established through a number of political and professional activities from 2006 onwards. Most members of the February 17 coalition were legal professionals and university professors from Benghazi.

The February 17 Coalition created a Benghazi local council to ensure the smooth running of the newly liberated city on 22 February. Other similar 'local councils' were created in other liberated areas around the same time: for example, Zintan created a committee for the defense of the city on 19 February and Al-Bayda formed a local council on 21 February.[11]

One of the founders of the February 17 Coalition, Mehdi Kashbour, noted that in most other areas in the East, local councils were composed of tribal notables, rather than the professional middle classes, as in Benghazi.[12] In many cases, however, these categories overlapped: for example, Mustapha Abdeljalil, was made head of Al-Bayda's local council as soon as he

[8] Shalgam had known Jibril since 1971. Interview with Abdelrahman Shalgam (Rome, 7 January 2019).
[9] Mlegta noted a similar process of tribal mobilization. Interview with Abdelmajid Mlegta (Geneva, 2 November 2019). Shalgam also noted exceptions, for example, Ali Maria, the Libyan Ambassador to Egypt, remained loyal to the regime, although his tribe (the Obeidat) sided with the revolution. Interview with Abdelrahman Shalgam (Rome, 7 January 2019).
[10] Lacher, Wolfram (2011), "Families, Tribes and Cities in the Libyan Revolution", *Middle East Policy* (Vol. 18, no 4), p.140.
[11] Lacher, *Libya's Fragmentation*, p.20.
[12] Interview with Mehdi Kashbour (Istanbul, 29 September 2020).

defected from the regime. Abdeljalil was a tribal notable, but he was also a respected judge, Qaddafi's Minister of Justice, and a well-known former professional footballer.[13]

On the 17 February coalition, Bartu notes that "as similar entities formed elsewhere, this group saw the need for a national body to represent all Libyans and invited representatives from other cities in the east to come to Benghazi to discuss this…On 26 February an agreement was reached to bring the local councils under a national council to run the liberated areas in the east" and the NTC was born.[14] The initial conception of the NTC was as an aggregation of local councils from the liberated areas of the country.

Mustapha Abdeljalil, Qaddafi's former Justice minister, was selected as the Chairman of the NTC. Abdelhafiz Ghoga, a prominent lawyer and member of a notable Benghazi family, was selected as his deputy. Immediately after the announcement of the NTC by Abdeljalil on *Al-Jazeera*, rebels in Misrata and Zintan announced their support for the body. Other 'liberated' areas of Western Libya also followed suit.[15] Some NTC members claim they were surprised by Abdeljalil's announcement, as agreement had not yet been reached on the structure and composition of the body, but with support flowing in they decided to accept Abdeljalil's *fait accompli*.[16]

The NTC initially had 11 members representing Cyrenaican cities. However, more than half of the original members were from Benghazi, including members representing "Youth", "Women" and "Political Prisoners".[17] Cognisant of the risk of being characterized by the regime as a separatist movement, the NTC announced that it would be composed of 30 members with seats reserved for the West and South of the country. At the beginning this was an aspirational goal, but efforts were made to expand the NTC to incorporate members from other regions of the country. It was not until May 2011, however, that the NTC was able to begin to fill the majority of seats for Western and Southern Libya and balance the representation on the TA. By 14 May, when Abdeljalil invited a delegation of figures from the

[13] Interviews with Mustapha Abdeljalil (Montreux, 1 November 2019) and Othman Magarhi (via Zoom, 19 October 2020).
[14] Bartu, Peter (2015), "The Corridors of Uncertainty: The National Transitional Council's Battle for Legitimacy and Recognition", in Cole, Peter and Brian McQuinn, eds., *The Libyan Revolution and its Aftermath* (London: Hurst), p.35.
[15] Interviews with Mohamed Montassir (Istanbul, 30 September 2020), Mohamed Saad (Istanbul, 28 March 2022) and Abdelrazak Madi (via WhatsApp, 12 October 2020).
[16] Interviews with Abdelhafidh Ghoga (Tunis, 18 July 2019), Hana Gallal (via Whatsapp, 26 November 2020), Mohamed Saad (Istanbul, 28 March 2022) and Intissar Aghili (Istanbul, 30 September 2020).
[17] See Annex 5.

West and South of the country to join the TA, the NTC consisted of representatives of sixteen towns from across Libya.[18]

Unlike in the other cases, foreign pressure and support were critical in this process of expansion. Guma Gamaty, one of the NTC's international 'Ambassadors', told me that "representativity was essential for our international credibility. The Americans, British and French were always asking if the NTC was representative of all Libya."[19] The NTC's Secretary General, Othman Ben Sassi, also said "inclusivity was a precondition for recognition."[20] Qatar and the UAE arranged for opposition activists to be flown to Benghazi, particularly from Western Libya.[21] Unlike the initial members, who had been nominated by their local council, this process was abandoned for those arriving at this time.[22] As we shall see, this new cohort therefore tended to be less 'representative' of their communities than those who had been nominated previously.

The total membership of the NTC eventually rose to 107 members.[23] Ostensibly, the expansion was driven by the demand for representation on the council proportionate to population, rather than the equal regional representation initially envisaged.[24] Although, as I shall demonstrate, the application of any rules related to membership and composition was flexible and context-dependent.

2.4 The Executive Office

On 5 March, the NTC held its first meeting and announced itself as "the sole national representative of Libya with all its social and political strata and all its geographical regions".[25] At the same time, the NTC announced the creation of a transitional government, known as the Executive Office.

The Executive Office was headed by Mahmoud Jibril, a prominent technocrat who had spearheaded Seif Al-Islam's ill-fated reform programme. Jibril was from Benghazi but was a member of Libya's largest tribe, the Warfalla, which is located primarily in Western Libya

[18] See Annex 5. Bartu puts the figure at twenty-three. Bartu, "Corridors of Uncertainty", p.42.
[19] Interview with Guma Gamaty (London, 4 December 2018).
[20] Interview with Othman Ben Sassi (via WhatsApp, 6 October 2020).
[21] Interview with Ahmed Abbar (via WhatsApp, 9 October 2020); Bartu, "Corridors of Uncertainty", p.42.
[22] Interviews with Othman Ben Sassi (via WhatsApp, 6 October 2020), Salwa Dghreily (via WhatsApp, 9 October 2020) and Abdelhafidh Ghoga (Tunis, 18 July 2019).
[23] See Annex 5.
[24] Interviews with Abdelhafidh Ghoga (Tunis, 18 July 2019) and Ahmed Abbar (via WhatsApp, 9 October 2020).
[25] C.f. Martin, Ian (2022), *All Necessary Measures? The United Nations and International Intervention in Libya* (London: C. Hurst & Co.), p.66.

with its traditional seat in Bani Walid. His tribal affiliation was seen by some as central to his appointment, as it provided the Warfalla a stake in the TA.[26] Others, however, pointed to Jibril's credentials and international credibility as Anglophone, 'secular' and western-educated.[27] Both factors are likely to have played a role in his appointment, in addition to his personal connections to many of the leading figures who defected from the regime.

The Executive Office had a full cabinet, including ministries of transport, culture, environment and so on. However, according to NTC member Mohamed Montassir, at this time, many of these 'ministries' were inactive: their ministers named to provide representation in the TA to certain constituencies.[28]

Several revolutionary figures such as prominent Misratan opposition leader, Abdelrahman Sweihli, and Islamic scholar, Ali Sallabi, criticized the Executive Office and Mahmoud Jibril in particular. However, these criticisms failed to gain any traction at this time, and both Sweihli and Sallabi publicly supported the NTC notwithstanding their criticisms.[29]

2.5 UNSC Resolution 1973 and the quest for recognition

Jibril saw his main role as seeking foreign support and recognition for the NTC.[30] In this respect he was relatively successful. France recognized the NTC as the legitimate representative of the Libyan people on 10 March; many others followed suit. On 4 April, Italy went further in recognizing the NTC as 'the representative of Libya'. This had practical import in granting the NTC access to Libyan state assets held in the territory of the recognizing state.[31] Shortly after the fall of Tripoli, on 1 September, Russia recognised the NTC and by 20 September the UN was able to award Libya's UN General Assembly seat to the NTC.[32]

International recognition, however, did not seamlessly translate into domestic authority. Landau-Wells writes that, "At no point in the years since achieving international recognition has the NTC, or its successor, the General National Congress, possessed undisputed physical

[26] Interview with Moussa Kouni (Istanbul, 1 October 2020). Ghoga was also Warfalla from Benghazi.
[27] Feltman, Jeffrey and Gene Cretz (2020), "Remembering Libya's Revolutionary Prime Minister, Mahmoud Jibril: Another Victim of COVID-19", *Brookings Institution*; Wehrey, Frederic (2018), *The Burning Shores: Inside the Battle for the New Libya.* (New York: Farrar, Straus and Giroux), p.42.
[28] Interview with Mohamed Montassir (Istanbul, 30 September 2020).
[29] Sallabi's National Transitional Charter, for example, failed to gain significant support. ICG. *Making sense of Libya*, p.27; Lacher, "Families, Tribes and Cities in the Libyan Revolution", p.148.
[30] Interview with Mahmoud Jibril (Tunis, 5 December 2018).
[31] Subject to sanction restrictions. Talmon, Stefan (2011), "Recognition of the Libyan National Transitional Council", *ASIL Insight* (Vol.1, No 6).
[32] Landau-Wells, Marika (2018), "High Stakes and Low Bars: How International Recognition Shapes the Conduct of Civil Wars", *International Security* (Vol. 43, No. 1), *Supplementary Materials.*

control over all Libyan territory…The Libyan case also highlights an underappreciated aspect of civil wars: political victory and military victory are not the same."[33] As Jibril put it: "we were able to prevail politically before we prevailed militarily".[34]

The NTC expended significant resources in the search for international recognition and seeking to isolate the Qaddafi regime politically. Although clearly important, the NTC was unable to parlay formal recognition into the monopolization of coercive force. Revolutionary armed groups continued to operate more or less outside of the chain of command envisaged by the NTC, as we shall see. Nor was the NTC able to monopolize foreign relations of the state. Head of the NTC's stabilization team, Aref Nayed, noted that the NTC struggled unsuccessfully to prevent communities, political groups and revolutionary militias from establishing bilateral relations with foreign states including France, Qatar and the UAE.[35] Military leader, Abdelmajid Mlegta described his bilateral negotiations with France to me, and ICG noted the independent funding of local and military councils which allowed them to operate independently of NTC control.[36]

On 17 March 2011, the UN Security Council adopted Resolution 1973, which established a no-fly-zone over Libya and authorized the use of all military force to protect civilians short of a ground invasion. The NTC derived great credit from Resolution 1973, although they do not seem to have directly influenced its negotiation.[37] Resolution 1973 and the NATO campaign which followed, ensured that the NTC had a base of operations in Cyrenaica which was safe from the regime. Qaddafi's air defences were destroyed, his air superiority nullified and any significant movement of troops eastward across the open desert from Sirte met with NATO aerial bombardment.

Resolution 1973 also called for intensified efforts to find a solution to the conflict and in March the UN appointed former Jordanian foreign minister, Abdelilah Al-Khatib, as special envoy.[38] The African Union also sought to negotiate a settlement between Qaddafi and the NTC. These

[33] *Ibid*, p.102.
[34] Interview with Mahmoud Jibril (Tunis, 5 December 2018).
[35] Interview with Aref Ali Nayed (Oxford, 12 December 2018); also Interview with Abdelrahman Shalgam (Rome, 7 January 2019).
[36] ICG (2012), *Divided We Stand: Libya's Enduring Conflicts*, Middle East and North Africa Report No. 130, p.19; Interview with Abdelmajid Mlegta (Geneva, 2 November 2019).
[37] Adler-Nissen, Rebecca and Vincent Pouliot (2014), "Power in practice: Negotiating the International Intervention in Libya", *European Journal of International Relations*, (Vol. 20, No.4). Although the moving speech by Abdelrahman Shalgam at the UN on 25 February may have shifted positions. Chappell, Bill, "Libyan Ambassador Denounces Gadhafi At U.N.", *National Public Radio (NPR)* (25 February 2011).
[38] UN Security Council Resolution 1973, S/RES/1973 (2011).

efforts were stymied by domestic and international obstinacy: neither the NTC nor their international backers believed Qaddafi would accept a political settlement, and they clearly focused their efforts on regime change.[39]

2.6 Proliferation of armed groups

As the non-violent protest movement morphed into a militarized civil war, bands of revolutionaries organized to defend liberated parts of Eastern Libya from regime forces. Tensions quickly arose between official NTC's military structures, headed by Abdelfattah Younes and Omar Harari, and these informal bands of fighters, due to the proximity of Younes and Harari to the former regime. Younes was Minister of Interior until his defection in February 2011 and was commander of the Special Forces unit sent to suppress the uprising in Benghazi. Harari was one of the original Free Officers who participated in Qaddafi's 1969 coup d'état. Ideological divides also began to surface, with many of the revolutionary brigades having a more Islamist bent than the former professional soldiers. This conflict between the NTC military structures and revolutionary brigades was laid bare by the assassination of Younes on 28 July 2011. The assassins have never been identified but it is generally established that Younes was a victim of an internecine conflict within the revolutionary camp. Many view the assassination of Younes as the turning point of the Libyan revolution, where divisions were exposed and the NTC began to lose its authority in the eyes of the people.[40]

Highly localized armed groups also emerged in Western Libya, often composed of defected army officers leading untrained civilian fighters. As the tide turned and the rebels began to capture territory in Western Libya, the NTC struggled largely unsuccessfully to direct or at least coordinate the capture of Tripoli.[41]

The battle for Tripoli was over by 22 August when the revolutionary forces captured Green Square in the center of the city, renaming it Martyr's Square, but the civil war was not yet over. Qaddafi had retreated with a group of loyal forces. Key strategic areas, including the central cities of Sirte, Bani Walid and much of the south was not under NTC control. It was not until 20 October 2011 that Qaddafi was tracked to a stretch of highway between Misrata and his hometown of Sirte. He was then brutally murdered by the rebel forces who captured him. The manner of Qaddafi's execution gave pause to many who hoped that the forces unleashed by

[39] De Waal, Alex (2013), "African Roles in the Libyan Conflict of 2011", *International Affairs* (Vol. 89, No.2), pp.374-375; Martin, *All necessary measures?*, p.39; Wehrey, *The Burning Shores*, p.45.
[40] Interviews with Othman Ben Sassi (via WhatsApp, 6 October 2020) and Salwa Dghreily (via WhatsApp, 9 October 2020).
[41] Lacher, *Libya's Fragmentation*, p.23.

the revolution could be contained, but a strong sense of euphoria remained when, on 23 October, Abdeljalil announced the liberation of Libya.[42]

While the NTC and the military structures it attempted to establish did not have full command-and-control over the armed elements of the revolution, as I will show in detail below, personal connections between NTC members and individual armed groups did allow for a degree of coordination and cooperation between the armed revolutionaries and the TA.

2.7 The Constitutional Declaration

In line with promises he had made to resign once liberation had been achieved, Mahmoud Jibril left his post as head of the NTC's executive office on 23 October 2011. The announcement of liberation on 23 October 2011 also started the clock ticking towards elections, as spelt out in the Constitutional Declaration, which was adopted by the NTC on 10 August 2011. Article 30 of the Constitutional Declaration laid out the plan for the dissolution of the NTC and the holding of democratic elections for a constituent assembly eight months after victory over Qaddafi.

The process of drafting and adopting the Constitutional Declaration was not without controversy. An initial roadmap proposed on 5 May envisaged that the NTC would continue to exert executive and legislative authority until the conclusion of the constitution-drafting process and the holding of legislative elections on this basis. When presented on 27 June, this plan was met with widespread protests from within the NTC as well as other quarters as it would require the NTC to directly nominate a constitutional drafting assembly and to govern for a protracted period.[43] The majority of NTC members deemed it essential that the Constitution should be drafted by an elected body and that all executive and legislative powers should be handed over to this body until the adoption of a new constitution.[44]

It was therefore agreed that elections would be held for a General National Congress (GNC), which would form a committee to draft a new constitution for Libya. As described in the following chapter, this did not, however, go as planned and at the time of writing Libya does not have a permanent Constitution. The Constitutional Declaration adopted by the NTC remains the constitutional basis of the state. This is both a testament to the political authority the NTC enjoyed in August 2011 and an indication that this was the zenith of the transition.

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[42] *France 24*, "Libya declares country's official 'liberation'", (23 October 2011).
[43] Interviews with Fathi Baja (Tunis, 28 June 2019), Salwa Dghreily (via WhatsApp, 9 October 2020) and Abdelrazak Aredi (via WhatsApp, 17 October 2020).
[44] Bartu, "Corridors of Uncertainty", pp.50-53.

2.8 Conclusion

The next chapter will examine the challenges to the authority of TA which occurred between 23 October 2011 and the NTC's disbandment on 8 August 2012.

As this narrative has shown, the NTC never enjoyed the degree of uncontested political authority that the Essebsi government in Tunisia was able to establish. Rather than quasi-automatic bureaucratic obedience as seen in Tunisia, the NTC's rule was contingent and negotiated. It relied on the personal connections of its members to convince and cajole armed actors to follow their broad guidance. The TA was only somewhat successful in its efforts to dictate the foreign policy of the revolution and failed to monopolize the flows of arms and ammunition coming into the country from abroad. The NTC's decisions were negotiated, subject to compromise and pushback from the public. High-profile events such as the assassination of Abdelfattah Younes reminded NTC members that their position was precarious.

However, one cannot categorically say that the NTC failed to establish its authority during this period. Despite clear limitations, the NTC was broadly accepted as the political expression and international face of the revolution by a vast swathe of the Libyan people. The NTC enjoyed immediate and growing authority from its creation in March until the liberation of Tripoli in August 2011.

Anecdotal evidence from a range of figures, including military leaders and the general public, suggests that no one significantly challenged the NTC's authority to dictate the direction of the transition.[45] Efforts to challenge the authority of the NTC by figures such as Ali Sallabi and Abdelrahman Sweihli failed to gain traction and no serious alternative transitional project emerged.[46] Bartu rightly concludes that the NTC "met a critical threshold of legitimacy for the Libyan revolutionary moment."[47] Moreover, the NTC significantly shaped (for better or worse) the political order which it left in its wake. Despite problems in its implementation, as of October 2022, the Constitutional Declaration drafted by the NTC remains Libya's principal constitutional reference point. The NTC successfully ushered in a new Libyan political terrain in a clear rupture with the past.

[45] Barfi, Barak, "Transitional National What? Libyans Still Don't Know Who Their New Leaders Are", *New Republic* (1 September 2011); Interview with Abdelwahab Bel Gayed (Istanbul, 29 September 2020).
[46] ICG, *Making Sense of Libya*, p.27; Lacher, "Families, Tribes and Cities in the Libyan Revolution", p.148.
[47] Bartu, "Corridors of Uncertainty", p.31.

What factors inhibited the NTC's smooth generation of political authority? And what explains the political authority they were able to secure during this short period?

3. Existing explanations

In the preceding narrative, I demonstrated that the NTC was somewhat successful in generating political authority during this early phase of the revolution. Between February and October 2011, the NTC established itself as the public and international face of the revolution and the 'legitimate representative of the Libyan people'. This role was relatively uncontested within the revolutionary camp, while, of course, the regime continued to violently oppose the NTC and the revolutionary project more generally. This authority allowed the NTC to elaborate a transitional legal framework, notably the Constitutional Declaration.

While the NTC never acquired uncontested authority, as witnessed in Tunisia under Essebsi for example, for reasons explored later, the authority it enjoyed was significant. How did it manage to establish that authority?

3.1 Revolutionary legitimacy

Revolutionary legitimacy cannot explain the political authority of the NTC. During this period, several prominent members of the NTC were deeply linked to the former regime. Abdeljalil and Jibril had served in the regime. These two figures could reasonably be categorised as 'reformers' inside the Qaddafi regime. Both Abdeljalil and Jibril had distinguished themselves by publicly standing up to Qaddafi, but such criticism of the regime from within can hardly be equated with revolutionary legitimacy. Moreover, it was not just 'reformers' who served in the NTC; long-term regime insiders also defected and played important roles in the TA. Abdelfattah Younes was Minister of the Interior until his defection. He was a close friend and ally of Qaddafi.

Some within the leadership of the NTC had been engaged in civil society activities prior to the 2011 revolution, such as Abdelhafidh Ghoga, who had represented victims of the Abu Slim massacre, and Fathi Baja, who had penned critical newspaper articles against the regime. But neither had been engaged in serious or public opposition political activity, which was quasi-absent in Libya in the years leading up to 2011. In the repressive context of Qaddafi's Libya there were no publicly known opposition leaders who could claim the mantle of revolutionary legitimacy.

Those active opponents of the regime who were based abroad, such as the leadership of the National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NFSL), were relatively unknown within Libya and

did not enter the highest levels of the leadership of the NTC when they returned to the country. NFSL leader, Salem El-Hassi, for example, returned to Libya in August 2011 but did not take up a post until February 2012.[48] Another NFSL figure, Khalifa Hafter, was publicly rebuked by the NTC when he claimed a position in the revolutionary military hierarchy; the NTC denied having granted him this post.[49] The most high-level NFSL figure in the TA was Ali Tarhouni, who served as the Minister of Finance and Oil at this period. ICG concluded in June 2011 that the NFSL "is not part of the new political structures that have developed since the uprising."[50]

The NTC was not led by long-term opponents of the Qaddafi regime but was dominated by regime insiders. As with Tunisia, revolutionary legitimacy cannot be deemed necessary for the establishment of authority during this political transition.

3.2 Legal-Rational authority or Input legitimacy

Unlike in Tunisia, the NTC did not present itself as existing in any legal continuity with the former regime. It did not derive its authority from a pre-existing constitution or legal framework. The NTC took a conscious decision not to adopt the 1951 Constitution of the Monarchy or the 1963 amended constitution for fear of alienating key constituencies.[51] Where the NTC did seek to tap into the legitimacy of the past was in its decision to return to the red, green and black flag of pre-Qaddafi Libya.[52] This, however, was a spontaneous move by protesters which was simply formalized by the NTC. Ghoga told me that "The red, green and black flag was flying on the first day of the revolution."[53] Few other symbols of an imagined legitimate past were conjured up to establish the authority of the TA.

To a greater extent the process of selection can explain both the extent and the limits of the authority of the NTC. The NTC at the outset was an agglomeration of the local councils which had arisen in Cyrenaica after it fell from regime hands. These local councils sent representatives to Benghazi, who formed the core of the NTC. A similar local council from Misrata also nominated representatives to be sent to join the NTC.

Subsequently this process of formal selection was all but abandoned for the selection of members from Western and Southern Libya for practical, logistical and political reasons as we

[48] Interview with Salem El-Hassi (Tunis, 2 December 2019).
[49] McGreal, Chris, "Libyan rebel efforts frustrated by internal disputes over leadership", *The Guardian* (3 April 2011).
[50] ICG, *Making Sense of Libya*, p.19.
[51] WhatsApp Communication with Fathi Baja (19 May 2022). This was a strategic mistake according to interview with Aref Nayed (Oxford, 12 December 2018).
[52] National Transitional Council (NTC), *The Constitutional Declaration* (3 August 2011), Article 3.
[53] Interview with Abdelhafidh Ghoga (Tunis, 18 July 2019).

shall see. However, the NTC's writ was weaker in areas where NTC members were not representatives of local councils. To a large extent, the authority of the NTC geographically co-varied with the quality of the process of their selection. It may therefore be suggested that the authority of the NTC stemmed from the process of its selection as representatives of these local councils.

However, this explanation must be qualified by an understanding of the structure of the local councils themselves. The local councils were self-appointed and comprised of local notables. They were not elected in any formal sense.[54] Consequently, the premise of input legitimacy as a seamless chain from the individual citizen to the national representatives is broken. Input legitimacy therefore requires a more subtle understanding of the social structures which mediate the relationship between individuals and their representatives, such as the theory I propose.

3.3 Charismatic, traditional and knowledge-based authority

Foreign diplomats often spoke of the reassuring self-confidence and technocratic mien of Mahmoud Jibril.[55] My interviews suggest that the choice of Mustapha Abdeljalil as Chairman of the NTC was partly based on his role as a 'tribal sheikh' and a traditional leader of the Barassa tribe. He also derived legitimacy from his long and fair service as a judge, and from his early celebrity as a professional footballer.[56] Critics and supporters alike speak of Abdeljalil's preternatural folksy charm.[57] Can one therefore ascribe the authority of the NTC to the traditional and charismatic authority of its members?

Firstly, my other cases suggest that charisma or traditional authority is neither necessary nor sufficient for successful authority-building. I also highlighted definitional problems with such terms in Chapter 2. Notwithstanding these critiques, other evidence confirms that charismatic and traditional authority cannot explain the NTC's political authority in Libya. Most important is the role of the tribal 'sheikh' or leader in Libyan society. Unlike in other contexts, tribes in Libya are not hierarchical, segmentary organizations. While the inclusion of members of tribes and their representatives was vital to generating the authority of the NTC, tribal 'leaders' *per se* had little authority to command the members of their tribes to do anything. If anything, tribal

[54] Henneberg, Sabrina (2020), *Managing Transition: The First Post-Uprising Phase in Tunisia and Libya* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p.112.
[55] Feltman and Cretz, "Remembering Libya's Revolutionary Prime Minister"*;* Wehrey, *The Burning Shores*, p.42.
[56] Interview with Mustapha Abdeljalil (Montreux, 1 November 2019).
[57] Interviews with Mahmoud Jibril (Tunis, 5 December 2018), Guma Gamaty (London, 4 December 2018), Abdelhafidh Ghoga (Tunis, 18 July 2019) and Ahmed Jehani (London, 17 May 2019). I witnessed similar folksy charm in my meeting with Abdeljalil (Montreux, 1 November 2019).

sheikhs in Libya were agents of their constituencies, rather than principals. The weak hierarchies of tribal structures in Libya have been noted by anthropologists and colonial officials, as well as contemporary political analysts.[58] Moreover, the Qaddafi regime sought to co-opt, politicise and delegitimize the tribal leadership through the Popular Social Leadership (PSL) structures.[59] Thus, the authority of the NTC could not be based on the traditional right of the tribal 'leaders' to govern.

Moreover, while Abdeljalil and several other members of the NTC, such as Ahmed Abbar, were drawn from the traditional leadership of their tribes, most were not. [60] Jibril, for example, was not from the leadership of his Warfalla tribe or its traditional base in Bani Walid. He was born in Benghazi and lived abroad for much of his life. As I argue below, while the NTC's inclusivity of Libya tribes was important for the process of the TA's authority-building, it does not seem essential for these representatives to come from the traditional leadership of the tribes.

Charisma and knowledge-based legitimacy may have bolstered the authority of the NTC but they cannot explain this authority.

3.4 Output legitimacy

The NTC ostensibly placed an emphasis on the provision of public services as central to their political authority. Bartu suggests that "the NTC knew early on that its legitimacy would in part be judged by its ability to pay salaries and otherwise run a wartime economy."[61] Three of the five goals the NTC publicly set for itself also reflect this focus on service provision: to safeguard the country, to improve the cleanliness of the country, and to provide more job security.[62]

However, Bartu notes that international pledges of funding for the NTC were slow to materialise and,[63] by their own estimation, the NTC did not have the resources to provide public services and was instead uniquely focused on winning the war. The NTC's Minister for Reconstruction, Ahmed Jehani asserted that the "NTC was not interested in services and

[58] Lahmar, Mouldi (2006), "Libyens et Italiens en Tripolitaine (1911-1928): Quels Territoires d'Allégeance Politique?" in Hénia, Abdelhamid, ed., *Être Notable au Maghreb: Dynamique des Configurations Notabiliaires.* (Tunis: Institut de Recherche sur le Maghreb Contemporain), Para. 43.
[59] Lacher, *Libya's Fragmentation.* pp.70-71; Interview with Ali Tarhouni (via WhatsApp, 13 October 2020).
[60] For example, Ahmed Al-Zubair al-Senussi and Ahmed Abbar were both related to the Sennousi monarchy. Mohamed Montassir was from a notable family who had fought against Italian colonialism. Interviews with Ahmed Abbar (via WhatsApp, 9 October 2020) and Mohamed Montassir (Istanbul, 30 September 2020).
[61] Bartu, "Corridors of Uncertainty", p.42.
[62] NTC (2011), "5 goals set for the NTC by the Libyan People".
[63] Bartu, "Corridors of Uncertainty", p.45.

service provision". According to Jehani, the TA was uniquely focused on imports of food, medicine and munitions, and on appearing as the public face of the revolution.[64] NTC Member, Mohamed Montassir, also conceded that the majority of the Executive Office "didn't really do anything": "there were ministers of reconstruction, social affairs, transport, environment, culture, education and religious affairs but only 3 or 4 people were working in these ministries".[65]

The prevailing orientation of the revolutionary armed groups, local councils and other transitional institutions at this time was self-sufficiency. They would seek bilateral international contacts,[66] use their own funds,[67] or make do with what was available around them.[68] However, the inversion of the usual patron-client relationship which had previously existed between the government and the citizenry in Libya did not seem to hamper the popular recognition of the NTC's authority.

As we shall see later, the importance of the NTC and its executive bureau was not what it could deliver to the population, but that it *represented* them. This explains the creation of so many Ministries, Committees and Commissions with so few resources. The allocation of posts allowed for more constituencies to be represented within the NTC and its other transitional institutions. The relationship between public service delivery and the NTC's authority was therefore complex and not unidirectional.

3.5 International recognition and support

The NTC expended much of its time and resources in seeking international recognition. Many of the NTC's members viewed international recognition as specifically important to establishing their authority to govern: For example, "the legitimacy [of the NTC] was derived from … our *international recognition."* said Mahmoud Jibril.[69]

Much of this international diplomacy seemed focused on securing material support for the revolution. However, international recognition was seen as bringing greater rewards than simply material benefits. Hafed Gaddur, the NTC's 'Ambassador' to Italy, told me that he

[64] Interview with Ahmed Jehani (London, 17 May 2019).
[65] Interview with Mohamed Montassir (Istanbul, 30 September 2020).
[66] E.g. Abdelwahab Bel Gayed used personal connections to secure arms from Sudan. Interview with Abdelwahab bel Gayed (Istanbul, 29 September 2020).
[67] E.g. Private donations from Misratan businessmen were central to relieving the siege of Misrata. Interview with Mohamed Montassir (Istanbul, 30 September 2020).
[68] E.g. Makeshift workshops sprung up at the beginning of the revolution to make weapons and adapt vehicles for military purposes. Pargeter, *Libya*, p.233.
[69] Interview with Mahmoud Jibril (Tunis, 5 December 2018). Also Interview with Guma Gamaty (London, 4 December 2018).

travelled *inter alia* to "Slovenia, Latvia, San Marino, and Ukraine" to seek recognition of the NTC. These countries were not expected to provide much material assistance to the rebels. When challenged on why he made these trips he responded: "Cyrenaica was freed first, but the State is in Tripoli, so recognition was important…I was looking for humanitarian assistance; medical assistance; and *political assistance*."[70] Jibril also told me that he travelled "all over the world seeking recognition", including three trips to South Africa, which was seen as important for political, rather than practical reasons, because of its leading role within the African Union, one of the remaining bastions of Qaddafi support.[71] Guma Gamaty, the NTC's 'Ambassador' to the UK, stated that the top priority of the NTC was "international recognition and denial of recognition to the Qaddafi regime."[72]

During this phase, international recognition seems to have played an unusually prominent role in the strategy of the NTC. However, as demonstrated in the following chapter, contestation of the NTC's political authority grew in the Autumn of 2011. This coincides with the recognition of the authority of the NTC by many international states: Russia recognised the NTC on 1 September and the NTC was granted Libya's UN General Assembly seat on 20 September. This suggests that international recognition did not contribute to the NTC's political authority in the way they anticipated.

International recognition may have contributed to the de-legitimation of Qaddafi without contributing to the NTC's authority. Prominent Libyan Islamic scholar, Wanis El-Mabrouk said, "It wasn't arms that won the war but the international isolation of Qaddafi. The international community deserted Qaddafi and this encouraged the desertion of the political class."[73] This compelling explanation suggests that the international recognition of the NTC contributed to the sense of inevitability of Qaddafi's downfall. This 'viability', to use Kurzman's term, may have built support for the revolution, but not necessarily contributed to the authority of the NTC.[74] This would explain why, once Qaddafi fell, contestation of the NTC's authority increased although their international support remained high.

Absent further evidence to the contrary, international recognition does not seem to have a clear link to the successful construction of the NTC's authority, despite the firm belief of NTC

[70] Interview with Hafed Gaddur (Rome, 10 January 2019).
[71] Interview with Mahmoud Jibril (Tunis, 5 December 2018).
[72] Interview with Guma Gamaty (London, 4 December 2018).
[73] Interview with Wanis Mabrouk (Istanbul, 29 September 2020).
[74] Kurzman, *The Unthinkable Revolution in Iran*, pp.169-170.

members to the contrary. As the NTC's international recognition became universal their authority went into terminal decline, as I shall demonstrate in the following chapter. This does not imply that international recognition was not important for the overthrow of Qaddafi, but this question is outside of the scope of this thesis. International recognition was not sufficient for successful authority-building in the Libyan case.

3.6 Conclusion

Existing explanations can neither explain why the NTC established the degree of authority which it did, nor explain the weakness of the NTC's political authority. The NTC was composed of figures with weak revolutionary credentials and did not have sufficient resources to provide public services to the population. Although the NTC invested significant resources in seeking international recognition, this does not seem to have bolstered their political authority at least in the mid-term. Many of the members of the NTC exhibited charismatic authority or traditional authority, but as I have previously established in other contexts, this is neither necessary nor sufficient for the establishment of authority. The NTC could not justify its rule based on any legal framework or pre-existing constitutional basis. Particularly in Cyrenaica, there was some sort of formal selection process for the members of the NTC. This, however, falls short of the requirements of 'input legitimacy' as outlined by Scharpf. The process of selection does, however, lead to my alternative explanation: the authority of the NTC is explained by its degree of inclusivity of the principal socio-political components in Libyan society at this time.

4. Alternative explanation

My socio-institutional theory of authority-building suggests that the nature of Libyan society and the Qaddafi regime presented extreme challenges for the NTC to build a sufficiently inclusive body to establish its authority. Historical splits between regions, cities and tribes; the near absence of hierarchical institutionalized organizations; and weakness and division within opposition political structures, rendered the formation of the strong and broad coalition seen in Tunisia nigh on impossible to realize in Libya. The institutional building-blocks and social cement for the formation of such a coalition were absent in the Libyan context. I will begin by outlining these challenges and their impact on the NTC's authority-building process.

However, the NTC proved itself more adept than other Libyan institutions or possible alternative coalitions at forming a TA and attracting support. I will, therefore, continue this section by explaining the NTC's relative success in establishing its authority. I argue that the

relative success the NTC enjoyed during this period is explained by two factors. First, the NTC was initially limited to Cyrenaica where the military context and dominant social structures allowed for the selection of relatively representative figures from the principal socio-political components of Eastern Libya. The NTC may not have consisted of a broad coalition representing all *Libyan* socio-political constituencies, but it did constitute a broad enough coalition of *Cyrenaican* socio-political constituencies. Second, the NTC benefited from the absence of viable alternative governing coalition contesting its authority. This absence can be explained by the prevailing instability and security situation in other parts of the country and the nature of the Libyan state and society, which impeded both armed elements and putative political organizations from forming a viable alternative coalition at this time.

4.1 Obstacles to inclusivity

Authority in political transitions is a function of the composition of the TA: the more inclusive a TA is of the principal socio-political components of a society the greater the likelihood of it successfully establishing its authority. However, the pre-existing socio-political structure of the society will condition the possible inclusivity of the TA. Societies with strong, hierarchical institutionalized organizations and pre-existing ties between elites will be more readily capable of constructing the type of broad coalitions necessary in times of political transition.

In this respect, the social structure of Libya presented three main challenges to the TA in constructing its political authority. First, Libya exhibits a high degree of regionalism and a lack of national unity; second, Libya had a dearth of hierarchical institutionalized organizations at a national level at the time of the revolution; and third, Libyan society and elites were highly atomized and lacked strong inter-group links. Given these factors the limitations of the NTC's authority are unsurprising and conform to my expectations.

I will examine each of these three challenges and how they impacted the authority-building process of the NTC.

4.1.1 Regionalism and the "accidental state"

As already established, the revolution in Libya began in the Eastern region historically known as Cyrenaica. Protests and violence erupted almost simultaneously in the West of the country, particularly in the Nafusa mountains and the coastal city of Misrata. However, the struggle for territorial control over western Libya was protracted and bloody: Misrata, for example, was under a state of violent siege between February and May 2011. By contrast, within 10 days the East of Libya was outside the *de facto* control of the Qaddafi regime and could reasonably

expect to remain so following the declaration of a no-fly-zone on 19 March.[75] This provided the NTC with a stable base of operations in Eastern Libya from which it would operate until relocating to Tripoli at the end of August 2011. This conjunctural regional distinction, largely a result of the military balance of power, reflected and reinforced the historical distinction between Libya's three regions.

Libya has been described by Vandewalle as an "accidental state."[76] It was not until 1949 that an independent and sovereign state of Libya was created. Prior to this time Libya was divided into three: Cyrenaica in the East, Tripolitania in the West, and Fezzan in the South. These three regions had distinct historical and political trajectories, and socio-political structures. For example, Cyrenaica was occupied by the Ottoman Empire in 1517, while Tripolitania only came under Ottoman control over thirty years later in 1551. Although Italy formally annexed Tripolitania and Cyrenaica in 1911, the colonial power was compelled to grant separate legal status to the two regions in 1919, creating two parliaments and local councils. When the Italian colonial period ended, a British Military Administration governed Tripolitania, while the French governed Fezzan. Cyrenaica created an independent administration following a period of British trusteeship. Although this was modified in 1963 following the discovery of oil, when the United Kingdom of Libya was created in 1951 the new state opted for a highly decentralized federal system based on these three historic regions.[77] Qaddafi intermittently sought to forge a single unitary national identity following his 1969 coup, but in 2011 regional distinctions and identities remained strong.

Tunisia formed a strong national identity under colonialism, which was consolidated after independence. This did not occur in Libya. Therefore, while in Tunisia, as I have shown, the TA could be composed of national political networks, with geographic representation being a secondary concern, in Libya the TA had to pay particular attention to its regional inclusivity. This relative lack of national unity presented a significant challenge in the context of the ongoing civil war.

[75] Martin, *All Necessary Measures?*, p.34. See ICG, *Making Sense of Libya* for an overview of the conflict.
[76] Vandevalle, *History of Modern Libya*, p.43.
[77] Summaries of this period of Libyan history are provided by Anderson, Lisa, (1986) *The State and Social Transformation: Tunisia and Libya 1830-1980*, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press.); Vandevalle, *History of Modern Libya*; Pargeter, *Libya*; St John, *Libya.*

The NTC was acutely aware of the risk of being labelled a separatist movement.[78] The TA sought to guard against this risk by announcing on 5 March that it was composed of 30 members, with each of Libya's regions equally represented. Only the names of eleven members (all from Cyrenaica) were announced but this was justified by the continuing insecurity in Western and Southern Libya and the risks faced by the families of NTC members in areas under regime control.[79] The deep concern over ensuring equal representation from across Libya suggests that the NTC was aware that their composition and particularly their geographic inclusivity was central to the acceptance of their authority in all parts of the country.

However, although the NTC implied in its public statement of 5 March that members were in place from across Libya, at this time the NTC had not actually filled the seats from the West and South. In fact, six out of the initial 11 seats were occupied by Benghazi residents. The first seats from the West were taken by representatives from Misrata in March.[80]

This lack of geographic inclusivity led to a frantic search for figures from Western and Southern Libya who could be brought to Benghazi to 'represent' their cities. The mechanism of selection, however, was relaxed to meet this urgent need. In the East of Libya, when cities were 'liberated' from the Qaddafi regime they established local councils to govern their cities and manage its defence. These local councils were typically composed of local notables. They were formed on an informal and *ad-hoc* basis, based on popular social consensus. When Benghazi was liberated, the local councils of the East sent delegates to the city and it was decided that they should form the NTC to represent liberated areas of the nation. The NTC members from the East were therefore selected by the local councils, from among their members: the leading local citizens.

At the beginning a similar process of selection was followed for representatives from Western and Southern Libya. Like the members from the East, Mohamed Montassir from Misrata was selected to travel to Benghazi in a consultative process involving the newly formed local council of Misrata. The local council of Misrata was composed of local notables, including future NTC members Suleiman Fortiya, Faouzi Abdel Aal and Ibrahim Ben Ghasheer, as well

[78] Interviews with Mahmoud Jibril (Tunis, 5 December 2018), Salwa Dghreily (via WhatsApp, 9 October 2020), Aref Nayed (Oxford, 12 December 2018) and Hassan Sghrir (via WhatsApp, 13 October 2020).
[79] Those announced were Mustafa Abduljalil (Bayda); Othman El-Megyrahi (Tobruk); Ashour Bourashed (Derna), Abdelallah El-myehoub (Qouba); Zubair El-Sharif Sennousi (Benghazi); Ahmed Al-Abaar (Benghazi); Fathi Mohamed Baja (Benghazi); Abdelhafedh Ghoga (Benghazi); Fathi Tirbil (Benghazi), Salwa El-Dghreily (Benghazi); Omar El-Harari (Tobruk).
[80] NTC files show the Misrati members joined on 27 March 2011. Interview with Ali Qalma (via WhatsApp, 12 October 2020); see Annex 5.

as Montassir. Montassir travelled to Benghazi directly from Misrata on a fishing boat.[81] One can therefore reasonably assume that Montassir was an effective representative of the city.

This process, however, was not followed for other members incorporated from the West of the country at this time. NTC member for Zwara, Othman Ben Sassi, for example, had been in political exile in France since 1980. Ben Sassi travelled back to Zwara in April 2011 *after* his appointment to the NTC in order to seek formal nomination from the local council.[82] Ex-post validation by the local council is qualitatively different from winning a competitive selection process: Ben Sassi, having assumed his post prior to seeking confirmation, would clearly bias the process in his favour. Similarly, Hassan Sghrir from Gorba Shatti in southern Libya, had only returned to his hometown in September 2010 after completing his doctorate in France. He joined the NTC as the representative of Shatti in May 2011 but readily admits that he had no popular support in his hometown, which remained loyal to the regime.[83] This problem was so widespread that NTC member from Tobruk, Othman Magarhi claimed that generally "western and southern 'representatives' did not represent their towns."[84] The process of identifying NTC members for Western and Southern Libya was less systematic and selective than for representatives from Eastern Libya. This lack of formal selection may draw into question the degree which these figures truly *represented* their communities on the NTC, and therefore the likelihood that these communities would subsequently recognize the authority of the NTC, according to my theory.

The NTC's process of expansion and identification of representatives from Western and Southern Libya accelerated in May and June 2011. This process of expansion was facilitated by Qatar and the UAE, which arranged for opposition activists to be flown to Benghazi to join the NTC.[85] However, the process of local nomination was almost totally abandoned for those arriving at this time. Abdelrazak Madi from Yifrin, who joined the NTC in September 2011, told me that "I was the only person with an official mandate from the local council. Those who joined earlier were activists from abroad or volunteers who could make it to Benghazi."[86] Othman Ben Sassi noted a similar haphazardness in the selection process for those joining the

[81] Interview with Mohamed Montassir (Istanbul, 30 September 2020).
[82] Interview with Othman Ben Sassi (via WhatsApp, 6 October 2020).
[83] Interview with Hassan Sghrir (via WhatsApp, 13 October 2020).
[84] Interview with Othman Magarhi (via Zoom, 19 October 2020).
[85] Interviews with Mahmoud Jibril (Tunis, 5 December 2018), Aref Nayed (Oxford, 12 December 2018) and Hassan Sghrir (via WhatsApp, 13 October 2020).
[86] Interview with Abdelrazak Madi (via WhatsApp, 12 October 2020).

council in May 2011. Contrary to the initial insistence on nomination by local councils seen in Eastern Libya, Ben Sassi told me that "most members of the NTC just showed up".[87]

This lack of formal selection is understandable given the logistical challenges presented by the conflict. For example, Ali Qalma, who represented Murzuk in the NTC, described his route from Qatrun on 25 March to Kufra on 28 March, which was followed by an extensive period leading those fighting against regime forces until 5 May, when he was able to travel to Benghazi. Like Ben Sassi, Qalma received *ex post* confirmation of his role as the representative for Murzuk, but he did not return to Murzuk to receive this mandate. Although understandable, the absence of a formal nomination and the difficulty others would face attempting to assume this post, draws into question the degree to which Qalma may be said to represent his city. Qalma was clearly a notable *revolutionary* figure from Southern Libya, but his position in the TA was not the result of any formal selection process. Similarly, although members from Tripoli claim to have been formally nominated in a clandestine consultative process, Abdelrazak Aredi, one of those who successfully made the journey to Benghazi, noted to me that, due to the ongoing conflict, half of the nominated representatives could not travel to Benghazi: "there was a very small pool of those willing *and* able to go" to join the NTC from Tripoli, he said.[88] The widespread absence of formal representation from Western and Southern Libya at this time is clearly in evidence.

Moreover, all senior positions in the NTC and its executive office at this time were held by figures from Eastern Libya. The Chairman of the NTC, Mustapha Abdeljalil, was from Bayda; his deputy, Abdelhafidh Ghoga was from Benghazi. The Chief of Staff of the rebel armed forces, Abdelfattah Younes was from Tobruk, and his deputy, Omar Harari, although from the Ferjani tribe with roots in central Libya, was also from Tobruk. Harari's replacement, Jalal Dghreily was from Ajdabiya.

The NTC sought to compensate for its Eastern bias by including figures with historic roots in Western Libya. However, although he was a member of the Warfalla tribe, Mahmoud Jibril was also from Benghazi, as was his deputy, Ali Issawi, although he too was from a family historically linked to the Jebel Nafusa in Western Libya.[89] Such historic ties were not considered sufficient by constituencies in Western Libya, who in general identified less

[87] Interview with Othman Ben Sassi (via WhatsApp, 6 October 2020).
[88] Interview with Abdelrazak Aredi (via WhatsApp, 17 October 2020). Those who could not travel were Mohamed Ternish, Bashir Rabti, Abdelrazak Abuhajer.
[89] Official website of Dr Ali. Alisawi: https://alisawi.ly/en/biography/.

strongly with the notion of tribe and extended kinship network.[90] For example, Faouzi Abdel Aal from Misrata told me that when he challenged other NTC members on the preponderance of members from the East of Libya they would tell him "'so-and-so is Misrati', but he came from Misrata to Benghazi a thousand years ago so how can he represent Misrata!"[91].

In sum, members from Western and Southern Libya were less representative of their communities than those from Eastern Libya, and the TA's leadership, institutions and structures were *de facto* dominated by Eastern Libyans. Given this, I would expect the NTC to enjoy less authority in Fezzan and Tripolitania than in Cyrenaica.

This is borne out by evidence from the ground. Contrary to the situation in the East, Madi told me that there was zero coordination between the local council in Yifrin, which arose at the beginning of the revolution, and the NTC in Benghazi.[92] A similar story was told about the local councils in Zintan and Zwara.[93] Lacher describes the lack of coordination and competition among revolutionary forces on the western front of the conflict, particularly around the offensive to take Tripoli in August 2011, and highlights the parallel lines of communication with international stakeholders.[94] This lack of command and control of the NTC over revolutionary forces in western Libya is, I argue, a consequence of the unrepresentative nature of NTC structures at this time. Western Libyan groups opened parallel channels to the international community and failed to coordinate with the NTC *because* they were not represented in the TA's structures.

The exception of Misrata supports this argument. There was significant coordination between the NTC and Misrata: the NTC for example facilitated the delivery of money, anti-tank missiles and other weapons to Misrata, as well as facilitating the evacuation of injured fighters from Misrata to Turkey.[95] The authority of the NTC was widely recognised in Misrata at this time. This case is notable because Misrata was represented by leading citizens, who had been selected by the revolutionary local council in Misrata and who were able to travel back and

[90] Interviews with Nagy Barakat (London, 18 March 2018), Faouzi Abdel Aal (Montreux, 30 October 2019) and Nasr Manea (Istanbul, 30 September 2020); Lahmar, Mouldi (2006), "Libyens et Italiens en Tripolitaine (1911-1928)", Para. 14.
[91] Interview with Faouzi Abdel Aal (Montreux, 30 October 2019); also recounted in Interview with Nasr Manea (Istanbul, 30 September 2020).
[92] Interview with Abdelrazak Madi (via WhatsApp, 12 October 2020).
[93] Henneberg, *Managing Transition*, p.120.
[94] Lacher, *Libya's Fragmentation*, p.23; for a detailed account see Cole, Peter and Umar Khan (2015), "The Fall of Tripoli: Part I" in Cole, Peter and Brian McQuinn, eds., *The Libyan Revolution and its Aftermath* (London: Hurst).
[95] Interviews with Mohamed Montassir (Istanbul, 30 September 2020), Faouzi Abdel Aal (Montreux, 31 October 2019) and Abdelwahab Bel Qayed (Istanbul, 29 September 2020).

forth between Benghazi and Misrata by boat. It is also notable because Misrata, as highlighted by Wehrey, "had deep social ties with Benghazi and the East".[96] The role of the strong social ties between Misrata and Benghazi in forming the NTC was also noted by NTC member, Faouzi Abdel Aal.[97] These pre-existing social ties facilitated the effective incorporation of Misrata into the NTC's governing coalition. The NTC's authority vis-à-vis a given constituency co-varied with the degree of representation of this constituency in NTC structures.

Lack of national unity in Libya meant that the NTC needed to ensure geographic inclusivity to establish its authority. The NTC expended significant energies in recruiting representatives from Western and Southern Libya. However, those joining the NTC from Western and Southern Libya were less representative of their communities than those from Eastern Libya. This variation in the degree and quality of the geographic inclusivity of the NTC partly explains geographic variation in the authority of the NTC. The NTC enjoyed greater authority in Cyrenaica because Cyrenaicans were better represented in the composition of the NTC.

4.1.2 The 'Jamahiriya' and hierarchical institutionalized organizations

The NTC was compelled to rely upon this highly problematic and sometimes haphazard process of selection of representatives of localities because no alternative hierarchical institutionalized organizations existed from which the TA could construct its coalition. In Tunisia, despite their weaknesses, political parties, trade unions and CSOs existed at the national level. It was on this basis that the HIROR was constructed, with geographic inclusivity a distant concern. In Libya the situation was far more complex: political parties, most CSOs, and other forms of *Gesellschaft* networks were targeted under colonialism and under the Qaddafi regime. CSOs which existed were tiny and suppressed. The NTC could only integrate members on the basis of their family, tribal and local identities; because no other strong organizing structures existed.

Anderson describes how the under the Ottoman empire, Libya had begun to develop domestic bureaucratic and political structures, but these were decimated by the Italian colonial practices and counter-insurgency campaign.[98] Vandewalle notes that the Italians "deliberately excluded native citizens from any of the administrative and bureaucratic institutions within the colony…As a result…Libya had neither a local bourgeoisie, nor an indigenous class of patrons,

[96] Wehrey, *The Burning Shores*, p.53.
[97] Interview with Faouzi Abdel Aal (Montreux, 31 October 2019).
[98] Anderson, Lisa (1990), "Tribe and State: Libyan Anomalies" in Khoury, Philip, and Joseph Kostiner, eds., *Tribes and State Formation in the Middle East* (Berkeley, University of California Press), p.294.

clients and brokers…"[99] The absence of these bureaucratic functionaries was not only an impediment to the emergence of a strong modern nation state, as Anderson highlights, but also more generally to the emergence of *Gesellschaft* networks that were so important to the reconstruction of political authority during the transition in Tunisia.[100]

The lack of a bureaucratic middle class was compounded by the prohibition on other forms of political organizing. After the 1952 Parliamentary elections, political parties were banned. This process was continued and accelerated under Qaddafi, who famously described political parties as "the abortion of democracy."[101] The prohibition of political parties was enshrined in Law 71 of 1972, which made membership of any group based on an ideology opposed to the regime a crime punishable by execution.[102] Repression of all forms of political opposition was brutal and decimated the organizational structures of opposition groups which managed to form, such as the Muslim Brotherhood (MB), the National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NFSL) and the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG).

In his famous 1973 speech in Zwara, Qaddafi announced the creation of the *Jamahiriya*, a neologism roughly translated as the "State of the Masses". In his five-point programme, Qaddafi decided to "obliterate the country's existing political structures and intensify the popular direction of the revolution."[103], creating what Davis has described as a "stateless Nation".[104] Theoretically, the idea of the *Jamahiriya* was that the people would govern themselves directly, without the mediating (and deforming, according to Qaddafi) structures of political party, trade union, CSO or elections. In reality, the absence of hierarchical political structures led to a highly idiosyncratic rule by Qaddafi and a small cadre of individuals close to him. In Tunisia, student and trade unions provided a semblance of democratic politics: allowing practice in the formation of alliances, negotiation and compromise, mobilization and electioneering.[105] In Libya all this was illegal, creating a depoliticized and atomized population.

[99] Vandewalle, *History of Modern Libya*. pp.40-41.
[100] Anderson, *The State and Social Transformation*, pp.203-222.
[101] Brown, Stephen and Philip Pullella, "Gaddafi Tells Italy to Scrap Political Parties", *Reuters* (11 June 2009); Davis explains the origins of this ideology. Davis, John (1987), *Libyan Politics: Tribe and Revolution. An Account of the Zuwaya and their Government* (I.B. Tauris & Co. Ltd, London), pp.216-17.
[102] ICG, *Making Sense of Libya*, p.7.
[103] Vandewalle, *History of Modern Libya,* p.83.
[104] Davis, *Libyan Politics* p.31. Davis also coined the term "Stateless State", p.257.
[105] Interview with Mustapha Ben Jaafar (Tunis, 24 July 2019).

The 1952 Parliamentary elections were the first and only national electoral event in Libya until the 2012 GNC elections. Unlike other dictators, Qaddafi did not even go through the pretence of organizing rigged elections, denying opposition groups this important mobilizing event, however flawed.[106] Nor was Libya a single party state: the regime did not establish itself as a ruling party, as in Tunisia or elsewhere in the region. In single party states, the party structure provided an opportunity to build alliances and networks beyond the boundaries of kinship and region.

Even the army, a bastion of nationalism, organization and a degree of meritocracy in many Arab states including Libya's Algerian, Egyptian and Tunisian neighbours, was decimated as an organized hierarchical structure in Libya.[107] Recruitment and promotion in the Army was conducted along tribal lines, with the Warfalla, Magharha and Obeidat playing key roles alongside Qaddafi's own tribe. Qaddafi further sought to marginalise the Army after the 1993 coup attempt, investing heavily in the personal security brigades led by his sons and closest loyalists.[108]

Thus, in 2011 Libya had few of the organized hierarchical institutional structures which characterize the modern nation state: there were no legally recognized political parties, independent trade unions, or established, independent civil society organizations (CSOs). Even sports clubs, *souks* and cafes were closely monitored to prevent political organizations from developing.[109] Joffé finds that there were only 22 approved Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) in Libya at the time of the revolution.[110] A few professional organizations and interest groups managed to survive and maintain a degree of independence in the *Jamahiriya*. Most important was the Bar Association.[111] Some CSOs were permitted to advance international causes close to Qaddafi's heart, such as the Committee for the Support of the People of

[106] The mobilizing potential of rigged elections has been noted by Laštro, Claudia and Florian Bieber (2021), "The Performance of Opposition Parties in Competitive Authoritarian Regimes: Three Case Studies from the Western Balkans", *European Political Science* (Vol. 20). They find that protests around elections are important for opposition unity and mobilization.
[107] Brahimi, Alia (2011), "Libya's Revolution", *The Journal of North African Studies* (Vol. 16, No. 4) p.614.
[108] Ben Lamma, Mohamed (2017), "The Tribal Structure in Libya: Factor for Fragmentation or Cohesion?", *Observatoire du Monde Arabo-musulman et du Sahel*, pp.34-35.
[109] Brahimi, "Libya's Revolution", p.608.
[110] Joffé, George (2016), "Civil Resistance in Libya during the Arab Spring" in Adam Roberts, Michael J. Willis, Rory McCarthy and Timothy Garton Ash, eds., *Civil Resistance in the Arab Spring: Triumphs and Disasters*. (Oxford, Oxford University Press), p. 118.
[111] Other key organizations were the Boy Scouts and the Libyan Red Crescent Society. Romanet Perroux, Jean-Louis (2019), "The Deep Roots of Libya's Security Fragmentation", *Middle Eastern Studies* (Vol. 55, No.2), p.204.

Palestine. These organizations would play an important role in the transition following the 2011 uprising, as we shall see.

The absence of national political institutions made the process of constructing a sufficiently inclusive TA highly problematic. Rather than representing a handful of organizations the TA had to seek to bring together the fragments of a divided society. In the absence of strong organizations based on *Gesellschaft* networks, the NTC could only incorporate members based on their purported representation of cities, regions and tribes.

4.1.3 Siloed elites and atomized society

Another peculiar feature of Libyan society was the relative absence of strong inter-communal links between elites. Libyans interacted with members of their own extended family, tribe and city; but rarely formed close bonds across these divides based on shared worldviews or experiences.[112]

The absence of inter-group ties was partly a product of the aforementioned lack of a strong sense of national identity and the proscription of organizations based on impersonal ties. There were few venues in which elites would meet and form strong social bonds. Studies indicate that almost 50% of marriages in Libya are between first cousins, placing the rate of endogamy in Libya among the highest in the world.[113] Connecting groups through marriage has historically been one of the principal mechanisms for forming strong bonds between discrete social units. Endogamy is thus one factor which reduces the likelihood of strong social ties between elites emerging.

Urbanization has been identified as a force for weakening primary solidarity networks and facilitating inter-group connections. Here too Libya stands out. From the 1980s, Qaddafi pursued a policy of "Bedewanization"[114] or "ruralization",[115] of the urban areas: some towns were settled practically by a single tribe, such as Bani Walid (the 'capital' of the Warfalla), and while larger towns such as Benghazi, Sabha and Ajdabiya contained multiple tribes, these tribes settled into quasi-homogenous tribal neighbourhoods.[116] Even in Tripoli, particular areas are associated with certain tribes and extended kinship networks.[117] In the absence of *Gesellschaft*

[112] Lacher, *Libya's Fragmentation.* p.69.
[113] Ksibi, Yassine (2021), "Libye: la Guerre et les Cousins - Taux d'Endogamie et Conflit en Libye", *SMALA review- Cercle des Études Todiennes* (Vol.3); Lacher, *Libya's Fragmentation*, p.110.
[114] Romanet Perroux, "The Deep Roots of Libya's Security Fragmentation", p.212.
[115] Ben Lamma, "The Tribal Structure in Libya", p.8.
[116] *Idem.*
[117] Wehrey, Frederic and Anouar Boukhars (2019), *Salafism in the Maghreb* (Oxford: Oxford University Press), p.115.

networks and a strong sense of national identity, *Gemeinschaft* networks retained paramount salience: as Vandevalle concludes "Libyans continued overwhelmingly to identify themselves with family, tribe or region, or in a larger sense as part of an Islamic community of the faithful."[118]

There were two exceptions to this generally siloed atomization of society: the exiled opposition community; and the leadership of the Qaddafi regime. Both the exiled opposition community and the upper echelons of the regime developed inter-group social ties through professional experiences and shared struggles, solidified by inter-marriage, which transcended parochial family, tribal or local networks. These two groups would also play a key role in the transitional period.

4.1.4 Conclusion

The difficult process of authority-building experienced by the NTC is partly a result of the Libya's almost unique socio-institutional features. Libya's sociological landscape and historical socio-institutional legacies rendered the creation of an inclusive TA more complicated than in the Tunisian context. Libyans lacked a strong sense of national identity, meaning that the NTC had to seek to represent all Libyan regions and cities: this was complicated by the ongoing conflict and the absence of a clear selection mechanism. The lack of strong hierarchical institutionalized organizations made the identification and selection of constituencies and representatives difficult, leaving weak claims of local and tribal affiliation the only criteria for inclusion. Finally, Libyan culture and explicit government policies of social engineering meant that Libyan elites were not well connected to one another across the boundaries of tribe and kinship. The absence of these connections presented another hurdle for the NTC to overcome in attempting to build a sufficiently inclusive coalition to run the transition.

4.2 Governing coalition

I have just explained the weakness of the NTC's authority through the socio-institutional structure of the Libyan society which rendered the creation of an inclusive TA difficult. I have established in particular that the NTC's weak authority in Western and Southern Libya is partly explained by the failure to adequately represent of Western and Southern Libyan constituencies in the TA's structures and institutions at this time. I have also shown that, in the absence of

[118] Vandewalle, *History of Modern Libya*, p.41.

strong national organizations, geographic and tribal inclusivity was the only viable metric around which the TA could structure representation.

Despite these challenges, the NTC was able to establish and consolidate a degree of authority over the revolutionary movement. Its authority in Eastern Libya was relatively high, and no alternative TA emerged from among Western and Southern Libyan constituencies to contest its authority. In fact, immediately after the announcement of the NTC, revolutionaries from Misrata, Zintan and other towns in Western Libya announced their support for the TA.[119] What then explains the NTC relative success in constructing it authority? I suggest that the authority of the NTC, particularly in Cyrenaica, is a function of the relatively broad coalition of the principal socio-political components of the society that were integrated into the TA. This, coupled with the low likelihood of an alternative coalition emerging from among Western and Southern Libyan constituencies, due to the conflict in other parts of the country at this time, permitted the NTC to establish its political authority.

Lacher identifies four constituencies represented in the NTC: regime reformist/technocratic defectors; long-standing regime figures who defected; Benghazi intelligentsia and Eastern notables; exiled opposition leaders.[120] Bartu describes the NTC as "an eclectic mix of notable families, lawyers, academics, young activists, serving diplomats, former ministers and security chiefs, government reformers, and diaspora leaders, some of whom had long opposed Mu'ammar al-Qadhafi."[121] I have attempted to distinguish as much as possible between overlapping constituencies to reach a parsimonious description of the governing coalition represented within the NTC. So, for example, I found that "regime reformers" and "long-standing regime figures" often belonged to the same network and were long-term associates prior to the revolution in 2011. They were far less likely to be personally connected to the network of civil society activists or Islamists, for example. Consequently, I arrived at four constituencies assembled in the governing coalition of the NTC: i) civil society activists, ii) Eastern tribal representatives, iii) regime insiders; iv) political Islamists. Together, I argue, these four groups represented the principal socio-political constituencies active in opposition-held Libya at this time.

[119] Interviews with Abdelhafidh Ghoga (Tunis, 18 July 2019), Intissar Aghili (Istanbul, 30 September 2020), Mohamed Montassir (Istanbul, 30 September 2020) and Abdelrazak Madi (via WhatsApp, 12 October 2020).
[120] Lacher, *Libya's Fragmentation,* p.21. in Lacher, "Families, Tribes and Cities in the Libyan Revolution" he identifies two groups: The regime defectors, and "aristocratic and bourgeois families who had dominated Libya during the monarchy", p.142.
[121] Bartu, "Corridors of Uncertainty", p.31.

In bringing together these four groups the NTC had a sufficiently inclusive coalition to establish its authority in Cyrenaica and over the revolutionary movement.

4.2.1 Vanguard of civil society activists

At the beginning, the revolution in Benghazi was led by a small and narrow vanguard of civil society activists who were connected to one another and activists throughout the country from approximately 2006 onwards.

On 20 February, a group of lawyers, academics and professionals formed the 17 February Coalition in Benghazi. Although the 17 February Coalition formed spontaneously, the members of the coalition had pre-existing social ties, established through a number of civil society activities from 2006 onwards. February 17 Coalition members, Mehdi Kashbour and Salwa Dghreily, despite their later political differences, noted that they and many other members of the 17 February Coalition were active in the Committee for the Support of the People of Palestine, an organization tolerated by the regime because of Qaddafi's support for the Palestinian cause.[122] Engagement on the Palestinian cause "developed our interest in human rights more generally" and exposed the hypocrisy of the regime, which "derided the treatment of the Palestinian people while subjecting their own citizens to similar treatment".[123] Subsequently, some of members of this Committee formed a Union of Lawyers, which held its first internal elections on 11 October 2010.[124] This was a deliberately provocative act in Qaddafi's Libya, where no independent organizing was permitted.

A direct line existed between participation in these CSOs, subsequent membership of the February 17 coalition, and subsequent integration into the NTC: members of the February 17 Coalition formally represented in the NTC included Salwa Dghreily, Fathi Terbil, and later Intissar Aghili, Khalid Sayeh as well as Kashbour. The official rapporteur of the NTC, Mustapha Manea was another member of the February 17 Coalition. Kashbour served as the legal advisor of the NTC during this period.

Other future members of the NTC had also been engaged in anti-regime activism prior to the 2011 uprising. In June 1996 a mass killing took place in Abu Slim prison in Tripoli. An informal group of lawyers became involved in representing the families of the victims of the Abu Slim massacre and other forms of protest activities related to the killing, such as a sit-in

[122] Interviews with Mehdi Kashbour (Istanbul 29 September 2020) and Salwa Dghreily (via WhatsApp, 9 October 2020).
[123] Interview with Mehdi Kashbour (Istanbul, 29 September 2020).
[124] Documents provided to the author by Mehdi Kashbour on 10 August 2022.

calling for transparency and respect of the law. Fathi Terbil and Abdelhafidh Ghoga represented families of the Abu Slim victims before serving on the NTC. These connections between legal professionals transcended regional and tribal boundaries. Benghazi-based lawyers were in contact with Tripoli-based colleagues, such as Mohamed Allagui, who would become another member of the NTC and future Minister of Justice.[125]

The importance of pre-existing social ties in conditioning the composition of the TA during this period is therefore evident. A relatively small, but closely-connected group of activists and legal professionals played a key role in forming the NTC. These connections went beyond the limits of family, region and tribe: a rarity in Qaddafi-era Libya.

However, notwithstanding the importance of these personal and professional connections in helping establish and set-up the NTC, this network of legal professionals and CSOs in Libya was institutionally weak and numerically insignificant. Unlike in Tunisia, where political parties and CSOs formed the backbone of the TA, had the NTC sought to structure itself around such a coalition it is unlikely to have acquired and maintained its authority.

i. Eastern tribal representatives

Luckily the authority of the NTC did not have to rest on the support of a narrow coalition of civil society activists. In contrast to the HIROR which was dominated by CSOs and political parties, the principal structuring logic of the NTC was one of tribe and city. By bringing in the representatives of Cyrenaica's local councils, the NTC would instead rest upon support of the Eastern tribes to establish its political authority. Notables from these Eastern tribes had built each of the local councils in their areas and would directly nominate their representatives to join the NTC. While the search for representatives from the tribes and cities of Western Libya was problematic, the representatives from Eastern Libya enjoyed the strong backing of their constituencies.

The term 'tribe' is a much-disputed analytical concept in modern social sciences, particularly due to its problematic use and manipulation by colonial powers.[126] In his work on Tripolitania, Lahmar has suggested that tribes were a politically meaningless concept.[127] And, indeed, in my

[125] Interviews with Abdelhafidh Ghoga (Tunis, 18 July 2019), Mehdi Kashbour (Istanbul, 29 September 2020) and Salwa Dghreily (via WhatsApp, 9 October 2020).
[126] Hobsbawn, Eric and Terence Ranger, eds. (1983), *The Invention of Tradition* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press); Anderson, Benedict (1983), *Imagined Communities: Reflections on the Origin and Spread of Nationalism* (London: Verso Books).
[127] Lahmar, Mouldi (2006), "Libyens et Italiens en Tripolitaine (1911-1928), Paras. 43-46.

own research several Libyan figures disputed the importance of the tribe in modern Libya.[128] However, these critiques imply a narrow definition of tribe as segmentary organizations with clear hierarchical lineages and concepts of collective responsibility. Gellner suggests that this is only one form of tribal structure; other tribes are non-hierarchical social organizations with weak, quasi-elective or fully elective leadership: "their internal organization is based more on a balance of power than on its concentration."[129] This definition corresponds more closely to the tribes found in Libya. Tribes in Libya do not tend to have a clear, decisive and hereditary leadership; but rather a consultative, selected and crucially representative leadership. Lacher notes, for example, Zintan's 'tribal egalitarianism' in contrast to Misrata urban elitism.[130]

Despite this relative weakness, they do, however, form the dominant social structure in Libyan society: many Libyans identify with their tribe before political or other forms of affiliation.[131] Moreover, Gellner observed generally that in times of crisis a centralized leadership may coalesce in tribes otherwise governed collectively, writing that "the more important the group's external relations, the more centralized and effective its leadership is likely to be."[132] While during normal times the tribe in Libya may have functioned more as a social club or mutual aid society, during this crisis the institution took on a more explicitly political role.

Tribes in Libya trace their lineage to an (often apocryphal) common ancestor.[133] Each tribe is sub-divided into houses (*Beit*), which may compete for authority within the tribe; and many tribes are confederated into a larger tribal confederation. For example, the Cyrenaican Sa'adi Tribes are divided into the Harabi and Jabarna tribal confederations, based on the sons of Sa'adi.[134] The Harabi, for example, are then subdivided into Al-Obeidi, Al-Drsy, Al-Hassiyah etc. Within Al-Obeidi there are many *Beit* such as Beit Mariami, Ghaithi, Mansouri etc.[135]

[128] Interviews with Wanis Mabrouk (Istanbul, 29 September 2020), Othman Ben Sassi (via WhatsApp, 6 October 2020), Ahmed Abbar (via WhatsApp, 9 October 2020), Hana Gallal (via Whatsapp, 26 November 2020) and Ali Tarhouni (via WhatsApp, 13 October 2020).
[129] Gellner, Ernest (1990), "Tribalism and the State in the Middle East." in Khoury, Philip and Joseph Kostiner, eds., *Tribes and State Formation in the Middle East* (Berkeley: University of California Press), p.111.
[130] Lacher, *Libya's Fragmentation*, p.123.
[131] Anderson, "Libyan Anomalies", p.288; Vandewalle, *History of Modern Libya*, p.3; Obeidi, Amal (2001), *Political Culture in Libya* (Routledge, London), p.108.
[132] Gellner, "Tribalism and the State in the Middle East.", p.111. Also Clastres, Pierre (1987), *Society Against the State* (London: Zone Books), p.208.
[133] Sometimes genealogies were invented to legitimize and strengthen tribal alliances. Lacher, *Libya's Fragmentation*, p70.
[134] A third branch, the Awlad Ali, are primarily found in Egypt.
[135] Obeidi, *Political Culture in Libya*, pp.43-44.

Thus, the tribe in Libya represents the primary socio-political structure which serves to aggregate individuals into larger social units.

During the monarchy, decision-making was primarily in the hands of members of the Cyrenaican Sa'adi tribes. Members of these tribes were marginalized following Qaddafi's 1969 revolution: Qaddafi's September Revolution was, in this respect, a social revolution with less prominent tribes supporting Qaddafi to overthrow their tribal masters. Although Qaddafi was from a small, insignificant tribe (the Qadhadhfa), he initially ruled Libya through an alliance with the Magarha in Southern Libya and the Warfalla in Western Libya.[136] The General People's Committees drew heavily from these tribal bases of support.

Outside of this core troika of tribal supporters, the Qaddafi regime initially worked to weaken tribal structures. During the 1970s a new system of rural administration was created which deliberately ignored tribal boundaries and marginalized tribal leaders.[137] This proved unsuccessful, however, and in the late 1980s Qaddafi shifted strategy by instead seeking to co-opt prominent tribes and tribal leaders.[138] In 1994 Qaddafi established the Popular Social Leadership (PSL) which explicitly sought to control and represent the population through tribal structures. The PSL strengthened the role of tribes as the principal organizing unit of society, while simultaneously transforming and disrupting internal tribal hierarchies. Lacher highlights that the PSL elevated new leaders within the tribe to create a leadership with strong loyalty to the regime: "within the PSL, notables drawing on historical legitimacy had to compete with figures whose sole source of influence was the regime…The PSL therefore reproduced tribal divisions and fuelled rivalries over the claim to community leadership."[139]

The tribe was such a relevant socio-political unit that Mattes observed in the 1990s that "Whenever positions are to be filled in administrative committees or in political committees…or when political directions are to be approved, decisions are often made along tribal lines."[140] Recruitment and composition of security brigades was also conducted along tribal lines, usually with underprivileged tribes being recruited to police their erstwhile masters.[141] Only a few Libyan town and cities, including Derna and Misrata, do not have a

[136] Mattes, Hanspeter (2008), "Formal and Informal Authority in Libya since 1969" in Vandewalle, Dirk, ed. *Libya Since 1969* (New York: Palgrave Macmillan), p.72.
[137] Joffé, "Civil Resistance in Libya during the Arab Spring", p.121.
[138] Mattes, "Formal and Informal Authority in Libya since 1969", p.71.
[139] Lacher, *Libya's Fragmentation*, p.71.
[140] Mattes, "Formal and Informal Authority in Libya since 1969", p.71; Anderson, "Libyan Anomalies", p.301.
[141] Lacher, *Libya's Fragmentation*, p.71.

strong tribal identity.[142] These areas developed a strong collective identity as urban centres, partly due to their links to the Ottoman colonial power.[143] Interestingly, it is these areas where political ideology has some salience as an identifying distinction.

As noted above, in 2011 mobilization for and against the regime happened along tribal lines. Lacher notes, however, that this did not necessarily correspond to patterns of patronage and repression by the regime, highlighting what he calls the "myth of the marginalized cities and regions."[144] Rather the practice of 'tribal profiling', where the actions of members of the tribe are taken to reflect the hostility or loyalty of the whole tribe, created a mutually reinforcing process of tribal solidarity: "The fact that the Sia'an and Mashashiya were now collectively perceived as hostile by their rebellious neighbours, in turn, strengthened the case for taking up weapons in support of the regime."[145]

In this context, where the tribe was the principal organizing unit of society and many localities and districts were tribally homogenous, the decision to construct the NTC from the local councils in the East was synonymous with a decision to structure the NTC along tribal lines. Making the NTC inclusive of Eastern cities and towns, meant making the NTC representative of the Eastern tribes. In all the cases I identified from Cyrenaica, the NTC representatives were not formally elected but selected by local notables. In most cases, this meant selection as a representative of the dominant tribe in the area.[146]

Even in cases where the representative selected was not a member of the dominant tribe, because of intra-tribal conflicts, tribal leaders were involved in the selection of the representative. Othman Magarhi, who is not Obeidat, described the process of his nomination as the NTC representative of Tobruk (which is composed of a majority of Obeidat) to me: "Tobruk is a small city. There was a meeting on 18 February between the Tribal Shiekhs and the revolutionary Youth. They reached consensus on my nomination."[147] Although Mustapha Abdeljalil, the NTC's Chairman had served as Minister of Justice under Qaddafi, he was

[142] Besides tribe, the other important distinction in Libya is based on ethnicity. Most of the Libyan population self-identify as Arab, but the country also has significant minority populations of Tebu, Amazigh and Tuareg. Obeidi, *Political Culture in Libya*, pp.44-45.
[143] Chuprygin, Andrey and Valeriy Matrosov (2018), "The Effect of Dernisation: Political Stalemate in Libya" *Italian Institute for International Political Studies (ISPI).*
[144] Lacher, *Libya's Fragmentation*, p.73.
[145] *Ibid*, p.77.
[146] Interviews with Mehdi Kashbour (Istanbul, 29 September 2020) and Othman Magarhi (via Zoom, 19 October 2020).
[147] Interview with Othman Magarhi (via Zoom, 19 October 2020).

primarily selected "because he was a Barassa",[148] as a tribal sheikh,[149] and representative of Al-Bayda.[150] Moussa Koni, NTC member from Ubari, told me that "the Tribal lobby from the Green Mountains was more influential than the 17 February coalition guys"[151] and urban intellectuals such as Ghoga expressed frustration at being side-lined in decision-making by Mustapha Abdeljalil in favour of tribal considerations.[152]

Maintaining broad tribal support in Cyrenaica also played an important factor in the decision-making of the NTC and its executive office. Nagy Barakat, the NTC's Minister of Health, reported that his decisions about appointments and allocation of resources were filtered through a lens of tribal balance and patronage. He described this as "tribal management."[153]

Founding NTC member, Fathi Baja, also highlighted that the logic of "tribal balance" was central to the NTC's composition and decision-making.[154] Although, the geographic representation of the NTC was heavily skewed towards the East, attempts were made to redress this imbalance by including members of tribes traditionally from the West of Libya within the TA's leadership. Mahmoud Jibril, for example, although from Benghazi, was Warfalla, the largest tribe from Western Libya. This was seen by some as important for his appointment as interim prime minister.[155]

The principal structuring logic of the NTC was one of tribe and city. During this period, the NTC integrated representatives of Cyrenaican tribes into the TA. This broad representation of Cyrenaica's tribes explains the relatively high degree of authority the NTC enjoyed *within* Cyrenaica at this time.

4.2.2 Regime insiders

If tribal structures were the most salient and organized social structures in Libya, the network of the Qaddafi regime was the most organized *political* network, despite the idiosyncratic and anti-institutional nature of the Qaddafi regime. In the spring of 2011, the NTC actively incorporated regime insiders into their governing coalition. The inclusive approach to regime insiders at this time contributed to the successful authority-building of the TA.

[148] Interview with Ahmed Jehani (London, 17 May 2019).
[149] Interview with Moussa Kouni (Istanbul, 1 October 2020).
[150] Interview with Mustapha Abdeljalil (Montreux, 1 November 2019).
[151] Interview with Moussa Kouni (Istanbul, 1 October 2020).
[152] Interview with Abdelhafidh Ghoga (Tunis, 18 July 2019).
[153] Interview with Nagy Barakat (London, 18 March 2018).
[154] Interview with Fathi Baja (Tunis, 28 June 2019).
[155] Interviews with Wanis Mabrouk (Istanbul, 29 September 2020) and Moussa Kouni (Istanbul, 1 October 2020).

In September 1969, Qaddafi and a group of fellow Army officers launched a bloodless coup against the Sennousi Monarchy. In the immediate aftermath of the coup they established a Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) to run the country. By the mid-1970s many members of the RCC had become disillusioned and disaffected with Qaddafi's idiosyncratic vision and rule. Some, like Mukhtar Abdullah Qarawi and Mohamed Najm, resigned from the RCC; others, like Omar Al-Meheishi, attempted more drastic action, unsuccessfully attempting their own coup against the regime.[156] Such defections and betrayals led Qaddafi to turn towards more civilian leadership. In 1977 the General People's Congress adopted "Declaration on the Establishment of the Authority of the People". This document outlined the structure of the *Jamahiriya*, or State of the Masses, and included local Popular Committees and People's Congresses, with the General People's Congress and the General People's Committee serving at the legislative and executive branches of the state respectively.[157] These structures, along with the handful of professional organizations and the tribal-based PSL were the only structures for interest aggregation and collective decision-making tolerated by the state.

The dearth of alternative institutions, organizations and networks meant that, when the revolution began, it was former Qaddafi regime insiders who would rise to prominence in the leadership of the TA. In a state where all forms of social organizing which may present a threat to the regime are prohibited, the state structures themselves become the natural sites of oppositional organization if and when revolution comes.

As noted above, Abdeljalil and Jibril had been 'reformers' inside the regime. Jibril had a leading role in developing Seif Al-Islam's failed programme of economic and social reforms. Although this reform initiative failed to produce fundamental changes to the Libyan system, the importance of these various programmes in bringing a new cast of characters, including Jibril, into the public domain cannot be underestimated. Abdeljalil similarly rose to prominence by publicly challenging Qaddafi and standing up for the rule of law. Many future revolutionaries spoke to me about the exhilaration they felt watching Abdelalil criticize Qaddafi when he was Minister of Justice, an experience which emboldened them and lionized Abdeljalil in their eyes.[158] These former regime figures enjoyed public profiles that other opposition figures did not have: Revolutionary military leader, Abdelwahab Bel Gayed told

[156] Pargeter, *Libya*, p.75.
[157] *Ibid.* p.92.
[158] Also noted by Pargeter, *Libya*, p.232. Interviews with Hafed Gaddur (Rome, 10 January 2019), Faouzi Abdel Aal (Montreux, 31 October 2019) and Abdelrahman Shalgam (Rome, 7 January 2019).

me "80% of the opposition was unknown to those doing the revolution. The people only knew the regime figures."[159] Baja also said, "No one knew who we [revolutionaries] were. People in Tripoli knew Abdeljalil. That is why we chose him to lead."[160] The same logic applied to other figures, such as Jibril.

Regime figures also fulfilled a need for professionals with military, technical and bureaucratic experience. Pargeter writes:

> the main reason why these former regime figures ended up leading the opposition was that there were few other choices… the pool of qualified personnel with any experience of politics – let alone governing – was extremely limited... It was for this reason that the NTC ended up being composed mainly of technocrats and professionals, most of whom had been orbiting around Saif al-Islam's reformist circles.[161]

Most importantly, however, the opening heralded by Seif Al-Islam's reform initiatives allowed connections to be built *between* reform-minded Libyans, which would later be used in forming the TA's structures. For example, Jibril and Abdeljalil were connected to one another through this shared experience in trying to reform the regime.[162] Others from the Executive Committee had also participated in Seif Al-Islam's projects. Ahmed Jehani, for example, knew Jibril from the Economic Planning Council,[163] as did Ali Issawi.[164] The networks created by Seif Al-Islam's reform programmes were central to the subsequent construction of the TA.

But it was not just 'reformers' who defected in 2011; long-term regime insiders also defected and played important roles in the TA. Abdelfattah Younes was Minister of the Interior until his defection. He was a close friend and ally of Qaddafi. Similarly, Libya's Ambassador to the UN, Abdelrahman Shalgam, was a close ally of Qaddafi. However, the 'reformers' provided a bridge to these central regime figures and helped bring them into the TA. Shalgam told me that he knew Jibril since 1971.[165] Abdeljalil and Younes had worked together closely as Ministers of Justice and Interior respectively. The pre-existing ties of the regime insiders to one another transcended group divisions. Incorporating regime insiders into the TA therefore greatly

[159] Interview with Abdelwahab bel Gayed (Istanbul, 29 September 2020).
[160] Interview with Fathi Baja (Tunis, 28 June 2019).
[161] Pargeter, *Libya*, p.232.
[162] Interview with Mahmoud Jibril (Tunis, 5 December 2018).
[163] Interview with Ahmed Jehani (London, 17 May 2019).
[164] Interview with Mahmoud Jibril (Tunis, 5 December 2018).
[165] Interview with Abdelrahman Shalgam (Rome, 7 January 2019).

increased the NTC's inclusivity by bringing the most developed *Gesellschaft* network present in Libya at this time into the TA.

The network of former regime insiders was important in forming a coalition of support for the NTC. The unique historical context of Libya, where all other forms of political organizing were prohibited, meant that the networks and connections forged within regime structures were important in the formation of the NTC. Without the participation of the regime insiders, who were able to bridge geographic and tribal divides, it seems unlikely that the NTC would have assembled so large a coalition and establish its authority to the extent that it did.

4.2.3 Islamist political organizations

Libyan Islamic Scholar, Wanis Mabrouk told me: "there were only two organizations inside Libya: the *Lignan Thuwriya* [revolutionary committees of Qaddafi] and the Muslim Brotherhood."[166] Having seen the role of regime members in forming the coalition which backed the NTC, I will now turn to the Islamists.

The Libyan Muslim Brotherhood (MB) is the most well-known political organization in the landscape of Islamist opposition to Qaddafi. The MB has been present in Libya since 1958 when King Idriss Al-Sannousi granted several Egyptian MB members asylum.[167] The MB was banned by the Qaddafi regime, like all other forms of political organization, and members were subject to repression and imprisonment. The MB were unable to benefit from any political opening, however brief and limited, unlike *Ennahda* in Tunisia. As Pargeter notes "while the other North African regimes all flirted (to varying degrees) with strategies of 'accommodationism' towards the Islamist opposition, Qaddafi left no space whatsoever for those of an Islamist persuasion."[168] Moreover, unlike in Egypt, the Libyan MB were unable to recruit members through a mix of social and humanitarian activities.[169] Libya's massive oil wealth and distributive economic policy created a population without need of such basic assistance. According to one leader, the MB in Libya consisted of "no one inside the country

[166] Interview with Wanis Mabrouk (Istanbul, 29 September 2020).
[167] Pargeter, Alison (2013), *Return to the Shadows: The Muslim Brotherhood and An-Nahda since the Arab Spring* (London: Saqi Books), p.118; Trauthig, Inga Kristina (2018), "Ghosts of the Past: The Muslim Brotherhood and its Struggle for Legitimacy in post-Qaddafi Libya", *International Centre for the Study of Radicalisation (ICSR),* p.9.
[168] Pargeter, *Libya*, p.166.
[169] Vandevalle, *History of Modern Libya,* p.126; Fitzgerald, Mary, (2015) "Finding their Place: Libya's Islamists during and after the Revolution" in Cole, Peter and Brian McQuinn, eds., *The Libyan Revolution and its Aftermath*. (London: Hurst), p.178. For a comparative study see: Pargeter, Alison (2010), *The Muslim Brotherhood: The Burden of Tradition* (London: Saqi Books).

and no more than 200 outside of it".[170] As part of Seif Al-Islam's reform programme, MB prisoners were offered the opportunity to 'repent' in return for early release from prison. In March 2006, almost 100 MB members were released from prison.[171] This rapprochement with the regime would subsequently delegitimize the MB in the eyes of the Libyan revolutionary population, however in 2011 the MB enjoyed high regard among the revolutionary groups for their long-term opposition to the regime and the suffering they had endured.[172]

According to St John and others, Islamist opposition groups in Libya were opposed by tribal leaders. In 1997 the Qaddafi regime enacted a system of collective responsibility for tribes found to be harbouring Islamists, thus exacerbating hostile relations between tribes and Islamist organizations.[173] However, according to my findings, this hostility was nowhere in evidence in the first half of 2011. Many non-Islamist members of the NTC lamented the influence of Islamist NTC members over Mustapha Abdeljalil. They suggested that the MB were able to build a rapport with Abdeljalil because he was naïve and perceived them as "good Muslims".[174] This explanation of cultural affinity may have been true to some extent: Pargeter, for example, notes that, while the Islamist leadership often comes from Tripolitania, their support throughout the 1990s was found mainly in Eastern Libya, where the population was traditionally more conservative.[175]

However, another explanation of the important role played by the MB within the NTC was offered by former-MB NTC member, Abdelrazak Aredi, as well as other non-Islamist TA members. All pointed to the superior organization of the MB, relative to the organization of other constituencies, which granted them an outsized role in the decision-making of the TA. Aredi said, "I was active, and I submitted things in writing…Morning to evening I was sitting in my chair, so I affected policy." He added, "Out of 102 members [sic] only 33 members regularly attended meetings."[176] Montassir also noted the, "superior management and organization of the MB."[177] Despite beliefs to the contrary, only a small number of NTC members at this time could be accurately described as Islamists. Fitzgerald suggests that "the total official Brotherhood members in the NTC and its executive board numbered less than ten

[170] Pargeter, *Return to the Shadows,* p.125; ICG, *Making Sense of Libya,* p.20.
[171] Pargeter, *Libya,* p.203.
[172] Interview with Intissar Aghili (Istanbul, 30 September 2020).
[173] St John, *Libya,* p.254; Pargeter, *Libya,* p.169.
[174] Interview with Hassan Sghrir (via WhatsApp, 13 October 2020).
[175] Pargeter, *Libya,* p.170.
[176] Interview with Abdelrazak Aredi (Via WhatsApp, 17 October 2020).
[177] Interview with Mohamed Montassir (Istanbul, 30 September 2020). Also interviews with Ali Tarhouni (via WhatsApp, 13 October 2020) and Abdelwahab bel Gayed (Istanbul, 29 September 2020).

out of some 100".[178] Like in Tunisia, those with superior organizational structures were able to have an influence over the TA and the trajectory of the transition which belied their numerical representation.

The other major Islamist opposition group in Libya was the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG). The LIFG were officially formed in 1995 by Libyan veterans of the armed opposition to the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. The LIFG was an explicitly vanguardist organization which did not seek to establish a broad social base.[179] It ran a decade-long insurgency campaign against Qaddafi, including a failed assassination attempt in November 1996. LIFG members were also released as part of Seif Al-Islam's reform programme.[180] The LIFG played an active role in the battle against the regime but were far less involved in the politics of the NTC. There may be numerous explanations for this,[181] but the only LIFG leader interviewed, Abdelwahab Bel Gayed, suggested that the LIFG did not believe at this time that they would win the revolution: "It was only after it was clear that we could win the war that we started to think in political terms. This is when divisions between Islamists and the Secularists emerged."[182] The LIFG did not invest early in political activity because their focus was on the fight against Qaddafi. Later, the LIFG leader Abdelhakim Belhaj would establish the Tripoli Military Council outside of NTC control and contest the authority of the TA, as I will demonstrate in the next chapter.

The NTC at this time was a broad ideological tent which incorporated the Islamic opposition to Qaddafi.[183] Although the Islamist political opposition to Qaddafi was weak, the MB in particular were able to play an outsized role because of their superior organization and institutional structures.

4.3 Absence of alternative governing coalition

As I have demonstrated, the NTC represented a relatively broad coalition of socio-political constituencies, bringing together former regime insiders, the Islamist opposition to Qaddafi

[178] Fitzgerald, "Finding their Place", p.185. My analysis suggests that there were approximately 8-10 Islamists on the NTC during this period and sixteen in total.
[179] Interview with Abdelwahab bel Gayed (Istanbul, 29 September 2020).
[180] Pargeter, *Libya*, p.203.
[181] It was a strategic decision to exclude the LIFG from frontline political roles to avoid attracting international opposition. Fitzgerald, "Finding their Place", p.189.
[182] Interview with Abdelwahab bel Gayed (Istanbul, 29 September 2020).
[183] The term "broad tent" was used by Wanis Mabrouk. Interview with Wanis Mabrouk (Istanbul, 29 September 2020); Nayed noted the "inclusivity of the NTC" as one of its key legitimating factors. Interview with Aref Ali Nayed (Oxford, 12 December 2018).

and tribal representatives, particularly from Cyrenaica, as well as the vanguard of civil society activists. However, just as important as the inclusivity of the coalition assembled was the impossibility of an alternative coalition forming to contest the NTC's authority. The ongoing conflict in Western Libya precluded the emergence of a viable alternative coalition from among Western Libyan constituencies to contest the NTC's authority at this time.

It has been argued, however, that the NTC was disconnected from the revolutionary armed groups which contributed to the subsequent decline of the NTC's authority. The secular political opposition also did not play a significant role within the TA at this time. I will now examine the role of these two 'excluded' constituencies in the authority construction of the NTC.

4.3.1 Revolutionary Armed groups

The relationship of the revolutionary armed groups to the NTC has been a source of great academic interest and speculation. It has hitherto been concluded that the NTC exerted no command-and-control over the armed elements of the revolution.

The official NTC's military structures were headed by Generals Abdelfattah Younes and Omar Harari. The revolutionary brigades were distrustful of Younes and Harari due to their proximity to the former regime. There were also ideological differences between the professional soldiers and the revolutionary brigades, with the latter having a more Islamist inclination. This conflict between the NTC military structures and revolutionary brigades was laid bare by the assassination of Younes on 28 July 2011.

Highly localized armed groups also emerged in Western Libya at the early stages of the revolution. These groups were often composed of defected army officers leading relatively untrained civilian fighters, such as the Madani brigade from Zintan which was led by Mohamed Ali Madani, a former member of the Libyan special forces, until his death on 1 May 2011.[184] Lacher argues that "The NTC and its military leadership had few connections with these groups, and little to offer them."[185] Several NTC members lamented to me that they did not control the rebel forces. Nayed described the revolutionary armed forces as a "rag-tag army of

[184] Cristiani, Dario (2012), "The Zintan Militia and the Fragmented Libyan State", *Hot Issue* (19 January 2012) (Washington D.C.: Jamestown Foundation).
[185] Lacher, *Libya's Fragmentation*, p.22. Also, McQuinn, Brian (2013), "Assessing (In)security after the Arab Spring: The case of Libya", *PS: Political Science & Politics* (Vol.46, No.4), p.718.

multiple centers"[186], and Jibril claimed to me that the armed elements of the revolution were not under NTC's command-and-control.[187]

However, my research suggests that this view is overly simplistic and potentially ahistorical, failing to account for temporal and geographic variation in the authority of the NTC over armed elements of the revolution. This categorical perspective elides the complex interaction between the revolutionary fighters and the NTC. In fact, in keeping with the central finding of this thesis, the degree of authority enjoyed by the NTC among elements of the armed opposition to Qaddafi covaried with effective representation of the armed elements in NTC structures.

Mohamed Montassir, the NTC representative for Misrata, for example, while acknowledging that the revolutionary fighters were opposed to Younes' command, suggested that globally the revolutionaries respected the NTC members and worked with them. He described the NTC as "the political expression of the revolution". [188] Salwa Dghreily, while agreeing that the relationship subsequently deteriorated, described the revolutionary armed forces as "the armed wing of the NTC" during the period prior to the announcement of 'liberation'.[189] Hana Gallal, who was briefly NTC's Minister of Education before resigning in protest, while broadly critical of the NTC, suggested that "the NTC as a body did not control [the revolutionary armed groups] but individual members of the NTC controlled people with weapons…No one was in control of everyone, but every [armed] faction was affiliated to someone in the NTC."[190] Mehdi Kashbour similarly described how "arrangements were based on personal connections between revolutionaries and individual NTC members". As an example, he explained how he served as a liaison between revolutionary military commanders such as Wissam Ben Hamid, Ismail Sallabi and Mehdi Harati, and the NTC: "If Wissam needed something, he came to me and I arranged it with the depot. I also facilitated the recognition of Harati's brigade by the NTC."[191]

Other NTC members, such as Ali Qalma, were integrated precisely because of their role as military leaders. Qalma played a role in coordinating between the NTC and Barqa Waredeco, the Tebu military leader.[192] Faouzi Abdel Aal played a similar role as liaison between the NTC

[186] Interview with Aref Ali Nayed, (Oxford, 12 December 2018).
[187] Interview with Mahmoud Jibril (Tunis, 5 December 2018).
[188] Interview with Mohamed Montassir (Istanbul, 30 September 2020).
[189] Interview with Salwa Dghreily (via WhatsApp, 9 October 2020).
[190] Interview with Hana Gallal (via Whatsapp, 26 November 2020). The same view was expressed in an interview with Ahmed Abbar (via WhatsApp, 9 October 2020).
[191] Interview with Mehdi Kashbour (Istanbul, 29 September 2020).
[192] Interview with Ali Qalma (via WhatsApp, 12 October 2020).

and armed groups in Misrata.[193] Military leader, Abdelwahab Bel Gayed, also told me that he considered the NTC as legitimate and representative, and worked under its orders: there was a "sort of centralization" he said, describing the process of requesting authorization to import weapons from Sudan as an example.[194] Mustapha Sagesli, another military leader, told me that he ensured direct coordination between the NTC and his brigade, through personal connections with individual NTC members.[195]

While this may fall short of the level of command-and-control expected in a professional military structure, it is unfair to suggest that the NTC had no authority over the armed elements of the revolution at this time. During this initial period, both organic links and mutual respect existed between armed groups in Libya and the NTC and its members. This relationship began to deteriorate rapidly after the capture of Tripoli in August 2011, as we shall see in chapter 6. As I shall examine in detail in the next chapter, this lack of authority is a direct result of the shift in the NTC's composition, and the failure to successfully integrate effective representatives of Western Libya and the armed elements of the revolution into its governing coalition.

The NTC was relatively representative of the revolutionary armed groups operating in Eastern Libya and parts of Western and Southern Libya at this time and had *de facto* authority over them. This authority stemmed from the inclusion of representatives of these armed groups in the TA's structures at this time.

4.3.2 Secular political opposition

While the formation of political parties and CSOs was suppressed and rendered almost impossible inside Libya under Qaddafi, there was an active and vibrant political opposition among Libyans living abroad. Of the non-Islamist political opposition to Qaddafi, the National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NFSL) was the most organized and well-known organization. Founded in 1981 by former Libyan Ambassador to India, Mohamed Al-Magarief, the NFSL primarily recruited its members from the Libyan *émigré* population and Libyan students studying abroad. NFSL leaders were subject to continual harassment by the regime and were under the constant threat of assassination even while abroad. The NFSL launched several military operations inside Libya during the 1980s but failed to attract widespread popular support and was generally regarded to have weak social ties inside Libya. Vandevalle attributes

[193] Interview with Faouzi Abdel Aal (Montreux, 31 October 2019).
[194] Interview with Abdelwahab bel Gayed (Istanbul, 29 September 2020).
[195] Interview with Mustapha Sagesli (Istanbul, 29 March 2022).

that lack of popular opposition to the regime to the "depoliticization of the population and an atomization that took place as any type of organized activity was forbidden," also citing Qaddafi's personal appeal, the repressive apparatus of the state and the wholesale distributive economic approach as contributing factors.[196]

Although lacking deep roots within Libyan society, the NFSL had strong bonds between members, fostered by extensive inter-marriage across family lines. As I have noted, this differentiated this political group from the majority of Libyan society which practiced endogamy.[197] The NFSL thus formed "a dense social network that proved cohesive after many of the group's members returned to Libya in 2011."[198]

Although the NFSL was relatively absent from the TA at this time, as ICG observed,[199] they did not present a challenge to the authority of the NTC. The potential counterweight of the secular political opposition to the NTC could have been greater had they formed a united front with the Islamist political opposition, as happened in Tunisia through the National Council for the Protection of the Revolution (NCPR). However, unlike in Tunisia, attempts for Islamist-secular dialogue between opposition parties in Libya prior to the revolution had been unsuccessful. For example, the Libyan MB boycotted the 2005 National Libyan Opposition Conference in London.[200] Opposition platforms established in 2000 and 2003 failed to bridge the Islamist-secular divide and exhibited "ideological differences and factional disputes."[201]

The absence of strong pre-existing ties between the secular and Islamist political opposition, coupled with the ready integration of the Islamists into the revolutionary coalition, precluded the formation of an alternative governing coalition to challenge the authority of the NTC. The weak rootedness of the secular political opposition within Libyan society further diminished their capacity to present a challenge to the authority of the NTC.

4.4 Conclusion

The NTC's early rhetorical and practical steps to demonstrate that it represented all Libyans clearly show that the body viewed its inclusivity as central to the process of establishing its authority to govern. However, the unique socio-institutional structure of Libya presented

[196] Vandevalle, *History of Modern Libya,* p.126.
[197] Lacher, *Libya's Fragmentation.* p.110.
[198] *Ibid,* p.111.
[199] ICG, *Making Sense of Libya*, p.19.
[200] St John, *Libya.* p.254.
[201] *Ibid,* p.255.

significant hurdles to the NTC in forming the type of broad coalition central to the process of successful authority-building in other contexts.

The NTC did successfully bring together a reasonably broad coalition of socio-political constituencies, particularly from within Cyrenaica, the area of the country in which it was then operating. The NTC assembled a vanguard of civil society activists and intellectuals, former regime defectors, representatives of Eastern tribes and the Islamist political opposition. In the context of a highly fragmented and depoliticized society, the inclusion of former regime defectors and the Islamist political opposition meant that the NTC was inclusive of the principal structured political organizations in the country; the representation of Eastern tribes meant that the main social structures from Cyrenaica were represented. While its representation of Western and Southern Libya was imperfect, this coalition was sufficiently broad to establish the authority of the NTC to speak on behalf of the Libyan revolution.

At the same time, no alternative coalition could emerge from Western Libya due to the ongoing conflict. Claims that the NTC did not represent the armed components of the revolution speak to a reality which developed later. At this time, there were organic links between the armed components of the revolution and the NTC. The secular political opposition, by contrast, did not play a major role NTC structures at this time; however, their lack of deep roots in Libyan society and their ongoing divisions with the Islamist opposition meant that they were unable to form a viable alternative coalition to contest the NTC's authority.

5. Conclusion

The NTC was formed in the midst of the civil war which would force Muammar Qaddafi from power. The NTC was not a longstanding opposition platform, or a government-in-exile, poised to assume power. The NTC was cobbled together from the tiny vanguard of civil society actors who were active inside Libyan and formed the February 17 Coalition, those who defected from the Qaddafi regime, and the representatives of Eastern tribes who had formed local councils to run their cities following the regime's defeat in Cyrenaica. Others were added later in a more haphazard and *ad-hoc* fashion: their links to the constituencies they were purported to represent exhibiting significant variation. Yet, the NTC was able to position itself as the voice of the Libyan revolution on the international stage and establish itself as the only legitimate political authority in the country, drafting the Constitutional Declaration which would remain the principal legal reference in Libya more than a decade later.

Both the weakness and the strength of the TA's political authority are explained by nature of the coalition assembled behind it. The NTC was relatively inclusive of the principal socio-political constituencies of Cyreanica. Even the armed components of the revolution had organic links and pre-existing social relations with individual members of the NTC. Although the NTC was less representative of the main actors in Western Libya, these actors were in no place to mount a challenge to the NTC's political authority during the civil war. Therefore, the NTC enjoyed a six-month period in which to establish and consolidate its authority.

However, the process of authority recognition in Libya would never be as smooth as that witnessed in Tunisia or in some other contexts. The unique history and sociology of Libyan society had decimated or prevented the emergence of the strong, hierarchical organizations for interest aggregation and collective decision-making which facilitate smooth authority recognition from key constituencies. The TA in Libya was necessarily constructed on the far weaker foundations of amorphous and non-hierarchical networks of region, city and tribe. Thus, although they sought to be as inclusive as possible, their authority would always remain contingent and subject to continual renegotiation.

In the following chapter, I will examine the main challenges the NTC faced following the announcement of the liberation of Libya in October 2011, when the lack of sufficient representation of socio-political constituencies from Tripolitania would become a major stumbling block for the NTC's continued ability to govern.

Chapter 6: The Post-'Liberation' NTC in Libya

1. Introduction

Contestation of the NTC's authority increased after its relocation to Tripoli in August 2011; the TA's authority continued to decline until the General National Congress (GNC) elections of July 2012. Its political and legislative decisions were contested, parallel elections were organized at the local level, and the NTC lost what precarious control it had over the use of armed force. The trajectory of the NTC's authority is *a priori* puzzling. The defeat of the Qaddafi regime and the revolution's triumph could have ushered in a period of consolidation of the NTC's authority. By removing Qaddafi and forcing his regime from power, the NTC had achieved what it had set out to do. The NTC garnered further international recognition from states that had been reluctant to recognise the NTC prior to Qaddafi's demise. Moreover, the NTC gained control over the substantial state coffers and access to the organs of state power located in the capital. However, rather than riding high, this period saw increased protests, insecurity and contestation of the NTC's rule.

I argue that the declining authority of the NTC during this period can be attributed to the composition of the TA. While the TA had strong representation of the principal socio-political constituencies in Cyrenaica, as I have demonstrated, the representation of groups from Western Libya was far weaker. Rather than redress this balance when it took over the remainder of the country, the NTC decided to draw heavily upon former exiles who had weak connections on the ground. The NTC further narrowed its base by alienating members of the former regime and doing little to court the revolutionary armed groups that had succeeded militarily in overcoming Qaddafi. With such a narrow base of support, the likelihood that the NTC's authority to govern would be contested was increased.

2. Context

The authority of the NTC and its executive branch began to precipitously decline almost as soon as it relocated to Tripoli on 26 August 2011.[1] Disputes raged over the leadership of the army, control over the capital, and the distribution of material benefits to revolutionary armed groups. Such issues had plagued the NTC from its inception, but contestation also began to target substantive areas in which the NTC had previously enjoyed relatively unanimous authority: contestation occurred concerning the composition of the government and over the legislative decisions of the NTC. Meanwhile, political action, notably local elections, began to

[1] Childs, Nick, "Libya: Transitional Council Moves to War-torn Tripoli", *BBC News* (26 August 2011).

take place outside of the framework established by the NTC. This period culminated in the election of the GNC, which, although hailed at the time for the conditions of relative security in which it was held, produced a body which was divided, ineffective and discredited from the outset despite its 'democratic legitimacy' as an elected body.

2.1 Internecine conflict and general insecurity

Unlike in many civil wars, the rebel movement in Libya quickly succeeded in eliminating regime forces as an effective military threat. The regime's military resistance died with Qaddafi. This defeat of their erstwhile enemies did not, however, translate into a monopolization of control over coercive force by the NTC. Various rival structures were created to claim authority over security provision, and the NTC struggled to retain the support of their previous allies among the armed components of the revolution.

Following the battle for Tripoli, former emir of the LIFG, Abdelhakim Belhaj, established a Tripoli Military Council to manage security in the capital. This was a parallel structure to the NTC's Supreme Security Committee (SSC), which was also created to oversee security in Tripoli. The SSC provided payments to the groups who registered with it but did not seek to integrate them into a coherent structure as individuals, electing to make payments at the brigade level. This created strong incentives to inflate the number of people under arms and did little to bring armed actors under NTC command-and-control. As Lacher concludes, "Neither Belhadj's council nor the SSC succeeded in concentrating authority over the plethora of armed groups that formed in Tripoli. Many retained close ties to their towns of origin – Misrata or towns in the Nafusa Mountains – while others adhered to particular strands of Islamism."[2]

In November 2011, the SSC was transformed into a nationwide institution under the Ministry of Interior and by August 2012 had ballooned to an estimated 149,000 people.[3] The SSC was a brazen attempt by the NTC to placate the armed revolutionary elements through financial incentives and patronage. The Ministry of Defence created a parallel body called the Libyan Shield Force which was formed in June 2012.[4] Like the SSC, fighters were integrated as part of their existing armed groups, maintaining their internal structures and loyalties. Thus, rather

[2] Lacher, Wolfram (2020), *Libya's Fragmentation: Structure and Process in Violent Conflict* (London: I.B. Tauris), p.24.
[3] Lacher, Wolfram and Peter Cole (2014), *Politics by Other Means: Conflicting Interests in Libya's Security Sector*, Working Paper No.20 (Small Arms Survey, Geneva), p.31.
[4] *Idem.*

than using patronage to consolidate their control over the armed components of the revolution, the NTC lost what authority it had over the armed forces.

This had consequences for stability and security in the country. Regular clashes occurred between revolutionary groups and communities associated with the former regime. For example, clashes in Sabha between the Awlad Suleiman tribe and the Tebu inhabitants killed upwards of 150 people in early 2012.[5] Similarly, clashes were seen between the towns of Zwara and Jmeil, near the Tunisian border, between Tebu and Zway inhabitants of the South-eastern city of Kufra, and between Zintan and Mashashiya in the Nafusa Mountains.[6] Forced displacement, often of entire communities, also took place, notably the expulsion of the Tuareg population of Ghadames and the displacement of the entire town of Tawerga, near Misrata.[7] Tawergans were subsequently subject to attacks, forced disappearances and harassment while in makeshift IDP camps.[8] The NTC did not condone these actions but were helpless to stop them.

In a further display of the general breakdown of security, incidents of violence against members of the diplomatic community also increased during this period. For example, the UK Ambassador's convoy was attacked in Benghazi on 11 June 2012, injuring two of his bodyguards.[9] This attack, one of a spate of attacks targeting foreign representatives, presaged the assassination of US Ambassador Chris Stevens in September 2012.

From late 2011 until the end of the NTC's reign, violent conflict and fragmentation of revolutionary forces on the ground mirrored persistent conflict over the leadership of the Libyan armed forces. For example, Khalifa Hafter, after seeking the leadership of the army during the period of Abdelfattah Younes' command, was elevated to the position of chief-of-staff on 17 November 2011. His appointment was met with widespread opposition, and a convoy carrying Hafter was attacked by Zintani forces when approaching Tripoli airport on 10 December 2011. Hafter was replaced by Youcef Mangoush on 3 January 2012, but this

[5] Gumuchian, Marie-Louise, "UPDATE 2-Libyan PM Visits Scene of Tribal Clashes in Desert", *Reuters* (1 April 2012).
[6] ICG (2012), *Divided We Stand: Libya's Enduring Conflicts*, Middle East and North Africa Report No.130, p.26.
[7] Dagher, Sam, "Libya City Torn by Tribal Feud", *Wall Street Journal* (21 June 2011).
[8] Human Rights Watch (HRW), "Libya: Bolster Security at Tawergha Camps" (5 March 2012).
[9] Al-Tommy, Mohammed, "British Envoy's Convoy Ambushed in Libya, Two Wounded", *Reuters* (11 June 2012).

appointment also met with opposition from some constituencies in Cyrenaica, who felt a fellow member of the Obeidi tribe should replace the slain General Younes.[10]

During the civil war against Qaddafi, the NTC had only had weak command-and-control over the armed forces but had been able to use personal connections and moral authority to retain a degree of coherence, discipline and strategic direction over the armed elements of the revolution. This function disappeared in the autumn of 2011. The reasons for the loss of this authority are fully explored below.

2.2 Appointment of El-Kieb

The authority of the executive branch of the NTC was also contested at this time. In the face of widespread criticism and attacks, Mahmoud Jibril announced in early October 2011 that he would resign as Prime Minister following the liberation of Sirte.[11] On 31 October, Abdurahim El-Kieb was appointed to replace Jibril. El-Kieb was a professor of electrical engineering who had lived and worked abroad in the United States for most of his life. He was originally from Tripoli, which was seen as key to his appointment, to counterbalance the Eastern bloc within the NTC.[12]

In forming his cabinet, El-Kieb decided to avoid all those who had worked with the former regime and to privilege professional expertise over identity or tribal affiliation. This approach led to protests from several quarters upon the announcement of his cabinet on 23 November. Members of tribes from the East, notably the Awaguir and the Magharba tribes, protested their 'exclusion' from the government.[13] The Amazigh too protested that they were not represented.[14] El-Kieb's cabinet was also seen as excluding Islamists.[15] Abdeljalil sought to defend El-Kieb stating: "We didn't intentionally exclude or marginalise any entity or any place or any region or any ethnicity. Libya, on the contrary, is for everybody."[16] However, in pursuing a cabinet based on professional expertise, while simultaneously excluding all those who had worked with the Qaddafi regime, El-Kieb was forced to rely heavily on the tiny

[10] Cristiani, Dario (2012), "The Zintan Militia and the Fragmented Libyan State", *Hot Issue* (19 January 2012) (Washington D.C.: Jamestown Foundation).
[11] Al-Jazeera, "Jibril Vows to Quit after Libya 'Liberation'" (4 October 2011).
[12] Kirkpatrick, David, "Libya Names an Engineer as Premier", *New York Times* (31 October 2011); Interview with Salem El-Hassi (Tunis, 2 December 2019).
[13] Lowe, Christian, and Francois Murphy, "Libyan Tribes Protest at New Government Line-up", *Reuters* (23 November 2011).
[14] McBain, Sophie, "The Voice of Libya's Minorities", *New Statesman* (28 November 2011).
[15] Stephen, Chris and Luke Harding, "Libyan PM Snubs Islamists with Cabinet to Please Western Backers", *The Guardian* (22 November 2011). Although Islamists had more positions in El-Kieb's Government than they did in Jibril's Executive Bureau, according to my analysis.
[16] Lowe and Murphy, "Libyan tribes protest at new government line-up".

expatriate constituency of the non-Islamist opposition to which he belonged. Lacher notes that, "Most ministers were technocrats, many of them – like [El-Kieb] himself – former exiles without a local power base."[17] As I shall discuss, this decision had significant consequences for the TA's political authority.

The TA also faced immediate challenges to its authority from those frustrated with the perceived lack of progress or material benefits from the revolution. On 9 November, armed protesters surrounded the Ministry of Finance while El-Kieb was holding meetings there, demanding money and jobs.[18] El-Kieb was able to defuse the situation, but this incident reflected the beginning of a pattern of the threat of armed violence being deployed against the TA to secure policy changes.

Such protests were not confined to Tripoli: in Benghazi, after several weeks of protests, a crowd stormed the NTC headquarters on 21 January 2012. Abdeljalil sought to calm the crowd but was forced to flee after plastic bottles were thrown at him.[19] The building was then ransacked.[20] Abdelhafidh Ghoga resigned in the wake of the attack, having survived several assassination attempts himself.[21] Such mass protests and acts of violence demonstrate the extent to which the population had lost confidence in the NTC and its government.

2.3 Electoral law

One of the main tasks of the NTC was to organize the election of the GNC, which would be tasked with drafting a permanent new constitution for Libya. It was understood, based on Article 30 of the Constitutional Declaration adopted by the NTC, that the Constitution would be drafted by a Constitution Drafting Assembly (CDA) selected by the GNC. The Constitutional Declaration was ambiguous as to whether this CDA would be formed from among the GNC members or would be a separate body which would present a draft to the GNC. In order to advance towards elections, the NTC needed to adopt key pieces of legislation allowing for the elections to take place, most importantly the electoral law. However, the NTC's authority to promulgate legislation also began to be hotly contested around this period.

The NTC adopted the electoral law for the GNC on 28 January 2012. In an effort to appease all constituencies they created a highly unusual electoral system: the system was designed to

[17] Lacher, *Libya's Fragmentation*, p.25.
[18] Holmes, Oliver, "New Libyan PM Seeks Cash, Reassures Fighters", *Reuters* (9 November 2011).
[19] Al-Tommy Mohammed, "Protesters Storm Libyan Government HQ in Benghazi", *Reuters* (22 January 2012).
[20] *BBC News*, "Libya: NTC Deputy Chief Abdel Hafiz Ghoga Resigns" (22 January 2012).
[21] *Al-Jazeera*, "Deputy Head of Libya's NTC Resigns" (22 January 2012); Interview with Abdelhafidh Ghoga (Tunis, 18 July 2019).

appease both national political parties and individual candidates with local constituencies;[22] it also sought to ensure acceptable representation of all regions, without totally abandoning the notion of representation proportionate to population. According to the law, the GNC would be composed of 120 individuals elected by a majority system in single-member districts and 80 list-based seats elected by proportional representation in multi-member districts.[23] The 200-seat GNC would be made up of 100 members from Tripolitania, 60 from Cyrenaica and 40 from Fezzan.

The electoral law immediately inspired protests from several constituencies. The Amazigh minority protested the absence of a specific quota of minority seats.[24] Tebu protested their disenfranchisement due to proof of citizenship requirements.[25] The most serious challenge to the electoral law, however, came from the so-called 'federalists' in Cyrenaica. On 6 March, a group calling itself the Cyrenaican Regional Transitional Council held its first public rally. The group called for a return to the system of federalism found in the 1951 Constitution and opposed the NTC's electoral law. Ironically, the Head of the Cyrenaican Regional Transitional Council, Ahmed Zubayr Al-Sennousi, was also a founding member of the NTC.[26] Other former members of the NTC's Executive Bureau, such as Belgasem Nimr, were also leading figures in the federalist movement.[27] Between March and the elections the federalists would conduct several mid-sized protests, acts of vandalism, violence and civil disobedience, but would never garner widespread support.[28] In spite of their relatively limited spoiler potential, the NTC sought to address the federalists' demands. The NTC's capitulation only aggravated the situation.

The NTC first decided in March 2012 that the composition of the CDA would be geographically balanced between Libya's three historic regions, meaning that, while the GNC would have stronger representation from Western Libya, due to its population, this important sub-body would have geographically equal representation. While this, in principle, suggests a minor and insignificant token acknowledgement of Libya's historic administrative division, in

[22] Pack, Jason and Haley Cook. (2015), "The July 2012 Election and the Origin of Post-Qadhafi Appeasement", *Middle East Journal* (Vol. 69, No.2), p.183.
[23] Law No. 4 of 2012 on the Election of the General National Congress (28 January 2012), Articles 5, 6 and 7.
[24] Cousins, Michel, "Amazigh Demonstrations in Zuara", *Libyan Herald* (29 March 2012).
[25] Pack and Cook, "The July 2012 Election and the Origin of Post-Qadhafi Appeasement", p.188.
[26] Sadiki, Larbi, "Libya's New 'Feds': The Call of Cyrenaica", *Al-Jazeera* (7 March 2012).
[27] Interview with Belgasem Nimr (Montreux, 30 October 2019).
[28] Pack and Cook, "The July 2012 Election and the Origin of Post-Qadhafi Appeasement", pp.185-6.

reality it reflected an important concession to the hitherto marginal 'federalist' movement in Cyrenaica.[29]

The second amendment was more evidently far-reaching in its impact. Less than 48 hours before the election of the GNC, under pressure from his Eastern constituency, Abdeljalil announced that the CDA would no longer be appointed by the GNC. Instead, a second direct election would be held for the constituent assembly. This effectively robbed the GNC of its core function of appointing a committee to draft the constitution. Abdelhafidh Ghoga estimates that only 37 members of the NTC (or 1/3) voted on this decision to amend the Constitutional Declaration despite the official requirement of a 2/3 majority.[30] Abdeljalil himself told me that only one other member of the NTC was in attendance during his negotiation with the federalists along with 13 representatives of the Eastern tribes.[31] The last-minute amendment to the Constitutional Declaration sent a terrible signal both to GNC candidates, who witnessed their democratic mandate being usurped by an unelected TA, and to minority interest groups in Libya who would learn that rules could be changed in their favour if they applied sufficient pressure.[32]

Abdeljalil characterized the decision as a necessary measure to prevent division and conflict in Libya, however the federalist movement was far outnumbered by those in favour of allowing elections to go ahead, including among armed segments of the society.[33] The federalist plan, had their concessions not been met, was to break into polling stations and burn the ballot boxes.[34] In retrospect, the degree of disruption the federalists would have generated pales into insignificance against the disruption generated by the decision to organize a second direct election, which would eventually take place in February 2014, with a far lower turnout and amid an even less propitious political and security environment.[35]

[29] Kane, Sean, "Federalism and Fragmentation in Libya? Not So Fast…" *Middle East Channel – Foreign Policy* (20 March 2012); Kane, Sean (2015), "Barqa Reborn? Eastern Federalism and Libya's Political Transition", in Cole, Peter and Brian McQuinn, eds., *The Libyan Revolution and its Aftermath*. (London: Hurst), p.227.
[30] Interview with Abdelhafidh Ghoga (Tunis, 18 July 2019).
[31] Interview with Mustapha Abdeljalil (Montreux, 1 November 2019).
[32] Interview with Ahmed Abbar (via WhatsApp, 9 October 2020).
[33] *Idem;* Kane, "Federalism and Fragmentation in Libya?"; Kane, "Barqa Reborn?", p.224.
[34] Interview with Belgasem Nimr (Montreux, 30 October 2019).
[35] Laessing, Ulf and Ghraith Shennib, "Poor Turnout in Libyan Vote for Constitution-drafting Body", *Reuters* (20 February 2014); Gall, Carlotta, "Libyan Vote on Charter Assembly Is Marred by Violence and Low Turnout", *New York Times* (20 February 2014).

2.4 Local councils

The NTC began as an assembly of local councils formed to govern 'liberated' areas. However, these local councils were unelected and sometimes contested institutions. As the civil war ended, several of the local councils, which had formed the embryonic backbone of the NTC, were reformed and renewed. In Libya's first democratic elections in over 40 years, local elections were held for the Misrata municipal council on 20 February 2012.[36] Local elections were also held in Benghazi on 19 May 2012.[37] Other Libyan cities and towns followed suit by holding elections for their municipal councils.[38]

While these polls were an important democratic exercise in post-Qaddafi Libya, they did nothing to renew and reinforce the authority of the NTC. The local elections were held without NTC support and were not conducted under any legal framework established by the NTC.[39] It was hoped that the NTC's composition might be altered to incorporate these elected officials as representatives of their cities; but such calls were not heeded, due to opposition from figures inside the NTC.[40]

In one of its last legislative acts, the NTC responded to the outpouring of local democratic spirit with Law 59 on the Local Administration System on 18 July 2012. This law sought to neuter the municipal councils and strip them of all important functions. Law 59 states, for example, that one of the main functions of municipal councils is to "Oversee local cultural activity, celebrations and festivals."[41] The weak powers granted to the municipal councils belied the important function local councils played in providing public services and ensuring security during the revolution and in the immediate post-Qaddafi period and signalled an intention to return to stifling centralized governance.[42]

The holding of independently organized local elections in Libya served to underscore the lack of the NTC's political authority; and the NTC's reaction to this development undermined this authority still further.

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[36] Hamuda, Hassan, "Libyans Queue for First Vote in Battle-hit Misrata", *Reuters* (21 February 2012).
[37] *BBC News*, "Libyan Voters Head to the Polls in Benghazi Local Elections" (19 May 2012).
[38] Romanet-Perroux, Jean-Louis. *et al*. (2017), *Libyan Local Governance Case Studies*, European Union Delegation to Libya.
[39] Although Abdeljalil attended the swearing in of the new elected councils in both Misrata and Benghazi.
[40] Harmala, Jason (2012), "Libya's Transition: The Current State of Play", *Atlantic Council*, p.6.
[41] Law 59 on the Local Administration System of 2012 (18 July 2012), Article 12.
[42] Megerisi, Tarek (2018), *Order from Chaos: Stabilising Libya the Local Way*, Policy Brief: European Council on Foreign Relations; Romanet-Perroux, *Libyan Local Governance Case Studies*.

Similarly, regime stronghold Bani Walid began to buck against the local council which had been imposed upon it by the NTC. On 23 January 2012, armed citizens of Bani Walid forced the NTC-backed council and associated military units to withdraw from Bani Walid. They announced their own 'social council' composed of elders from the Warfalla tribe, who formed the vast majority of the city's inhabitants.[43] The social council was formed based on representation of the tribe's five sections.[44] This underlines the importance of social consent for the authority of the NTC to hold. The NTC accepted the *de facto* rule of the social council, but Bani Walid was physically and politically isolated until the GNC launched a bloody military operation to re-take control of the city in October 2012.[45]

2.5 GNC elections and aftermath

The GNC elections took place on 7 July 2012 in conditions of relative security and stability. Turnout was approximately 60% and there were no major security incidents on polling day.[46] On 9 August, the NTC peacefully handed over power to the elected GNC and the period of the TA's rule ended for the purposes of this thesis.[47]

However, this surface success masked deeper structural problems stemming from the election. Legacies of the NTC's actions and decisions during their final months in office plagued the newly elected legislature. The electoral system, designed to placate several constituencies, created a fragmented body composed mainly of individuals without pre-existing connections to one another: 120 seats were reserved for individuals in single-member districts. Of the 80 list-based seats the largest number was won by the National Forces Alliance of Mahmoud Jibril, which took 39 of the 80 list-based seats; their nearest rival, the Muslim Brotherhood (MB)-aligned, Justice and Construction Party, won 17.[48] Neither party could hope to govern alone, and a complex process of alliance-building among the atomized individual-seat members began. The National Forces Alliance itself was a loose coalition quickly cobbled together with little unifying ideology.

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[43] *Reuters*, "Libyan Government Concedes to Restive Town's Demands" (25 January 2012).
[44] Lacher, *Libya's Fragmentation*, p.90.
[45] Gumuchian, Marie-Louise and Hadeel Al-Shalchi, "Capture of Libyan town Smacks of Revenge, not Reconciliation", *Reuters* (26 October 2012).
[46] Mezran, Karim (2012), "Libya Has Successful Elections but Not Yet Democracy", *Atlantic Council*; *BBC News*, "Libya Election: High Turnout in Historic Vote" (7 July 2012).
[47] Gumuchian, Marie-Louise and Ali Shuaib, "Libya's Ruling Council Hands over Power to New Assembly", *Reuters* (9 August 2011). Many consider that Libya is in political transition until today, given the lack of a permanent Constitution.
[48] *Idem.*

The fragmentation of the GNC prevented the first Prime Minister-elect Mustapha Abushagur from forming a government. The GNC rejected his proposed government on 3 October, and Abushagur was then subsequently dismissed by the GNC on 7 October.[49] It was not until 31 October 2012, more than three months after the elections, that the GNC would approve the cabinet of Prime Minister Ali Zeidan. This vote too was marred by protests and violence, after protesters stormed the GNC in opposition to the government line-up. [50] The CDA would not be elected until February 2014, meaning work on the permanent Constitution was delayed. More than ten years after the fall of Qaddafi, Libya still did not have a permanent constitution.

Unfortunately, the legacy of the NTC was the creation of a divided political system in which the use of violence was a necessary and acceptable means to gain political concessions. Some leading figures now believe that the rush to elect the GNC was a mistake,[51] and that the electoral system prohibited the formation of an effective government and perpetuated parochial identity politics based on tribe, region and city of origin.[52]

2.6 Conclusion

The preceding narrative has demonstrated how the NTC's authority fell from the heights of August 2011, when the Constitutional Declaration was adopted and Tripoli captured, to the point where no decision could be undertaken without eliciting protests and violence. Armed protesters forced policy changes, insecurity prevailed throughout the country, laws were contested and then revised, and local elections were held outside of the NTC's control. By the end of its tenure, the political authority of the NTC was highly contested and precarious. What explains this contestation and decline of the TA's authority?

3. Existing explanations

Given the success of the NTC in unseating the regime and securing control over the levers of state power, one may have expected that the TA would have begun to expand and consolidate its authority during this period. Instead, the opposite was witnessed: increasing insecurity, contestation and blockage. I will now seek to establish the extent to which this declining authority can be attributed to changes in the factors traditionally perceived to be key to

[49] *The Guardian*, "Libyan Prime Minister Mustafa Abu Shagur Dismissed" (7 October 2012).
[50] Grant, George, "Congress Votes to Approve Zeidan Government; Six Members Referred to Integrity Commission", *Libyan Herald* (31 October 2012).
[51] Interviews with Hassan Sghrir (via WhatsApp, 13 October 2020), Nagy Barakat (London, 18 March 2018), Othman Ben Sassi (via WhatsApp, 6 October 2020), Guma Gamaty (London, 4 December 2018) and Mahmoud Jibril (Tunis, 5 December 2018).
[52] Interview with Hafed Gaddur (Rome, 2 January 2019).

successful authority-building. I argue that variation in these factors does not adequately explain the contestation of the TA's authority witnessed during this phase of the political transition.

3.1 Revolutionary legitimacy

As described in Chapter 5, the NTC was initially composed of a broad coalition of former regime supporters and opposition activists, mainly from the East of the country. While this composition was accepted during the active phase of the civil war, when the rebels were happy to accept support from all quarters, such toleration of former regime defectors may have begun to rub when it became clear that the battle against Qaddafi had been won. Several NTC members spoke about how the previous "naively" welcoming atmosphere gave way to a more suspicious and less inclusive spirit in the Autumn of 2011.[53] And, indeed, the period witnessed numerous protests and accusations opposing the appointment of Qaddafi-era officials to posts in the TA. Such protests targeted everyone from long-term opposition figures like Hafter to officials who had remained as moles inside the regime until its fall, such as Albaranni Skhal.[54] Can the lack of revolutionary legitimacy account for the declining authority of the TA during this phase of the transition?

In fact, the NTC's revolutionary credentials were bolstered during this period through the use of legislation targeting the former regime and indemnifying revolutionaries, as well as changes to personnel removing those associated with the former regime from key posts. For example, in May 2012, the NTC passed legislation which targeted those associated with the former regime, such as Law 37 "on the criminalization of glorification of the tyrant", which provided for the imprisonment of those "lauding and glorifying" Qaddafi, his children, regime, and ideas.[55] At the same time, the NTC also indemnified those who had fought for the revolution through Law 38 which gave a blanket amnesty for crimes carried out "by revolutionaries to save or protect the revolution.".[56] As I shall show in detail below, the Government of El-Kieb was stripped of all elements who had worked under the former regime: it was a technocratic body composed primarily of opposition exiles. The expansion of the NTC from August to December 2011 was also conducted with the criteria of revolutionary participation as a *sine qua non* for inclusion: this explains, for example, the appointment of revolutionary figures such

[53] Interviews with Intissar Aghili (Istanbul, 30 September 2020) and Salwa Dghreily (via WhatsApp, 9 October 2020). Also Interview with Wanis Mabrouk (Istanbul, 29 September 2020).
[54] Stephen, Chris, "Misrata Rebels Defy Libya's New Regime", *The Guardian* (29 August 2011).
[55] Law 37 of 2012 on Criminalization of Glorification of the Tyrant (2 May 2012). This law was challenged as unconstitutional and eventually struck down by the Supreme court. Harmala, "Libya's Transition", p.2.
[56] Law 38 of 2012 on some procedures concerning transitional justice (2 May 2012).

as Mohamed Al-Ramash and Mbarak Al-Futumi, to 'represent' regime strongholds, Sirte and Bani Walid respectively.

Thus, if the NTC's authority could be explained by revolutionary legitimacy, I would expect its authority to increase during this period. Revolutionary credentials cannot therefore explain the variation in the authority of the NTC between its first and second phases.

3.2 Legal-rational or Input legitimacy

Another possible explanation for the declining authority of the NTC is that the population were willing to accept unelected and self-appointed representatives during the conflict but began to quickly demand greater legal and democratic accountability from their representatives following Qaddafi's defeat. The NTC's lack of legal-rational and input legitimacy for its initial composition may have come back to haunt the TA.

Such an explanation would account for the enthusiasm with which Misratis organized their local elections in February 2012, and the population's chagrin at the refusal of their NTC members to be replaced by these newly elected officials.[57] It would also explain the enthusiasm with which other cities began to prepare local elections in early 2012 and the relatively high turnout for the national elections in July 2012. Lack of input legitimacy also explains the opposition of Bani Walid to the local council imposed upon them by the NTC. Many NTC members believed that an unelected body could not remain in power any longer than absolutely necessary without being overthrown.[58]

Although this contention bears serious consideration, comparative evidence suggests that a formal legitimating selection process, far less a fully democratic election, is not a necessary precondition for the establishment of political authority in political transitions. As was seen in Tunisia, the HIROR was able to consolidate its authority despite the lack of a formal popular process of selection. In other contexts too, the absence of formal elections has not prevented the consolidation of authority where the representatives in the TA are nonetheless deemed to represent their constituencies.[59] I would therefore suggest that lack of legal-rational and input legitimacy is not sufficient to explain the NTC's declining authority.

[57] Grant, George, "Benghazi NTC Members Stand Aside for New Local Council Representatives; Jalil Calls on Misrata to Follow Suit", *Libyan Herald* (22 May 2012).
[58] Interview with Guma Gamaty (4 December 2018). Criticisms of the unelected nature of the TA are highlighted by Lacher, *Libya's Fragmentation*, p.25.
[59] For example, in Ethiopia and Cambodia, as discussed in Chapter 7.

3.3 Charismatic, traditional and knowledge-based authority

There was no noticeable decline in the charismatic or traditional authority of the TA during this period which could explain variation in the TA's authority. Moreover, the technocratic credentials of El-Kieb's Government were unprecedented. Almost 50% of the cabinet ministers had a doctoral-level education, many from foreign universities, and most had extensive professional experience in the areas of their ministerial portfolio.[60] Knowledge-based authority cannot therefore explain the decline in the NTC's authority following the announcement of liberation.

As has been demonstrated in other contexts, charismatic, traditional and knowledge-based authority are insufficient to explain the variation in the TA's political authority.

3.4 Output legitimacy

Another possible explanation of the declining authority of the NTC is the TA's failure to deliver expected improvements in public services or other material benefits. Lacher notes that the NTC during this period undertook no major public works projects and the government's capital expenditure plummeted.[61] Reports from the period note widespread discontent among the fighters about the lack of ammunition and supplies.[62] It may be that the unravelling of the NTC's authority at this time can be attributed to their manifest failure to deliver material benefits to the population and particularly those who executed the revolution.

However, as I have demonstrated in Chapter 5, the failure of the NTC to deliver public services in general, and material benefits to the armed components of the revolution in particular, does not date to Autumn 2011. Even at the high point of its authority the NTC was unable to deliver public services. Moreover, the UN Security Council lifted sanctions on the Libyan Central Bank in November 2011 providing the NTC with access to billions of dollars which they did not hesitate to deploy. Over a three month period, between January and March 2012, the NTC distributed 1.5bn US Dollars. The NTC spent these funds primarily on state salaries and payments to revolutionary fighters.[63] One could have expected this influx of funds and their disbursement to the population to catalyse an increase in the TA's popular support, but as

[60] At least 12 out of 27 ministers had PhDs. Additionally, Fatima Hamroush was a medical doctor. See Annex 7.
[61] Lacher, *Libya's Fragmentation*, p.27.
[62] El-Madany, Sherine, "Ammunition Shortage Hampers Attack on Gaddafi Bastion", *Reuters* (20 September 2011); McQuinn, Brian (2012), "After the Fall: Libya's Evolving Armed Groups", *Small Arms Survey: Working Paper No.12* (Geneva: Small Arms Survey), p.44.
[63] Shuaib, Ali and Hadeel Al-Shalchi, "Libya Halts Cash for Ex-fighters over Corruption", *Reuters* (9 April 2012).

demonstrated earlier, this did not happen, and the increased expenditure was matched by increased protests and contestation.

The NTC possessed greater resources than almost any other TA in history. Were it possible to buy loyalty, the NTC should have possessed enormous support. However, as highlighted elsewhere in the thesis, the causal link between provision of services and financial benefits, and the accrual of political authority, is conditioned by several intervening variables. The NTC's disbursement of funds to public sector employees and revolutionary fighters undermined its authority, rather than reinforcing it, as highlighted below. This case further underscores the complex relationship between service provision and political authority. Output legitimacy does not offer an explanation for the NTC's declining political authority.

3.5 International recognition and support

Similarly, the international recognition and support the NTC received during this period increased. States which had previously remained neutral during the conflict with Qaddafi recognized the NTC and rushed to re-establish relations with the *de facto* government of one of the wealthiest states in Africa. Russia recognized the NTC on 1 September 2011.[64] With the recognition of China on 12 September, all five permanent members of the UN Security Council recognised the NTC.[65] The NTC was then able to assume Libya's seat in the UN General Assembly on 16 September. The African Union (AU), of which Qaddafi had long been a major backer, recognized the NTC on 20 September. Major AU member states soon followed suit.[66]

If international recognition was directly correlated with political authority, I would expect to see the NTC's authority soar in September 2011. Instead, the authority of the TA began to fall almost as soon as many states recognised it as the legitimate representative of the Libyan people.

3.6 Conclusion

The declining authority of the NTC in the Autumn of 2011 is *a priori* puzzling. With its victory over the Qaddafi regime, one may expect this period to have been characterized by the consolidation of the NTC's authority, rather than increasing challenges and contestation. This shift cannot be accounted for by changes in the credentials of the NTC members: the NTC had the same or better revolutionary credentials, and charismatic, traditional and knowledge-based

[64] Gutterman, Steve, "Russia Recognises Libya's Transitional Council", *Reuters* (1 September 2011).
[65] Buckley, Chris, "China Officially Recognizes Libyan Rebels", *Reuters* (12 September 2011).
[66] Cropley, Ed, "African Union Finally Recognizes Libya's NTC", *Reuters* (20 September 2011); See Landau-Wells, "High Stakes and Low Bars", *Supplementary materials*.

authority as it had enjoyed at the outset. The material resources and the international recognition of the NTC also improved considerably during this period. Why then do we find that the authority of the NTC began to be challenged at this time?

4. Alternative explanation

My alternative explanation suggests that the NTC's declining political authority is explained by its socio-institutional composition. The NTC failed to include the principal socio-political components of the Libyan society it purported to represent. The NTC was not sufficiently inclusive and representative to maintain its authority. This lack of inclusivity was the result of structural factors and flawed decisions undertaken by the NTC.

Structurally, the origins of the NTC in Eastern Libya and its initial composition, which was dominated by figures from Cyrenaica, created a path dependency which made it difficult for the NTC to redress its strong Eastern bias when it assumed control over the entire country. Moreover, historical socio-institutional legacies compounded the un-representative nature of the NTC members from Western Libya.

However, the NTC also mismanaged its own transition from an opposition political movement in Cyrenaica to the TA of all Libya. The NTC tried to placate the revolutionary constituency by purging those associated with the former regime and persecuting the former regime constituency but this simply served to alienate this potential strong base of support. Although the NTC was initially able to incorporate elements of the former regime constituency during its early phase, in the Autumn of 2011 it decided to exclude this group. This deprived it of support from the most significant organized political constituency in the county. Similarly, by making revolutionary participation a condition for serving in the TA, NTC members who were purported to *represent* strongly pro-regime constituencies were not representative of these towns and cities at all.

At the same time, the NTC failed to sufficiently incorporate the emerging armed revolutionary constituency, the *Thuwaar*, into the TA. The NTC sought to placate this group by providing financial incentives. Instead of incorporating the increasingly powerful and organized *Thuwaar*, the El-Kieb cabinet drew heavily from the small group of former exiled technocrats with weak roots in Libyan society. The NTC missed multiple opportunities to build stronger links between itself and emerging socio-political structures on the ground, for example, by encouraging the local elections and using these representatives to re-establish its authority. Similarly, the NTC's mismanagement of the integration armed groups into state security

structures helped strengthen intra-groups ties within the militias but failed to bring them under state control.

While the NTC during its first phase in Cyrenaica was a broad tent bringing together diverse components of the Libyan society, particularly from Eastern Libya where it was mainly operating, during this phase the members of the TA were drawn from an increasingly narrow base. This lack of representativeness and inclusivity accounts for the decline of the NTC's authority during this period.

4.1 Governing coalition

Aware of its strong Eastern bias, as the NTC moved to Tripoli, it attempted to expand its membership to include more figures from Western and Southern Libya, and to reform the executive to be better representative of the revolutionary camp throughout the country. Both steps were mismanaged in a way that meant they reduced, rather than expanded the inclusivity of the TA. I will begin by evaluating the NTC's steps to expand its membership to be more inclusive of Western and Southern Libyan constituencies, before analysing the effect of executive reform on the TA's inclusivity.

4.1.1 Failed expansion

As the NTC moved to Tripoli in September 2011, the body attempted to live up to its claim to represent the whole of Libya by addressing the Eastern imbalance on the council and its executive office. However, the NTC's new ideological opposition to including those associated with the former regime, combined with the entrenched interests of the initial members, meant that this expansion failed to improve the TA's inclusivity of constituencies from Western Libya.

The NTC ballooned from 49 members in September 2011 to 107 members by May 2012.[67] This expansion was driven by the TA's efforts to incorporate members from Western and Southern Libya without excluding existing members or alienating supporters in Cyrenaica. Rather than replacing existing members with more representative figures from Western Libya, the NTC created additional seats for Western and Southern Libyan areas. To compensate for the high representation of Eastern Libya, particularly Benghazi, seats were allocated to Western and Southern Libyan cities without a clear idea of how to fill these seats. Seats were allocated before local councils had nominated representatives: in January 2012, for example, members

[67] See Annex 5.

from Benghazi occupied seven seats on the council while 20 seats, mainly from Western Libya, were left vacant.[68]

The inability of the NTC to adjust its composition to maintain a coherent structure and balanced representation is indicative of the path dependency seen in many TAs: it is easier to create new seats than to remove existing members and reallocate their seats. The initial composition shapes and dictates the structuring logic of the body and the manner of the TA's expansion. However, this expansion both created a bloated institution and was also almost impossible to realize in a coherent way: there simply were not enough figures who were willing and eligible to assume the additional seats.

As also noted, while in theory NTC members were nominated by their local councils, this process was not respected for the nomination of representatives from Western Libya. Barfi writes that "There seems to be little rhyme or reason to the final membership" noting that:

> NTC members have worked hard to establish roots and develop relationships in eastern cities such as Benghazi. But in Tripoli and other western towns that remained under Qaddafi's dominion until the rebels recently liberated them, the NTC was not able to make inroads at all.[69]

The members from Western Libya were less representative of their purported constituencies than the members from Eastern Libya. Thus, the expansion failed to meet its objective of ensuring effectively including Western Libyan constituencies in the TA.

This problem was more acute for areas where the population remained loyal to the Qaddafi regime. For example, Mbarak Al-Futumi, the representative of Bani Walid on the NTC was rebuffed when he tried to negotiate the town's surrender in September 2011 and was only able to return to his home at the head of an occupying military force.[70] He could not be considered to *represent* the inhabitants of the town in any meaningful sense. Similarly, NTC member, Hassan Sghrir noted that his hometown remained loyal to the regime and did not support him.[71] It was impossible to reconcile the principle of local sponsorship with the new demand that representatives have no ties to the former regime.

[68] Lowe, Christian, "Analysis: Libyans Losing Faith in Fair Division of Power", *Reuters* (25 January 2012).
[69] Barfi, "Transitional National What?"; also interview with Hana Gallal (via Whatsapp, 26 November 2020).
[70] Lacher, *Libya's Fragmentation*, p.89; Personal communication via WhatsApp with Wolfram Lacher (10 February 2022). Futumi formally reconciled with the town's inhabitants in 2018.
[71] Interview with Hassan Sghrir (via WhatsApp, 13 October 2020).

The NTC also rejected demands to replace figures deemed unrepresentative by their constituencies with more acceptable representatives. For example, the NTC resisted attempts to replace self-selected NTC members with elected members of local councils.[72] This is a further example of the short-term imperative of placating existing members prejudicing the ability to create a more inclusive and representative body.

This unbalanced representation also reflected on the policy decisions of the NTC. For example, the lengths to which Abdeljalil went to placate the relatively minor 'federalist' constituency from Cyrenaica demonstrates the discrepancy between the NTC's treatment of the interests of Eastern and Western Libyan constituencies. This pro-Cyrenaican bias is partly a product of the sociological composition of the NTC and partly a function of poor leadership. A more balanced organization may have had a more rational reaction to opposition from a relatively minor social group. In this case, the NTC's strong roots in the East were a liability rather than an asset.

While the NTC was composed of figures with strong roots in their respective constituencies in Cyrenaica, members from Western and Southern Libya were less representative of their purported constituencies. Moreover, the NTC was unwilling and unable to fundamentally revise its initial composition: this left Cyrenaica overrepresented in the TA and kept Western representatives in their posts in spite of popular opposition to their nomination. By the time the regime had fallen, it was clear the NTC was not able to live up to its 'national' moniker.

4.1.2 Executive reform

The NTC also sought to reform its executive branch to be more inclusive of figures from across Libya. When Mahmoud Jibril resigned as PM, it was decided that his replacement should come from Tripoli, and Abdurahim El-Kieb was selected for the role. El-Kieb's Tripolitan background was one factor in his successful nomination.[73] El-Kieb presented a cabinet which was more balanced towards Western Libya. Of the 27 ministries, over 60% were occupied by figures from Western Libya: one-third of the ministers came from Tripoli itself.[74] This geographic distribution closely mimics the population distribution of Libya. In principle, my theory would suggest that this greater inclusivity should increase the likelihood that the TA would have its authority recognized.

[72] Harmala, "Libya's Transition", p.6.
[73] Holmes, Oliver, "Libya's New Prime Minister is Low-key Technocrat", *Reuters* (1 November 2011); Kirkpatrick, "Libya Names an Engineer as Premier"; Interview with Salem El-Hassi (Tunis, 2 December 2019).
[74] See Annex 7.

However, this surface inclusivity is misleading in several respects. Firstly, important social constituencies were excluded from the cabinet. There were no ministers from major western cities such as Bani Walid, Sirte, and Tarhouna. These cities were deemed too closely aligned to the former regime to be included in the interim government, as we shall see. Significant minority ethnic groups, including the Amazigh, were also denied posts in the government, despite 10-15% of the population self-identifying as Amazigh, and the crucial role played by the Amazigh in the fight against Qaddafi.[75] The Tebu ethnic minority were also not represented in the cabinet, despite their important role in the revolution. Only two posts were given to women: Ministers of Health and Social Affairs. Thus, a closer examination of El-Kieb's cabinet betrays the illusion of inclusivity. Important socio-political constituencies were not included in the interim government.

More importantly, however, those who were included only had weak connections to the geographic constituencies they were assumed to represent. Many of the cabinet members selected by El-Kieb had spent extended periods abroad prior to the revolution and had only recently returned to Libya. A close examination of their biographies reveals the extent to which the cabinet had lived their lives outside of Libya. El-Kieb had travelled abroad for graduate studies in 1976 and had received a PhD in electrical engineering from North Carolina State University before teaching in Alabama.[76] His deputy, Mustapha Abushagur, had also studied electrical engineering at the California Institute of Technology: he lived in exile for thirty-two years until 2011. The Ministers of Finance and Culture and Civil Society both studied in Indiana. Other ministers had studied in the US, Canada, Ireland, France and Morocco before taking jobs and building their lives in exile. Bizarrely, at least six of the 27 ministers held PhDs in electrical engineering!

The cabinet drew heavily from the small but densely-networked pool of Libyan expats who formed the non-Islamist opposition to Qaddafi. For example, El-Kieb and his deputy had known each other for forty years and had taught together at the University of Alabama.[77] Many were members of opposition groups, including the National Front for the Salvation of Libya (NFSL), notably the Ministers for Higher Education, Foreign Affairs and the Deputy Prime Minister. As was the case in Tunisia and with the initial founding of the NTC, these close

[75] Prentis, Jamie, "Amazigh Awakening: Libya's Largest Minority Wants Recognition", *Al-Monitor* (1 March 2018).
[76] Holmes, "Libya's New Prime minister is Low-key Technocrat".
[77] Sen, Ashish Kumar, "Professor Elected as Prime Minister of Libya", *Washington Times* (31 October 2011).

personal connections underscore the importance of pre-existing social ties between elites in the formation of TAs. El-Keib built his cabinet from those with whom he enjoyed 'strong ties': he knew them well and could trust them following years of opposition activism and life in exile.

However, unlike in Tunisia and in Cyrenaica, although these western Libyan elites were connected to one another, they were not deeply rooted in their respective constituencies. As I have already noted, the NFSL only played a marginal role in the 2011 uprising. They only had weak connections inside the country, following decades of exile and repression by the Qaddafi regime. As Barakat, himself an exile, noted, "You can't hope to govern a country you haven't lived in for 30 years."[78] The NFSL's lack of popular support within Libya and the absence of roots within the country is evidenced by the poor showing of the National Front Party, the NFSL's successor party, in the 2012 elections. The party was only able to field candidates in 45 of the 80 list-based seats and only succeed in winning three seats.[79] The veneer of inclusivity, based on the long-forgotten geographic origins of the members, obscured the reality that the cabinet of the TA was drawn from a minuscule pool of educated expatriate Libyans. Such a group could hardly be considered as representative of the population of Libya, regardless of where they were born.

Thus, the new executive branch of the TA was neither sufficiently more inclusive, excluding as it did key Libyan constituencies, nor more representative, drawing its members from the deracinated expatriate constituency with weak social connections inside Libya.

4.1.3 Conclusion

The NTC's origins as an opposition movement based primarily in the country's East made the move to national TA difficult to manage: the NTC struggled to integrate new members from the West of country and reconcile the initial strategy of nomination by local councils with the new demand of revolutionary purity.

The new members integrated into the TA enjoyed strong technocratic and revolutionary credentials but were not deeply rooted in their geographic constituencies. Consequently, their incorporation did little to increase the overall inclusivity and representativeness of the TA, with the implications for authority recognition I anticipated.

[78] Interview with Nagy Barakat (London, 18 March 2018).
[79] Khan, Umar, "Party Profile: The National Front", *Libyan Herald* (30 June 2012).

4.2 Excluded constituencies

At the same time, the NTC undertook several actions which narrowed its base of support, particularly by excluding key constituencies, including supporters of the former regime and armed components of the revolution, the *Thuwaar*. This narrowing of the base of the NTC, coupled with the failure to find suitable alternative constituencies to bolster the weakened TA, makes the NTC's declining authority in this period unsurprising.

4.2.1 Former regime supporters

As noted in Chapter 5, one of the principal founding pillars of the TA were defected former regime supporters. This included so-called reformers, who had worked as part of Seif Al-Islam's reform programmes, such as Mahmoud Jibril, or had sought to mitigate the regime's abuses, such as Mustapha Abdeljalil. But the TA also counted figures who had been deeply embedded in the regime among its supporters. This included Omar Hariri, one of the officers who led Qaddafi's 1969 coup but whose relations with Qaddafi had later soured, as well as Abdelrahman Shalgam, the former Foreign Minister, and Abdelfattah Younes, the Minister of Interior, both in the inner circle of Qaddafi for many years.

As described previously, these networks of former regime members were central to the construction of the authority of the NTC. Not only did they bring professional expertise and competence as noted by Pargeter,[80] but they were also one of the few groups in Qaddafi's Libya who were connected to one another *and* embedded within their *Gemeinschaft* constituencies in Libya. Thus, they possessed the pre-existing social ties to one another and the deep social networks that I have identified as central to establishing a TA's authority.

However, after the announcement of liberation on 23 October 2011, rather than building upon this important base of support, the TA gradually began to cannibalize its support from this constituency. The regime's defeat could have spelt a period of reconciliation and magnanimity, demonstrating to the large proportion of the country who had supported or at least tolerated Qaddafi that the transition presented opportunities for them as well. Instead, the TA marked its triumph by closing ranks and initiating punitive and exclusionary policies, all but guaranteeing that those associated with the former regime would eventually mobilize against them.

While Jibril's Executive Office had been staffed by many figures who had worked with the regime in one form or another, as noted above, El-Kieb's government deliberately excluded all

[80] Pargeter, Alison (2012), *Libya: The Rise and Fall of Qaddafi* (New Haven: Yale University Press), p.232.

those who had held posts under the former regime, relying instead upon opposition figures who had long lived in exile. Leading figures who had been slated for important posts in the new interim government, such as Ibrahim Dabbashi, the deputy Libyan Ambassador to the UN, who was considered for the post of Foreign Minister, were passed over in favour of less prominent exile opposition activists.[81]

Similarly, the expansion of the NTC to include members from Western and Southern Libya was conducted with a view to excluding those with connections to the former regime. This meant that NTC members, including the representatives of key regime-supporting cities such as Bani Walid, Tarhouna and Sirte, were opposed by the very constituencies they were purported to represent and could often not travel to their hometowns. As noted above, it was not until 2018 that the NTC's 'representative' for Bani Walid, Mbarak Al-Futumi, was able to peacefully return to his hometown.[82] Thus major constituencies were deprived of effective representation in the TA. Subsequent low voter turnout for the 2012 elections in former regime strongholds underscores disaffection among those considered former regime supporters with the new regime. Pack and Cook note that only an estimated one-third of the eligible population of these cities registered to vote and only one-third of those cast ballots in the GNC elections.[83] Such abstentionism is a further indicator of the lack of support these communities had for the revolutionary project. This was a partly a result of their *de facto* exclusion from the TA.

The NTC also passed legislation which targeted members of the former regime. The NTC's Resolution 192 presaged the radical approach to the disenfranchisement of those associated with the former regime seen in the 2013 Political Isolation law. Resolution 192 ostensibly excluded from any mid-level bureaucratic positions (such as heads of university departments, members of municipal councils or boards of public companies) a vague plethora of people associated with the former regime, including anyone "*accused of*…squandering or stealing public funds", "who adopted a position opposed to the 17 February revolution", and "whose graduate studies were on the thought of Muammar Qaddafi and his green book."[84] In line with the generally unsystematic application of laws during this period, Resolution 192 was never, and could never, be uniformly applied: almost all the Libyan population could be accused of

[81] Murphy, Francois and Ali Shuaib, "Libya's NTC Unveils New Government Line-up", *Reuters* (22 November 2011).
[82] Lacher, *Libya's Fragmentation*, p.89; Personal communication via WhatsApp with Wolfram Lacher (10 February 2022).
[83] Pack and Cook, "The July 2012 Election and the Origin of Post-Qadhafi Appeasement", p.189.
[84] Resolution 192 of 2011 on determining and applying patriotism standards when assuming leadership positions. (16 December 2011). *Italics* added for emphasis.

collusion with the regime during its 49-year reign. Resolution 192 was instead used in a politically instrumental manner to threaten and marginalize political enemies and whole communities who were perceived as being sympathetic to the former regime. Article 10.6 of the electoral law applied the same criteria outlined in Resolution 192 to candidates for the GNC, *de jure* excluding a vast swathe of the Libyan population and establishing the grounds for contestation and resentment which would subsequently drive the country back into civil war by 2014.[85] Thus, during this period, beginning in the autumn of 2011, the NTC reversed its previous strategy of integrating and welcoming support from former supporters of the regime, and began to systematically exclude those linked to the former regime. This abnegation of inclusivity coincides with the decline of the TA's political authority.

Had the exclusion of former regime supporters been restricted to the elite level or those who had actively participated in the Qaddafi administration, it is possible that the TA could have continued to enjoy broad popular support. However, one of the peculiar side-effects of the strong Libyan social structure is that whole communities, rather than specific individuals, were quickly considered to be pro-revolutionary or pro-regime during the 2011 civil war. After the conflict, this categorization often stuck, and whole communities were subsequently targeted by initiatives designed to punish specific members of the former regime. This created the self-reinforcing path dependency that these communities subsequently became even less likely to support the revolutionary project and recognize the TA's authority. The spectre of former regime involvement began to mix with identity politics, and entire cities, tribes, and ethnic groups were tarred with the 'former regime' epithet. Figures like Abdelhafidh Ghoga were targeted as former regime supporters, despite his long-term opposition activism, because he was Warfalla. Such persecution led to figures his resignation.[86] Mousa Koni also tendered his resignation after witnessing the blanket targeting of the Tuareg constituency as former regime supporters, including the mass expulsion of Tuareg from the city of Ghadames.[87]

This not only created enmity from targeted communities, but it also crucially narrowed the base of support of the NTC. This was particularly important because those castigated as ´former

[85] Law No.4 of 2012 on the election of the General National Congress (28 January 2012); the link between the political isolation law and the 2014 civil war has been made elsewhere, including by Toaldo, Mattia (2015), "Crisis and New Agenda of the Arab States: The Free Fall of the Libyan State", *IEMed Mediterranean Yearbook 2015*.
[86] Interviews with Abdelhafidh Ghoga (Tunis, 18 July 2019) and Mohamed Saad (Istanbul, 28 March 2022). There was a similar targeting of Jibril based on his tribal affiliation according to my interview with Hana Gallal (via WhatsApp, 26 November 2020). Ghoga's father had briefly served as a diplomat under Qaddafi which provided further 'evidence' against him.
[87] Interview with Moussa Koni (1 October 2020).

regime supporters´ included large and relatively homogenous groups, such as the Warfalla and Tuareg. One newspaper report from the time drew a direct link between the exclusion of the Warfalla from the NTC and the revolt in Bani Walid which expelled the NTC-backed local council and its military units. A Libyan academic from Bani Walid is quoted as saying, "In numbers the Warfallah dominates Libya and if there is going to be one man, one vote and if this tribe, along with a couple of others,.... get organized then they will dominate political life for decades to come." However, the article concluded, "there are signs the tribe is being squeezed. In Tripoli, the influential players are from cities like Benghazi, Misrata, and Zintan, which led the fight against Gaddafi's forces during the nine-month civil war."[88] The exclusion of whole socio-political constituencies because of a perceived history of former regime support led to a narrowing of the coalition behind the NTC and thus fuelled contestation of its authority.

By excluding all those associated with the former regime and defining the category so broadly, the NTC prevented itself from maintaining a broad governing coalition.

4.2.2 Thuwaar

Given the strong emphasis on strengthening the NTC's revolutionary character and excluding the former regime, one may expect that the expansion and restructuring of the TA was conducted to include the so-called *Thuwaar*.[89] However, this was not the case. As already noted, the majority of members of the cabinet of El-Kieb were from the small, expatriate, secular opposition constituency. Few had played prominent roles in the revolution or led troops in the fight against Qaddafi. Of the cabinet, only the Minister of Defence, Osama Jweili had direct experience leading fighters, having served as head of the Zintan Military Council. Both Faouzi Abdel Aal from Misrata and Ashraf Ben Ismail from Benghazi could broadly be considered as representative of the *Thuwaar*, although Abdel Aal had been a public prosecutor and Ben Ismail a businessman prior to the revolution.[90]

Where such data exists, one finds that the composition of the *Thuwaar* was far less professional and middle-class than the composition of the TA. Interestingly in a country with such high levels of public sector employment,[91] McQuinn finds that only 11 per cent of Misrati revolutionary fighters were public sector employees prior to the revolution. A smaller

[88] Lowe, "Libyans Losing Faith in Fair Division of Power".
[89] *Thuwaar* simply means revolutionary but has come to refer to armed revolutionary fighters in the Libyan context.
[90] See Annex 7.
[91] 51% of the labour force worked in the public sector. Abuhadra, Dia Sadek and Tawfik Taher Ajaali (2014), *Labour Market and Employment Policy in Libya* (Turin: European Training Foundation), p.9.

percentage were professionals (8 per cent). By far the largest numbers of *Thuwaar* in Misrata were students (41 per cent) and private sector workers (38 per cent).[92] I found a similar composition among rebel leaders from other parts of the country. While some, such as Abdelhakim Belhaj or Ibrahim Jadran, had long been engaged in (multigenerational in Jadran's case) armed opposition to the state, often inspired by Islamist ideology,[93] the majority were blue-collar workers prior to the revolution. Revolutionary commanders Wissam Ben Hamid, Ziad Belaoum, and Mohamed Areibi from Benghazi were all car mechanics or similar. Mukhtar Lackhdar from Zintan was a driver for tourism and oil companies.[94] This suggests that the professional class, which dominated the NTC and its executive office, did not fully represent the *Thuwaar*.

This was not always the case. In addition to the organic links between NTC members and *Thuwaar* highlighted in Chapter 5, Mustapha Sagesli, Chairman of the Warrior Affairs Commission (WAC) and former revolutionary commander, notes that the composition of the *Thuwaar* leadership shifted in the autumn of 2011. When figures including himself and Fawzi Boukatif were at the head of revolutionary brigades they "acted as a bridge between the fighters and the elites" because of their higher education and middle-class social background.[95] When they were subsequently side-lined, with Boukatif being sent as Ambassador to Uganda and Sagesli's WAC being marginalized and underfunded, "the bridge between the elites and the fighters was broken"[96], according to Sagesli.

Unlike in Tunisia, where the *Muhammashin* were unable to significantly contest the authority of the HIROR because they remained fragmented and horizontally organized, the *Thuwaar* in Libya were newly emerging as a distinct socio-political constituency at this time, networked with one another and enjoying hierarchical institutionalized links. The *Thuwaar* did not benefit from the existence of pre-revolutionary *Gesellschaft* institutionalized networks, as Libyan lawyers and former regime officials did; however, the humble origins of many revolutionaries did not prevent them from forming nascent political structures and organizations once the main battle against Qaddafi was over. While the revolutionaries are often caricatured as being disorganized and anarchical, McQuinn highlights that they were quick to learn how to operate

[92] McQuinn, Brian (2012), "Armed Groups in Libya: Typology and Roles", *Small Arms Survey: Research Note 18* (Small Arms Survey, Geneva.), p.2.
[93] Hill, Evan, "One Family Against Gaddafi", *Al-Jazeera* (18 March 2011).
[94] WhatsApp Communication with Nohad Chebaro (14 February 2022); WhatsApp Communication with Patrick Haimzadeh (11 March 2022); WhatsApp Commucation with Mustapha Sagesli (14 June 2022).
[95] Interview with Mustapha Sagesli (Istanbul, 29 March 2022).
[96] *Idem.*

sophisticated conventional weapons, coordinate armoured divisions and conduct complex battlefield operations. Moreover, McQuinn notes that revolutionary brigades were "intensely cohesive, with strong allegiance to their leaders", adding that a "distinct feature of the revolutionary brigades is their consensus-oriented decision making."[97] Furthermore, the *Thuwaar* were typically organized based on local and kinship networks, rather than cross-cutting ideological, political, or social characteristics. They therefore already possessed pre-existing *Gemeinschaft* social ties prior to the conflict to aid their cohesion and mobilization.[98] Even purportedly ideological groups, such as the Salafi-inspired Special Deterrence Force (SDF), are deeply socially rooted in their geographic base.[99] During the revolution, most cities had created Military Councils to coordinate their defence and security. Larger cities had military coalitions which represented the interests of the *Thuwaar*, such as the Gathering of Revolutionary Companies in Eastern Libya and Misratan Union of Revolutionaries.[100]

Given these nascent organizational structures and cohesive social links it would have been feasible to grant greater representation of the *Thuwaar* within existing NTC structures or as part of a separate entity designed for their political representation. However, this did not happen and the *Thuwaar* perceived their political agency as being denied by the NTC. This translated into the protests and violence described above. For all its pretence of representing the revolution, the vital constituency of *Thuwaar* was not sufficiently represented in the TA; this exclusion greatly undermined the TA's authority.

Instead of representing the *Thuwaar* within the TA, the NTC sought to placate the *Thuwaar* through payments and integration into the security sector. During this period, the most notable scheme to offer payment and employment to *Thuwaar* as security sector employees was the Supreme Security Committee (SSC). The SSC was created in August 2011 to coordinate the 17 Military Councils which had spontaneously emerged in Tripoli following its liberation from Qaddafi. After the appointment of Faouzi Abdel Aal as Minister of Interior (MoI), the SSC became a nationwide institution under the MoI on 28 December 2011 pursuant to Decision 388. The SSC was given additional powers under Decision 392. Despite internal estimates suggesting that 25,000 officers were needed to secure the nation, by August 2012 the SSC had

[97] McQuinn, "Armed Groups in Libya", p.2.
[98] McQuinn, Brian (2013), "Assessing (In)security after the Arab Spring: The Case of Libya", *PS: Political Science & Politics* (Vol.46, No.4.), p.717.
[99] Wehrey, Frederic and Anouar Boukhars (2019), *Salafism in the Maghreb*. (Oxford: Oxford University Press), pp.120-121.
[100] Lacher and Cole, "Politics by Other Means", pp.17-18.

an estimated 149,000 officers on its payroll.[101] Abdel Aal described the SSC as a short-term expedient created under pressure from the NTC, the UN and the international community:

> The security situation was difficult…We had a huge number of armed people. The brigades were all over and they were doing things we could not control. So the idea was to contain them. We had the idea to create a parallel path until the Ministry [of Interior] had become stronger and was functioning well.[102]

In principle, the use of co-option and patronage to secure support from constituencies is not unprecedented and is the cornerstone of political authority in many neo-patrimonial and totalitarian systems. However, the NTC made a fateful error in devising and implementing the SSC recruitment strategy and payment system. The SSC registered and paid armed groups as units, rather than as individuals. Commanders were responsible for providing lists of fighters under their command. Initially, the Military Councils were then responsible for the distribution of payments to individual fighters.[103] This had the effect of reinforcing the link between individual fighters and their commanders, and giving leaders of armed groups the reins of patronage. Unlike in Tunisia, where selective use of patronage was used to decapitate and co-opt the *Muhammashin*, breaking their nascent social ties, in Libya, public funds served to strengthen links and hierarchies within the *Thuwaar*. Thus, the NTC unintentionally used their massive resources to undermine their own authority.

For all the rhetoric to the contrary, the NTC and Executive office did not mirror the composition of the revolution. The armed components of the revolution, the *Thuwaar,* were largely unskilled or semi-skilled private sector employees or students; the TA was composed of highly educated professionals and public sector employees. This need not have prevented the NTC from consolidating its authority; however, this emerging socio-political constituency of *Thuwaar* was assisted in its process of organizing and developing hierarchical networks through the system of payments and recruitment rolled out by the MoI in late 2011 and early 2012. By mid-2012, the *Thuwaar* were a large, well-financed and well-armed set of distinct groups with hierarchical leadership structures and strong social bonds between members.

[101] *Ibid*, pp.30-31; Khan, Umar, "Supreme Security Committee to be Dissolved by End of the Year, says Tripoli Chief", *Libyan Herald* (17 October 2012).
[102] Interview with Faouzi Abdel Aal (Montreux, 31 October 2019).
[103] Lacher and Cole, "Politics by Other Means", pp.30-31. Later registered armed groups would provide lists of members to the armed forces' military accounts office for payments to be made directly to their members.

Rather than being at the service of the state, this constituency would hold future governments hostage.

4.3 Conclusion

The NTC's authority began to decline in the autumn of 2011 because the body was insufficiently inclusive of the principal socio-political components of Libyan society. Instead of working to expand its base and representativity after Qaddafi's defeat, the NTC began to rely on an increasingly narrow base of expat exiles, alienating constituencies associated with the former regime as well as the armed components of the revolution, who were not represented in NTC structures.

As I have shown, those excluded from the TA were the most organized, hierarchical socio-political institutions in Libya at this time. The former regime supporters, once the backbone of the NTC, enjoyed pre-existing inter-communal social ties at the elite level and strong *Gemeinschaft* networks. The *Thuwaar* were increasingly developing political consciousness, hierarchical structures, and mechanisms for inter-group coordination, and were also deeply embedded in their respective communities.

These two constituencies increasingly saw that they were not represented in the TA's composition, and therefore undertook extra-institutional measures to pursue their interests, thus undermining the TA's authority.

5. Conclusion

The move from opposition movement to national TA is inherently difficult and fraught with risks. These risks were even greater in the Libya context where, although the regime had been toppled, as the then-UN SRSG Ian Martin highlighted:

> the Libyan people continue to have to live with its deep-rooted legacy; weak, at times absent, state institutions, coupled with the long absence of political parties and civil society organizations, which render the country's transition more difficult… This is further complicated by what was a systematic distortion of the country's socio-political fabric.[104]

The TA's efforts to construct its political authority were complicated by the absence of strong, hierarchical organizations with networks throughout the country, and weak social ties between elites.

[104] Martin, Ian, "Libya Facing Challenging Transition, but Authorities Striving to Succeed – UN", *UN News* (25 January 2012),

As the NTC moved to Tripoli, the consequences of their origins as a narrow movement born in Cyrenaica became evident. While the NTC had been relatively inclusive of major socio-political constituencies from Eastern Libya, it was not inclusive of major socio-political constituencies from Western Libya and Southern Libya. When it sought to expand its representation of actors from Tripolitania, particularly through inclusion in the cabinet of El-Kieb, it chose figures who were not representative of the geographic constituencies they came from. The El-Kieb Government relied too heavily on members of the exile secular opposition: technocrats with weak personal connections to constituencies inside Libya.

In seeking revolutionary purity in its members, the NTC and its executive branch also excluded figures with ties to the former regime. It thus lost the support of one of the major socio-political networks which had survived and transcended parochial local interests in pre-revolutionary Libya: the network of regime supporters and reformers. At the same time, the NTC failed to incorporate figures who truly represented major socio-political constituencies: the representative of Bani Walid, for example, could not set foot in his city. Large constituencies were further alienated by vague and discriminatory policies which were seen as ascribing collective responsibility to whole communities for the crimes of the regime. Such anti-regime actions did little to placate the *Thuwaar*, who were themselves largely excluded from the TA. Meanwhile, the formation of hierarchical institutionalized networks among *Thuwaar* groups and links between *Thuwaar* were indirectly facilitated by the NTC's wrongheaded strategies at funding and organizing security provision.

The declining authority of the NTC can be attributed to its narrowing base and unrepresentative composition. The weak composition of the NTC is partly attributable to path dependency stemming from its origins as an opposition political umbrella based out of Eastern Libya. Those members who were incorporated early on were unwilling to relinquish their posts, creating a need for balancing and counterbalancing which could never produce a truly representative body. The lack of strong institutionalized political networks from which the NTC could draw upon further complicated the task of identifying and incorporating representatives of the main socio-political constituencies in western Libya, leading to an overreliance on the small non-Islamist exile opposition constituency.

However, the NTC leadership must accept some responsibility for the failure to build a strong national coalition: the NTC failed to incorporate clearly organized constituencies such as the Amazigh; unnecessarily alienated large constituencies stigmatized as 'former regime

supporters', including groups with little direct connection to the regime or its abuses; ignored demands for the incorporation of elected local council representatives; and failed to sufficiently incorporate the *Thuwaar* while enacting policies which strengthened individual fighters loyalty to their commanders rather than the TA.

By July 2012, the NTC had lost all the support it had enjoyed in the summer of 2011. Many Libyans were thankful to see it go and ungrateful for the service it had rendered to the Libyan revolution. The challenge the NTC faced in establishing its authority was monumental, but not insurmountable; the NTC was unfortunately not up to this challenge.

Chapter 7: Authority-building in Comparative Perspective

1. Introduction

In the preceding chapters I have argued that a TA which is inclusive of the principal socio-political constituencies of a country will be more likely to be able to establish its authority. I have also shown how temporal variation in the authority of the TAs in Libya and Tunisia is linked to changes in the composition of the TA, while geographic variation is linked to the representation of particular constituencies. The two major cases studied in the preceding chapters offer both within-case variation and a degree of cross-case variation. However, it is necessary to examine the theory across a broader range of cases to establish its generalizability, and to control for potentially confounding factors.

Out of a possible universe of cases I have selected 12 cases to examine in greater depth. These cases were selected to provide maximum geographic and temporal variation, and to provide variation across several possible confounding variables: the level of violence witnessed during the process of regime change; the level of foreign intervention; and the absence or presence of a formal political settlement. The cases also provide variation across Shain and Linz's typology of *Revolutionary, Incumbent, Power-sharing* and *International* TAs. My 12 cases therefore follow a Most Different Similar Outcome (MDSO) selection strategy. However, many of the cases also offer within-case variation, as countries experienced multiple transitions and attempts to establish TAs. This introduces a Most Similar Different Outcome (MSDO) element to the case selection.

Across the cases I found that the composition of the TA is central to the process of its authority-building. TAs which were more inclusive of the main socio-political components of the society were better able to establish their authority. Inclusivity is an important factor in the relative success of TAs' authority-building efforts. Conversely, lack of inclusivity is associated with failure to establish authority in political transitions.

In the case studies of Tunisia and Libya, I looked closely at factors which condition the potential for a TA to become inclusive: I highlighted historical socio-institutional legacies, pre-existing social ties between elites, chance contingencies which set in motion path-dependent processes, as well as the choices made by the leaders of TAs. Unfortunately, I do not have the space or detailed historical and sociological knowledge of the comparative cases to systematically show that these mechanisms are also at play in these cases. I have however included a short analysis of how some of these factors may be seen in the comparative cases.

2. Case selection

The cases were selected to provide maximum variation across a range of possible alternative independent variables, including geography, time and several other factors outlined below. While my explanation of authority-building in political transitions requires a level of contextual and sociological knowledge which precludes a thorough examination of the universe of cases, the breadth of my analysis allows me to suggest a degree of generalizability in my findings.

Table 1: Summary of comparative case

	Country	**'Elite pact'**	**Level of violence**	**Foreign intervention**	**Authority-building**
1	Afghanistan	Yes	High	High	Failure
2	Cambodia	Yes	High	High	Success
3	Burundi	Yes	High	Low	Failure
4	DRC	Yes	High	Low	Failure
5	Iraq	No	High	High	Failure
6	Liberia (1990-94)	No	High	High	Failure
7	Liberia (2003-6)	Yes	High	High	Success
8	Yemen	Yes	Low	Low	Failure
9	Madagascar (1991-93)	Yes	Low	Low	Success
10	Madagascar (2009-13)	Yes	Low	Low	Success
11	Ethiopia	No	High	Low	Success
12	Peru	No	Low	Low	Success

My cases also allow me to control for the impact of potentially confounding factors. One of the principal differences between Tunisia and Libya is the level of violence witnessed during

the regime change process. Some may contend that the NTC in Libya could not generate the level of authority achieved in Tunisia because it arose under conditions of civil war. I have therefore attempted to select a spectrum of cases for comparative purposes where various levels of violence were witnessed during the regime change process. Of the 12 cases used for comparison, eight cases occurred in the context of a civil war (four without): the outcome of these cases is equally distributed between cases of success and failure. I did not therefore find that the level of violence witnessed in the context of a TA's creation overly determines its authority-building process. Most strikingly, the Ethiopian case demonstrates the potential to successfully establish a TA's authority following the violent overthrow of a regime. Conversely, the Yemeni case, in which non-violent popular protests overthrew the regime of President Ali Abdullah Saleh, only for the subsequent TA to fail to establish its authority, demonstrates that absence of violence in the process of regime change does not necessarily lead to successful authority-building.

Another major difference between Tunisia and Libya is the level of foreign intervention. While external actors only played a limited role in Tunisia, Libya witnessed a major NATO air campaign, significant foreign military intervention, followed by the establishment of a UN special political mission. The difficulties the NTC faced in consolidating its authority may therefore be attributed by some to their over-reliance on foreign support. I have therefore identified cases with variation in the level of foreign intervention in the transitional process. Although all cases involved some degree of foreign intervention, of the cases identified five cases witnessed strong foreign intervention in the establishment and daily operation of the TA. Three of these TAs failed to establish their political authority. Liberia offers me the opportunity to control for the impact of foreign intervention within a single country-case: between 1990-1996 Liberia was governed by a TA backed by a foreign military intervention; Liberia had another political transition between 2003 and 2006 backed by another foreign military force. A different outcome is witnessed in these two time periods, which suggests that foreign intervention cannot account for the variation in the success of the TA's authority-building efforts.

The TAs established in both Libya and Tunisia arose in an *ad hoc* manner without a formal political settlement or 'elite pact'. It may be suggested that these cases are therefore outliers, and that the absence of a formal political settlement accounts for the peculiar characteristics of the TA's authority-building process in these cases. I have therefore examined cases based on formal peace agreements to understand if similar dynamics are at play. Of the cases identified,

six TAs were formed on the basis of a peace agreement: four of these peace agreements resulted in the successful establishment of the TA's political authority, while two resulted in failure. Madagascar offers an interesting comparative case because it saw multiple attempts to initiate political transitions since the end of the Cold War, only two of which produced a successful TA. I therefore infer from this experience that the composition of the TA accounts for the variation witnessed, irrespective of the existence of a formal 'elite pact'.

The comparative cases also provide geographic and temporal variation, which is absent in the two detailed case studies. Of the ten countries discussed in this chapter, 20 per cent are in Asia; 20 per cent are in the Middle East; 50 per cent are in Africa; and one case comes from Latin America. In total, 32 countries underwent political transitions during the period of study. Of these, 50 per cent were in Central or Sub-Saharan Africa. Six countries in Asia and six countries in the MENA region also underwent political transitions. The distribution of the comparative cases therefore closely mimics the distribution of cases globally. The cases examined also arose over a 20-year period from 1990 to 2011. While accusations of cherry-picking may be levelled at any such study, this broad geographic and temporal comparison suggests a plausible degree of generalizability.

3. Level of violence

At the outset of my research, one of the key factors I anticipated would affect the authority-building efforts of TAs was the context of their creation, and specifically whether they arose in situations of mass violence and civil war, or in the relatively non-violent context of peaceful mass protests.

This contention bears further examination as my in-depth case studies also found a degree of inverse co-variance between the level of violence and the degree of political authority. In Tunisia, according to an independent inquiry, between 129 and 338 people were killed in the protests against the regime,[1] while in Libya the figure was far greater, with 21,490 killed and almost half a million displaced according to reliable sources.[2] As I have shown, the HIROR in Tunisia was far more capable of smoothly establishing its authority than the NTC in Libya. Level of violence may therefore be a confounding variable in my posited causal relationship between a TA's inclusivity and its political authority.

[1] *Agence France Presse (AFP)*, "Tunisia Revolution: 129 died, 634 Injured, Official Count Shows" (20 March 2021).
[2] Daw, Mohamed, Abdallah El-Bouzedi and Aghnaya Dau (2015), "Libyan Armed Conflict 2011: Mortality, Injury and Population Displacement", *African Journal of Emergency Medicine* (Vol. 5, No. 3), p.101.

There is a theoretical basis for anticipating that a context of violence is deleterious to the construction of authority. Arendt writes that "Since authority always demands obedience, it is commonly mistaken for some form of power or violence. Yet authority precludes the use of external means of coercion; where force is used, authority itself has failed!"[3] Conflict may create deep wells of enmity and resentment between a population and their would-be government which are impossible to overcome.

However, there is also a theoretical basis for anticipating that a violent contest for power may create a more conducive atmosphere for uncontested political authority to emerge. Mao Tse-Tung famously suggested that "Political power grows out of the barrel of a gun."[4] Tilly observes that "Other authorities…are much more likely to confirm the decisions of a challenged authority that controls substantial force; not only fear of retaliation, but also desire to maintain a stable environment recommend that general rule."[5] While the balance of coercive power may be uncertain in the context of mass social unrest, civil war has the advantage of establishing each parties' coercive means, capabilities and level of commitment. This certainty may lead to less contestation of the victor's authority. Victory on the battlefield may act as a way to clearly establish the government's right to govern. Protracted conflict and the upheaval it causes may also lead to a level of apathy among the population, making them amenable to accept any TA who seems capable of resolving the crisis.

A context of violence could theoretically affect a TA's ability to establish its political authority either negatively or positively. It is useful therefore to establish through examination of comparative cases whether the level of violence present at the time of a TA's creation can act as an alternative explanatory variable for its level of political authority.

A cursory examination of the comparative cases selected does not suggest that there is a strong link between the violence witnessed in the context of a TA's creation and its level of political authority. Of the eight cases created in the context of a civil war, four succeeded in establishing their political authority, while four failed. Of the four cases which occurred in the absence of widespread violence, 75 per cent eventually succeeded while 25 per cent failed. However, as

[3] Arendt, Hannah (1961), "What is Authority?" in Arendt, Hannah, *Between Past and Future: Six Exercises in Political Thought* (New York: Viking Press), p.93. Also, Zaum, Dominik (2017), "International Transitional Administrations and the Politics of Authority Building", *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* (Vol.11, No.4), p.411.

[4] C.f. Tyler, Tom (2006), "Psychological Perspectives on Legitimacy and Legitimation", *Annual Review of Psychology* (Vol. 57), p.376.

[5] Tilly, Charles (1985), "War Making and State Making as Organized Crime" in Evans, Peter, Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol, *Bringing the State Back In* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p.171.

seen in Tunisia and as I will demonstrate in the case of Madagascar, history is littered with putative TAs which failed, were reformed, or never saw the light of day. These informal attempts to create TAs in situations of non-violent contestation of authority are often missed in comparative studies of political transitions, and suggest that the rate of failure is much higher than a cursory examination would suggest.

A deeper qualitative analysis confirms that the TA's inclusivity played an important role in determining the outcome of the TA's authority-building efforts, regardless of the level of violence used in the regime change process. If one examines, for example, cases of TAs created in contexts of civil war in Ethiopia and Afghanistan, one finds that variation in the inclusivity of the TA explains the outcome of the TA's authority-building efforts. I found similar dynamics at play in Peru and Yemen, despite the absence of widespread violence in these contexts.

3.1 Ethiopia vs Afghanistan

The political transition in Ethiopia began in May 1991 with the military overthrow of President Mengistu. The transition ended with the June 1994 Constituent Assembly elections. The Constituent Assembly drafted a constitution under which elections were held in August 1995. The transition was governed by the Council of Representatives (CoR) and the Transitional Government of Ethiopia (TGE).

The political transition in Afghanistan began following the ouster of the Taliban government, by a US-backed coalition of Afghan forces in December 2001. Afghanistan was ruled by the TA of Hamid Karzai between 22 December 2001 and 9 October 2004, when presidential elections saw Karzai elected as president. The transition in Afghanistan can be divided into two phases: the first 'interim authority' was established by the Bonn Agreement, the second 'transitional authority' followed the conclusion of the Emergency Loya Jirga in June 2002.

Although the authority of the TGE and the CoR varied geographically and temporally, with the transition nearly breaking down due to tensions in Oromo-dominated areas around the 1992 local elections, Clapham demonstrates that the political structures established in 1991 survived more than a quarter of a century and represented a "relative success in managing a complex and often conflict-ridden system." [6] The TA in Ethiopia successfully established its political authority according to my definition: the TA was able to take decisions which were considered

[6] Clapham, Christopher (2017), *The Horn of Africa: State Formation and Decay* (London: Hurst and Company), p.76.

binding by the population and were not significantly contested either during its reign or subsequently.

Despite their military might, the same cannot be said of the TA in Afghanistan. The TA clearly failed to establish its authority: Karzai faced an ongoing Taliban insurgency, the foreign military occupation of his country, and rampant 'warlordism'. The writ of his government extended little beyond Kabul, and even within Kabul he was unable to ensure security. The TA's authority was clearly contested on the ground by the Taliban and other significant constituencies.

While the TA in Ethiopia succeeded in establishing its political authority, the TA in Afghanistan failed. This variation, I argue, can be attributed to the relative inclusivity of the TAs in these two cases.

When the Tigray People's Liberation Front (TPLF) succeeded in unseating President Mengistu, they did not seek to govern alone. They instead established the Ethiopian Peoples' Revolutionary Democratic Front (EPRDF). The EPRDF convened a national conference with more than 20 political movements to elaborate a consensual transitional charter, and formed the inclusive CoR and TGE to run the transition. Although they later left, the powerful Oromo Liberation Front (OLF) was brought into the TGE and given 12 seats on the 87-member CoR.[7] This initial demonstration of inclusivity helped reinforce the political authority of the TA.

By contrast the 'Interim Authority', created by the Bonn Agreement in Afghanistan was not inclusive of the principal socio-political components of Afghan society. The TA only represented the winners of US-led Operation 'Enduring Freedom'. The Interim Authority notably excluded the Taliban, who were at this time the most organized and unified constituency in the country. Johnson concludes that "In retrospect, Bonn should have attempted to draw in moderate Taliban elements and include them in the Government."[8]

While engaging the Taliban directly at this stage may have been challenging, greater efforts could have been expended to include all sectors of the Pashtun majority, which the Taliban claimed to represent. However, overall, the Pashtun majority were under-represented in the 'interim authority', with Panjshiri Tajiks and Shi'a Hazara over-represented. The 30-member

[7] Lyons, Terrence (1996), "Closing the Transition: The May 1995 Elections in Ethiopia", *The Journal of Modern African Studies* (Vol. 34, No.1), p.123.

[8] Johnson, Thomas (2007), "Afghanistan's Post-Taliban Transition: State-building After War" in Guttieri, Karin and Jessica Piombo, eds., *Interim Governments: Institutional Bridges to Peace and Democracy?* (Washington D.C.: United State Institute of Peace Press), p.314.

cabinet had 11 Pashtun members; the Pashtun form more than 40 per cent of the population. More importantly, although the proportion of seats held by Tajiks reflected their percentage of the population, they held the three most powerful ministries.[9] Five posts went to Shi'a Hazara which only make up 9 per cent of the population. The Uzbeks received three posts. [10] By failing to include the (majority Pashtun) Taliban, and over-representing the Tajiks and Hazara, the TA did not have a broad enough coalition of the principal organized socio-political forces in the country to establish its authority.

Nor was the inclusivity of the TA in Ethiopia absolute: Mengistu's party, the Workers Party of Ethiopia (WPE) and a diaspora group called the Coalition of Ethiopian Democratic Forces were notably absent from the National Conference.[11] But unlike in Afghanistan, the excluded groups were not deeply-rooted, hierarchical organizations. Clapham characterises those opposed to the EPRDF as 'thinly-rooted' groups of intellectuals.[12] Lyons notes that an putative alternative TA was composed of a "collection of diverse political groups, often disorganized, sometimes irresponsible, poorly led, and split by numerous internal differences..."[13] Those excluded were therefore powerless to contest the authority of the Ethiopian TA.

By contrast, in Afghanistan it was the Taliban who exhibited greater coherence and organization, while members of the TA were criticized as being weakly connected to one another and engaged in infighting. Watkins notes that "The Taliban constitute a relatively cohesive insurgent movement, as has been the case for most of the group's history."[14]As I have shown in Tunisia and Libya, the existence of a viable coalition to contest the authority of the TA is almost as important as the inclusivity of the coalition brought together in support of the TA.

The TGE was further assisted in establishing its authority by the relative strength and nationwide structures of the Ethiopian state, which the new transitional authorities were able to co-opt: "It encompassed a hierarchy of rule that extended all the way down to the *kebele*, the peasants' associations and urban dwellers' associations established during the revolution that

[9] *Ibid*, p.291.
[10] Ministries of Defence, Interior and Foreign Affairs. The Tajiks form 27% of the population of Afghanistan. *Ibid*, pp.293-295.
[11] Lyons, "Closing the Transition", p.123.
[12] Clapham, *The Horn of Africa*, p.73.
[13] Lyons, "Closing the Transition", p.121.
[14] Watkins, Andrew (2020), *Taliban Fragmentation: Fact, Fiction and Future* (Washington D.C.: US Institute of Peace) pp.6-7 and p.17. Others have contested the cohesion of the Taliban, notably Weigand, Florian (2017), "Afghanistan's Taliban- Legitimate Jihadists or Coercive Extremists" *Journal of intervention and Statebuilding* (Vol. 11, No.3), pp.364-365.

remained in place as the base units of administration."[15] These deep-rooted networks helped the TA project authority to the local level. Lyons writes that the "The EPRDF political operatives who controlled the critical kebelles and peasant associations provided the party with a network of officials that could both penetrate and mobilize the countryside."[16] Thus, the socio-institutional legacies of the state helped ensure that the TA enjoyed the depth of networks necessary to consolidate their authority throughout the country.

The Interim Authority in Afghanistan did not enjoy similar access to nationwide state institutions. The Afghan state was notoriously weak, even before and under the period of Taliban rule, and these state structures further evaporated in the wake of the US invasion.[17] The TA in Afghanistan could not depend on a strong state bureaucracy through which to project its authority.

Interestingly, the success of the TA in Ethiopia was not pre-determined by the structure of the revolutionary coalition to unseat Mengistu: as in Afghanistan, where the Northern Alliance was dominated by ethnic minorities, the TPLF was also a minority-dominated rebel movement. The TPLF enjoyed strong support in the Tigray region, but had no base among the Amhara, Oromo or Southern populations. Had the TPLF simply seized the organs of power in Addis Ababa, it seems unlikely that is authority would have been recognized by other ethno-political constituencies. However, the TPLF sought to build a broad ethnically inclusive TA after having toppled the regime,[18] while the Interim Authority in Afghanistan remained dominated by ethnic minorities, as I have shown. In the "Transitional Authority" Karzai attempted to redress the composition in favour of the Pashtun majority to which he belonged, but the path dependency of the initial composition prevented a significant rebalancing. "The continued power of the Tajiks alienated Karzai's Pashtun power base." Johnson writes, suggesting that this fundamentally undermined the authority of the institution.[19]

Clapham suggests that the demographic 'weakness' of the TPLF served as a "strengthening constraint, in that the very weakness of its title to rule forced it to engage in political processes, and notably coalition-building, for which victorious liberation movements generally feel no need, but which are central to the construction of a viable political order."[20] However, this

[15] Clapham, *The Horn of Africa*, p.66.
[16] Lyons, "Closing the Transition", p.142.
[17] Rubin, Barnett (1989), "The Fragmentation of Afghanistan", *Foreign Affairs* (Vol. 68, No. 5).
[18] Lyons. Terrence (2019), *The Puzzle of Ethiopian Politics* (London: Lynne Reiner), p.9.
[19] Johnson, "Afghanistan's Post-Taliban Transition", p.299.
[20] Clapham, *The Horn of Africa*, p.67.

strategic lesson, that a minority group which succeeds in unseating a majority government must engage in inclusive governance for the transitional period, does not seem to have been learnt by the TAs in Afghanistan.

Although the Ethiopian TA departed from its inclusive and pluralist origins,[21] this case is a fascinating example of how a group with a narrow, vanguardist political base, which succeeds in catalysing a political transition can reinforce its political authority by creating a broader governing coalition and tapping into organizations with deep institutionalized networks. By contrast the Afghan case exemplifies a case where a temporary balance of power in favour of a minority party is interpreted as a mandate to govern, leading to a TA dominated by minority groups which struggles to establish its authority.

3.2 Peru vs Yemen

In 2000 a political crisis in Peru was catalysed when President Fujimori attempted to secure an illegal third term in office. Following a corruption scandal, President Fujimori resigned on 20 November, leaving an institutional vacuum. Prior to Fujimori's resignation, a dialogue platform between the government, political opposition and CSOs had been created following the contested election of May 2000. This group has been simply dubbed the '*Mesa de Dialogo*' or 'roundtable'. After Fujimori's resignation the *Mesa de Dialogo* took on a new role: "It became the locus of authoritative decisionmaking [sic] power during the final days of the Fujimori government, preparing the way for the Peruvian opposition to win control of Congress and to form an interim government."[22] The *Mesa de Dialogo* adopted key political, judicial and security sector reforms which transformed the Peruvian state. The *Mesa de Dialogo* was quickly able to move to fill the vacuum created by Fujimori's departure and its authority to occupy this role was not contested.

Although the situation in Yemen would deteriorate into a situation of uncontrolled violence, it was not always thus. Peaceful protests began in Yemen in 2010 and accelerated after the successful overthrow of Presidents Ben Ali and Mubarak in Tunisia and Egypt respectively. By 27 January, between 15-20,000 protesters were on the streets of the capital, Sana'a.[23] Although there were major incidents of violence against protesters, most notably the "Friday of Dignity" Massacre of 18 March, when 45 people were killed, the total numbers of dead had

[21] Lyons, "Closing the Transition", p.142.
[22] Cooper, Andrew and Thomas Legler (2005), "A Tale of Two Mesas: The OAS Defense of Democracy in Peru and Venezuela", *Global Governance* (Vol. 11, No.4), p.427.
[23] Lackner, Helen (2017), *Yemen in Crisis: Autocracy, Neo-Liberalism and the Disintegration of a State* (London: Saqi Books), pp.35-39.

not exceeded the low hundreds by the time the transition began on 23 November 2011.[24] With a population more than double that of Tunisia, the uprising in Yemen was therefore decidedly non-violent during this phase.

The political transition in Yemen can be divided into two phases. The first phase began on 23 November 2011 when President Salah irrevocably delegated power to his Vice-President Abdrabbuh Mansur Hadi, who then formed a Government of National Unity (GNU). The second phase began with the one-man election of President Hadi on 21 February 2012 and was supposed to end with elections in February 2014.

The GNU and President Hadi never succeeded in establishing their authority. International Crisis Group (ICG) noted in 2012 that: "The Army is still divided, with warring commanders escaping the President's full authority. Armed factions and tribal groups loyal to Salah, Ali Mohsen or the Al-Ahmars remain in the capital; elsewhere the situation is far worse. The government's writ over the periphery, already tenuous before the uprising, has contracted sharply since."[25] Since then matters have worsened for the TA, as Houthi's seized control of Sana'a in September 2014, forcing President Hadi and his government to flee south.[26]

The variance between the successful authority-building of the *Mesa de Dialogo* in Peru and the GNU in Yemen can also be attributed to differences in the inclusivity of the TAs.

The *Mesa de Dialogo* was composed of 18 persons: four government ministers, opposition members of Congress and civil society representatives.[27] The *Mesa de Dialogo's* "intra-elite dialogue…with its emphasis on consensus, multisectoral representation, inclusionary decisionmaking, and pluralism"[28] follows the pattern I have suggested contributes to successful authority-building in political transitions.

In Yemen, the TA was dominated by the two rival political parties of the 'old elite'. The GNU established by Hadi divided portfolios equally between the General People's Congress (GPC) of President Saleh and the opposition Joint Meeting Parties (JMP). This formula failed to represent the emerging revolutionary youth movements which had driven the revolution and

[24] Human Rights Watch (HRW), "Yemen: Protester Killings Show Perils of Immunity Deal" (20 September 2011); Friedman, Uri, "40% of Casualties in Yemen's Uprising Came in the Last Ten Days", *The Atlantic* (3 June 2011).
[25] ICG (2012), *Yemen: Enduring Conflicts, Threatened Transition*, Middle East and North Africa Report No.125, i.
[26] ICG (2015), *Yemen at War*, Crisis Group Middle East Briefing No.45.
[27] Cooper and Legler, "A tale of two mesas", p.430.
[28] *Ibid,* p.438.

had become increasingly organized due to the protracted nature of the protests. Lackner notes that, "The integration of the new forces emerging from 2011 as minor elements of one of the two original rival factions gave them no clout and did not prevent the Islah party from dominating that faction of the transition."[29] Moreover, powerful and organized hierarchical politico-military organizations in the north and south of the country were also excluded from the TA: the Houthi movement from the north and the Hirak in the South. ICG noted:

> Huthi rebels in the north, southern separatists and many independent protesters view the settlement with scepticism, if not outright distain. They resent the elite nature of the agreement, which is skewed toward existing political parties and offers far reaching domestic immunity to Salah and his allies.[30]

Moreover, the deal did nothing to increase or modify representation in the delegitimized parliament, which remained in place. As Papagianni notes, "Important constituencies such as women, youth, and civil society groups who participated in the 2011 revolution, as well as the Houthis and the Southern movement, were not represented in the parliament."[31] The TA was not sufficiently inclusive of the principal socio-institutional constituencies in Yemeni society to establish its authority.

Moreover, the bi-partisan formula neglected the fact that both parties were considered corrupt, thinly-rooted and disconnected from mobilized constituencies on the ground. Both the GPC and JMP were seen as Sana'a centric organizations with few roots outside the capital.[32] The GPC was riddled with division and factional infighting before the crisis, and the JMP was viewed "as part of the establishment, a *status quo* entity in dire need of internal reform."[33] ICG underscored that Hadi "…possesses no ready-made power base within the civil service, military or party structure."[34] The TA was neither sufficiently broad, nor did it include entities with deep roots throughout the country.

Unfortunately, while the TA was unable to aggregate the requisite coalition to establish its authority, nor was an alternative coalition able to emerge to assume power. ICG noted that "New actors have been slow to organize and coalesce around viable entities: no alternative has

[29] Lackner, *Yemen in Crisis*, p.52.
[30] ICG, *Yemen*, p.2.
[31] Papagianni, Katia (2021), "National Dialogues and the Resolution of Violent Conflicts" in Weller, Marc, Mark Retter and Andrea Varga, eds., *International Law and Peace Settlements* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), p.316.
[32] ICG, *Yemen*, p.15.
[33] *Ibid*, p.14.
[34] *Ibid*, p.4.

emerged with ability to challenge the party system or power structure.[35] A National Dialogue process was designed to be a more inclusive body representing all Yemeni socio-political constituencies, but the National Dialogue did not assume legislative functions, unlike the HIROR in Tunisia, for example. Its mandate was rather vague and long term, including "establishing the key substantive elements of constitutional reform" and "determining the process of drafting the constitution".[36] It can therefore not be considered an integral part of the TA under my definition. Moreover, even the inclusivity of the National Dialogue was to some extent illusory. Lackner notes that "rural people and those from many areas were barely represented."[37] More than half of the 565 seats were occupied by southerners, however, these individuals were mostly seen as stooges for President Hadi, and only 85 were occupied by individuals who could be considered Southern separatists.[38] Thirty-five seats were taken by Houthis. The deracinated GCP held 112 seats and the discredited JMP 129 seats.[39]

The transition in Yemen was in the hands of elites, many of whom only had weak connections to their purported constituencies. By contrast the *Mesa de Dialogo*, although only composed of 18 individuals, represented a critical mass of the most organized socio-political constituencies in the country.

3.3 Conclusion

This comparative look suggests that my findings concerning the importance of inclusivity in authority-building continue to hold under conditions of civil war as well as in the context of peaceful protests.

This is not to say that conflict has no impact on the process of a TA's authority construction. Within my own theoretical framework, which posits that the composition of the TA and its inclusivity are central to the construction of political authority, I also anticipate that violence could act as a confounding factor. As noted by Staniland, violence strongly impacts social relations.[40] Violence may break pre-existing social ties between elites, particularly in contexts

[35] *Ibid*, p.6.
[36] Presidential Decree No. 30 (2012), Articles 3.2.a and 3.2.b. c.f. Papagianni, "National Dialogues and the Resolution of Violent Conflicts", p.317.
[37] Lackner, *Yemen in Crisis*, p.47.
[38] *Ibid*, p.43.
[39] *Idem.*
[40] Staniland, Paul (2014), *Networks of Rebellion*: *Explaining Insurgent Cohesion and Collapse* (Ithaca: Cornell University Press), pp.54-55. For a case study see, Schoon, Eric (2014), "The Paradox of Legitimacy: Resilience, Successes and the Multiple Identities of the Kurdistan Workers' Party in Turkey", *Social Problems* (Vol. 62, No.2).

of protracted conflict where elites find themselves on different sides of the war for an extended period. Violence may also break down hierarchical relationships between constituencies and their representatives. These factors may prevent the creation of an inclusive and representative TA when the conflict ends. Conversely, violence may lead to greater group cohesion and the emergence of a recognized leadership from otherwise amorphous groups. Greater cohesion and hierarchical decision-making could facilitate the construction of a more inclusive TA.

Similarly, when a TA originates in the context of a civil war, path dependency may dictate that the TA is dominated by one side of the conflict and has difficulty in becoming more balanced and inclusive. I demonstrated, for example, how the NTC's birth, in the context of *de facto* division of Libya, produced an institution dominated by figures from Cyrenaica, and how this imbalance proved difficult to redress when the NTC became the TA of all Libya. The Ethiopian case, however, demonstrates that this trajectory is by no means unavoidable.

A closer examination of the impact of conflict on inter and intra-group dynamics lies outside the scope of this study. However, on the basis of the foregoing, it is reasonable to conclude that the inclusion of the significant socio-political components of a society remains important for a TA's authority-building efforts, regardless of whether a political transition is catalysed by civil war or peaceful popular protests.

4. Foreign Intervention

Foreign intervention in political transitions exists along a spectrum from light technical support and humanitarian aid to the full-scale military occupation of the transitioning state and the assumption of legislative and executive functions. Prior to commencing my research, I expected to see a strong influence of foreign intervention on the authority-building processes of TAs. I speculated that a significant foreign intervention could obviate the need for a strong domestic coalition backing the transition; international support substituting for domestic support. Others have posited the opposite hypothesis, suggesting that foreign intervention could unintentionally undermine a TA, as the TA would be seen as a foreign imposition, and those domestic actors who collaborate with it criticised for failing to protect national sovereignty.[41]

[41] von Billerbeck, Sarah and Birte Julia Gippert (2017), "Legitimacy in Conflict: Concepts, Practices, Challenges", *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* (Vol. 11, No. 3), p. 279; Saul, Mathew (2009) "From Haiti to Somalia: The Assistance Model and the Paradox of State Reconstruction in International Law", *International Community Law Review* (Vol. 11, No.1), p.121.

A great deal of ink has been spilt on the practical and normative implications of liberal efforts at regime change and the international administration of states.[42] Many scholars have attempted to establish factors contributing to the successful establishment of the authority of International Transitional Administrations (ITAs). Zaum, for example, identifies five sources of authority for ITAs: consent; delegation; maintenance of peace and security; promotion of human rights and democracy; and provision of government.[43] He acknowledges however, that "all of these sources are contested."[44] Other scholars have suggested that foreign support is an important legitimating factor for transitional leaders, while yet others have pointed to international legal validation supporting a TA's authority-building efforts.[45]

However, my findings suggest that the degree of foreign intervention is of secondary importance to the outcome of a TA's authority-building process. As stated earlier, what is important is the composition of the TA and the extent to which it is inclusive of the principal socio-political components of the society. The epiphenomenal impact of foreign intervention on authority-building is, however, obscured by the fact that most ITAs are inherently *not* representative of the principal socio-political components of a society, dominated, as they are, by external stakeholders. They therefore often fail to establish their political authority, as we shall see.

To explore the validity of this contention, I have examined several cases of TAs with a strong degree of foreign intervention in the political transition, and established that the outcome of the TA's authority-building efforts cannot be attributed to the degree of foreign intervention but rather to the inclusiveness of the TA's decision-making processes. I have begun by examining the case of Liberia, which underwent two political transitions during its recent history, both with a strong degree of foreign involvement. Variation in the authority of the TAs is therefore unlikely to be accounted for by the foreign intervention. I then compare the cases of Cambodia and Iraq, which both exhibited a strong degree of foreign involvement but also varied in terms of the outcome observed.

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[42] Paris, Roland (2010), "Saving Liberal Peacebuilding", *Review of International Studies* (Vol. 36, No.2), offers a review of the literature, pp.340-347.
[43] Zaum, Dominik (2006), "The Authority of International Administrations in International Society", *Review of International Studies* (Vol. 32, No. 3), p.455.
[44] *Idem.*
[45] Gerdes, Felix (2015), "The Interplay of Domestic legitimation and Foreign Relations: Contrasting Charles Taylor and Ellen Johnson Sirleaf of Liberia", *Civil Wars* (Vol.17, No.4); Remmer, Karen (1995), "New Theoretical Perspectives on Democratization", *Comparative Politics* (Vol.28, No.1); Janos, Andrew (2001), "From Eastern Empire to Western Hegemony: East Central Europe Under Two International Regimes", *East European Politics and Societies* (Vol. 15, No.2).

4.1 Liberia's IGNU vs Liberia's NTGL

Liberia witnessed two periods of transitional governance since the end of the Cold War. The first Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU) was established in 1990, following a military intervention by ECOWAS designed to prevent Charles Taylor's National Patriotic Front of Liberia (NPFL) from taking control of the capital. The IGNU was imposed by ECOWAS and relied upon the ECOWAS military mission (ECOMOG) for its survival. ECOMOG comprised 16,000, mainly Nigerian, troops at its height.[46] The transition formally ended in July 1997 when Taylor's party won approximately 75 per cent of the votes cast in elections. However, the country was back in a state of civil war less than one year after the 1997 elections.

Between 1997 and 2003 the situation deteriorated due to the ongoing insurgency of anti-Taylor groups and the predatory behaviour of Taylor's regime. In 2003, as rebels closed in on the capital, Taylor fled into exile, sparking the second political transition, and a new ECOWAS-sponsored military mission (ECOMIL) was launched to stabilise the country. In late 2003, ECOMIL troops were transferred to the United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), with total troop numbers again reaching approximately 16,000.[47] The second National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL) was agreed in August 2003 as part of the Accra Comprehensive Peace Agreement (ACPA) and governed Liberia until January 2006 when a democratically-elected government was installed. UNMIL transferred security responsibilities to the Liberian authorities in 2016 and completed its mission in March 2018.[48]

There are strong parallels between the genesis of the IGNU and the NTGL, including in the predominant role played by foreign military forces in the establishment and maintenance of the TAs. However, there is clear variation in the political authority of the two TAs. The IGNU categorically failed to establish its authority. ECOMOG was unable to extend its control much beyond the capital and the IGNU was not able to provide basic services, including security. The transitional process terminated with an election which validated the rule of Charles Taylor, the warlord whose approach on the capital had catalysed the ECOMOG intervention in the first place. The transition simply served to prolong the civil war and produced the same end result.

[46] Tuck, Christopher (2000), "'Every Car or Moving Object Gone'. The ECOMOG Intervention in Liberia", *African Studies Quarterly* (Vol.4, No.1), p.2.
[47] Kroc Institute for International Peace Studies, "UN Peacekeeping Force: Accra Peace Agreement", *Peace Accords Matrix* (University of Notre Dame).
[48] United Nations Mission in Liberia (UNMIL), "UNMIL Fact Sheet". I have not evaluated whether UN-led operations produce different effects to operations led by States or regional organizations. This is a potential future avenue for study.

As Taylor himself said: "If we had been allowed to win on the battlefield, we would have finished the war in six months in 1990."[49] By contrast, the NTGL was able to establish its authority: security was restored throughout the country; disarmament, demobilization and reintegration (DDR) programmes were initiated; government reforms were undertaken; and successful democratic elections were organized.[50] Most importantly, the results of the elections were accepted and President Ellen Johnson-Sirleaf was allowed to serve two full terms as President before peacefully handing over power in 2018.

The variation in the authority of the IGNU and NTGL is anticipated by my explanation of authority-building in political transitions. The IGNU did not include the principal socio-political constituencies in the country, namely the warring parties. The IGNU was led by President Amos Sawyer who had strong personal credibility as the former Chairman of the 1981-84 Constitutional Commission, but was explicitly selected as an apolitical figure without ties to the warring parties or a strong personal political base. Sawyer recognised that his TA had too narrow a socio-political base and sought to engage the parties, including Taylor, through two regional, multilateral conferences. But these efforts elicited the opposition of ECOMOG which rejected participation of the warring parties in the transition.[51] Morgan concludes that, "One of the main problems with the first transitional government had been that none of the armed elements in Liberia had any stake in the government."[52] Sawyer was the type of transitional leader with strong personal valency that in another context may have been able to unite a sufficiently broad coalition to establish his TA's political authority. However, the opposition of ECOMOG to the inclusion of the warring parties stymied his attempts to create a more inclusive process and therefore condemned his TA to failure.

By contrast, the NTGL was inclusive of the main socio-political constituencies in Liberia: seats in the transitional legislature were given to the armed groups who had forced Taylor from power including Liberians United for Reconciliation and Democracy (LURD), and the Movement for Democracy and Elections in Liberia (MODEL), but also to representatives of Taylor's government and other political parties and geographic regions. The transitional executive was similarly inclusive of the principal socio-political and armed components in the

[49] Cf. Tuck, "'Every Car or Moving Object Gone'", pp.10-11.
[50] Morgan, Philip (2007), "Interim Government in Liberia: Peace Building Toward the Status Quo" in Guttieri, Karen and Jessica Piombo, eds., *Interim Governments: Institutional Bridges to Peace and Democracy?* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press), p.215.
[51] *Ibid,* p.203.
[52] *Ibid,* p.209.

country: "although the transitional chairman, Gyude Bryant, had no partisan past, the other players in the NTGL simply mirrored the factional interests in place at the end of the civil war."[53] By bringing the principal political and military factions into the TA, the NTGL was able to secure recognition of its authority throughout the country, tie parties into the transitional process, and successfully organize elections in October 2005.

4.2 Cambodia vs Iraq

The United Nations Transitional Administration in Cambodia (UNTAC) was established following the Paris Peace Agreement in October 1991. UNTAC was disbanded following the inauguration of the Cambodian national assembly in September 1993. UNTAC governed Cambodia along with a 13-member Supreme National Council (SNC) which was, according to the Paris Peace Agreement, the "unique legitimate body and source of authority in which throughout the transitional period the sovereignty, independence and unity of Cambodia are enshrined."[54]

Assessments of UNTAC's success vary. Doyle and Suntharalingam offer the most nuanced assessment of UNTAC's performance. They note the failure of the TA in civil administration and disarmament but highlight the success in restoring (or rather establishing) Cambodian sovereignty, repatriation of refugees and the holding of elections.[55] Others point to the success of UNTAC in stabilising the security situation prior to elections, which in spite of fears to the contrary, took place in conditions of relative peace.[56] Despite an announced boycott of the Khmer Rouge faction, almost all eligible Cambodians registered to vote and more than 90 per cent cast their ballots in the 1993 elections.[57] The political transition largely ended the conflict in Cambodia which had been raging for more than 30 years.[58] Given the context in which UNTAC was created, these factors suggest that the TA was relatively successful in establishing its authority, as defined by the relative lack of contestation of its decisions both during the transition and subsequently.

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[53] *Idem.*
[54] Cf. Doyle, Michael and Nishkala Suntharalingam (1994), "The UN in Cambodia: Lessons for Complex Peacekeeping", *International Peacekeeping* (Vol. 1, No.2), p.118.
[55] *Ibid.* p.127.
[56] Croissant, Aurel (2007), "International Interim Governments, Democratization and Post-Conflict Peace Building: Lessons from Cambodia and East Timor" in Guttieri, Karen and Jessica Piombo, eds., *Interim Governments: Institutional Bridges to Peace and Democracy?* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press), p.228.
[57] Doyle and Suntharalingam, "The UN in Cambodia", p.124.
[58] BBC News, "Cambodia profile – Timeline" (20 July 2018). The last fighting ended in 1998.

The political transition in Iraq began after the US-led military operation 'Iraqi Freedom' succeeded in defeating the forces of President Saddam Hussein and forcing him and the Iraqi Ba'ath party from power. Operation Iraqi Freedom was launched on 20 March 2003 and only took two months to achieve decisive military victory. The subsequent political transition in Iraq underwent two distinct phases: the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA), which, along with the Interim Governing Council (IGC), ran the country from May 2003 until June 2004, and the Interim Iraqi Government (IIG), operating along with the Interim National Council (INC), which assumed executive and legislative powers until the election of the Transitional National Assembly (TNA) on 30 January 2005. The 275-member TNA assumed legislative functions, including selecting a prime minister and approving his government, as well as drafting the new Iraqi constitution. However, the TNA, despite its name, is not a TA for the purposes of my study as it was formally elected. I am therefore concerned primarily with the authority-building efforts of the CPA and the IIG.

Both successive TAs in Iraq struggled to establish their authority, facing a total collapse of state institutions, widespread popular protests, a nascent insurgency, and widespread inter-communal and sectarian violence. Much of the violence and protests specifically identified the TA as illegitimate.[59] Key decisions of the TA were also contested, notably the Transitional Administration Law (TAL).[60] Of course, the authority of the TAs in Iraq was not uniform across the country, with the Kurdish northeast most accepting of the new regime. Nor was the TAs' authority uniform over time: Diamond notes a short-lived uptick in support for the IIG immediately after its creation.[61] However, in general, it must be acknowledged that the TAs in Iraq faced significant hurdles in establishing their authority to govern.

Both UNTAC and the CPA enjoyed 'international legitimacy' for their reign. UNTAC was created unanimously by UN Security Council Resolution 745 and 45 countries contributed personnel to the body.[62] While the invasion of Iraq was surrounded by legal and political controversy, the creation of the TA was legally legitimated by the UN Security Council in

[59] Caan, Christina, Beth Cole, Paul Hughes and Daniel P. Serwer, "Is This any Way to Run an Occupation? Legitimacy, Governance and Security in Post-Conflict Iraq" in Guttieri, Karen and Jessica Piombo, eds., *Interim Governments: Institutional Bridges to Peace and Democracy?* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press), pp. 330-331.
[60] Papagianni, Katia (2005), "Transitional Politics in Afghanistan and Iraq: Inclusion, Consultation, and Public Participation", *Development in Practice* (Vol. 15, No.6), p.749.
[61] Diamond, Larry (2005), *Squandered Victory : the American Occupation and the Bungled Effort to Bring Democracy to Iraq* (New York: NY Times Books), pp.115-16.
[62] United Nations Transitional Authority in Cambodia (UNTAC), "UNTAC: Facts and Figures".

Resolution 1483, which received 14 votes of approval (with Syria abstaining).[63] It is difficult to establish whether Cambodians considered the UN validation of UNTAC significant, but it is clear that international and legal legitimation did nothing to render the CPA more acceptable in the eyes of the Iraqis. Iraqis generally perceived the CPA as a foreign occupation force rather than the leader of a locally-driven political transition.

I attribute the success of the TA in Cambodia to the successful inclusion of the principal socio-political components of Cambodia society in the TA through the SNC. The 13-member SNC was composed of the four main factions of the conflict in Cambodia: the National Union Front for an Independent, Neutral, Peaceful and Cooperative Cambodia (FUNCINPEC); the Khmer Peoples' National Liberation Front (KPNLF), the Party of Democratic Kampuchea (PDK, a.k.a. the Khmer Rouge) and the Cambodian People's Party (CPP). Prince Norodom Sihanouk was given the Presidency of the SNC.

The role of Prince Sihanouk was particularly central in ensuring the success of UNTAC's authority-building efforts. Prince Sihanouk occupied a special place in Cambodian history as he had held key roles in successive regimes since independence:

> Prince Sihanouk's support was sought in order to strengthen the condition for acceptance and disperse any impression of the peace process as being imposed…the UN's authority and the authority of Sihanouk were consistently conceptualized as mutually reinforcing, reflected by the administrative, legal, and symbolic measures taken by UNTAC.[64]

Prince Sihanouk is the type of unifying political figure, acceptable and connected to all parties, found in many cases of successful authority-building in political transitions. The UN was aware that its political authority to govern Cambodia was conditioned on the consent of the Cambodian people, and that inclusion of the principal socio-political players in the TA was the best way to ensure this consent. In conclusion, Travouillon notes that the SNC "guaranteed the legitimacy of the UN's involvement in Cambodia's transition to a liberal democracy."[65]

[63] *Reuters*, "Aftereffects: Passages From Security Council Resolution Ending U.N. Sanctions on Iraq" (23 May 2003).
[64] Travouillon, Katrin (2017), "Moderator or Manipulator? How International–Local Relations Emerged as a Function of UN Authority-Building in Cambodia", *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding* (Vol. 11, No.4), pp.453-454.
[65] *Ibid.* p.449.

Conversely, the CPA only acknowledged the need for Iraqis to play any role in transitional governance in July 2003, when it created the IGC to respond to Iraqi critiques regarding the foreign nature of the TA. The IGC was the 'Iraqi face' of the CPA, tasked with appointing a government and drafting an interim administrative law. The IGC was designed to mimic the ethnic composition of the country: it was composed of thirteen Shi'as, five Sunnis, five Kurds, one ethnic Turk and one Assyrian Christian. However, the members of the IGC were not seen as representative of their respective constituencies: "nine of the twenty-five IGC members were returned exiles, many relatively unknown to most Iraqis. A general suspicion of returned exiles and a sense that they were out of touch with the country prevented the population from supporting their involvement in the IGC."[66] Although inclusive of Iraq's ethnic groups, the IGC's authority was contested because of the unrepresentative nature of its members. Moreover, as Papagianni notes, the IGC was not ideologically or politically inclusive; most importantly opponents to the US occupation were excluded from the TA (and subsequently from the IIG).[67] A surface inclusivity belied the truly un-inclusive nature of the TA, much in the same way the geographic inclusivity of the NTC in Libya was misleading because of the deracination of many of the Western Libyan members. Lack of political and ideological diversity in the IGC also mirrors a similar lack of non-revolutionary voices in the NTC post-October 2011.

Furthermore, the CPA retained veto power over IGC decisions, creating the impression that the IGC was a rubberstamping authority with no real power. By contrast, the SNC was vested with real power, and was not simply a puppet regime. Doyle and Suntharalingam note that UNTAC, "… had to abide by a unanimous decision of the SNC, so long as it was in keeping with the objectives of the Agreement." Croissant characterises UNTAC as an executive authority, while the SNC had full legislative authority and a degree of oversight over UNTAC.[68] Travouillon examines in detail how the SNC was a sort of 'Frankenstein's monster', created as a rubberstamp to legitimate UNTAC, but then exhibiting significant autonomy and often acting against as a constraint on UNTAC's actions.[69]

Unlike in many other transitional countries, the SNC in Cambodia was composed of parties with real socio-political constituencies on the ground. The groups incorporated inside the SNC

[66] Caan, Cole, Hughes and Serwer, "Is This any Way to Run an Occupation?", p.332.
[67] Papagianni, "Transitional Politics in Afghanistan and Iraq", p.748.
[68] Croissant, "International Interim Governments", p.227.
[69] Travoullion, "Moderator or Manipulator?", p.449.

included the principal armed and political opposition to the previous regime, *and* the regime itself. It therefore avoided alienating any of the key socio-political constituencies in the country (although the Khmer Rouge would subsequently leave the SNC and boycott the elections). Half the seats on the SNC were allocated to the CPP, the inheritor party of the State of Cambodia.

The CPA by contrast not only excluded Ba'ath party members from the TA but also undertook specific actions to persecute and punish party members. The CPA thus alienated a vast number of Iraqis through the process of de-Ba'athification. De-Ba'athification was launched on May 16, 2003 under CPA Order No. 1 on the "De-Ba'athification of Iraqi Society": this order removed all members of the Ba'ath party from their posts and barred them from future employment in the public sector. Order No. 2 on the "Dissolution of Entities" dissolved all former military and security institutions. This not only rendered the Iraqi state unable to perform basic functions, including provision of security, but also denied the TA a deep potential well of support and created resentment among a significant trained, armed and mobilized segment of the population. The Ba'ath party numbered almost 4 million members at the time of the US invasion, or more than 15 per cent of the total population.[70] The TA in Iraq thus excluded the most organized and well-rooted organization in Iraq from its governing coalition. The Ba'ath party also drew its members disproportionately from the Sunni population; which more generally began to feel like it stood to lose most from the transition to democracy. Iraqi Sunnis subsequently boycotted the 2005 elections. As in Libya, where the organized and significant constituency associated with the former regime was excluded from the TA after October 2003, the exclusion of the Ba'ath party and the alienation of the Sunni population led to contestation of the TAs' authority in Iraq.

The CPA formally transferred authority to the Interim Iraqi Government (IIG) on 28 June 2003. It was hoped that the IIG would broaden the TA's base of support, but Papagianni notes the IIG was a facsimile of the IGC, with the same narrow socio-political base.[71] In an effort to create a supplementary mechanism for engaging Iraqi constituencies, the IIG convened a national conference to select members of an Interim National Council (INC). The INC was composed of 81 individuals. According to Caan *et al.*, "the INC represented a small but important step forward: it gave Iraq a body more representative than the IGC and began the

[70] Sassoon, Joseph (2011), *Saddam Hussein's Ba'th Party: Inside an Authoritarian Regime* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.), p. 286.
[71] Papagianni, "Transitional Politics in Afghanistan and Iraq", p.753.

process of engaging a wider circle of Iraqis in governance."[72] However, others note that most Iraqis were unaware of the national conference's existence and criticized the INC as an exclusionary exile-dominated body, much like the IGC: "six political parties , most of them made up of returned exiles, dominated the process and alienated exactly the kind of popular leaders the conference was supposed to attract."[73] Sunnis also boycotted this process, again ensuring a major Iraqi constituency was excluded from the TA. Papagianni concludes that, "The process resulted in the forming of a national council that included no credible opponents of the US presence in Iraq and had failed to extend power to a wide range of political actors."[74] The successive TAs in Iraq were therefore formed in profoundly flawed and exclusionary processes which, through their decisions and composition, alienated huge numbers of Iraqis who then rejected the authority of the TA.

The TA in Cambodia faced enormous challenges in establishing its authority in a country riven by civil war which had never enjoyed full independence. Its relative success, I have suggested, can be attributed to the inclusivity of the SNC and the serious efforts to engage all components of Cambodian society in the transitional process. By contrast, the U.S.-led coalition defeated Saddam Hussein quickly and entered a country with a relatively strong bureaucracy and some established hierarchical socio-political organizations, including both regime and opposition institutions. They initially made no effort to include these Iraqi constituencies in the TA, and persecuted and alienated the largest and most organized Iraqi constituency: the Ba'ath Party. Subsequent efforts at inclusion were characterized by an over-reliance on deracinated exile groups, failure of genuine consultation and an unwillingness to countenance any opposition to the US occupation which thus *de facto* excluded vast swathes of the Iraqi population. This differing approach to inclusion translated into the different outcomes of the TAs' authority-building efforts in Cambodia and Iraq.

4.3 Conclusion

As seen with violence, the degree of foreign intervention does not *per se* abrogate the need for a TA to be inclusive of the principal socio-political components of a society. Iraq, Cambodia and Liberia (1990-97, 2003-2005) witnessed significant degrees of foreign intervention in their political transitions. The relative success of the authority-building efforts of the NTGL in Liberia and UNTAC in Cambodia is juxtaposed to the failure of the IGNU to establish its

[72] Caan, Cole, Hughes, Sewyer, "Is This any Way to Run an Occupation?", p.337.
[73] Ciezdlo, Annia, "Deep Divides Halt Key Iraq Meeting", *Christian Science Monitor* (30 July 2004).
[74] Papagianni, "Transitional Politics in Afghanistan and Iraq", p.755.

authority and the successive failure of the authority-building efforts of TAs in Iraq. The key variation between the cases of success and failure was the degree of domestic inclusivity of the TA. The NTGL in Liberia and the SNC in Cambodia were established with the need to be inclusive of the main socio-political components of the society at their central structuring logic. The IGNU and the Iraqi TAs were explicitly un-inclusive. In both cases the occupying powers, ECOWAS in the Liberian case and the US in the Iraqi case, were opposed to the creation of inclusive TAs. This is a major reason for the failure of their authority-building efforts.

5. 'Elite Pact' or Peace Agreement

Much of the early work on political transitions focused on the role of an 'elite pact'. O'Donnell and Schmitter define pacts as "an explicit, but not always publicly explicated or justified, agreement among a select set of actors which seeks to define (or better, to redefine) rules governing the exercise of power on the basis of mutual guarantees for the 'vital interests' of those entering into it."[75] Such elite pacts have been considered as a key variable in the successful transition to democracy.[76]

The TAs in Tunisia and Libya were not established on the basis of an explicit 'elite pact': as I have shown, the TAs in the two contexts were created in *ad-hoc*, informal and iterative processes. The composition, rules of procedure and policies of the TAs evolved and changed over time in a discursive process between the members of these institutions, and between constituencies represented inside and other interested constituencies outside the institutions themselves. As noted, these cases potentially reflect a new trend in political transitions: a move away from clear, negotiated, phased revolutions and political transitions, driven by structured long-term opposition movements, with their own internal hierarchies and decision-making structures, and towards chaotic processes, pushed along by more diffuse movements, coalescing due to a historically contingent confluence of events. The process of authority-building witnessed in Tunisia and Libya may have been influenced by this feature of their germination.

Transitions resulting from explicit 'elite pacts', including peace agreements and other forms of formal political settlement, may exhibit different authority-building processes to transitions which are managed in an *ad-hoc* manner by TAs which develop in a more organic fashion. The

[75] O'Donnell, Guillermo and Philippe Schmitter (1986), *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press), p.37.
[76] *Ibid.* p.39; Di Palma, Guiseppe (1990), *To Craft Democracies: An Essay on Democratic Transitions* (Oxford: University of California Press); Stepan, Alfred. and Juan Linz (1996), *Problems of Democratic Consolidation and Transition* (Baltimore: John Hopkins University Press).

formalization of the structure of the TA in an 'elite pact' may contribute to the ossification of the body, rendering it less capable of responding to events, shifts in the balance of power and the emergence of new actors. Alternatively, a peace agreement may act as a legitimating instrument, justifying the composition of the TA. A peace agreement is also often typically welcomed by international resolutions and statements, coupled with an influx of material and political support for the transitioning state. This may legitimate the TA and ease its authority-building process. Peace agreements may also outline hierarchical structures, decision-making procedures, and mechanisms for dispute resolution for the TA. This could render the need for a broad, inclusive TA less essential, allowing the parties to hew closer to the concept of a 'minimum winning coalition'. The formalization of a TA in an explicit 'elite pact' may therefore significantly impact the process of the TA's authority-building.

Of the 12 comparative cases I have chosen, eight TAs were the result of an explicit political settlement: only in Iraq, Liberia (1990-1997), Ethiopia, and Peru were the transitions not governed by a negotiated political instrument. Iraq and Liberia witnessed military occupations, while Ethiopia was the result of an outright military victory by a rebel movement. The transition in Peru was catalysed by a constitutional crisis. Of the cases of transition based on an explicit political settlement, 50 per cent of the TAs succeeded in establishing their political authority.

A closer qualitative analysis of the political transitions in Burundi, Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC) and Madagascar suggests that 'elite pacts' reinforce authority-building *only* when they codify a broad, inclusive governing coalition. The key deciding factor in the outcome of the authority-building process remains how inclusive the TA is of the principal socio-political components of the society. For example, in both DRC and Burundi, a surface agreement to create a broadly inclusive TA was, in fact, an agreement between elites without strong social bases. This, coupled with the failure to implement key aspects of the accords, led to challenges to the TAs' authority in both countries. A close look at the recent history of Madagascar, which has seen several attempts to form TAs, some based on explicit 'elite pacts' and some without such formal codification, indicates that, only if the TA was based on a genuinely inclusive governing coalition was it able to establish its political authority. The codification of these inclusive bodies in peace agreements was epiphenomenal.

5.1 Madagascar's HAE vs HAT vs the Dakar I Agreement

Madagascar witnessed two political transitions in the past 30 years, as well as a number of political crises which could have catalysed transitions but did not. I will now examine three of

these events, all of which saw the negotiation of a formally codified political settlement between elites, but only two of which witnessed a successful political transition. As I shall establish, if the 'elite pact' does not bring a critical mass of the key domestic socio-political constituencies together in the TA, it is likely to fail.

The first political crisis occurred immediately after the end of the Cold War and was partly catalysed by the fall of the Soviet Union. In 1991, with the sixteen-year regime of President Ratsiraka on the brink of collapse, the opposition leader, Albert Zafy, led a strike of 80,000 civil servants in the capital, Antananarivo, where he announced an interim government (with himself as Prime Minister) and a new legislature called the *Haute Autorité de l'Etat (HAE),* composed of sixteen opposition parties. In the face of opposition from President Ratsiraka, 400,000 supporters of Zafy marched on the capital and an extended period of political unrest ensued.[77] The country operated with two *de facto* administrations until the signature of the Panorama Convention on 31 October 1991.

The Panorama Convention created a broad power-sharing TA encompassing the principal socio-political components of Madagascan society. Ratsiraka was maintained as President for the transitional period but was deprived of most of his powers.[78] Zafy was appointed Prime Minister with expanded autonomy. The National Popular Assembly was suspended, and the HAE was expanded to include government representatives and endowed with legislative authority. The HAE was composed of 31 members: seven nominated by the party of President Ratsiraka (*Antoko Revolisionera Malagasy* – AREMA) and 24 seats going to a broad spectrum of opposition parties.[79] As such, the governing coalition contained both the full breadth of the political opposition as well as the regime. This broad coalition was able to successfully organize multi-party elections on 10 February 1993, which saw Zafy sweep to power.

The second transition began in March 2009 when an Army coup forced President Marc Ravalomanana from power, following four months of protests in Antananarivo. The *Haute Autorité de la Transition (HAT),* an opposition grouping led by then-Mayor of Antananarivo, Andry Rajoelina, announced that it would govern the transition with Rajoelina assuming the Presidency.

[77] Marcus, Richard (2004), "Political Change in Madagascar: Populist Democracy or Neopatrimonialism by Another Name?", *Institute for Security Studies: Paper No.89,* p.2.; Klass, Brian. "How Fake Democracies Damage Real Ones" *Foreign Policy* (June 2016).
[78] Panorama Convention (31 October 1991).
[79] Annex to the Panorama Convention (31 October 1991).

The HAT struggled to establish its political authority. The military was split, with the Army supporting Rajoelina and the Navy supporting Ravolomanana. Ravolamanana's political party, *Tiako I Madagasikara* (TIM), continued to organize mass protests against the HAT and Rajoelina. The international community also rejected the authority of Rajoelina and the HAT, isolating the TA and depriving Madagascar of much-needed international assistance. The HAT tried to reinforce its authority through several means, including a decision by the constitutional court, public consultations on a constitutional amendment, and a referendum on the new Constitution.[80] However, this was largely unsuccessful. The TA began to rely more and more on the use of force, and contestation of their authority broadened beyond partisans of the TIM to larger components of the society dubbed 'legalists'.[81] ICG noted that the political base of Rajoelina did not extend much outside of the capital. The HAT itself was not invested with real power, with decisions being taken by President Rajoelina without consultation. This began to irk members of the TA who were unwilling to act as window-dressing for Rajoelina's seizure of power.[82] The HAT struggled to establish its authority, tottering on a narrow base of support.

A South African Development Community (SADC) mediation process began in early 2011 and reached agreement on a roadmap by September 2011 to put in place a neutral, consensus Prime Minister, Omar Beriziky, and organize elections in 2013.[83] Beriziky built a genuinely inclusive interim government, with involvement from the four major political parties in Madagascar (the parties of Rajoelina- *Tanora malaGasy Vonona*, or TGV; Ravalomanana - TIM, Zafy - UNDD, the National Union for Development and Democracy, and Ratsiraka- AREMA) as well as other smaller parties, such as his own party.

Call notes that the structure of the mediation process was "intended to create a more politically diverse process and to ensure that the political negotiations extended beyond the highland elite—which includes both Ravalomanana and Rajoelina—to the majority coastal peoples."[84] With this inclusive political base the TA had no difficulty in securing its political authority and was able to organize (somewhat delayed) elections in January 2014. The TGV candidate, Hery Rajaonarimampianina was elected President, defeating the TIM candidate, Jean-Louis Robinson, and the transition was concluded.

[80] ICG (2010), *Madagascar: Sortir du Cycle de Crises*, Africa Report N°156, p.9.
[81] *Ibid*, p.10.
[82] *Ibid*, p.11.
[83] Roadmap for Ending the Crisis in Madagascar (13 September 2011).
[84] Call, Charles (2012), *UN Mediation and the Politics of Transition after Constitutional Crises* (New York City: International Peace Institute), p.20.

The Panorama convention in 1991 and the SADC Roadmap in 2011 codified a broad coalition in support of the transition, but the agreements themselves did not ensure the success of the TA's authority-building efforts. This point is underlined the failed attempt to establish a TA following the 2001 elections. This failed attempt was also the result of a political settlement: the Dakar I agreement.

This putative TA was attempted following the contested 2001 presidential election, which again saw President Ratsiraka, who had returned to power in the 1997 elections, pitted against Marc Ravalomanana. When Ravalomanana refused to participate in a run-off election, Ratsiraka imposed martial law and Ravalomanana countered by mobilizing hundreds of thousands of supporters and declaring himself President: "This touched off a maelstrom leading to a country with two presidents, high conflict, and a high potential for violence".[85] President Wade of Senegal intervened to negotiate a mediated solution. On 18 April 2002, the Dakar I agreement was signed. The Dakar agreement envisaged the creation of a TA, with a PM jointly designated by Ratsiraka and Ravalomanana: "Of the five principal ministries, Ravalomanana will name the interior and finance ministers. The other members of the government will be named by mutual agreement, with half chosen by Ravalomanana and the other half by Ratsiraka", the agreement continued.[86] The agreement was never implemented and the TA was never created. Ravalomanana was reinforced by defections from the army and by early July Ratsiraka fled to exile in France.[87]

This failed attempt to establish a TA underlines the inapplicability of the logic of the minimum winning coalition in contexts of complex and fluid political transition. The TA failed to establish its authority because, as a narrow deal between Ratsiraka and Ravalomanana, it had failed to bring together a sufficient coalition of the principal socio-political forces in Madagascan society. The coalition of President Ratsiraka had deserted him by mid-2001, including the Catholic church and the Council of Christian Churches. Senior retired army generals had announced their support for a rival AREMA presidential candidate, and the Association of Parliamentarians for the Development of the South (APDS) had also retracted their support from the President.[88] Ratsiraka's base of support, much like Ben Ali and Qaddafi

[85] Marcus, Richard (2005), "The Fate of Madagascar's Democracy: Following the Rules while Eroding the Substance", in Villalón, Leonardo and Peter Von Doepp, eds., *The Fate of Africa's Democratic Experiments: Elites and Institutions* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), p.170.
[86] *New Humanitarian*, "African Diplomats Secure Peace Pact" (18 April 2002).
[87] Marcus, "The Fate of Madagascar's Democracy", p.171.
[88] *Ibid.* p.166.

in 2011, was extremely narrow. Ravalomanana was, in 2002, a newcomer in Madagascan politics without a strong autonomous base of support. Ravalomanana was popular in Antanavarino, but as an ethnic *Merina* from the Madagascan highlands, his popularity was fragile among Madagascar's seventeen other ethnic groups, who are typically grouped together as the *côtier* people and positioned in opposition to the highlanders.[89] The TA was thus based on an agreement which excluded the principal socio-political components of Madagascan society and failed, not only to establish its authority, but even to see the light of day. Regardless of the fact that it was created in an 'elite pact' with strong international backing,[90] the TA was insufficiently inclusive to establish its authority.

In both successful Madagascan transitions, it was only after a genuinely inclusive governing coalition was created, including both the opposition and the former regime parties, that the TA was able to establish its authority.

5.2 Burundi and DRC

The difficulties faced by the TAs in Burundi and the DRC illustrate the potential disconnect between the process of negotiating an 'elite pact' and the process of authority-building on the ground. These cases underline the need for broad coalition-building to support the TA, irrespective of the architecture established by the peace accords. They further illustrate the constraint imposed by pre-existing socio-institutional structures on authority-building in political transitions.

The political transition in Burundi began with the signature of the Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement on 28 August 2000 and ended with the election of President Nkurunziza in August 2005. The Arusha Accords were designed to end the civil war in Burundi which had raged since 1993, by establishing a TA between the G7 (Hutu armed groups and political parties) and G10 (Tutsi armed groups and political parties). The TA was to be composed of a Transitional National Assembly (TNA), a transitional Senate, and a Transitional Executive.[91]

The TA faced significant difficulties in establishing its authority and the Arusha Accords were not immediately implemented. The Transitional Executive was only inaugurated on 1 November 2001 because of disagreements between the principal factions on the distribution of

[89] Marcus, "Political Change in Madagascar", p.11 and p.1.
[90] The agreement was formally negotiated by the UN and AU, and immediately welcomed by the EU. *Agence Europe*, "EU Welcomes Dakar Agreement" (23 April 2002).
[91] *Arusha Peace and Reconciliation Agreement for Burundi*, Chapter 2, Article 15.

posts, and the posts of President and Vice-President in particular. The TNA was only inaugurated in January 2002, after the issue of the Transitional Executive was resolved. The hiatus between the signature of the accords and the instauration of the TA was marked by an escalation of violence and an absence of state authority. After the TA was established it struggled to project its authority throughout the country, with violence continuing and the government's writ being contested in many areas. Despite this, the transition ended with the organization of a successful election and the population's approval of a new constitution. However, according to Curtis, one cannot say that the Burundian TA successfully established its authority.[92] The TA's authority was always highly contingent, and the transitional process was marred by violence and intimidation. Experts on Burundi note that the election of President Nkurunziza was seen as an explicit rejection of the TA, and point to the non-respect for the Constitution by the increasingly authoritarian post-transition government.[93] Violence continued and President Nkurunziza sparked further unrest in 2015 when he announced his intention to run for an unconstitutional third term.[94] Given my emphasis on non-contestation of a TA's decisions as an indicator of authority, one cannot conclude that the Burundian TA was successful in establishing its authority.

On the surface the Arusha Accords and the subsequent TA are a model of inclusivity. The Arusha Accords brought together 84 delegates. The most important delegations came from the Hutu-dominated *Front Pour la Démocratie au Burundi* (FRODEBU), which won the democratic elections of June 1993; and the Tutsi-dominated *Union Pour le Progrès National* (UPRONA), which had overthrown the government in a 1996 coup. The Hutu-affiliated *Conseil National Pour le Défense de la Démocratie* (CNDD) was also represented. UPRONA traces its roots to the struggle for Burundian independence and formed a one-party state from 1966 until 1993. FRODEBU also had a long history being founded as an offshoot of the banned Burundi Workers' Party in 1986.

The Transitional Executive eventually established on 1 November 2001 was composed of 14 Hutus and 12 Tutsis. However, Tutsis retained the key ministries of defence, foreign affairs and finance.[95] The TNA was composed of the members of the National Assembly elected in

[92] Curtis, Devon (2007), "Transitional Governance in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo" in Guttieri, Karen and Jessica Piombo, eds., *Interim Governments: Institutional Bridges to Peace and Democracy?* (Washington, D.C.: United States Institute of Peace Press), pp.187-8.
[93] *Ibid.* p.188; Daley, Patricia (2007), "The Burundi Peace Negotiations: An African Experience of Peace–making", *Review of African Political Economy* (Vol. 34, No.112), p.347.
[94] African Center for Strategic Studies (2017), "Dismantling the Arusha Accords as the Burundi Crisis Rages On".
[95] Daley, "The Burundi Peace Negotiations", p.346.

1993 and was therefore dominated by FRODEBU. However, the TNA also included parties who had failed to gain seats in the 1993 legislative elections, and civil society groups who had been added in 1998, as part of an earlier attempt to shore up the regime's authority by enlarging its base. As Daley notes, civil society in Burundi was synonymous with the Tutsi intellectual elite.[96] In 2002, the TNA numbered 185 members. This included the initial 81 MPs elected in 1993 supplemented by additional members nominated by the signatories to the Arusha accords. The final composition of the TNA reflected an ethnic balance between Hutu and Tutsi factions.[97] The TA therefore was strongly weighted towards the Tutsi ethnic minority, which made up approximately 14 per cent of the population, and the FREDEBU party. One may therefore expect the TA to have had no trouble in establishing its political authority, given the inclusion of these major parties.

Although superficially the agreement brought together the principal factions in the conflict, a closer examination reveals that the agreement and the subsequent TA rested on a deceptively narrow base. Once monolithic, FRODEBU and UPRONA had both splintered. Significant armed offshoots, including the *Conseil National Pour le Défense de la Démocratie -Forces pour le Défense de la Démocratie* (CNDD-FDD) and the *Parti Pour la Liberation Du Peuple Hutu- Forces National de Libération* (PALIPEHUTU-FNL), initially refused to sign the agreement. FRODEBU had lost a great deal of their popular support among the Hutu population following their overthrow in 1996. This is evidenced by their poor electoral showing in the 2005 National Assembly elections: FRODEBU received 21.69 per cent of the vote against CNDD-FDD's 58.55 per cent.[98] As Curtis notes: "many of the politicians had very little support among the broader population."[99] Daley concurs that "Many parties lacked a recognized constituency and had not tested their legitimacy with the disenfranchised Burundi population."[100] The inclusion of the two political parties in the TA may therefore have done little to ensure that the TA rested upon a broad social base. Furthermore, Curtis suggests that considering the conflict in purely ethnic terms obscured other important divides in Burundian society, including regional divisions and urban-rural divides.[101] The elite-led TA was therefore

[96] *Ibid.* p.342.
[97] National Assembly of Burundi, "The National Assembly of Burundi: Background" *Official website*, available at: https://www.assemblee.bi/spip.php?page=imprimer&id_article=420.
[98] Daley, "The Burundi Peace Negotiations", p.347.
[99] Curtis, "Transitional Governance in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo", p.187.
[100] Daley, "The Burundi Peace Negotiations", p.341.
[101] Curtis, "Transitional Governance in Burundi and the Democratic Republic of the Congo", p.176.

additionally failing to represent constituencies across other salient divides in Burundian society.

The TA was able to eventually integrate the CNDD-FDD in November 2003, which saw the TNA increased to 220 members in March 2004. Curtis notes that this integration was a significant boost to the TA and undoubtedly allowed the DDR process, the referendum on the constitution and the subsequent elections to take place.[102] In keeping with my theory, the authority of the TA increased concomitantly with the increase of its inclusivity of the most significant socio-political components of the society. The Burundian TA was struggling to establish its authority until it reformed to include the CNDD-FDD and other armed factions.

A similar dynamic played out in DRC. The transitional period in the DRC begins with the signature of the Sun City Agreement in December 2002 and ends with the second round of presidential elections in October 2006. The TA faced severe obstacles in establishing its authority. Conflict continued in the east of the country, particularly North and South Kivu and Ituri. Plans to integrate 300,000 combatants into a unified military hierarchy utterly failed. Rebel groups also continued to run separate de-centralized administrations in the areas under their control, refusing to subject themselves to the authority of the TA.[103]

At first glance the DRC case seems to disprove my theory. On paper the TA in the DRC was very inclusive: there were four vice-Presidents representing different political groups and the civilian opposition; 36 cabinet ministries were divided among different armed groups, political opposition parties and the *Forces Vives*. In addition, there were 25 vice-ministers. The 500 representatives in the National Assembly and the 120 representatives in the Senate were all designated by the parties.[104]

However, this plethora of parties and 'representatives' points more to the atomization of Congolese society and the absence of strong, hierarchical national institutions capable of mobilizing and controlling their constituencies. As Curtis write, "the signatories to the Sun City Agreement lacked strong command and control over their military and political wings, and there were numerous factions and shifting alliances."[105] For example, she highlights the split between *Rassemblement Congolais pour la Démocratie – Goma* (RCD-G) representatives in the TA and their Kinyarwanda-speaking constituency in North Kivu, concluding that, "the

[102] *Ibid.* p.187.
[103] *Ibid.* p.188-189.
[104] *Ibid.* p.180-181.
[105] *Ibid.* p.189.

RCD-G also faced serious internal dissent and factional disputes. The RCD-G has no coherent overarching structure."[106] The elaborate architecture of a seemingly 'inclusive' TA did not serve to bolster the TA's authority because of the disconnect between supposed representatives and their purported constituencies.

In both Burundi and DRC, the recognition of the authority of a TA does not necessarily follow the successful negotiation of an elite pact. In both Burundi and DRC, the signatories to the peace agreements were thinly-rooted in their respective constituencies. The process of authority recognition which was expected to follow their integration in the TA did not therefore occur. The TA in Burundi was able to shore up its authority by increasing its inclusivity over time, but the TA in DRC was never able to project authority far beyond the capital. Both these cases illustrate the importance the participation of hierarchical institutionalized organizations for interest aggregation and collective decision-making in the TA for successful authority-building to occur, irrespective of the presence of an 'elite pact'.

5.3 Conclusion

As I have shown, the presence or absence of an elite pact does not seem to significantly impact the process of a TA's authority-building. As the Tunisian case demonstrates, the existence of a formal elite pact is not essential for a TA to establish its authority. The cases of Burundi, DRC and the Dakar I agreement in Madagascar underline that elite pacts do not guarantee successful authority-building. Where elite pacts led to successful TAs in Madagascar, it was because they codified inclusive TAs which reflected the composition of the society.

Early transitology's focus on the importance of an 'elite pact' as an independent variable explaining successful political transitions is largely a result of the particular socio-institutional structure present in many of the societies they investigated. In cases where the principal socio-political constituencies in a society are roughly sorted into a limited number of hierarchical institutions, an 'elite pact' between the moderate opposition and regime representatives may provide the inclusivity I have identified as important. However, in these cases it is not, or not primarily, the presence of an 'elite pact' which is ensuring the transition's success but the fact that said elites represent significant and consequential constituencies in the country. However, this is not always the case. As Bratton and van de Walle have highlighted, "in neopatrimonial regimes political leaders may represent no more than a tiny coterie of clients and may be unable

[106] *Idem.*

to build a political consensus around any interelite agreement."[107] This finding has been evidenced in the cases of Burundi and DRC in particular, where seemingly inclusive TAs only represented thinly rooted organizations with little popular support. If an elite pact or peace agreement fails to bring the principal socio-political components of a society into a TA, or if a society is so atomized that interlocutors represent little more than themselves in negotiations, the TA is likely to struggle to establish its authority.

The cases highlight the importance of deep sociological knowledge among those negotiating transitional political arrangements to ensure that the TAs created represent more than the thinnest crust of political elites and therefore have a greater chance of success. As I have shown, while TAs and the negotiations to create them may initially seem inclusive, this may belie an underlying weakness in the representativeness of those participating in negotiations. This may result in TAs which are insufficiently inclusive to establish their political authority.

Furthermore, basing a TA on the formal basis of a peace agreement or other forms of political settlement does reduce uncertainty and create clarity around rules. Such institutionalization may be useful to resolve disputes as the transition progresses, but it may also render the TA flat-footed in responding to shifting alliances, emerging actors, and changing distributions of power and popular support. The TA must retain a capacity to negotiate alterations to its composition, as the transition progresses. As I have shown, it is vital for successful authority-building that a TA genuinely represents the most important socio-political components of a society at a given time.

6. Factors conditioning inclusivity

This chapter has sought to further establish the importance of inclusivity to the authority-building processes of TAs. The chapter has shown that the process of authority-building is intimately linked to the composition of the TA regardless of whether the TA has emerged in a context of extreme violence, as a result of foreign intervention, or following the negotiation of a formal 'elite pact'.

The detailed case studies of Tunisia and Libya identified several factors which exerted a constraining or enabling influence on the potential for an inclusive TA to be established. The composition of the TA is conditioned by:

[107] Bratton, Michael and Nicolas Van de Walle. (1994) "Neopatrimonial Regimes and Political Transitions in Africa", *World Politics* (Vol. 46, No. 4), p.465.

- Historic socio-institutional legacies: the structure of the society will limit and condition the potential inclusivity of the TA. Nationwide, hierarchical *Gesellschaft* networks are more ready building blocks for a TA than a plethora of parochial, kinship networks with weak decision-making structures.
- Pre-existing social ties: Relations between elites and long-term inter-group engagement help build bridges during the transition. In Tunisia and Libya, inter-marriage, elite educational establishments, experiences of shared exile, professional experience in the state administration and participation in opposition dialogue platforms facilitated inclusion of diverse constituencies across traditional political, ethnic and social divides.
- Path dependency and coordination problems: path dependency may work to reinforce or undermine the authority-building of TAs. Institutional stickiness can mean that groups are presented with a stark choice between recognizing an existing TA or a highly uncertain future. However, the initial composition of a TA, often a result of chance, will condition the future make-up of the TA.
- Agency of leaders: in spite of these constraints, leaders can make efforts to traverse divides and integrate constituencies into the TA. Leaders can also squander the advantages created by chance and history by alienating communities and excluding them from the TA, as seen in the Libyan case.

Space constraints and lack of deep contextual knowledge prevent me from categorically determining whether these constraining factors or others conditioned the inclusivity of the TAs in the 12 comparative cases discussed in this chapter. However, the above analysis has illuminated several cases where similar dynamics are at play.

The authority-building of the TAs in Cambodia, Ethiopia, Madagascar and Peru was facilitated by the existence of strong hierarchical organizations with nation-wide *Gesellschaft* networks. In the cases of Cambodia and Ethiopia, these institutional structures were forged in the fire of conflict: the TA built from previously conflicting parties and insurgent organizations. Experts on both contexts highlight the coherence, leadership and popular base of the component parts of the TA. The Ethiopian TA had the additional advantage that it could co-opt the strong bureaucratic structures of the state which gave it an ability to project its authority to the local level. In Peru and Madagascar, the TA was built around political parties. In the Madagascan case, Marcus and Ratsimbaharison demonstrate that political parties are effective tools of

neopatrimonial rule.[108] While this may undermine the 'democracy-enhancing' function of parties, it does not compromise their ability to mobilize the support central to successful authority-building in political transitions. Conversely, in Burundi, DRC and Yemen, the political parties incorporated in the TA were relatively deracinated from the society and did not enjoy popular support. They were not strong, hierarchical organizations.

In Iraq and Afghanistan the structuring logic of the TA was based on ethnic groups: the members of the TA were seen as weak representatives of these amorphous *Gemeinschaft* constituencies. The difficulties this posed were augmented by the exclusion of the principal organized socio-political institutions in the country from the TA, namely the Ba'ath Party and the Taliban respectively. In Liberia too, the main structured organizations in the country, the warring factions, were excluded from the IGNU, which was built from weak technocrats with little popular support.

Pre-existing social ties between elites facilitated the creation of the TAs in Madagascar, Cambodia and Peru. The parties engaged in the TA of Beriziky had been dealing with one another since at least 1991, when the Panorama convention was negotiated. They did not have any problem identifying the leaders of other parties to the dispute. Similarly in Cambodia, Travouillon notes the longevity of the relationships between the interlocutors. She notes that the deliberations between Hun Sen, the then-Cambodian Prime Minister, and Sihanouk began in 1987, four years before the creation of the TA, as well as the role of Sihanouk in successive Cambodian regimes.[109] In Peru, the dialogue between the parties began more than six months prior to their assumption of power during the transition. This period of *de facto* preparation for rule allowed them to negotiate many of the policies they would enact during the transition.

In Yemen and Iraq, although the elites who made up the TA were connected to one another they had little connection to the new forces unleashed by the regime change process. In Iraq, the TA was dominated by exiles with weak connections to real constituencies on the ground. In Yemen, the TA was dominated by an 'old elite' divorced from the new elites which emerged during the revolution.

Path dependency is most evident in the cases of Iraq and Afghanistan. In Afghanistan, there is a clear trajectory from the interim authority to the transitional authority: President Karzai was

[108] Marcus, Richard. and Adrien Ratsimbaharison (2005), "Political Parties in Madagascar: Neopatrimonial Tools or Democratic Instruments?", *Party Politics* (Vol. 11, No. 4), p.495.
[109] Travouillon, "Moderator or Manipulator?", pp.451-52.

circumscribed in his ability to radically alter the composition of the TA. As Johnson writes "Karzai had not been able to remove faction leaders and install members with professional qualifications, as the Pashtun community had anticipated, because the Northern Alliance was reluctant to cede the considerable power it received from the Bonn Conference."[110] The initial composition of the TA set in motion dynamics that were difficult to redress. In Iraq too, the IGC, IIG/INC and even the subsequent TNA, relate to one another like ripples on a pond, all emanating from the CPA. The CPA selected the IGC; the IGC selected the IIG; the IGC dominated selection of the INC. Thus, the original composition of the IGC, decided by the CPA, largely pre-conditioned the composition of all subsequent transitional bodies.[111] Although, these cases are the clearest examples of path dependency, the other cases too exhibit institutional stickiness. For example, although the TA in Burundi was reformed to offer a place to the CNDD-FDD, this was done by augmenting the number of posts rather than revising the arguable over-representation of the UPRONA and FRODEBU factions. The inclusivity of the TA is conditioned by path-dependent processes set in motion at the moment of the TA's conception.

Finally, many of the cases show that the agency of leaders plays a significant role in determining the inclusivity of the TA and therefore its chances of successfully generating political authority. In Ethiopia, the leaders of the TPLF exhibited significant foresight in opting to construct a broad coalition TA after their military victory. In Cambodia and Madagascar, leaders exhibited magnanimity in agreeing to govern with their erstwhile enemies in a broad, coalition. Conversely, foreign powers in Afghanistan, Iraq and Liberia were short-sighted in their decision to exclude key constituencies from the TA. In Yemen, domestic leaders also failed to seize the opportunity to build more inclusive transitional bodies, instead trying to cling to power. Figures such as Beriziky in Madagascar and Sihanouk in Cambodia served as unifying figures, using their high personal valency, i.e. their connections and acceptability to all parties, to bridge divides. However, the failure of President Sawyer to build an inclusive TA in Liberia demonstrates that the character of the leader is not sufficient to ensure a TA's inclusivity.

This cursory examination suggests that the four conditioning factors I identified from Tunisia and Libya translate to other contexts. However, I cannot categorically determine whether other

[110] Johnson, "Afghanistan's Post-Taliban Transition". p.299.
[111] Rangwala, Glen (2015), "The Creation of Governments-in-waiting: the Arab Uprisings and Legitimacy in the International System", *Geoforum* (Vol.66), p.217.

factors are equally or more important in explaining the relative inclusivity of a TA in other contexts.

7. Conclusion

The preceding comparative examination has shown that the factors explored in the cases of Tunisia and Libya are salient in relation to other cases of political transition. While it is impossible to control for all possible confounding variables, the composition of the TA remains a relevant factor in explaining its political authority in a broad range of cases, including cases which exhibit variation in the level of violence and foreign interference, and in cases which have witnessed the negotiation of an elite pact. This is not to say that these factors will not affect the relative inclusivity of the TA and therefore the processes of its authority-building. As I have demonstrated, violence can make the constituencies less willing to work together and can undermine the representativeness of political elites; foreign parties seem less capable of identifying the key socio-political constituencies in a country and their genuine representatives. Foreign parties also seem less ready to engage the necessary diversity of interlocutors in the TA, particularly if this means engaging with their critics and enemies. However, these trends are not insurmountable: as witnessed in Cambodia, Ethiopia and Liberia, broad-based TAs can emerge in contexts of civil war and intense foreign interference.

Although my limited knowledge of the comparative cases prevents me from categorically establishing that the constraining and enabling factors identified in Tunisia and Libya apply in these other cases, I have sought to show that historic socio-institutional legacies, pre-existing social ties between elites, path dependency and agency of leaders play a role in determining the composition of the TAs in the cases examined herein.

Chapter 8: Conclusions

1. Introduction

In seeking to understand the factors which condition the likelihood that a Transitional Administration (TA) will be able to establish its authority to govern, this thesis has focused on the composition of the TA as an underappreciated explanatory factor. I have argued that the more inclusive a TA is of the principal socio-political components of the society, the more likely it will be to successfully establish its authority.

The role of inclusivity in contributing to the legitimacy of decisions and the authority of governance actors has recently become axiomatic in academic and policy circles. However, the definition of inclusivity and the causal link between inclusivity and authority tends to be weakly theorized, and factors conditioning the possibility of establishing an inclusive body are absent from the prevailing literature. Moreover, the relationship between composition and authority is not highlighted in prominent theories on authority-building and legitimacy, which tend to focus on the performance of an institution or the ontological qualities of its leaders. My approach therefore improves understanding of the link between inclusivity and authority in the context of political transitions and offers a new explanation of authority-building rooted in the composition of the governing bodies.

This explanation was developed through a close examination of the TAs in Tunisia and Libya, which were created following the 2011 revolutions. My approach rests upon deep historical and sociological knowledge of the contexts and attempts to account for variation in authority over time, space and between different 'audiences'. This dynamic approach differentiates my approach from more static existing theories.

This concluding chapter outlines the key empirical and theoretical findings of my research before concluding with some policy implications and avenues for future research.

2. Empirics

2.1 Tunisia

In Tunisia, I demonstrated that the failure of Mohamed Ghannouchi to establish the political authority of his TA could not be attributed to factors such as a lack of legal-rational legitimacy, a failure to deliver public services or a lack of control over coercive force. Revolutionary credentials can also not account for the variation between Tunisian TAs.

Instead, the variation in the authority enjoyed by Ghannouchi and Essebsi is a function of the composition of their respective TAs. While Ghannouchi's TA rested on a narrow base of support from constituencies with weak roots in the Tunisian society; Essebsi managed to assemble a broad coalition of the principal organized hierarchical institutions in Tunisian society. At the same time, while the opposition to Ghannouchi was organized, coordinated and able to present a viable challenge to his authority, the opposition to Essebsi was fragmented, inchoate and easily co-opted.

Essebsi was able to assemble so broad and inclusive a TA because of his personal characteristics and leadership, but also because of the historical socio-institutional structure of Tunisian society. Essebsi was seen as a 'weak' figure, acceptable to all and threatening to none. His coalition could be built from well-established national organizations with strong roots in Tunisian society, institutionalized in the HIROR. The component parts of the TA had long experience working together and social ties to one another established over several generations through processes such as the 18 October Coalition. These factors made the creation of a broadly inclusive TA feasible. However, the variation between Ghannouchi's and Essebsi's efforts underlines that feasibility is insufficient without the commitment of leaders to build an inclusive TA.

2.2 Libya

The creation of an inclusive TA in Libya was rendered more complicated by the country's history and sociology. Libya's experiences of colonialism and the Qaddafi regime had produced a society which was highly atomized, with few hierarchical national institutions and a political elite with an extraordinary degree of parochialism.

Despite this, the NTC was able to quickly establish a degree of leadership and authority over the revolution and the liberated areas of the country. This remarkable achievement can be attributed to the efforts made to be as inclusive as possible of all components of the society, combined with a total absence of viable alternatives to contest the authority of the NTC at this time. During its initial phase, the NTC brought together a broad coalition of Eastern tribal representatives, former regime insiders and the Islamist political opposition, along with a vanguard of CSO activists who first mobilized against Qaddafi in February 2011. These groups enjoyed organic links with the armed components of the revolution.

The NTC's authority began to decline at the very moment it secured control over the capital and access to the resources and structures of the state. This surprising trajectory is also a

product of the composition of the NTC, relative to the broader composition of Libyan society. After securing victory, the NTC narrowed, rather than expanding, its base. The NTC excluded and alienated groups seen as supportive of the former regime, while at the same time failing to bring the *Thuwaar* into its structures and organs. The expanded representation designed to include Western Libyan constituencies was ill-managed and drew heavily on groups with little anchorage in Libyan society, namely the tiny expatriate non-Islamist opposition. In the end, the NTC represented only a fraction of the Libyan society, and those excluded worked to contest and undermine its authority.

2.3 Tunisia vs. Libya

In the empirical chapters of this thesis, I have primarily sought to explain *within-case* variation: offering an explanation for variation in the authority of the Tunisian and Libya TAs over time, space and between different 'audiences'. However, several factors also seem to contribute to an explanation of the variation *between* Tunisia and Libya. In general, I suggest that the TA in Tunisia was able to establish more stable authority because it was composed of a broad coalition of organized national institutions; the authority of the NTC in Libya was inherently fragile and contingent because it relied upon the support of amorphous constituencies represented through weak and contested individuals. The ability of Essebsi to assemble such a coalition in Tunisia and the failure of the NTC to establish a sufficiently broad basis for its rule was a result of the socio-institutional make-up of their respective societies.

Tunisia had strong national organizations based on *Gesellschaft* networks, while Libya was atomized and lacked strong bureaucratic organizations. This meant that the TA in Libya had to try to cobble together a coalition from a plethora of actors, often with only weak links to their purported constituencies; the TA in Tunisia could rely upon organized political institutions with large and mobilized bases.

Elites in Tunisia were well-connected to one another and had long been preparing for the opportunity to rule after Ben Ali's ouster. These pre-existing inter-group social ties helped the TA assemble a broad coalition of actors. Meanwhile, Libya is an almost uniquely siloed society with high degrees of endogamy, few elite educational institutions and a population which socialises almost exclusively within their family and extended kinship networks. Opposition groups were also fragmented. This meant that at the time of the revolution individuals were often 'discovering each other' for the first time. This created an additional hurdle when trying to build a broadly inclusive body.

In both cases chance played a role in 'selecting' the initial composition of the TA, which then set in motion path-dependent processes of expansion, and authority recognition and denial. The fact that the NTC was born in Benghazi while a civil war raged in Western Libya, for example, ensured that most of its members were from Eastern Libya and complicated the process of selecting members from Western Libya. As with all institutions, once the NTC became established these biases proved difficult to redress. In Tunisia, Ennahda's early integration into the TA made it difficult for the party to contest the HIROR's authority when its interests diverged from those of the majority in the TA. Path dependency encouraged them to work within the bounds of the TA, rather than attempting to establish a new body.

Finally, the agency of leaders is a factor which should not be underestimated. Across the board, Tunisian leaders were cognisant of the need for broad political and social consensus on all decisions undertaken during the transition. They undertook extraordinary steps to reassure and avoid alienating key constituencies. In Libya, while at the outset the NTC adopted an ecumenical approach to ensure the success of the transition, after the capture of Tripoli the TA adopted a far less consensual strategy: taking steps which alienated former regime supporting constituencies, and exhibiting a clear bias towards their Eastern base.

Thus the difficulties faced by the TA in Libya and Essebsi's relative ease in establishing his TA's authority are partly understandable given the historical and sociological factors conditioning the TA's composition, but natural advantages can be squandered, just as challenges can be overcome, as the cases demonstrate.

2.4 Comparative cases

In the comparative chapter I attempted to show that inclusivity plays a fundamental role in the process of authority-building in a range of different contexts. I considered several variables which may have reduced the importance of the composition of the TA as an explanatory factor in establishing its authority, namely the level of violence seen during the process of regime change, the degree of foreign intervention and whether the transition was based on a formal 'elite pact'. I found that, while these factors may help condition the composition of the TA, TAs which are more inclusive of the principal socio-political components of a society remain more likely to be able to establish their authority. Although I was unable to explore the factors conditioning the inclusivity of the TA in these contexts as fully as I did in the cases of Tunisia and Libya, the breadth of cases examined allows me to claim a degree of generalizability of my findings.

3. Theoretical findings

In contexts of political transition, TAs which are more inclusive of the main socio-political components of a society will be more likely to establish their authority. However, the inclusivity of a TA must be evaluated based on a close examination of the sociology of the given context. An illusion of inclusivity may be created by having many 'parties' or 'constituencies' represented in the TA. However, such surface inclusivity will not contribute to successful authority-building if these members only come from a narrow stratum of the society, or do not truly represent their constituencies. In Tunisia, the TA of Ghannouchi included a number of different parties, groups and figures, however, as highlighted, they primarily came from the same narrow sociological pool and had weak connections elsewhere in the country. In Libya, the NTC tried to become more 'representative' of Western Libyan constituencies, however those chosen to represent these constituencies were deracinated former exiles or unaccepted figures from the political fringes. It is easier to represent well-defined, organized constituencies, than amorphous categories without established organizational structures. This has implications for the standard usage of 'inclusion' to refer to vague categories such as 'women' and 'youth'. More sociological rigour is required in the evaluation of the inclusivity of a TA.

The inclusivity of the TA must also be considered relative to possible alternative coalitions to contest the authority of the institution. In Tunisia, the *Muhammashin*'s fragmentation and weak institutionalization prevented them from forming an alternative pole around which authority could coalesce, just as in Yemen those contesting the authority of the TA failed to unite in their opposition and present a viable alternative coalition. The NCPR in Tunisia did, however, offer such an alternative and was thus able to undermine Ghannouchi's political authority and form the embryonic core of the HIROR. In Libya, the civil war in Western Libya prevented the emergence of early challengers to the NTC's authority and thus reinforced the TA's chances of successful authority-building at a critical stage.

Inclusivity contributes to successful authority-building through the processes of strong and weak validation. Groups represented inside the TA typically accorded the TA strong validation as they see the TA aligned with their interests and may lack better alternative avenues for goal satisfaction, due to a variety of coordination problems. The minority of groups excluded from the TA often still accord it weak validation because the broad coalition assembled inside the TA appears unassailable. The notion that 'everybody supports the TA' is therefore a sort of

self-fulfilling prophecy. I outlined this process of weak validation with regards to the *Muhammashin* in Tunisia, and the NFSL in the Libyan context.

Political transitions are periods of great uncertainty, with the relative weight and influence of different components of the society relatively unknown and subject to flux. It is therefore better for TAs to be more inclusive, than trying to hew to the principle of a 'minimum winning coalition'. The NTC, for example, chose to see their victory over Qaddafi as an opportunity to narrow their coalition of support and divide up the spoils of victory between a more limited number of constituencies. This ultimately led to the contestation of their authority by those excluded from the TA. The HIROR in Tunisia incorporated a tremendous number of groups, particularly leftist parties, which reduced contestation of the TA's authority and fragmentation of key constituencies.

TAs do not, however, have a free hand in choosing their composition. Three factors condition the ability of a TA to create an inclusive body: historical socio-institutional legacies, pre-existing social ties between elites, and chance contingencies which lead to path-dependent outcomes. Societies which possess strong, hierarchical institutions at the national level are more readily able to assembly a broadly inclusive coalition than societies which are fragmented and lack clear organized institutions for interest aggregation. In some cases these component parts may be politico-military actors, as in Cambodia or Ethiopia. In other contexts, the component parts may be political parties, CSOs and trade unions, as in Tunisia. Weakly-rooted organizations without popular bases do not contribute to the inclusivity of a TA regardless of their number, as seen in Burundi and the DRC.

Pre-existing social ties between elites foster the ability for constituencies to work together to form broad coalitions. In Tunisia, the process of the 18 October coalition dialogue was essential to build links, trust and understanding among a broad spectrum of political actors. Without this process it seems unlikely that the TA could have been so inclusive. In Peru, the *Mesa de Dialogo* played a similar role in the run up to Fujimori's ouster and was therefore able to step into the vacuum when he was forced from power. Similarly, I found that pre-existing social ties between elites from Misrata and Benghazi allowed Misrata to be effectively integrated into the NTC at an early stage in Libya, despite the ongoing conflict and the attendant logistical challenges this presented. In contexts of political transition, an ability to form alliances across groups is highly prized: I have termed this quality 'valency' and have found that highly valent

leaders, who may otherwise be seen as weak, play an important role in facilitating the creation of broadly inclusive TA.

Finally, chance plays a role in determining the initial composition of the TA, which this sets in motion path-dependent processes which are difficult to redress. In Libya, the NTC's swift victory in the east led to its domination by Eastern figures, which was difficult to subsequently counterbalance. Mustapha Abdeljalil's presence in Bayda at the time of the revolution led to his defection and selection as head of the NTC, with all the consequences this entailed.

In spite of these constraints, the agency of leaders still plays a role. In Ethiopia, for example, the TPLF was able to transcend their narrow sociological origins to create a broadly inclusive TA. In Iraq, successive TAs squandered opportunities to create a more inclusive TA through their initial opposition to local participation and their subsequent refusal to countenance the integration of even moderate voices critical of the occupation into the TA. In Tunisia, Ghannouchi could not imagine creating a broader coalition for his TA, excluding Ennahda and the illegal leftist opposition from talks on the Government of National Unity. In Libya, the NTC lost its broad base of support by enacting policies to target and persecute supporters of the former regime, while failing to share power more broadly with the *Thuwaar*. Such decisions which impact the inclusivity of the TA remain in the hands of the TA's leadership.

In sum, TAs with a broadly inclusive socio-political base are more likely to be successful in establishing their authority but are constrained in their potential to form such coalitions in important and relatively systematic ways.

4. Policy implications

The most obvious potential beneficiaries from the insights generated by this thesis are TAs themselves, and opposition groups who aim to play a role in political transitions in the future. For TAs, the principal lesson of this research is that creating institutions which are representative of as broad an array of socio-political actors as possible is an important way to shore up their authority. Such inclusivity can help compensate for weakness in the delivery of public services, lack of input legitimacy and even ontological weaknesses in the quality of leaders. This inclusivity must, however, go beyond formal Potemkin representation and ensure the genuine participation of the principal organized socio-political components of the society. It may also entail making difficult compromises to reach consensus with erstwhile enemies.

For opposition actors, my argument suggests that energies expended in the building of strong hierarchical organizations with roots throughout the society, as well as investment in processes of dialogue and cooperation across societal divides, are well spent. Such recommendations are not self-evident, as the cases have shown that authoritarian and totalitarian contexts tend to disincentivize both the creation of mass opposition movements as well as fostering division between segments of the society. Less polarizing figures with high valency may be better suited to lead the transition than 'strong' figures who may have led the charge against the regime. This may be difficult for revolutionary leaders to accept but may be essential to ensure the TA can assemble a sufficiently broad coalition to make the transition a success.

The 'international community' may already have absorbed the need for inclusive bodies to support successful transitions,[1] however, this thesis also offers some important nuance for international stakeholders. Firstly, historical and sociological context is pivotal to establish the necessary components of an 'inclusive' transition. One must go beyond vague policy prescriptions for the inclusion of 'youth and women' in transitional process to understand the genuine socio-political divides and institutions which make up a society and must be included in a TA. This may entail special efforts to ensure the inclusion of 'problematic' actors, such as those close to the Taliban in Afghanistan, the Ba'ath party in Iraq, and the Qaddafi regime in Libya. The exclusion of these players has undermined the authority of TAs in these contexts.

This thesis also highlights potential constraints which render the creation of inclusive TAs more difficult, notably historical socio-institutional legacies, and lack of pre-existing ties between elites. In this respect, long-term civil society support, democratization, conflict resolution, peacebuilding and development projects can contribute to successful political transitions long before the process of regime change begins. For example, even processes of dialogue which ostensibly 'fail', such as the 18 October Coalition in Tunisia, can create inter-elite ties which play important constructive roles in subsequent political transitions. The international community should adopt a long-term vision on the potential impacts and benefits of such programming.

[1] Rangwala, Glen (2015), "The Creation of Governments-in-waiting: the Arab Uprisings and Legitimacy in the International System", *Geoforum* (Vol.66), p.218; De Groof, Emmanuel (2020), *State Renaissance for Peace: Transitional Governance under International Law* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press), pp.226-227.

5. Future research

This thesis derived its findings largely from the detailed examination of two country cases. Valuable though the extension of the analysis to other cases was, it was necessarily limited due to space constraints. There is scope for further research to examine other TAs in more detail and thus shed additional light on sources of TA's authority.

One factor which was touched upon in this thesis is the role of 'valency' of leaders in political transitions. My research threw up several instances where 'weak' leaders played an important role in political transitions, because of their ability to form alliances with many divergent groups. It was found that 'strong' leaders were sometimes more polarizing and less able to form the broad coalitions necessary to promote successful authority-building in contexts of political transition. However, I also examined cases, such as Liberia, where highly valent leaders were unable to form a broad coalition. There is room for further research to explore this concept and consider the role of valency in authority-building.

Detailed process-tracing could also be deployed to address a number of additional questions related to TAs, which have been touched upon in this thesis but not fully explored, including the international relations of TAs, the role of *Gemeinschaft* versus *Gesellschaft* networks in political transitions, the relationship between TAs and armed groups, and the process of collaboration between TAs and the bureaucratic organs of the state.

The explanation of political authority as a function of composition may also be usefully deployed in other contexts. Most importantly, throughout this thesis I have alluded to the narrowing of the base of support for the old regime as preceding the regime's collapse. This suggests that, contrary to popular imagination, breadth of support may also have important implications for authoritarian resilience which have not been fully explored.[2]

The thesis examines a number of political transitions which have occurred since the Cold War. The thesis does not make claims about earlier historical periods because, *a priori* the same need for broadly inclusive representation does not apply to earlier examples of political transition following revolutionary regime change. In early transitions, before the advent of mass media and communications, a far smaller subset of the population was politically mobilized and

[2] Khoury and Kostiner have noted that "The degree of legitimacy attained by many Middle Eastern States has depended on the Government's ability to establish broad effective societal coalitions in the service of State ideology." Khoury, Philip and Joseph Kostiner (1990), "Introduction: Tribes and the Complexities of State Formation in the Middle East" in Khoury, Philip, and Joseph Kostiner, eds., *Tribes and State Formation in the Middle East* (Berkeley: University of California Press), p.18.

actively contributing to the administration of the transition.[3] This does not mean that the TAs in these contexts did not enjoy political authority. It may therefore be useful to explore the conditions under which the normative and pragmatic demand, assumed in this research, for representation in return for authority-recognition emerged.

Finally, the focus of this thesis has been on theory-building rather than hypothesis-testing. However, this does not preclude the use of different methods to attempt to further validate the claims outlined herein. While traditional quantitative approaches are not well suited to studying either my independent or dependent 'variables', other methods including the use of surveys, and natural experiments may shed further light on the mechanisms linking the composition of a TA to its political authority.

6. Conclusion

TAs play fundamental roles in their countries' histories. Despite their importance, TAs are the subject of little academic interest. Their origins, composition and roles are often underappreciated and omitted from the historical record. This thesis, in focusing on the TAs in Libya and Tunisia during the crucial 2011-12 period, has sought to contribute to the understanding of the role of TAs in political transitions. Specifically, it seeks to explain why some TAs successfully establish their authority to govern while others fail.

The composition of the TA is an underappreciated factor in determining its authority. As this thesis has shown, a TA is not a monolithic entity separate from society but is hewn from existing socio-institutional components and embedded within a pre-existing web of social and political relations. A TA evolves and changes over time through iterative and discursive processes among its members and among constituencies inside and outside its institutions, just as the society itself is altered by the process of revolutionary regime change. A TA which remains relatively inclusive of the principal socio-political components of a society will enjoy a greater probability of establishing its authority. However, several factors condition a TA's potential to become sufficiently inclusive, notably historical socio-institutional legacies, pre-existing social ties between elites, chance contingencies leading to path-dependent outcomes, and the agency of leaders.

[3] Lipset, Martin Seymour (1959), "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy", *American Political Science Review* (Vol.53, No.1), p.87.

Annexes:

Annex 1: Transitional Administrations

1.	Afghanistan	Interim Administration of Afghanistan	Asia	2001-2005
2.	Algeria	High Council of State	MENA	1992-95
3.	Burkina Faso	National Council for Democracy	Central and Sub-Saharan Africa	2015
4.	Burundi	Transitional Power-Sharing Government:	Africa	2000-2005
5.	Cambodia	UNTAC/ Supreme Advisory Council	Asia	1992-93
6.	Central African Republic	National Transitional Council	Africa	2013-16
7.	Central African Republic	Provisional National Political Council	Africa	1992
8.	Comoros	Tripartite Commission for National Reconciliation	Africa	1999-2002
9.	Democratic Republic of Congo	Transitional Government	Africa	2002-6

10.	East Timor	UNTAET/ National Consultative Council	Asia	1999-2003
11.	Egypt	Supreme Council of Armed Forces	MENA	2011-12
12.	Ethiopia	Council of Representatives/ Transitional Government	Africa	1994
13.	Fiji	Interim Civilian Administration	Oceania	2000
14.	Guinea	Interim Government	Africa	2010
15.	Guinea Bissau	Transitional National Council	Africa	2012-2019
16.	Iraq	Coalition Provisional Authority; Interim Governing Council; Interim Iraqi Government	MENA	2003-2005
17.	Ivory Coast	Government of National Unity	Africa	2003
18.	Kosovo	UNMIK	Europe	1999-2008
19.	Kyrgyzstan	Interim Government of	Asia	2010

		the Kyrgyz Republic		
20.	Lesotho	Interim Political Authority	Africa	1999
21.	Liberia	Interim Government of National Unity (IGNU)	Africa	1990-94
22.	Liberia	National Transitional Government of Liberia (NTGL)	Africa	2003-2006
23.	Libya	National Transitional Council (NTC)	MENA	2011-12
24.	Libya	Government of National Accord	MENA	2015-21
25.	Madagascar	High State Authority	Africa	1991-1993
26.	Madagascar	High Transitional Authority	Africa	2009-13
27.	Mali	Interim Government	Africa	2012
28.	Mauritania	Military Council for Justice and Democracy	Africa	2005
29.	Nepal	Interim Cabinet of Ministers	Asia	2013-14

30.	Niger	National Sovereign Conference	Africa	1991-1993
31.	Niger	Council for National Salvation	Africa	1996
32.	Niger	Council for National Reconciliation	Africa	1999
33.	Niger	Supreme Council for the Restoration of Democracy	Africa	2010
34.	Peru	Mesa De Dialogo	Latin America	2000-2001
35.	Somalia	Transitional Federal Government	Africa	2004-12
36.	South Africa	Government of National Unity	Africa	1994-97
37.	Thailand	National Council for Peace and Order	Asia	2014-2019
38.	Tunisia	HIROR	MENA	2011
39.	Ukraine	Government of Prime Minister Yatsenyuk	Europe	2014
40.	Yemen	Government of National Unity	MENA	2011-2022

The Palestinian National Authority (1994-present) remains an ambiguous case. I would classify it as a National Liberation Movement, rather than a Transitional Administration. I don't consider the Habibie regime in Indonesia as a transitional administration because Habibie was unclear about whether he would remain in power. The Rwandan national unity government was also not explicitly temporary.

Annex 2: List of interviews

1. Libya

1) Mustapha Abdeljalil: President of the National Transitional Council (NTC); former Minister of Justice;
2) Mahmoud Jibril: Head of Executive Board (Prime Minister) of the NTC;
3) Abdelhafidh Ghoga: Vice-Chairman and Spokesperson of the NTC;
4) Ali Tarhouni: Deputy Prime Minister; Interim Prime Minister; Minister for Oil; Minister for Finance; Head of the Constitutional Drafting Assembly;
5) Salwa Al-Dghreily: Head of the NTC Legal Committee;
6) Othman Ben Sasi: Secretary General of the NTC; Representative of Zwara;
7) Faouzi Abdel Aal: NTC representative of Misrata; Minister of Interior in the Interim Government;
8) Mohammed Al-Montasir: NTC Representative of Misrata;
9) Fathi Mohammed Baja: Head of Political Affairs of NTC;
10) Intissar Aghili: NTC representative of Benghazi;
11) Mehdi Kashbour: NTC representative of Benghazi; Muslim Brotherhood Member;
12) Moussa Kouni: NTC representative of Ubari; Vice-President of the Presidency Council of the Government of National Accord;
13) Abdelrahman Shalgam: Former Libyan Foreign Minister and Libya's representative to the United Nations;
14) Aref Ali Nayed: Former Head of the NTC's Libyan Stabilization Team; former Libyan Ambassador to the United Arab Emirates;
15) Hafed Gaddur: Libyan Ambassador to Italy; former Libyan Ambassador to the EU;
16) Guma Al-Gamaty: NTC Ambassador to the UK; Long-term opposition activist;
17) Ahmed Jehani: Minister for Reconstruction and Stabilization of the NTC;
18) Naji Barakat: Minister of Health of the NTC;
19) Belgasem Nimr: Minister for the Environment of the NTC; Federalist activist;

20) Wanis El-Mabrook: Islamic Scholar;
21) Nasr Al-Manea: Head of Crisis Management Committee; Secretary of State in PM's office;
22) Salem El-Hassi: Head of the Libyan External Intelligence Service;
23) Ahmed Abbar: Head of NTC Economic Committee;
24) Abdelrazag Madi: NTC member from Yifrin;
25) Ali Qalma: NTC member from Qatrun;
26) Abdelrazak Aredi: NTC member from Tripoli; former Muslim Brotherhood member;
27) Hana Al-Gallal: Former Minister of Education (resigned) of NTC;
28) Abdelwahab Belqaid: Libyan Islamic Fighting Group leader; Head of Libyan Border Guards; Member of the GNC;
29) Mustapha Sagesli: Head of the Warrior Affairs Commission;
30) Abdelmajid Mlegta: Senior Revolutionary Military Leader, Zintan;
31) Mohamed Saad: President of the International Medical University; Political Activist.

2. Tunisia

1) Mustapha Ben Jaafar: President of Ettakatol, the Tunisian social democratic party; President of the National Constituent Assembly;
2) Samir Dilou: HIROR representative of the *Association internationale de soutien aux prisonniers politiques* (AISPP) ;
3) Abdessatar Ben Moussa: President of the Tunisian League for Human Rights; HIROR member; winner of the Nobel peace prize;
4) Mohamed Ghariyani: Secretary-General of the Rassemblement Constitutionel Democratique (RCD);
5) Ahmed Najib Chebbi: President of the Progressive Democratic Party (PDP); Minister of Regional Development in the Interim Government;
6) Abdelhamid Jlassi: Vice-President of Ennahda;
7) Omeyya Seddik: Member of the Political Bureau of PDP; Coordinator of the 18 October Coalition;
8) Abdelrazak Kilani: President of the Tunisian National Order of Avocates; Member of the HIROR;
9) Gilbert Naccache: Founding Member of Perspectives Tunisie; leftist ideologue; Member of the HIROR (resigned).
10) Zuhoor Khourda Abid: Member of Political Bureau of CPR; Member of HIROR;

11) Mouldi Riahi: Member of Political Bureau of Ettakatol; Member of HIROR;
12) Farida Labidi: Member of Executive Bureau of Ennahda; Member of HIROR;
13) Saida Garrach: Spokesperson of the President of the Republic of President Beji Caid Essebsi; President of the *Association de Femmes Democrates Tunisiennes* (ATFD); Member of the HIROR;
14) Khadija Sherif: President of the *Association de Femmes Democrates Tunisiennes* (ATFD); Member of the HIROR;
15) Ahlam Belhaj: President of the *Association de Femmes Democrates Tunisiennes* (ATFD); Member of the HIROR;
16) Houcine Abbassi: former Secretary-General of the UGTT; Member of the HIROR; Nobel peace prize winner;
17) Omar Mestiri: President of the *Conseil national des Libertés en Tunisie* (CNLT); Member of the Haute Instance;
18) Tarek Ben Hiba: Member of HIROR representing Tunisians abroad;
19) Mustapha Tilili: Member of HIROR;
20) Ayyachi Hammami: Member of HIROR;
21) Massoud Ramadani: Member of HIROR; President of the Tunisian Forum for Economic and Social Rights (FTDES);
22) Abdelrahman Hatheeli: President of the Tunisian Forum for Economic and Social Rights (FTDES);
23) Sofian Ben Ramadan: Vice-President of Jabhat al-Islah;
24) Leila Riahi: Founder of the Tunisian Observatory for the Economy; Founder of the "I do not forgive" campaign; President of the IRIE France 2 during the 2012 election.
25) Seifeddine Trabelsi: Political Activist; Journalist;
26) Walid Haddouk: Political Activist; Adviser to President Moncef Marzouki.

Annex 3: Members of the Commission for Political Reform[4]

Yadh Ben Ashour	Emeritus Professor and former Dean of the Faculty of Judicial, Social and Political Sciences of Tunis
Mohamed Salah Ben Aïssa	Professor in the Faculty of Judicial, Social and Political Sciences of Tunis
Slim Loghmani	Professor in the Faculty of Judicial, Social and Political Sciences of Tunis

[4] *Leaders*, "Composition de la commission supérieure pour la réforme politique" (28 January 2011).

Farhat Horchani	Professor in the Faculty of Judicial, Social and Political Sciences of Tunis
Mohamed Ridha Jenayeh	Professor in the faculty of Law and political science and economics of Sousse
Hafidha Chekir	Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Judicial, Social and Political Sciences of Tunis
Mohamed Chafik Sarsar	Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Judicial, Social and Political Sciences of Tunis
Mustapha Ben Letaief	Lecturer in the Faculty of Law and Political Science of the University of Tunis
Mounir Snoussi	Senior Lecturer in the Faculty of Judicial and Economic Sciences and Management at the University of Jendouba
Asma Nouira	Assistant Professor in the Faculty of Judicial and Economic Sciences and Management at the University of Jendouba
Sadok Marzouk	Head of the Tunisian section of Amnesty International, Former professor in the faculty of law and Political Science at the University of Tunis
Ghazi Ghraïri	Secretary-General of the International Academy of Constitutional Law, Tunis

Annex 4: Members of the High Authority for the Realisation of the Objectives of the Revolution, Political Reform and the Democratic Transition (HIROR)[5]

Representatives of Political Parties:	
Mouvement des démocrates socialistes (MDS)	Ahmed Khaskhoussi
	Rachid Guermazi
	Afef Boughrara
Mouvement "Ettajdid"	Samir Taieb
	Nidhal Slimani
	Aida Khemiri
Parti Démocrate Progressiste (PDP)	Mongi Ellouz
	Houssem Eddine Chebbi
	Maher Hanin
Forum Démocratique pour le Travail et les Libertés (FDTL)	Mouldi Riahi
	Bilel Falhi
	Rabia Ben Taarit Abid
Mouvement "Ennahda"	Noureddine Bahri
	Sahbi Attig
	Farida Labidi
Parti Socialiste de Gauche (PSG)	Béchir Labidi

[5] *Leaders*, "La liste complète des membres du Conseil de la Haute instance pour la réalisation des objectifs de la revolution" (7 April 2011); for the original list of 71 members see, *Babnet*, "Tunisie: Les membres du Conseil de l'instance supérieure pour la réalisation des objectifs de la Révolution" (15 March 2011).

	Nassim Kéfi
	Ghezala Guesmi
Parti du Travail Patriotique et Démocratique de Tunisie (PTPD)	Mohamed Jmour
	Imen Khemaies
	Naima Hammami
Parti Tunisie Verte	Abdelkader Zitouni
	Faouzi Hadhbaoui
	Naima Guiza
Parti de la Réforme et du Développement (PRD)	Mohamed Goumani
	Mohamed Habib Mestiri
	Awatef Zarrouk
Mouvement des Patriotes Démocrates (MDP)	Chokri Belaid
	Bayrem Belifa
	Essia Haj Salem
Congrès Pour la République (CPR)	Tarek Labidi
	Samir Ben Amor
	Zouhour Kourda Abid
Parti d'Avant-Garde Arabe Démocratique (PAAD)	Kheireddine Souabni
	Karim Kotaeib
	Hayet Hamdi
Representatives of Commissions, Associations, Organizations and Components of Civil Society	
Union Générale Tunisienne du Travail (UGTT)	Moncef Yaacoubi
	Ridha Bouzriba
	Abid Briki
	Houcine El Abassi
	Marwan Chérif
Ordre national des Avocats (ONAT)	Saida Akremi
	Ahmed Seddik
	Fathi Laayouni
	Rached Berguech
Association des Magistrats Tunisiens (AMT)	Ahmed Hamrouni
Ligue Tunisienne des Droits de l'Homme (LTDH)	Mokhtar Trifi
	Anouar Kousri
Association Tunisienne des Femmes Démocrates (ATFD)	Saida Ben Garrach
Association de la Femme Tunisienne pour la Recherche et le Développement (AFTURD)	Radia Bel Haj Zekri
Ordre National des Médecins	Mohamed Néjib Chaabouni

Conseil National des Libertés en Tunisie (CNLT)	Omar Mestiri
Association Internationale de Soutien aux Prisonniers Politiques (AISPP)	Samir Dilou
Association Liberté et Equité	Mohamed Ennouri
Syndicat National des Journalistes Tunisiens (SNJT)	Néjiba Hamrouni
Syndicat tunisien des Médecins Spécialistes de Libre Pratique	Faouzi Charfi
Mouvement de Modernisation de l'Union Tunisienne de l'Industrie, du Commerce et de l'Artisanat (UTICA)	Kais Sellami
	Khalil Ghariani
Organisations d'Émigrés Tunisiens	Kamel Jendoubi
	Mohamed Lakhdhar Lala
	Tarek Ben Hiba
	Ridha Bettaieb
	Néjib Achouri
Association Nationale des Chambres de Notaires	Imed Amira
Confédération Générale Tunisienne du Travail (CGTT)	Habib Guiza
Union des Diplômés Chômeurs	Salem Ayari
Union Générale des Etudiants Tunisiens	Tarek Saidi
	Mouna Oueslati
Association des Anciens Combattants	Ali Ben Salem
National Personalities	Ayachi Hammami
	Jalila Baccar
	Anouar Ben Gueddour
	Mohamed El Bsiri Bouabdelli
	Farhat Gammarti
	Mounir Graja
	Mongi Ben Othmane
	Mohamed Sghaier Ouled Ahmed
	Ibrahim Bouderbala
	Abdelaziz Mzoughi
	Abdessattar Ben Moussa
	Abdeljalil Bouraoui
	Moncef Ouannes
	Abdelhamid Larguech
	Sofiane Belhaj Mohamed
	Hédia Jrad
	Ali Mahjoubi
	Mokhtar Yahyaoui
	Abdelmajid Charfi
	Mahmoud Dhaouadi
	Mohamed Bouzriba
	Sami Jerbi

	Noura Borsali
	Dorra Mahfoudh
	Khédija Chérif
	Zeineb Farhat
	Lazhar Akremi
	Héla Abdeljawed
	Mohsen Marzouk
	Latifa Lakhdhar
	Hassen Dimassi
	Mongi Miled
	Adnene Hajji
	Samir Rabhi
	Samia Bokri
	Alia Chérif
	Abdejabar Bsaies
	Ahlem Belhaj
	Kalthoum Kannou
	Mustapha Tlili
	Sophie Bessis
	Samir Ennabi
	Sofiane Chourabi
	Massoud Ramdhani
	Mustapha Ben Ahmed
	Hamida Ennaifer
	Mehdi Mabrouk
	Amine Sami Ben Sassi
	Mabrouk Harrabi
	Zouheir Makhlouf
	Ahmed Kahlaoui
	Saida Harrathi
	Karima Darouich
	Lamia Farhani
	Abdelbasset Ben Hassen
	Frej Maatoug
	Nejib Hosni
	Mohamed Errehimi
	Adib Soudana
	Abderraouf Laabidi
	Mohamed Ali El Héni
	Imed Hidaoui
	Soufia Hammami
	Moncef M'barki
	Belgacem Abbassi
	Fethi Triki
	Adnene Mnasser
	Monia Bou Ali
	Najoua Makhlouf
	Abdessalem El Arbaoui

	Mustapha Abdelkebir
	Mohamed El Hedi Kahlaoui
Regional Representatives	
Tataouine	Abdellatif Haddad
Nabeul	Habib Ghalleb
Sfax	Noomane Majid
Kebili	Fadhel Bettaher
Gabès	Taoufik Jridi
Jendouba	Hédi Ben Romdhane
Sidi Bouzid	Youssef Salhi
Bizerte	Faouzi Sadkaoui
Medenine	Abdelaziz El Ayeb
Tunis	Lotfi Yaakoubi
Gafsa	Ridha Raddaoui
Kasserine	Mouldi Ksoumi
Representatives of the Families of Martyrs	
	Mongi Bouazizi
	Ali Bouazizi

Annex 5: Members of the National Transitional Council (NTC)

	Name	**Place of birth**	**Region**	**Date entered**
1	Mustapha Abdeljalil	Bayda	East	Feb-11
2	Abdelhafidh Ghoga	Benghazi	East	Feb-11
3	Fathi Baja	Benghazi	East	Feb-11
4	Ahmed Abbar	Benghazi	East	Feb-11
5	Othman Mgarhyi	Tobruk	East	Feb-11
6	Ahmed Zubair Sennousi	Benghazi	East	Feb-11
7	Ashour Bourashed	Derna	East	Feb-11
8	Abdullah Mousa Mayhoub Abuseif	Qubbah	East	Feb-11
9	Salwa Dghreily	Benghazi	East	Mar-11
10	Omar Hariri	Tobruk	East	Mar-11
11	Fathi Terbil	Benghazi	East	Mar-11
12	Faouzi Abdel Aal	Misrata	West	Mar-11
13	Ibrahim Ben Ghasheer	Misrata	West	Mar-11
14	Mohammed Montassir	Misrata	West	Mar-11
15	Suleiman Fortiya	Misrata	West	Mar-11
16	Abdullah Mohamed Gzeima	Zawiya	West	Apr-11
17	Ali Qalma	Murzuk	South	Apr-11
18	Othman Ben Sassi	Zwara	West	May-11
19	Jamal Salah Eissa	Kabow	West	May-11
20	Mohamed El-Harizi	Tripoli	West	May-11

21	Abdelbasit Abutahama	Tarhouna	West	May-11
22	Abdelrazek Aredi	Tripoli	West	May-11
23	Mustapha El-Houni	Hun	South	May-11
24	Abdelmajid Seif Ennasr	Sabha	South	May-11
25	Seddik El-Kebir	Tripoli	West	May-11
26	Hassan Sghrir	Wadi Shatti	South	May-11
27	Amin Belhaj	Tripoli (Souk Al Juma)	West	May-11
28	Salem Gnan	Nalut	West	May-11
29	Abdelrazek Mokhtar Ahmed Abdelgader	Tripoli	West	May-11
30	Mohamed Swa'i El-latif	Tripoli	West	May-11
31	Khalid Nasrat	Zawiya	West	Jun-11
32	Emaddine Nouridine Nassir	Zawiya	West	Jun-11
33	Ali Manea	Ghadames	West	Jun-11
34	Abdullah Triki	Zintan	West	Jun-11
35	Mohammed Khalifa Salem	Jebel Nafusa	West	Jul-11
36	Taher Saleh Diab	Merj	East	Jul-11
37	Idriss Abufayed	Ghariyan	West	Jul-11
38	Abdurahim El-Keib	Tripoli	West	Jul-11
39	Mustapha Rajbani	Qasr Ben Gasir	West	Jul-11
40	Ahmed Muftah Zway	Kufra	South	Aug-11
41	Moussa Kouni	Obari	South	Aug-11
42	Ramadan Salah Khalid	Tajoura	West	Aug-11
43	Abdelrazak Madi	Yifrin	West	Sep-11
44	Ali Mohamed Al-Jawani	Sobratha	West	Sep-11
45	Hassan Al-Magharbi	Ajdabiya	East	Sep-11
46	Saad Mohamed Nasr	Gizba- Shatti	South	Sep-11
47	Mustapha Eissa Landi	Kufra	South	Sep-11
48	Abdelhadi Shawish	Murzuk	South	Sep-11
49	Faraj Mohamed Shoieb	Shahat	East	Sep-11
50	Farhat Sharshari	Sorman	West	Oct-11
51	Khalid Shakshak	Zlitan	West	Oct-11
52	Abdullah Banoun	Tripoli	West	Oct-11
53	Mohamed Al-Ramash	Sirte	West	Oct-11
54	Ihbeel Areibi Mohamed Douoi	Jadu	West	Oct-11
55	Abdelgader Al-Minshaz	Khoms	West	Oct-11
56	Hassan Dhroui	Sirte	West	Oct-11
57	Mokhtar Jadal	Ajailat	East	Oct-11
58	Mansour Kikhia	Benghazi	East	Oct-11
59	Younes Barghathi	Tokra	East	Nov-11
60	Salah Abdelrahim Mohamed	Baida	East	Nov-11

61	Ahmed Khairallah Dayakh	Baida	East	Nov-11
62	Abdelnasr Said Ben Ramadan	Tripoli	West	Nov-11
63	Abdelnasr Benafa'a	Ein Zara	West	Nov-11
64	Oussama Abukharaza	Tripoli	West	Nov-11
65	Ali Toufik Shtewi	Tripoli	West	Dec-11
66	Salah Darhoub	Janzour	West	Dec-11
67	Abdelbasi Abbadi	Tripoli	West	Dec-11
68	Milad Salem Al-Oud	Garabouli	West	Dec-11
69	Intissar Aghili	Benghazi	East	Jan-12
70	Khalid Sayeh	Benghazi	East	Jan-12
71	Mohamed Abuzaid	Ghariyan	West	Jan-12
72	Seif Ennasr Mahjoub	Tazerbo	South	Jan-12
73	Assadek Hussein Ghraith	Khoms	West	Jan-12
74	Abdelghani Ftesi	Zlitan	West	Jan-12
75	Mohamed Othman Essnah	Sabha	South	Jan-12
76	Mohamed El-Naas	Sabha	South	Jan-12
77	Abdelgasem Al-Arabi	Obari	South	Jan-12
78	Ibrahim Hamid El-Asmar	Sabha	South	Jan-12
79	Hassan Moussa Hassan	Ajdabiya	East	Jan-12
80	Mansour Milad Younes	Ghariyan	West	Jan-12
81	Hassan Mohamed El-Girsh	Zintan	West	Feb-12
82	Riad Sultan Abushuwashi	Zwara	West	Feb-12
83	Khalifa Abugasm Kamal	Jmeil	West	Feb-12
84	Omar Buzaid	Rajban	West	Feb-12
85	Mohamed Ramadan Sidi Omar	Ghat	South	Feb-12
86	Mohamed Ali Sherif	Jufra	South	Feb-12
87	M'barak Rahil Al-Foutumi	Bani Walid	West	Feb-12
88	Mustapha Imhamid El-Galib	Misrata	West	Feb-12
89	Fathi Hamad Khalifa Abuzweidah	Abbyar	East	Feb-12
90	Mehdi Kashbour	Benghazi	East	Mar-12
91	Abdullah Amrou Al-Khamrani	Elheibate	West	Mar-12
92	Abdeljalil El-Nimr	Benghazi	East	Mar-12
93	Salam Al-Tabib	Tajoura	West	Mar-12
94	Nasser Al-Krayoui	Tripoli	West	Mar-12
95	Abdelhamed El-Mehdi	Tripoli	West	Mar-12
96	Assaid Abu Aboud	Tripoli	West	Mar-12
97	Mohamed Aburaas	Rigdaleen	West	Mar-12
98	Juma Mohamed El-garj	Mizdah	West	Mar-12
99	Youssef El-Mehdi	Sirte	West	Apr-12
100	Faraj Abdullah Hashem El-Obedi	Merj	East	May-12
101	Abugasm Abdullah Mohamed	Kikla	West	May-12

102	Hussein Abugasm El-heibi	El-Ayanah	West	May-12
103	Ibrahim Ramadan Bargouth	Oumjerssan	West	May-12
104	Abdelsalam Ali Omar	El-Qalla	West	May-12
105	Abdullah Salam Ali	Zoltan	West	May-12
106	Abdelsalam Omar Al-Mahrouk	El-harabah	West	May-12
107	Abdelsalam Ibrahim Adam	Merj	East	May-12

Annex 6: Members of the NTC's Executive Bureau[6]

1.	Prime Minister	Mahmoud Jibril	East – Benghazi
2.	Deputy Prime Minister	Ali Al-Issawi	East – Benghazi
3	Oil and Finance	Ali Tarhouni	East – Merj
4.	Defence	Jalal Dghreily	East – Benghazi
5.	Economics	Abdullah Shamia	East – Benghazi
6.	Health	Najy Barakat	West – Ghariyan
7.	Justice and Human Rights	Muhammed Allagui	West – Tripoli
8.	Culture and Community Affairs	Atiya Al-Awjili	East – Benghazi
9.	Social Welfare	Hania Al-Gumaty	East – Benghazi
10.	Reconstruction and Infrastructure	Ahmed Jehani	East – Benghazi
11.	Local Government and Planning	Faraj Al-Saiya	West – Warshafana
12.	Transport and Communication	Anwar Al-Fituri	East – Rajma
13.	Islamic Affairs	Salim Al-Shaikhi	East – Bayda
14.	Environment	Belgasem Nimr	East – Slouk
15.	Media	Mahmoud Shammam	East – Benghazi
16.	Interior	Ahmed Al-Darrat	East – Benghazi
17.	Education	Hana Al-Gallal (Resigned); Suleiman Sahli	East – Benghazi East – Benghazi
18.	Minister of Electricity	Awadh Barasi	East– Bayda

Annex 7: Official List for Prime Minister Abduraheem El-Keib's Transitional Executive Board[7]

1.	Prime Minister	Abduraheem El-Keib	West – Tripoli	Phd in Electrical Engineering; North Carolina State University

[6] Bartu, Peter (2015), "The Corridors of Uncertainty: The National Transitional Council's Battle for Legitimacy and Recognition", in Cole, Peter and Brian McQuinn, eds., *The Libyan Revolution and its Aftermath* (London: Hurst), p.342.

[7] *Reuters*, "Ministers in new Libyan government" (23 November 2011); *Temehu Website*, "Current Libyan Transitional Government".

2.	Deputy Prime Minister	Mustafa Abushagur	West – Tripoli	NFSL; PhD in Electrical Engineering from Caltech
3.	Minister of Religious Affairs	Hamza Abufaris	West– Mslatta, Tripoli	PhD in Islamic Science from Zaytouna university, Tunisia
4.	Minister of Justice	Ali Khalifa Ashour	West– Khoms	
5.	Minister of Telecoms	Anwar Fituri	East – Rajma	PhD in Electical Engineering
6.	Minister of Labour	Mustafa Rujbani	West– Nafusa Mountains	Director of IBM in Lebanon and Jordan; PhD
7.	Minister of Health	Fatima Hamroush	East– Benghazi	Expat in Ireland; Medical doctor of Opthamology
8.	Minister of Interior	Fawzi Abdel Aal	West– Misrata	Former NTC member and Public Prosecutor
9.	Minister of Trade and Commerce	Taher Sharkasi	West– Tripoli	
10.	Minister of Education	Sulaiman Sayeh	East– Benghazi	University Professor
11.	Minister of Foreign Affiars	Ashour Ben Khayil *	East– Derna	Diplomat; NFSL
12.	Minister of Defense	Osama Juwaili	West– Zintan	Head of Zintan Military Council
13.	Minister of Planning	Isa Tuwaijri	West– Misrata	
14.	Minister of Social Affairs	Mabrouka Jibril**	South– Sabha	PhD in Philosophy from Mohamed V

				university Morocco; Tuareg minority
15.	Minister of Oil	Abdelrahman Ben Yizza	West– Tripoli	Former ENI oil executive
16.	Minister of Finance	Hasan Zaglam	West– Tripoli	MA from the University of Indiana
17.	Minister of Agriculture	Abdul-Hamid Sulaiman Abufruja	East– Bayda	
18.	Minister of Industry	Mahmoud Fetais	West– Zlitan	Member of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB)
19.	Minister of Scientific Research and Higher Education	Naeem Gheriany***	West– Tripoli	Member of the NFSL; PhD in Nuclear Engineering from New York Institute
20.	Minister of Investment	Ahmed Attiga	West– Tripoli	PhD in Finance from Madison-Wisconsin University
21.	Minister of Culture and Civil Society	Abdulrahman Habil	East – Derna	PhD from Indiana University
22.	Minister of Electricity	Awadh Barasi	East– Bayda	Muslim Brother; Doctor in Electrical engineering; University of British Colombia
23.	Minister of the Martyrs	Ashraf bin Ismail	East– Benghazi	Businessman
24.	Minister of Local Government	Mohammad Hadi Hashemi Harari	West– Tripoli	MB; PhD in Law from la Sorbonne
25.	Minister of Transportation	Yousef Wahashi	West– Tripoli	

26.	Minister of Youth	Fathi Terbil	East– Benghazi	Former Member of NTC and 17 February Coalition
27.	Minister of Construction	Ibrahim Eskutri	East – Tobruk	PhD in Electrical engineering; resident in Misrata.

*earlier reported as Ibrahim Debbashi

** also reported as Fawziya Siela.

*** earlier reported as Fathi Ragab Akkari

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