Why Does God Save The King?

A post-Arab Spring analysis of regime survival in Arab monarchies

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DEDICATION

To my mother and father,

whose selflessness and sacrifices paved the way for my achievements.

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ABSTRACT

Why Does God Save The King? A post-Arab Spring analysis of regime survival in Arab monarchies

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Inspired by the outcome of the 2010 Arab uprisings, this project explores the causal mechanisms behind regime survival in the monarchies of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA). It is motivated by the following research question: How do Arab monarchies survive active opposition?

To answer this question, this study develops a theory about successful regime behavior that leads to survival. This theory highlights how active opposition impacts the process that leads to regime survival, and how survival-seeking regime behavior in turn affects immediate as well as future opposition. It argues that authoritarian monarchs survive by using a specific toolkit to contain (rather than exacerbate) threats. This toolkit consists of various combinations of strategies which rulers choose consistently depending on the level of threat which they face. The latter is determined by the goals and motivations of the opposition, the evolving interrelationship between the regime and different opposition actors, and various exogenous factors.

Methodologically, this project is characterized by a mixed methods triangulation approach which analyzes both quantitative and qualitative data separately before converging the results for interpretation. The author's analysis of a wider scope of different but complementary data- from in-depth interviews, archival research, primary sources, trends and datasets- allows her to advance well-substantiated conclusions. Moreover, this study is constructed around a three-part, in-depth explanatory case-study which follows a micro-level approach to within-country and cross-country analysis. Its main theory is built through a fine-grained analysis of Morocco and Oman, confirmed through a cross-country analysis of the remaining six Arab monarchies, and further developed through a study of negative cases such as Iran's Pahlavi monarchy and Gaddafi's Libya.

This dissertation makes several important theoretical and empirical contributions to the fields of Comparative and Middle East politics, and its main argument presents a novel and comprehensive explanation about authoritarian persistence.

***Keywords*: Monarchy - Authoritarianism - Regime Survival - Protests - Opposition - Social Movements - Subsidies - Oil**

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CHAPTER 1: INTRODUCTION

My dissertation explores the causal mechanisms behind regime survival in Arab monarchies through a novel angle which highlights the impact of the regime's interactions with its opponents on its survival. Framing my research in relation to the debate on Arab monarchical survival that was sparked by the outcome of the Arab uprisings, I show that contemporary theories of monarchical and country-specific exceptionalism do not adequately explain regime survival in Arab monarchies today. Instead, through a survey of the authoritarian resilience literature, I find that the theories focusing on the behavior of dictators better address my **research question***: How do Arab monarchies survive active opposition (i.e., when opposition actors mobilize against the regime and/or challenge its policies*)?[1]

To investigate the phenomenon of Arab monarchical survival**,** I make a comparative analysis between the understudied and structurally different cases of Oman (a resource-rich, absolute monarchy) and Morocco (an oil-poor, non-absolute monarchy). This comparison allows me to examine the potentially different causal mechanisms behind regime survival in monarchies with different levels of wealth and type of rule. From this in-depth case study, I get an interesting theory with partial support; I then develop this theory through a cross-

[1] Note that I use "active opposition" and "opposition" interchangeably.

country analysis of the other surviving monarchies to confirm the causal steps. Finally, I further investigate my theory by examining relevant collapsed regimes.

Thus, using a mixed methods triangulation design, I systematically and consistently show that Arab monarchies endure by employing a specific and sophisticated combination of authoritarian strategies- i.e., repression, monetary accommodation, and political concession- that contains threat and avoids escalation, and that varies depending on the regime's perceived threat of the opposition. I measure threat according to the potential power loss for the ruler and find that different types of opposition represent different levels of threat. The variation in threat is usually tied to the motivation and goals of the opposition actors involved in the event, as well as their historical interrelationship with the regime.

Although I discuss this in greater detail in Chapter 2, it is important to clarify what I mean when I refer to each of the three aforementioned strategies. *Political concessions* are those used by dictators to meet some of the demands of reform- driven opposition actors, e.g. releasing political prisoners, reshuffling cabinets, easing repression, increasing civil freedoms, negotiating with opposition leaders, and so on (Rasler 1996). These minimal political reforms lead to political liberalization which reduces rulers' powers minimally, but they do not cross the threshold towards democratization. *Monetary accommodation* refers to the use of resources by the regime during unrest to target the wider population and protestors (rather than elites, which are coopted continuously). *Repression* refers to the regime's persecution of opposition actors by using or threatening the use of violence; it includes physical tactics (torture, assassination, beating, etc.) and non- physical tactics (media censure, violation of civil liberties, etc.).

Importantly, this dissertation does not seek to argue that the only factor that shapes monarchical survival is regime behavior. My empirical research in Chapters 3-5 and theoretical discussion in Chapter 2 emphasize that it would be an oversimplification to attribute a complex phenomenon such as regime survival to a single causal mechanism (including support of the coercive apparatus or of external actors). However, my findings show that how regimes react to various opposition events often escalates or deescalates the situation and greatly impacts the outcome of regime survival. Some scholars rightly point out that the Arab uprisings highlighted the process of authoritarian learning and adaptation in MENA regimes through the adaptive behavior of the regime in Algeria, Morocco, Jordan etc. (Heydemann and Leenders) therefore, regime reactions to opposition events are not simply defensive and spontaneous but are part of a carefully planned multilevel game between the regime, the opposition, and other domestic and international actors. My dissertation takes this argument further by positing that the process of authoritarian learning takes place long before the opposition event in question and that the game between these various actors is repeated consistently by the regime in order to contain threat.

Furthermore, while this project was inspired by the monarchy-republic divide during the Arab uprisings, it does not seek to explain regime survival in MENA *monarchies versus republics*; while it is true that four republican regimes fell as a result of the Arab uprisings, it is also true that eight republics endured. Regime survival during was thus not distinctive to monarchical systems. There is considerable variation in vulnerability and robustness across authoritarian states, not just in monarchies. This dissertation takes an interest in the topic of MENA monarchical survival because of the emergence of post-Arab spring theories hinging on monarchical exceptionalism. These theories are flawed, and this dissertation aims to

address these flaws by investigating what Arab monarchies do to contain threat and survive, I analyze the regime's reaction to different types of active opposition using several research methods, including: comparative analysis of cash-handouts, subsidies, and delayed austerity measures; linear analysis of long-term regime repression based on various datasets; in-depth interviews; archival research; analysis of monarchs' speeches; and a study of constitutional reforms that were ratified in reaction to active opposition. I then triangulate this data using secondary sources published during the relevant opposition events (such as newspapers, human rights reports, and fiscal reports). By considering specific events of active opposition against the regime, and systematically examining the levels and combinations of repression, political concession, and monetary accommodation that the regime uses to contain these events, I uncover a pattern of regime reaction to opposition that leads to survival. More specifically, I contribute an in-depth study of a repertoire of successful strategies used by regimes to contain various types of opposition across different cases that informs on regime survival and can be applied to other cases.

Ultimately, the broader contribution of my dissertation is the *combination factor* which it exposes. The Moroccan and Omani regimes successfully use a varying combination of authoritarian tools to contain active opposition and avoid power loss; neither maintains power by only accommodating opposition actors or repressing them. The strategic nature of this process starts with the regime (1) first considering opposition actors' demands and predicting their reactions to potential trade-offs, (2) combining tools to contain opposition and avoid escalation based on these calculations, and (3) modifying future behavior based on these interactions. My argument matters not because I focus on monarchs' use of certain tools, but because I analyze the reasoning behind their *varying* use and combination of these

tools, and the impact of the opposition-regime interrelationship on regime behavior. In doing so, I highlight the impact of the regime's contextual and strategic interactions with its opponents on regime survival. In the end, I show not only how active opposition impacts the process that leads to regime survival, but also how survival-seeking regime behavior in turn affects the level of immediate as well as future opposition.

In this introduction, I first establish the puzzle and significance of monarchical survival in the MENA region before outlining my research design and contributions. **1.1** introduces and contextualizes the topic. **1.2** explains its significance for authoritarianism studies, post-World War II theories on democratic transition, Orientalism, and policy-related, geostrategic considerations. **1.3** lays out the key concepts of monarchy, regime survival, active opposition, and threat**. 1.4** briefly establishes my argument in context of the authoritarian resilience theories. **1.5** justifies my positive and negative case selection, describes my methods for argument testing, and discusses my data. **1.6** demonstrates my empirical and theoretical contributions to the theories of authoritarianism, Middle Eastern studies, and rentierism. **1.7** outlines the organization of my manuscript, and **1.8** provides a summary and conclusion.

1.1 THE PREMISE AND PUZZLE

Much regime theory holds that authoritarian regimes are inherently and terminally vulnerable because of low legitimacy, overdependence on coercion, and regime monopoly over power, due to: (1) the absence of checks on the regime's power, and (2) the over-centralization of the decision-making process (Huntington, 1991; Nathan, 2003; Gilley, 2003). The overthrow of four republics and no monarchy during the Arab uprisings (2010-

4), however, might suggest that not all authoritarian systems are equal in terms of vulnerability and survival.

Yet, MENA monarchical endurance has not been consistent. While monarchical systems were strong and common in Ottoman history, they became brittle in the face of rising Arab nationalism. During the 19th and 20th centuries, monarchies that had risen to power prior to or independently of Ottoman rule proved robust, like in Bahrain, Morocco, Oman, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia. Throughout the 18th and 19th centuries, Tunisia had a stable, semi-autonomous beylic under Ottoman rule, which survived as a puppet state under the French protectorate in the 20th century and collapsed in 1957 following Tunisian independence. As a matter of fact, the 1950s and 1960s marked the fall of several monarchies put in place by colonial powers- in Iraq, Libya, and Egypt- with only Kuwait and Jordan avoiding collapse. Since the fall of Iran's Pahlavi monarchy in 1979, however, the remaining MENA monarchies have proven robust and have withstood the ravages of the Arab uprisings.

The Arab uprisings- which led to major and minor upheaval across the MENA region- are neither unprecedented, nor unique in their aim to remove despots and bring about democratization in the region. Khalidi (2011) outlines the similarities between the recent uprisings and past revolts in several MENA states against colonial powers, and Jones and Ridout (2015:252) point out that the problems against which people protested in 2011 had been recurring. Taking the Arab uprisings as one of many active opposition events that have shaken the Arab world opens the door to important research on the failure of these democratization attempts and the persistence of authoritarianism in MENA regimes.

As Fawcett (2017: 789) explains, to understand present-day phenomena in the MENA region, we must look beyond its current situation and examine "the evolution of states and sovereignty in the modern Middle East." I argue that, since I am investigating how monarchies survive- and assuming that they use their strategies of survival continuously- carrying out a historical analysis of said strategies is imperative.

All the surviving Arab monarchies- Morocco, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, Oman, Kuwait, Qatar, Bahrain, and the United Arab Emirates- experienced different degrees of unrest during the Arab uprisings, but none were overthrown. Some scholars group these monarchies as a single category to study, because they focus on the outcome of the uprisings: regime survival (Keyman, 2012; Kirby, 2000). Others underline the interesting variation in unrest and regime behavior across the monarchies (Barany, 2013; Yom, 2012). This dissertation departs from the outcome of the Arab Spring, but looks beyond it to investigate how Arab monarchies, despite their major differences, have managed to survive until today. Focusing on structurally different cases like Morocco and Oman, which represent two categories of monarchies (with different levels of wealth and types of rule) allows me to further this investigation of regime survival in monarchies.

1.2 SIGNIFICANCE AND RELEVANCE OF THE RESEARCH QUESTION

Arab monarchical endurance is significant on several levels. First, it contradicts post-World War II academic predictions on the demise of monarchy, notably the "king's dilemma" (Huntington 1968.) which predicted that absolute monarchies would fall as social reforms increased. Arab monarchies, especially, are subject to such predictions whenever regional upheavals occur in the MENA region (Gause III). Upheavals that have led to the demise of

MENA dictatorships include the revolutionary waves of the 1950s and 1960s, triggered by the rise of Nasserism and Arab socialism; the 1997 Iranian Revolution which led to the overthrow of Reza Shah Pahlavi and his replacement by Ayatollah Khomeini as the head of an Islamic republic; and the recent Arab uprisings.

Second, the survival of these *Arab* monarchies incites comparisons to kingdoms in Europe that either democratized or were overthrown. Is there something about Arab identity or Islam that guarantees the resilience of Arab monarchs? This angle of analysis addresses the East-West dichotomy and touches on important perceptions of Orientalism,[2] notably the essentialism of complex survival strategies, and the assumption that the endurance of Arab monarchies is a result of factors inherent to Arab or Islamic identity and culture- i.e. that the Muslim world is less likely to democratize, Arab populations are drawn to monarchical systems, etc. (Huntington 1991: 22-23; Kedourie 1994: 1-6).

Finally, the survival of these eight monarchies has important implications for the geopolitics of the MENA region and touches on the importance of oil, external support from Western powers, and internal support within the circle of monarchies itself. Arab monarchies, partly because of their perceived stability, are long-time strategic allies of various Western countries; their survival is beneficial to Western security and economic interests. In a continuously changing and unstable region, steady allies like the Arab monarchies are important and valuable players.

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[2] Edward Said (1978) attributes the West's political, economic, social, and cultural domination of Middle Eastern, North African, and Asian societies to its essentialist view that they are undeveloped and inferior.

1.3 KEY DEFINITIONS AND ASSUMPTIONS

Before investigating how Arab monarchies survive active opposition, I clarify key concepts and terms. I first define and categorize monarchy and authoritarian regimes and address relevant debates, before examining the concept of regime survival- my outcome of interest- according to theories developed by Bueno de Mesquita (2008; 2010), Beasley (2009), and Gallagher and Hanson (2013). After clarifying the role of relevant actors, I conclude by defining and categorizing events of active opposition (protests, riots, coups etc.) and measuring the threat they pose to rulers.

1.3.1 DEFINING MONARCHICAL SYSTEMS AND AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES

I define *regime* as the sets of relationships and rules that govern the political behavior in a state; and I refer to *state* in the Weberian and Tillian sense: the centralized and complex entity that possesses a monopoly over the legitimate use of force within a country's territorial boundaries (Weber 1946: 78; Tilly 1985).

A *monarchy* is a type of regime in which the state is headed by a ruler of royal descent, the monarch (Hadenius and Teorell 2007). It is not sufficient for power to be passed on from father to son for the regime to be classified as a monarchy; while not a king, Syria's Hafez Assad passed on power to Bashar Assad. Primogeniture must be ratified by common law and/or widely accepted by the population. Vertical primogeniture (from father to eldest son) is not a necessary trait of monarchy; power can be passed on to brothers, or a successor may be chosen by a royal family consensus, as is usually the case in Saudi Arabia. There is a

distinction between monarchies where rulers monopolize political power and those where they are merely figureheads. The latter category in not classified as authoritarian.

Since I focus on *Arab* monarchical survival and Arab monarchies are not democratic, *monarchy* always refers to authoritarian monarchies in this study. While there are academic[3] and colloquial[4] debates surrounding the classification of any type of monarchy as a democracy, I abide by Dahl's (1971) criteria for democracy and consider genuine constitutional monarchies (where the monarch's powers are constrained by legal text, like in Belgium) democratic for four reasons: (1) the monarch is a reigning, ceremonial figure or does not possess the majority of the political power; (2) all political actors' powers are checked so that none of them can dominate the political sphere; (3) competitive, free, and fair elections take place and wield influence; and (4) citizens enjoy both civil and political freedoms. None of the Arab monarchies satisfy these criteria, and they fall under the authoritarian regime category as defined by Linz (1975) because of their limited and controlled participation.

I agree with Stepan, Linz, and Minovas (2014) that the commonly used two-part typology of "ruling" versus "constitutional" monarchies is problematic, especially in the contemporary MENA region. Several MENA monarchies- notably in Morocco, Jordan, Kuwait, and

[3] Stepan, Linz, and Minovas (2014: 35-6) classify constitutional monarchies as democracies that developed out of non-democratic ruling monarchies.

[4] This debate takes issue with the fact that monarchs inherit their role, and it largely revolves around the political system in the United Kingdom and whether, to be truly democratic, the country should abolish the monarchy (Ridyard 2014; Toynbee 2015; Bates 2016; The Economist 2015). There have been similar discussions concerning other European monarchies.

Oman- have constitutions or basic laws that limit the monarch's powers to a minimal extent. Thus, I side with Geddes et al.'s (2012b: 8) explanation that the regime in authoritarian monarchies controls significant aspects of the political sphere and dynamics, including the coercive apparatus, policy, and leadership selection.

1.3.2 REGIME SURVIVAL

I consider *survival* as the absence of regime overthrow or collapse in the face of threat, and *resilience* as the continuation of the regime's successful rule as it thrives and adapts to social and economic realities (Gallagher and Hanson 2013). A regime cannot be resilient if it does not survive; however, it can merely survive without being resilient (like the Government of National Accord in Libya). Given that regime survival leads to resilience in most cases, my primary focus (on how monarchies survive active opposition) makes resilience relevant to my research. Unlike traditional realist theories (Koivisto 2010; Mearsheimer 2001; Moravcsik 2003), my unit of analysis is the regime or the monarch, not the state.[5] This interchangeability is due to: (1) the primordial role of authoritarian monarchs in the decision-making process (Valeri 2015; El Houdaïgui 2012); and (2) the portrayal of the regime in the monarch's image (Kaplan 2013).

I assume that monarchs, like all actors, are rational in the most basic way; their primary interest is survival (Beasley 2009). To that end, they act to maintain their power and avoid overthrow (Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2010). To diminish potential or existing threats,

[5] Similarly, Bueno de Mesquita and Smith (2010), McGillivray and Smith (2008), Bueno de Mesquita and Siverson (2008), and Goemans (2000) use rulers as their unit of analysis.

rulers take strategic actions (e.g. making institutional changes or reforming economic and political policies). They also use resources to satisfy their coalition of supporters (which is small for monarchies).[6] Dictators use a balance of carrots and sticks to buy loyalty and acquiescence and to raise the cost of collective action against their rule (Gallagher and Hanson 2013). I argue that how dictators combine these tactics depends not only on economic and political factors, but also on the type of opposition they face and the level of threat which they perceive; hence the variation of regime reaction to dissent over time. I discuss this important point in greater detail in section 1.4 below.

There is an important difference between how rulers behave when they are facing active opposition, and when they are not. When there is no active opposition, rulers still act to maintain the support within their winning coalition (Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2010). When they face active opposition, there is an immediate threat to their survival which pushes them to act to avoid power loss. Thus, revolutionary threats cause rulers to modify their normal behavior; they might use public goods to co-opt revolutionaries or appease the wider population- something they do not do in the absence of active opposition (Idem).

A significant theoretical contribution of selectorate theory on regime survival is its focus on an interrelationship between mass political movements and regime behavior inspired by

[6] Selectorate theory holds that three groups of actors affect rulers: (1) the nominal selectorate (everyone involved in choosing the ruler), (2) the real selectorate (actors who really choose the leader), and (3) the winning coalition (whose support is essential for the rulers to win). For rulers to remain in power, they must maintain their winning coalition. In autocracies, where the winning coalition is small, rulers use private goods to satisfy it. In democracies, where the winning coalition is large, rulers use public goods to satisfy it (Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2010).

threat. Bueno de Mesquita and Smith (2010) show how mass political movements impact regime survival, and how survival-seeking regime behavior in turn affects the level of mass political movements. I depart from this theory and argue that regime reaction to active opposition affects future opposition, and active opposition affects future regime behavior. This supports my aim of moving beyond an explanatory model of regime reaction in authoritarian monarchies to a predictive one.

1.3.3 DEFINING AND CATEGORIZING THREAT AND ACTIVE OPPOSITION

Rulers' primary objectives are to survive and maintain their power (Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2010; Beasley 2009). Rulers fear active opposition (i.e., political dissidence whereby opposition actors mobilize against the regime and/or challenge its policies) because it demonstrates the ability of opposition actors to organize and coordinate, which in turn enhances the likelihood of their success (Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2010). Active opposition ("opposition") constitutes a threat to rulers because it might lead to overthrow or other forms of power loss. Active opposition events ("opposition events") may be peaceful (e.g. non-violent protests and marches, civil disobedience, sit-ins, creating and sharing pamphlets, elite negotiations, opposition politics, strikes, and riots) or violent (e.g. coup d'états, revolution, uprising, violent protests, and terrorism). An *opposition actor* is one that actively participates in an opposition event to challenge the regime or its policies.

Not all opposition events are equal in terms of threat, because different events have different degrees of potential power loss; not all, for example, have the potential to cause overthrow. I argue that: (1) the higher the ruler's potential power loss, the higher the threat of an

opposition event, and (2) the degree of potential power loss of an opposition event depends primarily on the goals, organization level, and motivation of opposition actors.

The highest level of threat involves total power loss, when the ruler risks being removed from the political helm of the territory (due to assassination, overthrow, or secession). Moderate threat involves major power loss, when the ruler's powers risk drastic reduction (due to the creation of laws that check the ruler's powers with institutions). Dictators want to avoid this sort of liberalization because: it decreases their control over the political sphere, limits their actions thus making it more difficult for them to reward their coalition, and might cross the threshold to democratization. Small threat involves minor (if any) power loss when the ruler risks small reductions to his powers that do not affect his position overall (e.g. passing laws that do not change the status quo within the state).

To ensure the lowest possible power loss, rulers act to contain threats. It follows that rulers react differently to different opposition events that have different degrees of potential power loss. Theoretically, rulers do not react to peaceful, reform-oriented protests in the same way they would react to a military coup. A military coup, if successful, would cause total power loss, whereas peaceful, reform-seeking protests would lead to minor or major power loss (depending on the reforms).

Importantly, we must acknowledge the elasticity of the perception of threat by the ruler. First, other factors may affect the level of threat represented by an opposition event. This is because opposition does not take place in a vacuum; factors outside of the event and actors involved may make it more or less threatening to the ruler- e.g., unrest on the international,

regional, or domestic level. Therefore, historical, political, and economic context must be considered, as I show in sections 3.6 and 4.5.

Second, the way that the regime reacts to an event affects the event's level of threat. For instance, the Arab Spring represented a moderate threat to Mohammed VI, but after the regime appeased and repressed the crowds, the threat decreased. In contrast, the Arab Spring represented a moderate threat to Gaddafi, but the threat increased drastically after the Libyan regime's brutal repression fueled the crowds. I focus on perceived (rather than actual) threat, because regime behavior depends on its perception of threat. [7]

1.4 THE ARGUMENT

As I show in more detail in Chapter 2, the existing research on monarchical survival encounters difficulties in providing a conclusive explanation for the continued post-independence survival of Arab monarchies (see Figure 1). Scholars have attempted to address the question of Arab monarchical survival through various approaches. Owen H. Kirby and Robert D. Kaplan use a cultural approach to explore the role of historical, religious or tribal legitimacy in monarchical endurance. Michael Herb, Anoushiravan Ehteshami, and Steven M. Wright focus on structural arguments that emphasize the importance of regime type and wealth as an indicator of how monarchies successfully

[7] Davenport (1995) discusses the limits of unidimensional threat perception and the merits of a multidimensional approach. Focusing on 53 countries over a period of four decades, he concludes that the way in which regimes perceive threat depends on the basic frequency counts of events, whether there is violence, what strategies the opposition uses, and current behavior and cultural norms.

contain the opposition. Gregory Gause and Sean Yom employ a foreign alliance-based approach to emphasize the importance of regional and Western allies to regime survival.

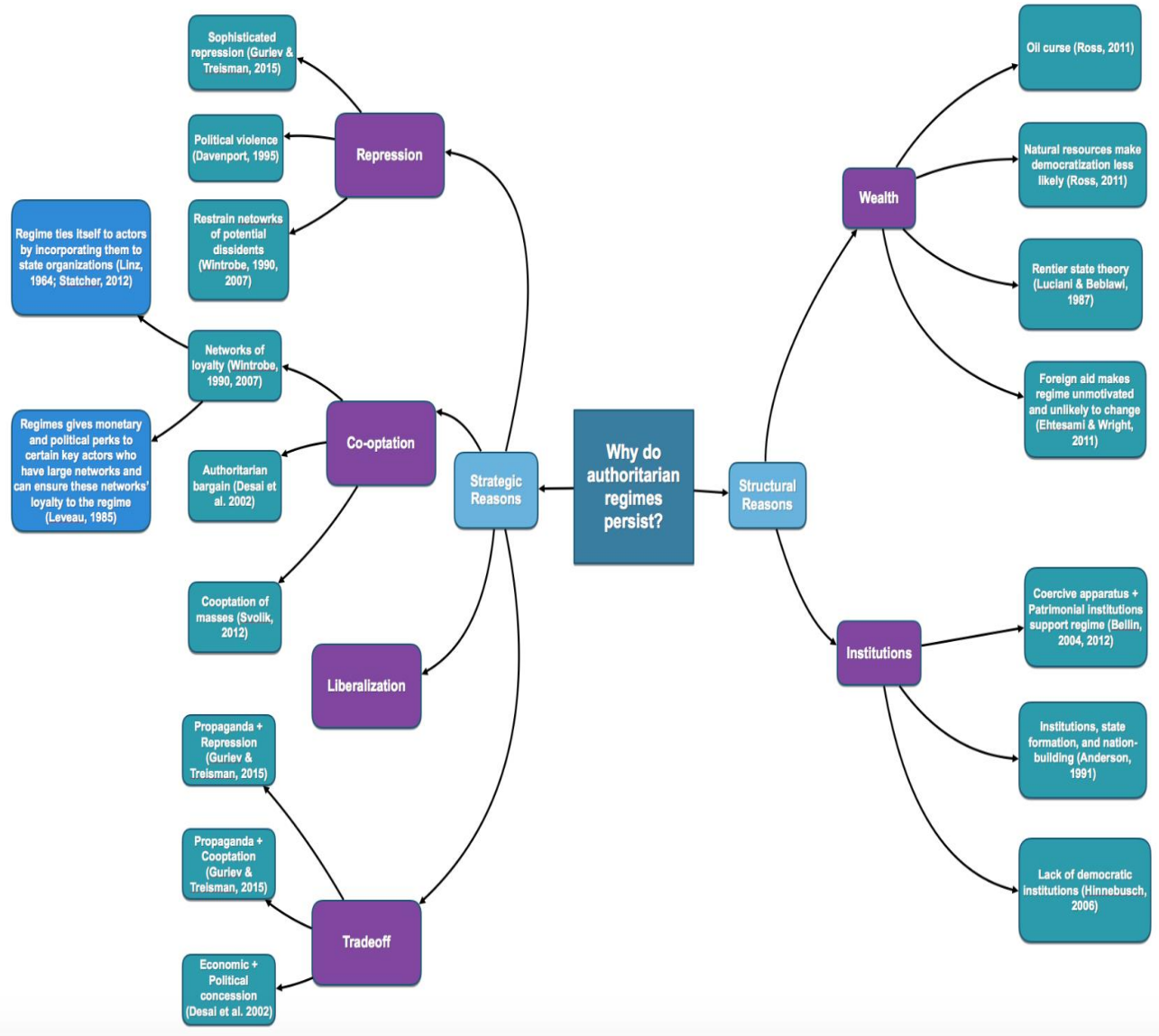
While these approaches are important to understand the political dynamics of Arab monarchies, they fail to adequately explain how these regimes continuously survive in the face of active opposition. Theories of monarchical exceptionalism and external support essentialize this complex question by focusing excessively on broad claims linked to monarchical structure that can be weakened or altogether disproved through qualitative analysis (specifically, a causes-of-effects approach[8]). They can also be weakened through a historical analysis of how some MENA monarchies were overthrown in the past, and of how surviving monarchies were founded. In qualitative analysis, a good theory must explain the outcome (regime survival) in all the cases within the population of cases (i.e. all the surviving Arab monarchies). Theories of monarchical exceptionalism and external support fail to do this.

On the other hand, theories focusing on regime structure and resources ignore the important structural, economic, and political difference between surviving monarchies; thus, they are case and time-specific, and they can only be applied to some (but not all) of the monarchies. Overall, the resulting flaw lies in these approaches' focus on singular events and the ensuing fragmentation of their framework, their neglect of the role of opposition actors on regime

[8] A causes-of-effects approach is one which "starts with the cases and their outcomes and moves backward toward the causes" (Mahoney and Goertz 2006: 232).

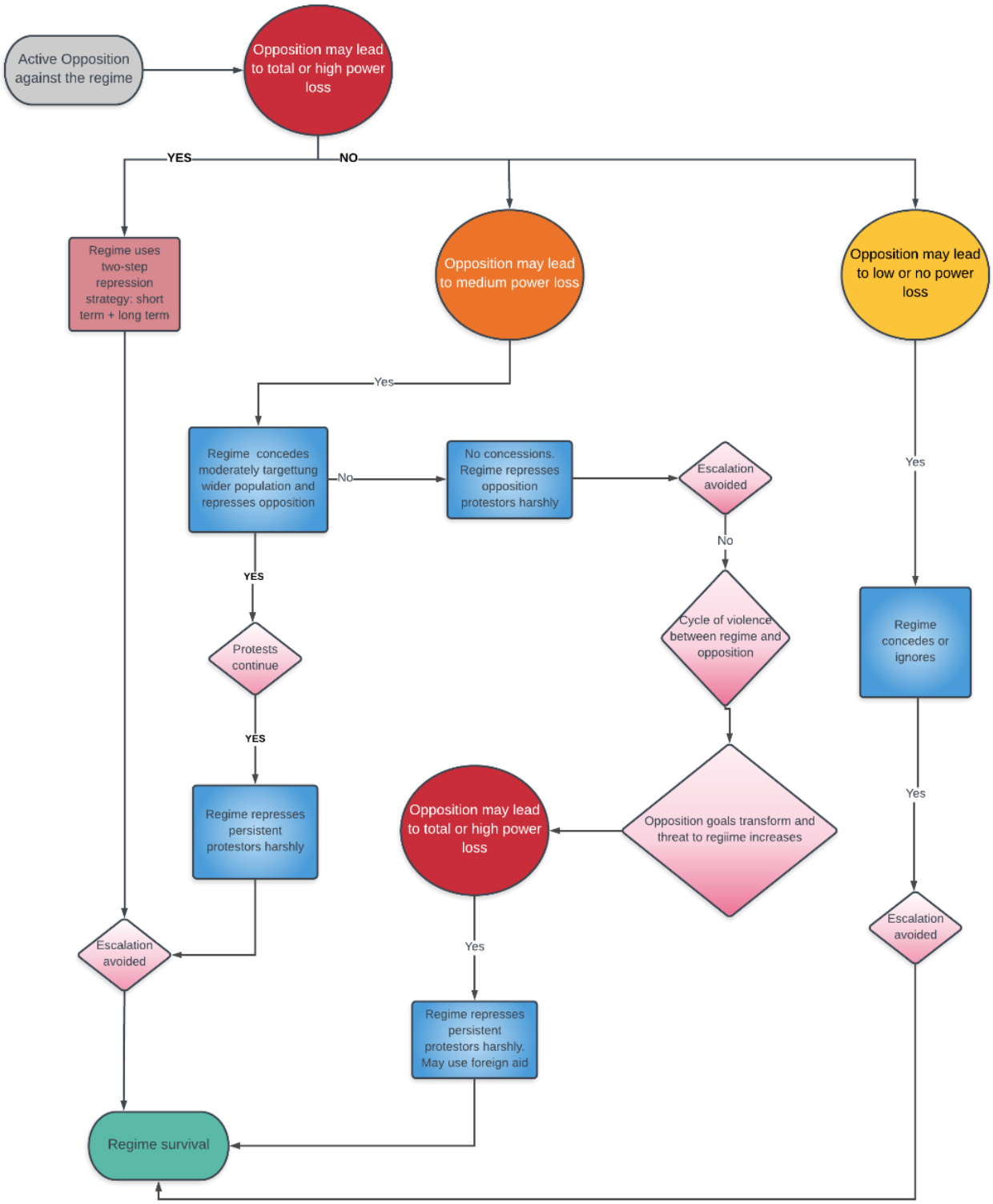
behavior, as well as their failure to systematically broach the tactical nature of the monarchies' reaction to protests.

Figure 1: CONCEPTUAL FRAMEWORK FOR AUTHORITARIAN SURVIVAL



Source: Author's diagram based on the cited literature in Chapters 1 and 2.

Figure 2: CONCEPTUALIZATION OF MY THEORY



Source: Author's diagram based on empirical research in Chapters 3-6.

To address these gaps, I propose an explanatory model of authoritarian survival in monarchies in which I build on the authoritarian robustness theories that focus on the behavior of dictators. My model conceptualizes a multi-part regime strategy that hinges on the regime's multilevel threat perception of opposition events (see Figure 2). Through my research on my positive and negative cases, I find that several scenarios of successful regime reaction to dissent repeat themselves during these regimes' modern history, which allows me to outline the pattern below.

First, my theory holds that the regime in these monarchies survives high-level threat events- i.e., when overthrow, significant power loss, or escalation is likely- by using a two-step repression strategy that contains immediate and future threats. This is the case when opposition is isolated within a group espousing a religious or regional-based ideology, and the group wants total autonomy from the state. Here, the ruler only uses repression- no political or monetary concessions are made- as was the case in Morocco with the Rif regional upheaval in 1957-1959, 1984, and 2016-2018, and in Oman with Jabal Akhdar war in 1954-1959. This is also the case when the opposition group explicitly wants to remove and replace the king, as did elements in the Moroccan military in 1971 and 1972, as well as key opposition groups during the Dhofar Rebellion in 1963-76.

Second, when faced with low-level threats that involve minor power loss- i.e. protestors who want small changes to the status quo or who manifest themselves peacefully without making demands for change- the regime avoids escalation by not using repression and meeting the opposition's demands if there are any; this is because the regime faces only a small threat that can easily be contained, or no threat at all. For example, when opposition actors want

civil or minor political change, the regime concedes fully or ignores the event altogether, knowing that it will remain the most powerful actor; I illustrate this in Chapter 3 for Morocco with the women's rights activism and Chapter 4 for Oman with the silent protests against US foreign policy in the region. Minor threats do not risk changing the status quo or shifting the power balance away from the monarch, so the regime does not use repression, because it does not need to eliminate the (inexistent or very low) threat, as corroborated by Davenport (2007).

Finally, beyond these extremes, the monarchs in my cases successfully contain moderate-threat events and deescalate the situation by using nuanced behavior that targets opposition actors as well as the wider population. Here, repression is successful in containing the threat because it is used as a supplementary tool which ensures that offered political and/or monetary concessions aimed at addressing some of the opposition's demands are accepted and that further opposition is deterred. This conforms to an important aspect of Guriev and Treisman's (2015) informational theory of dictatorship: Once other, non-violent means have failed and the opposition becomes overt, the regime can only use repression. Continued opposition creates a greater risk of the status quo being changed, and of the balance of power shifting away from the regime; this is what prompts the ruler to use repressive action to eliminate the threat (Davenport 2007).

For example, when opposition actors want economic reforms, and the regime is poor (e.g. in Morocco), it offers moderate monetary concessions that do not fully satisfy the opposition which continues to protest. This prompts the regime to repress the opposition but maintain the concessions (as was the case during the serious unrest in Morocco in 1981- see section

3.1). When opposition actors seek political change that would reduce the regime's power without overthrowing it- as was the case in Oman during the Arab uprisings- the regime offers political concessions that do not genuinely address the opposition's demands and do not reduce regime powers. This prompts at least part of the opposition to continue to protest, at which point the regime uses repression.

As mine is an inductive approach, by which I develop my theory after closely examining my two main cases (**Chapters 3 and 4**), I empirically test my argument to confirm whether the other surviving Arab monarchies use similar combinations of tactics to maintain power and contain threat (**Chapter 5**). I then further develop my theory by investigating whether regime behavior was linked to collapse in a failed republic and a failed monarchy (**Chapter 6**). By demonstrating that these failed regimes collapsed in part because they reacted (differently than my positive cases and) in such a way that led to the exacerbation of the threat rather than its containment, I hope to make a particularly strong case for my argument that Arab monarchies survive events such as the Arab uprisings because of successful survival-seeking behavior that is affected by multidimensional threat perception and the regime's contextual interactions with various opposition actors.

1.5 RESEARCH DESIGN AND OUTLINE

To explore the causal mechanisms behind regime survival in these monarchies, I use a mixed methods triangulation design, specifically a convergence model, whereby I collect and analyze both quantitative and qualitative data separately before converging the results for interpretation. This model allows me to collect a wider scope of different but complementary data, and to advance well-substantiated conclusions (Creswell 1999;

Creswell and Clark 2007; Johnson et al 2007). Briefly, my quantitative data sources include trends and linear datasets as well as raw financial data from the World Bank and country-specific sources discussed in greater detail in sections 1.5.3.1 and 1.5.3.2 below; and my qualitative data sources include in-depth interviews, archival research, and primary sources such as legal texts and official speeches (also discussed in greater detail below). I then triangulate this data using secondary sources published during the relevant opposition events (such as newspaper articles, human rights reports, and fiscal reports). The reason I use datasets to lend a quantitative element to what is otherwise a qualitative, small-N study of my ten cases is that analyzing different types of data helps me investigate sensitive political issues that make it highly difficult to gather original data.

To complete my research, I adopt an inductive three-step approach with a micro- level focus that combines different methods into a coherent explanatory framework. A micro-level focus looks at regime survival as a result of choices and strategies between significant political actors, i.e., opposition actors, elites, and members of the ruling coalition. This approach downplays the role of theory at an early stage of empirical research, and indeed, I do not set out with a preexisting theory that I test through different cases. Rather, I depart from the commonly accepted assumptions in authoritarian survival studies that rulers are endlessly opportunistic and their main goals are to avoid overthrow and to lose as little power as possible (Davenport 2007; Beasley 2009; Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2010) and I use empirical research to build my theory. Thus, through an in-depth analysis of the Moroccan

and Omani monarchies' reactions to active opposition throughout their modern history,[9] I build a theory of successful regime survival-seeking behavior that contains (rather than exacerbates) opposition threats that I then test by applying to other cases.

Indeed, my dissertation is constructed around a three-part, in-depth explanatory case-study.[10] **The first part** is a close and fine-grained analysis of regime reaction to all major opposition events in the understudied and structurally different cases of Morocco and Oman; to determine what factors led these monarchies to survive, I examine how they successfully contain various opposition events over time (rather than just a single opposition event). My point is that an approach that focuses on just the Arab Spring and the fact that no Arab monarchy collapsed misses the larger process of long-term regime survival across the region in the face of different types of opposition actors and events.

The second part compares the six other surviving monarchies' successful reactions to the Arab uprisings to the trends in Morocco and Oman. This section determines whether the scope of the external validity of my findings on Morocco and Oman extends to the other surviving Arab monarchies. Specifically, it examines whether the patterns of survival used by the regime in my core cases can be applied to other monarchies within the same category, and whether the causal mechanisms behind regime survival are similar *across* the two

[9] As Fawcett (2017: 789) explains, to understand present-day phenomena in the MENA region, we must look beyond its current situation and examine "the evolution of states and sovereignty in the modern Middle East." I argue that, since I am investigating how monarchies survive- and assuming that they use their strategies of survival continuously- carrying out a historical analysis of said strategies is imperative.

[10] Mine is an explanatory case study because it seeks to answer the question of how Arab monarchies survive active opposition, and to explore the presumed causal link between regime survival and regime behavior.

categories of monarchies (i.e., do all Arab monarchies share a pattern of survival regardless of type of rule and regime wealth?).

The final part further develops the theory I built based on my findings in Chapters 3-5 by examining negative cases (i.e. regimes that collapsed). In this section, I adopt an events-based approach (whereby I compare cases in which the regime collapsed during a similar event to one when the regime in my positive cases survived) to investigate the causal pathway of regime overthrow in a non-monarchy and a monarchy- Pahlavi Iran and Gaddafi's Libya. This section investigates how regime behavior in these cases is linked to the outcome of regime collapse. This final section also compares regime reaction to opposition in my negative cases to regime reaction in the surviving monarchies. This chapter serves an explanatory purpose (Lieberman 2005); it provides insights into another possible causal factor (external support) and reviews how it complicates and complements my existing analysis.

1.5.1 CASE SELECTION

At the core of this dissertation are two case-studies that focus not only on *variation* in successful regime reaction to opposition but also on *variation across cases*- (1) from Morocco to Oman, (2) from Morocco and Oman to other surviving monarchies, and (3) from Morocco and Oman to collapsed regimes. The primary focus is on the Moroccan and Omani cases which generate this dissertation's theory. The next section further explains my choice of Morocco and Oman as main cases.

1.5.1.1 SELECTION OF POSITIVE CASES

The Moroccan and Omani regimes are my representative and main positive cases. I refer to *case* as a spatially and politically defined macro-social unit (Goodwin 2012; Gerring 2004); *regime* is my unit of analysis and *regime survival* is the outcome of interest that must be explained. Morocco and Oman are *positive* cases because of their outcome of regime survival. In contrast, my dissertation's final part focuses on *negative* cases, in which the outcome of interest is absent. While I derive my argument from my positive cases and confirm it through my smaller cases (the other surviving monarchies), my negative cases serve an explanatory role, "as a source of insights into new causal factors or other problems with the existing analysis" (Lieberman 2005; Seawright 2016). A representative case study- that analyzes typical examples of a wider category- is useful here, because it allows me to intensively study regime survival in Morocco and Oman to draw lessons about all Arab monarchies today- i.e., a larger class of cases (Peters 1998). The representativeness of my main cases allows a degree of generalization of the results, which can be extended to other Arab monarchies.

Figure 3: OVERVIEW OF CASE SELECTION REASONING (CATEGORIZATION OF ARAB MONARCHIES) - 2018

	Succession		Resource Wealth	Regime Type		Material Perks for Citizens	Population Size > 3 million	GCC Member
	Dynastic	Personalist		Absolute	Non-Absolute			
Morocco		X			X		X	
Jordan		X			X		X	
Bahrain	X		X	X		X		X
Kuwait	X		X	SEMI		X		X
Oman	SEMI		X	X		X		X
Qatar	X		X	X		X		X
Saudi	X		X	X		X		X
UAE	X		X	X		X		X

Source: Author's table based on data from Freedom House, Polity IV, the World Bank, and qualitative sources.

A controlled representative comparison is thus useful because it generates theory that "travels across time and space but remains sensitive to the challenge of establishing precise causal relationships among variables" (Slater and Ziblatt 2013: 22). Another (more exhaustive) way to investigate Arab monarchical survival is to carry out an in-depth study of all surviving Arab monarchies. However, my approach is more useful not only for practical reasons, but also because fewer cases can be studied more intensively (Gerring 2004). The following section explains and justifies my case selection process which I base on Bennett and George's (2005) typological design method. This method requires the use of prior knowledge about all potential cases to focus on a smaller number for in-depth analysis. It divides potential cases into groups based on key criteria and selects them because they fall into theoretically interesting categories. Since my sample of cases is small (only 8 surviving monarchies), random sampling has few benefits (Seawright 2016); and it presents the risk of selecting a strange mix (Gerring 2004).

In the following section, I categorize the surviving monarchies into Gulf and non- Gulf groups. Because Gulf monarchies are wealthier and have more closed political systems than Morocco and Jordan, this categorization allows me to examine possible differences in how monarchies with different wealth and regime types react to opposition (see Figure 3). I then select the most relevant, interesting, and understudied cases from each category.

1.5.1.1.1 GULF AND NON-GULF CATEGORIZATION

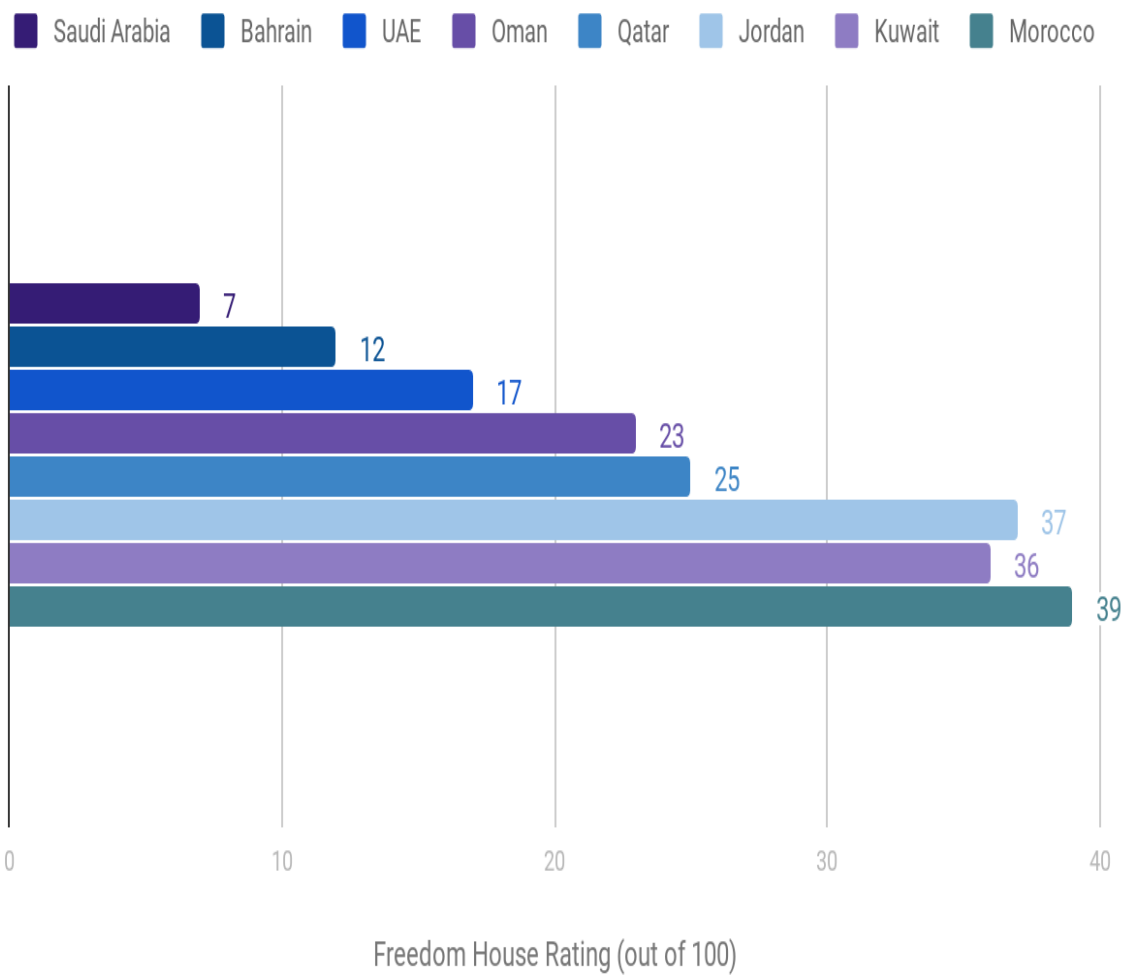
Out of the 15 monarchies that have existed during the MENA region's modern history, 8 have survived; these surviving monarchies are my universe of possible cases. In the existing research, they are categorized along different lines. First, there are dynastic and personalist

monarchies. Five Gulf monarchies are dynastic, where monarchs rule as representatives of their families, and family members monopolize political power (Herb 1999)- refer to Figure 3. Morocco and Jordan are personalist monarchies where power is concentrated in the king who rules as an individual (*Idem*; Gause 2013).

Scholars disagree about Oman's classification. While it is not fully dynastic because Qaboos does not share power with his family, the latter will choose his successor. Furthermore, Oman is closer to the other Gulf monarchies (in terms of political culture and wealth) than it is to Morocco and Jordan (Barany 2013; Gause 2013). Thus, Bank Richter, and Sunik (2013) classify Oman as a semi-dynastic monarchy. I favor this categorization because, although the majority of power is concentrated in Qaboos rather than across a family council, several of his relatives hold official positions (e.g. as special representatives to the Sultan, (deputy) ministers, and special advisors).[11] This categorization of Oman as closer to Gulf monarchies supports my Gulf versus non-Gulf distinction.

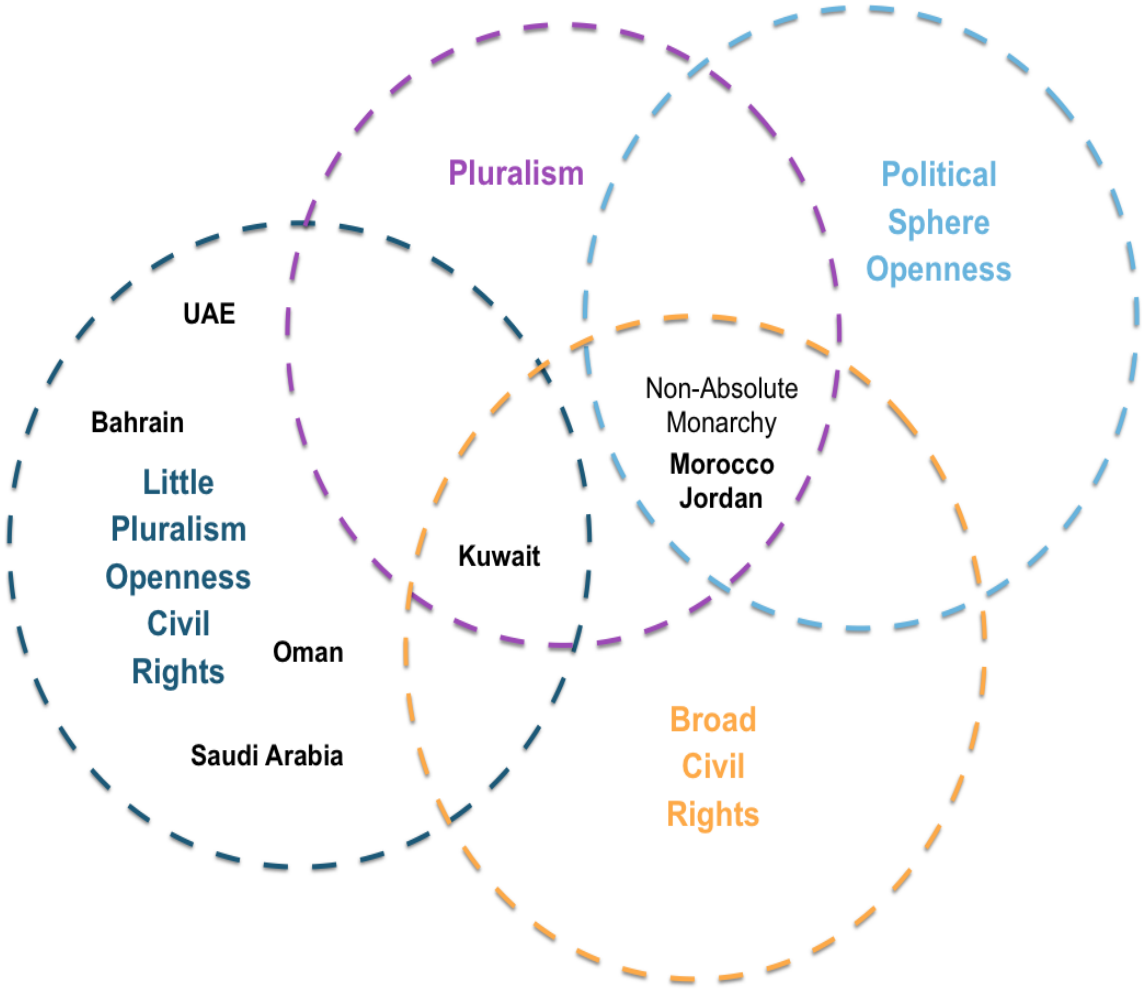
[11]More specifically, as of 2018, Qaboos' uncle, Shabib bin Taimur Al-Said, is a Special Advisor on Environmental Affairs. His cousin, Asaad bin Tariq Al-Said, is Deputy Prime Minister for International Cooperation as well as the Sultan's Special Representative. Qaboos' other cousin, Haitham bin Tariq Al-Said is Minister of Heritage and Culture and was formerly the Undersecretary of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as well as the Secretary General for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs. Yet another cousin, Shihab bin Tariq Al-Said, is Advisor to the Sultan and former Commander of the Navy. Qaboos' first cousin once removed (and Asaad's son), Taimur bin Asaad bin Tariq Al-Said, is Assistant Secretary General for Communication in Oman's Research Council as well as board member of its largest bank. Another cousin, Fahd bin Mahmoud Al-Said, is the Deputy Prime Minister for the Council of Ministers. Finally, up until his death in 2010, Qaboos' second cousin- Thuwayni bin Shihab Al-Said- served as his Personal Representative and was formerly Deputy Governor of Muscat then Governor of Muscat.

Figure 4: FREEDOM HOUSE RATINGS FOR THE SURVIVING MONARCHIES, 2017.



Source: Author's graph and diagram based on data from Freedom House.

Figure 5: ABSOLUTISM VS. NON-ABSOLUTISM IN ARAB MONARCHIES.



Source: Author's diagram based on data from Freedom House, Polity IV, the World Bank, and qualitative sources.

Morocco and Jordan are oil-poor, non-absolute monarchies where the king rules with some political opening. They are *soft dictatorships* as both have: (1) a minimum component of democracy, and (2) mechanisms that ensure that the ruler maintains monopoly over power

(Fukayama 1992; Kesselman, Krieger, and Joseph 2010). This results in a gross power imbalance between the regime and citizens that is a typical trait of authoritarian systems.

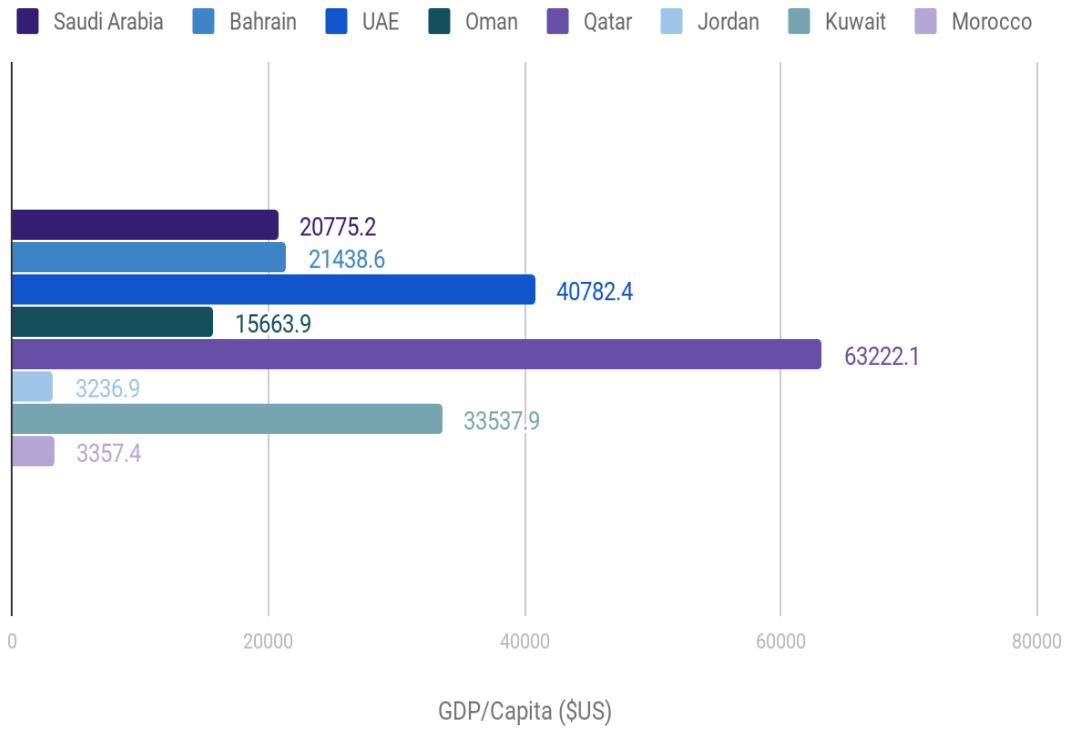
Most Gulf monarchies have absolute regimes- where the monarch rules with little to no degree of political openness (Ehteshami and Wright 2011).[12] They lack the healthy civil society and minimal pluralism of Morocco and Jordan (only Kuwait and Bahrain have minor political opening and growing civil society groups)- see Figures 4 and 5. Also, compared to Morocco and Jordan, Gulf monarchies have resource wealth. While Oman and Bahrain are poorer than their neighbors (see Figure 6) they are still significantly wealthier than Morocco and Jordan.

Furthermore, Gulf monarchies provide their citizens with material perks that Morocco and Jordan cannot afford. Citizens in most Gulf monarchies enjoy free healthcare and education, receive free or reduced housing, and do not pay income taxes (Barany 2012; Schaechter and Fasano-Fiho 2003). Compared to Morocco and Jordan, all GCC states (except Saudi Arabia) have populations smaller than 1.5 million (see Figure 7).[13] By comparison, the Moroccan and Jordanian populations were 33,655,786 and 8,185,384, respectively, in 2016.

[12] There is a debate regarding how to classify Kuwait, which has a functioning parliament but where the Emir possesses near absolute political power (Barany 2012: 17).

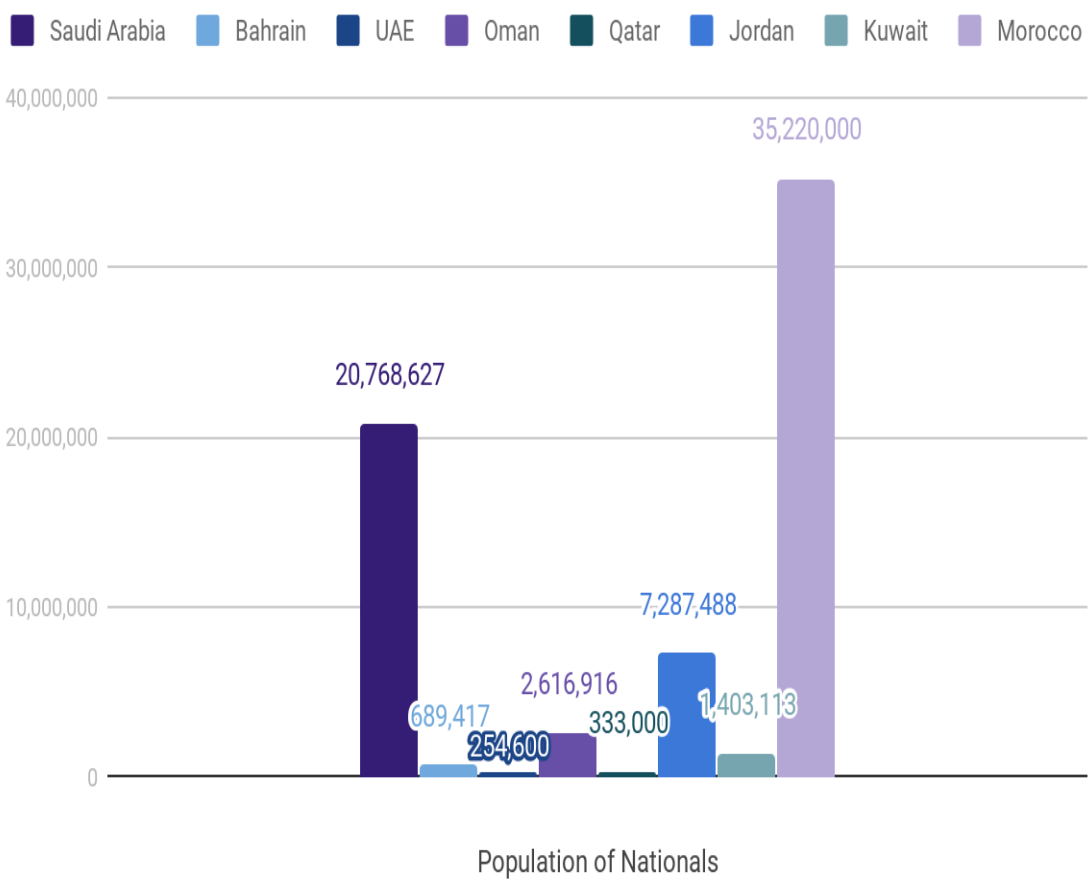
[13] The statistics in Figure 7 are for nationals of these states. The percentage of foreign nationals in the Gulf monarchies is much higher than it is in Morocco and Jordan. Distinguishing between nationals and non-nationals is important because rulers perceive them differently (as will be shown in Chapter 5), and because non-nationals in the Gulf do not benefit from the same privileges as nationals.

Figure 6: GDP/CAPITA, ARAB MONARCHIES IN 2016.



Source: Author's graph and diagram based on data from Trading Economics.

Figure 7: POPULATION SIZE OF NATIONALS IN ARAB MONARCHIES 2013-6.



Source: Author's graphs using data from Statista, Gulf Migration Information & e-Government Authority – Bahrain Open Data Portal, Dubai Statistics Centre, National Centre for Statistics & Information – Sultanate of Oman, Priya Dsouze Communications: "Population of Qatar by Nationality – 2019 Report", Department of Statistics – Jordan.

The numbers and arguments in this section show that Gulf monarchies, despite their differences, have a lot in common structurally and institutionally. The same can be said of Morocco and Jordan. Thus, rather than following hard categorizations and limits that would make grouping these monarchies together impossible, I divide Arab monarchies into Gulf and non-Gulf categories and underline the importance of the difference in type of rule and resource-wealth between both categories.

After considering the significant differences between these categories, I select representative cases for each one, thus departing from the trend of comparing cases within the same category (Lust-Okar 2004; Odinius and Kuntz 2015). The rationale for *not* comparing Gulf and non-Gulf monarchies is a concern for *external validity*; in Comparative Politics, this is the validity of a causal argument beyond the cases studied (Slater and Ziblatt 2013).[14] Because Gulf and non-Gulf monarchies are so different structurally, it might seem difficult to generalize the results of a study on Morocco, for instance, and apply them to Oman.

Yet my argument for selecting one Gulf and one non-Gulf monarchy is to be able to examine how these structural differences affect survival-seeking regime behavior, if at all. A comparison between the similar cases of Morocco and Jordan would not show the different circumstances present that might affect regime behavior. On the other hand, comparing the different cases of Morocco and Oman allows me to examine potential differences between regime reaction to active opposition in structurally different monarchies. The

[14] For more on the generalization of findings in comparative case studies, see: Peters, B. Guy. 1998. *Comparative Politics: Theory and Methods.* New York: New York University Press.

representativeness of my cases is critical to determine the external validity of my argument (which is generated through the study of empirics from only Morocco and Oman, and none of the other surviving monarchies or failed regimes).[15]

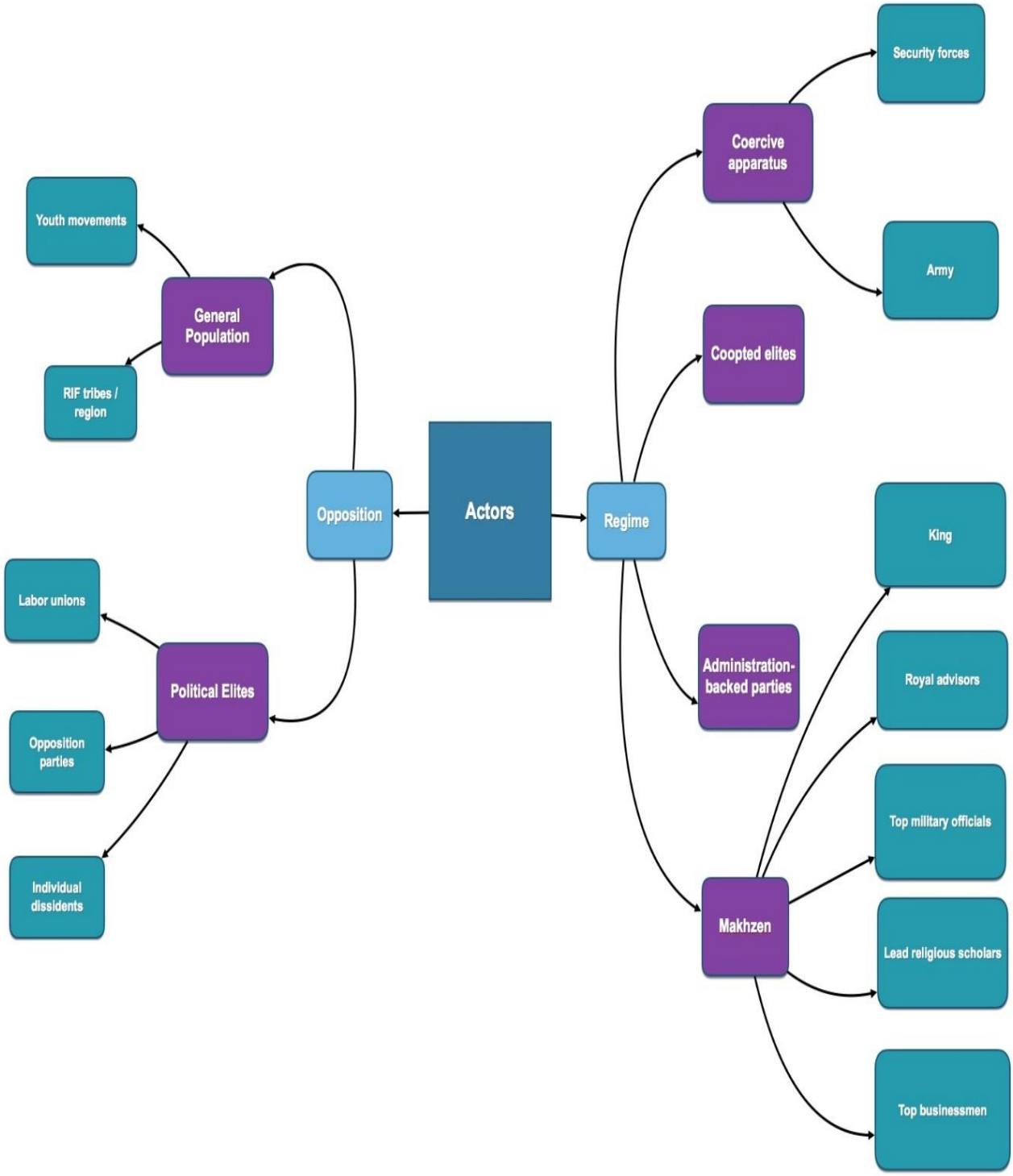
1.5.1.1.2 CHOOSING MOROCCO AND OMAN SPECIFICALLY

Between Morocco and Jordan, Morocco is a more valuable case-study as its monarchy has existed for centuries longer than the Hashemite monarchy, which was established during the colonial period. Arguments of historical legitimacy can therefore be tested in Morocco- where the king also bolsters his religious legitimacy through the instrumentalization of Islam and Islamic culture. King Mohammed VI is Head of State, Commander of the Faithful, and Commander of the Armed Forces. While he is the most powerful political actor, there is a head of government and a parliament (so the monarchy is not absolute). The *makhzen*- a centralized organization comprised of leading *oulema,*[16] important tribal chiefs, high military officials, and wealthy businessmen (Claisse 1992)- revolves around the king and aims to maintain his legitimacy and power (see Figure 8). The government is appointed through legislative elections every five years and follows the party-list proportional representation system; over thirty-six parties competed in the 2016 legislative elections.

[15] The argument generated through the study of empirics from Morocco and Oman will enjoy some degree of external validity as it is not also generated from other monarchies (but does apply to them).

[16] *Oulema* (or *ulamaa*) are religious scholars and authorities. In Morocco, there is a Superior Council of Oulema that was created in 1981 to uphold the kingdom's religious politics.

Figure 8: RELEVANT ACTORS IN THE MODERN MOROCCAN POLITICAL SCENE.



Source: Author's diagram using qualitative sources.

In the Gulf category, I bar Bahrain because its survival during the Arab Spring was highly dependent on the intervention of GCC troops (Bshir and Abu-Rish 2012); however, note that I only bar Bahrain as a representative case and that I examine it (and the role of external aid) in Chapter 5. The UAE is not a representative case as it operates differently than the other monarchies; it is a federation of seven hereditary monarchies, each governed by an absolute monarch (Billingsley 2010: 108). Furthermore, the UAE and Qatar experienced little active opposition during the Arab Spring (Barany 2012: 3), so they are less relevant to my research

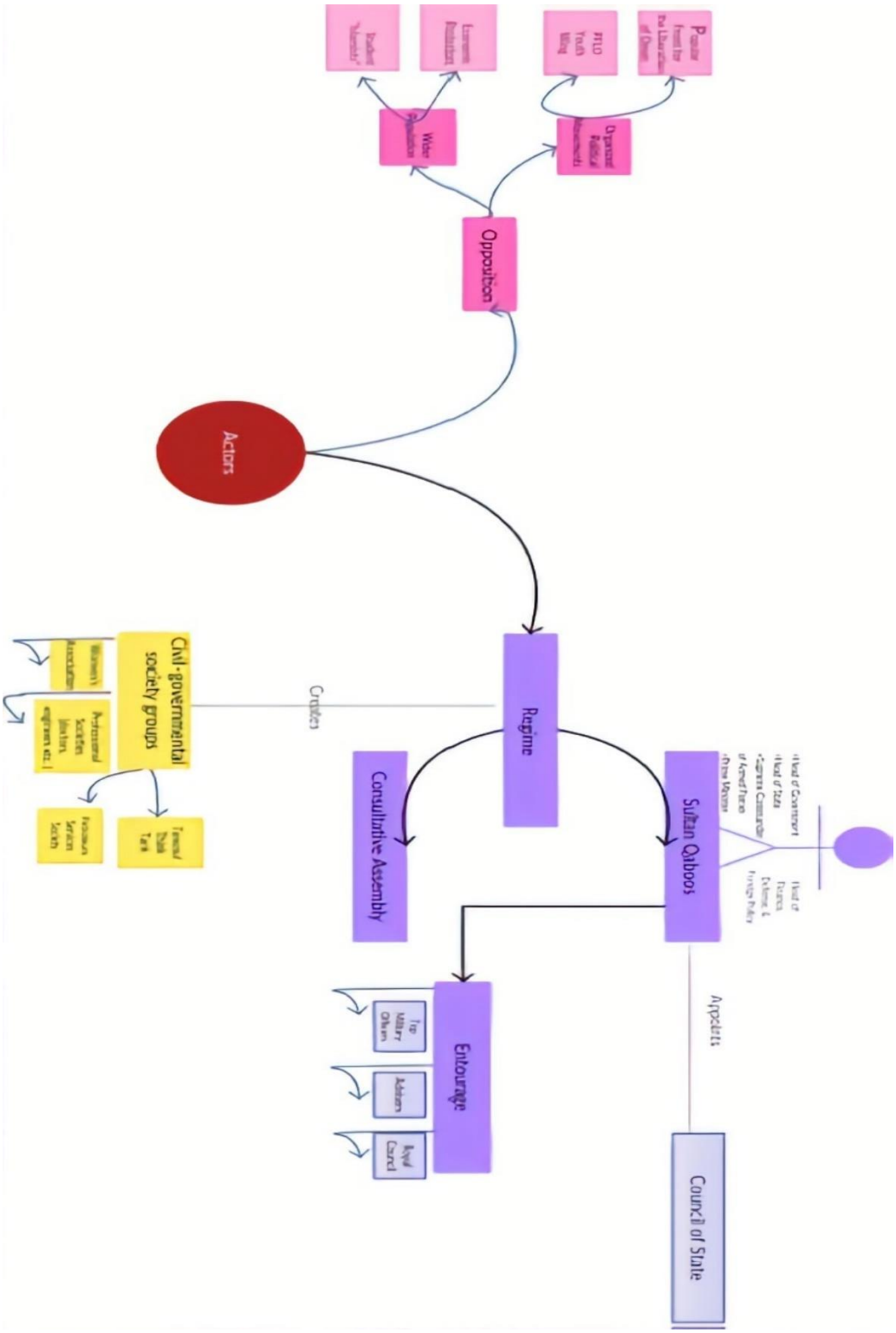
Of the three remaining monarchies, Oman is both an excellent comparative case for Morocco, and an interesting and understudied case study on its own. The Sultanate is ruled by Sultan Qaboos bin Said Al-Said, an absolute ruler who is Head of Government, Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces, and Prime Minister (see Figure 9 below).[17] He also acts as the head of various fields, namely relating to defense, foreign policy, and finance. He appoints *Majlis a-Dawla* (the Council of State) which assists him in implementing his development, economic, and cultural strategies (Article 17, No. 86/97 Omani Royal Decree). In a striking difference to Morocco, there are no political parties in Oman, nor legislature; rather, the Sultan takes advice from *Majlis Al-Shura* (the Consultative Assembly), a

[17] Qaboos forged this absolutism early on in his reign, at the end of 1972 when he took on the roles of Prime Minister as well as of Ministers of Interior, Defense, and Finance. He also refused to share important financial treaties between the sultanate and the Petroleum Development Oman company (PDO) with then Prime Minister Tariq bin Taimur which prompted the latter to resign.

bicameral representative body consisting of 84 elected members (Article 58, No. 99/2011 Omani Royal Decree).

Furthermore, civil freedoms are highly restricted in Oman, as they are in Saudi Arabia, Qatar, and Bahrain. Eickleman (2001) explains that, while the text of the Basic Law allows freedom of expression, it has not been implemented. Three government agencies have been set up to oversee the censure of texts, public expression is limited, and local print and broadcast media are restricted. Finally, unlike the Moroccan and Jordanian rulers, Qaboos has not initiated democracy- oriented reforms and therefore is not restrained by a changing process. On the other end of the spectrum, unlike other Gulf monarchs, Qaboos is not restrained by a politically powerful royal family. In this sense, he is in a unique and freer position than the other monarchs.

Figure 9: RELEVANT ACTORS IN THE MODERN OMANI POLITICAL SCENE



Source: Author's diagram using qualitative sources.

1.5.1.1.2 BENEFITS AND ADEQUACY OF A MOROCCO-OMAN COMPARISON, AND THE TIMEFRAME

Oman and Morocco provide an excellent comparative case study of the impact of regime reaction to dissent on survival due to: (1) their unexpected similarities in terms of longevity, colonial experience, regional divisions, and foreign alliances; and (2) their interesting structural and institutional differences e.g. regime wealth and type of rule, civil society health, and organization of the opposition. Beyond methodological and theoretical justification, examining Morocco and Oman, rather than highly studied cases like Saudi Arabia or Jordan, is a larger contribution to the field of Middle Eastern studies.

Importantly, this comparison allows me to look beyond the dominant theoretical framework of Gulf rentierism[18] when investigating regime survival, without removing rentierism altogether. Indeed, Oman possesses natural resources that generate rents which it continues to use as other rentier states do (Ross 2001). However, Oman is less wealthy than most Gulf monarchies, which has encouraged its regime to look away from rents not only in matters of economic development, but also in matters of politics. In this sense, Oman offers a unique opportunity to study regime survival in a rentier state that might be on a transformative path. Thus, a case study of Oman and of Morocco (which has no oil wealth) makes a significant contribution to the study of non-rent accommodation.

[18] Gulf rentierism attributes the persistence of authoritarianism in Gulf monarchies to the prevalence of oil rents which lead to a gross power imbalance between the regime and citizens.

1.5.1.1.2.1 IMPORTANT SIMILARITIES

Not only are Morocco and Oman two of the oldest independent states in the MENA region, but both monarchies have been in power for centuries and can thus make a claim for legitimacy through history, since their national identity is tied to the dynasties currently in power (Pappas Funsch 2015; Maddy-Weitzman and Zisenwin 2012; Eickelman 2001). The presence of the monarchy's legitimacy, while not necessarily tied to regime survival, is therefore plausible in both cases.

Morocco and Oman were impacted by colonialism in a similar manner: they were protectorates during the 20th century (though not officially in Oman's case) and, following independence, retained close ties with their colonizing states- an important point to consider when studying external support during events like the Arab uprisings. Not only does Morocco rely on France, and Oman on the United Kingdom in several aspects, but both have strong ties to the United States, which they supported during its fight against Communism, the "War on Terror," and the First Gulf War (Valeri 2007; Owtram 2004). Morocco and Oman also share regional allies, which help them financially and diplomatically during tough times. The Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) pledged USD 10 billion to Oman to fund development projects and gave Morocco 5 billion to delay austerity measures in

2011(Friedman 2012: 74; Rousselet 2014). GCC states have also generally supported Morocco diplomatically in its territorial dispute over Western Sahara (Maclean 2016).[19]

Morocco and Oman's close alliance with Western powers is significant to my research on successful survival-seeking regime behavior, as it gradually restricted their use of repression to contain opposition. Indeed, both have had to act more cautiously in terms of human rights violations over time; this is significant as it impacts their reaction to opposition. Their projected image as West-friendly monarchies as well as the expectations of their allies made them switch from overt to hidden or justifiable repression in the late 20th century.

For example, in 1972, Hassan II blatantly executed and imprisoned a high number of officers involved in two attempted coups without granting them fair trial (Primary Footage 1971; Hassan II 1972). In the early 1990s, however, he denied allegations of torture and imprisonment, then released political prisoners. Qaboos made a similar shift. In 1994, he ordered the imprisonment of 200 presumed Islamist militants without fair trial. However, when he faced another Islamist threat in 2005, he made his decisions more transparent and justifiable to his Western allies. In both cases, the rulers' consideration of the West's heightened sensibilities towards repression stemmed from a desire to develop international ties that would lead to economic gains (Leveau 1985; Feliu 1996; Izquierdo 2012; Valeri 2007).

[19] Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have become less supportive of Morocco's position on Western Sahara since the 2016 Gulf crisis, most likely due to Morocco's refusal to take Saudi Arabia and the UAE's side against Qatar.

Furthermore, Morocco and Oman offer an opportunity to challenge the concept of country-specific exceptionalism. Their exceptionalism is tied to their portrayal as the good news stories of the MENA region by the media, international community, and several scholars-because of the reputation of their rulers as less repressive and more open to change (Sater 2010; Martinez 2015; Totten 2013). Moroccan exceptionalism revolves around the regime's pre-emptive democratic efforts and the supposed lack of repression during events like the Arab Spring (Martinez 2015; Bartolucci 2011).

Omani exceptionalism revolves around the country's supposed political stability as well as "*distinctively Omani democracy*," which is tied to "the Omani social and political micro-climate" (Jones and Ridout 2005: 379). Scholars relate Oman's exceptionalism to the so-called Omani sense of social self and tolerance and predict that these attributes will lead to social and political liberalization, which in turn will lead to an evolving and distinctively Omani democracy. It is distinctively Omani because it does not follow Western standards of democratization and is unobserved outside of the sultanate; rather, regime behavior in Oman is seen as tied to tradition as well as to society's aspiration to transparency and public accountability (*Idem*).

The claim that Morocco and Oman have regimes that are exceptional because they are open politically is important to my dissertation, especially to my research on pseudo-liberalization (discussed further in Chapter 2), because it brings attention to consistently failed liberalization attempts in these countries. If they are truly exceptional because they liberalize, why do they often backslide to repression?

Because of existing institutions, constitutional reforms, and civil society, the Moroccan regime is a *soft authoritarian system* where there is a minimum component of democracy (in the form of political competition), but where there are also mechanisms that ensure the ruling coalition's monopoly over power (Fukayama 1993; Kesselman, Krieger, and Joseph 2010). It would follow that, while some aspects of democracy exist in Morocco (such as elections and democratic institutions), its authoritarian structures' robustness makes political transformation unlikely. On the other hand, Oman is an absolute monarchy where the monarch is both head of state and head of government. Yet, the system in Oman is less closed relative to Saudi Arabia and the UAE; Qaboos, at times, has favored a less ironfisted approach all the while adjusting the political system so as not compromise his power.

Especially relevant to my focus on the impact of different opposition actors on regime behavior, both monarchies faced important dissidence marked by regional or religious divide during the 1950s-1970s. The presence of groups from certain regional and religious backgrounds that participate in opposition events (that sometimes revolve around those groups' religious or regional ideology) is important to my research because these divides affect regime behavior and threat perception.

In Morocco, Amazigh tribes in the Rif rebelled against the monarchy several times (Mouline 2014). Furthermore, while the monarchy allied itself to the Jewish community and co-opted many opposition groups (e.g. the Left, the Islamist Justice and Development Party, and

feminist groups), it failed to co-opt various Amazigh groups which remain steadfast in their opposition against its politics.[20]

The Omani monarchy has a similarly troubled relationship with the Ibadi political movement. Prior to the 1950s, Inner Oman was organized into an Imamate that was separate from the Sultanate. In the 1950s, during the Jabal Akhdar War, the Sultan unified his territories (i.e., the Sultanate of Muscat) with the Imamate's territories (I.e., Inner Oman), thus containing the Ibadi threat by taking over the Imamate's regions (Valeri 2007). In 2004-5, the regime feared that Ibadism would rise as a rallying opposition force when it intercepted a secret movement that had been planning explosions in the name of strengthening the Ibadi system in Oman (Valeri 2007). This represented a threat to the regime because the movement could have developed to a force supporting an Islamic regime that would threaten Qaboos' nation-state (Peterson 2005).

1.5.1.1.2.2 SIGNIFICANT DIFFERENCES

The disparity between Morocco and Oman's wealth is significant to my research on successful survival-seeking behavior; while both countries have problems in their economy, Oman has more funds to address economic hardship and the opposition which it triggers (see Figures 10 and 11 below). Without fruitful natural resource reserves of its own, Morocco cannot meet the high popular demand for subsidies without taking out loans or asking for aid. Morocco's economy is tied to exogenous factors because of its overdependence on

[20] Author's personal interview (Z) with an Amazigh activist and scholar, October 2016.

agricultural production[21] and on its relationship with Europe for tourism and foreign investment (Zartman 1987; Sater 2016). More recently, the Kingdom has turned towards Africa (Abouzzohour and Tomé-Alonso 2018; Lamlili 2017), but this recent development has not yet affected the country's economic standing. While Morocco does export a natural resource- phosphates- the resulting rents are minor compared to those accrued by the GCC states and contributes far less to its economy than tourism, fisheries, and agriculture.

Oman's economy is aided by its petroleum and natural gas reserves whose revenues fueled the country's important development during the last three decades.[22] Although its economy is tied to the rise and fall of oil prices, oil exportation has been the leading currency earner in Oman since 1967.[23] When Qaboos took over in 1970, oil accounted for 95% of gross national product.[24] Development also benefited by rents generated through the sale of copper which, along with oil, was discovered through a mineral exploration consortium in Muscat in 1973 (Halliday 2013: 5563). While, at present, Oman does not have the tremendous oil wealth of other GCC states, it has important gas reserves.

[21] 40–45% of the Moroccan population is employed within the agriculture sector which accounts for only around 14% of GDP (Moroccan Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries 2012).

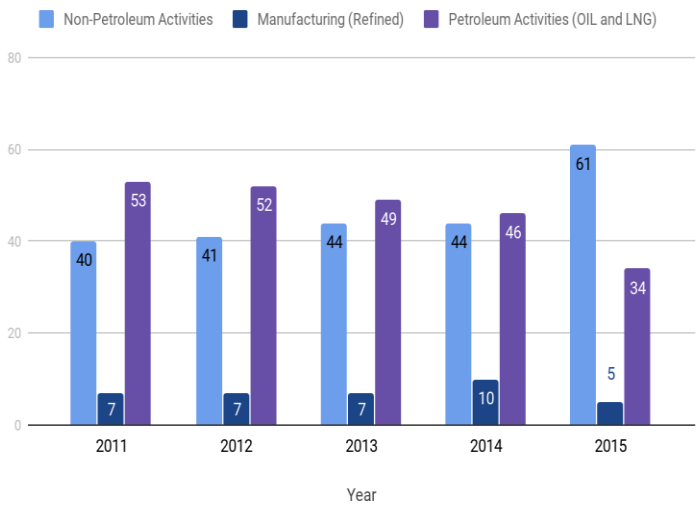
[22] However, perhaps due to British influence or pressure, in the years following 1967, Said and Qaboos made some economically harmful decisions like allowing over-production of Omani oil and building a two- million-dollar luxury palace.

[23] On average, Oman exported an average of 738,000 barrels of crude oil per day and produced 1 million barrels per day in 2006 (Oman Tribune, 10/2016; Al-Badl, Malik, and Gastli 2009).

[24] See Halliday (2013: 5560).

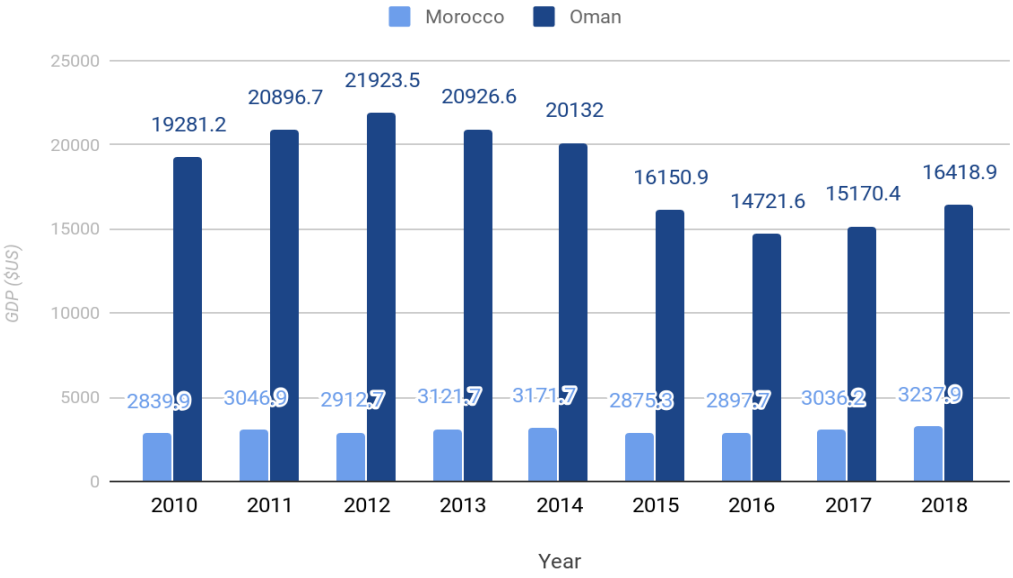
Furthermore, the regime has used oil-rents wisely in its significant modernization efforts. It developed and improved the tourism, agriculture, and fisheries sectors, the standard of living of nationals, and infrastructure; it decreased the nation's dependence on oil through income diversification, industrialization, and privatization; it launched its project to "Omanize" the public and private labor force; and, it spent massive amounts of revenues on social services and welfare, notably education and health services (Wasty and Martin 2014; Al-Lamki 2000**;** Das and Gokhale 2010; Peterson 2004). Finally, Oman has important reserves of natural gas; as of 2016, it held 23 trillion cubic feet (Tcf) of proven natural gas reserves (Oil and Gas Journal 2016), and the Oman Petroleum Development Company (PDO) announced the discovery of a gas reservoir with more than 4 Tcf and 112 million barrels of condensate in March 2018 (Middle East Monitor 2018).

Figure 10: OMAN'S GDP ACCORDING TO TYPE OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY (%).



Source: Author's graph using data from the World Bank.

Figure 11: GDP PER CAPITA IN OMAN COMPARED TO MOROCCO (2010-2016).



Source: Author's graph using data from the World Bank.

Currently, there is no organized opposition in Oman as there is in Morocco, which impacts how the Omani regime perceives threat compared to the Moroccan regime (which faced and contained more opposition events over the past 60 years). This is significant to my research on how regimes react to threat, because higher organization leads to higher threat and more frequent opposition (Davenport 1995). While several authoritarian resilience theories hold that dictators are likely to offer some concession if the opposition is organized and powerful enough to threaten their rule (O'Donnel, Schmitter, and Whitehead 1986; Barany 2012), during the Arab uprisings, *both* Qaboos and Mohammed VI offered political concessions. In the absence of an organized opposition, why was Qaboos inclined to do so? I discuss this further in Chapter 4. Furthermore, these differences plant Oman more firmly in the Gulf

category of monarchies and offer a good opportunity to examine differences and similarities in regime survival tactics across my two categories of monarchies.

The opposition in Morocco is divided along several axes, including goals and background. There are those who belong to a specific ethno-religious community (e.g. Amazigh activists who often oppose Islamism); those who want gradual change (e.g. the Islamist Justice and Development Party currently in power, and most leftist parties); and those who want radical change (e.g. the Islamist and far left movements outside of the political scene); those who campaign specifically for human rights (e.g. feminist groups and human rights councils); those more interested in socio- economic reforms (like labor unions, certain branches of the mass mobilization groups); and those who ask for a combination of socioeconomic and political reform (e.g. 20 February and Rif *Hirak* movements, various socialist parties etc.).

On the other hand, in Oman (like in Qatar, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia), organized political organization is scarce (Barany 2012). Importantly, political parties are not allowed. In the past, the most influential opposition movement was the Dhofar Liberation Movement which organized in the Dhofar Rebellion (Allen 2016). It merged with another front and expanded to later form armed cells in the UAE. The organization was first weakened when it split after some of its members accepted Qaboos' amnesty offer towards the end of the Dhofar Rebellion. While it is still active and maintains some underground activity- especially its youth wing- it is largely unthreatening to the regime and is removed from the political scene.

The same applies to civil society, which is far more organized and independent (from the government) in Morocco than it is in Oman. Significantly, many Moroccan civil society groups were established specifically to oppose the regime's political activities and goals.

While some of them were co-opted or became satisfied by minor concessions, many remain steadfast in their opposition (including Islamist organizations, many Amazigh groups, far left pseudo-parties, and so on). Omani civil society, on the other hand, mainly consists of groups launched by or under the purview of the government. They cannot openly oppose the government and thus cannot achieve significant change in the public sphere.

1.5.1.1.2.3 TIME FRAME

I limit the scope of my research to Morocco's modern history (i.e., starting with the end of the French protectorate in the country and after it gained its independence and became a modern state). What Takriti (2013) explains about the Omani case applies to other MENA monarchies including Morocco, especially enduring ones: current monarchical institutions are often erroneously portrayed as ancient structures with a continuous history. Takriti attributes this to the "confusing concepts of state and dynasty" (2013: 395). In short, dynastic structures (or classical *dawla*) in the MENA region have existed long before the colonial era. What is a modern and postcolonial concept is the modern monarchical state (in the Tillian and Weberian sense, as I explain in detail in section 1.3.1) where the monarchical institution has monopoly over coercive violence and resources. This places the timeframe for my analysis between the late 1950s 2018, which allows me to investigate the survival patterns of two kings: Mohammed VI and Hassan II, as well as the end of the (independent) rule of Mohamed V.

While Oman was never formally a British protectorate, the British exercised control over the country until a few years after Qaboos replaced his predecessor. They provided the sultans of Oman (and, previously, of the Sultanate of Muscat) with military aid to counter tribal

insurgencies, sent their oil companies to explore and drill oil in the country, and placed a resident embassy in Muscat.[25] Importantly, Britain had control of Oman's economy, which became apparent after Qaboos took over and oil exportation increased. Britain's international influence had been declining since the 1940s (Archives of Commons and Lords Hansard 1954), and it officially started withdrawing from the Gulf in 1968.

Thus, I start my analysis of Oman in the early 1950s- even though the sultanate was still under *de facto* British sovereignty- for two reasons. First, Britain was less involved in Gulf affairs at that point. Second, two important opposition events took place in the twenty years before the official British withdrawal from Oman. However, these events targeted the Sultan and monarchy specifically, so they were not anti-colonial events. Not only did the sultanic regime react to these events independently from British control (although it did receive military aid from Britain), but both events had a profound impact on Omani state-building and on the regime's future reactions to subsequent opposition (which I discussed in Chapter 4, sections 1-4).

For these reasons, I include these events in my analysis, which therefore starts immediately after the Buraimi crisis and ends in 2018. This timeframe allows me to examine regime reaction to opposition over the rule of two sultans- Said bin Taimur and Qaboos bin Said- as

[25] Not only that, but the traditional colonial hierarchy (which was present in the Moroccan protectorate, for example) was clearly drawn out in Oman. Takriti (2013: 35) recounts a scene, during the celebration of Sultan Said bin Taimur ascension to the throne in which British officials who were present would only stand for the British Political Resident's Speech and not the Sultan's, while the natives were expected to stand when Said started his address.

well as several local and regional rebellions, most notably the secessionist movement in Dhofar during and the Jabal Akhdar wars.

In both Morocco and Oman, by examining survival strategies across several rulers (rather than just one), I determine the survival-seeking behavior of the monarchy rather than of a separate ruler; as such, my argument is not endemic to one ruler but should to apply to many.

1.5.2 DATA SOURCES AND METHODS

To examine the link between regime survival and specific, strategic regime behavior in Morocco and Oman, I use mixed methods and pursue comparative-historical analysis as a central mode of investigation- an ideal approach for analyzing regime behavior as it focuses on big structures and large processes (Mahoney 2003; Tilly 1984). More specifically, I use a causal narrative which allows me to describe the process of survival-seeking regime behavior, explore the causal determinants of this behavior when examining different types of dissent, and highlight the steps involved in the causal chain that leads to regime survival.

1.5.2.1 DATA SOURCES AND METHODS FOR REPRESSION

My main data source for regime repression is the Cingranelli-Richards (CIRI) Human Rights Data Project, which measures the government's respect for a range of 15 human rights and provides two additional indexes which focus on political violence (e.g. disappearances, torture etc.) and political freedom. The dataset's focus on a wide variety of repressive activities allows me to distinguish between civil repression and the more relevant political repression (i.e. of opposition actors during specific periods of time). This dataset is reliable

and valid because the data is gathered systematically across place and time, and at least two trained coders code every country-year independently.[26]

Having already identified the opposition events in my literature survey and historical analysis, I use CIRI to ascertain the level at which states repress their citizens in a given year. Indicators are coded as zero (50+ reported abuses), one (1-50 reported abuses), or two (0 reported abuses). Morocco and Oman almost continuously score in the zero category (50+ reported abuses); however, what matters for my project is the yearly change within and beyond this range. Comparing these yearly findings with a historical analysis of opposition events is a straightforward way of determining the conditions that triggered (changes in) state repression. After examining these conditions over a period of over sixty years in both my cases, I can delineate an initial pattern of conditional repression that leads to survival.

I complement my analysis of repression using the Polity IV data series, which codes states' annual level of electoral democracy and democratic development. Unlike CIRI, which focuses on regime infringement on civil and political rights to measure repression, Polity IV considers the state's elections to determine levels of competitiveness, openness, and participation. Its focus on the conditions for both contestation and participation makes it especially relevant to my research. It is valid and reliable because of its long-time span and concrete coding, and because it compares its coding to other popular measures. Furthermore, Polity IV offers a detailed explanation for each country to justify how it was categorized.

[26] For the most recent coding (2010), the Krippendorf's r-bar measure of interrater reliability for the entire set was 0.944 (Cingranelli and Richard 2010).

States are given a score that ranges from -10 to +10, with -10 being the least "democratic" and +10 being the most "democratic". As such, a score from -10 to -6 corresponds to autocracies (including Arab monarchies), -5 to 5 to hybrids or anocracies, and 6 to 10 to democracies. While Morocco and Oman always score between -10 to -6, what matters for my research is the yearly change within this range which points to the conditions under which these regimes restrict political freedom.

I discuss the limitations of these datasets in greater detail in the Conclusion, but it is important to explain that an important limitation of *Polity IV* is the narrow criteria used to determine democracy and repression (Munck and Verkuilen 2002). However, for this study, electoral competitiveness, openness, and participation are valid criteria to cross check against a state's longitudinal repression of its citizens' civil and political rights. Furthermore, CIRI and Polity IV have a problem of missing data. Importantly, very little has been recorded about Morocco and Oman's (or any of the monarchies') most repressive years. In fact, there are no datasets available to account for acts of repression before the late 1980s, largely because of researchers' limited access and these regimes' denial of their repression through censure. It is therefore necessary to supplement the scarce available quantitative data through qualitative research. To do so, I review the post-colonial history of Morocco and Oman, record the most important events of active opposition and examine the levels of repression, political concession, and monetary used by the regime. I also supplement the datasets through primary and secondary sources as well as in-depth, qualitative interviews with key political actors, opposition members, and activists.

I structure the interview process in an open-ended manner to allow respondents to discuss a wide range of regime repression and to describe interactions with the coercive apparatus not knowable through the aforementioned methods, e.g. how the different repressive (and non-repressive) tactics used by the regime triggered the opposition to react, or what tactics prompted them to surrender or persevere. Since the interviews were carried out after the Arab uprisings (and, of course, long after the earlier opposition events discussed throughout this dissertation took place), respondents were asked to reflect on the experiences and views the developed during the events in question.

After I gather all my data, for the purpose of analysis, I code little repression or no repression as 0; some repression as 5 (i.e. the repression of civil and political liberties, moderate police crackdowns on opposition, 0-100 arrests, rigged elections, dissolution of parliament); and drastic repression as 10 (i.e., military violence, detention camp sentences, 100+ arrests, forced disappearances, forced exile, and public or secret execution of opposition actors). My findings allow for as detailed an analysis of these regimes' repressive reaction to opposition as possible, given currently available data.

1.5.2.2 DATA SOURCES AND METHODS FOR MONETARY CONCESSION

I trace Morocco's subsidy and delayed austerity measures and Oman's regime handouts and pledges using data from the IMF, World Bank, and both countries' ministries of finance and energy. The difference in data across cases is due to Morocco and Oman's different economic structure and policies. As explained earlier, Oman has considerably more resource-wealth, while Morocco relies on agricultural production, tourism, and foreign investment.

Because data from the IMF, Work Bank, and national accounts capture only a subset of budgetary subsidies and do not provide information on cash handouts, I also use secondary accounts of monetary accommodation for each examined opposition event (from media sources and official reports). This method is common in authoritarianism studies because it is difficult to access transparent, primary sources on regime spending in authoritarian systems, where this sort of data is usually only available to the ruler and the informed elite, and where ordinary citizens are often left to update their views on the matter from sources that are made available to them by the regime- like state or independent media (Guriev and Treisman 2015). Secondary accounts are thus significant to my research as they provide information on the amount and type of monetary accommodation used by the regime, and on the way that the regime portrays its use of monetary accommodation to the press and the public.

Once the data is compiled, I code it in preparation for analysis. A score of 0 implies that the regime made little or no effort to make monetary concessions; a score of 5 points to the use of moderate monetary concessions which partly meet the opposition's demands; and a score of 10 points to economic reforms and concession that satisfied the opposition's demands.

1.5.2.3 DATA SOURCES AND METHODS FOR LIBERALIZATION

While tracing the use of monetary accommodation and repression is straightforward, examining liberalization in these monarchies is complicated for two reasons. First, the subtle

distinctions between liberalization and democratization[27] are often not accounted for in datasets, partly because the definition and criteria for democracy in these datasets are too narrow. In some cases, because liberalization does not pass the threshold of democratization, it is not measured adequately and goes unnoticed. In other cases, liberalization is coded but blurred with democratization. Second, it is difficult to code instances when monarchs do not liberalize as they promise, appear, or claim to (i.e. what I refer to in my theory and empirical chapters as *pseudo-liberalization*).

Thus, I differentiate between different levels of liberalization: (1) Genuine liberalization (to which I assign a score of 10) substantially eases restrictions, e.g. reforms that reduce or check the monarchs' powers; free, fair, and competitive elections; independent government; and close to complete civil and political freedom. (2) Moderate liberalization (coded as 5) addresses certain issue areas but does not check the monarch's expansive powers and does not substantially lessen restrictions of civil and/or political freedom. Rulers may promise reform (often to contain opposition immediately, and usually with no intent of following through); or allow some political opening before backsliding into repression; or increase civil liberties but not political ones (thereby maintaining political power while appearing to have liberalized- what I call *illusionary liberalization*). (3) Finally, little or no liberalization is coded as 0 and usually means the ruler did not offer genuine political concession but used another strategy to maintain power.

[27] Democratization implies a transition towards more political participation whereby citizens and opposition groups can freely express themselves and wield influence in political matters (Dahl 1971: 39).

This distinction allows me to determine (1) the conditions under which the regime presumes it can avoid making real concessions, and (2) the decisive conditions that push the monarch to genuinely give up power and truly liberalize.

I analyze two types of data sources to trace liberalization and pseudo-liberalization: (1) monarchs' speeches, and (2) constitutional and legal reforms ratified during or shortly following opposition events.

1.6 CONTRIBUTIONS

There is a huge, highly informed and refined literature dealing with the survival of authoritarian regimes over the last 60 years (Bellin 2004, 2012; Anderson 2011; Crystal 1994; Yom 2016), as well as with monarchical resilience in the MENA region (Fandy 1999; Herb 1999; Kechichian 2001; Kostiner 2000; Yom and Gause 2012; Lucas 2012, 2014; Bank, Richter, and Sunik 2014; Yom 2014). One may ask whether there is a need for another analysis of regime survival in MENA monarchies. If this dissertation were merely investigating monarchical regime survival during the Arab uprisings, or if it were providing only a brief explanation for general monarchical survival in the region, then I might doubt its usefulness and its contribution to existing theory. While the debate disproving the role of legitimacy in monarchical survival is an interesting one (Gause and Yom 2012; Keyman 2012; Kirby 2000), and while the continued insistence of many Arab monarchies on their symbols of legitimacy as exceptional factors fosters a need for ongoing empirical examination, this study looks beyond these matters.

My research deals with the theoretical debate on the determinants of regime reaction to active opposition and sheds light on the interrelationship between opposition actors and past/future opposition events on the one hand, and regime behavior and survival on the other. Importantly, my research demonstrates how past opposition affects regime survival, and how survival-seeking regime behavior- in turn- affects future opposition. I agree with Lynch (2012) that, while the debate on monarchical systems may matter to some extent to the question of resilience, there is more to this question than a so-called monarchy-republic divide. Focusing exclusively on ways to explain monarchical exceptionalism blinds the current literature to the fact that surviving Arab monarchies act similarly to surviving Arab non-monarchies when threatened and to the fact that presidential dictatorships in the MENA region also survived active opposition including the Arab uprisings. It is in this continuity that I wish to move away from the dichotomy of the monarchy- republic divide, and to frame my research as an investigation of regime survival in a specific set of cases.

I see my research as complementary to existing theories that focus on the causal link between regime survival and factors like the coercive apparatus, elite co-optation, and external aid. These factors are tools, and what my dissertation emphasizes is that how some of these tools are used impacts the outcome of regime survival in the cases I examine. Thus, while investigating how Arab monarchs contain active opposition, this dissertation makes several contributions to the fields of Comparative Politics and Middle Eastern Studies, specifically to the themes of exceptionalism, regime behavior, threat perception, regime-opposition interrelationships, and Gulf rentierism. I discuss these contributions in greater detail in this dissertation's conclusion (specifically, in section 7.2) and outline the highlights briefly below.

The first contribution of this study relates to the recent theories of monarchical survival during the Arab Spring. I find that the monarchies I examine survive active opposition by consistently using a toolkit of strategies (that vary according the perceived threat) to contain active opposition and avoid power loss. This toolkit, which is at the center of my theory, brings to light three important themes- the escalation versus containment of threats to the regime, the regime's multi-level threat perception and how it is affected by exogenous factors, and the regime- opposition interrelationship- which I discuss in detail in Chapter 7.

My findings suggest that there is nothing inherent or exceptional about the survival of these Arab monarchies. The regimes I examine do not survive simply because they are monarchies, because they have some variant of legitimacy, or because their inherent stability guarantees external support for their rule. Rather, they survive because of their use of a strategic combination of authoritarian tactics. Asking 'why monarchies survive,' then, is misleading as it essentializes a complex theme and implies that they survive because of their monarchical structure.

However, the less exciting truth is that, although there is an overarching pattern of survival across all Arab monarchies, and certainly strong similarities within the various categories of monarchies themselves, the question of Arab monarchical survival is a complex one that needs more in-depth work. While recent theories seem intent on finding a single rule to apply to all or most monarchies, they would benefit greatly from a more substantive and in-depth analysis of each regime as a separate case. It is necessary to realize that, if Arab monarchies are exceptional, it is not because they are monarchies, but rather because they have mastered the science of survival.

Another contribution of my research is moving beyond the interesting, yet over- studied topic of Gulf rentierism towards a more sophisticated and scarcely- researched theory of *strategic monetary accommodation,* which focuses on the regime's use of the state's resources (including but not limited to rents) to specifically stifle protests, appease protestors, and target the wider population. This is different from rentier-state theory (discussed further in Chapter 2) which holds that the regime in a rentier state uses rents to appease the wider population on a continuous basis. My research challenges rentierism's current domination of the literature on authoritarian robustness by showing that successful monetary accommodation depends on how and when the regime uses its wealth, not just the amount or type of wealth it possesses.

Indeed, my findings from my positive cases show that both resource-wealthy and poor surviving monarchies use resources in the same way to successfully contain active opposition. Specifically, when faced with moderate threat-events triggered in part by economic hardship, these regimes offer the opposition and citizenry monetary concessions; they then use repression to force persisting opposition members to accept the offered concessions and to avoid an escalation of the situation due to continued dissidence. In Chapter 5, my research shows that- predictably- the data from the resource-wealthy monarchies' oil revenues linked to their concessions, as well as the reaction of protestors when offered concessions, point to a causal inference between strategic use of wealth and regime survival.

However, what is striking is not that wealthy regimes survived opposition events such as the Arab uprisings, but that as soon as they perceived threat, they used their resources

specifically to target the wider population and to stifle protests. This happened through pledges of public spending in Saudi Arabia, increased public sector jobs in Oman, free food and cash handouts in Kuwait, and higher salaries and welfare benefits in Bahrain and the UAE. My findings on my negative cases also bolster this contribution. In Chapter 6, I show that the decision of the regime in oil-wealthy Pahlavi Iran not to offer protestors monetary concessions during the Iranian revolution exacerbated the protests. Combined with the Shah's indecisive strategy towards protestors, this contributed to the regimes' eventual overthrow.

Empirically, little data exist on regime reaction to active opposition in monarchies; none exist, in fact, which span before the late 1980s. One of the contributions of my research is that I have collected and will make publicly available data on the regimes' use of political violence, pledges, subsidies, and cash-handouts to contain active opposition.

Another contribution is my adoption of scarcely studied sources- such as royal speeches, and constitutional and legal reforms- to elucidate a helpful typology of genuine, promised, and illusionary political liberalization.

My last contribution is to the classification of authoritarian regimes. Scholars like Hadenius and Teorell (2007: 5) consider monarchy part of the greater authoritarian regime umbrella. They use Freedom House and Polity scales as well as the democracy cutoff values of Przeworski et al. (2000), Mainwaring, Brinks, and Pérez-Liñán (2001), and Reich (2002) to establish what they call the "broad authoritarian family". Tetrault (2000) demonstrates this view through an in-depth analysis of 20th century Kuwaiti politics which shows that the regime uses traditional authoritarian tactics when dealing with political mobilization. Lucas

(2014) examines how Gulf monarchies act as traditional authoritarian regimes, emphasizing the ruling bargain in these regimes. My research contributes to these works by reframing the debate on Arab monarchical survival away from arguments about exceptionalism and by highlighting Arab monarchs' rational, authoritarian behavior. My analysis in my empirical and theory chapters challenges exceptionalism-based arguments, and my dissertation classifies Arab monarchies as part of the greater authoritarian regime umbrella.

1.7 ORGANIZATION OF MANUSCRIPT

My dissertation investigates the causal mechanism behind regime survival in Arab monarchies in the face of active opposition, and links regime survival to a varying combination of authoritarian strategies that depends on the multidimensional perceived threat of the opposition. It proceeds as follows:

I construct my theoretical framework in **Chapter 2**, by first situating my research in relation to the current scholarly literature on Arab monarchical survival, and by overviewing the contributions and shortcomings of theories that attempt to justify monarchical endurance through cultural, structural, and foreign alliance-based approaches. By distinguishing between strategic and innate reasons for survival, my research implicitly questions the validity of concepts such as monarchical peace and monarchical exceptionalism. I then show how the broader theories on authoritarian persistence and regime behavior provide a better foundation to build my argument.

In **Chapters 3** and **4**, I build my theory through in-depth analysis of my main positive cases, Morocco and Oman. First, I determine each countries' major opposition events using

historical analysis and categorize these events according to their level of threat to the regime. I then trace and analyze the Moroccan and Omani regimes' successful reaction towards active opposition over time by using several methods, including: comparative analysis of subsidies and cash-handouts, linear analysis of long-term regime repression (based on various datasets), in-depth interviews, archival research, and a study of legal reforms ratified in reaction to opposition events. This allows me to determine whether these regimes use a toolkit of authoritarian tools in a consistent manner for different events.

Chapter 5 investigates the implications of the theory developed (through my analysis of Morocco and Oman) on other Arab monarchies which I categorize according to regime wealth and type. For practical reasons, I focus on a single opposition event- the Arab Spring- because it is the most recent and relevant one (as its outcomes inspired my research), and I determine whether the strategies used by the other surviving monarchies to contain the threat of the Arab Spring fit the Moroccan and Omani patterns. While there are stronger similarities within the categories of monarchies, I find an overarching pattern across all monarchies.

Serving an explanatory purpose, **Chapter 6** further develops the theory I built based on previous chapters by examining negative cases (i.e. regimes that collapsed). It adopts an events-based approach (i.e., comparing cases in which the regime collapsed during a similar event to one when the regime in my positive cases survived) to examine the causal pathway of regime overthrow in a non-monarchy and a monarchy- Pahlavi Iran and Gaddafi's Libya. This chapter thus investigates how regime behavior in these cases is linked to the outcome of regime collapse. It compares regime reaction to opposition in cases where the regime

collapsed to regime reaction in the surviving monarchies (where the regime did not collapse).

Chapter 7 concludes this project by recapitulating my findings and discussing their significance for studies on authoritarian resilience and democratization within and beyond the Arab world. Finally, it addresses my dissertation's limitations and lays out the ways that it opens the door for future study on transitional democracy in the MENA region, and specifically in Arab monarchies, by generating new insights into the micro- foundations of potential democratic transitions from soft authoritarian regimes, competitive authoritarian systems, and absolute monarchies.

1.8 SUMMARY

This chapter frames the outcome of the Arab uprisings as a puzzle that has inspired a debate regarding monarchical survival in the MENA region, and establishes my topic's significance for several fields of study. In the next chapter, I situate my argument in relation to the current literature on Arab monarchical survival, overviewing its contributions and shortcomings. I then show how the theoretical framework of authoritarian persistence allows me to build my argument (that, when facing active opposition, Arab monarchies survive because of their strategic use of a varying combination of authoritarian tools- repression, monetary accommodation, and liberalization- depending on the level of threat of the opposition).

CHAPTER 2: THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

This chapter consists of two parts. The first situates my topic in relation to the to the current and mostly post-Arab Spring literature on MENA monarchical endurance. This literature adopts three dominant approaches to show that Arab monarchies survive because they are exceptional in some way: cultural, structural, or foreign alliance-based. I overview the contributions of these approaches and show how they fail to adequately explain regime survival in Arab monarchies.

The chapter's second part focuses on the broader literature on authoritarian persistence and shows how authoritarian persistence theories that focus on the behavior of dictators are more helpful in examining regime survival in Arab monarchies. Unlike the post-Arab Spring literature, these theories focus on strategic rather than innate reasons for authoritarian endurance. They are thus more useful as a foundation to support my findings and my argument that: when facing active opposition, Arab monarchies survive because of their strategic use of a varying combination of authoritarian tools- repression, monetary accommodation, and liberalization- depending on the level of threat of the opposition.

2.1 THE SHORTCOMINGS OF CONVENTIONAL WISDOM

The current and mostly post-Arab Spring literature which examines the endurance of monarchical systems in the Middle East does not offer a conclusive explanation for the continued post-independence survival of Arab monarchies. The **cultural approach** attributes the role of monarchs' historical, religious or tribal legitimacy to explain their

endurance- i.e. because monarchs are inherently legitimate, people do not rise against them or are more easily persuaded to stop opposing them. I find that this approaches' greatest flaws are its focus on the role of factors that are intrinsic to the monarchical structure of these regimes on their survival, and its neglect of the interactions between opposition actors and the regime.

The **structural approach** emphasizes the importance of structural factors (like regime type and wealth) as indicators of how monarchies act to survive- i.e., the Gulf monarchies have oil wealth so their authoritarian bargaining structure[1] ensures survival and resilience, non-dynastic monarchies liberalize because of their structure which leads to an open political system and ensures survival. While this approach does not take for granted the necessary actions that monarchs take to survive, it ignores the changing and contextual relationship between the regime and opposition actors and neglects the implication of continued opposition - i.e., Why do Saudi opposition actors keep rising against the regime despite the well-established, Saudi rentier model?[2] Why do opposition actors in Morocco and Jordan continue to protest a supposedly open and liberalizing system, leading the regime to repress them? Perhaps the greatest flaw of this approach is that it attributes a single strategy to monarchs depending on their regime type and wealth. Why, then, did oil-wealthy monarchs move towards liberalization during the Arab Spring, while Morocco and Jordan used repression?

[1] i.e., the arrangement between the regime and the citizens whereby the regime increases public spending in exchange for the citizens relinquishing political influence.

[2] The Saudi regime's access to oil revenues means it receives most of its income from oil and it does not need citizens to contribute (i.e., through taxation). In return, the regime can deny them certain rights such as representation and political participation.

The **foreign alliance-based approach** attributes regime survival in Arab monarchies to the financial, military, and diplomatic support given by their Western and regional allies. While I acknowledge that foreign aid exists and is important to Arab monarchies, the foreign alliance-based approach overemphasizes the consistency of foreign aid and the extent to which these monarchies receive it. In so doing, it overlooks the considerable number of times when foreign patrons did not come through for Arab monarchs.

Overall, the overarching flaws of these approaches lie in their focus on singular events and the ensuing fragmentation of their framework, their neglect of the role of opposition actors in influencing regime behavior, and their failure to systematically broach the tactical nature of the monarchies' reaction to protests.

2.1.1 CULTURAL APPROACHES

Monarchical exceptionalism holds that monarchs survive because of historical, religious or tribal legitimacy (Gause and Yom 2012), and presupposes that Arab monarchs have more legitimacy than non-monarchs (Spinks et al. 2008). Monarchical exceptionalism places emphasis on the ruler by arguing that monarchs actively draw on historical, tribal, or religious legitimacy to maintain their rule, and that presidential dictators lack this sort of legitimacy (Kirby 2012). Thus, monarchs instrumentalize history, religion, and tribalism to create an illusion of their own legitimacy in the eyes of their citizens, which Keyman (2012) terms "perceived legitimacy". Distinguishing between legitimacy and perceived legitimacy is important because there is great difficulty in ascertaining whether a ruler's claims to legitimacy are based in reality.

Regardless, for monarchical exceptionalism, the veracity of a monarch's claims to legitimacy is of little consequence; what matters is that people believe these claims-perceived legitimacy. For instance, the ties to the prophet Muhammed that Abdullah of Jordan claims might be tenuous at best. However, he bolsters his legitimacy if he convinces people of their veracity. To take it a step further, if many Jordanians do not believe that he is related to the prophet but are intimidated by the fact that a significant portion of the population might believe he possesses religious legitimacy, overthrow is unlikely. Accordingly, whereas Arab Spring protests were triggered by a combination of economic, social, and political factors in most of the MENA region, perceived legitimacy (or lack thereof) determined whether a ruler was overthrown.

Monarchical exceptionalism seems to have substantial factual support. For instance, historical exceptionalism emphasizes the role that monarchs play in forging national identity, and points to the lack of historical ties between authoritarian presidents and their states. Kaplan (2013) argues that Ben Ali is "superfluous to Tunisia's identity"; Tunisians do not link him to their country's rich civilization and history. By contrast, Anderson (1991) explains that the regime in most Arab monarchies predates and has founded the modern state (except for the Hashemite monarchy in Jordan which the British colonial forces put in power in 1921). Monarchs built the state around their regime and entangled themselves with the newly independent nation. As such, these nations' identities would not be complete without a monarchy in power. Valeri (2006) corroborates this view through his work on Oman; he argues that the legitimacy of Oman's Sultan Qaboos is tied to creation of Omani national identity since 1970 and that his person embodies the state. Ridout and Jones (2015: 252) take this further by arguing that Qaboos is less likely to be threatened not only because he is

a monarch but also because he is the only ruler that many Omanis have known, having ruled since 1970.[3]

Monarchical exceptionalism moves on to argue that, because of their legitimacy, monarchs do not face serious threats to their rule (Kaplan 2013). Conversely, due to a lack of legitimacy, tyranny is a necessary rite of passage for authoritarian presidents. In turn, this lack of moderation leads people to perceive authoritarian presidents as power-grubbing, whereas monarchs' moderation bolsters their perceived legitimacy (*Idem*). For instance, Ridout and Jones (2015: 252) posit that Egypt's Hosni Mubarak was overthrown because Egyptians found out he had been planning to pass on the rule to his son; this was supposedly viewed by Egyptians as too tyrannical which prompted them to protest. Thus, the theory of monarchical exceptionalism emphasizes: (1) the nature of monarchy and republic, and (2) what citizens expect of them, to explain why monarchies endure and republics collapse.

2.1.1.1 DIFFERENT TYPES OF LEGITIMACY IN ARAB MONARCHY

Some monarchs politicize Islam and emphasize their religious titles to bolster their legitimacy; they maintain their rule by either using ties to the prophet Muhammad or by fostering relationships with Muslim clerics. Both the Jordanian and the Moroccan kings fall under the first category; and the Saudi king, in addition to emphasizing his self-proclaimed role as protector of Mecca and, financially accommodates and protects clerics in return for their public support.

[3] However, the same can be said of Libya's Gaddafi, Egypt's Mubarak, Tunisia's Ben Ali, and other long-ruling authoritarian presidents.

The example of the Moroccan king is striking because, not only does the Alaoui dynasty claim direct descent from the prophet Muhammed, but the king is "Commander of the Faithful" by law in Morocco (Moroccan Constitution 2011. Art. 41. Sec. 3). This claim is strengthened by the fact that the monarchy traces its origins to Ali, the fourth caliph in Islamic tradition. The king thus positions himself as the legitimate successor to the Prophet's authority in the country (Joffe 1988). Accordingly, his rule is justified by religion. Up until 2011, the king's person, by law, was not only "inviolable," it was "sacred". To bolster his religious legitimacy, Mohammed VI maintains several rituals to remind people of these ties: He leads televised prayers during religious celebrations, effectively associating himself with the most important figure in Islam. He holds central roles in all religious celebrations, notably Aid al Adha, when he sacrifices sheep as Abraham did to save his son Ismail. In doing so, the king not only entangles himself with Islam's history, he also emphasizes his country's patriarchal society- he represents Abraham and his people represent Ismail, he is the father and they are his children, and they are all connected since many Moroccans also sacrifice sheep during that day. In Oman, Qaboos has so entangled himself with the country's religious tradition that he only missed one Aid celebration in Rustaq since 1970 (Valeri 2007).

Tribal-based exceptionalism assumes that royal families seek legitimacy through their ties to their countries' powerful tribes- regional organizations comprised of families, extended families, or groups of families (Salzman 2008; Lapidus 1990)- and their alliances with tribal chiefs. Tribalism is relevant to the survival of Arab monarchies as tribes have an important presence in these regimes' political systems. In Morocco, the Alaoui monarchy uses Amazigh tribes to promote social order; in return, the chiefs of these tribes are part of a

national consultative assembly where they suggest policies and make recommendations to the king (Lust- Okar 2005).

Furthermore, the late Hassan II married the daughter of a powerful Amazigh tribal chief, thereby ensuring regional and tribal loyalty. Other monarchies, especially those in the Gulf, guarantee their legitimacy through marital ties between royal family members and members of powerful tribes. The Al-Saud family is so intermarried with tribal elites that it is a "cluster of tribal segments" (Khoury and Kostiner 1990). These elites are vested in the monarchy's control over the country and are tasked with helping the regime maintain peace and security. In Saudi Arabia, tribal chiefs are given local government positions and represent their own tribes in dialogues with the regime. This theory takes us back to Linz's (1975) typology of authoritarian rule because it emphasizes the clientelist nature of the relationship between Arab monarchies and these tribes.

2.1.1.2 MY CRITIQUE OF THE CULTURAL APPROACH

I do not argue that Arab monarchs do not have legitimacy, but I take issue with the claim that monarchs survive because of their legitimacy. While Arab monarchs have often used Islam, tribal loyalties, and history to legitimate themselves, legitimacy does not, on its own, account for their endurance during opposition events.

First, scholars promoting monarchical exceptionalism show the correlation between legitimacy and survival but do not prove a causal link; Menaldo (2012: 711) posits that Arab monarchs rely on Islamic principles to gain citizens' trust and appease opposition actors. However, the process of how monarchs use Islamic principles to gain citizens' trust is not

clarified; nor is it clear how monarchs use this process with different categories of opposition, for instance to pacify secular opposition.

Second, measuring legitimacy (and lack thereof) is problematic, especially in these types of regimes (Schwedler 2011; Gause 2013). One cannot assess legitimacy through behavior where behavior is tightly controlled; without free and fair elections, transparent polling, and free speech, it is impossible to ascertain that citizens consider their ruler legitimate. Some theorists use the presence or absence of upheaval to measure legitimacy; however, the argument that upheaval points to a regime's loss in legitimacy, and that it leads to the overthrow of the monarch is a weak one. In 1960s and 70s Morocco, Hassan II experienced unprecedented upheavals. First, political parties widely opposed the 1962 constitution which gave the king monopoly over power. Then, riots broke out that culminated in the king declaring a state of emergency in 1965. In the early 1970s, Hassan II faced at least two military coups in which he was nearly assassinated. By the king's own account, upon his escape, he was deeply shocked by how unaffected the Moroccan people were by his near-death and the abolition of his line (Ziraoui et al. 2009). Despite such upheavals and close to a dozen more opposition events, Hassan II ruled for thirty-eight years until his death. The fact that there were uprisings in Morocco and that Hassan II went on to reign without being deposed shows that potential loss of legitimacy does not necessarily lead to overthrow. Monarchical exceptionalism is thus undermined by its scholars' difficulty in measuring legitimacy and by the weak link they draw between a monarch's legitimacy to whether citizens rebel.

Furthermore, monarchical exceptionalism does not address monarchies that were overthrown. Iran's Pahlavi monarchy was unseated by the revolution of 1971. Egypt's

kingdom was overthrown by a military coup. Following religious and tribal unrest, as well as five attempted putsches, the Iraqi monarchy fell to a coup in 1958 which saw members of the royal family executed. Libya's king, too, was overthrown by a military coup in 1969 after he banned political parties and could not contain clashes between the provincial and federal governments. Tunisia's Bey was removed by President Bourguiba in 1958 after a constitutional process was established.

Libya and Iraq present a double conundrum since the monarchs had strong tribal ties, and thus undermine tribal-based exceptionalism. This theory depicts tribalism in an optimistic light and ignores the problematic nature of tribal-monarchical relations. Although several Arab monarchies depend on tribal alliances and support to ensure loyalty, tribes have historically threatened the rule of monarchs, either by growing too powerful or by pressuring the regime.

In Morocco, from 1957 to 1959, the Rif tribes rose against the king's politics of marginalization of the region; military intervention was necessary to quash the rebellion. In Jordan, where the regime relies on tribes for security services, armed forces, and political stability more on than any other Arab monarchy, tribes in the East Bank rose against the king in 2011. Forming an opposition movement, *Hirak,* they staged regular protests and demanded political and economic reforms until the king conceded (Tell 2015: 9-10).

2.1.2 STRUCTURAL APPROACH

The structural approach emphasizes the importance of structural factors (like regime type and wealth) as indicators of how monarchies act to survive. Oil-wealthy regimes use authoritarian bargaining to ensure survival and resilience, for example. This is the basis of

the rentier-state theory. A rentier-state is one in which one area of the economy (e.g. oil production) is responsible for the largest part of the country's GDP. This trivializes other forms of domestic investment because most of the population can live off oil rents without actively participating in the economy. A state's access to oil revenues means it receives most of its income from oil and that it does not need citizens to contribute (i.e., through taxation). In return, the state can deny them certain rights such as representation or political participation. Accordingly, abundance of rents leads to an unbalanced relationship between the state and its citizens because the state becomes the dominant economic and political actor (Luciani 1987).

My critique of structural arguments that attribute regime survival in monarchies to oil wealth revolves around their failure to address discrepancies between theory and history. First, rentier-state theory fails to explain why the oil-rich Iranian monarchy overthrown in 1979. Furthermore, it does not address the continued survival of monarchies with little or no oil wealth. Jordan and Morocco do not have enough oil to generate rents. While Luciani (1987; 2009) tries to address this flaw through a sort of extended rentierism by which oil-poor monarchies survive because of the oil- rent-generated aid given to them by oil-wealthy monarchies, his argument is also flawed. The aid given to oil-poor monarchies by oil-rich ones is neither systematic nor sufficient to cover the countries' economic needs. Jordan, for example, cannot hold its end of a rentier social contract without a steady source of income.

Some structural arguments focus on type of rule to explain regime survival; absolute regimes survive because they repress the population, while non-absolute regimes survive because they open the political system. Herb (1999) explains this trend through the involvement or lack thereof of the royal family in political matters. In dynastic monarchies where

inheritance is horizontal and royal family members pick the successor and hold important political positions, the ruler answers to his family which probably prefers to avoid political opening that would lead to its power loss. Were King Salman to promise constitutional reforms, he would probably face backlash from his family. Abdullah II and Mohammed VI, on the other hand, do not have the same fears. They are personalist rulers and their family members are not involved in the political sphere, nor do they hold positions of power. Hence, both monarchs can (and do) grant political reforms at will, without familial restraints; i.e., non-dynastic monarchies liberalize because of their structure which leads to an open political system and ensures survival.

My critique of structural arguments that attribute regime survival in monarchies to type of rule revolves around their oversimplified reasoning. These arguments attribute regime survival in absolute monarchies to a closed political system, and in non-absolute monarchies to an open political system; yet, they do not clarify why the different monarchies require different strategies of survival. They also do not address factual inaccuracies; non-absolute monarchies depend (sometimes heavily) on repression to contain opposition. Hassan II's unbridled brutality during the Years of Lead[4] (see section 3.2.1) is a good example. On the other hand, absolute regimes use tools other than repression to contain opposition. Qaboos, for example, reshuffled his entire cabinet in 2011.

[4] The Years of Lead marked the peak of Hassan II's repressive years. This period is known for the king's violent backlash against the leftist opposition starting in 1963, two failed military coups in 1971, and assassination attempts on the king's life.

Other structural arguments attribute regime survival in monarchies to the fact that monarchs are more successful in carrying out political liberalization than non- monarchs (Herb 2004). Thus, non-absolute kings' legitimacy hinges on the likelihood of future reform (Köprülü 2012: 72); however, these reforms can only be symbolic for the monarch to maintain power. Symbolic reforms including political parties in the political sphere; and monarchs are less threatened than non-monarchs by these types of reforms. If a monarch grants opposition parties more participation, these groups will not directly compete with him. In terms of political hierarchy, political parties are on a lower level than the monarch. When they run for elections, they are not competing for his position. They are "reconciled, resigned, or even moderately opposed, to the presence of the monarch" (Herb 1999), but they do not restrain him. When Mohammed VI accepted a constitution that gave the prime minister more powers in 2011, he knew that the prime minister would not threaten his own position as king. This structural argument holds that, conversely, authoritarian presidents are challenged by liberalization in a way that monarchs are not, because they are not protected by a rank that raises them beyond the fray of other political actors. The decision of Algeria's President Benjeddid to transition from a single-party to a multipartite system, for example, was swiftly repressed by the military regime when it saw that the Islamic Salvation Front (FIS) was about to win the election (which would have decreased the military's powers, or at least complicated the political system)- see section 2.2.2 for a more in-depth analysis.

My critique of this theory is similar to my previous critiques. First, the argument that monarchs survive because they liberalize more than non-monarchs assumes that opposition actors are satisfied with the monarchs' policies, but it is not clear whether this is the case. Since monarchs also use repression, then we cannot determine how opposition actors feel

about the policies. Furthermore, the first assumption of Herb's argument is that monarchs liberalize, which is not always the case. There are examples like Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Qatar, where there is no political opening, let alone liberalization. But even in non-absolute monarchies, the regime rarely genuinely liberalizes. Instead, monarchs often promise to liberalize gradually but do not come through, or they move towards liberalization then reverse the reforms. After the implementation of the 2011 constitution, Mohammed VI, for example, retains the right to dissolve parliament and suspend elections; he continues to control the political sphere and can undermine the prime minister at will.

2.1.3 FOREIGN ALLIANCE-BASED APPROACHES

Foreign alliance-based approaches emphasize the importance of international and regional actors to regime survival in Arab monarchies. Gause and Yom (2012) argue that Arab monarchies have the unwavering support of their foreign patrons, and that, if worse comes to worst, the monarchies can call on them for help. This claim is rooted in geostrategic perspectives and based on the aid that the United States and former colonial powers have given these monarchies in the past. Indeed, the Arab Cold War (1952-1970) played an important part in forging the alliance between the West and MENA monarchies. Following the 1952 Egyptian Revolution and Gamal Abdel Nasser's rise to power, a series of conflicts rose between the newer republics which espoused Arab nationalism and the traditionalist kingdoms. Arab nationalism, an overwhelmingly republican phenomenon, was ideologically threatening to both the West and the Arab monarchs (which feared Arab nationalist-led overthrow). These dynamics resulted in the West and the Arab monarchies becoming natural allies. Furthermore, Western powers currently have resource and security interests in the

MENA region because of its oil production, its importance for transportation, and its geography.

Foreign alliance-based argument holds that the existence of Arab monarchies makes the region more stable and secures Western interests; as a result, Western powers support Arab monarchies diplomatically, financially, and militarily. For instance, Great Britain helped Sultan Said contain the Dhofar uprising in Oman by using military force against the insurgents in 1970. Whenever the Moroccan monarchy faced uprisings in Western Sahara because of ongoing territorial disputes, France and (to a lesser extent) the United States helped the regime by shielding it from international and UN backlash and vetoing any relevant Security Council resolutions.

My critique of this argument revolves around the lack of plausibility of a Western country militarily supporting authoritarian regimes and quashing democracy-seeking protestors in the globalized 21st century (due to domestic public opinion). Indeed, Western support rarely translates into military aid- only in the aforementioned case of Oman did the West ever get militarily involved. Thus, short of France advising Mohammed VI on diplomatic measures or of the US praising the reforms of the Jordanian regime or the moderation of the Al-Saud monarchs, Western powers did not and cannot forcibly keep these kings in power by sending in their armies to disperse protestors. This is illustrated by the fall of the Shah of Iran. Regardless of the Carter administration's support for the Westernized and pro-US Shah, once the Iranian Revolution took place, the United States did not intervene.

Foreign alliance-based arguments also focus on the role of Arab monarchies themselves in their overall survival- *monarchical solidarity,* i.e., the solidarity these monarchies extend to one another. Saudi Arabia's readiness to deploy troops in the case of Bahrain (Ehteshami

and Wright 2011), as well as the Gulf monarchies' willingness to help oil-poor Jordan and Morocco through development funds, loans, and unexpected membership offers to join the GCC (Luciani 2009) show that Arab monarchies are prepared to help one another for two reasons: (1) the fear of the rise of political Islam (especially in the case of Saudi Arabia helping the Bahraini monarchy to avoid Shia rule in a neighboring country), and (2) the fear that the collapse of one monarchy would trigger a domino effect- in other words, that if one falls, they might all follow.

Yet, I argue that monarchical solidarity is limited and complicated by time and resources. First, financial or military aid only provides temporary solutions and merely postpones upheaval. The GCC's financial help only gave the Hashemite monarchy two years of austerity-free economic policies after which protests were renewed. Furthermore, realistically, the GCC cannot pay off the poorer monarchies' protestors forever, nor can it deploy to quash all future uprisings. These monarchies have their own interests to consider and prioritize. Would Saudi Arabia have deployed troops to Bahrain if it faced a violent uprising? Would the UAE have sent Morocco funds if there had been a drop in oil prices?

2.2 THE CONTRIBUTIONS OF THE PERSISTENCE OF AUTHORITARIANISM THEORIES

In light of the flaws I have pointed out in the previous section, I argue that the current post-Arab Spring literature does not adequately explain regime survival in monarchies, especially when they face active opposition. Instead, I turn to the literature on authoritarian persistence, specifically the theories which focus on the actions of rulers and their interactions with opposition actors.

2.2.1 BRIEF SUMMARY: WHAT ARE AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES, AND WHERE DO ARAB MONARCHIES COME IN?

In addition to having limited and controlled participation (Linz 1975, 2000), authoritarian regimes control significant aspects of the political sphere, including the coercive apparatus, policy, and leadership selection (Geddes et al. 2012b: 8). As I discuss in detail in section 1.3.1, Arab monarchies fall under the umbrella of authoritarian regimes because they fit the criteria outlined by Linz (1975, 2000) and Geddes et al. (2012b). To understand regime survival in Arab monarchies, it is therefore necessary to look beyond the contemporary theories that examine just monarchies, and to study theories of authoritarian resilience.

2.2.2 RELEVANT PERSISTENCE OF AUTHORITARIANISM THEORIES

In this section, I examine the persistence of authoritarianism literature and show that some of its insights- namely on the tools used by dictators to remain in power- provide helpful guidelines to explain how Arab monarchies survive active opposition. This body of literature is highly informed and covers a wide range of explanations. Along structural lines, scholars focus on class configurations, elite relations, limited modernization, an unsolved national problem, and resource-wealth to explain why authoritarianism persists in certain states (Hinnebusch 2006). Other scholars look at the institutions constructed by authoritarian regimes to help them bolster their rule.

Bellin (2004) takes these explanations a step further and argues that authoritarianism persists when there are both patrimonial institutions and support of the state's coercive apparatus.[5] This allows the regime to maintain authoritarianism and suppress democratization initiatives. Furthermore, if the regime receives foreign financing from its allies, then it will have neither the motivation nor the need to change (Bellin, 2004, 2012; Brownlee 2002; Snyder 1998). Finally, because these regimes have foreign aid, resources, and institutions that support them (and because there is a lack of effective and impartial state institutions), then the coercive apparatuses will benefit from supporting them.

I do not oppose or challenge these explanations; I acknowledge that structural factors play an important role in ensuring the persistence of authoritarian regimes, and that the support of the coercive apparatus is necessary for these regimes to remain in power. However, my contention is that, in addition to these structural factors, the strategies used by dictators while they are facing active opposition impact regime survival. To explore this contention further, in the following sections, I examine the relevant contributions of theories that explain survival-seeking regime behavior- specifically, the tradeoffs that authoritarian regimes face.

2.2.3 AUTHORITARIAN TRADEOFFS

How do dictators stay in power? The most straightforward answer- repression- is problematic, because it leads to the "dictator's dilemma" (Desai, Olofsgard, and Youssef

[5] By "coercive apparatus," I mean the different institutions (intelligence agencies, as well as military, security, navy, air, and police forces) that authoritarian regimes rely on for their security (Bellin 2012: 130).

2009). If a dictator survives through only repression, then citizens pretend to support him while opposing him in secret; this increases the potential threat to the ruler (Wintrobe 2007; Tullock 1987). To avoid this dilemma, most dictators repress (some) citizens while giving (some of) them something in return. The tradeoff can be financial (i.e., the regime increases redistribution to citizens in exchange for obedience) or it can be political (i.e., the regime grants some civil and/or political concessions but maintains its power monopoly).

Indeed, there is a consensus that the most common tactics dictators use are repression, monetary accommodation, and liberalization.[6] Accordingly, I explore the potential contributions of the theories that explain the impact on regime survival of tradeoffs involving repression, monetary accommodation, and/or liberalization. Importantly, these tradeoff-based theories focus on the actions and considerations of rulers; examining them allows me to shed light on the interrelationship between monarchs and opposition actors, and on how this interrelationship affects regime reaction to active opposition and- eventually- regime survival.

Indeed, while a large part of the literature on the persistence of authoritarianism focuses on the role of rulers and elites (Mainwaring 1992), I argue that the role of opposition actors as well as of the wider population is strikingly important, and that it is the interactions that the regime has with these actors during active opposition that impact (future) survival-seeking regime behavior. While dictators may have the upper hand in terms of resources and coercive power, it is clear from my research that they consider how the opposition will react

[6] Throughout this entire dissertation, I use "liberalization" to refer to "political liberalization".

before acting. To explore this further, I examine the contributions of authoritarian resilience theories that focus on the behavior of dictators so that I may build on them to make my own argument which highlights the impact on regime survival in Arab monarchies of the contextual, strategic interactions between the regime and its opponents.

2.2.4 MONETARY COOPTATION AND CONCESSION

Since the primary goal of rulers is to remain in power (Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2010), they use the tools available to them to contain or prevent opposition. One of these tools is using monetary incentive to control actors. While many scholars who examine the role of resources in regime survival focus on elite co-optation by the rulers (Gerschewski 2013; Josua 2011; Bove and Rivera 2015; Merkel and Gerschewski 2011), I agree with Svolik (2012) that there is a difference between how regimes co-opt their support-base and how they monetarily accommodate the citizenry.[7] I argue that, to understand how monarchies survive, we must study the regime's use of resources to target different audiences: (1) elites, whose loyalty is bought through networks of patronage, i.e., *co-optation*; and (2) members of the wider population, who are appeased through *monetary concession*, like cash handouts and pledges to increase public funding. I argue that monetary concessions are what rulers use in moments of potential power loss (during opposition events) to ensure survival, and

[7] Svolik focuses on the co-optation of party-bases specifically. He examines non-monarchical authoritarian regimes (like Syria and Iraq) which either favor certain parties or establish party structures that maintain a loyal popular base for the regime (Svolik 2012: 10-15). While this tactic is interesting to look at in monarchies with electoral parliaments- like Kuwait, Morocco, and Jordan (all of which have administration-backed parties)- the monarchical structure of these countries means that they have different relationship with parties; indeed, they have placed themselves as referees of the electoral systems rather than mere participants.

co-optation is what they use continuously (outside of opposition events) to avoid the threat of active opposition.

Indeed, co-opting elites (unlike giving monetary concessions to the citizenry) is a constant process by which the regime incorporates individuals into the state organization (Linz 1964: 300; Stacher 2012: 40). Rulers use co-optation as a positive incentive for elites to comply with their rules and support them (Svolik 2012: 10). There are two levels of co-optation rulers must achieve to remain in power. First, rulers must co-opt key groups and actors with patronage and accommodation to ensure their loyalty (Josua 2016). These actors remain outside of the state structure and are co-opted using rent revenues, land, and foreign aid (Hinnebusch 2006). Often, they are targeted because of their connections or their control over a wider network of actors. In Morocco, historical analysis shows that the monarchy has continuously co-opted rural elites who, in return, police and stabilize rural populations and garner support for the monarchy amongst them (Abouzzohour 2017). These elites thus mobilize large-scale support for the regime in political matters. In exchange, they receive resources, political favors, and protection against agrarian reforms proposed by the urban bourgeoisie (Levau 1985).

Second, beyond this larger group of elites, rulers must continuously maintain the support of a narrower group- the winning coalition (i.e., in case of authoritarian regimes, the portion of the population that is involved in selecting the ruler/keeping him in power) - by co-opting it with private goods (Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2010: 936). In Saudi Arabia (where King Salman recently replaced his nephew, Muhammad bin Nayef, with his own son, Muhammad bin Salman as Crown Prince) the Allegiance Council is the winning coalition. It consists of 28 members (the sons and grandsons of the late King Abdulaziz), and it usually selects the

new king or ratifies the current king's choice of successor by secret ballot. In non-dynastic monarchies, where a personalist king rules without the restraint of a family bloc (Herb 1999) the winning coalition consists of elites of the uppermost echelon (generals, security service leaders, tribe chiefs, wealthy businessmen etc.). These are the "'trusted men' put in command of the structural instruments of power" (Volpi and Cavatorta 2007: 20; Hinnebusch 2006).

Importantly, to stay in power, the selectorate theory holds that dictators should not distribute the resources that they could use to buy off the winning coalition as public goods for the wider population (Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2012: 18). Doing this could anger the winning coalition and prompt it to overthrow the ruler. However, in regimes with abundant access to resource rents, there is enough money to satisfy both the winning coalition and the citizenry, which brings us back to the *rentier state theory*. Along comparative historical lines, this theory is not a sufficient explanation for authoritarian resilience for it does not account for the fall of resource-rich regimes. Syria is currently experiencing civil war; in 2011, Libya underwent rebellions and regime change; and the Pahlavi monarchy of Iran was overthrown in 1979. These examples show that resource wealth is not detrimental to the survival of authoritarian regimes. However, resources are not irrelevant to regime survival (Smith 2004). What differentiates these fallen regimes from similarly resource- wealthy ones that survived?

I argue that it is how and when they used their resource rents that matters- what I call *strategic monetary accommodation*. While rentier-state theory holds that the regime in a rentier state uses rents to appease the wider population on a continuous basis, strategic monetary accommodation focuses on the regime's use of the state's resources (including but

not limited to rents) to specifically stifle protests and appease protestors. In the case of the short-lived monarchy of Iran, for instance, despite the regime's oil wealth, the Shah did not offer protestors monetary concessions during the economic crisis that resulted from the decade-long oil boom and bust cycle. He adopted austerity measures in 1978 which led to widespread unrest, oil strikes, and unemployment. Combined with high inflation, high costs of living, and socioeconomic inequality, this contributed to the Shah's overthrow. Iran in 1978 is an example of rentierism resulting in economic mismanagement.

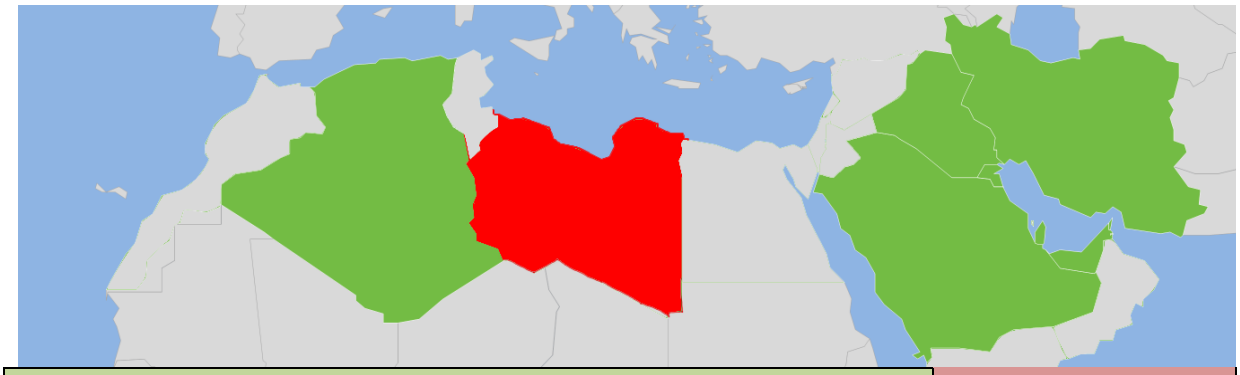
Among the most relevant post-Arab spring literature on this topic, Sika (2018) demonstrates how the regime's cooptation of the leadership of protest movements contains the threat to the regime by dividing the movement. Bellin (2012) briefly discusses how the regime in countries such as Saudi Arabia coopts the citizenry through the distribution of buyouts. My research builds on these two works by focusing on both these strategies of monetary accommodation toward the wider population and the leaders of public movements. Important, I examine buyouts across wealthy and poor cases, thus investigating non-traditional buyout tactics such as subsidies, public sector job provision, etc. (instead of cash handouts, welfare advancements and other traditional tactics offered by oil-wealthy regimes).

My theory of strategic monetary accommodation is strengthened by the strategic use of resources by surviving regimes (including monarchies) to buy off protestors during the Arab uprisings, which seven rentier-state regimes[8] of varying levels of resource wealth survived

[8] These are Algeria, Iraq, Iran, Kuwait, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, and the United Arab Emirates.

(see Figure 12). By comparison, only two resource- rich regimes were overthrown (in Libya and Yemen). Secondly, the data from the oil-rich monarchies' oil revenues linked to their concessions as well as the reaction of protestors point to a causal inference between use of wealth and survival (see Figure 13). For instance, when the revolution started in Tunisia in 2011, the Al-Saud monarchy co-opted the Saudi population with pay raises and promises of employment. More specifically, the Saudi king vowed he would spend $1300 billion on the population (Al-Matter 2016; Barany 2012), while the Emir of Kuwait offered his subjects free food and cash handouts. Other monetary concessions in Kuwait, Bahrain, and the UAE included new government jobs for the unemployed, higher salaries for state employees, and better welfare aid (Ulrichsen 2013: 36-8).

Figure 12: SURVIVAL OUTCOME OF RESOURCE-WEALTHY COUNTRIES DURING THE ARAB SPRING



Survived		Collapsed
Algeria	Saudi Arabia	Libya
Iran	Qatar	
Iraq	UAE	
Kuwait		

Source: Author's graph using qualitative data.

Importantly, since I emphasize the regime's use of wealth rather than the amount and type of wealth, my argument is applicable to both resource-wealthy and resource-poor states. While Morocco and Jordan do not have enough natural resources to generate rents, they have used other types of wealth to accommodate protestors. Unlike resource-rich states, they are unable to offer cash-handouts or pledge massive amounts of money. They do, however, increase subsidies and delay austerity measures when facing protests. This successful use of resources that do not come from rents- what I call *non-rent accommodation*- backs my argument that dictators successfully co-opt protestors and contain threat not because of the amount of wealth they possess, but rather their strategic use of wealth.

Figure 13: NATURAL RESOURCE (%GDP)



Source: Author's graph using data from the World Bank, 2017.

Most of the sparse literature that delves beyond oil rents when studying authoritarian survival in the Middle East focuses on the use of food subsidies to ensure survival (Ciezadlo 2011). In the face of protests spurred (at least in part) by economic hardship, Middle Eastern regimes have traditionally used subsidies to replace larger- scale economic reforms. Ciezadlo (2011) traces this strategic use of subsidies to the Cold War era when the USSR and the United States used grain to win over nations in the region. Later on, in times of political unrest, many economically weakened Arab regimes, notably in Nasser's Egypt, subsidized bread to appease the population and buy loyalty. As Saif[9] puts it, the strategic use of subsidies to placate protestors is "the patronage system that prevailed for some time: I am the state, I take care of you, and you don't question my political behavior" (*Idem*).

Trego (2011) attributes the success of these regimes in using food subsidies to survive to the MENA region's dependency on imported foods. Because most Arab countries import over half of what they consume in terms of food, their governments use subsidies to counter food inflation. Without increased government subsidies on food, a predominant part of the population would not be able to afford food as prices rise. In 2011 Morocco increased its spending on food and fuel to $5 billion, while Kuwait provided free staple foods to its entire population for 14 months. Although, for oil-poor monarchies, this strategy cannot be sustainable in the long-term, the theory holds up historically.

To summarize, dictators use their resources to contain or prevent opposition in two ways: (1) constant co-optation of elites through patronage and networks, and (2) reactionary monetary

[9] Ibrahim Saif is an economist who served as secretary-general of the Economic and Social Council of Jordan, 2015-2017.

concessions to the wider population. By examining how monarchies use cash handouts, pledges, subsidies, and delayed austerity measures to appease protestors and the wider population during, preceding, or shortly following opposition events, I build a theory of strategic monetary accommodation whereby dictators- whether they have rents or not - use their resources to target the wider population and contain or prevent active opposition. This theory shifts focus from the over-studied Gulf rentierism which does not adequately explain regime survival (and, indeed collapse) in Arab monarchies. My findings in Chapters 3 (Morocco), 4 (Oman), and 5 (the remaining Arab monarchies) support this argument.

2.2.5 PREEMPTIVE, ILLUSIONARY, AND PROMISED LIBERALIZATION

Another way that dictators contain active opposition is using minimal political reform to appease opposition actors. This is a tricky tactic, because dictators do not want a completely open political system in which their powers would be reduced. Thus, they liberalize- i.e., grant reforms that ease repression and extend civil freedoms of individuals without allowing them to impact the political sphere. Dictators may reduce censorship of the press, tolerate political opposition, or release political prisoners (Mainwaring 1992; Stepan 1989; Schmitter and Schneider 2004: 2). These reforms reduce rulers' powers minimally but do not cross the threshold towards democratization, which implies a transition towards democracy- i.e., more political participation whereby citizens and opposition groups can freely express themselves and wield influence in political matters (Linz and Stepan 1998). In the early 1990s, for example, Morocco experienced a wave of political liberalization. In the face of internal and international pressures, Hassan II allowed the Leftist opposition to assume power in the

Alternance,[10] freed notable political prisoners, adopted new constitutions in 1992 and, closed his secret detention camps, and transferred their prisoners to regular prisons.

2.2.5.1 MY PSEUDO-LIBERALIZATION ARGUMENT

However, historical analysis shows us that liberalization takes place only rarely in authoritarian systems. This is because when liberalization occurs there is a risk to the regime; liberalization could lead to checked powers (Stepan 1988), resurrect civil society (O'Donnell, Schmitter, and Whitehead 1986), or even cross the threshold to democratic transition (Carothers 2002; Levitsky and Way 2002). A large body of literature on democratic transitions focuses on cases where liberalization leads to democracy, as in Brazil where liberalization adopted by the military regime led to democratization (Stepan 1988). However, not all projects of liberalization culminate in a successful transition to democracy (Hinnebusch 2000). Most importantly, in the context of the Middle East and the Arab monarchies, not all projects of liberalization culminate in actual liberalization. This is because dictators often adopt liberalization as a substitute for rather than a step towards democratization; their intent is to remove the threat of active opposition, not to democratize. My research uncovers the tactics rulers use to avoid truly liberalizing when they face active opposition. More importantly, I shed light on the process rulers undergo to have their cake and eat it too- how they contain upheaval without reducing their powers. Do they continuously trick opposition actors? Is the opposition aware of the rulers' intent? Are there

[10] The *Gouvernment d'Alternance* refers to the Youssoufi Government I (1998-2000). The party in power was the USFP, a long-term opponent of Hassan II, and the Prime Minister was given some genuine power although the king remained in charge.

other tactics involved? Through my study of various pseudo-liberalization tactics used by dictators to contain threat, I emphasize the role and impact of opposition actors on the regime's decision to genuinely liberalize versus its decision not to.

As far as pseudo-liberalization is concerned, it is a game of rulers appeasing opposition actors through minor concessions without reducing their own powers. To avoid losing power, dictators who truly liberalize (i.e., substantially ease restriction or introduce reforms that limit their powers) often abort their efforts or backslide into repression; this is because liberalization does not necessarily displace the authoritarian coalition which can reverse its actions later (O'Donnell, Schmitter, and Whitehead 1986). Algeria transitioned from a single-party to a multipartite system in 1988 following the October riots. This was short-lived as the military intervened to stop the Islamic Salvation Front from winning the elections, starting a civil war that would last over ten years. Similarly, Egypt experienced a controlled political opening when President Sadat introduced his plans to transition into a multipartite system in 1974 which were cut short by the creation of his own party (the National Democratic Party) and Hosni Mubarak's ensuing thirty-year rule. The regime in both Algeria and Egypt would go on to maintain *illusionary liberalization* by allowing elections to take place regularly while interfering with them. By transitioning into a multipartite system, the regime allowed citizens to participate in the public sphere without impacting the political sphere. This is a sophisticated, "less carnivorous form of authoritarian government," (Guriev and Treisman 2015: 2) that maintains power without using brutal repression (e.g. mass killings), holds elections but rigs them, does not abolish the press but censures it, etc.

A ruler might also introduce new reforms to avoid a potential crisis- *preemptive liberalization*- as did the Moroccan king in 2011. As soon as protests started in Tunisia, the king sought advice from France on how to negotiate reforms. Similarly, in Jordan in 2011, before Mubarak stepped down in Egypt, King Abdullah dismissed the government, appointed a new prime minister, and promised concrete genuine reform. One year later, he dissolved parliament and called for new elections on the eve of expected protests (CNN 2012). My findings show that preemptive liberalization usually culminates in limited reforms that minimally check rulers' powers with a promise of further reform down the line; this is the case of the Moroccan regime which approved a constitution in 2012 that barely opened the political system any further after the Arab uprisings.

Dictators preemptively combine *gradual-promised liberalization* whereby they promise to liberalize- starting with smaller reforms and asking protestors to wait for bigger ones- and do not come through. With *promised liberalization*, the ruler ensures that protests are contained without surrendering any power. Protestors accept these promises because the ruler already granted smaller ones. In Yemen, for example, prior to the Arab uprisings, President Saleh promised a large range of reforms through the Millennium Development Goals; yet, because the regime was reluctant to share power, only two out of eight goals were reached (Aarts et al. 2009).

2.2.5.2 THE MERITS OF AN APPROACH FOCUSED ON REGIME-OPPOSITION INTERACTIONS

My focus on the role and impact of opposition actors on survival-seeking regime behavior allows me to contribute to the political science literature on democratic transitions in which many scholars see political liberalization is a result of divisions within the ruling coalition

(O'Donnell, Whitehead, and Schmitter 1986; Przeworski 1986; Przeworski 1991), with some emphasizing schisms within the military (Stepan 1988). With some reservation, I agree that the ruling coalition in authoritarian regimes- as well as divisions within it- is responsible for allowing (pseudo) liberalization to take place.

For example, while the ruling family in Qatar ensured its position as the country's dominant political actor, intra-family factionalism and competition led Sheikh Hamad to abolish media censorship, dismantle the Ministry of Information, introduce an elected Central Municipal Council, and adopted a new constitution between 1995 and 2003 (Kamrava 2009). Qatar's reforms had two goals: (1) upholding the "liberalization veneer" (Russel 2004) by increasing the people's participation in the public sphere all the while allowing the monarch to retain most of his power, and (2) placing the monarch out of the opposing elites' reach by securing his support among his citizens. My reservation regarding elite-focused explanations for liberalizations is that they focus mostly on the ruling coalition and its supporting elites, which underestimates the role of opposition actors in different types of opposition events. This approach also overlooks the structure of certain authoritarian regimes where the ruling coalition is small and unlikely to experience schisms (i.e., regimes where power lies with a single person without institutional or familiar influence, like in Oman).

Especially during an opposition event (where the threat is coming from outside of the ruling coalition, e.g. mass mobilization, union riots, opposition from political parties, etc.) the regime's survival-seeking behavior depends on its interactions with opposition actors and on their demands and motivations. Focusing solely on the authoritarian coalition implies that the decision to liberalize (or to promise or pretend to do so) depends solely on the ruler; however, when faced with potential power loss, rulers act in anticipation of how opposition

actors will react. During the Arab Spring, the kings of Morocco and Jordan offered constitutional reforms which limited their power to a minor degree. Why not just repress protestors or co-opt them? The opposition in both cases demanded clear political reforms and would have continued to protest had the regime not addressed these requests at least minimally. The monarchs liberalized in the absence of a struggle within the authoritarian coalition; they did so to contain a threat from the outside. In some cases, then, dictators liberalize to minimize their losses despite high levels of uncertainty that come from such transitions. Under which conditions do dictators take the risk of liberalizing to contain a threat?

First, there must be an imminent or ongoing threat (Lucas 2006). That is, in the face of ongoing violent protests, a ruler might transition from a single-party to a multipartite system, as the aforementioned example of 1988 Algeria shows. The regime accepted the introduction of a multipartite system- thus appeasing the protestors and containing the threat- but reneged on the reforms once it became clear that the Islamist party would win the elections. Importantly, as shown by the Algeria case as well as several democratic transitions in Latin America, liberalization is not just a top-to-bottom process that is fully in the hands of the regime. Rather, it is an interplay between the regime and the opposition actors. How, then, do these calculations unfold, and under which conditions does a dictatorship truly liberalize (or avoid doing so through the aforementioned tactics)?

First, the cost of liberalizing must not outweigh its benefit for the regime. Second, the opposition's motivations must involve only minor power loss (if any) for the regime. In the case of imminent threat, the regime only liberalizes after calculating the risk involved, considering the demands of opposition actors, and predicting their likely reaction. In the

case of ongoing threat, it does so after negotiating with the opposition and attempting to outdo it (Mainwaring 1992).

2.2.5.3 PSEUDO-LIBERALIZATION AND THE CONSTITUTION GAME

While there may be a risk of dictators constraining themselves when they introduce reforms, they usually do so knowing that the reform can be taken back or that it is too minimal to be impactful. It is therefore in their benefit to remove the impending threat of overthrow by liberalizing, then backsliding into repression later. Algeria in 1988 represents an excellent case of a regime that revoked democratic reforms (i.e., free and fair elections). In all the Arab monarchies with functioning parliaments, the monarchs suspend parliament or revoke election laws (Lucas 2004). Merely three years after passing the country's first constitution, Hassan II dissolved Morocco's parliament in 1965 following riots; Mohammed VI, who is Head of State, currently retains the right to dissolve parliament. The emir of Kuwait retains similar rights and has suspended the National Assembly five times between 1976 and 2016 due to irresolvable conflicts between the institution, emir, and government. Similarly, the Jordanian constitution grants the king the right to do the same, and he has disbanded parliament as recently as 2016.

Not only can monarchs suspend these democratic institutions, but these institutions barely check their powers. As a result, these monarchs have only liberalized in the sense that they created or reformed such institutions without being constrained by them, thus giving the illusion of liberalization without running any of its risks. This is reminiscent of the European monarchs' reaction to the 1848 revolutions that struck Europe. In Prussia, the king liberalized when faced with pressure from protests then dissolved the National Assembly within a year of regaining control. This tactic is not used solely by monarchs. In 1991, Zaïre

(now the Democratic Republic of Congo) saw such a change when Mobutu Sese Seko, in the face of generalized protests, allowed parties other than his own to form, promised free and fair elections, and entered a coalition government. He reversed these reforms once protests died down and he had ensured the support of the military (Knutsen and Nygård 2015).

My research on how the regime in Arab monarchies uses political tactics to contain active opposition leads me to make a distinction between true liberalization and what I call pseudo-liberalization (preemptive, promised, and gradual). This distinction allows me to determine (1) the conditions under which dictators presume they can avoid making real concessions, and (2) the decisive conditions that push them to genuinely give up power and genuinely liberalize. My findings on Oman and Morocco emphasize the impact of opposition actors on the regime's decision to liberalize; the level of threat represented by the opposition determines how the regime will react to ensure survival. Importantly, both actors' behavior affects each other's future behavior during active opposition; e.g., a monarch might feel comfortable introducing new ineffective constitutions if this has satisfied a part of the opposition in the past, and other parts of the opposition might protest more robustly if the monarch promises constitutional reforms in the future.

2.2.6 REPRESSION

Repression is the go-to answer to the question of authoritarian survival because authoritarian regimes are perceived as more repressive (than democratic regimes), and because repression does not constrain regimes like liberalization or cost as much as co-optation or monetary accommodation. However, repression comes at a cost; overusing it makes regimes dependent on their coercive apparatuses and leads to backlash from the opposition.

Therefore, regimes grant monetary and political concessions. However, rulers disregard the cost of repression and use it when the result of not using it could ruin them (Bermeo 1997: 315-317). When does this happen? According to my findings, dictators use repression during opposition events when other tactics have not succeeded in containing the threat, or when the initial threat is so high that it could lead to total power loss.

In this section, I highlight the theoretical contributions of the literature on authoritarian persistence for my study of how the regime's use of repression impacts its survival. I then show why regimes use repression in combination with other tactics, and how this choice of tactics emphasizes the impact on successful survival- seeking regime behavior of the interrelationship and interactions between the regime and its opponents. In so doing, I discover the impact of *preemptive repression* on regime survival.

2.2.6.1 UNDERSTANDING REPRESSION AND WHY REGIMES USE IT

How exactly does repression allow authoritarian regimes to persist, and under which conditions do regimes resort to it? Broadly, repression is the regime's persecution of opposition actors using or threatening the use of violence, to restrict their ability to voice or act on their discontent and challenge the regime (Goldstein 1978). It includes "harassment, surveillance/spying, bans, arrests, torture, and mass killing by government agents and/or affiliates" (Davenport 2007a: 1). Repression restricts freedom of speech, press, petition, organization and assembly (Goldstein 1978). Regimes use it within their territorial jurisdiction to respond to active opposition (Davenport 2007a).

While some scholars examine the arbitrary use of repression by regimes to create uncertainty and cause fear to strengthen their rule (Al-Khalil 1998; Crystal 1994; Al-

Naqeeb 1990), and while I acknowledge that rulers benefit from repressing populations consistently and constantly, I focus on non-arbitrary (i.e., strategic) use of repression during opposition events (i.e., when there is a threat to their power). Therefore, the first condition for a regime to use repression is the presence of actual or potential opposition. The regime's goals in using repression are therefore twofold:

(1) To physically incapacitate people from rising against them (i.e., targeting opposition actors specifically through political detention, enforced disappearance, assassination etc. when there is *actual* threat to the regime), and

(2) To instill fear within the people to deter them from participating in future uprisings (i.e., targeting all citizens of the state by restricting their civil rights- freedom of expression, freedom of assembly etc. - in the case of *potential* threat).

2.2.6.2 THE IMPACT OF ROBUST COERCIVE APPARATUSES ON REGIME SURVIVAL

A dominant strand of the persistence of authoritarianism literature links the survival of these systems to their strong coercive apparatus- i.e., military and security forces. How do robust coercive apparatuses help authoritarian rulers stay in power? First, the coercive apparatus can side with the regime during uprisings to make sure there is no overthrow. During the Arab Spring, for example, regimes were overthrown when the army partly or completely backed demonstrators- like in Tunisia, Egypt, and Yemen (Brownlee et al. 2015: 65-7). Second, coercive apparatuses can repress opposition groups that threaten regime survival both during and outside of opposition events. This second reason is most relevant to my research, since it focuses on the impact of authoritarian tactics on regime survival.

In the Middle East particularly, Bellin (2004; 2012) attributes the likelihood of coercive apparatuses using harsh violence against potential regime threats to an interplay between: (1) their patrimonial linkages with the regime and low level of institutionalization; (2) their possession of enough rents to fund and sustain coercive apparatuses; (3) their geostrategic importance to international allies that secure support the coercive apparatuses (e.g. the US sending aid to the Egyptian military because Egypt is an ally in the Israel-Palestine conflict); (4) their restriction of social mobilization which makes challenges to their authority unlikely.

2.2.6.3 THE COST OF REPRESSION: COERCIVE APPARATUSES AND THE DICTATOR'S DILEMMA

While I agree that the support of the coercive apparatus is necessary for the regime to survive and function, it is important to note that rulers rarely use repression on its own when facing opposition. However, scholars often consider repression the main tool that authoritarian regimes use to maintain their power (Davenport 1999, 2004; Poe et al. 1999) supposedly because repression is less expensive than co-optation of elites or monetary accommodation of the wider population (Svolik 2012) and less politically constraining than liberalization. It should therefore be the go-to regime reaction. *Why, then, do dictators often combine repression with these costly tactics?*

First, regimes depend on the coercive apparatus to repress opposition actors, and an overdependence on these apparatuses could be costly to the regime. The military could overthrow the regime using the resource granted to it to suppress regime opposition (Svolik 2012). Furthermore, the regime's overdependence on the coercive apparatus to stay in power could empower the apparatus' leadership and grant it political leverage; influential members of the apparatus could ask for resources and political favors. Rulers are conscious of this

cost; which is why Ben Ali gave the Tunisian military little funding, and why Hassan II removed important military ranks from the army and distanced high officials from the political sphere. Thus, to avoid empowering potentially dangerous coercive apparatuses, dictators use strategies other than repression that do not depend on the apparatuses.[11]

Furthermore, combining repression with other tactics or using it sparingly benefits the regime, as an overuse of repression can backfire. Repression may work at first glance; Lichbach (1987) argues that opposition actors will use nonviolent rather than violent methods if they are repressed, and Gupta et al. (1993) posit that, while repression may lead to violence in a democratic setting, it is effective in eliminating threats to the regime in an authoritarian setting. However, in the long run, repression may lead to more protest (Rasler 1996). It could also lead to the "dictator's dilemma," whereby citizens pretend to support the repressive ruler while opposing him in secret; this increases the potential threat to the ruler (Olofsgard et al. 2009; Wintrobe 2007; Tullock 1987). While it is less likely that protests will occur once the regime represses opposition actors, repression creates great discontent within the opposition (Kricheli et al. 2011). Thus, while the regime succeeds in achieving its main goal- avoiding protests- when it represses opposition actors, its actions give the opposition more cause to protest in the future. Therefore, while authoritarian regimes can use brutal force to crush rebellions, they prefer to use violence sparingly or as a last resort- after other tactics have failed. My findings on Morocco and Oman show that rulers consistently use repression after monetary accommodation and political concessions had

[11] As Svolik (2012) explains, however, there are exceptions. Some rulers inherit militaries that are loyal and politically entrenched, as is the case of Bashar Al-Assad whose father had co-opted the Alawi-dominated military which stood by Bashar throughout Syria's bloody civil war.

failed and the opposition became overt, but also when active opposition would have led to total regime power loss.

2.2.6.4 THE REGIME-OPPOSITION INTERRELATIONSHIP: THE ROLE OF PRE- EMPTIVE REPRESSION ON REGIME SURVIVAL

These definitions and conditions point to a relationship between repression and active opposition, because repression is conceptualized in terms of its relationship to active opposition; the implication being that both the regime and opposition actors are aware of the strategic value of their actions- protestors, for example, know that the regime will repress them when they protest and are prepared for this initial repression (Ritter and Conrad 2016). My findings on Morocco and Oman show that, if the regime expects a group of opposition actors to participate in an uprising, it represses them preemptively. This explains why, when Tunisians rose against Ben Ali in 2010, authoritarian regimes in Morocco and Algeria cracked down on their own citizens preemptively, and why these citizens persisted for some time after this initial repression.

Furthermore, this relationship is affected by exogenous conditions: regional proximity, global learning, and cultural similarity (Danneman and Ritter 2013). For instance, while authoritarian regimes will most likely always repress protestors, they will be more brutal if they fear a domino effect. When the Arab uprisings hit Tunisia and Egypt, those regimes closest to them (Libya, Algeria, and Morocco) increased their repression of protestors. However, this theory is complicated by the fact that regimes further away from Tunisia and Egypt also increased their use of repression or targeted certain groups specifically (like the youth movement in Saudi Arabia). I argue that this is because, while exogenous factors are important, the motivations, background, and threat of opposition groups matters more.

2.3 TAKEAWAY FROM THE PERSISTENCE OF AUTHORITARIANISM FRAMEWORK FOR MY ARGUMENT

My dissertation examines the causal link between regime survival and systematic survival-seeking regime behavior during opposition events. By investigating how the regime in Arab monarchies uses a combination of authoritarian tactics to maintain the status quo during moments of potential change (i.e., opposition events), I shed light on the impact on regime behavior and survival of the interrelationship and interactions between the regime and opposition actors In this chapter, I overview the relevant theories of authoritarian persistence, and I outline the significant guidelines these theories provide on what to focus on when examining Arab monarchies' behavior and survival.

First, we learn from these theories that monarchs, like all rational rulers, are endlessly opportunistic; their main goals are to avoid overthrow, and to lose as little power as possible at the expense of citizens' collective prosperity (Davenport 2007; Beasley 2009; Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2010). To that end, monarchs co-opt, repress, or liberalize to deter the citizenry and elites from organizing, conspiring, and rising against them at present or in the future (Goldstein 1978; Svolik 2012); and due to their strategic adaptation over the years, monarchs remain the most powerful political actors within their territory (Schlumberger 2002).

Second, there is a distinction between these regimes' spontaneous and strategic use of authoritarian tactics; dictators are aware of the strategic value of their reactions, and they use these tools accordingly (O'donnel and Schmitter 1986; Lust-Okar 2004; Menaldo 2013). This distinction rejects the ideas of spontaneous regime reactions to opposition and of

random, situational repression. I therefore do not abide by king- specific theories that hold that monarchs in Morocco and Jordan are more liberal while their predecessors were more repressive; or that the Gulf monarchs are always more repressive (Arwa 2008).

Third, historical analysis shows that dictators only concede when there is an ongoing or looming threat to the regime's survival. Importantly, any liberalization process remains under the control of the authoritarian regime which acts in reaction to its interplay with the opposition; often the ruler aims to portray his liberalization effort as credible enough to appease opposition actors (Boudahrain 1999; O'donnel and Schmitter 1986). However, if the threat can be stabilized using methods other than liberalization (i.e., monetary accommodation or repression) then the regime forgoes concession; the nature and level of the threat of the opposition as well as the regime's economic situation is detrimental to its reaction (Lust-Okar 2004). Thus, I reject the widespread argument that Gulf monarchies are more repressive than Morocco and Jordan; I find that Gulf monarchies, as well as Morocco and Jordan, co-opt opposition actors when there is an economic trigger and repress them when they cannot afford to concede. My argument (that monarchies endure because they employ a specific and sophisticated combination of authoritarian strategies depending on the threat that the opposition represents to the regime) complicates the predictions of Gulf resilience faltering when oil prices fall or of resource-poor monarchies risking overthrow because of lack of rents; my findings show that the strategic value of monetary accommodation, repression, and political concession by the regime means that these tactics can be used interchangeably based on the triggers and motivations of opposition actors.

2.4 THEORETICAL TAKEAWAY: MY ARGUMENT

According to these guidelines, and to test whether or not a causal link exists between (1) regime survival in monarchies and (2) the regime's use of a sophisticated combination of authoritarian strategies depending on the perceived threat of the opposition, I adopt an inductive three-step approach with a micro-level focus that combines different methods into a coherent explanatory framework. This approach downplays the role of theory at an early stage of empirical research, and indeed, I do not set out with a theory that I test through different cases. Rather, through an in- depth analysis of the Moroccan and Omani monarchies' reactions to active opposition throughout their post-colonial history, I construct a theory of regime survival which I test on the remaining Arab monarchies.

I find that, for any single opposition event, the regime's use of repression, liberalization, and monetary concession is linked to the motivation, organization, and background of the opposition actors involved. Accordingly, to avoid losing power, monarch react to different types of opposition events depending on how big a threat they represent (how much power loss the involved). My findings point to a pattern of regime behavior that builds on extant theoretical assumptions that rulers seek to avoid genuine liberalization because it decreases their control over the political sphere (Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2010), but that they do not want to become overly dependent on the use of force (Lichbach 1987; Rasler 1996; Kricheli et al. 2011; Svolik 2012; Guriev and Treisman 2015). This pattern suggests that:

If the likely perceived outcome of opposition is total power loss (highest level of threat), the ruler represses opposition actors harshly and grants no concessions, e.g. when dissidence is isolated within a group espousing a religious or regional-based ideology, and the group

wants total autonomy from the state. This was the case in Morocco during the 1957-1959 Rif rebellions, and in Oman during the 1954-59 Jebel Akhdar War when the Imamate challenged the Omani state. This is also the case when opposition actors explicitly want to remove the king, as did elements in the Moroccan military in 1971 and 1972; as well as in the 1963-76 Dhofar Rebellion where Marxist rebels in the Dhofar region wanted to remove Sultan Said from power.

Outside of this scenario, the monarch's reaction to moderate threat (i.e., major power loss, when the monarch's powers risk being drastically reduced or checked) depends on the triggers of dissidence but is usually a combination of repression and another strategy that adequately addresses some of the opposition's demands. When opposition actors do not aim to remove or separate from the ruler, then the monarch grants concessions if he can do so without losing power, but he represses opposition actors harshly if they continue to protest. This conforms with an important aspect of Guriev and Treisman's (2015) informational theory of dictatorship: that once other, non-violent means have failed and the opposition becomes overt, the regime can only use repression. Continued dissidence creates a greater risk of the status quo being disrupted, which prompts the ruler to use repressive action to eliminate the threat.

Thus, when the opposition seeks political reform, the ruler maintains power by offering minor liberalization and repressing the unsatisfied opposition actors moderately or harshly (depending on the regime's stability in the domestic, regional, or international scene). This repression-liberalization merging ensures that the king's 'compromise' is accepted by the opposition.

In the scenario where the opposition is triggered (at least in part) by economic hardship, the monarch grants monetary concessions as a first step, but also follows up with repression to ensure that the concession is accepted by protestors. The level of repression used depends on domestic factors, specifically the wealth of the regime. In the case of resource-poor Morocco, the king represses opposition actors harshly due to the lack of resources his Gulf allies have- there is only so much the king can offer, and this is sometimes not enough for the opposition (as was the case during the serious unrest in Morocco in 1981- see section 3.1). Regimes with more wealth, like the Gulf monarchies, are more likely to offer monetary concessions that might satisfy a majority of the opposition actors. While there is an exhaustive literature that covers differences in regime behavior depending on resource wealth (Mendalson 2011; Herb 2005; Wantchekon 2004; Beblawi 1987), the takeaway here is that rulers will not offer concessions (be they political or monetary) without a degree of repression. This conforms with Guriev and Treisman's (2015) aforementioned argument, as well as with Svolik's (2012) assumption that dictators play games with other actors by combining monetary incentives and deterrence tactics. For example, the monarchy in Morocco prefers to use co-optation (in the form of elite patronage) rather than repression or confrontation and the regime has a deeply ingrained system of patronage and accommodation. This supports the model's argument that the regime tries conceding materially when it can. The second takeaway is that even poor countries like Morocco, and resource-wealthy but struggling countries like Oman, try to concede monetarily first.

When facing minor power loss that involves small reductions to his powers, the monarch either concedes to the opposition actors, knowing that he will remain the most powerful actor, or ignores the actors altogether. I illustrate this in Chapter 3 for Morocco and Chapter

4 for Oman. Minor threats do not risk changing the status quo, so the regime does not use repression because it does not need to eliminate the (inexistent or minor) threat.

After deriving the aforementioned pattern from Morocco and Oman, I test it on the remaining Arab monarchies. This allows me to confirm the pattern and to advance five scenarios about regime survival during active opposition:

S1: In a poor regime, moderate monetary concessions will ensure regime survival if opposition seeks mostly economic change and the regime combines monetary concession with repression.

S2: In a wealthy regime, major monetary concessions will ensure regime survival if opposition seeks mostly economic change.

S3: In a wealthy, absolute regime or a poor, non-absolute regime, a combination of repression and minor, illusionary, and/or promised political concession will ensure regime survival if opposition seeks mostly political change that would moderately reduce the ruler's power.

S4: In a wealthy, absolute regime or a poor, non-absolute regime, full political concession will ensure regime survival if opposition seeks mostly political change that would not reduce the ruler's power.

S5: In a wealthy, absolute regime or a poor, non-absolute regime, immediate and harsh repression ensures regime survival when the goals of the opposition would lead to high or complete power loss.

The outcome in all these scenarios is regime survival, which regimes achieve through the strategic use or combination of different authoritarian tactics depending on the opposition. Importantly, there is an antecedent variable that determines how regimes will react: the level of threat to the regime. In scenario 5, for example, the threat to the regime is high because of the goals, motivations, and organization of the opposition (e.g. coup d'états, secessionist movements, and highly organized opposition groups). As a result, the regime bypasses non-violent reactions and harshly represses the opposition. In scenario 4, the threat to the regime is low and would not reduce its powers, so the regime concedes without repression.

While, broadly, I argue that it is the consistent way in which the regime reacts to different types of opposition that leads to survival, my findings emphasize the importance of the level of threat that an opposition event represents in determining how the regime will react. Opposition actors and their past and current interactions with the regime are therefore key.

2.5 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I delve into the broader concept of authoritarian survival by exploring the existing literature on traditional authoritarian tactics. Through the guidelines I derive from my literature survey and the analysis of my core cases, I find that authoritarian regimes combine these tactics differently depending on the threat of potential power loss caused by opposition events (which is measured through the motivation, interests, and background of opposition actors involved).

In the following chapters, I carry out an in-depth and systematic analysis of successful regime reaction to active opposition in my core cases, Morocco and Oman.

CHAPTER 3: THEORY BUILDING – REGIME SURVIVAL IN A NON-ABSOLUTE, RESOURCE-POOR MONARCHY

In my dissertation's third chapter, I build my argument through an in-depth analysis of the Moroccan case. Using mixed methods, I systematically show that the Moroccan regime endures because it employs a specific and sophisticated combination of authoritarian strategies- repression, monetary accommodation, and political concession- depending on the perceived threat to the regime.

First, through historical analysis, I highlight the major opposition events faced by the monarchy during its modern history (i.e., after the end of the French colonial involvement and following the foundation of the modern state) and categorize these events according to their level of threat to the regime.[12] To determine whether there is a pattern of survival (i.e., whether the Moroccan regime uses the authoritarian tools discussed in Chapter 2 in a consistent manner for different events), I analyze the regime's reaction towards different types of active opposition using several methods, including: comparative analysis of subsidies and delayed austerity measures, linear analysis of long-term regime repression (based on datasets from the Cingranelli- Richards Human Rights Data Project, Polity IV, and Freedom House), in-depth qualitative interviews, analysis of monarchs' speeches, and a

[12] As explained in detail in section 1.3.3, an event's level of threat is determined by potential power loss, which is linked to the motivations, goals, and organization of the opposition

study of constitutional reforms and basic law that were ratified in reaction to opposition events. I then triangulate this data using secondary sources published during the Arab Spring (such as newspapers, speeches, and fiscal reports). By considering specific opposition events, and examining the levels and combinations of repression, political concession, and monetary accommodation that the regime used to contain dissidence, I uncover a pattern of successful survival-seeking regime survival.

My research on Morocco (and, in Chapter 4, on Oman) is the first step of the inductive, three-step approach which I discuss in detail in Chapter 1; it is through this in-depth analysis of the Moroccan and Omani monarchies' reactions to active opposition throughout their post-colonial history that I construct a broader theory of regime survival. Starting with Morocco, I focus on the reigns of two kings: Mohammed VI (1999-) and Hassan II (1961-1999); this allows me to analyze *patterns* across *both* their rules rather than pinning one strategy to one ruler.[13] After examining Morocco's modern history to identify its main opposition events, I investigate the conditions under which the regime reacts differently when facing different levels of threat from various opposition actors.

3.1 CONDITIONS: NATURE OF THE THREATS AND TYPES OF OPPOSITION GROUPS

I argue that, to understand the conditions under which regimes use specific tactics, it is necessary to distinguish between the different threats to their power. So far, there have been

[13] These are the only two kings Morocco has known in its modern history. I do briefly look into Mohammed V's rule, but only to examine the reaction of Hassan II (then Crown Prince) to the First Rif Rebellion (1957-9).

three types of upheavals in Morocco's modern history. The differences between them are: what triggers the opposition, who threatens the monarchy, and what their goals are. Triggers of opposition include regional persecution, economic crisis, and the regime's monopoly over power. Importantly, whereas opposition due to regional persecution usually happens separately, riots in response to economic hardship and repression often overlap- as they have in 1981 and 1984, when people protested first inflation and austerity measures, then the regime's repression. Similarly, during the Arab Spring, although Moroccan protestors followed the example of Tunisia and demanded reforms, there was an underlying economic crisis (since 2008) that made widespread revolt necessary. During the uprising, people demanded jobs and protested high food prices and widespread poverty. This overlap is also linked to the opposition groups. The three main groups of opposition in Morocco are political elites (1962, 1963, 1965, 1970, 1990-1991), the army (1971, 1972), and the wider population- including youth groups[14] and the Rif tribes/region (1957-1959, 1965, 1984, 1990-1991 2002 2014) – see Figure 14.

[14] Youth groups are often composed of students and educated lower-to-upper middle class people from urban regions. The term "youth" here does not refer to protestors' age but rather to their self- identification.

Figure 14: MAIN OPPOSITION EVENTS IN MOROCCO, 1956- 2017

Event	Actors	Triggers			Motive	Date	Regime Reaction		
		Regional	Economic	Regime Repression Monopoly			Repress	Econ	Reform
Al-Hoceima Protests	Rif region	X	X		Political economic inequality	On-going	X	?	?
Arab Spring	Wider pop.		X	X	Politics economic reform	2011-2012	X	X	X
Family Code Protests	Wider pop., civ. society				Civil reform	2002			X
Pro-Iraq Protests	Wider pop, Parties				King sent troops to fight Iraq	1990-1991	X		
Fez Riots	Labor unions Wider pop.		X	X	Demands for higher wages, benefits	1990	X	X	
Rif Uprising	Rif region	X	X		Economic inequality protestor repression	1984	X		
Bread Riots	Labor unions, Wider pop.		X	X	Economic hardship, lower subsidy	1981	X	X	
Aviators' Coup	Military			X	Overthrow regime	1972	X		
Skhirates Coup	Military			X	Overthrow regime	1971	X		
Rigged Elections	Parties			X	Regime rigged elections	1970	X		X
Student Protests	Wider pop. Politica l parties		X	X	Student-related & socioeconomic	1965-1966	X		X
Elite Power Struggle	Parties			X	Monarchy power monopoly	1962-1965	X		X
Rif Rebellion	Rif tribes	X		X	Secession	1957-1959	X		

Source: Author's table using historical analysis data and interviews.

Morocco has had a strong organized- albeit often divided- opposition since the post-independence period (see Figure 8 below). Opposition in Morocco started with the nationalist Istiqlal and leftist UNFP (National Union of Popular Forces) parties. After the 1960s, the *Istiqlal* was co-opted and the UNFP weakened and divided by a palace-ordered assassination of its founder and leader, Mehdi Ben Barka,[15] the Left became the main opposition group during Hassan II's reign in the 1970s and 1980s. It was mainly represented by the USFP party (Socialist Union of Popular Forces), which splintered from the then irrelevant UNFP and was also comprised of smaller left-to-center parties such as the PPS (Party of Progress and Socialism) and PSU (Unified Socialist Party). Morocco also has a strong organized Islamist opposition, comprised mainly of the now- co-opted and governing Party of Justice and Development (PJD), and the *Al-Adl Wal Ihsanne* organization which, in an attempt to avoid bowing down to the monarchy, has remained outside of the political arena.

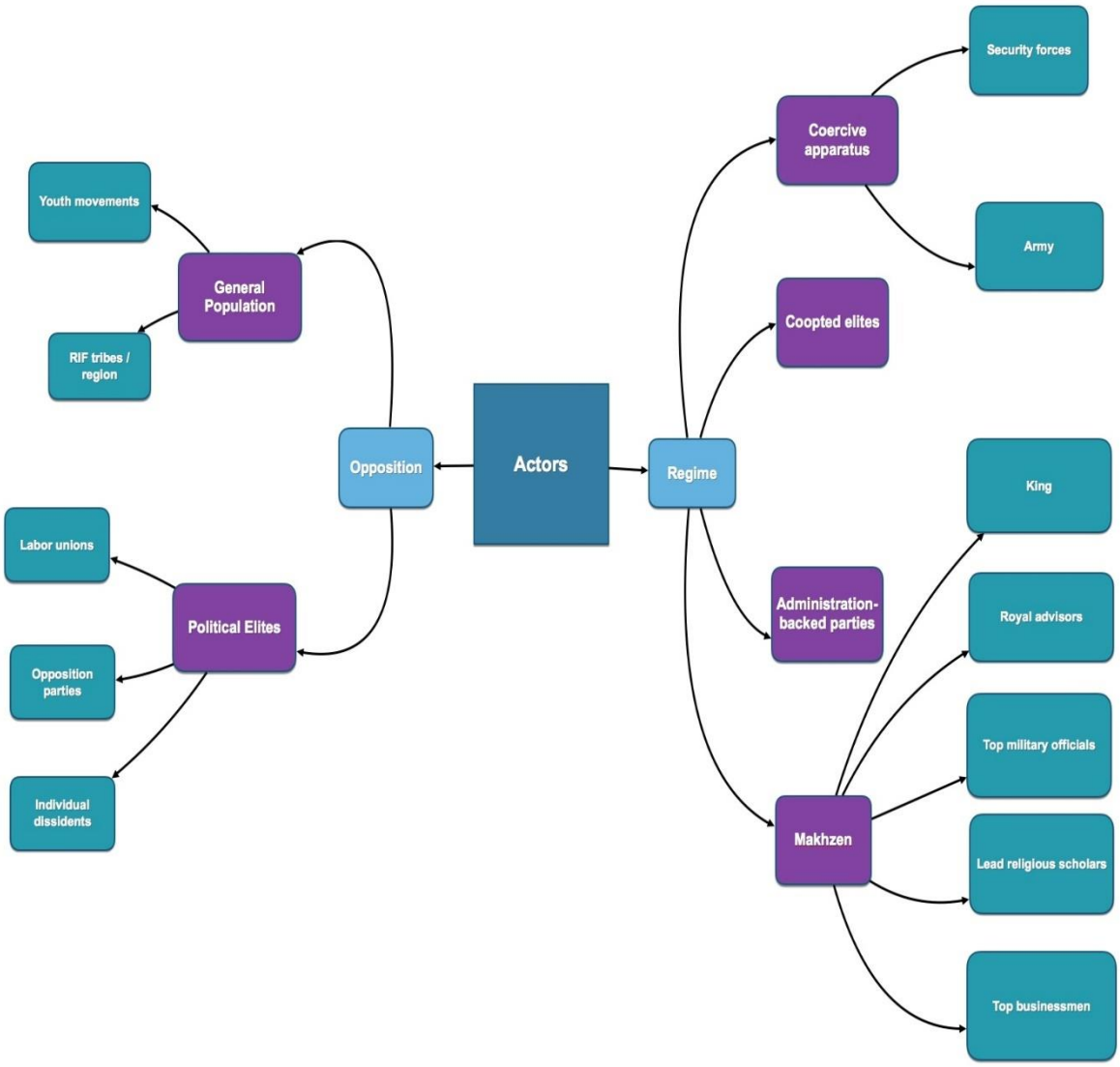
Another organization which remains outside of the political system is *Annahj A-Dimoqrati* (Democratic Way) a Marxist legal party which also includes former members of the heavily-repressed PCM (Moroccan Communist party) and sympathizers of the MLMM (Marxist–Leninist Moroccan movement). *Annahj* boycotts elections because it does not consider them to be free and transparent, and because it does not want to participate in the democratic smokescreen that it calls the "his majesty's opposition".[16] Its main goal is to construct a

[15] Hassan II ordered the forcible disappearance of Mehdi Ben Barka (the founder of the UNFP) in 1963. See: Jacques Derogy, and Frédéric Ploquin. *Ils Ont Tué Ben Barka* (Paris: Fayard, 1999).

[16] This is the phrased used by Mustapha Brahma, as quoted in Soufiane Sbiti, « Que revendique *Annahj A-Dimoqrati*, le seul parti qui boycotte les élections? » (Telquel 2015).

democratic society governed by a socialist regime that would put an end to capitalism in Morocco.

FIGURE 8: RELEVANT ACTORS IN THE MODERN MOROCCAN POLITICAL SCENE.



Source: Author's diagram using qualitative sources.

The greatest weakness of Morocco's organized opposition is its division along several axes, including goals and their background. There are those who belong do a specific ethno-religious community (Amazigh activists who often oppose Islamist groups); those who want gradual change (the PJD Islamist party currently in power, and most leftist parties); those who want radical change (*Annahj A-Dimoqrati* and *Al-Adl Wal Ihsanne*); those who campaign specifically for human rights (feminist groups, CNDH- the National Council for Human nights in Morocco); those who are more interested in economic reforms (labor unions, certain branches of the mass mobilization groups); those who want socio-economic reforms (youth groups, and people protesting specific economic hardship); and those who ask for a combination of socioeconomic and political reform (the 20 February movement and socialist parties like the PSU).

Morocco also has an independent civil society in which several groups were established specifically to oppose the regime's political activities and goals, and while some of them were co-opted or satisfied by minor concessions (feminist groups, some human rights group like CNDH, and some Amazigh groups), many remain steadfast in their opposition and protest (Islamist organizations, many Amazigh groups, far left pseudo-parties, and so on).

The link between regional and religious divide and threat in the context of this dissertation is that these groups represent a threat to the regime, which develops when members of a regional or religious group participate in opposition events or rise against the regime. In Morocco, various Amazigh tribes, notably in the Rif, rebelled against the monarchy several times throughout modern history (Mouline 2014). Furthermore, while the monarchy was able to ally itself to the Jewish community and to co-opt various opposition groups (e.g. within the Left, the Islamist PJD party, and many feminist groups), it has failed to co-opt

various Amazigh groups which remain steadfast in their opposition against its rule and politics.

Thus, the presence of groups from certain regional and religious backgrounds that participate in opposition events (that sometimes revolve around those groups' religious or regional ideology) is important to my research because authoritarian regimes often target regional and religious minorities with their authoritarian tactics differently than other groups (Barany 2002; Abdullah 2016). The presence of regional and religious divide in Morocco and Oman is significant to my argument because it affects regime reaction to active opposition.

The goal of the **political elite** (i.e., opposition parties, individual political actors, and labor unions) has never been to overthrow the monarchy. Rather, it usually wants the monarch to liberalize and share his power. This was the case in 1962 when the socialist UNFP and nationalist Istiqlal parties protested against Hassan II's vast political powers, in 1970 when they contested and boycotted the rigged legislative elections, in 1981 when the Moroccan Workers' Union and the Democratic Confederation of Workers called for a general strike to protest reduced subsidies and high inflation, and in 1990 when the Democratic Confederation of Workers and the General Union of Labor called for a general strike in response to state repression, economic crisis, and the king's involvement in the First Gulf War.

Various subgroups of the **wider population** protest for different reasons. The **people of the Rif** protest persecution against the Rif region and- to a lesser extent- Amazigh people in Morocco (Dalle 2004: VIII). The first two Rif events were triggered by the regime's political and economic marginalization of the region; while the most recent (and ongoing) Rif event

was triggered by both regional marginalization and socioeconomic injustices (which protestors argue are linked). In protests not limited to a specific region, youth groups and member of the wider population are usually triggered by economic crisis and regime repression.

Y**outh groups** are often composed of students and educated lower-to-middle class people from urban regions; the term "youth," here, does not refer to protestors' age but rather to their self-identification. Indeed, throughout the 1970s, subgroups of the wider population (usually trade unions and youth groups) were involved in riots that were spurred by economic crisis and repressive practices. The regime's strategy then was to crackdown on protestors and instill fear within the population using police forces (who beat, arrested, and/or tortured protestors) and army forces- specifically soldiers that patrolled the streets with tanks and arms (Slyomovics and Safi 2008).

Neither partnership with other opposition groups nor overlap of opposition triggers occurs when **the army** opposes the regime. In 1971 and 1972, elements of the Moroccan army attempted to overthrow the monarchy and establish a military regime. Why did this army faction act alone? The first reason lies in the structure of the army prior to 1972. It was highly organized, independent, powerful, and had resources and strong leadership; it could rise against the regime without help from outside groups. The second reason lies in the goals of the army (i.e., what it hoped to achieve through the putsches). It was the only opposition actor whose explicit goal was to overthrow the regime; this is drastically different from what the wider population and political elites sought (economic and political reforms that would limit the king's powers without deposing him).

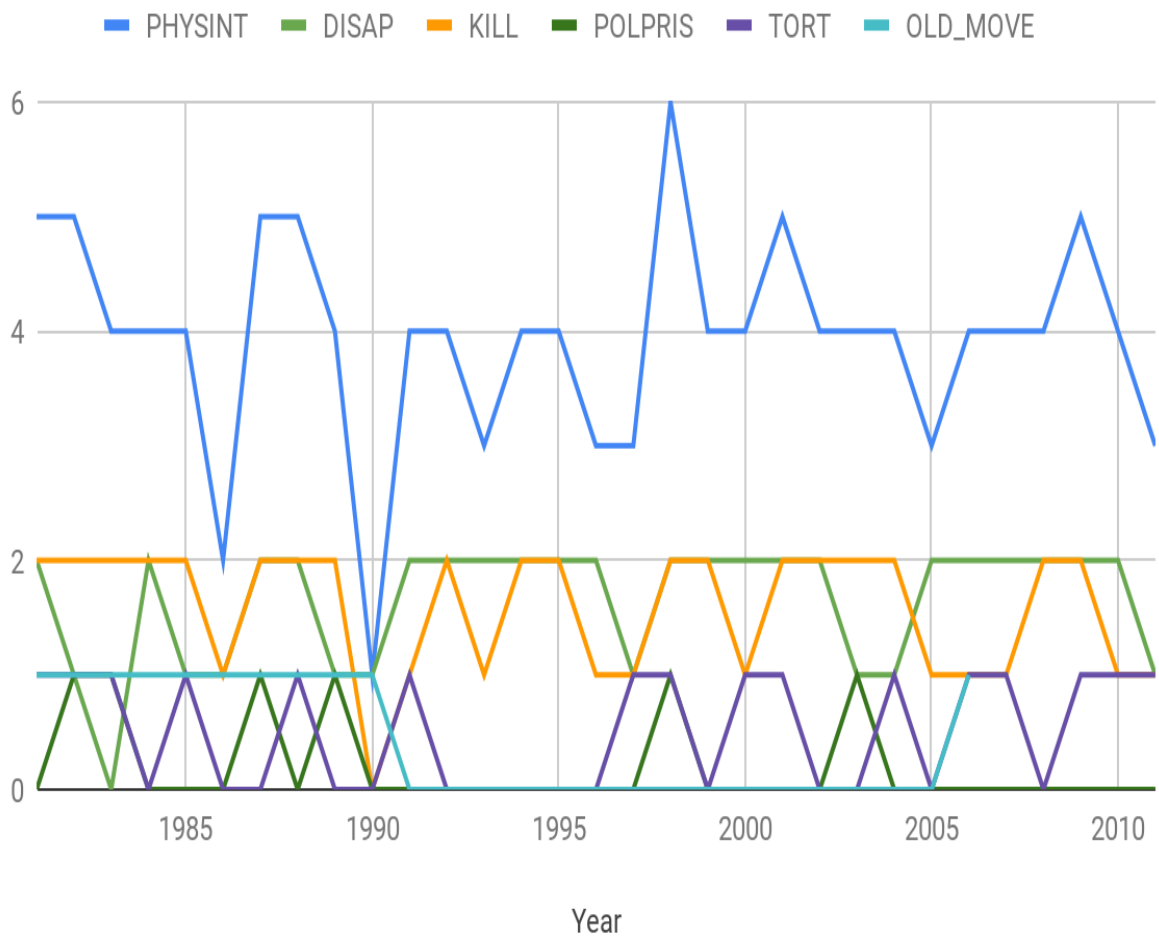
3.2 REPRESSION

Perhaps the greatest misconception about Morocco's political dynamics is that the country is less repressive than its Arab counterparts because civil liberties increased during the last three decades (Sater 2015: 60-86; Totten 2013). Since Mohammed VI replaced Hassan II in 1999- and even since the last decade of the latter's rule- many have argued that the liberalization that the kingdom has experienced make it less repressive (Boukhars 2011: 24-29). It is true that Mohammed VI has allowed and even pushed for important social changes in minority and women's rights. It is also true that Hassan II's reign saw a marked shift in favor of political and civil liberties during the 1990s. However, linking civil liberalization to decreased repression is incorrect. This significant misconception implies that, when the regime reduces civil repression, it also reduces politically motivated repression; however, the Moroccan regime often uses political violence even when it eases civil repression (see Figures 15 and 16 below). While Morocco currently has one of the highest civil liberties ratings in the region (Freedom House 2015), the regime is repressing protests in the Rif (Primary Footage 2016).

To better understand this distinction, let us go back to my theoretical discussion of state-focused repression in Chapter 2: the persecution of opposition actors through (threatened) use of violence, to restrict their ability to voice or act on their discontent and challenge the regime (Goldstein 1978). My research focuses on regime reaction to active opposition in the face of a threat to their power. I thus assume that regimes use repression when there is actual or potential opposition, and that its main goals in repressing are: to physically incapacitate people from rising against it in the case of an actual threat, and to instill fear within the

wider population to deter it from participating in future uprisings in the case of potential threat.

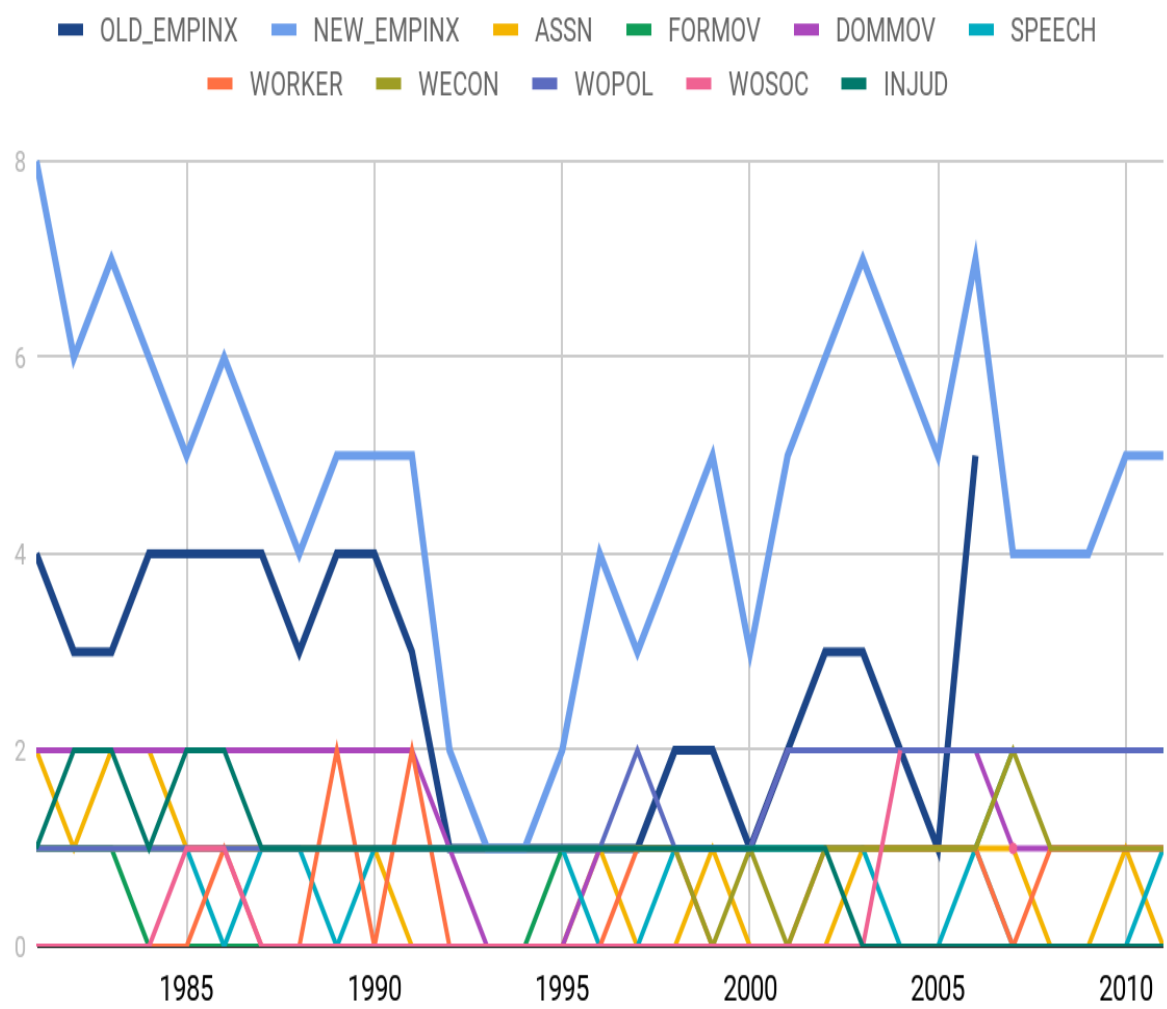
Figure 15: TYPES OF POLITICAL VIOLENCE USED BY THE MOROCCAN REGIME (1985-2010).



Source: Author's graph using data from CIRI and interviews.

The figure shows the yearly level of the regime's use of different types of political violence: restricting freedom of movement torture, political imprisonment, extrajudicial killing, forced disappearances, and violation of physical integrity.

Figure 16: YEARLY VIOLATIONS OF CIVIL LIBERTIES IN MOROCCO.



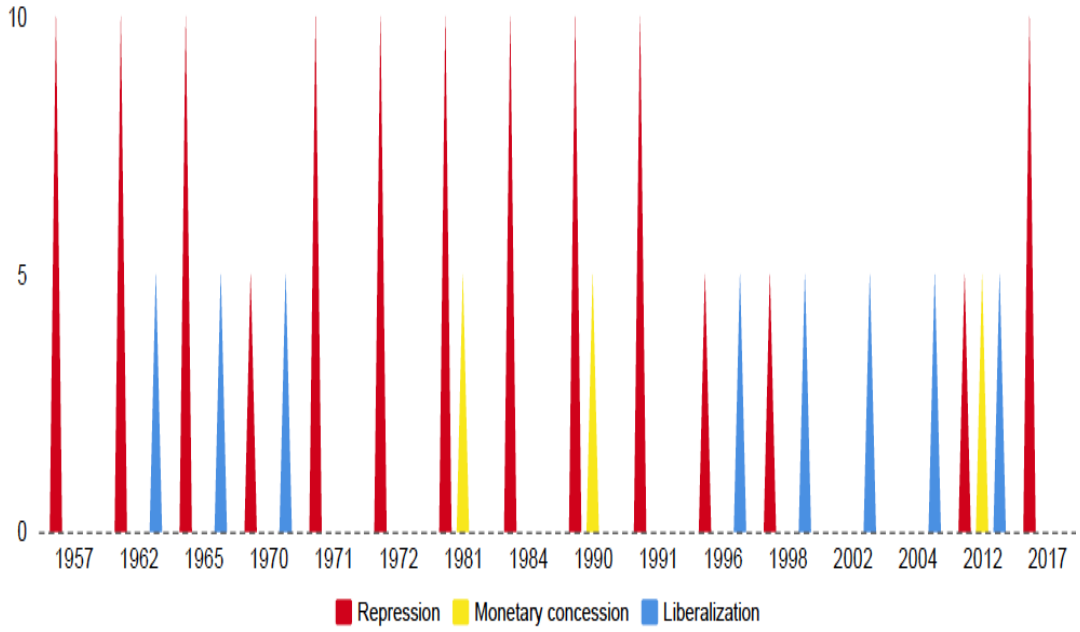
Author's graph using data from CIRI and interviews.

The figure shows the yearly level of regime violation of civil liberties, including: right of free assembly & association, freedom of domestic movement, freedom of foreign movement, electoral self-determination, religious freedom, free speech, women's economic rights, women's political rights, women's social rights, workers' rights, and independence of the judiciary.

The misconception about Morocco's political dynamics lies in a misunderstanding of the different types of repression. While political violence targets opposition actors specifically and aims to dispose of them or stop them from opposing the regime (through assassination, disappearing, arrest etc.), some repressive tactics target all citizens and aim to restrict their civil rights (i.e., freedom of expression, freedom of assembly, and so on) to avoid future threat. Often, when the Moroccan regime's use of these civil rights-related tactics decreases (as was the case in the 1990s onward, see Figure 17), the regime is perceived as a liberalized one that would not use political violence (Sweet 2002: 22-24; Benstead 2008: 59-60).

This is exacerbated by the fact that a considerable part of the literature on authoritarianism in Morocco discusses liberalization in terms of absolute versus non- absolute regimes- whereby liberalization is a catalyst for democratization in non- absolute regimes, and lack of liberalization is a hindrance to democratization in absolute regimes. As explained in detail in Chapter 1, an absolute regime in one where there is no pluralism or openness, non-absolute authoritarian regimes maintain a degree of social and political liberalization. In other words, the lack of liberalization in Hassan II's Morocco made democratization impossible and allowed for the monarch's continued use of violence against opposition actors. On the other hand, Mohammed VI's reign saw an increase in liberalization that made the regime open to democratization and thus less likely to repress opposition actors. This approach is too simplistic as it does not account for Hassan II making political concessions rather than repressing opposition actors (e.g. in 1962 when the *Istiqlal* party demanded more political control and Hassan II responded by creating the country's first constitution and shifting Morocco from a unicameral to a bicameral parliamentary system), or for Mohammed VI's use of political violence as recently as the 2017 Rif protests.

Figure 17: PATTERN IN MOROCCAN REGIME'S REACTION TO DIFFERENT TYPES OF ACTIVE OPPOSITION, 1956-2017.



Regime Reaction to Active Opposition in Morocco

Figure 11, Coding for Repression	Figure 11, Coding for Monetary Concession	Figure 11, Coding for Liberalization
*Very little or no repression = 0	*No monetary concessions= 0	*Little or no liberalization = 0
*Some repression= 5 i.e. repression of civil & political liberties, moderate police crackdowns on opposition, 0-100 arrests, rigged elections, dissolution of Parliament	*Some monetary concession = 5 i.e., the use of subsidies and the delay of austerity measures.	*Moderate liberalization = 5 i.e., reformed constitution that addresses certain issue areas but does not check the monarch's powers, + any action that ease repression
*Drastic repression = 10 ie., political violence, detention camps, unfair trials, 100+ arrests, forced disappearances, forced exile, & execution of opposition actors.	*Regime's use of its funds to satisfy opposition = 10	*Genuine liberalization = 10 i.e., reforms that reduce or check king's power; free, fair, and competitive elections; independent government; & complete civil and political freedom.

Source: Author's graph using Datasets from CIRI, Polity IV; World Bank financial reports; and interviews

In this section, to determine when and how the regime uses repression to contain opposition events, I use longitudinal data analysis. As explained in detail in Chapter 1, I analyze data from the Cingranelli-Richards Human Rights Data Project Dataset (CIRI) and Polity IV.[17] Additionally, I supplement my data collection through press- analysis as well as in-depth interviews with current and past members of government, activists, party leaders, and civil society organizations.

3.2.1 POLITICAL VIOLENCE-ONLY STRATEGY

Under which conditions does the king use only political violence to survive (refer to the highest red peaks in Figure 17, coded as 10 for repression, 0 for liberalization, and 0 for monetary concession)? When the threat to the throne is so great that opposition's only outcome is high, if not total, loss of power, the king uses a two-step repression-only strategy. First, he crushes the opposition to stop the ongoing threat through harsh political violence. Then, he takes repressive measures to ensure the threat will not arise later.

This is the case when dissidence is isolated within a regional group, and the group in question wants a heightened level of autonomy, e.g. in the Rif. As early as 1957- 1959, when the Amazigh tribes of the Rif rebelled against the regime's policy of marginalization and neglect of Morocco's northern region, Hassan II- then Crown Prince and Chief of the Defense Staff- led an army of thirty-thousand soldiers and violently repressed the uprisings, causing close to a thousand deaths and thousands of injured rebels (Mouline 2016). After the

[17] For an in-depth explanation of the methods used and data compiled for this section, as well as their reliability, refer to section 1.5.2.1.

opposition was squashed, Hassan II subjected the region to a military regime and marginalized it for over four decades. When Rif protests occurred in 1984, they were crushed immediately.

Figure 18: MAIN REPRESSION OPPOSITION EVENTS IN MOROCCO, 1956- 2017.

Event	Actors	Triggers			Motive	Date	Regime Reaction		
		Regio-nal	Econo-mic	Regime Repres-sion Monop-oly			Repress	Econ	Reform
AlHoceima Protests	Rif region	X	X		Political economic inequality	On-going	X	?	?
Pro-Iraq Protests	Wider pop. Parties				King sent troops to fight Iraq	1990 - 1991	X		
Rif Uprising	Rif region	X	X		Economic inequality, protestors' repression	1984	X		
Aviators' Coup	Military			X	Overthrow regime	1972	X		
Skhirates Coup	Military			X	Overthrow regime	1971	X		
Rif Rebellion	Rif tribes	X		X	Secession	1957 - 1959	X		

Source: Author's table using archives, interviews, and historical analysis data.

Why is upheaval in the Rif too threatening for the king to make concessions? In 1957, Rif tribes demanded regional autonomy, rather than reforms or changes. Since the nature of the threat was regional, it could not have been appeased by minor concessions. Unlike political or economic practices that can be reformed, identity crises are rooted in tribalities, which cannot be changed. Regional secession was a significant threat in Mohammed V's time (1957-1959 Rif rebellions) because the monarchy was still unstable and ruling a newly independent country. While it had national autonomy prior to colonial rule (1912-1956), Morocco was mainly made up of tribes that occupied specific regions and swore allegiance to the Sultan. After gaining independence in 1956, Morocco underwent the beginning of the formation of the modern state. The 1957-1959 Rif rebellions posed a threat to the delicate Westphalian structure that the monarchy was constructing; and losing the Rif region would have opened the possibility to losing other regions with well-established tribes. The 1984 Rif protests came at a difficult time during Hassan II's reign. The regime was suffering the aftermath of the 1981 economic crisis and riots and struggling to maintain control over the Western Sahara territory.[18] If the Rif region had moved towards autonomy at this point, a

Military rebellion is another type of opposition which is so threatening to the regime that it inspires only brutal repression. Leading up to the military coups in 1971 and 1972, the Moroccan army was highly organized, independent, powerful, and rich. Its goal during its attempts was to overthrow the monarchy and replace it with a military regime, as had been happening in Egypt and Libya. In both coups, the organizers were motivated at least partly

[18] Morocco fought against the Polisario Front in the war over Western Sahara (1975-1991), a territory that had been part of the Moroccan sultanate in pre-colonial times but that had become disputed after colonial Spain released it and granted its administration to Morocco and Mauritania.

by the desire for socioeconomic change and by their anger at what they saw as a corrupt and predatory royal family.

General Madbouh and Colonel Ababou were the main organizers of the 1971 coup; they mobilized close to 1,200 cadets and marched on the Royal Palace in Skhirates where the Hassan II was celebrating his birthday. Their goal was to kill the palace guard to corner the King and overthrow the monarchy; Madbouh had wanted Hassan II to abdicate, while Ababou wanted him killed (DALLE 2011). They were motivated by large-scale corruption by the royal family and the King's entourage as well as despotism.[19] Earlier that year, Madbouh had traveled to the United States on Hassan II's orders where he discovered that Pan American World Airways had decided against building a luxury hotel in Casablanca because they were asked to bribe officials that were close to the King. After informing Hassan II of this issue, Madbouh found that monarch's reaction to be too lax. Hassan II had merely dismissed four cabinet ministers but did not try them or punish them in any way. The day of the coup, on the orders of Madbouh and Ababou, 1200-1400 armed soldiers stormed the royal palace of Skhirates where the King's birthday celebrations were held. They attacked the guests (killing 92), held VIPs hostage, and cornered Hassan II in a guest bathroom (where Madbouh attempted to negotiate with him, in vain). The King eventually fled, unharmed.[20]

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[19] Ababou's daughter posits that her father was "disgusted by the authoritarianism, injustice, and daily abuse of power" he witnessed after joining the King (Ababou 2010).

[20] All evidence suggests that the coup was organized by elements of the army without external support. Libya's Colonel Muammar Gaddafi threatened to send troops to support the rebels but did not do so since the coup ended within a day. Gaddafi himself had overthrown a monarch two years prior. Hassan II also insinuated during a press conference that there was some interference from Egypt since close to 600 Moroccans resident

The 1972 coup was organized by General Oufkir[21] (then Minister of Defense) and Colonel Amerkane and involved more than 200 officers who planned to shoot down a plane carrying Hassan II. Oufkir ordered fighter jets[22] to shoot at the royal Boeing 727, thus killing several passengers but missing the monarch. Two fighter jets inflicted damage on two of the three engines of the Boeing which was still able to land safely at which point two fighter jets fired at the king while he was moving towards the reception in his honor. They killed eight people and injured around 50 but the king survived. Amerkane then resorted to his third back-up plan and commanded five fighter jets to fire at the royal palace in Rabat, to no avail as Hassan II was not present. All three attempts had failed

Because those elements of the army that that rose against Hassan II wanted to overthrow him (i.e., causing total power loss), the King reacted as he had done in the Rif: he used a two-step repression-only strategy. First, he crushed the opposition by to immediately contain the threat; then he took repressive measures to ensure the threat would not arise later. During the first 1971 coup, both Madbouh and Ababou died in the ensuing battle[23] against royal troops let by General Bouhali. Close to 200 of the 1200-1400 rebel soldiers died in battle,

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in Egypt had attempted to renew their passports on the day of the coup. Gamal Abdel Nasser, who was also involved in overthrowing the Egyptian monarchy via coup, did not comment.

[21] General Oufkir, a high military official and formerly the right-hand man of Hassan II, orchestrated s failed putsch 1972, and was most likely involved in a prior coup in 1971. His role in the 1971 coup remained hidden until after the second coup.

[22] Five fighter jets took off on Oufkir's orders and under Captain Hachad's command. Only three were armed; these were piloted by Commander Kouera, Lieutenant Ziad, and Lieutenant Boukhalif. Kouera had been informed of the coup three years prior, while Ziad was told minutes prior to take off and Boukhalif during the flight (Ksikes and Boukhari 2010).

[23] While this remains unconfirmed, it is believed that Ababou had killed Madbouh due to a disagreement, and that Ababou later asked another rebel to kill him when he was wounded by royal troops.

while 74 were captured, tried and condemned to life in prison (and most were later transferred to the Tazmamart concentration camp), and ten high-rank officers were executed after being interrogated. Ironically, Hassan II invested Oufkir (who would later organize a second coup against him in 1972) with full powers to punish the rebels and contain the threat. Oufkir and royal troops performed house-to-house searches in Rabat and either executed or arrested captured rebels.

After the second failed putsch, the regime put 22 soldiers on trial; 11 high-rank officers (including Amerkane[24]) were executed; Oufkir was assassinated by Generals Dlimi and Alaoui[25]; 30 officers were sentenced to prison for life and sent to secret detention camps (like the Tazmamart prison) where soldiers from the first failed attempt were already located. After close to two decades of imprisonment, and out of at least 58 prisoners, only 28 prisoners had survived (Primary Footage 1971; CNDH Report 2014; Slyomovics 2005). Between 1976 and 1981 alone, 400 opposition actors were kept in secret prisons (Lamlili 2016).

As a long-term strategy, the king took four measures: (1) Sentencing the prisoners to long sentences (close to two decades) in secret detention camps so that they could no longer threaten him (2) Imprisoning, harassing, and/or spying on the family members of the putschists (as was the case of the Oufkir family in 1972); this ensured the families would not

[24] Amerkane had fled to Gibraltar to seek political asylum minutes after his third attempt to assassinate the King had failed. The British government, following pressure from Hassan II, allowed a Moroccan military plane to land on Gibraltar and extradite Amerkane.

[25] Official reports (see Cairo Press Review, 16 August 1972: 25) state that Oufkir succumbed to suicide, while he was in fact shot in the back several times by Moulay Abdellah and General Dlimi, on Hassan II's orders (Slyomovics 2005:54; Pedron 1972).

protest in favor of the putschists. (3) Isolating the army from the political sphere by removing the ranks of Minister of Defense, Major General, and Deputy Major General, and by overseeing the army himself. To the present-day, in Morocco, the army is separate from the politics of the country. (4) Redistributing the wealth of the putschists to people close to and loyal to him within the army; this encouraged loyalty and deterred future opposition.

Another opposition event which prompted the king to use only drastic repression is the 1990-1991 student riots. These riots were triggered by international and domestic factors: Hassan II's support of the United States during the First Gulf War, and the dire economic times in Morocco. The high cost of living, inflation, and IMF-ordered reduced subsidies led the Democratic Confederation of Workers to join forces with the General Union of Labor and call for a general strike. In the streets, people also condemned the repressive political atmosphere that still reigned in Morocco since the failed military coups. This was exacerbated by Hassan II's decision to support the US and Saudi Arabia against Saddam Hussain. The Moroccan regime had fervently condemned Saddam at an Arab League meeting as soon as he invaded Kuwait in 1990. Kuwait was an ally and a monarchy, and Saddam, despite his past generosity towards Hassan II (Rasoux 2015: 102), represented a threat during the post-Arab Cold War period (especially considering Iraq's structural similarities with the neighboring Algeria). The king declared support to the multinational force and secretly sent first 3600, then 1200 soldiers to

Saudi Arabia after Saddam's invasion (Gregory 1999). Perhaps to placate the Moroccan people (who were overwhelmingly pro-Iraq) and justify his actions, Hassan II expressed sympathy for the Iraqi people who were suffering the consequences of UN sanctions and ordered members of the Moroccan royal family to supervise supplies collection for Iraqis.

Regardless, in Rabat alone, close to 500,000 people took the streets to oppose the Gulf War and, especially, the king's position (Zoubir 1993).

No one factor on its own presented an unusually high threat for the king, as he had been used to containing political and economic protests. However, the combined triggers of active opposition (economic and political), as well as the widespread organization of the opposition actors, created a major threat to his rule. Importantly, Hassan II had never faced such organized backlash; opposition parties organized pro-Iraq marches, and people across class and background condemned Morocco's military involvement- nationalist and Pan-Arab arguments were strong and persuasive. All parties (except the Free Communist Party), as well as youth groups, religious leaders, and organized forces of lawyers sided against Hassan II. While he was not mentioned during the brutally repressed marches, his popularity suffered immensely. Combined with Morocco's poor socioeconomic situation, he feared for his reign. At the same time, he could not call back his troops and discredit himself to his powerful allies. His only option to save face and avoid overthrow was brutal repression. He immediately ordered the army to shoot the crowds, killing over 170 people (Sherbrooke Report 2015). The following year, according to Amnesty International (1991), there were 350 political prisoners in Morocco.

An interesting and peculiar example of the regime's repression only two-step strategy to contain threat is the Mehdi Ben Barka case. It was peculiar because there was not a single event of unrest (like a coup, protest, or rebellion) which was orchestrated by Ben Barka to overthrow the regime. Rather, Ben Barka carried out a prolonged campaign promoting his ideals and goals and strengthening his network of domestic and international allies. He represented a high threat for the regime due to the following reasons: His demands and plans

for change (discussed in greater detail below) were political and involved reforms that would significantly reduce the regime's power; as he announced on public radio, he wanted to transform Morocco's "medieval regime which [was] attempting to revive Moroccan society's medieval structures" (Bensoussan 2012: 431). Furthermore, Ben Barka's initial and second parties were both well organized, had clear hierarchies, and developed networks with other opposition groups (namely the Union of Moroccan Workers). Ben Barka also had a positive reputation as he had been a key player in the struggle for independence (Ben Barka 1997). Finally, the central role that Ben Barka held after his exile in the Third-Worldism[26] political movement only exacerbated the threat perceived by the monarchy (Buttin 2010).

While presiding over the Consultative Assembly (1956-1959), Ben Barka was a driving force behind the demands for a constitutional project, strong legislature, as well as socioeconomic plans that would drastically change the country's feudal structure.[27] Mohammed V and, later, Hassan II, wanted to delay the constitutional project as much as

[26] From its emergence in the late 1940s to its decline in the 1980s, Third-Worldism was a political ideology which categorized the world order during the Cold War into three groups: (1) First World countries which sided with NATO and which had functioning democracies and stable economies; (2) Second World countries which were socialist states under the influence or control of the USSR; and (3) Third World countries which were usually newly independent states across Africa, Asia, Latin (and Central) America, and Oceania, which sided with neither NATO nor the USSR. In the MENA region Third-Worldism was championed by Gamal Abdel-Nasser, an ally of Ben Barka. Another ally was Che Guevara, who promoted a more radical and socialist vision of the movement. Nasser was a threatening symbol to Hassan II and other monarchs because he led the 1952 revolution which overthrew the monarchy in Egypt and replaced it with a military regime. I discuss this further in chapters 2, 3, and 4.

[27] Ben Barka famously said, "For us, it is not a question of merely stopping the exploitation by the [French] protectorate, but also of stopping the exploitation of Moroccans by other Moroccans," (Ben Barka 1999: 94 [*Author's translation from French*]).

possibly- quite rightly, since the monarchy in Tunisia was dissolved in 1956 soon after the *Neodoustour* party won the elections.

After breaking off from the *Istiqlal* party in 1959 and forming *l'Union Nationale des Forces Populaires* (the UNFP) Ben Barka demanded the removal of French troops (who were already at that time supporters of the monarchy), national support for Algerian independence, and agrarian reforms that would benefit farmers and peasants (Ben Barka 1962: 3-8). It is at this point that the regime started to repress Ben Barka and UNFP supporters, at which point Ben Barka sought exile in Paris. He survived a palace-organized assassination attempt shortly after returning to Morocco in 1962 which led him to return to Paris where he continued his campaign which targeted the monarchy and Hassan II in particular (whom he accused of being an instrument of neocolonialism[28]). As the threat to his throne rose, Hassan II accused Ben Barka of planning to kill him and sentenced him to death in March 1964 along with other leaders of the UNFP as well as communist sympathizers. The regime then banned the youth union (UNEM) and various socialist and communist groups. This repression provoked further unrest among the political elite and the youth groups (by 1965, there was widespread student activism and protests). To contain the continued protests, the regime unleashed violent repression in the form of police forces beating and imprisoning protestors. That same year, the regime assassinated Ben Barka in Paris[29], thus eliminating a major threat to its power and weakening the UNFP party.

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[28] Bouamama, Saïd. 2014. *Figures De La Révolution Africaine*. Paris: Découverte.

[29] The consensus on the circumstances of Ben Barka's death is that Generals Oufkir and Dlimi tortured him in a house outside of Paris belonging to Georges Boucheseiche, a former Gestapo agent. There, Ben Barka was

3.3 MONETARY CONCESSION

The Moroccan regime is rarely described as one that co-opts opposition actors, mainly because it lacks resource wealth. While scholars agree that the regime co- opts elites and influential actors (Levau 1985; Josua 2016), little is written on how the Moroccan regime uses its scarce resources to appease the wider population. I argue that, while this focus on elite co-optation sheds light on the constant process by which the regime co-opts key actors to maintain their loyalty and avoid future opposition, it overlooks the Moroccan regime's use of its sparse resources during opposition events specifically to stifle upheaval and appease protestors (i.e., when there is a threat to the regime that spans wider than its support base) to ensure its own survival. Focusing on this tactic, my strategic monetary concession argument emphasizes that it is how and when regimes use their resource rents that matters and does not limit the study of authoritarian monetary accommodation to resource- wealthy regimes. Finally, it opens the door for future research on how resource-poor regimes use similar tactics to resource-wealthy ones, and on non-rent accommodation.

I argue that, to contain certain opposition events (mainly those triggered, at least in part, by economic hardship), the resource-poor Moroccan regime uses *non-rent accommodation*. It appeases protesters and the wider population using resources which it does not acquire from rents, e.g. increasing subsidies and delaying austerity measures (see Figure 19). By 'subsidy' I mean the financial aid given by the regime to an economic sector or actor to

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stabbed to death, and his body was dissolved in acid. The French courts could not question Hassan II but did issue warrants for the arrests of Oufkir, Dlimi, and- decades later- of General Benslimane. Hassan II refused to allow the arrest of Oufkir and Dlimi.

lower or maintain the price of a commodity or service in the general interest of the public; I am not referring to tax concessions (World Trade Organization 2006, B: 48; de Moor and Calamai 1997). I focus on what El-Katiri and Fattouh (2015: 2) categorize as "on-budget, or explicit subsidies that constitute explicit transfers made by the government to either the producer or the consumer receiving the subsidy, registered on the state's budget." When facing economic hardship, the regime imposes austerity measures to reduce its spending, e.g. decreasing subsidies, raising taxes etc. The regime may adopt austerity measures through its own volition or be imposed to do so by international institutions that loaned the country money, like the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Predictably, subsidies benefit the wider population while austerity measures displease it, which is why regimes can use them to control people.

Globally, the ratio of subsidies to GDP is lower in developed countries than in developing countries. While the data is more scattered for the latter, the available information suggests that governments in developing countries grant higher levels of subsidies. In some regions, like the Middle East and North Africa, food and energy subsidies are more prevalent than in the rest of the world (Commander 2012; Ciezadlo 2011); this is in great part because the welfare system in the MENA region is weak. However, there is strong variation even within the region. In Morocco, between 1998 and 2002, subsidies made up 10.8% of government spending on average and 1.8% of the country's GDP (WTO 2006, E: 118). This is consistent with the numbers in nearby Tunisia (10.3% of government spending and 1.6% of the GDP) but significantly higher than in the GCC countries- see Figure 20.

Figure 19: OVERVIEW OF THE COMMODITIES SUBSIDIZED BY THE MOROCCAN GOVERNMENT (2018).

Commodities Subsidized by the Moroccan Government			
Petroleum Products	***Status***	***Food Products***	***Status***
Liquified petroleum gas	Current	Sugar	Current
Diesel	Phased out	Flour	Current
Fuel-oil	Phased out	Wheat	Current
Gasoline	Phased out	Milk	Phased out
Fishing gasoil	Phased out	Butter	Phased out
Jet fuel	Phased out	Cooking oil	Phased out

Source: Author's graph using data from the Moroccan Ministries of Finance and of Energy.

Figure 20: SUBSIDIES AS % OF GOVERNMENTAL SPENDING AND OF GDP IN VARIOUS MENA COUNTRIES.

Countries 1998-2002	Subsidies as % of government spending	Subsidies as % of GDP	GCC state?
Morocco	10.8	1.8	
Tunisia	10.3	1.6	
Kuwait	1.2	0.3	X
Oman	0.6	0.1	X
Qatar	0.4	0.1	X

Source: Author's graph using data from (WTO 2006, E: 118)

The current public compensation plan in Morocco is an interesting and unique one (see Figure 19). Historically, subsidies are an important part of Morocco's socioeconomic (and political) landscape and date back to the 1940s, when sugar and Liquefied Petroleum Gas (LPG) were subsidized (Verme et al. 2014; Chen, Liverani, and Krauss 2014). The subsidy system, which is controlled by the Compensation Fund started expanding in the 1960s and covered cereals, milk, cooking oil, gasoline, and diesel (Verme et al. 2014: 134). Today, the only products fully subsidized are LPG, sugar, and flour; Morocco started liberalizing its domestic oil market in 2006, started phasing out fossil fuel subsidies in 2012, and finally pledged to axe them (specifically petrol and diesel) in 2015 (Maroc, Rapport Sur La Compensation 2017). Currently, domestic fuel products have been raised and linked to international prices, and a small pre-determined subsidy remains for oil products (El-Katiri and Fattouh 2015: 9).

Energy and food subsidies have been so embedded in Morocco's economic landscape that the population views them as necessary, and most people (60-70%) are unwilling to accept potential subsidy reforms, according to government- commissioned interviews and focus groups from 2010 (Commander 2012: 29). Historically, large-scale demonstrations following the announcements of price increases for basic commodities- as was the case in 1980s Morocco (Chen et al. 2014). To avoid backlash from the most recent (post-Arab Spring) reforms to the subsidy system, the regime only announced and implemented reforms after the Arab Spring protests had died down; and, even then, it used a thorough communication strategy to explain the new system of decreased subsidies to the wider population (El-Katiri and Fattouh 2015: 9).

Examining the regime's prior use of subsidies to appease and control the population is relevant for this dissertation. People tend to be unhappy with their government for imposing austerity measures, and they perceive it as a positive action when the regime delays austerity measures or increases subsidies. Subsidies and delayed austerity measures are resources that the regime gives to the wider population, and the way the regimes uses these resources strategically is similar to how regimes in oil-rich countries use oil rents. Regime use of subsidies (and people's perception of subsidies as necessary and positive) are not unique to Morocco or to monarchical systems. Other regimes in oil-poor MENA states do the same, including Tunisia, Jordan, and Egypt.

This became increasingly clear during the Arab uprisings, which were triggered in part by exacerbated socioeconomic inequalities that resulted from economic liberalization policies (including cutting subsidies).[1] Because oil-poor states were required by foreign donors to meet economic liberalizing requirements, they modernized their economies by encouraging foreign investments, privatizing state enterprises, and- importantly- lowering government budgets (Gause 2011). One of the most effective ways for these regimes to lower government budgets is to cut subsidies and other forms of public compensation.

During the Arab uprisings, as rulers of oil-poor countries saw these economic reforms backfiring on Ben Ali in Tunisia and Mubarak in Egypt, they delayed austerity measures and

[1] Gause (2011) explains that these liberal economic reforms backfired on the Tunisian and Egyptian regimes in 2010 because, while these reforms did help increase economic growth rates, they widened the gap between the poor and the wealthy classes because of corruption and politically driven privatization.

increased subsidies. This was their way of monetarily accommodating protestors as well as the wider population in the absence of rents that would fulfil the authoritarian bargain. While I agree with Gause (2011) that the resulting corruption and crony privatization from the neoliberal economic policies adopted by oil-poor states led people to protest, I also argue that the expanded subsidy system in oil-poor states is so well-established and embedded in their economic landscape that cutting subsidies or reforming the system leads to popular revulsion. It follows that increasing subsidies or delaying austerity reforms appeases the population.

In this section, to determine when and how the Moroccan regime uses monetary concession to contain opposition events, I trace Morocco's subsidies and pushed- back austerity measures through longitudinal analysis of data from the IMF and Morocco's Ministries of Finance and Energy. Because data from the IMF and national accounts captures only a subset of budgetary subsidies, I also use secondary accounts of monetary accommodation for each examined opposition event (from the media and official reports). These accounts are significant to my research as they provide information on the amount of monetary concession used by the regime, as well as the way the regime portrays its use of monetary accommodation to the press and the public. Additionally, I supplement my data collection through in-depth interviews with members of government, activists, party leaders, and civil society organizations.

3.3.1 LET THEM EAT COUSCOUS…IN JAIL.

While the Moroccan regime lacks the rents that its Gulf counterparts use to counter rising unemployment rates and costs of livings, stifle protests and co-opt protestors (Menaldo;

2013), it grants other types of monetary concessions when faced with active opposition that is triggered (at least partly) by economic hardship (see Figure 21). Mainly, the regime accommodates the wider population with increased subsidies and delayed austerity measures. I argue that the monarch's reaction to moderate threat (i.e., major power loss, when the monarch's powers risk being reduced or checked) depends on the triggers of opposition, and it is usually a combination of repression and another strategy that is adequate to the demands of the opposition actors.

In other words, when the opposition actors do not aim to remove or separate from the ruler, then the monarch makes concessions if he can do so without losing power, but he represses opposition actors harshly if they continue to. When active opposition is triggered by economic hardship, the monarch grants monetary concessions as a first step, but also follows up using repression to ensure that the concession is accepted by protestors. This conforms with an important aspect of Guriev and Treisman's (2015) informational theory of dictatorship: that once other, non-violent means have failed and the opposition becomes overt, the regime can only use repression. Continued dissidence creates a greater risk of the status quo being changed, which prompts the ruler to use repressive action to eliminate the threat (Davenport 2007).

In resource-poor Morocco, the king represses the opposition harshly because the regime simply does not have the great resources of its Gulf allies; there is only so much the king can offer, and this is sometimes not enough for the opposition (as was the case in 1981). At this point, keeping in mind that the costliest outcome for the king is one that involves giving up power, he represses the opposition harshly because repression involves less power loss

compared to liberalization, which decreases the ruler's control over the political sphere (Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2010).

Figure 21: MAIN MONETARY CONCESSION OPPOSITION EVENTS IN MOROCCO, 1956-2017.

Event	Actors	Triggers			Motive	Date	Regime Reaction		
		Regional	Economic	Regime Repression Monopoly			Repress	Econ	Reform
Arab Spring	Wider pop.		**X**	**X**	Politics economic reform	2011-2	**X**	**X**	**X**
Fez Riots	Labor unions Wider pop.		**X**	**X**	Demands for higher wages, benefits	1990	**X**	**X**	
Bread Riots	Labor unions, Wider pop.		**X**	**X**	Economic hardship, lower subsidy	1981	**X**	**X**	

Author's table using historical analysis data

Regimes with more wealth at their disposal, like the Gulf monarchies, are more likely to offer higher monetary concessions that might satisfy opposition actors. While there is a tremendous amount of literature that covers differences in regime behavior depending on resource wealth (Mendalson 2011; Herb 2005; Wantchekon 2004; Beblawi 1987), the takeaway here is that rulers will not offer concessions (be they political or monetary) without a degree of repression. This conforms with Guriev and Treisman's (2015)

aforementioned argument, as well as with Svolik's (2012) assumption that dictators play games with other actors which involves a combination of co-optation and deterrence, as well as other techniques.

Stacher (2012) ties authoritarian endurance to micro-dynamics of co-optation across the MENA region, while Albrecht (2005) shows how the regime in Egypt co-opts specific organizations, and Waterbury (1973) shows how the makhzen tied elites to the monarchical system by co-opting them into a deeply ingrained system of patronage and accommodation. As Gandhi (2010) shows, the Moroccan regime historically made political concessions when it could not afford to monetarily co-opt the opposition; this was different to the regime in Ecuador which was in a similar position but refused to grant political concessions and was removed from power shortly thereafter. However, as Mekouar (2008) argues, the current regime has expanded its channels of co-optation using neoliberal reforms. My theory of strategic accommodation builds on these arguments and their shared implication that even oil-poor regimes concede materially to avoid power loss.

To illustrate this further, I use the 'bread riots' (*émeutes de pain)* of 1981. This is a significant event because, up to 1981, protests against the regime were triggered by political reasons such as the monarchy's suppression of civil and political rights and its monopoly over political power. In 1981, however, while Morocco, whose economy is largely agrarian, was suffering a four-year drought, the World Bank and the IMF imposed reduced subsidies for basic commodities as part of their structural adjustment program. This led the Moroccan Workers' Union and the Democratic Confederation of Workers to join forces and call for a general strike that soon escalated into riots in the economic capital (Casablanca) and other

cities, where members of the wider population and labor movements protested reduced subsidies and the ensuing increase of flour, wheat, and oil prices. At this point, the threat to the throne was not high as the king did not risk total power loss; the protests were not aimed at the monarchy but at economic conditions. However, the threat was also not minor; the regime had to respond to growing unhappiness with economic hardship and did not have enough funds to do so.

Out of the three strategies of authoritarian survival that this dissertation examines, liberalization was irrelevant in this case and the king made no move toward it; hence the score of 0 in liberalization for this event (refer to Figure 15). Left to choose between repression and monetary concession, the king moved to appease the opposition by announcing a 50% cut on price increases, despite the strain such a cut would put on public funds; therefore, the event is coded as 5 for monetary concession (refer to Figure 15). Hassan II's initial move towards concession confirms Ciezadlo's (2011) argument that authoritarian regimes in the Middle East use food subsidies to replace larger-scale economic reforms and buy off protestors. However, in the case of Morocco in 1981, protestors were unsatisfied with this concession and the labor unions continued to demand a cut back of 100% on the increase in primary product prices and threatened the continuation of a general strike (Chmirou 2012; *Aujourd'hui Le Maroc* 2005).

It was at this point, after its attempts at accommodation through monetary concession had failed, that the regime prepressed protestors to end the strike. The army raided the cities where the strike was held; its helicopters monitored the cities and its tanks were present on the streets. As the army's intervention fueled more protests, Hassan II proclaimed a state of

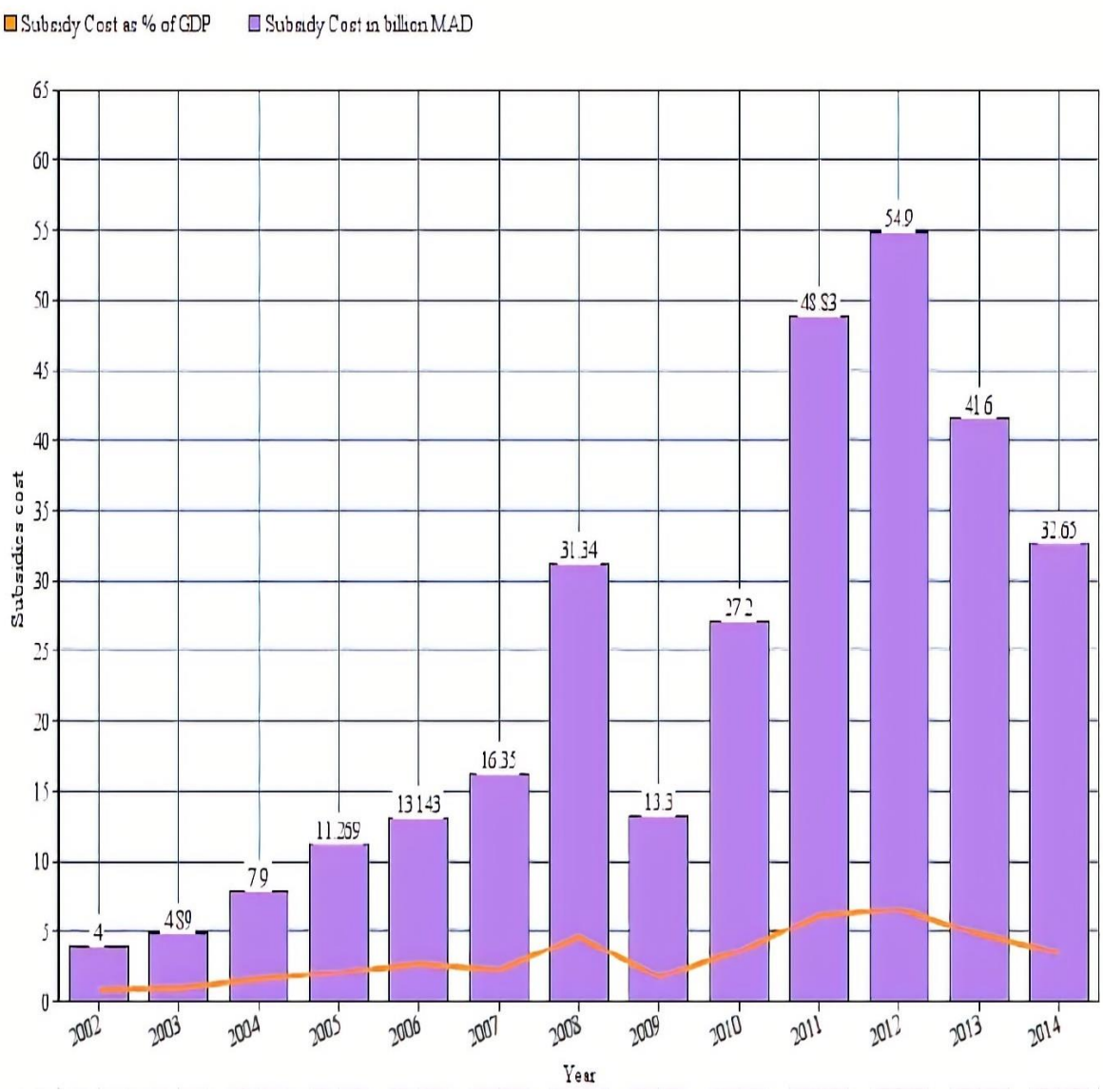
emergency and the army, under his direction, ruled the cities were the riots had occurred, effectively containing the uprising. Political violence during this period was high as the coercive apparatus tortured and shot at protestors; the casualties in Casablanca alone ranged from 114 (according to the Equity and Reconciliation Commission) to 800 (according to the socialist PPS party), with close to 5,000 arrests.[2] This move towards repression only after attempts at accommodation had failed conforms with my argument that once non-violent means have failed and the opposition becomes overt, the regime can only use repression (Guriev and Treisman 2015) to put an end to continued dissidence which creates greater risk of the status quo being changed, and of the balance of power shifting away from the regime.

Experts strongly agree that Morocco's subsidy system is too costly, flawed (because subsidies are untargeted and can thus lead to inequality), and unsustainable. Even after phasing out fossil fuel subsidies, the remaining compensation charge is astronomical. Despite these significant issues, the Moroccan regime maintains the subsidy system; it increases subsidies or delays planned subsidy reforms to contain or preempt protests triggered (at least in part) by economic hardship. As Figure 22 shows, there were drastic subsidy increases in 2008 (when the economic crisis hit) and 2010-2014 (the Arab Spring and post-Arab Spring period). There are of course exogenous factors that partly explain the rise in subsidy spending during these periods, especially changing prices of energy products. Morocco, significantly, is the largest energy importer in North Africa, and imports over 91%

[2] For a more detailed overview, see: Zakia Daoud, *Les années de plomb, 1958-1988, Chroniques d'une résistance* (Houilles: Editions Manucius 2007).

of its energy- including gas, coal, oil, and oil products (International Energy Agency Report 2014). Given Morocco's overdependence on energy imports and its historical subsidization of energy, its subsidy spending depends on the oil boom and bust cycles.

Figure 22: EVOLUTION OF SUBSIDY COST IN MOROCCO (2002-2014)



Source: Author's graph using data from Morocco's Ministry of Finances, the IMF, and the World Bank.

When oil prices rose in 2005 and 2008, Morocco spent $2 billion and $8 billion respectively on energy imports (African Economic Development Institute 2014). While exogenous factors may partly explain the Moroccan regime's increased subsidy spending during these periods, the role of popular protest is not negligible. The Moroccan regime, like regimes in other oil-poor countries, not only increased subsidies in 2011 to contain Arab Spring protests, but also delayed planned energy reforms and froze energy prices as soon as Ben Ali was overthrown (El-Katiri and Fattouh 2015: 8), presumably to avoid further unrest. The regime did this at a great expense, since Morocco is an IMF debtor and was supposed to follow through with reforms proposed in the late 2000s to cut down energy subsidies. Morocco's subsidy bill for 2012 (after it had made monetary concessions following protests) was double what it was in 2010 (before the protests started)- refer to Figure 22. As I pointed out in section 2.1.3, the Moroccan regime could appease protestors monetarily partly because of loans and financial aid from its GCC allies, and partly because the regime made a deal with the IMF- promising to reduce its subsidy spending in exchange for a Liquidity lifeline of $6.2 billion. Morocco kept its side of the deal by cutting its petroleum subsidies and adopting green reforms in 2015 (long after Arab Spring- inspired protests had died down).

3.4 A PSEUDO-DEMOCRATIC MONARCHY

Supporters of the Moroccan exceptionalism thesis point out events like the Arab Spring and claim that the regime's reaction was an exceptional combination of preemptive democratic reforms and a lack of repression (Martinez 2015; Bartolucci 2011). Those who disagree with this theory highlight the regime's use of autocratic tactics, especially violence, to disperse

and quash the opposition (Benchemsi 2012; *Idem* 2011; Rachidi 2015). Between 2016 and 2018, police presence has been particularly heavy, and large-scale arrests have taken place at the Rif protests currently taking place in Al Hoceima,[3] where protesters were explicitly banned from mobilizing (Primary Footage 2017).

Unlike democratization, liberalization does not increase the public's ability to directly influence or participate in government, but it does enhance individual freedoms and people's ability to participate in the public sphere. The most notable example of political liberalization in Morocco occurred in the early 1990s, when Hassan II allowed the Leftist opposition to assume power in the *Alternance*, freed notable political prisoners, closed his secret detention camps, and transferred their prisoners to regular prisons. On the other hand, Morocco has not undergone democratization as the regime has never reduced its powers; the concessions offered by the regime enhance individual freedoms without increasing civil freedom. The regime only grants the opposition reforms so long as they do not limit its own powers, and it represses the unsatisfied opposition actors who continue to protest, thus conforming with Guriev and Treisman's (2015) aforementioned informational theory of dictatorship which holds that: once other, non-violent means have failed and the opposition becomes overt, the regime resorts to repression. Thus, the decrease in civil repression is the Moroccan regime's concession to the opposition, one that allows the regime to keep its vast political powers while maintaining an illusion of reform. The use of political violence, one

[3] Author's interviews (G, H) with opposition actors 2017.

the other hand, is the regime's way to ensure that the immediate threat of protest is eliminated.

Sweet (2001: 22) argues that this combination of political authoritarianism and moderate civil liberties is not unique to the Moroccan case; rather, it is a subtype of authoritarianism that emerged following the third wave of democratization[4] and that has been adopted by several regimes: *pseudo-democracy*. Sweet's argument touches on my discussion in Chapter 1 about Huntington's king's dilemma which predicted that 20th century social reforms following the fall of the Soviet Union would make it difficult for regimes like those in absolute monarchies to survive unchanged. Such an environment combined with Morocco's proximity- both geographic and diplomatic- to several Western liberal democracies led the regime to put up a democratic façade behind which it continues to function as a classic authoritarian system. The democratic façade is a result of the regime's political openings, for instance switching to a bicameral system as Hassan II did following protests by parties and labor unions in 1962 or reforming the constitution as Mohammed VI has done in 2011.

These examples of political liberalization do not cross the threshold to democratization because they do not restrict the ruler's powers or enhance the ability of the public to influence political matters. While Hassan II proposed a constitution, which created a bicameral legislature- i.e., two chambers of which only one is elected by the citizenry

[4] The third wave of democratization in world politics occurred in Latin America in the mid-1970s and 1980s, Asia Pacific in the late 1980s, Eastern Europe Following the fall of the USSR in 1991, and sub-Saharan Africa in the 1990s (Huntington 1991).

(*Moroccan Constitution of 1962*, III.44), he remained the strongest political actor as his powers were neither limited nor opposed by Parliament. This is not to trivialize the impact of the shift from a unicameral to a bicameral system on Morocco's path towards (pseudo)democracy; most notably, it strengthened the structure of the party system (Beling 1964). However, the king retained the right to dissolve Parliament at will and to veto all legislation passed by it (*Moroccan Constitution of 1962*, III.62). Hassan II's extensive powers made the opposition nominal and consolidated the power of the *makhzen* (Silvertein 2011). Similarly, while Mohammed VI introduced important constitutional reforms in 2011, due to loopholes in the constitutional text as well as to the robustness of the state institutions which backed the regime, these reforms do not limit his political powers as Head of State.

Neither example of political liberalization as a spontaneous endeavor on the regime's part; both were reactions to social upheaval (in the 2012 example) and to demands for change (in both examples), thus conforming with the conditions I laid out in Chapter 2: Authoritarian regimes use political liberalization against two types of threats: imminent and ongoing (Lucas 2006). That is, in the face of ongoing protests from political parties, a ruler might make reforms that give the *illusion of* liberalization without affecting his powers. He might, for example, allow a transition from a unicameral to a bicameral system, as did Hassan II in 1962- a move which did not reduce the king's powers but appeased part of the opposition (the Istiqlal and USFP parties as well as the Moroccan Union of Workers).

A ruler might also introduce new reforms to avoid a potential crisis- *preemptive liberalization*- as did Mohammed VI in 2012. As soon as protests started in Tunisia, the King sought advice from France on how to negotiate reforms, presumably to contain the

situation in Morocco from devolving into a full-blown revolution like in Tunisia and Egypt. The Moroccan regime also uses *promised future liberalization* to grant the opposition smaller reforms and ask it to wait for more significant (and gradual) reforms. The opposition thus accepts these promises since the ruler has already shown some amenability to reform, and the ruler does not surrender any power. This is exemplified by Mohammed VI's famous Arab Spring speech in which he promised to meet the demands of protestors for democratization (Mohammed VI 2011).

To ascertain (1) the way in which the Moroccan regime uses different types of political liberalization to survive during opposition events, and (2) the conditions which prompt the regime to use this tactic, I examine royal speeches and announcements, and I study constitutional and legal reforms that were ratified during or shortly after opposition events. Using this method, I distinguish between genuine, promised, and illusionary liberalization. This distinction allows me to determine (1) the conditions under which the regime presumes it can avoid making real concessions, and (2) the decisive conditions that push the monarch to genuinely give up power and genuinely liberalize. Additionally, I supplement my data collection through in-depth interviews with current and past members of government, activists, party leaders, and civil society organizations.

3.4.1 MODERATE POLITICAL VIOLENCE AND SOME LIBERALIZATION

The costliest outcome for dictators is giving up power, and rulers avoid this outcome using different authoritarian tactics, including monetary accommodation, repression, and political liberalization. In general, monetary accommodation is costly, and in some cases (when the opposition demands political reforms), it may be ineffective. Repression, used on its own,

may lead to potential backlash from the opposition and could make the regime overly dependent on the coercive apparatus. While political liberalization may be politically constraining for the regime, rulers usually liberalize knowing that the constraint can be taken back or that it is too minimal to be impactful. It is therefore in their benefit to remove the impending threat of overthrow by promising, pretending to, or genuinely liberalizing, before backsliding into repression or reneging reforms. In my earlier example of Hassan II in 1962, merely three years after passing the country's first constitution, the king dissolved Morocco's parliament in 1965 following student riots.

In Morocco, liberalization often takes place in the form of constitutional reforms which respond to some of the opposition's demands, but only in so far as they do not affect the powers of the regime. The Moroccan regime has only liberalized in the sense that it has created or reformed constitutional laws and democratic institutions without being constrained by them, thus giving the illusion of liberalization without running any of its risks and without ever crossing the threshold of democratization (see Figure 23). I am not making an oversimplified argument that undermines the intelligence of the opposition. Rather, I argue that the regime's success in adopting liberalization does not rely on opposition actors not catching on to its tactics eventually. Indeed, as I show through the example of Hassan II in 1962, the opposition does catch on and reacts accordingly. Rather, what is key to the regime's success is following political liberalization with repression that incapacitates the opposition from further opposing it in an effective manner. Through this combination of authoritarian tactics, which upholds the regime's democratic façade, the Moroccan regime eliminates the immediate threat while keeping various members of the domestic and international community content.

I illustrate these points in the following section using my earlier example of Hassan II in 1962, when the regime combined repression (mostly political violence against opposition actors) and illusionary liberalization (through a constitutional smokescreen) to avoid losing power. This event represented a moderate threat to the regime. The opposition actors were the country's two main political parties (both of which had played a key role in the still-recent struggle for independence) and the Union of Moroccan Workers (the largest trade union in Morocco). The three branches of the opposition were highly organized and had a well-defined hierarchy. The *Istiqlal's* headquarters in Rabat, for example, controlled regional party inspectors that were in charge of 1200 party secretaries by 1958 (Ashford 1964: 5). The opposition wanted the regime to transform into a constitutional rather than an absolute monarchy, a transformation would limit the monarch's powers.

The threat to the regime was not high, as the opposition did not want to overthrow the regime or replace it; however, the threat was moderate, because the opposition wanted to limit the monarch's powers. This threat was amplified by the unstable political context; by 1962, Hassan II had only been in power for one year, and Morocco had only gained its independence six years prior. The regime had neither the resources nor the motivation to fight the country's (then) strong and organized political elite and wanted to form peaceful relations with it. To that end, Hassan II offered concessions which did not limit his powers and thus did not satisfy the opposition. The opposition continued to protest, and the king repressed it to contain the threat. This conforms with the pattern I outline in my argument in Chapter 2.

Figure 23: MAIN LIBERALIZATION OPPOSITION EVENTS IN MOROCCO, 1956- 2017.

Event	Actors	Triggers			Motive	Date	Regime Reaction		
		Regional	Economic	Regime Repression Monopoly			Repress	Econ.	Reform
Arab Spring	Wider pop.		X	X	Politics economic reform	2011-2012	X	X	X
Family Code	Wider pop. civ. society				Civil reform	2002			X
Rigged Elections	Parties			X	Regime rigged elections	1970	X		X
Student Protests	Wider pop. Parties		X	X	Student-related & socioeconomic	1965-2016	X		X
Elite Power Struggle	Parties			X	Monarchy power monopoly	1962-1965	X		X

Source: Author's table using archives, interviews, and historical analysis data.

Following strong protests from the socialist UNFP and nationalist Istiqlal parties as well as the Union of Moroccan Workers, which took issue with Hassan II's vast political powers and his delaying of constitutional reforms promised by King Mohammed V seven years prior,[5] Hassan II proposed and passed the country's first constitution. His concessions to the opposition included: classifying Morocco as a "constitutional, democratic, and social monarchy," (*Moroccan Constitution 1962*. Art. I, Sec.1), shifting from a unicameral to a

[5] Author's (A-C) interviews with senior members of the opposition October 2016; the leader of the UMT was quoted in Beling (1964:165) saying: "I am not sure that the King even wants a constitution. I am not sure that we will ever have one. We have talked about it for seven years and maybe we will get one on Judgment Day."

bicameral system, and extending political rights- freedom of speech, organization, etc. Furthermore, he put the project of the constitution to a vote through national referendum, saying that the Moroccan people had a right to decide on this matter (Beling 1964: 172). These were all safe but moderate concessions; safe because they did not diminish the monarch's powers, and moderate because they consolidated the country's party system and allowed the Moroccan people to elect one of the two chambers. While the constitution did not genuinely address the parties' demands (and both the Istiqlal and UNFP protested the text of the constitution fervently),[6] it put Morocco on the path to becoming a non-absolute monarchy.[7]

However, the fact that these were safe concessions (that did not address the demands of the opposition) triggered continued protest. The opposition argued that the constitution perpetuated and solidified the king's powers rather than limiting them. Specifically, opposition actors took issue with the fact that the king could take over all political powers if he declared a state of emergency (*Moroccan Constitution 1962*. Art. 35), that the bicameral system only retained an advisory role (and the king could veto any of their decisions), that the monarch could dissolve Parliament, and that he could change laws passed by it (*Idem*,

[6] Author's interviews (D-F, H) with senior members of the opposition, September 2016 and April 2017.

[7] Indeed, an absolute monarchy would not have democratic institutions, no matter how limited their powers may be.

Arts. 25, 70, and 77). Furthermore, the opposition objected to the regime's claim that the constitution was legitimate because most people had voted for it in the referendum.[8]

Combined with the opposition's ignored demands, the king's vast powers led to continued upheaval which, by June 1965, had expanded to involve labor unions and student groups.[9] As I discuss in Chapter 2, while dictators prefer to use repression sparingly (Guriev and Treisman 2015), they repress the opposition when other, non-violent tactics have failed. The reason is that continued dissidence creates a greater risk of the status quo being changed. This is what happened in Morocco following 1962 as the political elite remained unsatisfied with the constitution; opposition actors continued to protest and mobilized more people, which created a greater threat for the king. Thus, Hassan II used violence and political maneuvering to contain the threat and silence the opposition.

For the most part, the regime targeted the wider groups of opposition actors (i.e., leaders and members of political parties that opposed the king, mostly the Islamists, socialists and communists) and their families, and tortured and/or arrested them (Guessous 2009). In other cases, the regime's opponents were exiled and/or forcibly disappeared, as was the case of Mehdi Ben Barka in 1965.[10] As would become its pattern, the regime was moderately

[8] Indeed, the opposition pointed out that the majority of the population was illiterate and thus misguided (Beling 1964: 172).

[9] Author's interviews (I-N) with former dissidents, March 2016 and October 2016.

[10] Hassan II is widely believed to have ordered the forcible disappearance Mehdi Ben Barka (the founder of the UNFP) in 1963. See: Jacques Derogy, and Frédéric Ploquin. *Ils Ont Tué Ben Barka* (Paris: Fayard, 1999).

cautious of political elites because, while they did not call for a change in leadership, they were organized and had reach in the wider population. The regime reacted in a similar way when political parties contested and boycotted the rigged legislative elections of 1970. Thus, because these actors possessed enough power of mobilization and organization to cause political instability and to possibly reduce the king's powers, they presented a moderate threat to the regime. To eliminate this threat, maintain power, and contain continued protests, the regime used repression after its earlier concessions were not accepted.

As for political maneuvering, the regime used various authoritarian tactics to weaken the Istiqlal and UNFP. First, it formed a coalition of administration-backed parties prior to the 1963 elections to limit the votes for the Istiqlal. Then, the king refused to reinstate Istiqlal ministers to the new government. In a more brutal move, he imprisoned key actors of the UNFP and the Left movement overall, which prompted other leftists to flee the country. By mid-July 1963, 104 socialist leaders were arrested; 24 of them were elected deputies of the UNFP (Beling 1967: 178).[11] Thus, the UNFP became powerless, and the Istiqlal was effectively isolated from political power.

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[11] See the account of the Third National Congress of the UMT in *La Nation Africaine*, January 8, 1963.

3.4.2 NO REPRESSION: AN OUTLIER?

While the norm during Morocco's modern history is for the king to combine liberalization with repression to ensure that the opposition would accept his concessions, there are some instances where he liberalizes without repressing. In 1990, 2002, and 2004, the king genuinely addressed the demands of protestors without repressing them. The conditions that led to this reaction show that the king acted in accordance to my argument.

In 1990, internal pressure (from political parties) and international criticism of the state's human rights violations led Hassan II to free political prisoners and create an independent commission to report human rights violations. In 2002, following non- violent protests by groups of supporters and opponents of the planned reform of the family code (*Moudawana*) in Rabat, Casablanca, and other major cities, the regime did not repress protestors. Rather, Mohammed VI removed the text of the code for consideration and reformed it four years later. In 2004, following small protests, Mohammed VI made drastic improvements in the area of human rights. He freed 33 political prisoners and, in an unprecedented move, created the Equity and Reconciliation Commission to collect the testimonies of victims of the Years of Lead[12] and grant them reparations.

[12] Years of Lead marked the peak of Hassan II's repressive years. This period is known for the king's violent backlash against the leftist opposition starting in 1963, two failed military coups in 1971, and assassination attempts on the king's life. For more information, see: Maâti Monjib, *La Monarchie Marocaine Et La Lutte Pour Le Pouvoir: Hassan II Face à L'opposition Nationale, De L'indépendance à L'état D'exception* (Paris: L'Harmattan, 1992).

In these three cases, the demands of the opposition never targeted the king's powers, so he knew that any liberalization he undertook would not constrain him. He was therefore able to grant protestors what they wanted without being threatened. Having obtained what, they wanted; protestors stopped protesting. The lack of continued protest meant that the king did not have to use repression. More importantly, the reforms were mostly civil rather than political; because the protestors did not demand political changes, there was no real threat to the king's power, and thus no need for violence.

3.5 TESTING MY THEORY ON MOROCCO'S REACTION TO THE ARAB UPRISINGS

Many would argue that how the Moroccan regime contained the Arab uprisings breaks from my pattern because it was supposedly free of violence and the king made significant reforms (Pelham 2012; Lewis 2011; Khashoggi 2014). However, while media and academic sources hailed Mohammed VI for his democratic efforts during the Arab Spring (Tremlett 2011; Charai and Braude 2011; Bartolucci 2011) others have argued that the concessions he made were illusions of democratization rather than genuine efforts and pointed out that the regime continued to use political violence while claiming to democratize (Benchemsi 2013).

While it is true that, by the time the constitution was adopted (three months after the first protests), there was not much police violence, the monarchy harshly repressed the crowds once the opposition continued to protest and express its dissatisfaction with the reforms. For instance, when a peaceful manifestation took place in Casablanca and Rabat after the king's speech, police forces violently dispersed the protestors. Not only that, but by many accounts,

the referendum vote was rigged. Benchemsi (2012) terms it the 'Soviet referendum' because the result was an unlikely 98.5% in favor of the constitution. Furthermore, the referendum campaign was greatly biased- public media praised the constitution, mosques called for people to vote "yes", the king announced in his speech that he would vote in its favor and encouraged people to do the same, etc. Combined with massive electoral fraud (evidence appeared of officials rummaging through open ballots, stuffing of the votes at a large scale) this propaganda raises the question: would a truly democratic effort require such repression?

Figure 24: TRIGGERS AND REGIME REACTIONS TO THE ARAB UPRISINGS IN MOROCCO.

Event	Actors	Triggers			Motive	Date	Regime Reaction		
		Regional	Economic	Regime Repression Monopoly			Repress	Econ.	Reform
Arab Spring	Wider pop.		X	X	Political economic reform	2011-2012	X	X	X

Source: Author's table using historical analysis data.

A closer look at the opposition's demands (see Figure 24) and the threat that the Arab Spring represented to the regime shows that Mohammed VI's seemingly contradictory reaction to the protests and his efforts to contain them were predictable and follow the argument which I lay out in Chapter 2; his actions ensured he would not lose power and that his control over political matters would not be reduced. Because the proposed reforms did not satisfy the opposition, which continued to protest, the regime used repression.

The opposition consisted of the wider population- specifically, educated members of the middle class from various regions and with diverse backgrounds and interests. They had clear-stated goals, which included constitutional and economic reforms. Importantly, for the most part, they did not condemn the king himself but focused on his entourage and the government. I categorize this threat as moderate; while protestors did not want to replace the regime, their demands did require the king's powers to be reduced. They wanted a democratic and constitutional monarchy with a strong government headed by a Prime Minister who possessed significant powers.

Thus, although the Arab Spring did not present a great enough threat to the monarch for him to use drastic repression, the threat was not low enough to warrant a liberalization-only strategy. While I acknowledge that the threat to the regime was amplified because these protests happened during the Arab Spring (and there was thus a risk of domino effect), I consider this to be a political context rather than a unique situation. In 1962, Hassan II faced an unstable political context due to recent independence from colonialism and a strong and organized political elite. In 2011, Mohammed VI faced an unstable political context due the regional nature of the Arab Spring (as well as to the socioeconomic consequences of the 2008 economic crisis).

To contain the 2011 protests, the king proposed a new constitution that did not limit his vast powers but that did present important civil reforms (e.g. making the Amazigh language Morocco's official language alongside Arabic and allocating resources for women's shelters) and some political reforms (like giving the Prime Minister slightly more power). While the speech announcing that a new constitution would be drafted calmed protests,

opposition actors were not satisfied by the proposed reforms and the regime-established Constitutional Commission (Abouzzohour and Tomé-Alonso 2018). This led them to renew their protests, which prompted the regime to order heavy police intervention and crackdown on the opposition (Lalami 2011)- refer to Figure 17, 2010 onwards. The takeaway, then, is not that the regime achieved a compromise with opposition actors by duping them; rather, it used repression to force the compromise on the opposition.

The demands and triggers of the opposition were not only political but also economic. Economic hardship, especially unrelentingly high unemployment rates that had been soaring since the 2008 economic crisis, played an important role in mobilizing the citizenry. The regime used moderate monetary concessions in the form of food and fuel subsidies as well as cutbacks on austerity measures to appease the public. Although the Moroccan regime could not pledge money for new jobs (as some Gulf monarchies did), it reportedly spent around four billion dollars on subsidies for fuel and food (El-Katiri and Fattouh 2015: 108-15; Araar, El- Massnaoui, and Vermeren: 1; Masetti et al. 2013), a significant amount for a country of Morocco's meager wealth. The king also asked Parliament to keep the range of cost of living within reasonable proportions and to increase the minimum wage by at least 10%; refer to Figure 22, from 2010 to 2012. The regime's reaction slightly eased the economic hardship but did not satisfy the opposition actors who continued to protest. At this point, the regime used repression to make protestors accept its concessions.

Regime behavior during the Arab Spring thus conforms with the pattern that I outline in Chapter 2. Furthermore, as we are currently in the post-Arab Spring period, I can draw interesting conclusions regarding the Moroccan regime's various tradeoff tactics and the tug

of war it plays with the opposition. Morocco's first democratic experiment in 1962 established a lasting pattern of failed democratic effort in the kingdom. In all subsequent experiments (1970, 1972, 1992, 1996, and- most recently- 2011), the king would only move towards liberalization if it maintained- if not strengthened- his powers. Thus, the unsatisfied opposition would protest the reforms, and the regime would repress it.

This pattern touches on my discussion in Chapter 1 of the significance of my topic with regards to the Orientalist take on authoritarian persistence in the MENA region. The aforementioned pattern allows us to examine the democracy paradox in Morocco from a different angle than the revisionist and imperialist approaches. Indeed, my pattern suggests that the persistence of authoritarianism in Morocco is not due to Arab or Muslim values, or to foreign intervention. Rather, it is due to the regime's instrumentalization of democratic effort to avoid reducing its powers. To put it simply, the paradox is that (1) Morocco's kings were never prepared to give up power, so (2) any move towards liberalization that they made was doomed because genuine liberalization (and eventually democratization) require that the powers of the ruler be checked by democratic institutions; power loss is what the opposition had always demanded.

3.6 CONCLUSION

Carrying out an in-depth historical analysis of any regime (Morocco's included) sheds light on the nuanced quality of both regime reaction to active opposition and the threat presented by an opposition event. Upheaval does not happen in a vacuum, and historical context matters greatly. In the Moroccan case, Mohammed VI inherited a far more stable country than Hassan II had, and the obstacles he faced were arguably less dangerous. While Hassan

II struggled for power against a strong, credible, and organized opposition which he later weakened through political maneuvering and violence, Mohammed VI has never had to compete against another political actor. While Hassan II's decision to introduce reforms rather than repress the political elite in 1962 was due to the regime's lack of resources and its disorganized coercive apparatus in a recently independent country, Mohammed VI is backed by the army and has access to more funds.

However, the current king is also constrained by political context. His predecessor used brutal repression in a time where this was globally accepted. Hassan II's contemporaries- Hussein of Jordan, Saddam Hussein, Reza Shah Pahlavi, Pol Pot, Mao Zedong, Ferdinand Marcos, Omar Bongo, to name a few- were some of the most violent despots of the 20th century. While brash and overt authoritarianism did not stand out at that time, it is less acceptable in the 21st century. Most of today's dictators have had to rebrand and transform into new-style dictatorships that use brutal force sparingly and maintain control through political and economic maneuvering.

Importantly, however, carrying out a systematic analysis of authoritarian regime reaction to active opposition helps strip away the historical context and points to a basic pattern of regime reaction to various types and levels of threat that leads to survival. While historical context does matter and can explain the nuanced use of repression, monetary concession, and liberalization, regimes throughout modern history (in the cases I look at) use these tactics in a similar way and under similar conditions. The regime's decision to use a tactic or a combination of tactics is linked to the nature of the opposition event (the level of threat it presents and the degree of potential power loss).

What I find is that the regime represses without any form of concession only when the threat of the opposition is so high that overthrow is likely. This is the case when the opposition explicitly wants to remove the regime, as did elements of the army in 1971 and 1972, and when opposition is isolated within a region which wants autonomy (thus leading to the ruler's loss of political and economic power) as was the case in the Rif in 1957-1959 and 1984. However, as I discuss in detail in Chapter 1, it is important to acknowledge the elasticity of the measure of threat to the ruler. Since opposition events do not take place in a vacuum, factors and actors outside of them may affect the level of threat. These exogenous factors may be international, regional, or domestic, and may make a threat greater or smaller than it would be otherwise. In my example of the 1990-1991 student riots, Hassan II's brutal reaction cannot be attributed to a single factor, as no one factor on its own presented an unusually high threat for the king who had been used to containing political and economic unrest. However, the combined triggers of active opposition (economic and political) as well as the widespread organization of the opposition actors created a major threat to his rule.

When overthrow or major loss of power is less likely, the regime offers economic and/or political concessions (depending on the demands of the opposition). If these concessions do not fulfil their purpose to contain further protest, the continued upheaval increases the threat to the regime. This prompts the regime to use repression to contain the continued protests and, in a way, to force the opposition to accept the offered concessions. In the Moroccan case, where resources are sparse, the regime can relieve some but not all the economic hardship that triggered the upheaval. This does not satisfy the opposition which continues to protest, and the regime therefore resorts to repression. When the demands of the opposition are political and require a change that would reduce the ruler's powers, the ruler offers

concessions that do not genuinely address the opposition's demands but that may be viewed as a step towards liberalization. These concessions usually only meet those demands that lead to very little if any power loss; the 2011 constitutional reforms are the most recent example.

Interestingly, based on my interviews and archival research, most of these actors had learned over time to become begrudgingly satisfied with small concessions. In 1962, for example, some members of the Istiqlal expressed dissatisfaction with the new constitution but they stopped protesting and accepted the reform, partly because they wanted to obtain at least what the king was proposing.[13] This takes us back to an important argument I make in Chapter 1 regarding the interrelationship between opposition actors and the regime. A regime-focused approach is not sufficient and does not adequately address the questions posed by this dissertation. The theory that I develop allows me to shed light on the role of opposition actors on (future) regime reaction to active opposition, and on the interrelationship between these actors and the regime. While I acknowledge that dictators often have the upper hand in terms of resources and coercive power, my analysis in this chapter shows that they frequently and consistently consider the potential reactions of the opposition before acting.

In the 1962 example, the initial struggle for power between Hassan II and the political elite lasted for four years, during which there were negotiations between both sides but also

[13] Author's interview (O) with a senior member of the Istiqlal party, October 2016.

political maneuvering and repression. Expecting the opposition to be unhappy with his proposed constitution, Hassan II weakened the political parties by imprisoning and exiling their leaders and isolating them from the rest of the political scene. Through this maneuvering, the regime ensured that the opposition would eventually have to accept the initial concessions, albeit begrudgingly. Following this, the political elite, in turn, became aware of the regime's tactics and acted accordingly. As early as 1962, before the constitution was drafted, the leader of the Moroccan Union of Workers- Mahjoub Ben Sadiq- argued that the way towards democratization does not depend on the king issuing a constitution, but on people being allowed to freely participate in the political scene. The problem for the opposition was not whether the king would propose a constitution- they knew this would be his tactic; the issue was that the proposed constitution would not change the status quo.[14]

Following the unsatisfying reforms proposed by the 1962 constitution, the opposition learned that reforms initiated by the king would only benefit him and protect his powers. One year later, the opposition disclosed that, far from implementing a constitutional monarchy, the constitution it legalized absolutism instead.[15] The opposition was aware that the ruler would use loopholes in the text of the constitution to maintain or strengthen his position. The regime's behavior during and shortly following 1962 affected the opposition's

[14] Mahjoub Ben Sadiq, speaking at a Seminar at University of Southern California, as quoted in Beling (1964: 179)

[15] As quoted in *L'avant-garde* (Novemeber 24, 1962) in the original French: "Loin d'instaurer une monarchie constitutionelle, le projet de constitution, n'est en fait, qu'une 'constitution monarchique'."

future actions. During the 1970 legislative elections, for example, the parties protested as soon as they realized the regime was rigging the vote; and, indeed, they had been expecting this sort of behavior as the regime has shown in the past that it would not go through with reforms that limit its powers.

This chapter's most important contribution, then, is that it highlights the contextual strategic interactions between the regime and its opponents; it shows not only how opposition impacts regime survival, but also how successful survival-seeking regime behavior in turn affects the level of future opposition. This becomes clear in my comparative analysis of the Arab Spring for different regimes. The Arab Spring represented a moderate threat to the Moroccan monarchy, but after the regime appeased and repressed the crowds, the threat decreased. In contrast, the Arab Spring represented a moderate threat to Libya's Colonel Muammar Gaddafi, but the threat increased drastically after the Libyan regime's brutal repression fueled the crowds. Accordingly, the way that the regime reacts to dissidence affects future dissidence, and dissidence affects future regime reaction. The importance of studying these interactions and consequence relates to my dissertation's aim of moving beyond an explanatory model of regime survival to a predictive one. If I can determine how past dissidence movements affected the regime's immediate (and future) behavior, and how the regime's reaction to active opposition affected future movements, then I would be able to advance conclusions about future regime and opposition behavior. This is why outlining a pattern of regime reaction to active opposition is important; it is not merely explanatory but also predictive.

CHAPTER 4: THEORY BUILDING – REGIME SURVIVAL IN A RESOURCE-RICH, ABSOLUTE MONARCHY

The continued survival of the Omani monarchy has puzzled scholars and policy researchers alike. Most sources explain the regime's endurance with factors tied to some form of legitimacy which- in turn- is tied to Oman's monarchical structure: Supposedly, Oman is an "oasis of peace" in the MENA region where dissidence rarely takes place (Gidda 2017). Adopting the cultural approach which I strongly disprove in Chapter 2 (section 2.1.1), other scholars posit that Qaboos survived the Arab Spring because- as a hereditary ruler- he possesses more political legitimacy than non-monarchs (Jones and Ridout 2015: 251). These scholars use the lack of direct criticism he faced during the protests to measure Qaboos' supposedly higher legitimacy, noting that he faced less criticism than Mohammed VI, Abdullah of Jordan, and Hamad of Bahrain (*Idem*; Worrall 2012).

An interesting potential explanation for Qaboos' survival is that the population did not view him as a successor since he has ruled Oman since 1970 and is thus the only rulers most Omanis know (Jones and Ridout 2015: 252). In contrast, other rulers (monarchs and non-monarchs alike) are the successors of "illustrious predecessors," for example in Morocco, Jordan, Syria, and Egypt. These scholars note that this puts Qaboos in a unique position as only Gaddafi in Libya enjoyed as much primacy. To further support this theory, scholars

point out the fact that opposition against Mubarak escalated when he tried to name his son as heir.

These legitimacy-based explanations are highly problematic. First, lack of dissidence does not equate legitimacy; in highly repressive states, it is extremely difficult to express anti-regime sentiments. Indeed, it is impossible to measure legitimacy in dictatorships where researchers cannot freely survey populations or hold focus groups. Second, dissidence does in fact take place in Oman (see Figure 25 below), and there have been at least 13 events of active opposition[1] from 1900 to 2018. Furthermore, that Qaboos did not face direct criticism does not mean that people are satisfied with his rule; it is illegal in Oman to defame the Sultan, so people avoid mentioning him in protests to avoid being arrested (Article 126 Omani Penal Code 1974). Indeed, as I discuss further below (section 4.3.1), more than twenty activists were jailed in 2012 for lèse-majesté (i.e., insulting the monarch).

Additionally, the aforementioned claim that Qaboos faced less criticism than monarchs did in Morocco, Jordan, and Bahrain is not factually correct. In these regimes, monarchs rarely faced any direct criticism during the Arab Spring because of their lèse-majesté rules; the implication that Qaboos was unique in this matter is misleading. Finally, the claim that Qaboos is more legitimate because he is the only ruler most Omanis remember is dubious; not only is this a correlative argument (rather than a causal one) but Qaboos has faced

[1] As a reminder, active opposition events ("opposition events") may be peaceful (non-violent protests and marches, civil disobedience, sit-ins, creating and sharing pamphlets, elite negotiations, opposition politics, strikes, and riots) or violent (coup d'états, revolution, uprising, violent protests, and terrorism). An opposition actor is one that actively participates in an opposition event to challenge the regime or its policies.

opposition throughout his rule (see Figure 25, 1970 onward). Furthermore, the comparison the authors themselves draw to Gaddafi refutes their own argument; while the Libyan president was the founder and leader of the Libyan Arab Republic and the only ruler most Libyans knew in 2011, he was overthrown and brutally murdered.

This leads to the puzzle I repeatedly highlight in Chapters 1 and 2: Given that the Omani sultanate (like the seven other remaining MENA monarchies) has survived numerous and significant events of active opposition throughout its modern history, what has the regime in Oman done to survive so far? Rather than adopting a cultural approach, I look beyond refutable personalist theories of regime survival that hinge on the legitimacy of (specific or all) monarchs. Instead, I examine how the Omani regime reacted to the opposition events it survived throughout its modern history to determine which strategies it used to successfully contain opposition, and the conditions under which is used these successful strategies. My findings highlight a pattern of specific strategies used to survive different types of opposition.

Thus, in my dissertation's fourth chapter, I build my argument through an in-depth analysis of the Omani case. Similar to what I did with the Moroccan case, I use mixed methods to systematically show that the Omani regime endures because it employs a specific and sophisticated combination of authoritarian strategies- repression, monetary accommodation, and political concession- depending on the perceived threat of the opposition.

Figure 25: MAIN OPPOSITION EVENTS IN OMAN, 1950- 2018.

Event	Actors	Triggers			Motive	Date	Regime Reaction		
		Regional/ tribal/ religious	Economic	Regime Repression Monopoly			Repress	Econ	Reform
Un-employment Protests	Wider pop.		X		Unemployment	2018	X	X	
Post-Arab Spring Protests	Wider pop.		X	X	Unfulfilled promises	2012-2014	X	X	
Arab Spring	Wider pop.		X	X	Political and economic inequality	2011-2012	X	X	X
Teachers Protests	Teachers groups		X		Higher wages	2010	X--		
Islamist Plot II	Average citizens and mid-level officials				Alleged plan to overthrow regime	2005	X		
Women's campaign	Women's rights activists			X	Gender Equality	2003	X		X
Islamist Plot I	Islamist supporters			X	Regime overthrow, terrorism	1994	X		X
Violent Uprising in Muscat and Matra	Rif region		X		Economic inequality, protestors' repression	1971	X		
Overthrow of Sultan Said	British and Qaboos		X	X	Overthrow regime	1970	-	-	-
NDFLOAG attacks	Guerilla Actions by NDFLOAG			X	Overthrow regime		X		

Dhofar under Qaboos	Dhofari Tribes	X	X	X	Overthrow regime	1970-1976	X	X	
Dhofar under Said	Dhofari Tribes	X	X	X	Overthrow regime, separate Dhofari State	1962-1970	X		
Jabal Akhdar War, Part 2	Interior tribes/ Imamate	X		X	Remove foreign troops, form independent Imamate	1957-1959	X		
Jabal Akhdar War, Part 1	X	X		X	Secession of Imamate from Sultanate which violated its autonomy	1954-1955	X		
Sporadic unrest in the interior	Interior Tribes	X		X	Interior tribes wanted Imam to have a bigger role; resentment of British-Sultan ties	1895; 1913-1920	X		X

Source: Author's table using archives, monetary data, historical analysis and interviews.

First, through historical analysis, I highlight the major opposition events faced by the monarchy during its modern history (i.e., starting in the 1950s until 2018). This time frame allows me to examine regime reaction to opposition over the rule of two sultans as well as several local and regional rebellions. As with the Moroccan case, by examining survival strategies across several rulers (rather than just one), I determine the survival-seeking behavior of the monarchy rather than of a separate ruler; as such, my argument is not endemic to one ruler but may apply to many.

After highlighting the major opposition events faced by the Omani monarchy, I categorize these events according to their level of perceived threat by the regime.[2] To determine whether there is a pattern of survival (i.e., whether, like the Moroccan regime, the regime in Oman uses the authoritarian tools discussed in Chapter 2 in a consistent manner for different events), I analyze the regime's reaction towards different types of active opposition using several methods, including: archival research, comparative analysis of subsidies and delayed austerity measures (based on data from the National Center for Statistics and Information in the Sultanate of Oman, the International Energy Agency, the World Bank, the Omani Ministry of Finance, and secondary sources), linear analysis of long-term regime repression (based on datasets from the Cingranelli-Richards Human Rights Data Project and Polity IV), in-depth elite interviews, and a study of constitutional reforms and basic law that were ratified in reaction to opposition events.

I then triangulate this data using secondary sources published during the Arab Spring (such as newspapers, speeches, and fiscal reports). By considering specific opposition events, and examining the levels and combinations of repression, political concession, and monetary accommodation that the regime used to contain dissidence, I uncover a pattern of successful survival-seeking regime survival.

Building on Chapter 3's findings on Morocco, my research on Oman is the first step of the inductive, three-step approach which I discuss in detail in Chapter 1; it is through this in-

[2]As explained in detail in section 1.3.3, an event's level of threat is determined by potential power loss, which is linked to the motivations, background, and organization of the opposition.

depth analysis of the Moroccan and Omani monarchies' reactions to active opposition throughout their modern history that I construct a broader theory of regime survival in Arab monarchies. For Oman, I focus on the reigns of two sultans: Said bin Taimur (1932 – 1970) and Qaboos bin Said, the current ruler of Oman (1970-); as explained earlier, this allows me to analyze *patterns* across *both* their rules rather than pinning one strategy to one ruler. After examining Oman's modern history to identify its main opposition events, I investigate the conditions under which the regime reacts differently when facing different levels of threat from various opposition actors.

4.1 CONDITIONS: NATURE OF THE THREATS AND TYPES OF OPPOSITION GROUPS

I argue that, to understand the conditions under which regimes use specific tactics, it is necessary to distinguish between the different threats to their power. First, when discussing the *threat* to a regime, I am referring to perceived (rather than actual) threat, because regime behavior depends on its perception of threat. As I explain in detail in Chapter 1 (section 1.3.3) because rulers' primary objectives are to survive and maintain their power (Bueno de Mesquita and Smith 2010; Beasley 2009), they fear active opposition (i.e., political dissidence whereby opposition actors mobilize against the regime and/or challenge its policies) because it demonstrates the ability of opposition actors to organize and coordinate, which in turn enhances the likelihood of their success. In other words, rulers fear active opposition because it might lead to overthrow or other forms of power loss. Because different opposition events have different degrees of potential power loss, they represent different levels of threat to the ruler (i.e., the higher the ruler's potential power loss, the

higher the threat of an opposition event). Importantly, the degree of potential power loss of an opposition event depends on the goals, organization level, and motivation of the opposition actors. To illustrate:

If opposition actors want to remove the ruler from the political helm of the territory (by assassinating the ruler, overthrowing the regime, or seceding from the country) then they represent the highest possible level of threat to the ruler who could face total power loss. In Oman, events like the Jabal Akhdar War and the Dhofar Rebellion could have led to the removal from power of Sultan Said bin Taimur and so represented a high level of threat to the monarch.

If opposition actors seek to reduce the ruler's powers (for example, through the creation of laws to check them) then they represent a moderate threat to the ruler who could risk major power loss.[3] In Oman's Arab Spring-related protests, for example, protestors asked for higher living wages and price cuts, the removal of corrupt officials, and a more open political sphere. This last demand involved reducing Qaboos' powers by reforming the Basic Law (constitutional text) and giving legislative power to the elected assembly (*Majlis Al-Shura*).

[3] Dictators want to avoid liberalization that would result from the creation of laws and institutions that would check their powers, because it would decrease their control over the political sphere, limit their actions thus making it more difficult for them to reward their coalition, and possibly cross the threshold to democratization.

Finally, if opposition actors demand reforms that would result in minor (if any) reductions to the ruler's powers, then they represent a small threat, as did events in 2003 related to women's rights. When faced with threats to their power, rulers act to contain them and aim to retain as much of their power as possible. Their reactions to opposition events differ depending on the degree of potential power loss; for instance, rulers do not usually react to peaceful, reform-oriented protests in the same way they react to a military coup. Why? As explained earlier, a successful military coup would remove the ruler from power, while peaceful, reform-seeking protests would lead to minor or major power loss (depending on the reforms). My theory builds on Davenport's (1995) discussion of the limits of unidimensional threat perception and the merits of a multidimensional approach, in which he concludes- after examining 53 countries over a period of four decades- that the way in which regimes perceive threat depends on the basic frequency counts of events, the presence/absence of violence, the strategies used by the opposition, and current behavior and cultural norms.

Yet, while we can learn a significant amount about regime survival from systematically examining how regimes react to various types of opposition events- as I discuss theoretically in section 1.3.3 and show empirically in section 3.6 with the Moroccan case- we must acknowledge the elasticity of the perception of threat by the ruler which may be affected by other. Indeed, opposition does not take place in a vacuum; factors outside of the event (on the international, regional, or domestic level) may make it more or less threatening to the ruler.

4.1.1 TRIGGERS OF OPPOSITION TO THE REGIME

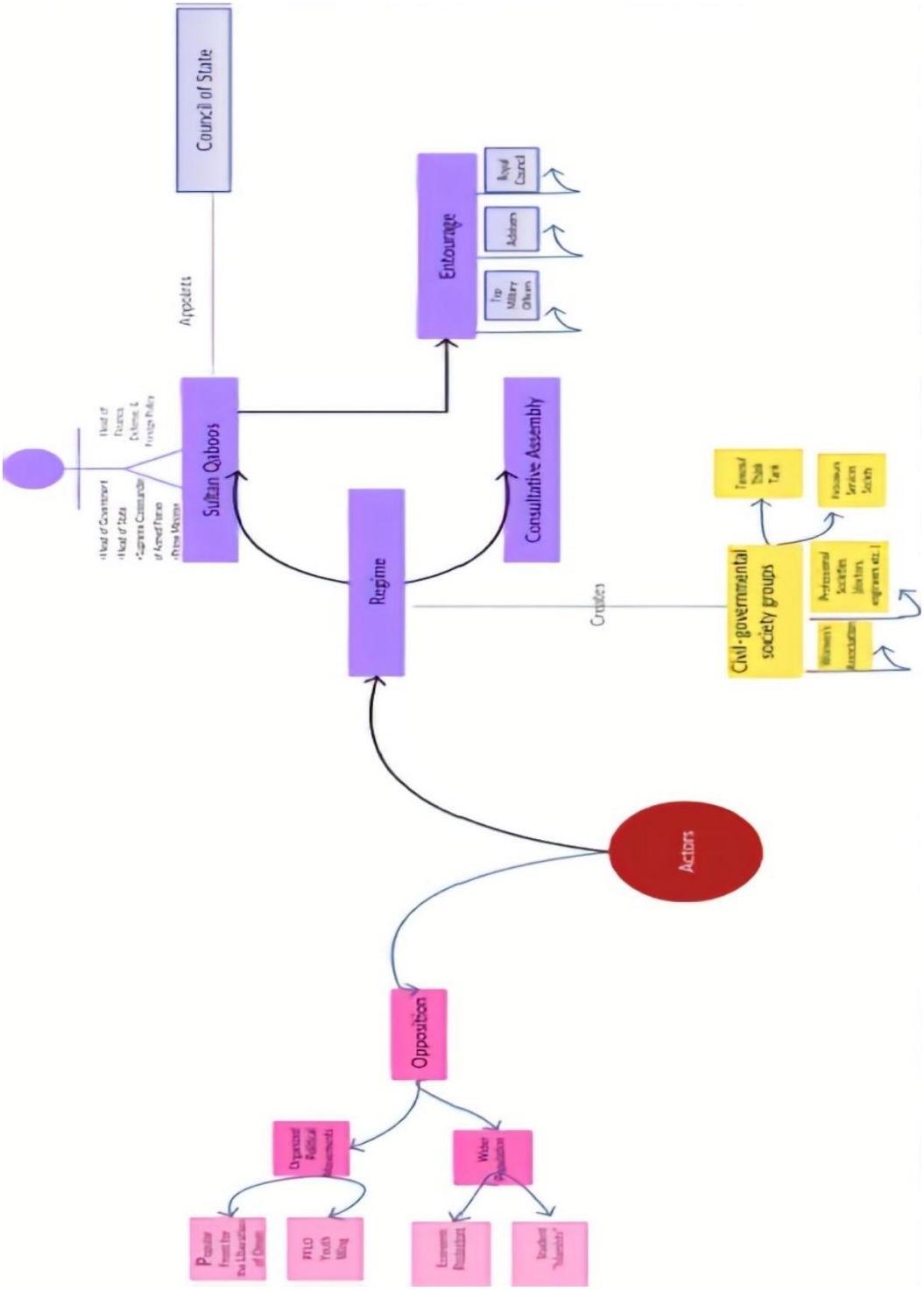
While some sources portray Oman as having never experienced political instability since Qaboos' ascension to the throne (Pappas Funsch 2016; Gidda 2017; Economist 2000), historical analysis shows that there has been political unrest in the sultanate in the form of protests and strikes (see Figure 25 below), and that these opposition events threatened the regime to varying degrees. In Oman, the threats to the regime and motivations of the opposition are linked to the absolute political system, economic hardship, regional persecution, as well as the history of the sultanate and its relationship with the Imamate.

The Sultan of Oman is an absolute monarch who acts as Head of State, Prime Minister, and Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces; he is not constrained by the country's elected and appointed assemblies (*Majlis Al-Shura*[4] and *Majlis a- Dawla*[5]). This restrictive political system has resulted in a lack of political parties and legislature (see Figure 9 below). Indeed, political organization in Oman is scarce (Barany 2012) and political parties are banned. The desire to counter this political restriction and to open the system was a strong motivation for opposition actors to mobilize against the regime and/or its policies. In Arab Spring-related events, intellectuals in Muscat asked for more political freedom and that *Majlis Al-Shura* be given legislative power while workers in Sohar asked for economic reforms.

[4] M*ajlis Al-Shura* is a bicameral representative body in Oman consisting of 84 elected members (Article 58, Royal Decree No. 99/2011).

[5] *Majlis a-Dawla* is a council of state whose members are appointed by the Sultan to assists him in implementing his development, economic, and cultural strategies (Article 17, No. 1997 Royal Decree).

FIGURE 9: RELEVANT ACTORS IN THE MODERN OMANI POLITICAL SCENE.

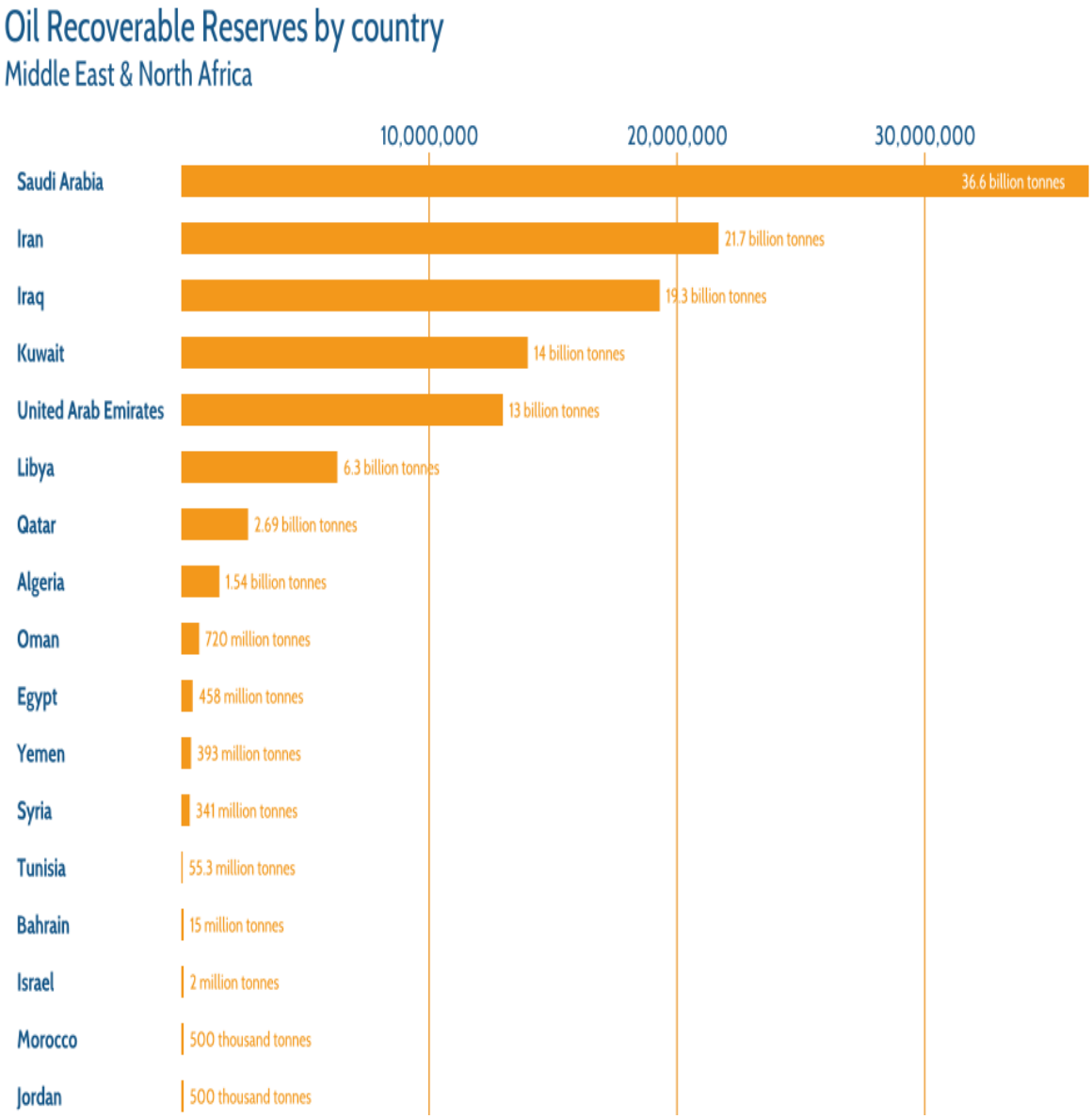


Source: Author's diagram using qualitative sources.

Economic issues also trigger unrest in Oman; and, as I explain in greater detail in Chapter 1, while Oman is better-equipped than Morocco to address economy- triggered hardship as it is wealthier, Omanis do face more economic hardship compared to citizens in other GCC states (notably super-rentier GCC states like Qatar and the UAE). Revenues from Oman's petroleum and natural gas reserves fueled the country's development during the last three decades and allowed Qaboos to transform the country not only industrially but also infrastructurally, agriculturally, and economically.[6] During its modern history, as Oman increased oil recovery and production rates, it generated enough rents to implement a rentier-state social contract (Ross 2001).[39] However, because oil exportation has been the leading currency earner in Oman since 1967, the country's economy is tied to the rise and fall of oil prices; in 2018, 51% of its budget came from oil revenue. Furthermore, Oman has smaller oil reserves to fall back on compared to other GCC states like Qatar and Saudi Arabia, which makes it more vulnerable to the impact of decreased oil prices (see Figure 26).

[6] Under Qaboos, rents from petroleum and gas revenues were used to develop the tourism, agriculture, and fisheries sectors, the standard of living of nationals, and the country's infrastructure. Revenues were also used to decrease the nation's dependence on oil through income diversification, industrialization, and privatization; to launch the project to "Omanize" the public and private labor force; and, to advance social services and welfare, notably education and health service (Wasty 2014; Al-Lamki 2000**;** Das and Gokhale 2010; Peterson 2004).

Figure 26: PROVABLE MENA OIL RESERVES 2017



Source: Author's graph using datasets from World Energy.

Since 2016, for example, the Omani economy has been faltering due the global collapse in oil prices (which crashed to USD 47.11 in December 2014, then to USD 45.69 in August 2015, and finally to USD 29.7 in January 2016).[7] Because of Oman's comparatively smaller reserves, this resulted in a decrease in its GDP growth by -1.7pp to +2.5% (World Bank Growth Dataset, 1966-2017). This exasperated the unemployment situation in the sultanate (16.9% of nationals were unemployed in 2017, with 48.24% of youth unemployed)[8] and has driven the regime to cut public spending by raising taxes and reforming the subsidy system. Coupled with rising unemployment rates, tax increases, and a reduction of 20% of the country's energy bill between 2015 and 2018 (Gulf Business 2017), Oman's struggling economy has led to persistent post-Arab Spring protests in 2018. Even before the sharp drops in oil prices between 2014 and 2016, economic issues in Oman have caused unrest.

Another motivation of opposition is religious and is tied to the Omani population's sectarian makeup and to the country's history with the Imamate (751-1971), an area which was located in the interior of present-day Oman, centering on the city of Nizwa, and surrounded by the Trucial States (present-day UAE) to the west and by the Sultanate of Muscat to the north, east and south[9] (see Figure 27). The Imamate centered on the Ibadi movement[10] in

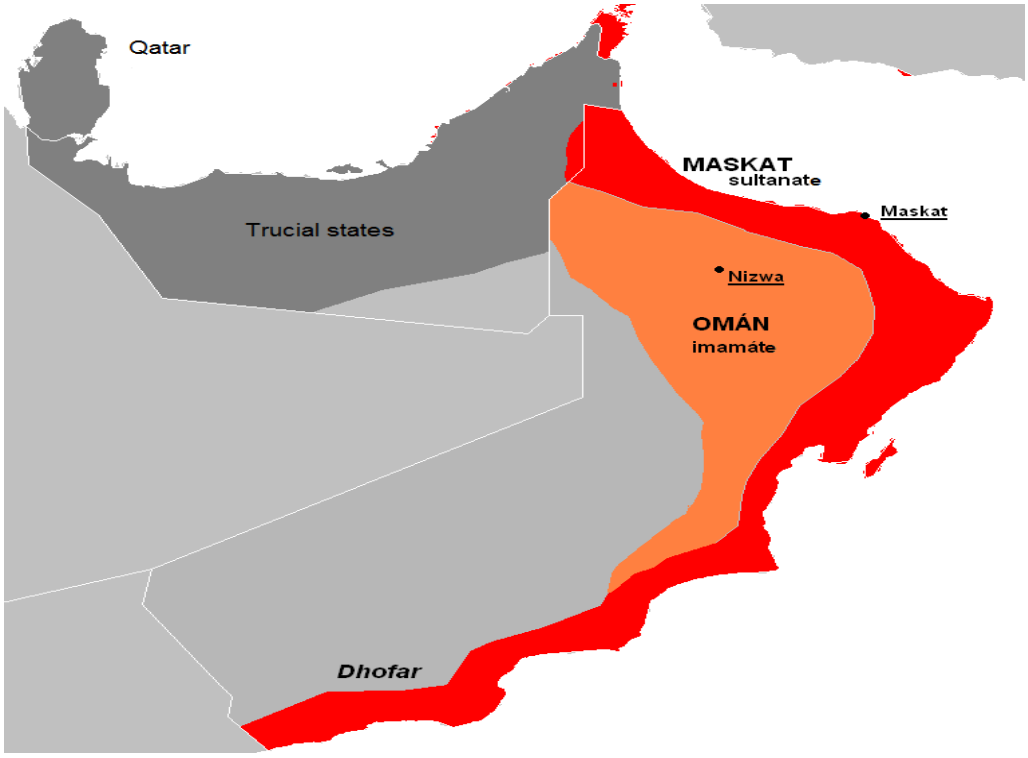
[7] Author's calculations based on dataset from "Crude Oil (Petroleum) - Monthly Price - Commodity Prices - Price Charts, Data, and News - Indexmundi." 2018. *Indexmundi.com.*

[8] World Bank Dataset 2018 Unemployment, total (% of total labor force) (modelled ILO estimate).

[9] Think of the Imamate as the interior portion of present-day Oman, and of the Sultanate of Muscat as the coastal portion.

Islam and was governed by Ibadi imams (religious rulers). The Imams ruled over the interior tribes, so the Imamate played a supra-tribal (and thus unifying) role.

Figure 27: MAP OF THE HISTORICAL SULTANATE OF MUSCAT AND THE IMAMATE TRANSPOSED OVER PRESENT-DAY OMAN'S BORDERS



Source: map derived from "The Last Sultanate: Modernity, Identity, and Fragility in Oman", Reformer.

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[10] There is some debate regarding whether Ibadism is one of the three sects of Islam (along with Sunni and Shi'a Islam) or whether it is a movement or doctrine. While some scholars (see Valeri 2007:8) and Ibadis themselves (see Hoffman 2012: 3) view Ibadism as the third sect of Islam, some scholars agree that it is in fact a subsect of the Kharijite movement (Aillet: 2012: 6) from which it broke off.

Omani authorities are sensitive about sectarian differences within the population and threats that might arise from this sectarianism- so much so that there are no official figures on the religious makeup of the population. Eickleman (2001: 202) posits that about 50-55% of Omani citizens are Sunni, 40-45% are Ibadi, and less than 2% are Shia. I argue that this impacts the regime's perception of the opposition's threat and its subsequent reaction for two reasons. First, Qaboos, who belongs to the Ibadi sect, does not belong to the same sect as the majority of the population (i.e. the Sunni sect of Islam). Second, the high percentage of both Sunnis and Ibadis means that there is a potential for two types of religious threat: (1) radical Sunnis who are unhappy with the regime's Israel and Western-friendly stance, and (2) Ibadis who might want a revival of the Imamate with an Ibadi system of rule. The significance of this type of threat is apparent not only in the regime's strong reaction towards opposition events it perceives as religiously driven, but also in the regime's continuous attempts to police religious expression in the public sphere and its avoidance of sectarian discourse entirely.[11]

Ibadism, which developed in Basra, in modern day Iraq twenty years following Prophet Muhammad's death (and so preceded the Sunni and Shi'i sects of Islam) was founded by Jabir ibn Zayd and further developed by Abdullah ibn Ibad, who broke the sect from the Kharijite movement (i.e., the movement that broke from the main sect of Islam when Ali was caliph and later assassinated him). Historically, Ibadis opposed both the rule and murder

[11] In royal speeches, schools, and even Friday religious sermons, sectarian issues are never mentioned (Eikelman 2001: 202).

of Othmane ibn Affan, the third caliph in Islam, as well as the rule of Ali, the fourth caliph; more generally, they were opposed to an absolute caliphate of Qurayshi (Aillet 2012: 1). Ibadis[12] reject the notion of a central Islamic authority and, as Wilkinson (2010: 178) explains, they believe that there is "no law/arbitration/ judgements (*hutem*) except that of God," and hold that the Imam should be elected by the religious leaders of the community (*ulamaa*) based on his religious knowledge and piety (Hoffman 2012). Thus, Ibadism's teachings present a threat to the Omani monarchy because they call for the ruler to be elected by the *ulamaa* (which the sultan in the current system is not), and for the ruler to be deposed if he does not respect Islamic teachings. Furthermore, throughout history, Ibadis have identified themselves as the "democrats" of Islam (Ghubash Hussein 1998; Aillet 2012).

Beyond this, the threat that Ibadism represented for the regime in modern Oman is rooted in the tensions[13] that existed between Imams and the Sultans of Muscat prior to the formation of the modern state. Indeed, all four sultans[14] of the 20th century dealt with threats to their power from the interior tribes of the Imamate. These tensions escalated after oil was discovered in the Imamate in 1954. Because of their geostrategic interests, the British helped

[12] Today, the majority of Ibadis are found in Oman. The rest are in Algeria (Mzab region), Libya (Nafusa Mountains), Tunisia (Djerba), and Tanzania (Zanzibar Island).

[13] In 1895, for example, some tribes sieged Muscat "under an Ibadi revivalist umbrella" (See Peterson 2004: 1).

[14] These are Faisal bin Turki (1888-1913), Taimur bin Faisal (1913-1932), Said bin Taimur, and Qaboos bin Said (1970-).

Sultan Said bin Taimur take over the Imamate's land during the Jabal Akhdar War and, eventually, the sultan unified the lands of the Imamate and the Sultanate of Muscat to form what we know today as the Sultanate of Oman.

However, the Ibadi threat to the regime did not end with the opposition's defeat during the Jabal Akhdar War, and the regime in Oman continued to fear losing power to a re-established Ibadi movement. Indeed, in 1994, around 200 Omanis were arrested and accused by the regime of being part of an Ibadi movement that was trying to overthrow it. Similarly, in 2005, the regime arrested around 30 people it claimed were part of a secret Ibadi movement that had been planning explosions (Valeri 2007). In both events, the regime reacted strongly because it feared that Ibadism would rise as a rallying opposition force when it intercepted the threat.

Not only does the Ibadi Imamate have strong historical roots as a well-functioning supra-tribal entity, but it is reflected in the Omani historical narrative as the entity that has defended the country against foreign intervention (Aillet 2012: 21). This represents a threat to the regime because the movement could have developed into a force demanding an Islamic regime that would threaten Qaboos' nation-state (Peterson 2005: 3). Thus, the presence of groups from certain regional and religious backgrounds that participate in opposition events (that sometimes revolve around those groups' religious or regional ideology) is important to my research because authoritarian regimes often target regional and religious minorities with their authoritarian tactics differently than other groups (Barany 2002; Abdullah 2016). The presence of regional and religious divide in Oman is significant to my topic because it affects regime reaction to active opposition.

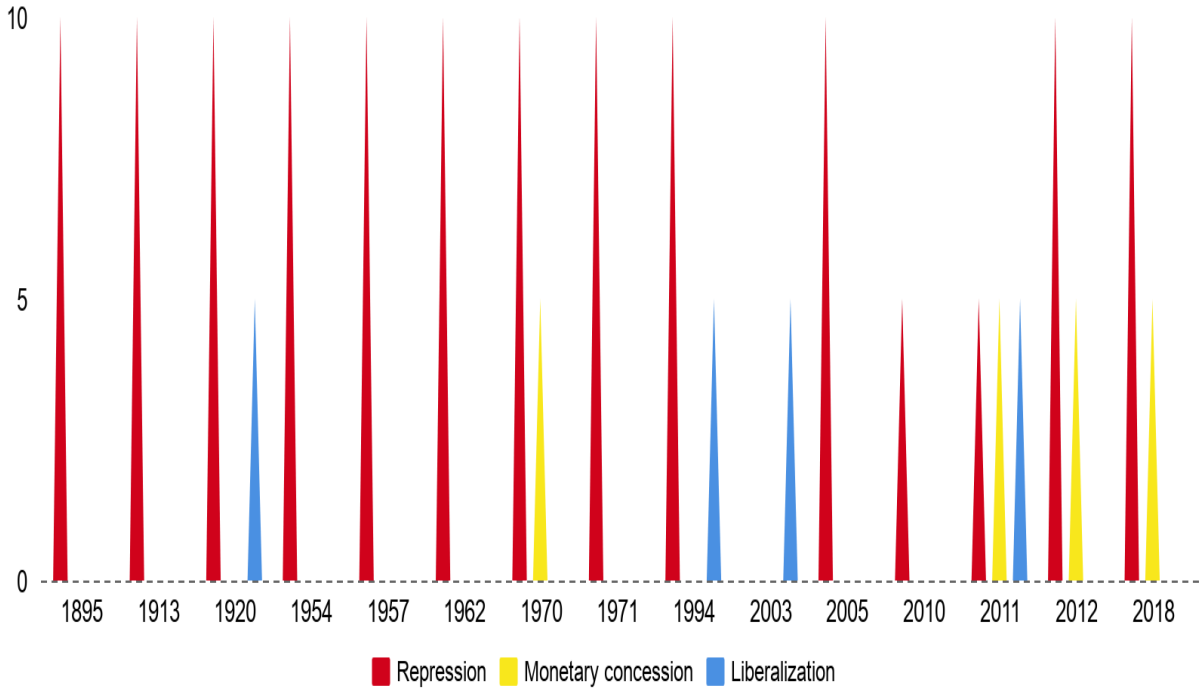
4.1.2 CATEGORIZING OPPOSITION ACTORS

Categorizing Oman's opposition is a complicated task because, as explained earlier, there is no formal political organization in the Sultanate.[15] Here, I broadly categorize the opposition groups that appeared in Oman according to motivations, organization, and goals. The actors involved in these events in Oman's modern history- listed in order of danger to the regime- are: (1) regional, insurgent movements with Marxist ideologies supported by Arab nationalist regimes as well as by China and the USSR;

(2) forces supporting the establishment of an Imamate regime led by Imam Ghalib Bin Ali Al-Hani and supported by Saudi Arabia, (3) supporters of Islamism among the wider population; (4) young, educated people and activists who complain about their lack of political freedoms and (sometimes) express Islamist views; (5) and the wider population- including labor workers, unemployed young people, and other activists protesting labor conditions and economic inequality. To be historically accurate, a sixth historical opposition group would be Qaboos backed by the British, forcing his predecessor out of power. However, as Qaboos has no direct heirs, this remains a historic, non-recurring group, so I do not include it with the main categories.

[15] Similarly, civil society in Oman is restricted by the regime and holds no power in the public sphere. Other than small and still-developing groups that have been established since 2007 (Valeri 2009) and that seek to influence the decision-making process, there are civil-government society group launched by or under the purview of the regime. These include the Omani Woman's Association, professional societies (e.g. doctors, engineers, etc.), the Oman Society for Petroleum Services, and the *Tawasul* think tank. They cannot openly oppose the latter and thus cannot achieve significant change in the public sphere.

Figure 28: PATTERN IN OMANI REGIME'S REACTION TO DIFFERENT TYPES OF ACTIVE OPPOSITION, 1895-2018.



Regime Reaction to Active Opposition in Oman

*Very little or no repression = 0	*No monetary concessions= 0	*Little or no liberalization = 0
*Some repression= 5 i.e. repression of civil & political liberties, moderate police crackdowns on opposition, 0-100 arrests, rigged elections, dissolution of Parliament	*Some monetary concession = 5 i.e., the use of subsidies and the delay of austerity measures.	*Moderate liberalization = 5 i.e., reformed constitution that addresses certain issue areas but does not check the monarch's powers, + any action that ease repression
*Drastic repression = 10 ie., political violence, detention camps, unfair trials, 100+ arrests, forced disappearances, forced exile, & execution of opposition actors.	*Regime's use of its funds to satisfy opposition = 10	*Genuine liberalization = 10 i.e., reforms that reduce or check king's power; free, fair, and competitive elections; independent government; & complete civil and political freedom.

Source: Author's graph using Datasets from CIRI, Polity IV; World Bank financial reports; and interviews.

4.1.3 HIGH-LEVEL THREAT GROUPS

Of these opposition groups, three have carried out plans to overthrow the ruler or separate from the sultanate: Imamate supporters during the two Jabal Akhdar Wars, Dhofari rebels with Marxist and Arab nationalist ideologies during the Dhofar Rebellion, and Qaboos supported by the British during the 1970 coup d'état. The latter was the only successful one, but I exclude it from my analysis because: (1) the coup was organized, managed, and executed by the British who merely included Qaboos (who was under house arrest at that point) in their plan as a replacement;[16] and, (2) most importantly, the goal of the coup was not to overthrow the monarchy or the regime, but to replace Said on the throne.[17] On the other hand, the Jabal Akhdar Wars and the Dhofar Rebellions were domestic upheavals organized by Omani opposition actors (with foreign support) who wanted to overthrow the regime or separate from the sultanate.

Another high-level threat involved in one of the two covert threats to the regime, the 2005 foiled Islamist coup, was accused of planning to overthrow the regime and replace it with an

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[16] Takriti (2013: 197) uncovered a letter dated July 27, 1970 (four days after the coup that deposed Said) in which Qaboos requests recognition from the British government. However, this should not be taken to mean that Qaboos engineered the coup without the knowledge of the British and that he only informed them of his ascension through this letter. A formal request of recognition probably needed to be made to the government, hence the letter. On the other hand, there is significant evidence (via Foreign Office correspondence) that shows the British had in fact engineered the coup and had long planned to put Qaboos in power in the event that there was a problem with Said (See Halliday 1999 and Takriti 2013). Townsend (1977: 74) suggests that Qaboos, who was "outspoken about his father to many expatriate visitors" was aware of the British plan to overthrow his father beforehand.

[17] The British decided to replace Said with Qaboos because of frequent opposition events targeting Said. Qaboos had been educated in Sandhurst and so presented a safe choice (as a sultan who would likely embrace modernization, unlike his predecessor). Qaboos had been under house arrest at that point because his father had feared a palace coup.

Islamist state. Its members were a mix of teachers, students, and mid-level government officials.

Less covertly, *Ajabha Asha'abia Litahrir Oman* (PFLO- the Popular Front for the Liberation of Oman), was a revolutionary organization with roots in Marxism and Arab nationalism which led the Dhofar Rebellion against both sultans from 1963 to 1976 (Allen Jr 2016).[18] The PFLO (as well as its precursor, the Dhofar Front) was highly organized and had three currents- tribal, republican, and Dhofarist. It was triggered by Said's absolutism and reluctance to modernize the country, the economic exploitation of Dhofar- an agricultural haven-[19] and persecution faced by Dhofaris.[20] The organization had separatist and revolutionary goals; it wanted to overthrow Sultan Said and remove British foreign power from Oman. As it shifted from a tribal movement to a Marxist and Arab nationalist group, it became less esoteric in the international scene and gained more support.

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[18] *Jabhat Tahrir Dhofar* (the Dhofar Liberation Front) is a communist front which merged with A- *Jabha Al-Watania A-Dimoqratia Litahrir Oman Wal- Khalij Al-Arabi Al-Mouhtal* (the National Democratic Front for the Liberation of Oman the and the Occupied Arabian Gulf) in 1971. The organization expanded and formed armed cells in the UAE but was weakened when it split after some members accepted Qaboos' amnesty offer following his successful coup against Said in 1970. While it is still active and maintains some underground activity- especially its youth wing, the Oman Youth Organization- it is largely unthreatening to the regime and is removed from the political scene. It now protests peacefully for democracy as *Ajabha Asha'abia A-Dimoqrati Al-Omani* (PDFO- the Popular Omani Democratic Front).

[19] Dhofar is an agricultural haven because it has a heavy rainfall that results in a tropical forest in the mountains and an area of vegetation of around 40 miles. This makes Dhofar different to the rest of the Gulf region most of which is dry and barren (Ibn Batuta and Gibb 1962; Wilfred. 2010; Halliday 2013).

[20] It is worth noting that the Dhofari population is majority Sunni (of the Shafi'i *madhab*), not Ibadi (Izady 2000; Brice 1981). However, because Dhofar is so isolated geographically from the rest of Oman and of the Islamic world, religion is reportedly not strongly observed there (Halliday 1999: 6002).

Examining the Dhofari opposition has been instrumental to building my theory- specifically in terms of the interrelationship between the regime and opposition actors and how this affects future regime reactions to dissidence- for two reasons: First, over the eight years of opposition, there was a shift in the opposition- from Dhofar Liberation Front (DLF) to the Popular Front for the Liberation of the Occupied Arabian Gulf (PFLOAG)[21] which marked the transition in its activity from spontaneous opposition to an organized (thus more threatening) revolutionary violence based on Maoist theory. Second, influenced by Maoist theory, the Dhofari opposition perceived historical events as having the potential to transform the future (Takriti 2013: 110) and thus saw their interactions with the regimes' forces in the same light. This is reminiscent of my discussion on Morocco where I show that the way the political parties dealt with the regime in 1962 influenced future regime reaction in 1970 which, in turn, influenced future opposition.

The final high-level threat was organized by the Imamate forces (i.e., the Omani Liberation Movement) and supporters which rose against the regime during the two Jabal Akhdar Wars sought independence from the sultanate and wanted to replace the Sultan's regime with one based around an Imamate. The Imamate forces were comprised of tribes from the Interior, led by the newly elected Imam Ghalib bin Ali Al-Hinai, and organized by his brother Talib (who later fled to Saudi Arabia). They had Saudi support as well as a trained army of Omani expats. Their goals were to remove foreign troops from Oman and form an independent state in the interior region.

[21] See note 17 for more detail.

4.1.4 MID-LEVEL THREAT GROUPS

The wider population- and the various groups that comprise it- has usually represented a medium threat to the regime. So far, none of the popular movements sought to overthrow the regime or secede. Rather, they are usually triggered by economic or political grievances and seek reforms. They are not as organized as armies or insurgencies and have not established international networks.

Among them, there is the youth group- students and recent graduates. Students staged protests in new schools after Qaboos took over, and graduates protested unemployment rates in 2012 and 2018. An important subgroup of the wider population is the workers, who usually organized to hold riots and ask for better wages and working conditions. Qaboos' development projects and modernization agenda brought about politicization of labor. Workers were active in protests at the beginning of Qaboos' rule as well as during the Arab Spring and post-Arab Spring protests. They organized Oman's first strikes in the interior (in Nizwa, Rustaq, and Ibri), a strike in the Fahud oil field in August 1970, a violent uprising in Matra in September 1971, and protests in Sohar in 2011.

4.1.5 LOW-LEVEL THREAT GROUPS

There are two types of low-level threat groups in Oman. The first involves groups that seek civil reforms that do not affect the regime. An example is the Women's Rights activists asking for equality. They usually trigger no violence from the regime and obtain minor reforms- similar to women's rights groups in Morocco. Another group is teachers who organized in 2010 and protested for better wages. While they did not obtain the increase in

wages which they demanded, they inspired no violence from the regime which actually reviewed their demands carefully. However, it is worth noting that civil society in Oman is weak; it is mostly comprised of groups that were founded by the regime and that do not have autonomy.

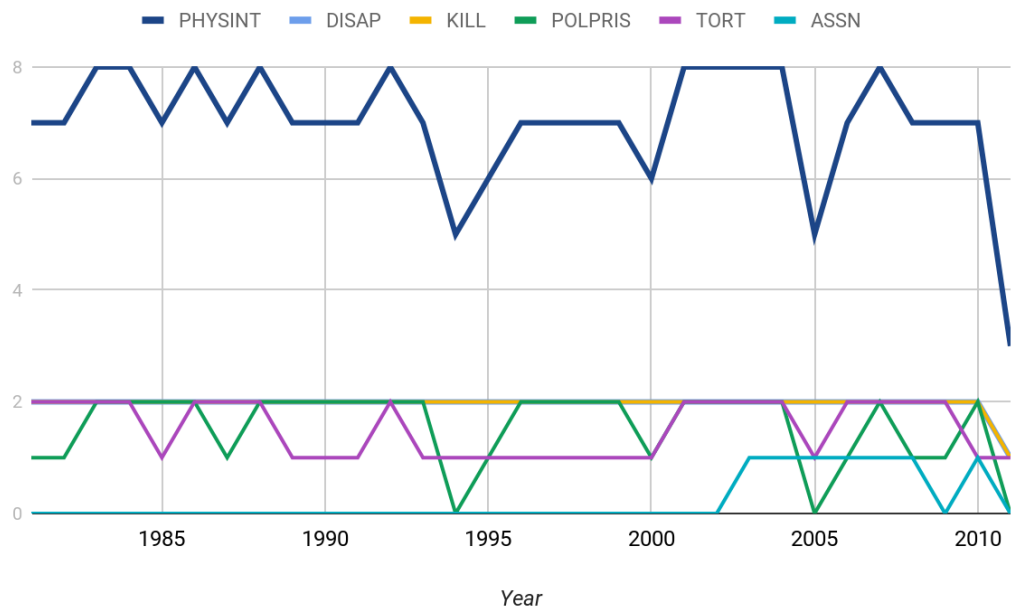
The second type of low-level threat groups in Oman are actors that organize peacefully, do not target the regime but criticize some of its policies, and do not demand explicit changes. They organize to be seen and heard, but do not make requests. These are young, educated people who complained about lack of political freedoms or who expressed views associated with Islamist movements, and were involved in online critique of the regime during the Arab uprisings. This group critiqued US policy in the region and the regime's friendly relations with the US and Israel. They staged a "polite protest" (Jones and Ridout 2015: 235) in the presence of Qaboos in 2000 during the National Day Parade.

4.2 REPRESSION

Oman is an absolute monarchy with limited political and civil freedoms (Freedom House 2017) where the regime uses various types of repression to target citizens. By examining the data shown in Figures 29 and 30 of repression in Oman over the last 40 years, one might erroneously infer that the regime uses repression continuously or randomly; and Valeri (2007) argues that Qaboos seems to randomly alternate between risk-free accommodation and harsh repression since 2003. However, the overwhelming majority of political science theory on repression systematically shows that regime use of repression is built on rationality (de Merritt 2016). Empirically, it has been proven that all forms of repression (including those used in Oman, shown in Figures 29 and 30)- ranging from the restriction of

political rights to brutal violence- are carried out in pursuit of an important political outcome (Ames 1990); in context of my research, this outcome is regime survival and avoiding power loss.[22]

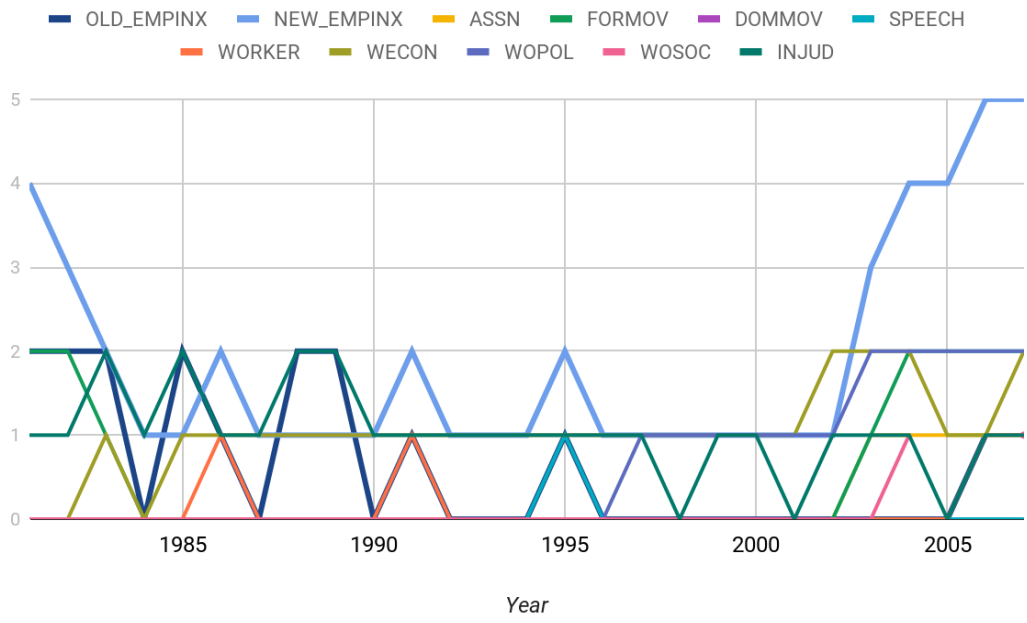
Figure 29: TYPES OF REPRESSION IN OMAN



Source: Author's graph using CIRI dataset.

[22] As I explain in Chapter 2, while some scholars examine the arbitrary use of repression by regimes to create uncertainty and cause fear to strengthen their rule (Al-Khalil 1998; Crystal 1994; Naqeeb 1990), and while I acknowledge that rulers benefit from repressing populations consistently and constantly, I focus on non-arbitrary (i.e., strategic) use of repression during opposition events (i.e., when there is a threat to their power). Therefore, the first condition for a regime to use repression is the presence of actual or potential opposition.

Figure 30: VIOLATIONS OF CIVIL LIBERTIES IN OMAN



Source: Author's graph using CIRI dataset.

Relative to monetary and political concessions, repression is less costly (Ritter 2013; Pierskalla 2009); it does not constrain regimes like liberalization or cost as much as monetary accommodation. However, this does not mean that the Omani regime uses just repression to contain all opposition events. Indeed, repression comes at a cost: overusing it makes regimes dependent on their coercive apparatuses[23] (Svolik 2012) and leads to

[23] Rulers are cautious of becoming overly dependent on their militaries (i.e. military overthrow, power leverage), which is why Ben Ali gave the Tunisian military little funding; why Hassan II removed important military ranks from the army and distanced high officials from the political sphere; and why Qaboos remains the Commander in Chief of Armed Forces.

backlash from the opposition (Rasler 1996: Olofsgard et al. 2009; Wintrobe 2007; Tullock 1987). This is why rulers accommodate the opposition during certain events.

During other events, however, regimes use repression despite the aforementioned risks. Why? Because the result of not using repression under those conditions could ruin them (Bermeo 1997: 315-317). What are these conditions in the Omani case? The latter falls in line with much of the existing political science literature that examines the use of repression *conditional* on certain characteristics- like the type and number of opposition events (Davenport 1955), the demands of the opposition (Gartner and Regan 1996), and organization (Poe et al. 2000).

These conditions are very similar to what I found in Morocco. Broadly, in the face of active opposition, and in order to maintain power and avoid overthrow, the regime in Oman uses repression in one of two ways: (1) brutally and on its own, when the threat is so high that overthrow, significant power loss, or escalation is likely, and (2) as a way to ensure that offered concessions are accepted and that further opposition is deterred. Unlike Moore (2012), I do not make the argument that repression is merely a substitution when other tactics are used by the regime and rejected by the population. Rather, since dissent can spread through the population and escalate (de Merritt 2016), continued dissent creates a threat to the regime. This is why continued dissent is perceived as dangerous and why regimes increase repression to contain it (Regan and Henderson 2002).

Finally, there are rare events- as I show through the Moroccan case in Chapter 3- where the threat to the regime was so minimal that no violence was used. This use of repression conforms with the theories laid out in Chapter 2 (section 2.2.6).

4.2.1 POLITICAL VIOLENCE-ONLY STRATEGY

Under which conditions does the regime in Oman use only political violence to contain an opposition event (refer to the single red peaks in Figure 28, coded as 10 for repression, 0 for liberalization, and 0 for monetary concession)? When the threat to the throne is so great that opposition's only outcome is high, if not total, loss of political, economic, and/or territorial power, the ruler uses a two-step repression- only strategy. First, he crushes the opposition to stop the ongoing threat through harsh political violence. Then, he takes repressive measures to ensure the threat will not arise later on. As explained earlier, three opposition events in Oman have led to this sort for regime reaction, and they had strong regional and/or Imamate-related ideologies: The Jabal Akhdar War, the Dhofar Rebellion, and the 2004 Islamist plot. In the first two, the opposition was isolated within ideologically and regionally organized groups, and the groups in question wanted a heightened level of autonomy from the regime (similarly to the 1957-1959 Rif rebellions in Morocco as discussed in section 3.2.1). In both cases, the Omani regime brutally repressed the opposition. The main difference in the Dhofar Rebellion is that, towards the end, the regime no longer feared overthrow (for several reasons I discuss further below), so it was able to co-opt some members of the opposition while crushing the rest.

The Jabal Akhdar War is a difficult event to discuss without providing detailed context, because the event took place right before Oman, as we know it today, was formed. However,

because of how close the Jabal Akhdar War was to the formation of the modern state, and because of the lasting impact it has had on the Omani regime's state-building, domestic policy and reactions to various opposition events, I argue that it is important to examine both the event and the way in which the regime dealt with it in my analysis. Furthermore, the actions of Sultan Said during the rebellion were independent; he asked the British for help rather than accepted foreign military action (Archives of Commons and Lords Hansard 1957a).

The event was triggered by Sultan Said's breeching of the Treaty of Seeb in 1954.The treaty was an agreement (brokered by the British) between Said's predecessor, Sultan Taimur of Muscat, and Imam Muhammad bin Abdullah Al- Khalili in 1920. At that time, the regime in the sultanate controlled the coastal region (i.e., present-day Muscat and the area surrounding it). Nominally, the Sultan of Muscat controlled the interior tribes;[24] however, in practice, the interior tribes were ruled by tribal leaders, and the Imam was the supra-ruler of the interior. This interior part was called the Imamate, also known as Oman proper (1856–1970).[25] There was growing hostility between the interior tribes and the sultan because of Taimur's close alliance with the British and his decision to limit slavery (perceived by the Imamate as un-

[24] Historically, compared to the interior tribes of the Imamate, the coastal tribes were wealthy as the Sultanate of Muscat generated revenue from slave trade across East Africa (until the sultanate abandoned slave trade starting in 1822 at the insistence of the British) and from the maritime empire which the sultanate created in the mid-1600s and which began to decline in the early 1800s. By comparison, the interior region had a subsistence economy; it was largely based on herding cattle and gathering frankincense- an aromatic resin used for incense (Takriti 2013: 691; Halliday 1999).

[25] I am referring to Imamate rule that was established during the Al-Said dynasty (1744-) in Oman (specifically during the 20th century), not prior.

Islamic- Rabi 2008). In 1895, Salih bin Ali Al-Harithi led a tribal coalition against Muscat, while in 1913 tribes of the interior launched attacks on the coastal region under the leadership of Imam Salim bin Rashid Al-Kharusi (Archival Source 1957).[26] On both occasions, the sultan crushed the interior tribes with the help of the British. Eventually, Sultan Taimur- whose life was threatened during the attacks- agreed to sign the Treaty of Seeb which gave the Imamate limited autonomy; however, the treaty recognized the Sultan as having sovereignty throughout the Sultanate (*Al-Seeb Treaty* 1920).

Three decades after the Treaty's signing, Sultan Said (Taimur's successor) granted the Iraq Petroleum Company licenses to look for and drill oil (including in the fields that were located inside the Imamate),[27] thus violating the autonomy which the tribes were promised by the treaty. This led the newly elected Imam Ghalib bin Ali Al- Hinai to (1) declare complete independence from the sultanate (Townsend 1977: 61), and (2) start an uprising which sought independence from the coastal region. Archival sources show that the Imam was armed (with machine guns and anti-tank mines) and had domestic and international networks;[28] he thus represented a high threat to the regime. This uprising was contained with

[26] Commons and Lords Hansard. 1957. "Muscat and Oman." London. *Debate Proceedings*. HC Deb 29 July 1957 vol. 574 cc870-7.

[27] Takriti (2013: 535) posits that Said and the British saw Imam Al-Khalili's death as an opportunity to expand further territorially. However, it is more likely that the British were merely following their geostrategic interests and would have moved to explore more oil regardless of which Imam was in power.

[28] Commons and Lords Hansard. 1957. "The Situation in Central Oman." London. Meeting Minutes.

the help of the British in 1955[29] but re-erupted in 1957- supported by Saudi Arabia- and evolved into the Jabal Akhdar War (1954-1955; 1957-1959).

Therefore, between 1954 and 1959, Said dealt with two high-threat opposition events with brutal repression and no concessions. During the first event (1954- 1955), in response to Ghalib's actions,[30] Said ordered his troops and employees of Iraq Petroleum to capture Ibri from the Imam, thus cutting him off from Saudi support (Archives in Commons and Lords Hansard 1957b). Said moved to capture the cities of Bahla and Nizwa, then- with British help- took control of Rustaq. In light of his victory, Said terminated the Treaty of Seeb and abolished the Imamate altogether. This forced Imam Ghalib to abdicate and retire to his village while his brother Talib (who had been involved in organizing the uprising) fled to Saudi Arabia where he received help from the Saudis and started training an army of escaped and expatriated Omanis- the Omani Liberation Movement.

Said dealt with the second event (i.e., the rekindled Jabal Akhdar War which lasted from 1957-1959) in a similar manner: He repressed the rebels by imprisoning their leaders. The goals of the Omani Liberation Movement were to remove foreign troops and form an independent state in the interior region (i.e., establishing a fully independent Imamate). The

[29] The British provided Sultan Said with military support because the held stakes in the Iraq Petroleum Company, as well as in Petroleum Development Oman, which was in charge of oil exploration (Commons and Lords Hansard 1957, vol. 574 cc870-7). PDO is currently responsible for more than 70% of the country's crude oil production (Energy Information Administration 2017).

[30] The Imam was also supported by Sheikh Suleiman bin Himyar Al-Nabhani, the Sheikh of one of the biggest tribes in Oman- the Bani Riyam tribe- which was located in the interior around Jabal Akhdar and counted close to 15,000 members (Allfree 2014).

rebels were armed and succeeded in turning local tribes against Said (*Idem*). In May 1957, Said pretended to consider negotiations with the rebels and invited Lieutenant Ibrahim bin Issa[31] (who led the first rebel troops into Oman) to Muscat to talk.

However, Said immediately imprisoned Ibrahim upon his arrival. Said also asked the British for military help to crush the rebellion and left Muscat for Dhofar (near Salalah)- a move which protected him from assassination attempts. Said tried to deter dissidents by distributing a leaflet that warned them of what would happen if they persisted and by having a demonstration aircraft fire on selected targets to demonstrate that the Sultan possessed "effective, powerful weapons" (Archives of Commons and Lords Hansard 1957a). The ultimatum was that they would avoid getting bombarded if they turned the traitors out and acknowledged the regime's sovereignty over their land. Heavily aided by the British military, Said bombarded Nizwa in 1957. He fought the rebels for two years at the end of which he killed or kicked them out of Oman and forced Ghalib into exile in Saudi Arabia. That was the end of the Imamate.

The next opposition event that inspired a repression-only strategy from the regime was the Dhofar Rebellion (1962-1976) which saw tribes in Dhofar (in southernmost Oman) rise against the Sultan overthrow him and form an autonomous state in Dhofar.[32] The tribes were

[31] Ibrahim bin Issa was also the uncle of the *wali* (governor) of Nizwa and the brother of Salih bin Issa, the exiled pro-Imamate leader (Valeri 2009; Jones and Ridout 2015).

[32] Even before the establishment of the Dhofar charter (based on Maoist theory) which explained in great detail the goals, aims and motivation of the Dhofar rebellion, there were student pamphlets circulated in 1963 by the Dhofar Arab Youth encouraging the overthrow of Said.

triggered by a strong sense of regionalism, economic grievances as well as political ideology. Dhofar had a subsistence economy as it did not have major agricultural resources and lacked the ability to trade. In such poor conditions, the Dhofari population was hostile towards the regime-imposed taxation system (Takriti 2013: 28), and resented Said's domineering interference in Dhofari affairs. Most importantly, Said exploited the territory via taxation and by taking over unclaimed land (Ibid; Jackson 1943; Halliday 1999: 6129).

Politically, Said ruled with an iron fist, without any consultation or participation; he did not even give the appearance of an open regime, like neighboring states did by using consultative assemblies (Takriti 2013; Burrows 1953). Similar to Hassan II in the Rif, Said isolated Dhofar economically and politically. However, Said went beyond Hassan II's treatment of the Rif population; he banned travel and limited education (Halliday 1999: 275; Takriti 2014:1078). As a monarch, Said was already in a precarious position; this was the 1950s and 1960s, when Arab nationalism was popular and traditional monarchs were threatened by the Arab Cold War (1952-1970), as I discuss in Chapter 2.[33] In addition, there were strong Marxist sentiments in Dhofar in the 1960s, an influence from the People's

[33] Following the 1952 Egyptian Revolution and Nasser's rise to power, a series of conflicts rose between the newer republics which espoused Arab nationalism and the traditionalist kingdoms. Arab nationalism, an overwhelmingly republican phenomenon, was ideologically threatening to existing Arab monarchs (who feared Arab nationalism-led overthrow). Gamal Abdel Nasser, the most popular promoted of Arab Nationalism at the time, had unseated King Farouk of Egypt from the throne, subsequently abolished the Egyptian monarchy, and was a staunch supporter of republicanism. Nasser targeted Arab monarchs in his speeches and portrayed them as traitors and allies of the colonial forces (Abdel Nasser 1962).

Democratic Republic of Yemen. Said's autocratic and exploitative attitude exacerbated this situation.

Furthermore, Dhofar had a strong sense of regional autonomy which, in the mid- 1900s, became what Takriti (2013: 59) terms *Dhofarism.*[34] This sense of regional autonomy was exacerbated by the economic persecution faced by Dhofaris and regime-imposed taxes[35] that discouraged economic development in the region. Of course, Said's goal in stalling the region's economic development was to isolate and control its inhabitants. Ironically, the resulting marginalization and poverty in Dhofar led to emigration of thousands of men to the rest of the Gulf (after the 1950s oil boom) who would later form the Dhofar Charity Fund (DCF) which funded the rebels during the Dhofar rebellion.

Furthermore, Valeri (2006: 205) explains that in the 2000s, well into Qaboos' rule, people in Salalah still referred to themselves as "Dhofari" rather than "Omani," and that the latter term was used to refer to non-Dhofari Omanis settled in Dhofar. Thus, the triggers of the Dhofari opposition were economic, political and regional. Its objective was to overthrow Said and be

[34] Dhofar was not annexed by the Sultanate of Muscat until 1879. While the region came under brief foreign control several times in its history- notably by Yemen in pre-Islamic times and Ya'ariba forces (preceded the Al-Said dynasty in Oman) - it was not ruled by Omani Sultans until the 1870s (Halliday 1999: 6058). From this point until the Dhofar Rebellion, there were many small uprisings through which local tribesmen challenged the sultan's authority; these opposition events were put down by the sultan's forces with British military assistance.

[35] Halliday (1999) reports that one out of five owned cattle were paid as a tax annually; fishermen had to pay 120 rial for the right to fish sardines during the fishing season (which lasted three months) and 75 rial for every additional months; other fish were taxed daily; importation taxes in Dhofar were 300% higher than in the rest of Oman; and ghee exports were taxed at 20%.

rid of British influence[36] through armed uprising,[37] hence the high threat to the regime (and to Said in particular). Furthermore, while Said perceived the revolution as a local tribal rebellion (Washington Post, Excerpt, 27 December 1970), the DLF was a danger to the sultanic regime for four reasons: it was backed by foreign actors,[38] had military resources, gathered funding, and was provided with ammunition. (1) Indeed, while the Dhofari rebels were not as organized as an army planning a coup, they did have a subgroup of rebels with military training. These soldiers established a clandestine group in 1961 whose aim was to overthrow the regime. Furthermore, the Dhofaris received military training from the Movement of Arab Nationalists (MAN), and once the DLF was formed in 1964, it operated in a military fashion. (2) The Dhofari Rebels were at one point or another backed by the MAN,[39] South Yemen,[40] Iraq, Nasser's government,[41] Saudi Arabia,[42] the USSR,[43] and

[36] This makes the Dhofari movement similar to the Imamate opposition in that both wanted to remove both sultanic and British control.

[37] Initially, Dhofaris considered overthrowing Said via a coup and asked the British commander appointed to the Dhofari forces for help. However, he refused (Takriti 2013).

[38] While foreign support was an important asset to the Dhofari rebels, having such a diverse source of support was problematic. As explained previously, there are free different currents (tribal, Dhofarist, and republican) with different foreign powers (1) supporting different currents and (2) having different goals in supporting the rebels. Clearly, the DLF wanted to overthrow the Sultan and have a separated state (i.e., in Dhofar). The Imamate leadership (exiled in Saudi Arabia) wanted an independent state in the interior of Oman. the MAN wanted a unified regional struggle against British control in the region.

[39] MAN provided the Dhofar rebels with military and ideological training throughout the 1950s and 1960s. However, MAN did not honor its promise to provide the rebels with arms which led many to leave. Eventually, with divisions along nationalist lines growing as well as complications arising from the 1967 Arab defeat against Israel, the Gulf MAN chapters were closed in favor of creating a regional Marxist-Leninist organization.

[40] South Yemen underwent an armed struggle, led by two nationalist organizations, against British control from 1963 to 1967. It thus sympathized with and support the Dhofar rebellion until the end.

China.[44] (3) As explained earlier, Dhofari migrants in the Gulf collected funds for the rebels. (4) Finally, Iraq and the MAN provided the rebels with ammunition.

The Dhofar Rebellion lasted over a decade, but historical analysis shows that the regime and the rebels' behavior was consistent. Beyond just creating unrest, rebels attacked fixed targets (mainly oil companies), supported mass mobilization,[45] and attempted to assassinate Said (and succeeded in wounding him).

The regime reacted with a harsh repression-only strategy. Yet, Said used harsh repression from the start of the event in 1962 until he was deposed by a palace coup in 1970. By 1969,

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[41] After some initial reluctance, Egypt started supporting Dhofari rebels in 1964. It was because of Egypt's insistence that the Dhofari rebels be unified that the Dhofar Liberation Front was formed (unifying members of the MAN, the DCA, and the DSO) (Al-Mdairis 1987; Takriti 2013). Egypt stopped helping the DLF in 1969, because of an internal disagreement between the DLF's military and their more radical representatives abroad (Takriti 2013: 102).

[42] Saudi Arabia initially supported the Dhofar rebels; however, this support waned in 1966 for several reasons. First, the kingdom feared the Dhofaris alliance with Nasser, a known enemy of traditional monarchies (and of the Saudi king especially- See Abdel Nasser, Gamal. 1962. "Khitab Arais Gamal Abdel Nasser Fi Ihtifal B'Aid Anassr Assadiss Biypor S'Aid." Presented at the Port Said). Furthermore, Saudi Arabia had become close to and did not want to jeopardize relations with the British imperial power which supported the Sultan over the rebels. The Dhofaris and Imamate leadership (exiled in Saudi Arabia) had a strained and often hostile relationship (including with Imam Ghalib's group), likely to have influenced Saudi Arabia in abandoning the Dhofar rebels.

[43] The USSR started supporting PFLOAG in 1971 despite some reluctance after a USSR journalist visited Dhofar and a PFLOAG representative visited the USSR (Ridout and Jones: 2015).

[44] The DLF turned to Maoist China for help in 1968 after the Egyptians and other Arab regimes refused to support it. China had always condemned British involvement in the region as well as Said (Behbehani 1981). It is worth noting that China developed tis with the Imamate leadership in 1955, so its opposition to Anglo-sultanic rule predated the Dhofar movement. Behbehani (1981) points out that it makes sense China, which was undergoing a cultural revolution, and which was promoting the idea of a world revolution through armed struggle would support the DLF (which was in fact attempting to overthrow the regime through armed struggle).

[45] When trying to mobilize people, the DLF's strategy was to target people regardless of tribal affiliation or caste.

110 DLF members were arrested. When, in April 1966, the DLF attempted to assassinate Said, he immediately locked up 22 of their members, and later caught 5 more. At this point, Said notably went into a long, damaging isolation;[46] however, his repression-only strategy remained in place.

Moving forward, Said- who had superior arms- tried to starve Dhofaris by instigating a blockade around the three mountain ranges of Dhofar;[47] dropped bombs across the region; imprisoned Salalah inhabitants; repressed their trade; drove out rebels from coastal villages; launched strikes in the mountains; and subjected Dhofaris to military threats and harassment. Yet, despite his upper hand, Said still faced a significant risk; while the continued unrest in Dhofar was not in itself a great threat to his rule by 1966, it did create a platform for more mobilization. This explains why the Sultan further tightened the siege on the mountains in 1967.

Even after Oman started exporting oil in August 1967, Said did not make monetary concessions or even uphold his end of the social contract vis- à-vis the rest of the population; he allocated no money to alleviate the dire economic situation - an example of economic mismanagement reminiscent of the Shah's prior to 1979. Yet, I posit that offering monetary concessions would have been an ineffective action on Said's part; the opposition,

[46] This isolation combined with his reluctance to modernize and the unrest targeting his person is what prompted the British to support Qaboos.

[47] This method was successful in the past but failed to immediately quash the opposition here because the DLF was well organized and prepared.

while being triggered by Dhofar's economic marginalization, expressed the desire and carried out a failed plan to depose Said. They wanted him off the throne, not giving out favors. With the 1970 British- organized coup that replaced Said with Qaboos, the stakes changed, and the regime moved away from a repression-only strategy. I explain this in detail in the following section.

The repression-only strategy which I discuss in this section was not unique to Said. Qaboos, too, used it when faced with high-level threats. For example, in 1970 through 1972, Qaboos- new to the throne- reacted with quick repression to any popular unrest. Overall, the opposition that manifested itself at the beginning of Qaboos' reign was spontaneous, and the regime always reacted with quick repression to contain it. In 1971, for example, the wider population was angry at the inflation rate which was rising by 25% per year (*Le Commerce du Levant* 1970; Halliday 5617), foreign labor (specifically, unequal pay for Omanis compared to European expats), and what they viewed as foreign companies taking advantage of Omani resources. A violent uprising ensued in Matra and Muscat. Thousands of Omani workers attacked PDO loading stations, marched on Qaboos' palace, and verbally targeted the Minister of Labor. To contain the uprising, Qaboos declared a state of emergency, sent police forces to disperse protestors, and stopped flights to and from Oman. No compromises were offered.

Decades later, Qaboos adopted the same strategy to contain the 2005 Islamist plot. Ibadi Islamists- mostly teachers, students, and government officials- were arrested for plotting a coup. They were found to have weapons and accused of attempting to revive the Imamate (or a similarly religiously based system). More than 30 arrests were made, and sentences

ranged from 1-20 years, without transparency or a fair trial. Qaboos pardoned them in the end but it was still a highly repressive episode.

4.3 MONETARY CONCESSION

Sultan Qaboos' reaction to the Dhofar Rebellion was more nuanced and flexible compared to his predecessor's repression-only strategy.[48] However, this was not because Qaboos was inherently less repressive than Said (just like Mohammed VI of Morocco is not inherently less repressive than Hassan II). Rather, it was because Said's removal from the throne (along with some other structural factors that I clarify in this section) changed the level of threat that the Dhofar Rebellion represented for the regime- from high to moderate- and so the regime's reaction was more malleable. While using different resources, Qaboos' strategy during the Dhofar revolution is similar to Hassan II's reaction to the 1981 bread riots (discussed in section 3.3.1): there was a financial deal to co-opt the opposition specifically (through the amnesty), a massive development project in Dhofar aimed at the wider Dhofari population, and repression targeting the remaining and persisting opposition. Thus, under Qaboos, the opposition was still brutally repressed, but attempts were made by the regime to negotiate and accommodate. Why was Qaboos prepared to negotiate when Said was not? After the 1970 coup, the Dhofar Rebellion represented a moderate (rather than a high) threat to Qaboos; the Omani regime faced a shrinking opposition (that did not necessarily want to

[48] As I explained previously, in 1970, Qaboos replaced his father through a bloodless coup organized by the British. The coup took place in the midst of the Dhofar Rebellion, hence the switch in leadership.

kill Qaboos) and had foreign military and financial help, funds from oil exports, and a strong army. The threat to the regime was therefore far smaller than it had been when Said was in power.

Indeed, when the rebellion broke out in 1962, the DLF's goals were to construct a separate Dhofari state, free Dhofar of economic persecution, and overthrow Said to end his rule of terror (to that end, at least one assassination attempt against Said took place). Qaboos himself was not the target of the rebels' ire in the way that Said had been. The new sultan also had a growing oil exportation-based economy and was backed by important foreign powers and new allies whose support was material, not merely diplomatic.[49] Said, on the other hand, was isolated from the rest of the region and relied mostly on the British. Finally, the strong opposition that Said faced had grown tired and fractured over twenty years of rebellion. By the time Qaboos took over, he was able to take advantage of the divisions between the Dhofari opposition's tribal, republican, and Dhofarist groups. He did this by moving away from a repression-only strategy and co-opting the opposition.

He offered the rebels a general amnesty deal in 1970- financial aid and pardon in exchange for surrender. The republican current of the PFLOAG remained in opposition, but close to 2,000 members of the tribal current surrendered. Thus, Qaboos did something similar to

[49] Qaboos' allies included Iran's Reza Shah Pahlavi who sent more than 3,000 troops to help the sultan in December 1973, Jordan which sent military advisors, Saudi Arabia which provided military aid and $2.5billion in funding, the UAE which gave Qaboos $200 million, Egypt which provided military training, and the US which gave Qaboos financial aid.

what he would do close to forty years later during the Arab uprisings: using public funds strategically to appease the opposition and the wider population of Dhofar. Qaboos' goal was two-fold: decreasing the population's unhappiness with the regime (following Said's rule and his removal) and containing the Dhofar rebellion through discrete and minor developmental efforts.[50] Overall, Qaboos spent around 25% of development funds on Dhofar from the time he took over until the end of the war in order to improve the following sectors: education, health, and transportation (Oman Tax Guide 2015).[51]

Qaboos' decision to make these and other developmental reforms both complements my overarching argument (which emphasizes the link between regime survival and behavior in MENA monarchies) and offers an interesting example for further study, because the motivations of the opposition at that point could not be described as economic (e.g. as they were, partially, in the Arab Spring). In 1962, when the rebellion broke out, it was triggered in part by the economic persecution; yet, a decade later, the opposition had transformed, adopting first Arab nationalism then Maoist ideologies. In fact, the republican current which adhered to these ideologies did not accept Qaboos' concession. It continued to attack the camps of the Sultan's Armed Forces during the first two years of Qaboos' reign.

[50] For instance, a new port was built in Sur where the regime suspected fishermen had ties with the PFLOAG. As Halliday (1999: 5576) rightfully points out, the new port was also a way for the regime to monitor the aforementioned ties as it forced the fishermen to moor their ships in the harbor where they faced more scrutiny by regime officials.

[51] This percentage is significant because only about 50,000 people inhabited Dhofar in the mid- 1970s compared to 400,000 people in the rest of Oman.

The regime therefore followed up the amnesty offer with repression in the form of a full-scale military offensive starting in 1971 on which Qaboos spent half the country's USD 47.7 million oil revenues (Halliday 2013: 5517-5523). The aim of the regime's counterattacks, arrests, and interrogations was to contain the remaining dissidence. Qaboos' repressive tactics were similar to his predecessor's with blockades aiming to starve Dhofaris until they surrendered, gruesome warning leaflets distributed across rebel lands, and immediate executions of opposition actors.[52] In the eastern region of Dhofar, for example, hundreds of communists were killed. In western Dhofar, Qaboos distributed warning leaflets to deter people from continued opposition.[53] His ultimatum was that they cease their opposition or be brutally repressed.[54] Qaboos also continued the previous sultans' starvation tactics by strengthening the blockade around western Dhofar, thus cutting off food and water.

By 1975, the Sultan's Forces[55] had confined the opposition to a small area near the Yemeni border where they were finally able to defeat the rebels (International Business Publications 2016). Qaboos used repression because continued dissidence creates a greater risk of the

[52] Less importantly for the context of this research, Qaboos also resorted to anti-opposition propaganda that he used continuously throughout his reign. During the Dhofar Rebellion, PFLOAG members were referred to as "sinners" and "atheists" who "rejected Islam." See Hughes, Geraint. 2009. "A 'Model Campaign' Reappraised: The Counter-Insurgency War in Dhofar, Oman, 1965– 1975." *Journal of Strategic Studies* 32(2): 271-305.

[53] The leaflet described the strength of the Sultan's forces, ammunition, and military base in Safreet.

[54] Whether the warning was a ploy or merely a representation of what Qaboos had planned, it depicted a harsh and merciless reaction. Rebels were told that for every counter-revolutionary they had killed in previous battles, several rebel supporters would die to pay for their actions.

[55] The Sultan's Forces were greatly developed during the beginning of Qaboos' reign. The army saw its numbers grow by more than two thousand men (mostly former rebels) and received training and arms from Qaboos' new allies.

status quo being changed, which prompts the ruler to use repressive action to eliminate the threat (Davenport 2007). This was similar to what the Moroccan regime did in 1981 and 2011, and it conforms with Guriev and Treisman's (2015) informational theory of dictatorship which holds that once other, non-violent means (i.e., the amnesty) have failed, the regime must resort to repression to contain the threat.

4.3.1 STRATEGIC USE OF RESOURCES AND SUBSIDIES IN THE SULTANATE

Examining how the Omani regime monetarily accommodates opposition actors and the wider population to contain threat is complicated by rentier social contract adopted by GCC states. Oman has a high-income economy[56] that has depended heavily on limited natural resources since the ascension of Qaboos to the throne in 1970.[57] Currently, Oman owns close to 60% of PDO, the company responsible for more than 70% of the country's crude oil production (Energy Information Administration 2017). The oil sector represented 24.65% of Oman's GDP in 2016 (see Figure 31). The regime is currently trying to diversify the country's economy in order to reduce its over-reliance on its limited reserves of natural resources, and to create more jobs (which would alleviate the pernicious effects of the

[56] I refer to the World Bank's definition when I classify Oman as having a high-income economy (World Bank 2018); some other sources refer to it as a middle-income economy (see Strolla and Peri 2013). A country with a high-income economy is one whose gross national income (GNI) is above $12,236, according to the World Bank. The latter classifies every economy as high, middle (GNI is between $1,006 and $12,235), or low-income (GNI is $1,005 or less); it further categorizes middle- income economies as lower middle- income (with a GNI per capita between $1,006 and $3,955) and upper middle-income (with a GNI per capita between $3,956 and $12,235). Here, GNI per capita is considered to be the best indicator of economic health and capacity.

[57] For the purpose of comparison, Morocco is a lower middle-income economy.

sultanate's unemployment problem).[58] This is an important step for the sultanate which is more prosperous than most MENA states (see Figure 32) but is less secure than six of its GCC neighbors. Compared to the other GCC states (barring Bahrain), Oman has only modest oil reserves; as of 2017, it has 5.373 billion in proven reserves[59] of crude oil in barrels (see Figure 34). This is the highest oil reserve of any non-OPEC country, but still significantly lower than Oman's Gulf neighbors (see Figure 33).

Omani oil reserves will likely be depleted in 21 years (at a recovery rate of 700,000 barrel/day).[60] While more oil will probably be discovered in Oman (Katz 2004), it will have to be discovered in great quantities in order to affect this estimated timeframe of reserve depletion. This means that the Omani regime will have to adapt to a post-oil economy sooner than other GCC states with higher reserves. Currently, Oman's economy is stable but low-performing; due to the drop in oil prices (which started in 2014 and further decreased in 2016) as well as the increased subsidies[61] adopted following the Arab Spring in 2011, the

[58] Unemployment is a steadily growing problem in Oman, with 16.9% of the population unemployed as of 2017. As lately as January 2018, soaring unemployment rates, coupled with tax increases and a reduction of 20% of the country's energy bill over the last three years, have fueled persistent post-Arab Spring protests in the sultanate.

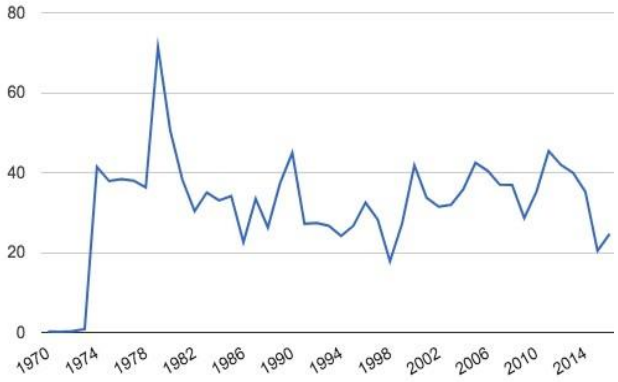
[59] Proven oil reserves are those quantities of petroleum which can be estimated with a high degree of confidence to be commercially recoverable from a country's current reservoirs (according to geological and engineering data).

[60] Author's calculations using data from the PDO as follows: 5.373billion (oil reserves) divided by 700,000 (barrels recovered a day) divided by 365 (days in a year).

[61] By 'subsidy' I mean the financial aid given by the regime to an economic sector or actor to lower or maintain the price of a commodity or service in the general interest of the public; I am not referring to tax concessions (World Trade Organization 2006, B: 48; de Moor and Calamai 1997). I focus on what El-Katiri and Fattouh (2015: 2) categorize as "on-budget, or explicit subsidies that constitute explicit transfers made by the government to either the producer or the consumer receiving the subsidy, registered on the state's budget."

sultanate's budget and foreign reserves were weakened, and its GDP declined by 5.1% in 2016 (World Bank 2017).

Figure 31: OMAN: REVENUE MINUS PRODUCTION COST OF OIL, % OF GDP



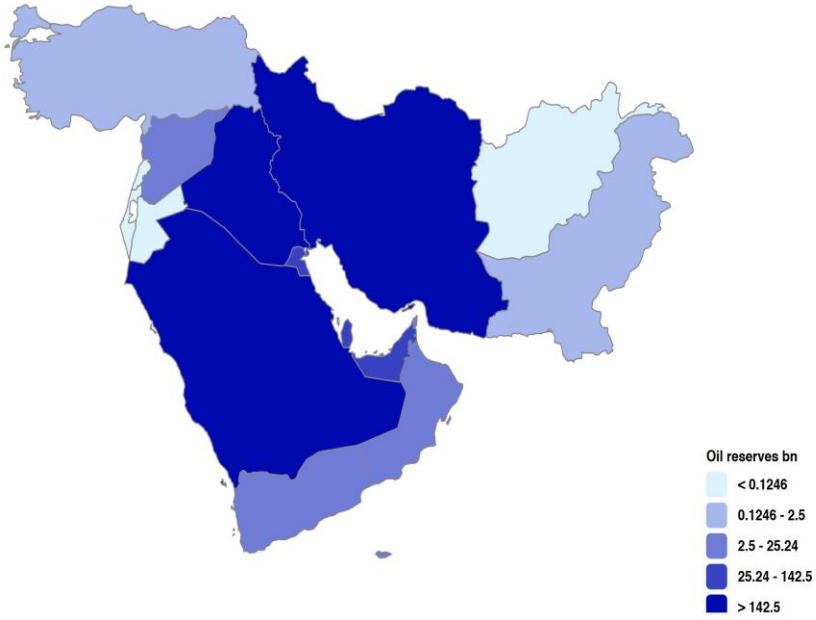
Source: Author's figures using data from the World Data Bank.

Figure 32: WORLD BANK CLASSIFICATION OF ECONOMIES 2017.

Economy	*Code*	*Income group*
Bahrain	BHR	High income
Israel	ISR	High income
Kuwait	KWT	High income
Malta	MLT	High income
Oman	OMN	High income
Qatar	QAT	High income
Saudi Arabia	SAU	High income
United Arab Emirates	ARE	High income
Algeria	DZA	Upper middle income
Iran, Islamic Rep.	IRN	Upper middle income
Iraq	IRQ	Upper middle income
Lebanon	LBN	Upper middle income
Libya	LBY	Upper middle income
Djibouti	DJI	Lower middle income
Egypt, Arab Rep.	EGY	Lower middle income
Jordan	JOR	Lower middle income
Morocco	MAR	Lower middle income
Syrian Arab Republic	SYR	Lower middle income
Tunisia	TUN	Lower middle income
West Bank and Gaza	PSE	Lower middle income
Yemen, Rep.	YEM	Lower middle income

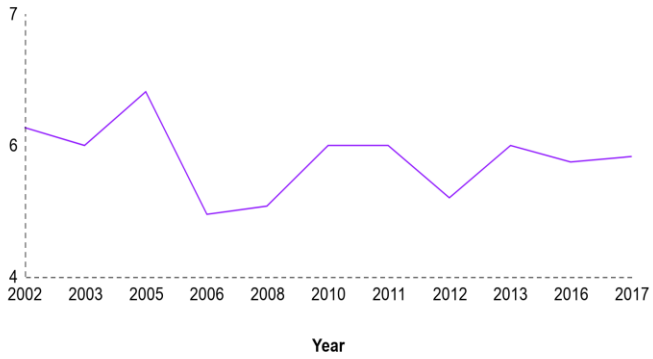
Source: Author's figures using data from the World Data Bank

Figure 33: MENA REGION PROVEN OIL RESERVES 2017.



Source: Author's figures using data from the World Data Bank

Figure 34: OMAN TREND IN OIL RESERVES 2002-2017 (BBL).



Source: Author's figures using data from the World Data Bank

The regime plans to move from an oil-centric to a post-oil economy in which oil revenues would account for only 9% of GDP by 2020 (compared to 66.3 percent[1] on average during 2011-2015)[2] and in which other sectors like tourism, shipping, and industry would contribute more to the country's GDP (see Figure 10 below for the results of the diversification effects). The fact that Oman's is an oil- centric economy is a weakness, since it means that the country is tied to the rise and fall of oil prices. To compensate for its reduced budget since the 2014 crash in oil prices, the regime cut public spending by raising taxes and reforming the subsidy system- cutting subsidies for fuel, gas, electricity, and water (see Figure 35).

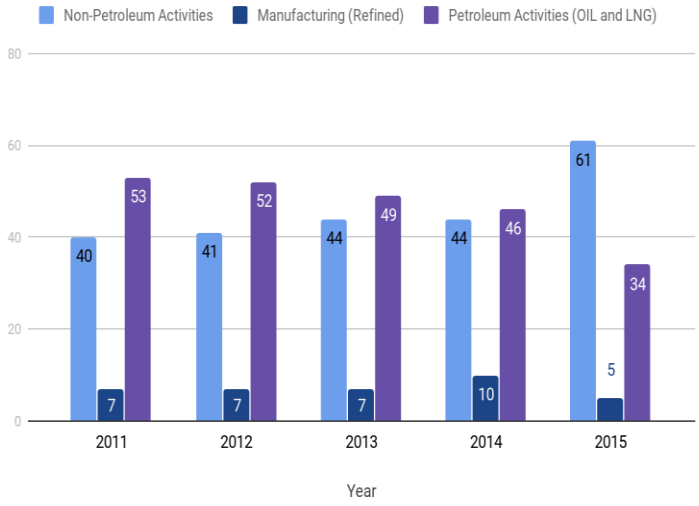
The Omani regime has a long history of targeting the citizenry (rather than just elites) with subsidies, grants, and other social benefits[3] to buy social peace. As early as 1971, during the Dhofar revolution, Qaboos targeted both the dissidents and the wider population with the financial incentive to appease them; he offered the opposition a financial deal discussed earlier and funded a massive development project in Dhofar to appease the rest of the population. He combined this tactic with repression to contain the remaining opposition.

[1] Central Bank of Oman, *Annual Report 2016.*

[2] See Oman's Vision 2020 Plan for more detail on the plans to move to a post-oil economy.

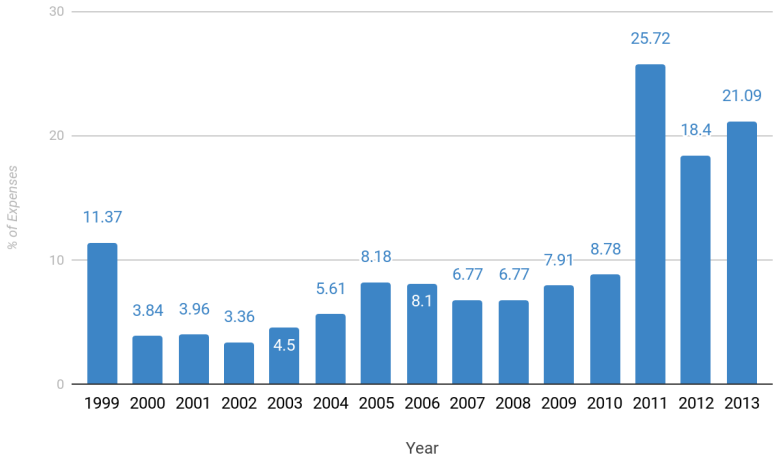
[3] Unrequited, non-repayable transfers on current account to private and public enterprises; and social security, social assistance benefits, and employer social benefits in cash and in kind

FIGURE 10: OMAN'S GDP ACCORDING TO TYPE OF ECONOMIC ACTIVITY (%)



Source: Author's graph using data from the World Bank.

Figure 35: OMAN'S SUBSIDIES AND OTHER TRANSFERS AS % OF EXPENSES.



Source: Author's figures using data from the World Data Bank

Qaboos' diversification of the regime's strategy vis-à-vis Dhofar can be explained by the fact that, as discussed earlier, the Dhofari rebels did not want to assassinate Qaboos as they did Said. Qaboos also had more oil exports and more allies (who provided military resources) than his predecessor. He also faced a weakened and fractured opposition. These factors decreased the threat that Qaboos faced (from high to moderate) hence his willingness to grant financial appeasement. Overall, this combination of tactics (strategic accommodation and repression targeting persisting opposition) successfully contained the threat.

The Omani regime used this specific combination of tactics several times since then- most memorably during the Arab uprisings (which I discuss in more detail in section 4.5) when protestors demanded better economic and political reforms, and the regime reacted with a financial package, small reforms to the Basic Law, and repression (both short-term and long-term). Two other events were handled in a similar manner: the post-Arab Spring protests throughout 2012 and 2013, and the unemployment protests of January 2018. Both events were triggered, at least in part, by economic factors. The post-Arab Spring protests were staged by labor and youth movements starting in May 2012 in reaction to high unemployment rates and the regime's slow economic and political reforms. There was also a strike by close to 1,000 oil laborers who demanded better wages and working conditions. In 2014, further strikes took place in private retail and petrochemical companies, despite their being outlawed by the regime (Gulf News 2014). The situation was exacerbated by protests that erupted in Sohar (the industrial capital) in support of Talib Al-Maamari, a member of *Majlis Al-Shura* targeted by the authorities for anti-government Facebook posts. These events were closely followed by a four-week strike of 35,000 teachers across 740 public

schools (out of 1,040) who demanded standardized salary grades, better pay, and the right to form unions.

This post-Arab Spring event is significant because (1) opposition actors criticized Qaboos directly- something which had not happened in Oman since the Dhofari rebels openly targeted Said in the 1960s, and (2) the oil strikes impacted the economy of the country. In response, the regime targeted the wider population with financial incentives while harshly repressing the opposition in the short and long- term. Indeed, in the summer of 2012, the authorities arrested 22 activists (Amnesty International 2012), jailed 12 protestors for illegal gathering, criticized actors who were supposedly using freedom of expression to incite public disorder, repressed civil society groups, and upheld the convictions of two journalists who had appealed their 2011 judgement.

In so doing, the regime to put an end to the immediate threat (i.e., a renewal of Arab Spring-style events); the regime has since continued to repress opposition actors through 2016.[4] The regime also outlawed striking in oil plants, airports, ports, and refineries- all deemed essential to public life.[5] Finally, to deter future opposition, Qaboos passed a new law through royal decree which allowed the state to deprive Omani nationals of their citizenship if they formed groups, organizations, or parties whose principles "harmed Omani interests"

[4] The included human rights activists Said Jaddad and Basima Al-Rajhi, protestors who continued to demonstrate in Sohar's industrial area, the aforementioned Al-Maamari, social media activist Hilal Al-Busaidi, several bloggers, Sohari and Buraimi civil servant and businessmen, journalist editor Mohammed Al-Fazari, writers Ali Al-Rawahi and Said Al-Darudi, among others.

[5] Muscat Daily. 2013. "Oman Bans Strikes at Facilities Providing Essential Services."

or worked outside of Oman and did not obey the regime's order to return home (Article 20, No. 38/2014 Omani Royal Decree).

At the same time, even as it dealt with falling oil prices- the regime announced it would increase the minimum wage by 62% for nationals; standardize the salaries, grades, and pensions of public sector employees; increase the number of scholarships to study abroad; and limit the number of foreign laborers (thereby Omanizing the workforce) by withholding visas (Valeri 2015). In an effort to appease the citizenry, Qaboos also pardoned the 2012 and 2011 jailed activists on the occasion of the 43rd anniversary to his ascension to the throne; and he ordered that Arab Spring protestors that had been fired from their jobs be reinstated. Finally, he allowed the country's first municipal elections to be held in December 2013.

The final and most recent economy-triggered opposition events during which the regime reacted by targeting the wider population with financial incentives while harshly repressing continued opposition in the short and long-term are the unemployment protests of February 2017-January 2018. These protests took place because of the high levels of unemployment in the Sultanate and austerity measures[6] adopted by the regime in January 2017 to compensate for decreasing oil prices and for its overspending to contain the Arab uprisings. It did this namely by cutting government spending on subsidies by over OMR500 million in 2015/2016 (Times of Oman 2017). Indeed, five years after the Arab Spring ended in Oman,

[6] When facing economic hardship, the regime imposes austerity measures to reduce its spending, e.g. decreasing subsidies, raising taxes etc. The regime may adopt austerity measures through its own volition or be forced to do so by international institutions that loaned the country money, like the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Predictably, subsidies benefit the wider population while austerity measures displease it, which is why regimes can use them to control people.

the sultanate had the highest budget deficit of all the GCC states, at 21% of GDP (IMF 2017).

As a result of regime-implemented austerity measures, the domestic price of petrol increased by close to 75% from 114 to 186 *baisa*[7] per liter, which prompted hundreds of Omanis to protest in February 2017 in front of the Ministry of Oil in Muscat. A week after the start of protests, the regime capped the price of regular petrol at its then current price (i.e., 186 *baisa*/liter); diesel and super petrol remained linked to international crude oil prices. The reasoning for the authorities' decision is that regular petrol was the most popular fuel as well as the fuel most widely used by lower-income citizens who were most affected by austerity measures. By contrast, super petrol is mostly used by higher-income citizens with expensive cars, and diesel is used by companies and traders that can afford the extra costs.

Soon thereafter, in October 2017, the regime promised via royal decree to create 25,000 new jobs and announced that it would take action against private firms that did not hire more Omani nationals- who occupy only 237,900 of the 1.87 million private sector jobs (Omani Ministry of Manpower 2017).[8] Protestors were evidently unhappy with this concession, (1) because they saw it as an empty promise, considering the regime had not provided the jobs it

[7] A *baisa* is a subunit of the Omani riyal; one riyal consists of 1,000 baisas.

[8] The regime took this unprecedented move of calling on the private sector to help with the unemployment issue because it could not afford to create enough jobs in the public sector because of pressure on the state budget due to lower oil prices (averaging $45/barrel in 2017) and due to overspending to contain Arab and post Arab Spring protests.

pledged before, and (2) because there are more than 54,000 registered job seekers, so 25,000 new jobs would not be enough for more than half the country's unemployed citizens (*Idem*).

As a result, in January 2018, similar protests took place in front of the Ministry of Manpower in Muscat and spread to Salalah and Sur. Opposition actors were mainly young and educated Omanis protesting unemployment. This continued unrest led the regime to harshly repress protestors, especially in the south- suggesting that Salalah and Sur's history of protest heightened the regime's perception of the threat- where they were arrested immediately upon their arrival to the protest sites (Human Rights Watch 2018). These protestors faced human rights violations and riot police brutality, and it is not clear whether and when they were released. After removing this immediate threat, the regime (as it had done seven years prior to contain the Arab Spring) then pledged to create more jobs in a six-month timeframe and to restrict the employment of foreign workers for six months, thus placating the wider population (*Idem*).

4.4 L'ÉTAT, C'EST MOI: REGIME-CONTROLLED LIBERALIZATION

As discussed in this chapter's introduction, supporters of the Omani democracy thesis highlight the current monarch's relative openness compared to his predecessor and his Gulf neighbors (Arwa 2008; Clements 1980) as well as what some call a "*distinctively Omani democracy*," which is tied to "the Omani social and political micro-climate" (Jones and Ridout 2005: 379). Yet, the research which portrays Said as inherently more repressive

(Townsend 1977: 11-13; *The New Oman* 1971[9]) and Qaboos as more open to political liberalization (Searl 1975; Clements 1980) follows the Qaboos-state's attempt to legitimize itself by delegitimizing the predecessor it overthrew, and this research provides only a superficial analysis of both monarchs' types of rule.

These scholars relate Oman's exceptionalism to the Omani sense of social self and tolerance and predict that these attributes will lead to social and political liberalization, which in turn will lead to an evolving and distinctively Omani democracy. However, as I explain in great detail in Chapter 2 (section 2.2.5), unlike democratization, liberalization does not increase the public's ability to directly influence or participate in government, but it does enhance individual freedoms and people's ability to participate in the public sphere. Furthermore, while Oman is more open than other absolute monarchies like Saudi Arabia and the UAE in some respects (e.g. Oman has a constitution and one elected Consultative Council), it is far from democratic, and does not even come close to Morocco's standards of soft authoritarianism.[10]

After all, Oman is an absolute monarchy where the Qaboos is both head of state and head of government. This means that any gesture of (pseudo)liberalization depends wholly on the

[9] This is a government publication through which the regime attempts to spin the narrative that Qaboos would move on from his father's "harsh and medieval rule." See: The Omani Ministry of Information, Labor and Social Welfare. *The New Oman*, Muscat: 1971.

[10] Soft authoritarianism refers to a system of rule in which there is a minimum component of democracy (in the form of political competition), but where there are also mechanisms that ensure that the ruling actor remains the most powerful. It would follow that while some aspects of democracy exist in Morocco (such as elections and democratic institutions), the robustness of the authoritarian structures makes political transformation unlikely (Hafez 2010).

sultan. For example, since 2003, he *seems* to have alternated between risk-free political opening, harsh repression of all opposition actors, and random gestures of benevolence (Valeri 2007). This is because, like any rational ruler, Qaboos (and Said before him) does not wish to decrease his power in a way that would restrain him, but he does want to appease and/or contain opposition actors.

However, Qaboos' actions are far from random; he combines repression and benevolence in a specific way whereby he targets dissidents with repression and the wider population with liberalization. This is markedly different from episodes of brutal repression used- for example- by Hassan II in the 1957 Rif Rebellion or Said bin Taimur in the first Jabal Akhdar repression. In both these cases, only repression was used, and it targeted groups beyond the opposition. Furthermore, the events which I examine below show how the extreme top-down liberalization process in the sultanate is determined completely by the regime.

My analysis bolsters my theoretical discussion in Chapter 2 about how dictators often adopt liberalization as a substitute for rather than a step towards democratization (Hinnebusch 2006); their intent is to remove the threat of active opposition, not to democratize. As a result, most of the projects of liberalization do not culminate in a successful transition to democracy (Schmitter 2000) or even in actual liberalization. The point of the argument I make based on my findings is not to undermine the intelligence of the opposition. Rather, I show that the Omani regime survives some types of dissidence events by promising or pretending to adopt liberalization to contain the immediate threat and wider discontent, then following political liberalization with repression that incapacitates the opposition. Through this combination of authoritarian tactics, which upholds the regime's democratic façade, the

Omani regime eliminates the immediate threat while keeping various members of the domestic and international community content.

4.4.1 STICKS AND CARROTS

As with Morocco, the Omani regime reacts most brutally when opposition actors want to remove the ruler from the political helm of the territory. When opposition actors seek to reduce the ruler's powers (for example, through the creation of laws that would check the ruler's powers with institutions or texts) then they represent a moderate threat to the ruler who could risk major power loss.[11] In Arab Spring- related protests, for example, protestors asked for higher living wages and price cuts, the removal of corrupt officials, and a more open political sphere. This last demand involved (theoretically) reducing Qaboos' powers by reforming the Basic Law and giving legislative power to the elected assembly. Similar to Mohammed VI (as well as the remaining Arab monarchs) Qaboos appeased the protestors with promises of reforms- which satisfied some protestors but did not meet the requests of others- before repressing the remaining protestors to avoid continued dissidence which would lead to a greater threat (see Section 4.5 for a more in-depth analysis).

This pseudo-liberalization tactic has been used by the Omani regime continuously throughout its modern history as early as 1996 when Qaboos ratified a constitution that allowed for an elected consultative body. On the one hand, this allowed the monarch to give

[11] Dictators want to avoid liberalization that would result from the creation of laws and institutions that would check their powers, because it would decrease their control over the political sphere, limit their actions thus making it more difficult for them to reward their coalition, and possibly cross the threshold to democratization.

people the illusion of control over political matters, and on the other, as Valeri (2006) rightly points out, this was a way for the monarch to "neutralize emerging socio-political forces" by co-opting them and presenting them as scapegoats.

Examining the Omani regime's use of liberalization is less straightforward than studying Morocco's, because the expression of active opposition varies significantly from one case to the other. As explained earlier, organized political organization is scarce in Qatar (and other GCC states) because political parties and political associations are not allowed, while union laws are restrictive.[12] Furthermore, the rules on freedom of association are vague. Constitutionally, Omanis are allowed to form associations but must obtain the authorities' permission in writing prior to doing so. Even then, the organization must not be critical of the regime or have the potential of creating unrest. Following the Arab Spring and post-Arab Spring protests, these laws have become more restrictive. Furthermore, civil society in Oman is mostly consists of groups launched by or under the purview of the regime.

Therefore, they cannot openly oppose the regime and thus cannot achieve significant change in the public sphere. This barren political scene not only impacts how the Omani regime perceives threat (less opposition organization leads to less frequent threats to the regime which, in turn, makes the regime more cautious of opposition events when they occur), but it also impacts how opposition actors go about making demands from the regime. Indeed, it is rare for actors in Oman to organize to demand political liberalization. Prior to the Arab

[12] Omani workers can legally form unions and strike, but only one federation is allowed, and all workers have to agree to form a strike.

uprisings, actors did this indirectly; actors made these demands in a "roundabout way" by staging anti-war demonstrations, holding protests against Israel-friendly foreign policy, getting involved in religious activities, and abstaining from voting (Valeri 2006: 204).

4.4.1.1 CONTAINING COVERT THREATS

Oman provides an interesting case to study how regimes contain cover threats- i.e., active opposition in the form of covert operations against the regime. I refer to these operations as covert because they were organized and planned but were intercepted before being carried out. Despite their being foiled by the regime, two such events took place during Oman's modern history- in 1994 and 2005- and both were linked to religious ideology.

For example, the threat that Ibadism represented for the regime in modern Oman is rooted in the tensions that existed between Imams and the Sultans of Muscat prior to the formation of the modern state.[13] Even after the Jabal Akhdar Wars which I examine earlier in this chapter, the regime in Oman continued to fear losing power to a re-established Ibadi movement.

The regime saw this fear materialize in May 1994 when it intercepted a plot to overthrow the monarchy. According to official reports, more than 430 members of an underground Islamist group in possession of weapons were arrested.[14] The motivation of the Islamist group was to denounce the relations between Oman and Israel as well as American presence in the region,

[13] In 1895, for example, some tribes sieged Muscat "under an Ibadi revivalist umbrella (See Peterson 2004: 1).

[14] See Worrall, James. 2012. "Oman: The "Forgotten" Corner of the Arab Spring." *Middle East Policy Council.* Mepc.org. https://www.mepc.org/oman-forgotten-corner-arab-spring

and its goal was allegedly to overthrow the regime and set off a series of explosions across Muscat. Valeri (2007) notes that, even though there is little information about this dissidence event due to the lack of transparency of the arrests and court proceedings, it is significant as it was the first sign of major and open dissidence towards the regime since the Dhofar Rebellion.

Furthermore, the event was exacerbated by the political context. The early 1990s marked a time of instability in Oman and the Gulf region. Iraq had invaded Kuwait in 1990, leading the Gulf- and indeed the world- into a bloody war fought by Saddam Hussein and his few allies on the one side and the Saudi and US-led multinational coalition on the other. Oman sided against Saddam and (as had happened in Hassan II's Morocco), this created resentment among nationals who disapproved of the regime-sanctioned US military presence in their country.

This popular resentment was not limited to Oman but spread to its Gulf neighbors. Terrorists attacked American troops in Saudi Arabia; Bahraini Shi'as were actively opposing the monarchy; and the balance of power shifted within the Qatari monarchy following a palace coup. In light of the rising Islamist popularity in the region, the fact that the 1994 foiled coup in Oman was organized by Islamists (linked to the Muslim Brotherhood) was perceived by the regime as a serious threat.

Predictably, the regime reacted with targeted repression; around 150 people were tried and condemned, with jail time ranging from 3 to 20 years and 3 people sentenced to death. Qaboos later commuted the death sentences to life in prison and granted royal pardon to the other detainees (Valeri 2007, 2011). Once the imminent threat was contained, Qaboos

targeted the wider population with liberalization to appease discontent and avoid a continued threat. The wider population was dissatisfied at this point which could be seen in 1996 through occasional student demonstrations, distributed pamphlets, and- memorably- the use of donkeys to advertise critiques of the regime (Eickelman 2001: 201).

Thus, following the intercepted Islamist coup and in the midst of the aforementioned tension, Qaboos proposed and passed Oman's first constitution: The 1996 Basic Law. While the constitution came about through undemocratic means- it was promulgated by Qaboos with a Royal Decree (No. 101/1996) without any debate or communication- it marked an important step towards some degree of liberalization. Indeed, the Basic Law made the Omani regime less absolute than its Saudi and Emirati neighbors. While it did not restrict the Sultan's powers (*Omani Constitution* 1996, art. 42), at least it was a legal text that held him accountable to a certain extent. In this sense, the 1996 Omani constitution is similar to the Moroccan constitutions between 1962; it codified Qaboos' massive powers[15] while stipulating that Oman should have an elected body, *Majlis Al-Shura* (*Omani Constitution* 1996, art. 50).[16]

[15] Qaboos's powers include promulgating and ratifying laws, declare war and state of emergency, control individuals' rights, and grant royal pardons (*Omani Constitution* 1996, art. 42). Furthermore, his person is inviolable, similarly to the King of Morocco (art. 41).

[16] To put this into perspective, *Majlis Al-Shura* went from being appointed by Qaboos, to being selected by regional elites with the sultan only having a final say. Later, in 2003, the members were elected to the lower house by the citizenry, while the Sultan appointed *Majlis a-Dawla*. The elected body, however, had only limited powers that did not extend to matters of foreign policy, domestic politics, national security, legal reform, or initiating legislature.

Thus, the constitutionalization itself (like in 1962 in Morocco) was a positive step towards progress; however, the text did not open the political scene. It improved civil liberties- by ensuring equality, medical care, education, and religious tolerance (art. 17-28)- but not political freedom (which would constrain the monarch). For example, Article 33 on forming associations made it impossible to create parties and political associations, and very difficult to form unions.

4.4.2 REFORMING WITHOUT REPRESSING

Finally, opposition events that seek reform and would result in minor (if any) reductions to the ruler's powers are perceived as low-threat events. In reaction to general unhappiness with the regime, Qaboos made several developmental reforms without repressing the population when he came to the throne; among these changes, he released prisoners and dismissed conservative British advisors and Omani henchmen from Said's time. There was also a small increase in civil liberty; *Al-Watan*, a national newspaper was allowed into the country, radio stations were set up in Muscat and Salalah, and some Omanis returned from exile.

Other notable (developmental) changes include: building infrastructure (Port Qaboos in Matra, a 125-mile tarmacked road, and an international airport at Sib); developing fishing and agriculture, thus creating more employment; implementing a basic welfare system; providing more education for children; adopting a basic health program; building more hospitals; and building two extensions between Muscat and Matra to support the growing urban population (Halliday 1999: 5568).

Over the last two decades, Qaboos has continued to grant reforms that do not impact his powers. In 2010, for example, after campaigns and complaints by women, he countered Article 11.b (1996) which required that women obtain consent from their male guardian before they marry with the 2010 Royal Decree which allows women to petition the Sultan to marry if their male guardian refuses. In 2003, to appease tensions among the wider population, the regime granted universal suffrage for *Majlis Al-Shura* (shifting the selection of Council members away from regional elites).

4.5 TESTING MY THEORY ON OMAN'S REACTION TO THE ARAB SPRING

The unfolding of the Arab uprisings in Oman is often glossed over by government sources, journalists, and scholars as a straightforward situation that was well handled by an enlightened regime that swiftly granted reforms. Qaboos is praised for his willingness to listen to protestors' demands, and the presence and subsequent involvement of armed forces is rarely mentioned (Gilda 2017; Said 2015; Worrall 2012). However, both the circumstances of the protests as well as the multi-step regime reaction that contained them are more complex than existing research shows. Importantly, the regime's initial reaction was not unprecedented, nor did it put an end to the protests which reemerged outside of Muscat (in Sur, Salalah, and repeatedly throughout Sohar). Worrall's (2012) description of Oman as "the forgotten corner of the Arab Spring" is apt not because the sultanate avoided the uprising, but because academics and journalists alike have labeled it in a superficial manner lacking in-depth analysis.

The Arab uprisings started in Oman with a small series of protests of around 200 people organizing in Sohar (a northern industrial city) in February 2011 that gradually spread to Muscat then to the south in Salalah. The movement grew, and protestors took to the streets in the thousands to demand socio-economic and political reforms. The opposition was largely peaceful (organizing sit-ins, petitions, riots, and demonstrations) except for a minority, notably in Sohar where protestors set fire to the Indian-owned Lulu hypermarket and threw stones at security forces. Broadly, protestors were educated and mostly working-class without division across sects, while royalist supporters were wealthy (Worrall 2012: 101).

The opposition can be divided into two groups based on their demands and numbers. In Sohar, thousands from the wider population (most notably industrial workers) gathered to demand socio-economic reforms- i.e., a solution to unemployment, higher living wages, and price cuts- while in Muscat (in addition to thousands of people who took to the streets- including students and ministry workers) a group of intellectuals collaborated and wrote a petition wherein they asked Qaboos for political reforms- namely, the resignation of corrupt officials and a more open

political sphere. The latter involved reducing Qaboos' powers by reforming the Basic Law and giving legislative power to the elected assembly.

The threat was not as high as the Dhofar Rebellion or Jabal Akhdar Wars because the opposition during the Arab Spring did not want to overthrow the regime (and Qaboos was

not targeted)[17], nor did it have secessionist motives that would create material losses and political complications for the regime. The opposition was not motivated by a religious ideology that might undermine the legitimacy of the Qaboos state (as the Imamate had done in the past) and it did not fracture across regional lines that might awaken the coastal-interior divide.

However, the threat of Oman's Arab uprisings was not as low as the 2010 campaigning for women's rights which targeted the patriarchal family code. The opposition did not seek to topple the monarchy or separate from it territorially, but they did have some demands that required limiting Qaboos' power and were organized enough to plan marches across the country with thousands of participants- a significant number in a country which counted only about two million nationals in 2011 (Ministry of National Economy and General Directorate for Civil Status 2014). Finally, the Arab uprisings were the first example of such significant organized public dissent since the Dhofar rebellion (i.e., in close to 60 years) so it was not a trivial event and, importantly, it had the potential to evolve into a more serious episode were it not contained (as had been the case in Tunisia and Libya). Hence, the regime viewed the Omani Spring as a moderate threat.[18]

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[17] However, in July 2012, protestors expressed anger at Sultan Qaboos for wasting resources by sending a hundred horses to the Diamond Jubilee in honor of Elizabeth II. Furthermore, in Sohar, there was graffiti calling for the overthrow of the monarchy (Valeri 2012). However, these are minor expressions of frustration against the regime.

[18] As I explain in greater detail in Chapter 3, while I acknowledge that the threat that these protests represented to the regime was amplified because they happened during the Arab Spring (and there was thus a risk of domino effect), I consider this to be a political context rather than a unique situation. When the Dhofar Rebellion was unfolding, Said faced an unstable political context due to the rising popularity of Arab nationalism, the overall fragility of monarchical systems (which fell in Iraq, Libya, and Egypt), and the

To contain the 2011 protests, the sultan first reshuffled his cabinet (whose members were accused of being corrupt), fired targeted personalities (like the Lieutenant- General Al-Maamari), dissolved the Ministry of National Economy (also accused of being corrupt), promised that the public prosecutor would have independence, and proposed new reforms to the Basic Law that did not limit his vast powers but that did present important civil reforms. For example, the Public Authority for Consumer Protection, an independent authority that protects consumers' rights, was set up. The most significant political reform was granting legislative and regulatory powers to *Majlis Al-Shura* (which had thus far been merely a consultative body). However, now eight years after the start of the protests, this reform remains theoretical.

The regime also granted monetary concessions. It promised to create 50,000 new jobs in the public sector (Ottaway and Muasher 2011: 18). New monthly unemployment benefits of USD 390 were provided (Bank 2014). Pension contribution rates for civil servants were reduced. The minimum wage for the private sector was set to 520 USD. Various groups were also targeted: Students of certain institutions were given higher allowances the further away they lived; military and security personnel were given stipends to cover their living costs; and pensions were raised by one hundred% for people registered at the Social Development Ministry. Qaboos also secured a ten-billion-dollar aid plan from the GCC to

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ensuing threat to traditional monarchs by the Arab Cold War. In 2011, Qaboos faced an unstable political context due the regional nature of the Arab Spring (as well as to the socioeconomic consequences of the 2008 economic crisis and the decrease in oil prices).

upgrade housing and infrastructure within the decade. Finally, he pledged to raise expenditures by 26% to provide more welfare benefits.

However, these concessions were not granted without repression, specifically a two- step repression strategy that started from the beginning of the initial Sohar protests in 2011 and continued when protests were renewed. Indeed, during the first Sohar protests, security forces used rubber bullets and tear gas to disperse protestors. Dozens of protestors were arrested, and two were killed. In the following months, protestors who marched or organized sit-ins in Muscat, Sur, Sohar, and Salalah were brutalized and/or arrested. Importantly, on March 1 and 28, the army repressed the crowds with live ammunition and military tanks; Sohar was then placed under military control for one week. When a demonstration cropped up in Salalah on May 14, the army intervened, and the authorities cut off the internet. In June 2011, fifteen arrested protestors received prison sentences (ranging from six months to five years). The regime then started targeting actors beyond those that were physically protesting.

In September 2011, for example, two newspaper editors who had accused the Ministry of Justice of being corrupt were arrested and sentenced to five months in prison; their websites were censured. A month later, Qaboos issued a Royal Decree in October 11 which restricted freedom of expression. Protests continued because people did not believe the regime would deliver the promised reforms. For instance, the promise of job creation seemed dubious since citizens (and the IMF) did not

believe it would be so easy to create jobs that were not created before, and since these jobs would relieve the unemployment issue in the short-term but not in the long run (International Monetary Fund 2011).

By July 2013, while the regime released many protestors imprisoned between 2011 and 2012, it was slow to implement promised reforms. To contain continued protests, the regime ordered the arrest of protestors as well as other actors who expressed discontent with the regime, including thirty activists, writers, and bloggers given a year in prison. Political activists were also tortured by security services (Gulf Centre for Human Rights 2014). Moving forward, freedom of expression and organization were harshly limited to avoid further opposition (Omani Penal Law, art. 137- amended in 2011). Regime behavior in Oman during the Arab Spring thus conforms with the pattern that I outline in Chapter 2.

4.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I use mixed methods to investigate the strategies that the Omani regime uses to contain active opposition. First, through historical analysis, I highlight the major opposition events faced by the Omani monarchy during its modern history, which I categorize according to the perceived threat by the regime. Then, I analyze the regime's reaction to these different types of active opposition using data from archives, interviews, Omani legal texts, the IMF, the World Bank, Freedom House, various datasets, and Oman's ministries of Oil and Energy, Finance, and Manpower. By considering specific events of active opposition against the regime, and systematically examining the levels and

combinations of repression, political concession, and monetary accommodation that the regime uses to contain these events, I uncover a pattern of regime reaction to opposition that leads to survival in Oman that is similar to the pattern I uncover in Morocco.

There are two extremes in the pattern which I uncover: brutal repression without any sort of accommodation, and no repression at all. The regime uses repression on its own when the threat is so high that overthrow, significant power loss, or escalation is likely. Overthrow was likely during the 2005 Islamist plot where an organization made plans to overthrow Qaboos, and the Jabal Akhdar War which specifically targeted Said who survived at least one assassination attempt. Great power loss was a potential outcome of the Dhofar Rebellion whose leaders wanted to secede from the sultanate. Finally, escalation was a possibility for the post-Arab Spring protests which saw the regime jail dozens of activists for peaceful protest or opinion to avoid country-wide unrest.

At the other extreme, the regime does not repress actors like Women's Rights activists or teachers who participate in low-threat events, or those who manifest themselves peacefully without making demands for change, like the "polite protest" (Jones and Ridout 2015: 235) of 2000 against US involvement in the region.

Outside of these conditions, the Omani regime's reaction is more nuanced and combines tactics that target opposition actors as well as the wider population. In these events, repression is a supplementary tool which ensures that offered concessions are accepted and that further opposition is deterred. When faced with moderate threat-events triggered in part by economic reasons, the Omani regime offers the opposition concessions but also targets the wider population; it then uses repression to force persisting opposition members to

accept the concession and to avoid an escalation of the situation due to continued dissidence. Most importantly, my findings in Oman bolster my Morocco findings on strategic monetary accommodation. Oman, which is wealthier than Morocco, uses monetary concessions under similar conditions and does not just throw money at the opposition.

Looking forward, the Omani regime will have to change its behavior to catch up with the transformations its citizens are undergoing. Small civil society pockets are developing and young, educated people are disillusioned with both the lack of employment prospects, and the regime's obvious reluctance to carry through the reforms promised during the Arab Spring. Furthermore, as I discuss in Chapters 2 and 3, the regime's use of repression will have to change due to the current political context. The Omani regime used the harshest forms of violence in the 1950s, 1960s, and 1970s, a time where this was globally accepted as many violent despots existed in the 20th century. This sort of brash and overt authoritarianism is less acceptable in the 21st century, as can be seen in Oman through online petitions, increased participation in the 2011 elections, and the disdain towards the regime's repressive behavior in 1994, 2005, and 2012-2015. Yet, the Omani regime has intensified its efforts to suppress free speech since 2012, has arrested activists, and passed laws that make political critique illegal.

Finally, falling oils prices and the fact Oman's oil reserves have proven to be lower than initially believed makes Oman vulnerable. Since the crash of oil prices in 2014, it has been struggling and cannot reasonably afford to increase public expenditure by 70% as it did to contain the Arab Spring. Qaboos' Iran-friendly and Qatar-neutral stance amidst the current Gulf crisis has led wealthy Gulf allies to withhold aid from Oman. This bolsters my

argument in Chapter 1 discrediting monarchical solidarity and its role in regime survival. While more stable than MENA countries like Libya and Syria, Oman is not as peaceful an oasis as some would like to believe.

This chapter (along with Chapter 3 on Morocco) completes the first part of a case study which aims to investigate regime survival in MENA monarchies; these two chapters have generated my dissertation's theory. The next section tests the external validity of my theory through a comparative analysis of regime survival of the remaining MENA monarchies during the Arab uprisings.

CHAPTER 5: CONFIRMING EXTERNAL VALIDITY AND THEORY-TESTING

This chapter's goal is to determine the scope of the external validity of my findings on Morocco and Oman. My dissertation is constructed around a three-part, in-depth explanatory case-study.[1] Mine is an inductive approach, by which I develop my argument after closely examining my two main cases in this dissertation's first, theory building part (Chapters 3 and 4): a close and fine-grained analysis of successful regime reaction to all major opposition events in a resource-poor, non- absolute monarchy (Morocco) and a resource-wealthy, absolute monarchy (Oman). I then empirically test my argument in this chapter by analyzing regime reaction to active opposition in the other surviving Arab monarchies. Finally, in the following chapter, I examine regime reaction to opposition in failed regimes that are similar to Morocco and Oman to determine whether the regime follows this model.

5.1 INTRODUCTION

After reviewing the lessons from Morocco and Oman, this chapter compares successful reactions to the Arab Spring within the six other surviving monarchies (organized according to regime wealth and type) to the trends in Morocco and Oman. This allows me to determine

[1] Mine is an explanatory case study because it seeks to answer the question of how Arab monarchies survive active opposition, and to explore the presumed causal link between regime survival and the strategic use and combination of authoritarian strategies.

whether the patterns of survival used by the regime in my core cases can be applied to other monarchies within the same category, and whether the causal mechanisms behind regime survival are similar *across* the two categories of monarchies (i.e., do all Arab monarchies share a pattern of survival regardless of type of rule and regime wealth?). This part focuses on a single opposition event- the Arab Spring- because it is the most recent and relevant one (as its outcomes inspired my research). While there are stronger similarities within the categories of monarchies, I find an overarching pattern across all monarchies.

Thus, in my dissertation's fifth chapter, I use mixed methods to build my argument through a comparative analysis between my main cases and the remaining surviving Arab monarchies during the Arab uprisings.

5.1.1 METHODS, DATA, AND TIME FRAME

Historical analysis is less necessary in the first part of this chapter, which focuses on a single, predetermined event- the Arab Spring- to compare successful regime reaction to active opposition within the six other surviving monarchies to the trends in Morocco and Oman. The Arab Spring is a valuable opposition event to examine because it is the most recent one which all the monarchies faced, and because it was broadly motivated by similar socioeconomic and political issues across these countries.

To determine whether the patterns of survival used by the regime in my core cases can be applied to other monarchies within the same category, and whether the causal mechanisms behind regime survival are similar *across* the two categories of monarchies (i.e., do all Arab monarchies share a pattern of survival regardless of type of rule and regime wealth?), I

analyze the six other monarchies' reaction towards the Arab Spring using several methods, including: comparative analysis of cash handouts, subsidies and delayed austerity measures (based on raw data from the International Energy Agency, the World Bank, these countries' ministries of finance; linear analysis of regime repression (based on datasets from the Cingranelli- Richards Human Rights Data Project and Polity IV); and legal sources to analyze the laws that were ratified in reaction to the Arab Spring. This data was then triangulated by secondary sources published during the Arab Spring such as newspapers and fiscal reports).

5.1.2 LESSONS FROM MOROCCO AND OMAN

Through an in-depth analysis of the Moroccan and Omani monarchies' successful containment of active opposition throughout their post-colonial history, I build a theory of regime survival in the face of various forms of threat. I find that, for any single opposition event, the regime's use repression, liberalization, and monetary concession is linked to the motivation, organization, and background of the opposition actors involved. Accordingly, to avoid losing power, monarchs react to different types of opposition events depending on how big a threat they represent (how much power loss they involved). My findings point to a pattern of regime behavior that builds on extant theoretical assumptions that rulers seek to avoid genuine liberalization because it decreases their control over the political sphere, but that they do not want to become overly dependent on the use of force. This pattern suggests that:

If the likely perceived outcome of opposition is total power loss (highest level of threat), the ruler represses opposition actors harshly, uses long-term repression to contain future

opposition, and grants no concessions, e.g. when opposition is isolated within a group espousing a religious, regional, or regional-based ideology, and the group wants total autonomy from the state. This was the case in Morocco during the 1957-1959 Rif rebellions, and in Oman during the 1954-59 Jabal Akhdar War when the Imamate challenged the Omani state. This is also the case when opposition actors explicitly want to remove the king, as did elements in the Moroccan military in 1971 and 1972; as well as in the 1963-76 Dhofar Rebellion where Marxist rebels in the Dhofar region wanted to remove Sultan Said from power.

Outside of this scenario, the monarch's reaction to moderate threat (i.e., major power loss, when the monarch's powers risk being drastically reduced or checked- for example, through the creation of laws that check the ruler's powers with institutions) depends on the triggers of dissidence, but it is usually a combination of repression and another strategy that adequately addresses some of the opposition's demands. When opposition actors do not aim to remove or separate from the ruler, then the monarch grants concessions if he can do so without losing power, but he represses opposition actors harshly if they continue to protest (since dissidence creates a greater risk of the status quo being disrupted, which prompts the ruler to use repressive action to eliminate the threat).

Thus, when the opposition seeks political reform, the ruler contains the threat and maintains power by offering minor liberalization and repressing the unsatisfied opposition actors moderately or harshly (depending on the regime's stability in the domestic, regional, or international scene). This repression-liberalization merging ensures that the king's 'compromise' is accepted by the opposition and that the situation does not escalate due to

overly harsh methods. This is what happened during the Arab Spring in both monarchies, when Qaboos and Mohammed VI reformed updated their countries' constitutional texts without granting reforms that would restrain their powers. In both cases, the dis-ingenuity of the constitutional reforms prompted more protests between 2012 and 2014 which were harshly repressed in both Oman and Morocco.

In the scenario where the opposition is triggered (at least in part) by economic hardship, the monarch grants monetary concessions as a first step, but also follows up with repression to ensure that the monetary concession is accepted by protestors. The level of repression used depends on domestic factors, specifically the wealth of the regime. In the case of resource-poor Morocco, the king represses opposition actors harshly due to the lack of resources his Gulf allies have- there is only so much the king can offer, and this is sometimes not enough for the opposition (as was the case during the serious unrest in Morocco in 1981- see section 3.1). Regimes with more wealth, like the Gulf monarchies, are more likely to offer monetary concessions that might satisfy a majority of the opposition actors. While there is an exhaustive literature that covers differences in regime behavior depending on resource wealth (Mendalson 2011; Herb 2005; Wantchekon 2004; Beblawi 1987), the takeaway here is that rulers will not offer concessions (political or monetary) without a degree of repression. The second takeaway is that even poor countries like Morocco, and resource-wealthy but struggling countries like Oman, try to concede monetarily first.

When facing minor power loss that involves small reductions to his powers, the monarch either concedes to the opposition actors, knowing that he will remain the most powerful actor, or ignores the actors altogether. I illustrate this in through the examples of

campaigning for women's rights in 2004 for Morocco and 2003 for Oman. Minor threats do not risk changing the status quo, so the regime does not use repression because it does not need to eliminate the (inexistent or minor) threat.

After deriving the aforementioned pattern from Morocco and Oman, I test it on the remaining Arab monarchies. This allows me to confirm the pattern and to advance five scenarios about regime survival during active opposition:

S1: In a poor regime (like Jordan), moderate monetary concessions will ensure regime survival if the opposition seeks mostly economic change and the regime combines concession with repression.

S2: In a wealthy regime (like the UAE and Saudi Arabia), major monetary concessions will ensure regime survival if opposition seeks mostly economic change.

S3: In a wealthy, absolute regime or a poor, non-absolute regime, a combination of repression and minor, illusionary, and/or promised political concession will ensure regime survival if opposition seeks mostly political change that would moderately reduce the ruler's power.

S4: In a wealthy, absolute regime or a poor, non-absolute regime, full political concession will ensure regime survival if opposition seeks mostly political change that would not reduce the ruler's power.

S5: In a wealthy, absolute regime or a poor, non-absolute regime, immediate and harsh repression ensures regime survival when the goals of the opposition would lead to high or complete power loss.

5.1.3 CATEGORIZATION OF THE OTHER SURVIVING MONARCHIES

At the core of this dissertation are two case-studies that focus not only on variation in successful regime reaction to opposition but also on variation across my universe of possible cases (i.e., all surviving monarchies). Other than Morocco and Oman, six monarchies successfully contained the Arab Spring. These are Saudi Arabia, the United Arab Emirates (UAE), Qatar, Kuwait, Bahrain, and Jordan. Consistent with my approach in Chapter 1 (see Figure 3 below), I categorize these monarchies into Gulf and non-Gulf groups. Broadly speaking, Gulf monarchies are wealthier and have more closed political systems than Morocco and Jordan (Figures 3, 5, and 6 below). Importantly, this categorization fits with the five aforementioned scenarios which I derive from my theory (laid out in Chapter 2). I discuss this point in greater detail below.

Like Morocco, Jordan is a resource-poor, non-absolute monarchy where the king rules with at least some political opening. Because it has a functioning parliament and a constitution, it is a soft dictatorship- i.e., a dictatorship with a minimum component of democracy, and mechanisms that ensure the ruler has the most power (Fukayama; 1993; Kesselman, Krieger, and Joseph 2010). The remaining surviving monarchies are Gulf monarchies, most of which are absolute- i.e., the monarch rules with little to no degree of political openness (Ehteshami and Wright 2011). They lack the healthy civil society and minimal pluralism of Morocco and Jordan.

FIGURE 3: OVERVIEW OF CASE SELECTION REASONING (CATEGORIZATION OF ARAB MONARCHIES) - 2018

	Succession		Resource Wealth	Regime Type		Material Perks for Citizens	Population Size > 3 million	GCC Member
	Dynastic	Personalist		Absolute	Non-Absolute			
Morocco		X			X		X	
Jordan		X			X		X	
Bahrain	X		X	X		X		X
Kuwait	X		X	SEMI		X		X
Oman	SEMI		X	X		X		X
Qatar	X		X	X		X		X
Saudi	X		X	X		X		X
UAE	X		X	X		X		X

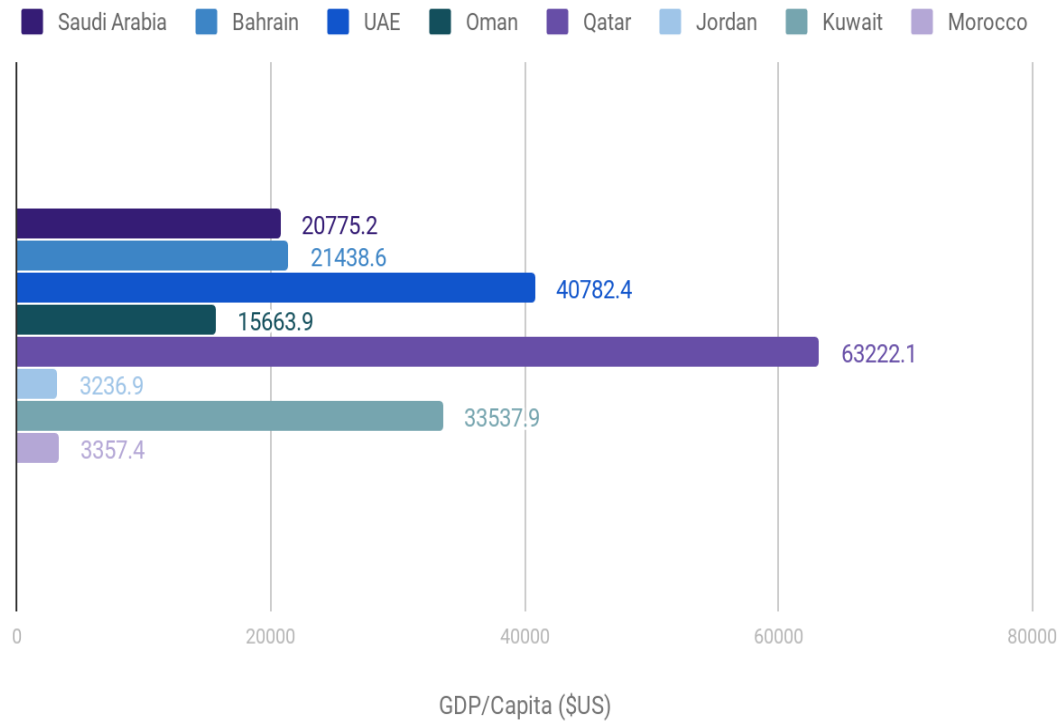
Source: Author's table based on data from Freedom House, Polity IV, the World Bank, and qualitative sources.

There is a debate regarding how to classify oil-wealthy Kuwait, which has a functioning parliament but where the Emir possesses near absolute political power (Barany 2012: 17). Kuwait's constitution is the most progressive of any GCC state, and its civil society is healthy compared to other Gulf states (Herb 2018). However, unlike in Morocco and Jordan, the prime minister must be a member of the royal family and is appointed by the Emir (rather than selected from the winning party). This means that the monarchical system's interests are represented through the emir as well as the royal prime minister. It is therefore fair to categorize Kuwait politically between the other GCC states on the one hand and Morocco and Jordan on the other (see Figures 4 and 5).

Also, compared to Morocco and Jordan, Gulf monarchies have considerable resource wealth. As explained in great detail in Chapter 1, while Oman and Bahrain are significantly poorer than their neighbors (see Figure 6 below), they are still significantly wealthier than Morocco and Jordan. This means that the state's economic landscape differs across both categories. For example, most Gulf monarchies provide their citizens with material perks that Morocco and Jordan cannot afford- like free healthcare and education, free or reduced housing, and no or reduced income taxes (Barany 2012; Schaechter and Fasano-Fiho 2003). The difference in demographics is also striking between the two categories of monarchies. All GCC states (except Saudi Arabia) have populations smaller than 1.5 million (see Figure

7 below),[2] whereas Morocco's population was 33.65 million and Jordan's was 8.2 million in 2016. This exacerbates Morocco and Jordan's economic issues, as these states with little wealth must provide for relatively large populations. On the other hand, the Gulf monarchies use their considerable wealth to cater to small populations.

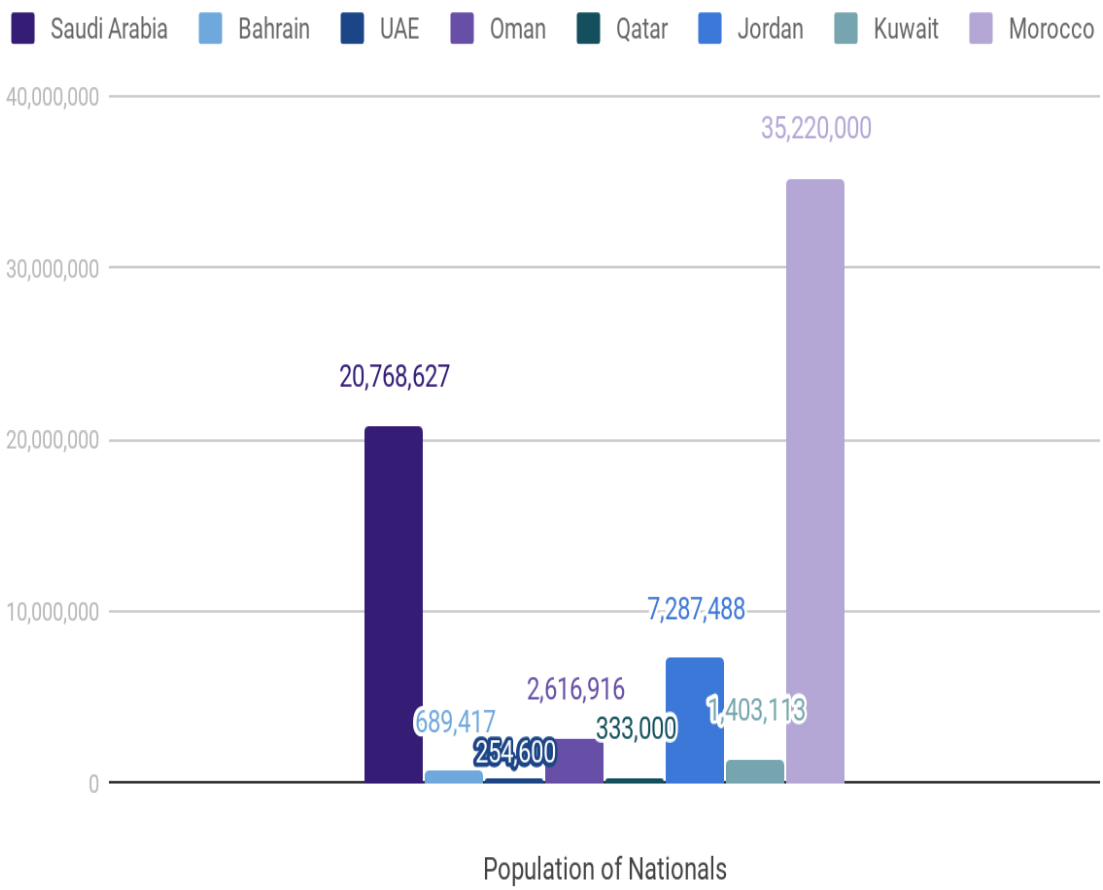
Figure 6: GDP/CAPITA, ARAB MONARCHIES IN 2016.



Source: Author's graph and diagram based on data from Trading Economics.

[2] The statistics in Figure 7 are for nationals of these states. The percentage of foreign nationals in the Gulf monarchies is much higher than it is in Morocco and Jordan. Distinguishing between nationals and non-nationals is important because rulers perceive them differently, and because non-nationals in the Gulf do not benefit from the same privileges as nationals.

Figure 7: POPULATION SIZE OF NATIONALS IN ARAB MONARCHIES 2013-6.



Source: Author's graphs using data from Statista, Gulf Migration Information & e-Government Authority – Bahrain Open Data Portal, Dubai Statistics Centre, National Centre for Statistics & Information – Sultanate of Oman, Priya Dsouze Communications: "Population of Qatar by Nationality – 2019 Report", Department of Statistics – Jordan.

The purpose of my categorization of the surviving monarchies along wealth and political openness is twofold. First, it allows for a degree of generalization in my analysis; I can draw comparisons to my findings from Morocco and Oman (which differ structurally and institutionally along wealth and political openness). The argument generated through the study of empirics from Morocco and Oman enjoys some degree of external validity since it was not only generated from other monarchies but also applies to them. Second, it allows me to examine potential differences between regime reaction to active opposition in structurally different monarchies. As I explain in Chapter 4 (Conclusion), while the Omani regime has access to significantly more resources than the Moroccan regime, it does not use more monetary concessions during active opposition. Differentiating between resource-wealthy and resource-poor allows me to determine whether this trend applies beyond my main positive cases.

5.2 TESTING THE EXTERNAL VALIDITY OF MY MODEL: THE OTHER SURVIVING MONARCHIES AND THE ARAB SPRING

As I explain in this chapter's introduction, when investigating how the remaining Arab monarchies survived the Arab Spring, I do not adopt a historical analysis since I focus on a singular event- the Arab Spring- which affected all the monarchies. The Arab Spring is an excellent opposition event to test the external validity of the scenarios derived from my theory on the remaining monarchies for several reasons. First, it was triggered by both economic hardship and political discontent, which allows me to consider scenarios about

both economic and political triggers (i.e., scenarios 1,2,3, and 5).[3] Scenario 4 cannot be tested on any of the cases during the Arab Spring, because the threat of to the regime was not low and the demands of the opposition were not minimal in any of the cases- even in the UAE and Qatar, which experienced the least opposition of all the monarchies during the Arab Spring.[4]

In all of the remaining monarchies except Bahrain, the goal of the opposition actors was not to overthrow the regime but to obtain socio-economic and political reforms (Jones 2013; Bsheer and Abu Rish 2012). Thus, scenario 5 applies only to Bahrain where the opposition targeted the monarchy. [5] In the other monarchies, the goals of the opposition would not have led to high or complete power loss.

Among these cases, there is an oil-poor monarchy with some political opening (Jordan), oil-wealthy absolute monarchies (Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Qatar), and an oil-wealthy monarchy with a little opening but where the ruler maintain the majority of power (Kuwait).

[3] These scenarios are: (1) In a poor regime, moderate monetary concessions will ensure regime survival if the opposition seeks mostly economic change and the regime combines concession with repression. (2) In a wealthy regime, major monetary concessions will ensure regime survival if opposition seeks mostly economic change. (3) In a wealthy, absolute regime or a poor, non-absolute regime, a combination of repression and minor, illusionary, and/or promised political concession will ensure regime survival if opposition seeks mostly political change that would moderately reduce the ruler's power. (5) In a wealthy, absolute regime or a poor, non-absolute regime, immediate and harsh repression ensures regime survival when the goals of the opposition would lead to high or complete power loss.

[4] Scenario: In a wealthy, absolute regime or a poor, non-absolute regime, full political concession will ensure regime survival if opposition seeks mostly political change that would not reduce the ruler's power.

[5] In a wealthy, absolute regime or a poor, non-absolute regime, immediate and harsh repression ensures regime survival when the goals of the opposition would lead to high or complete power loss.

Thus, these cases can be used to test the validity of the following scenarios which I derive from the theory that I build based on my Morocco and Oman findings:

1. In a poor regime (like Jordan), moderate monetary concessions will ensure regime survival if the opposition seeks mostly economic change and the regime combines concession with repression.

2. In a wealthy regime (like Saudi Arabia, the UAE, Kuwait, and Qatar), major monetary concessions will ensure regime survival if opposition seeks mostly economic change.

3. In a wealthy, absolute regime (like Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Qatar) or a poor, non-absolute regime (like Jordan), a combination of repression and minor, illusionary, and/or promised political concession will ensure regime survival if opposition seeks mostly political change that would moderately reduce the ruler's power.

In Bahrain, protests were complicated by the Shi'a-Sunni sectarian divide and the Sunni monarchy's persecution of the country's Shi'a majority in favor of its Sunni minority. The regime's repression of protestors led to an escalation of protests which almost unseated the Al-Khalifa monarchy. The Bahraini case is a valuable one for my analysis because it is the only monarchy where the threat of the Arab Spring was so high that it could have led to high or complete power loss. It is therefore the only case which I can examine to test the validity of my theory's fifth scenario (i.e., in a wealthy, absolute regime or a poor, non-absolute regime, immediate and harsh repression ensures regime survival when the goals of the opposition would lead to high or complete power loss).

The following section will test the validity of the aforementioned scenarios through an investigation of regime reaction to the Arab Spring in the remaining Arab monarchies.

5.3 HOW THE REMAINING ARAB MONARCHIES STRENGTHEN MY THEORY

The Jordanian case (discussed in greater detail in the following section) confirms scenarios 1 and 3. Jordan is an oil-poor, non-absolute regime (see Figures 5 and 6) that experienced protests triggered by economic hardship (e.g. unemployment, inflation, subsidy reform) and political issues (e.g. the monarchy's monopoly over power and a cosmetic constitution). Although some of the opposition's demands during the Arab uprisings would have reduced the regime's power, they would not have created total or high-power loss because the opposition did not seek to overthrow the monarchy, nor did it have a separatist agenda. The Jordanian regime successfully contained this moderate threat by combining monetary concessions that targeted the wider population rather than co- opting specific groups (e.g. delayed austerity measures, creation of public sector jobs, and increased subsidies) with illusionary and promised liberalization which did not reduce the regime's powers (e.g. dismissing prime ministers that displeased protestors, new electoral laws, and constitutional reforms). Significantly, the Jordanian regime used repression but not initially or excessively. Rather, security forces were present but only repressed protestors when they did not accept the offered concessions and continued protesting, thus creating a risk of escalation. Jordan thus followed the same pattern as Morocco and Oman had in similar events.

The Saudi case confirms scenarios 2 and 3. Saudi Arabia is an oil-wealthy, absolute monarchy (see Figures 5 and 6) that experienced protests triggered by economic hardship (flooding in Jeddah, poor living conditions that led an elderly man to self- immolate), social issues (e.g. discrimination against women and Shi'a Saudis), and political problems (e.g. political exclusion, overly powerful ruling family etc.). Protestors did not seek the regime's overthrow at any point, so the threat was not high but moderate as some of the political demands would reduce the monarchy's power). The regime thus contained the uprising by combining monetary concessions (e.g. new government jobs, higher public sector salaries, increased minimum wage etc.) with socio-political reforms that only slightly opened the political and public scenes but did not constrain the regime (e.g. men-only municipal elections, promises to include women in elections, released prisoners etc.). Security force presence was heavily increased across the kingdom but did not harshly repress non-Shi'a opposition actors until they continued to protest despite concessions.[6] This process increased as the unrest continued.

Saudi Shi'a protestors, however, were repressed constantly from the onset of the unrest in the Shi'a-populated Eastern Province. The presence of Shi'a opposition in Saudi Arabia during the Arab Spring makes the Saudi case important to examine regime reaction to different opposition groups in a single opposition event. It also bolsters my arguments from Chapters 2, 3, and 4 about how: (1) the historical interrelationship between the regime and various opposition groups leads the regime to adapt its survival-seeking behavior vis-à-vis

[6] The Shi'a-Sunni protestor divide in Saudi Arabia is discussed further below as part of the Saudi case.

those opposition groups; and (2) that the regime associates higher threat with opposition that is isolated within ideologically and regionally organized groups (like the perceived threat of the Islamist actors to the Omani regime, or of the Rif protestors to the Moroccan regime).

Similarly, the regime in Kuwait- another oil-wealthy monarchy that is less absolute than Saudi Arabi and Qatar but more closed than Morocco and Jordan- treated a regionally organized opposition group more harshly than other protestors. The Bidoon (stateless) people protested against discrimination and economic hardship but the regime initially did not address their demands; rather it threatened then with deportation. It was when Kuwaiti protestors joined their cause that the regime addressed some of their concerns. The regime's different reaction to these minority groups compared to other opposition actors in Kuwait and Saudi Arabia shows that the regime's survival-seeking behavior is not affected only by the demands of the opposition or its historical interrelationship with that group, but by the perceived risk of that group to cause greater problems to the regime. The Bidoon people are not Kuwaiti citizens and could easily be dismissed through deportation; the Kuwaiti regime initially did not grant them concessions because the threat they represented was too low. On the other end of the spectrum, Shi'a Saudis has a problematic history with the Sunni monarchy, resided near major oil fields, were organized, supported Bahraini Shi'a protestors, and were perceived by the regime as potential Iran allies. They represented a higher threat to the monarchy than the Sunni Saudis.

The way that the Kuwaiti regime contained the other (non-Bidoon) protestors confirms scenarios 2 and 3 of my theory. The protestors' demands sought to reduce the Emir's powers (e.g. legalization of political parties, more representative political system etc.) as well as

economic reform. Thus, the threat to the regime was moderate as it involved some power loss. The regime granted monetary concessions to the wider population (e.g. food grants and cash handouts) which it combined with small political concessions that did not reduce the ruling family's powers (e.g. dissolving parliament, dismissing the prime minister etc.). When protestors persisted, they were arrested. The regime also restricted citizens' freedom of expression and organization and limited their internet rights.

The Qatari and Emirati cases provide an interesting opportunity to examine how my theory applies to cases where unrest is (relatively) limited. In Qatar, where opposition was organizing mainly online and physical protests never materialized, the Emir combined small electoral and constitutional concessions with repression (i.e., arresting known opposition actors). In the United Arab Emirates (UAE), around 150 people were involved in the opposition. They sent a petition to the ruler asking for greater political opening (e.g. through universal suffrage). The regime targeted the wider population with economic concessions (e.g. lowering food prices and creating development projects). Minor political concessions were also made, including increasing the number of eligible voters for a political body that holds no power over the regime. The UAE regime also repressed the petition signatories and arrested activists.

What is important here is that the threat to both monarchies was low, yet both combined repression and concessions to contain the threat. This indicates that there are different types of low threat opposition events: (1) those where there is so little unrest that power loss in unlikely, like the Arab Spring for the UAE and Qatar; (2) events where opposition actors want civil concessions that would not reduce the monarch's powers at all, like the 2004

women's rights demonstrations in Morocco; and (3) events where actors peacefully demonstrate to voice their opinion about an issue but do not made demands of the regime (e.g. the 2002 "polite protests" in Oman against US and Israeli ties with Oman and foreign policy in the MENA region- see section 4.1.5). Out of these three low-level threat types of events, only the first one can potentially escalate to a protest that targets the regime. Indeed, limited unrest can increase due to exogenous factors (e.g. regional protests). Thus, the Arab Spring in the UAE and Qatar was a low-threat event which the regime perceived as having the potential to become more threatening.

The Bahraini case provides the opportunity to examine the impact of initial and excessive use of repression (rather than a combination of economic and political concessions enforced with repression) on the threat to the regime and its survival. The regime in Bahrain saw the threat of the Arab Spring transform from moderate to high as a direct result of regime behavior during the initial phase of the protests. The Bahraini case supports scenario 3 of my theory, as protests escalated *because* the monarchy used only repression rather than combining strategies that partially address the opposition's demands.

Because of the transformative threat the regime faced, this case also supports scenario 5 from my argument; when opposition actors started calling for the abdication of the entire ruling family, the regime repressed them even more, this time with the help of its Gulf allies. The presence of foreign intervention complicates my theory but does not weaken it. Once the threat to the regime had become so high that it could have led to regime collapse, the regime followed the steps laid out in scenario 5- it harshly repressed protestors (killing, imprisoning, and torturing them) until the opposition was so weakened that the threat was

low. It did this with help from the GCC. This is similar to the behavior of the Omani regime during the Dhofar Rebellion and the Jabal Akhdar Wars.

5.4 JORDAN, TESTING THE VALIDITY OF SCENARIOS 1 AND 3

In Jordan, which- like Morocco- is poorer and more politically open than the Gulf monarchies, protests were triggered by high unemployment rates, planned subsidy reforms, and soaring food and fuel prices. The protests did not come as a shock to the regime (as they had in Oman, for example, which experienced its last country- wide opposition event in the 1970s) because the Arab Spring was not a unique event for Jordan. Several mass protests had swept the country in its recent history, especially in the rural areas of the south. In 1996, bread riots took place in southern cities; in 1989, an uprising took place in Karak and other cities nearby.

Politically, there were demands for a new constitution, better elections laws, more transparent elections, and a stronger, more independent government. While most protestors did not express a desire to abolish the Hashemite monarchy, they did demand that the king reduce his powers. The opposition's goals, organization, and triggers as well as the threat to the regime are strikingly similar to the Moroccan case. In light of these aforementioned factors, these are the relevant scenarios whose validity can be tested through the Jordanian case:

S1: In a poor regime (like Jordan), moderate monetary concessions will ensure regime survival if the opposition seeks mostly economic change and the regime combines concession with repression.

S3: In a wealthy, absolute regime (like Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Qatar) or a poor, non-absolute regime (like Jordan), a combination of repression and minor, illusionary, and/or promised political concession will ensure regime survival if opposition seeks mostly political change that would moderately reduce the ruler's power.

5.4.1 REGIME REACTION TO THE ARAB SPRING IN JORDAN

The strategies which the regime in Jordanian used to contain the Arab Spring conform with scenarios 1 and 3. King Abdullah granted monetary concessions and proposed reforms which did not change the status quo in the long-term and which maintained his monopoly over political power; when opposition actors continued to protest, he repressed them.

A series of protests broke out against unemployment, low salaries, poor living conditions, corruption, high taxes, repression, and the regime's monopoly over power; they lasted from January 2011 to April 2011. Jordan's protestors can broadly be categorized into two groups: those organized by the Muslim Brotherhood in Amman, and those who were mobilized by East Bank tribes (the *Hirak* movement). Overall, protesters were young (under forty) and mostly low-to-middle class Jordanians from across the country but had higher concentrations in east Jordan (where the aforementioned *Hirak* tribes reside). The *Hirak* considered themselves loyalists with specific demands for reforms. Bedouin tribes, traditionally supporters of the regime, also participated in protests and demanded more jobs and better welfare services. Other opposition actors include retired generals, trade unions, and secular and religious political organizations. For example, as explained earlier, the largest protests in 2011 that counted between 7,000 and 10,000 people (Tobin 2012) were mobilized by the Jordanian branch of the Muslim Brotherhood, a large and highly organized

opposition group. Most of these groups did not want to overthrow the monarchy; only in November 2012 did a small part of the opposition- two subgroups under the *Hirak* umbrella- systematically target the king (Karmel 2014).[7]

In 2010, inflation had risen by 1.5% to 6.1 percent, unemployment had reached 12 percent, and 25% of the population lived under the threshold for poverty. The political scene was not faring well either, with the king overpowering Parliament. The regime also restrained freedom of expression and organization; it consistently repressed journalists and activists, ratified laws to regulate online speech (Jordanian Press and Publications Law, 2012 Amendment: Law 32). The country's security apparatus used torture to force confessions from peaceful protestors (Amnesty International 2012: 196-198; Amnesty International, 2013).

To address these issues, protesters demanded economic change, more jobs in the public sector, food price cuts as well as the constitutional and electoral reforms that would democratize the regime. The demand that would most limit the King's power was that the prime minister be elected by parliament rather than appointed by the monarch.

Rather than repress protestors immediately when the uprisings broke out, King Abdullah II allowed them to protest peacefully until he proposed small political reforms and granted monetary concessions. The political reforms were constitutional amendments and new electoral laws. The King established the Independent Election Commission, sacked three

[7] There were allegations that protestors had attached Abdullah's motorcar with stones and empty bottles in June 2011, however this was widely denied by Jordanian officials.

consecutive prime ministers (whom he appointed and whom protestors continued to target), and called for early parliamentary elections to take place in 2013. However, he did not meet the demand for parliament to elect the prime minister. Instead, he proposed to consult with parliament but make the ultimate decision himself (Davis 2013) thus retaining the majority of his power.

The King also dismissed members of his cabinet and government officials targeted by the opposition. Later, after renewed protests, Abdullah reformed the parliamentary electoral system in 2016 by introducing proportional representation to the House of Representatives, and the local electoral system by decentralizing it in 2017. These renewed protests also prompted Abdullah to reform the judiciary to make it independent. The regime also used illusionary liberalization by appearing to involve other actors in the political scene. Indeed, in February 2011- less than a month after the protests started- Abdullah met with members of the Muslim Brotherhood opposition group. This did not appease protestors who continued to march in the hundreds around the prime minister's office, demanding socioeconomic and political reforms.

These political concessions did not reduce the King's power, nor did they genuinely address the demands of the opposition. The constitutional reforms were minor, and the changes to the electoral system were designed not to disturb the status quo. The most impactful reform was the constitutional article which no longer allowed the monarch to indefinitely postpone elections. The most significant electoral law increased the number of seats in the Chamber of Deputies and assigned a greater quota to women. However, the new law still allowed the king to appoint the members of the Senate. Abdullah's reshuffling of his cabinet and

dismissal of government officials did not affect his position of power; mainly, this move allowed him to defuse tensions by placing the blame on the government and scapegoating select officials. The political concessions offered and promised to appease protestors in 2011 and 2012 are consistent with the historical pattern of strategic illusionary liberalization in Jordan (Köprülü 2012) whereby the regime presents protestors with symbolic short-term reforms as well as the long-term likelihood of future reforms.

The regime also offered monetary concessions which targeted the wider population in the form of delayed austerity measures, more public sector jobs, and increased subsidies. Abdullah pledged $500 million to raise the minimum wage, increase food and fuel subsidies, and expand public employment to offer more public sector jobs. These reforms directly addressed the aforementioned demands of the opposition. Additionally, a $1.4 billion loan from Saudi Arabia in 2011 and a $5 billion loan aid package from the GCC allowed the regime to delay austerity measures and reduce its multi-billion-dollar budget deficit.

The state's coercive apparatus initially did not repress opposition actors. However, as dissatisfied protests continued despite the regime's proposed political reforms and economic concessions, the regime adopted the same two-step repression strategy which I discuss in Chapters 3 and 4. It harshly repressed those dissidents that were not satisfied by the proposed concession and that continued to protest, and it implemented a long-term repression strategy that targeted potential future dissidents (activists, journalists, etc.). Interestingly, as an immediate repressive tool, the regime used surrogates to contain protests through violence (Moss 2014: 277). For example, pro-regime civilian groups attacked and injured protestors (mostly members of youth groups and trade unions) in February 2011

while soldiers remained uninvolved at the scene.[8] This tactic allowed the regime to effectively oversee that the immediate threat was contained without fueling further protests (since the regime itself was supposedly blameless).

However, the regime also used direct repression. During one of the largest protests, on March 25, the authorities did get involved, resulting in 62 civilian injuries and one death (Moss 2014: 278). The regime also shut down 300 websites and tightened its grip on independent media (Ryan 2013; Köprülü 2012). As had been the case in Oman, in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, Jordanian activists were continuously repressed to avoid more dissent.

5.5 THE OTHER GULF MONARCHIES: TESTING THE VALIDITY OF SCENARIOS 2 AND 3

Setting aside the exceptional case of Bahrain which I discuss in greater detail in the following section, the remaining Gulf monarchies experienced different degrees of unrest during the Arab Spring. Whereas the UAE and Qatar faced only small protests, and Saudi Arabia saw major but peaceful demonstrations, Kuwait experienced the most unrest. In all these cases, the opposition made similar socioeconomic and political demands that largely did not target the monarchical system. The way that the regime in these countries contained the protests follows the pattern I derive from Morocco and Oman.

[8] The repressive surrogacy tactic is not unique to Jordan. In Egypt in 2011, the regime paid the *baltagya* gangs to fight of protestors.

Similar to Oman, the regime in Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the UAE, and Qatar immediately addressed economic grievances by specifically targeting nationals with the following monetary concessions: reducing food prices, creating public sector jobs, offering cash awards, and providing low-income housing.

5.5.1 SAUDI ARABIA

In Saudi Arabia, the Arab Spring came in the form of protests, sit-ins, and online mobilization. Protestors were largely composed of youth groups, women's rights activists, human rights activists, labor organizations, and Shi'a protestors (including youth groups) in the Eastern Province. The catalyst for the dissidence was not just the Arab Spring events in Tunisia and Egypt, but also the self-immolation of an elderly Saudi man in Samtah in 2011 and a flooding that took place in Jeddah. Sparked by these two events, protests broke out sporadically between January and March 2011 in Samtah, Jeddah, Qatif, Hofuf, Al-Awamiya, and Riyadh- despite massive police presence in March. Another wave of protests took place between May and December 2011 with groups organizing for labor and women's rights; unrest also continued in the Eastern Province.

Arab Spring dissidence in Saudi Arabia can be broadly categorized into two geographic groups whose methods and goals overlap. **First**, there is the dissidence that took place in the East Province where the majority of the country's Shi'a population as well as considerable oil fields are located (ICG 2005). 10-15% of the Saudi population is Shi'a (Pew Research Center 2009; Ertl 2015) and has been historically persecuted by the Saudi regime (Human Rights Watch 2009: 9-14) which bases its legitimacy on the ultra-radical and Sunni Wahhabi doctrine whose teachings lead to discrimination against Shi'is (Wehrey 2013; Jones 2009).

Here, the demands of protestors were more political participation, respect for human rights, the release of political prisoners, and an end to anti-Shi'a state behavior (Ertl 2015).

The **second category** is also comprised of mostly youth groups and human and women's rights activists across the country's urban centers outside of the East Province. These actors do not identify as Shi'a and did not protest the regime's anti- Shi'a persecution. However, they want general socio-economic reform and political change. Specifically, they wanted more political participation through elections, that the bans on women's driving and voting be lifted, a more inclusive political system, and economic reforms. There were also actors who organized in March 2011 to demand better labor rights (as had happened in Oman in 2011, for example).

5.5.1.1THREAT TO THE REGIME

The threat which the regime perceived from the Arab Spring was not negligible; the opposition represented a moderate threat for several reasons that fall in line with the theory set out of multi-threat perception. **First**, the regime had a history with the Shia part of the Arab Spring opposition; this is similar to Rif opposition actors in Morocco and the Ibadi actors in Oman. The ruling family in Saudi Arabia is Sunni, and it has economically and politically persecuted the East Province populations. Shi'a opposition actors rose against the Saudi regime after the 1979 Iranian revolution and were repressed and co-opted.

In 2011, additionally, there were large Shi'a protests in neighboring Bahrain which worried the Saudi regime. While some protestors in the Eastern Province demanded that their region have its own constitution and legislative assembly, Shi'a protestors were not secessionist.

Thus, the nature and motivation (Ertl 2015) of the Shi'a opposition impacted how the regime perceived and contained it. This will become more obvious when I explain how the Saudi regime reacted to the Shi'a opposition differently to the non-Shi'a opposition during the Arab Spring.

Second, all opposition actors in 2011 were asking for political change that might limit the monarchy's extensive powers. The demands for more political inclusion via elections in Saudi Arabia might seem less significant compared to demands for a constitutional monarchy in Morocco and Jordan. However, Saudi Arabia, similar to Oman, is an absolute monarchy with no parliament or parties. Thus, the regime fears any demands for increased political inclusion. **Finally**, the variety of opposition groups across the country was worrisome to the regime which did not want a trans-sectarian opposition front. The regime also had to deal with women's rights groups and human rights activists. On a similar note, the Saudi regime was, up to 2011, accustomed to dissidence in the form of petitions to the ruler. The fact that the opposition during the Arab Spring manifested itself through protests, sit-ins, and online mobilization represented a threat.

5.5.1.2 REGIME REACTION TO CONTAIN OPPOSITION

As soon as organizers call for a Day of Rage, security forces were deployed across the kingdom. Sensitive areas like the Shi'a-populated Eastern Province and important cities like Riyadh and Jeddah had extra security. However, despite heavy police presence during protests, the regime avoided repressing the opposition in the first few months of protests. The regime's first response was to partly address the demands of the opposition. This game of give and take with the opposition hinged on the regime offering small concessions that

would reduce as little of its power as possible while finding out if these small concessions would suffice or if the opposition would continue to protest. This allowed the regime to maintain the status quo while offering and promising small concessions.

The Saudi regime first pledged $37 billion to bolster public sector salaries and increase low-income housing units. As protests increased, the monarchy promised another $93 billion for the creation of new government jobs and other socioeconomic projects. This combined packages of $130 billion is greater than Saudi Arabia's total annual budget for 2007. The regime offered one-time bonus payments to civil servants, created an unemployment scheme, and increased the budget of public credit agencies. The regime also created 60,000 new jobs in the public sector, and built 500,000 houses, and raised the minimum wage to $800- i.e., three times higher than the average private wage (Hertog 2011; Colombo 2012). The Saudi case is an excellent example of the importance of what I call strategic monetary accommodation (i.e., the regime's use of the state's resources- including but not limited to rents- to specifically stifle protests and appease protestors) which targets the wider population, rather than elite co-optation which targets just opposition leaders. Indeed, the Saudi regime had successfully co-opted important Shi'a clerics prior to and during the Arab Spring. However, youth actors refused to be co-opted and continued to protest despite the attempts of Shi'a leaders to stop them (Matthiessen 2012).

Moving beyond rentier-state behavior, the Saudi regime offered a mixture of social and political concession that promised to improve civil as well as political liberties. In September 2011, men-only municipal elections were held to elect half the members of local councils after being postponed since 2009 (Wehrey 2013). When female activists continued to protest

their political exclusion, the regime also promised to allow women to participate in the 2015 municipal elections and to be appointed to the Consultative Council (*Majlis Al-Shura*). The regime then directly addressed the demands of protestors by releasing several prisoners (Lacroix 2014). While these concessions directly address some of the demands of the opposition, they do not genuinely increase political inclusion and participation which protestors had asked for; the Saudi monarchy maintains absolute power in the political sphere.

The Saudi monarchy's use of illusory concessions meant that opposition actors would remain unsatisfied and would continue to protest, at which point the regime resorted to repression, similarly to the Omani case where Qaboos deployed the military to put an end to upheaval in Sohar. The Saudi regime followed the two-step repression strategy I outline in Morocco and Oman, as the regime first targeted protestors and activists to put an end to the immediate threat and, second, used wider repression to deter potential opposition actors (via internet blocs, criminalizing protests, and arbitrary arrests).

However, the presence of Shi'a and non-Shi'a opposition groups complicated this pattern as it meant that the regime had to continuously repress protestors outside of the East Province all the while containing sporadic outbreaks of unrest within the East Province. The presence of Shi'a and non-Shi'a opposition groups also makes Saudi Arabia an excellent case to examine how the historical interrelationship between a regime and an opposition group makes the regime adapts its future behavior to contain threat (see my discussion of adaptiveness of regime behavior in section 3.6). Indeed, both Shi'a and non-Shi'a opposition

groups had similar demands and participated in the same type of event during the same timeframe; yet they were treated in a different way by the regime.

In Saudi Arabia the regime deployed massive security forces to avoid Day of Rage in March 2011 and to deter opposition actors from protesting. While the regime was first granting concessions in the first months of unrest, there was heavy police presence in the urban centers, but harsh force was not used against protestors. As unrest continued, the regime arrested hundreds of dissidents and human rights activists; dozens were put in long-term custody. They were tried in courts that were specialized in terrorism. The Ministry of Interior banned protests altogether in February 2011, similarly to what happened in Oman in 2011-2012. The regime also used arbitrary arrest to deter future protests, e.g. the arrest of Mohammed Saleh Al-Bejad (Lacroix 2014).

The regime used harsher repression in the East Province (where protests continued sporadically until August 2012) compared to any other area, because of its fear of a Shi'a uprising. In Qatif, even medical personnel were arrested. In one protest, security forces shot 10 protestors to death. The regime's harsh repression of the Shi'a as well as its sending troops to help the Bahraini monarchy quash protestors, increased protests in the Eastern Province where protests escalated in November 2011. In these protests, people targeted the monarchy itself, thus heightening the threat to the regime which used harsher repression to put an end to the threat. More than 15 Shi'a protestors were killed.

5.5.2 KUWAIT

The Arab Spring manifested itself in Kuwait through two types of protest: The Bidoon people's protests and the popular protests demanding socio-economic and political change. When the Arab Spring broke out in Tunisia and Egypt, the Kuwaiti regime gave every Kuwaiti citizen $3580 and one-years' worth of free food grants. However, these concessions were not extended to the Bidoon- a social group without a nationality settled in GCC states and in Iraq. This led many of the 120,000 Bidoon people (Ghabra 2014) settled in Kuwait to protest against discrimination in Kuwait City. Bidoon protestors demanded the resignation of Prime Minister Nasser Al-Sabah and the right for citizenship. Unrest continued until January 2012 despite a ban on protests and heavy repression.

The other protest in which Kuwaiti citizens demanded economic change and political reforms took place from the summer of 2011 to March 2012. Protestors included the wider population (mostly youth groups and grassroot organizations) and Members of Parliament (MPs). In their first act of opposition, they demanded the resignation of the Prime Minister and called out his alleged bribery of pro- regime MPs. Then, in November, they stormed and occupied the National Assembly, calling for the ouster of Prime Minister Nasser Al-Sabah. They rapidly moved out of the Assembly to Al-Erada Square where they continued to protest. The protests briefly subsided as the Prime Minister was dismissed and early elections took place that saw the Islamist opposition dominating the legislature. However, after the Constitutional Court invalidated the results of the February election and re-instated the previous (regime-friendly) government, protests were renewed, and MPs boycotted parliamentary sessions. Protests rose after the Emir dissolved parliament and changed the

electoral law via royal decree.[9] Protestors demanded the removal of the new law. MPs also organized to boycott the December 2012 poll, thus stalling the emir-led process (Tetrault 2013). The following two elections of parliament (in December 2013 and July 2013) were boycotted. Kuwait has since remained in a political stalemate (Dazi-Heni 2015).

5.5.2.1 THREAT TO THE REGIME

The threat to the Kuwaiti monarchy represented by the Bidoon protests was not significant because Bidoon people are not citizens and could easily be deported. However, the regime was worried of a unified front between the Bidoon protests and the Kuwaiti activists who had bonded with the movement in 2011 (Ghabra 2014). Indeed, the regime perceived the threat of the 2011-2012 protests by Kuwaiti citizens as moderate. They demanded concessions that would reduce the Emir's powers. For instance, they wanted political parties to be legalized,[10] more political participation in government formation, and a more representative political system. If granted, these concessions would limit the monarchy's power over the political scene and the parliament. Another threat to the monarchy was the insistence of protestors that the Prime Minister be chosen from the parliamentary majority, rather than appointed by the Emir at will (usually from the royal Al-Sabah family). This

[9] The new law allowed each voter to vote for only one candidate. The previous law allowed voters to vote for up to four candidates. The new law thus made coalition-building more difficult, made it easier for the regime to co-opt candidates, and reduced the number of potential opponents to the regime (Dazi-Heni 2015).

[10] Political parties are not prohibited by the Kuwaiti constitution but were never legalized by the regime. Yet, there exist de facto political parties in Kuwait.

demand would not only limit the regime's control over the Prime Minister, but it would also complicate the relationship of the Emir with the Al-Sabah tribe.

While protestors never planned to overthrow the regime, they did target the monarchy and Emir during the marches. In a protest in Al-Erada, former MP Mussallem Al-Barrak[11] criticized and warned the monarch in front of the crowds,

"We will not allow you, your highness, to take Kuwait into the abyss of autocracy...We no longer fear your prisons and your riot batons... If your highness decides to change the election law by emiri decree, then you alone are responsible for complicating matters and you alone are responsible for resolving it." (BBC News, 2012).

Al-Barrak's involvement was perceived by the regime as problematic because he hails from a powerful tribe and defended marginalized tribes and groups. He thus comes from a tribal majority- a first for Kuwaiti opposition history (Dazi-Heni 2015).

5.5.2.2 REGIME REACTION TO CONTAIN OPPOSITION

The regime's initial reaction to the Bidoon protests was to announce deportation procedures; this is a telling move as it implies the regime was unwilling to negotiate with or concede to non-citizens. However, as Bidoon protestors allied themselves to Kuwaiti protestors, the regime granted them some social benefits. Notably, in 2011, it gave them free healthcare and education, and the right to register births, marriages, and deaths. In 2013, Parliament passed

[11] Al-Barrak, formerly a trade unionist, is from the powerful Al-Mutayr tribe and has links with the Popular Movement for Democracy. He served six consecutive terms in Parliament.

a law to naturalize 4,000 foreigners, including Bidoon people. However, none have been actually naturalized. Furthermore, they continue to face political and social discrimination.

The Kuwaiti regime's reaction to the protests by Kuwaiti citizens was swifter. The Emir promised $70 billion to enhance subsidies and increase public sector salaries. In February 2011, the regime provided all citizens with $3,500 cash handouts. It then announced 14 months of free basic foods for its nationals. Unemployment benefits were also introduced. According to the IMF (Country Report 18/22), Kuwait's wage bill rose considerably right after the Arab Spring, from under 10% of GDP in 2011 to over 18% of GDP in 2016; this was the highest increase across the Middle East and North Africa. The increase does not only reflect high new public sector employment, but also a rise in the compensation of employees.

However, the concessions did not satisfy the protestors who also wanted political change. They continued to demonstrate, and after the storming of the National Assembly, the Emir offered some political concession. He dissolved Parliament in December 2011 and dismissed the Prime Minister (a prince and member of a powerful tribe). While these changes addressed superficial concerns, they did not genuinely reduce the emir's powers. He remains able to appoint a Prime Minister outside of the winning party and may dissolve parliament or impose laws by royal decree. His powers, while weaker compared to his Emirati or Omani counterparts, remain near-absolute.

As was the case in all the monarchies I have discuss, the Kuwaiti regime's illusionary concessions led the opposition to continue to protest, which in turn led the regime to increase its repression. The latter started after protestors continued to demonstrate despite the first

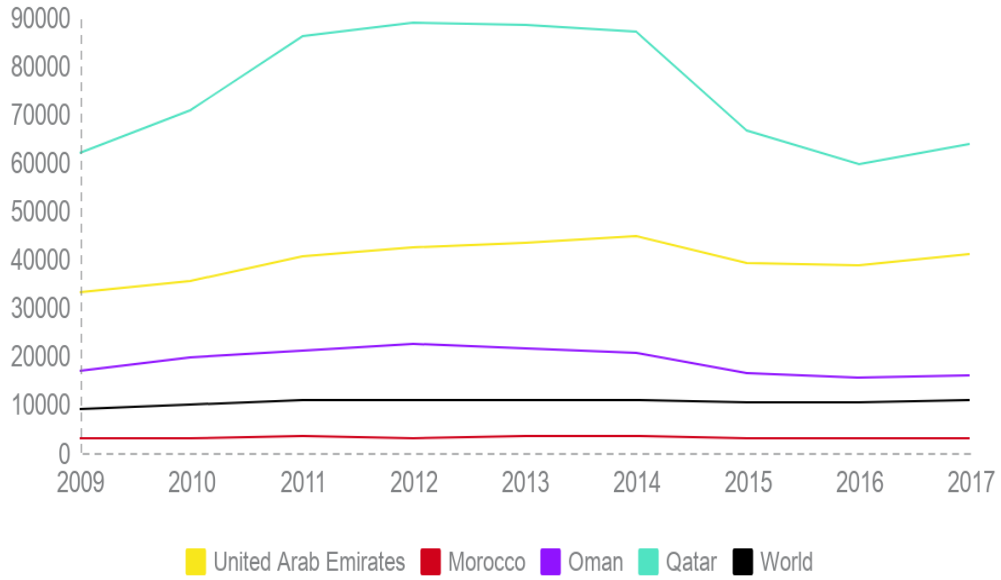
monetary concessions. Practicing and former MPs involved in the opposition were arrested or questioned by the authorities in October 2012. This prompted a group of close to 500 protestors to march outside of the Justice Palace. This led the regime to ban public gatherings of more than 20 people (similarly to what happened in the aforementioned Saudi case). Between October and November, lawmakers involved in the opposition were arrested which further roused protestors (*Agence Press Française*, 2012). After this point, the regime restricted freedoms of expression and association, and arrested dozens of opposition actors for offending the Emir. In Al-Erada square, security forces and National Guard attacked protestors with batons and tear gas, wounding and arresting protestors and former MPs (Dazi-Heni 2015). Since 2013, social media users- especially on Twitter- were targeted by the authorities for offending the Emir (Human Rights Watch 2013).

5.5.3 QATAR AND THE UNITED ARAB EMIRATES

I group the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Qatar together for two reasons. First, as I explain in Chapter 1 when discussing my case selection (section 1.5.1), they experienced very little unrest during the Arab Spring. Second, the two monarchies share many structural similarities. They are two of the wealthiest countries in the world in terms of GDP per capita- in 2010, at the start of the Arab Spring, this was $70,306.2 for Qatar and $35,037.9 in the UAE compared to a world average of $9,513.6 and to $2,834.2 in Morocco (see Figure 36).

Qatar and the UAE also have small populations (243,073 and 168,029 nationals respectively in 2010)[12] and small areas (83,600 km² for the UAE and 11,571 km² for Qatar). Their proven oil reserves are among the world's top fifteen (25.244 billion proven oil reserves in Qatar and 97.8 billion in the UAE)[13]. Finally, they both function as absolute monarchies (with the UAE structured as a federation of absolute monarchies).

Figure 36: GDP/CAPITA OF THE UAE AND QATAR COMPARED TO THE WORLD AVERAGE, OMAN, AND MOROCCO.



Source: Author's graph using raw data from the World Bank.

[12] *Population and Vital Statistics*. (2010). Retrieved from https://www.dsc.gov.ae/en-us/Themes/Pages/Population-and-Vital-Statistics.aspx?Theme=42andyear=2016#DSC_Tab1

[13] Al Mazrouei, S., Alkaabi, A., and Al Mehairi, S. (2018). OPEC: United Arab Emirates. Retrieved from https://www.opec.org/opec_web/en/about_us/170.htm; Al-Sada, M., Al-Ghanim, I., and Al-Hussaini, A. (2018). OPEC: Qatar. Retrieved from https://www.opec.org/opec_web/en/about_us/168.htm

The opposition in the UAE was mainly composed of about 133 intellectuals and academics, as well as Islamists that were sympathetic to the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and its affiliates in Tunisia, who organized petitions to the ruler asking for more political opening (Al-Jazeera 2011a). Specifically, they wanted universal suffrage and more legislative power for the Federal National Council (Solomon 2011). However, despite the small-scale opposition, in March 2011 the UAE lowered the prices of certain foods and promised $1.6 billion (Hertog 2011) to address socio economic hardships. Specifically, these funds would be used on infrastructure projects in the poorer northern emirates like Sharjah, Fujairah, Umm Al-Quwain, and Ajman. The regime also increased military pensions by 70% and introduced subsidies for basic foods such as bread and rice. The Emirate of Abu Dhabi also announced, in June 2011, 6,000 public sector jobs for nationals (Gulf News 2011). As a political concession, the regime across the UAE increased the number of eligible voters for the Federal National Council[14] elections from 6,689 to 129,274 voters (i.e., an increase of x 21.5).

However, the regime in the UAE also repressed the opposition immediately (Al-Jazeera 2011b) to contain the threat and took measures to ensure it would avoid further opposition. Notably, security forces arrested and prosecuted some 94 activists in April and dissolved professional associations for teachers and lawyers. A prominent activist, Ahmed Mansoor, was taken into custody for fake charges according to his lawyer. Starting in December 2011,

[14] The Federal National Council is a political body with limited powers that represents Emirati people. It consists of 40 members in the Advisory Council, 20 of which are elected while the rest are appointed by the rulers of each emirate.

the regime also repressed local members of the Muslim Brotherhood which it perceived as a threat due to its organization and international ties. The regime then increased its security surveillance to prevent protests. Similar to what had happened in Oman, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait, the regime in the UAE reformed its cybercrime law in 2012 to limit free speech further. The new law (Art. 28) introduced punishment for anyone who published online content which may endanger the state's national security, reputation, and higher interests.

Qatar experienced the least unrest of all the Arab monarchies.[15] The opposition in Qatar took place mostly online; in March 2011, 30,000 people joined a Facebook page that supported a revolution (Barken 2011). The group's main criticism revolved around the Emir's pro-West foreign policy. However, the plans for protests never materialized and no physical opposition took place. Yet, the online opposition prompted the Qatari regime to announce (thus far postponed) elections for *Majlis Al-Shura* would take place in 2013 (Hamid 2013). The regime also proposed a constitutional amendment in favor of separation of powers (i.e., separating the powers of the Emir from those of the Prime Minister). This last reform does not check the Emir's powers as the Prime Minister is chosen from the royal family.

Prior to the online opposition, there was some opposition movement when the Qatari Youth Rescue movement (a group of Qatari opponents residing inside and outside of Qatar) was formed in 2010. Khalid Al-Hail- a now-exiled businessman who was once associated with former Prime Minister Hamid bin Jassim- helped form the group. As a response the regime

[15] Scholars agree that the Qatari royal family's intra-familial rivalry currently poses a greater threat to the emir than any popular opposition.

imprisoned and tortured him in 2010 and again in 2014. The movement's goal is to have a constitutional monarchy via a bloodless coup (Fahmi 2016).

5.5.4 THE BAHRAINI EXCEPTION: BOLSTERING SCENARIO 3 AND TESTING SCENARIO 5

Bahrain is a unique case because it experienced the largest upheaval of all the monarchies during the Arab Spring, its regime was at high risk of being overthrown, and the outcome of survival in Bahrain during the Arab Spring is tied to foreign intervention. The Bahraini case was complicated by the persistence of protestors, the regime's use of excessive force and no political concession, and the impact Shia-Sunni divide in the country's political arena. The power-sharing ruling family,[16] which is Sunni, favors a Sunni minority- which makes up close to 40% of the non- foreign population- over the Shi'a majority- which makes up over 56% of the non- foreign population (Pollock 2017).

At the onset of protests in February 2011, out of less than 600,000 Bahraini inhabitants, more than 100,000 (i.e., close to one-fifth of the population) marched to protest socio-economic and political hardship and- eventually- the monarchy itself (Joyce 2012). Significantly, protestors were not all Shi'a; members of the Sunni minority also participated in demonstrations. Importantly for my argument about multi-dimensional threat perception and its effect on regime reaction to opposition, a significant number of protestors eventually

[16] As I discuss in greater detail in Chapter 1, five Gulf monarchies (including Qatar) are dynastic, where monarchs rule as representatives of their families, and family members monopolize political power (Herb 1999, 2005) refer to Figure 3.

expressed their desire to overthrow the monarchy; this increased the threat of the event to the monarchy.

The Bahraini case complicates and bolsters my theory, because it shows what happens when a regime does not follow the pattern of reaction to dissent which I outline in my Oman and Morocco findings. Briefly, I find that, to avoid losing power, monarchs react to different types of opposition events depending on how big a threat they represent (how much power loss the involved). For any single opposition event, the regime's ability to contain the oppositions depends on its successful use repression, liberalization, and monetary concession, which is linked to the motivation, organization, and background of the opposition actors involved.

Out of the five scenarios that I derive from this pattern, the ones relevant to the Bahraini case are scenarios 3 and 5:

S3: In a wealthy, absolute regime or a poor, non-absolute regime, a combination of repression and minor, illusionary, and/or promised political concession will ensure regime survival if opposition seeks mostly political change that would moderately reduce the ruler's power.

S5: In a wealthy, absolute regime or a poor, non-absolute regime, immediate and harsh repression ensures regime survival when the goals of the opposition would lead to high or complete power loss.

As it had for Oman, Morocco, Jordan, Saudi Arabia, and Kuwait, the Arab Spring at its onset represented a moderate threat to the regime in Bahrain. Protestors in the beginning did

not make demands that would drastically reduce the monarchy's powers or overthrow it, so the threat was not high at this point. Rather, protestors wanted political and social reforms that would create moderate power loss for the monarchy. Thus, according to my pattern, Bahrain- a wealthy, absolute regime- should have used a combination of repression and minor, illusionary, and/or promised political concession to contain the unrest. Instead, the regime immediately used excessive force and the coercive apparatus killed and tortured opposition actors on the first day of protests; other forms of repression included beatings, firing rubber bullets, and using tear gas.

The regime's continued use of only harsh repression fueled more large-scale dissidence and transformed the threat that the opposition represented. The protestors' demands changed to include the abdication of the ruling family. At this point, the threat to the regime had become so high that it could have resulted in high or complete power loss. This led the regime to harshly repress protestors and ask for foreign military aid to contain the uprisings. Thus, the Bahraini case provides an opportunity to consider scenario 5. It is very similar to the first part of the Dhofar Rebellion in Oman when Said harshly repressed the opposition, refusing it concede, and had to ask for British military aid.

5.5.4.1 THREAT TO THE REGIME

Unlike some of the other absolute monarchies, the Bahraini regime was no stranger to popular opposition. As I explain in Chapter 4, Oman's barren political scene impacts how the regime perceives threat; less opposition organization leads to less frequent threats to the regime which, in turn, makes the regime more cautious of opposition events when they

occur. It also impacts how opposition actors go about making demands from the regime (i.e., in a roundabout way by staging anti-war demonstrations, abstaining from voting etc.).

The regime in Bahrain, on the other hand, has experienced organized uprising targeting the monarchy regularly starting in the 1920s until the 1970s. Importantly, the opposition was not only Shi'a but cross-sectarian; in 1956, the nationalist and reformist National Union Committee which was comprised of Marxist sympathizers and Arab Nationalists, organized protests against the regime. The monarchy also contained an uprising between 1994 and 1999 organized by various opposition movements, including the Islamists, leftists, and liberals who demanded democratic reform. The harshly repressed uprising ended with the king proposing a constitution which was later changed by the new king to give himself more power.

Bahrain's frequent political opposition also means that the threat which the regime perceived from the Arab Spring was not negligible since the regime (and, at its heart, the power sharing Al-Khalifa ruling family) had a history with popular uprising which has been persistent throughout the country's modern history. There are five reasons that explain why the threat that Arab Spring protests represented to the Bahraini regime started out as moderate but increased due to harsh and immediate repression. First, the opposition- consisting of ordinary Bahrainis as well as trade unions- was cross-sectarian. Despite the regime's attempts to divide the opposition along sectarian lines, protestors chanted about the unity between Sunnis and Shi'as (Al-Khawaja 2014: 191). Thus, not only did the regime's failure to divide the opposition impact its threat perception, but the Shi'a involvement also worried it. Second, the sheer number of protestors made the threat significant. Over 200,000

people (out of about 600,000 Bahraini nationals) marched around Manama's Pearl Roundabout. Proportionally, this was one of the largest Arab Spring events across the MENA region.

Third, the demands of the protestors would limit or completely remove the monarch's powers. Initially, protestors were calling for political reform (i.e., a constitution that would genuinely limit the powers of the king). However, and the regime repressed the opposition and the protests progressed, they demanded the resignation of Prime Minister Khalifa bin Salman Al-Khalifa which prompted the regime to increase its use of force on February 17, 2011. This led to protestors calling for the abdication of the ruling family.

Fourth, the regime's initial reaction of harsh and continuous repression without concession exacerbated the unrest. Already, the motivation of the opposition was increased repression and human rights violations by the regime, Shi'a persecution, and the stalled democratic process. Rather than take this into consideration and offering even illusionary concessions, the regime continued to behave in the way that had triggered the opposition to protest. The protests started on February 14, 2011 in the Roundabout and protestors mostly used nonviolent tactics despite brutal violence from security forces. They even responded to violence with flowers and human chains (Little 2011). Immediately, however, protestors were killed, beaten, and tortured (Human Rights Watch 2011). The repression fueled further unrest and resulted in a nationwide strike.

Finally, the persistence of the unrest increased the threat to the regime for two reasons. First, as I explain in my theoretical discussion in Chapter 2 and my empirical research in Chapters 3 and 4, since dissent can spread through the population and escalate (de Merritt 2016),

continued dissent creates a threat to the regime. This is why continued dissent is perceived as dangerous and why regimes increase repression to contain it (Regan and Henderson 2002). Second, the persistent protests impacted Bahrain's economy, which in March 2011 was at a breaking point due to the general strike of trade unions (Cherif Bassiouni, Rodley, Al-Awadhi, Kirsch and Arsanjani 2011).

5.5.4.2 REGIME ATTEMPTS TO CONTAIN OPPOSITION

The regime in Bahrain attempted to preempt protests using monetary concessions in February 2011, as soon as Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak stepped down. The King granted each family of Bahraini nationals $2,600 and announced public sector 20,000 jobs in the Ministry of Interior (Middle East Online, 2011; Hertog 2011); the latter is a significant number given Bahrain's population of 600,000. The Bahraini regime's preemptive behavior is not unique as the regime in the UAE, Qatar, and Saudi Arabia had done the same.

When protests took place despite the concessions, the regime immediately responded with excessive force. On the first day of protests, one protestor was killed while others were beaten and tortured. As the regime's repression caused more protest and more people to join them, the regime countered this increased dissidence with even more repression. For instance, on February 17, 2011, security forces attached protestors sleeping at the Roundabout at dawn to scare them as well as the wider population out of further dissidence (Chulov 2011). This links back to my discussion in Chapter 2 of how rulers use arbitrary repression to instill fear within the people to deter them from participating in future uprisings.

The regime's harsh repression made the Bahraini protests more threatening to the monarchy than they were initially. Not only did the regime's reaction cause more protests, but it transformed the event to a national strike and then an uprising. Furthermore, the regime's reaction changed the demands of the opposition which had been protesting for political reforms but ended up demanding that the royal family step down.

The Bahraini regime, at this point, could either act like Bashar Al-Assad and harshly repress one third of its population until opposition actors were killed or fled, or it could concede to the opposition. Unlike Al-Assad's regime, the Bahraini monarchy lacked the military apparatus to maintain its power in a civil war. On the other hand, conceding to the opposition at that point meant abdication (i.e., the monarchy would lose all its power). It is at this point that the King- a rational ruler whose goal is to survive and maintain his power- asked his GCC allies for help.

The GCC, on Saudi Arabia's orders,[17] sent 1,500 security troops from the Peninsula Shield Force (PSF)[18] to contain the unrest in Bahrain on March 14, 2011.[19] King Hamad then

[17] I discuss the reasons behind Saudi Arabia and the GCC's help to Bahrain in great detail in Chapter 2. Briefly: Saudi Arabia was worried that the fall of the Bahraini monarchy would trigger a domino effect that would threaten the rest of the monarchies. Second, a Shi'a uprising could spill over to the Shi'-a populated Eastern Province which shares a border with Bahrain. Furthermore, Saudi Arabia, a rival of Iran, was threatened by the possibility of a Shi'a regime in Bahrain that would ally itself to Iran.

[18] The Peninsular Shield Force is the military arm of the GCC and was formed in 1982 to defend GCC member states from foreign attacks. At its founding, it consisted of 5,000 to 10,000 soldiers from all the GCC states and two brigades, and it was located in Saudi Arabia. It now has close to 40,000 troops.

[19] Interestingly, the forces sent to Bahrain in 2011 were made up of Saudi and UAE troops. Kuwait and Oman did not send soldiers.

declared martial law whilst domestic troops suppressed protestors and GCC troops secured strategic buildings.

Over 120 people were killed, many others were injured, thousands were arrested, and 5,000 were dismissed from their jobs as a form of punishment (Al-Saadi, 2014; Bahrain Center for Human Rights, 2011; Report of Bahrain Independent Commission of Inquiry, Articles 1313-1323). Security forces also repressed medical staff, students, unionists, and teachers. Hospitals as well as Shi'a mosques were targeted. Most of Bahrain's opposition leaders were jailed or tortured by the end of 2011 (Bahrain Center for Human Rights, 2012). The homes of activists were raided, their family members were abducted, and even very young people were tortured or killed. In January 2012, a small group of protestors threw rocks and Molotov cocktails at security forces; other than this incident, despite the repression taking place, most protestors remained non-violent. As the harsh repression continued, more groups resorted to violence. The regime, however, targeted both violent and non-violent protestors.

5.6 CONCLUSION: LESSONS FOR MY PATTERN FROM THE REMAINING MONARCHIES

My goal throughout this chapter is to determine whether the theory that I built based on Morocco and Oman applies to other monarchies that share the same outcome of regime survival. In other words, this chapter tests the external validity of my theory. To do this, I focus on a single event, the Arab Spring, the most recent opposition event which all surviving experienced and the phenomenon which inspired this research project.

5.6.1 THEORETICAL IMPLICATIONS FOR MY PATTERN

There are important takeaways for my theory from the regime behavior to contain the Arab Spring across the remaining six monarchies, as well the reactions of the opposition this the regime's behavior in these countries. **First**, my findings in this chapter point to the importance of a nuanced response from the regime when facing popular opposition that represents a moderate threat. In the countries where the regime used mostly excessive and continuous force against the entire opposition or a subgroup, the unrest increased significantly. For example, in Bahrain, security forces killed protestors as early as the first and second day of protests. The regime's harsh repression of opposition actors over months led to a nationwide strike of close to 200,000 people (i.e., a third of the Bahraini population). It also pushed the protestors, who had remained peaceful for months, to adopt violent tactics. According to the Bahraini leaders of the nonviolent protests, had the regime stopped using harsh repression and allowed space for peaceful protest, the unrest would have decreased as it had in the 1990s- see section 5.5.4.1(Al-Khawaja 2014: 199). In a less extreme case, the Saudi regime's reactions towards Shi'a unrest in the Eastern Province was harsher than in the rest of the country because of its fear of a Shi'a uprising and the location of its major oil fields in the Eastern Province. Protests escalated in November 2011 as a result of perceived persecution by the regime.[20] Similarly, in Jordan, when security forces harshly repressed

[20] The Saudi regime dealt with a proportionally smaller Shi'a opposition groups than the Bahraini regime, as Shi'as represent 10-15% of the Saudi population whereas they are a majority in Bahrain.

peaceful protestors on August 5, 2011, more protestors marched the following day, throwing eggs at a government building and verbally targeting the monarch.

This links back to my discussion in Chapter 2 of why and how authoritarian regimes use repression (section 2.2.6). While the overuse of repression comes at a cost (overdependence of coercive apparatus,[21] and risk of backlash from the opposition[22]) it does not constrain regimes like liberalization or cost as much as monetary concession (Svolik 2012). However, rulers disregard the cost of repression and use it when the result of not using it could ruin them (Bermeo 1997: 315-317). According to my findings on Morocco and Oman, dictators successfully use repression to contain opposition events when other tactics have not succeeded in containing the threat, or when the initial threat is so high that it could lead to total power loss. However, while the Bahraini regime had attempted but failed to pre-empt the protests with monetary concessions, it failed to address any of the demands of the opposition (which were non-economic), hence the escalation. In contrast, the Saudi regime addressed the political and economic demands of its non-Shia opposition majority and, eventually, of the Shi'a opposition as well.

[21] If the ruler becomes overly dependent on the military, the latter could overthrow the regime using the resource granted to it to suppress regime opposition. The regime's overdependence on the coercive apparatus to stay in power could also empower the apparatus' leadership and grant it political leverage. This is why Ben Ali gave the Tunisian military little funding, and why Hassan II removed important military ranks from the army and distanced high officials from the political sphere.

[22] Repression may lead to more protest (Rasler 1996) or to the "dictator's dilemma," whereby citizens pretend to support the repressive ruler while opposing him in secret; this increases the potential threat to the ruler (Olofsgard et al. 2009; Wintrobe 2007; Tullock 1987). Repression also creates great discontent within the opposition (Kricheli et al. 2011).

Second, we also learn from the Saudi and Kuwaiti cases that, during the same opposition event, the regime may perceive different opposition groups as representing different levels of threat and treat them accordingly. In Kuwait, the regime initially did not concede to the Bidoon protestors because it perceived them as less threatening since they are stateless. As soon as Kuwaiti protestors allied themselves to the Bidoon groups, the regime made small concessions (granting them residency rights, for example). On the other end of the spectrum, the Saudi regime perceived Shi'a protestors as threatening because the Sunni royal family bases its legitimacy on Sunni Wahabi teachings. There was also a fear of the potential interference of rival Iran, a Shi'i country. Finally, major oil fields are located in the Shi'a-populated Eastern Province.

Third, the remaining monarchies' strategies of survival during the Arab Spring highlight the impact of the opposition of the regime's survival-seeking behavior and strengthen my arguments from Chapters 1 and 3 about the role of the interrelationship between the opposition and the regime in the latter's survival. In Jordan, for example, the protestors had learned over time to threaten the regime with escalation to a mass revolution to get concessions. Thus, as I discuss in greater detail in Chapter 1, a regime-focused approach is not sufficient and does not adequately address the question of Arab monarchical survival during and prior to the Arab Spring. Opposition actors and their past and current interactions with the regime are also key. Thus, while dictators often have the upper hand in terms of resources and coercive power, my analysis in my empirical chapters shows that they frequently and consistently consider the potential reactions of the opposition before acting.

Finally, my findings on the six Gulf monarchies fall in line with but also complicate the rentier state theory.[23] Importantly, the resource-wealthy Gulf monarchies did not use just monetary concession to contain the Arab uprisings; they employed political strategies as well. The importance here is twofold. First, resource wealth on its own is not sufficient to ensure survival in all cases, and regimes know this. The demands and threat of the opposition, as well as its interrelationship with the regime, must be taken into account. Second, while structural factors are important (e.g. the super rentier Qatari regime's wealth means it can afford more drastic concessions than struggling or poor regimes) they do not limit regimes from using strategies to contain threats when opposition actors ask for political reform. Even absolute monarchies like the UAE and Saudi Arabia acted in a broadly similar way to Morocco and Jordan by using promised and illusionary liberalization. In the closed political systems of the UAE and Saudi Arabia (which are most similar to Oman) even the smallest political concessions that would seem trivial in Morocco or Jordan mattered to the opposition.

5.6.2 FURTHER INVESTIGATING MY THEORY

In the following chapter, I examine regime reaction to opposition in Pahlavi Iran and Gaddafi's Libya, both of which collapsed. This chapter further develops my theory by

[23] A rentier-state is one in which one area of the economy (e.g. oil production) is responsible for the largest part of the country's GDP. This trivializes other forms of domestic investment because most of the population can live off oil rents without actively participating in the economy. A state's access to oil revenues means it receives most of its income from oil and that it does not need citizens to contribute (i.e., through taxation). In return, the state can deny them certain rights such as representation or political participation. Accordingly, abundance of rents leads to an unbalanced relationship between the state and its citizens because the state becomes the dominant economic and political actor (Luciani 1987; 2009).

investigating the link between regime behavior based on multidimensional threat perception and collapse. Its main goal is thus to show how regime collapse in failed states was affected by regime behavior and by the regime's contextual interactions with opposition actors.

CHAPTER 6: CONFIRMING THE THEORETICAL SCENARIOS

Since explaining regime survival requires comparing the conditions of both survival and collapse, this chapter investigates the causal pathway of regime overthrow in a non-monarchy and a monarchy: Pahlavi Iran and Gaddafi's Libya. Thus, after determining in Chapter 5 that the scope of the external validity of my findings on Morocco and Oman extends to the other surviving Arab monarchies, my main goal in this chapter is to further develop the theory I build by examining relevant negative cases. This chapter serves an explanatory purpose (Lieberman 2005) as it provides insights into another possible causal factor (external support) and reviews how it complicates and complements my existing analysis.

6.1 INTRODUCTION

To do this, rather than employing a country-based approach, (i.e., comparing cases in which the regime collapsed during a similar event to one when the regime in my positive cases survived) to investigate how regime behavior is linked to the outcome of regime collapse in a non-monarchy and a monarchy- Pahlavi Iran and Gaddafi's Libya. Finally, this chapter compares regime reaction to opposition in my negative and positive cases.

Through my in-depth research on Morocco and Oman, I uncover a pattern of successful regime reaction to active opposition that is based on (1) the opposition's perceived threat by

the regime, and (2) the interrelationship between the regime and the opposition. The most relevant regime reactions which I examine are those that contain high and moderate threats which are similar to those that toppled other regimes.

The Moroccan, Jordanian and Saudi monarchies, for example, survived several military coups, whereas the monarchies of Libya, Egypt, and Iraq did not; neither did the republics Syria and Iraq. The Omani monarchy survived uprisings and rebellions in Dhofar and in the Interior which were motivated by regional persecution, Marxist movements, and/or religious ideology, whereas the Iranian monarchy collapsed in the face of communist and Islamist opposition in 1979. Tunisia's Husinaid dynasty was abolished by constitutional process, while the Moroccan monarchy stalled the constitutional process, weakened threatening political elites in 1962, and maintained its vast powers. Riots, strikes, and protests triggered by socio-economic hardship culminated in revolution which overthrow the regime in Yemen, Egypt, Tunisia, and Libya during the Arab Spring; Morocco and Oman (but also, the republics of Algeria and Syria amongst others) successfully quashed numerous protests, strikes, and riots throughout their modern history and avoided continued dissent, including the Arab Spring.

My point is that the approach that focuses on just the Arab Spring and the fact that no Arab monarchy collapsed misses the larger process of long-term regime survival across the region in the face of different types of opposition actors and events. Thus, in this chapter, I use mixed methods to build my argument through a comparative analysis between my positive cases (i.e., the surviving monarchies) and republics and monarchies that collapsed. I would agree that to exhaustively further investigate my results from Chapters 3, 4, and 5 on

successful regime surviving behavior, I would need to carry out an in-depth study of all MENA monarchies and non- monarchies where the regime collapsed up to and during the Arab Spring. However, it would not be possible to examine in a single chapter the twelve opposition events that brought down the aforementioned MENA regimes. While such a study exists (Bank 2013)- at least for all the surviving and collapsed monarchies in the MENA's modern history- it has been carried out as an overview focusing on structural factors rather than an in-depth analysis and does not broach the complexity of regime reaction to dissent in each case.

To that end, because this research was inspired by the Arab Spring which is also the focus of my analysis in Chapter 5, I examine regimes that fell to revolutions or uprisings, limiting my analysis to one monarchy and one non-monarchy. Pahlavi Iran is the only monarchy that fell to a revolution; it also has the advantage of being the only monarchy (other than the Husinaid monarchy in Tunisia) that collapsed more than twenty years after its founding.[1] Out of the four MENA republics that collapsed during the Arab Spring, I choose Libya because it allows me to examine other potential causal factors and provides a valuable comparison to regimes that survived despite foreign intervention.

6.1.1 METHODS, DATA, AND TIME FRAME

To investigates how regime behavior in my negative cases is linked to the outcome of regime collapse, I analyze data from datasets (CIRI, Polity IV, the World Bank, and the

[1] Other failed monarchies- like in Iraq, Egypt, and Libya- collapsed too close to their date of founding; thus, the regime was not as well-established as in Iran.

IMF); primary sources including video footage, transcripts of official proceedings, and maps; content analysis of speeches and press releases by the regime; and secondary historical sources including country reports, newspaper articles, and elite accounts of the events.

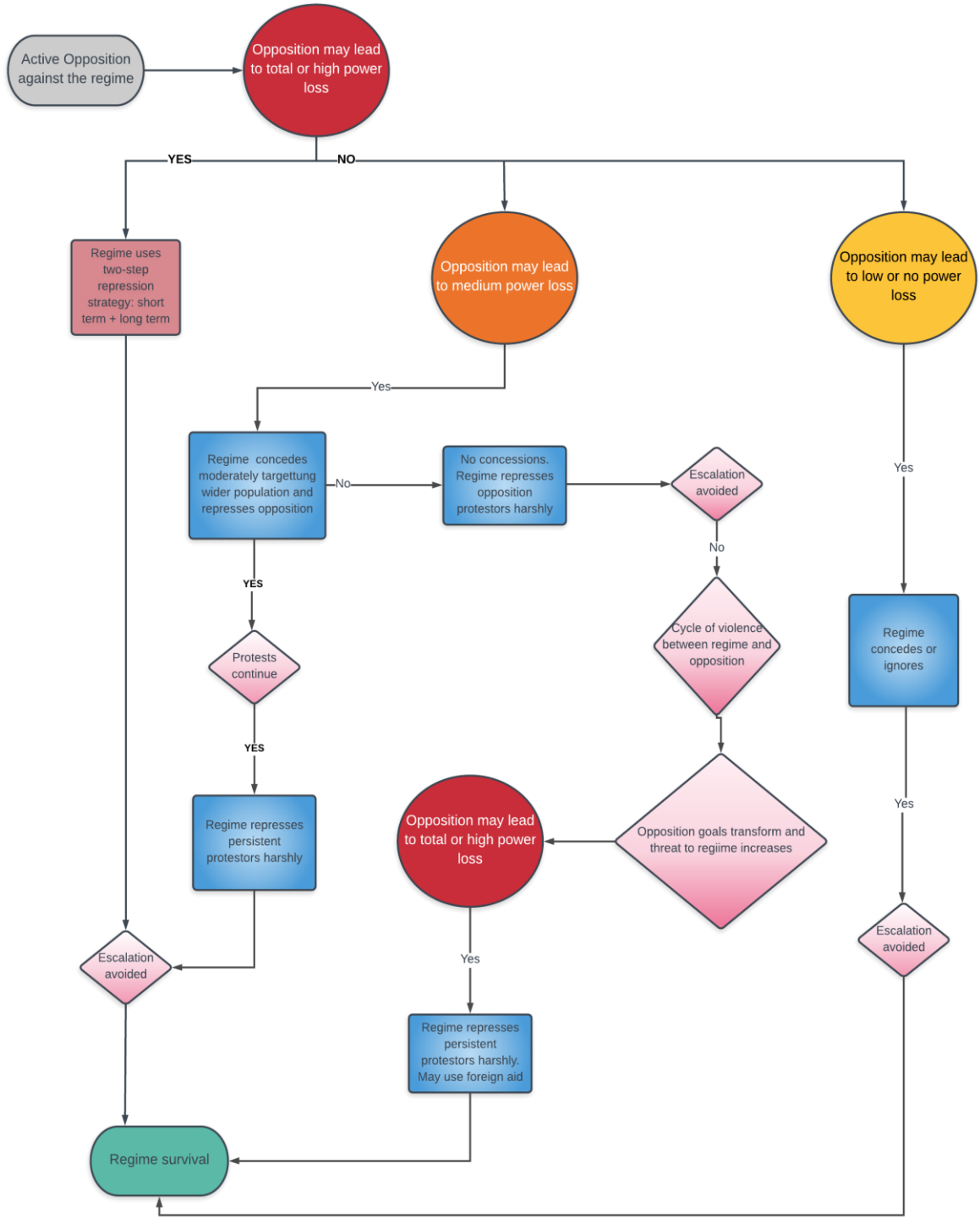
The use of secondary accounts is common in authoritarianism studies because it is difficult to access transparent, primary sources on regime spending in authoritarian systems, where this sort of data is only available to the ruler and the informed elite, and where ordinary citizens are left to update their views on the matter from sources that are made available to them- like state or independent media (Guriev 2015). Secondary accounts are thus significant to my research as they provide information not only on regime behavior, but also on the way that the regime wishes to communicate with the opposition and wider population. I also used secondary accounts as part of my research in Chapters 3 and 4.

6.1.2 LESSONS FROM THE SURVIVING MONARCHIES

My in-depth study of successful regime reaction to opposition events in Morocco and Oman shows that these regimes maintain their power in the face of active opposition by using different combinations of tactics depending on the degree of threat represented by the event (which in turn is linked to the motivation, organization, and goals of the opposition). Reviewing my research on Morocco and Oman, as well as the other Arab monarchies, shows that these regimes have successfully contained different types of opposition events over the course of their modern history, not just Arab Spring-style protests. These opposition events differ greatly from one another (in terms of motivation, goals, and this threat) and they illicit different reactions from these regimes (refer to Figure 2 below).

Through Chapters 3 and 4, I show that five types of movements have tried to remove or greatly restrain these monarchs' powers: (1) Regional or religiously-driven rebellions aimed at the early state that was newly-independent or somehow still tied to a colonial power- like the 1957 Rif Rebellions in Morocco, and the two Jabal Akhdar Wars in Oman (1954-1959); (2) military coups aiming to remove the regime from the top and transition to military rule (Morocco, Saudi Arabia, and Jordan); (3) popular uprisings, protests, and riots trying to make bottom-top changes and aiming for mid to high-level reforms- like Arab Spring and post-Arab Spring protests in both countries, les Emeutes du Pain of 1981 in Morocco, the Matra uprisings and the Omani workers' riots in the Fahud oil field in 1970 in Oman; (4) elite-driven opposition where elites try to take power from the ruler (like the Istiqlal and UNFP in Morocco and 1962, or Qaboos' uncle Taimur in 1971); and (5) and military coups, like those in 1971 and 1972 in Morocco or 1968 in Saudi Arabia, with factions of the army want to replace the regime with military rule.

FIGURE 2: CONCEPTUALIZATION OF MY THEORY



Source: Author's diagram based on empirical research in Chapters 3-6.

6.2 A NEGATIVE CASE OF REGIME COLLAPSE TO A REVOLUTION: IRAN'S PAHLAVI MONARCHY

Pahlavi Iran is an ideal negative case[1] because it is structurally similar to the oil-wealthy, absolute monarchies. It was a rentier state ruled by an absolute monarchical-military dictatorship where Reza Shah Pahlavi was at the center of the ruling coalition (Skocpol 1982). The state machine in Pahlavi Iran was based on patronage to foreign and domestic investors. The coercive apparatus consisted of the military and the secret police (i.e., the Organization of National Intelligence and Security of the Nation, known as SAVAK). Both were loyal to and vested in Reza Shah's rule.

In Pahlavi Iran, the Shah made all the decisions, small or big (Skocpol 1982: 270).[2] This is reminiscent of the regime in Oman where Qaboos, like the Shah, controlled the military, the political sphere, the economy, and foreign policy. Furthermore, like many Gulf states, Pahlavi Iran was a rentier state after the mid-1960s at which point it got most of its revenues from exports and did not tax Iranians.

Another similarity to Oman which allows for interesting comparison is the presence of foreign control. Like the British in Oman under Said and the early years of Qaboos, the US had significant vested interests in Iran. As had happened in Oman during the Jebel Akhdar

[1] In a negative case, the outcome of interest (regime survival) is absent. While I derive my argument from my positive cases and confirm it through my smaller cases (the other surviving monarchies), my negative cases serve an explanatory role.

[2] Thus, Pahlavi Iran is similar to most Gulf monarchies where the monarch rules with little to no degree of political openness, and where there is a lack of healthy civil society and pluralism. Also like the Gulf monarchies, Pahlavi Iran had natural resources.

Wars and the Dhofar Rebellion, the massive discontent that preceded and partly led to the Iranian Revolution was due to US interference in state affairs.[3]

Furthermore, Iran is an ideal negative case because it offers the opportunity to examine a monarchy that fell to a revolution, an opposition event similar to several of the events survived by the Arab monarchies which I discuss in Chapters 3, 4, and 5 (such as the Arab Spring, the Dhofar Rebellion, the Moroccan 1984 riots and 1965 protests). The revolution was mass-based, rather than just involving elites. In that sense, it is similar to the Arab Spring. Indeed, the Pahlavi regime fell to what is now known as the Islamic Revolution, a series of mass urban demonstrations and strikes directed against what was seen as a corrupt and imperialist monarchy and catalyzed by a pro-regime article in a Tehran newspaper that made disparaging remarks about Ayatollah Khomeini (Ettela'at 1978).[4] Khomeini was then a cleric who opposed the Shah's reform efforts and is now known as the founder of the Islamic Republic of Iran and its Supreme Leader.

Skocpol (1982) classifies the Iranian Revolution as a social movement that culminated in a revolution. It is therefore a social revolution, rather than just a political revolution. Social revolutions are rapid basic transformations of a country's state and class structures and of its dominant ideology. The Iranian Revolution transformed more than just the political class; it transformed social and economic ties as well.

[3] Like Said in Oman before the Dhofar Rebellion, Reza Shah survived multiple assassination attempts before 1977.

[4] Smaller revolts by workers against the domestic class took place simultaneously.

6.2.1 THE TRIGGERS OF THE IRANIAN REVOLUTION

Briefly, the opposition was triggered by economic hardship which resulted from the effects of rapid economic expansion (modernization and regime overspending), the regime's monopoly over power and repression in the 1960s and 1970s, and the Shah's closeness to the US. Many Iranians were displeased by the economic situation which they suffered due to high government spending, and a boom in oil prices that led to high rates of inflation and stagnation of their buying power, resulting in popular discontent.

Despite high petroleum revenues in the 1970s (which the regime used to pay for its reform projects), the economy was negatively impacted by world monetary instability, fluctuations and Western oil consumption, and regime-led modernization efforts (specifically, land reform imposed by the Shah in 1963, rapid rural migration, and industrialization). There was also disparity between the urban and rural populations in the sectors of education and health.

Furthermore, these economic, social, industrialization transformations took place with no participation from the government. This was exacerbated by the fact there was little outlet for the opposition and political participation; opposition parties like the pro-Soviet Tudeh and the Nationalist Front (NF) were outlawed. Furthermore, between 1963 and 1977, the Shah suppressed all opposition forces and repressed the press (Daneshvar 1996). People were also unhappy about the lack of a separation between the regime and its entourage's business interests and their political actions; for example, members of the Pahlavi family used their position in court to amass more wealth.

6.2.2 OPPOSITION ACTORS AND GOALS

For a revolution to take place, discontent must be turned into effective political action, which, in turn, requires autonomous collective organization and resources (Tilly 1979; Skocpol 1982). The opposition that participated in the Iranian Revolution had strong collective organization and the ability to manage resources; it posed a credible threat to the Shah not only because of its size and unity, but also because of the Shah and his government's weakness due to the economic climate.

The opposition encompassed both secular and religious actors and can be divided into two groups according to the threat they posed. First, there were the avowedly revolutionary leaders (Skocpol 1982) that mobilized support to decrease the regime's powers and eventually overthrow it, such as Khomeini or Ali Shariati. Second, there were members of wider population (mostly peasants) with concrete demands, usually revolving around socio-economic issues. The actors spanned across all sectors of urban society, and eventually they united. The ulama, secular intellectuals, *bazaaris*, students, communists, youth (especially unemployed rural immigrants), artisans, merchants, middle-ranking officials, and workers all eventually united under the banner of Shi'a Islamic ideology.

Broadly, from the onset, the various sections of the opposition all wanted the Shah to be less involved in the political and economic spheres and for his powers to be reduced. As the unrest continued, their demands became more severe and included the Shah's abdication, removal of top officials and the re-organization of the coercive apparatus, administrations, and judiciary. All wanted economic reforms, especially the wider population. The NF demanded that the Shah stop from authoritarian rule and submit to Constitutionality via a letter in which it criticized his reign (Green 1982: 65). Lawyers demanded an end to

deviations from the constitutional process and that the judiciary become independent. Mehdi Bazargan revived the Liberation Movement (which the Shah dissolved in 1963) and collaborated with the bazaar community.[5] They demanded a return to the 1906 constitution.

The Tudeh Party, People's Mujahidin of Iran, the Iranian Peoples' Fadaian movements developed underground and/or guerilla movements and organized political activity in Tehran. They were also active in universities, where opposition activities became volatile starting in October 1977. After the opposition began to unify in October 1977, its demands included the dissolution of SAVAK (Bakhtiar 1982: 113); this would have reduced the Shah's control which is why he never agreed to it (until he left the country). As the opposition's size increased, they asked for the Shah to relinquish some of his powers and that laws be verified by practitioners of Islamic law, pursuant to article 5 of the constitution. The clerics assumed leadership of the opposition starting in 1977 after Khomeini's son died of a heart attack and unsubstantiated rumors arose that SAVAK was to blame. Once the clerics took over- late into the cycle of violence which escalated the revolutions- overthrowing the Shah became a necessary condition of the opposition.[6]

Indeed, similar to what happened in the Dhofar Rebellion (which I examine in Chapter 4), as the cycle of violence continued, the opposition and its goals transformed. The

[5] A pro-democracy activist, Bazargan served as deputy minister under Premier Mohammed Mossadegh in the 1950s, and as the head of the National Iranian Oil Company from 1951 to 1952. He co-founded the Liberation Movement in 1961 and was imprisoned repeatedly for political differences with Reza Shah. During the revolution, Bazargan allied himself to Khomeini and was in charge of directing the oil strikes that weakened Iran's economy. After the Shah's departure, Bazargan was head of the provisional government. Political differences with Khomeini led him to resign in 1979.

[6] By *cycle of violence*, I mean when deaths at the hand of the regime fueled more protests which triggered more repression, which in turn led to more killings.

transformation was twofold. First, by 1977, the different opposition groups had united, so their demands were unified, rather than separate. Second, as violence escalated, the majority of the opposition (rather than just radical groups) wanted to overthrow the regime. In other words, the Shah mishandled an opposition event that initially represented a moderate threat (as the opposition's demands would have reduced his powers but not revoked them). His arbitrary use of repression, negligible political concessions, and refusal to use oil rents to alleviate the population's economic woes led the opposition to escalate and its leaders to want him to step down.

6.2.3 REGIME'S REACTION AND THE SHAH'S FALL

Mismanagement of the economy accelerated consumer goods inflation to 25.1% in 1977 (Walton 1980:286); this is a significant rise compared to the -0.5-inflation average between 1960 and 1970 (World Development Report 1979: 127). In the face of popular unrest, the Shah mishandled the situation by repressing certain groups rather than offering concessions in addition to repression (scenario 2 in my model).

He fined *bazaaris*[7] and shopkeepers and targeted some wealthy businessmen (Daneshvar 1996) rather than finding concrete economic solutions. Unrest rose due to this and to increased political repression. SAVAK'S practices were brought to light due to infiltrations by opposition actors in the mid-1970s. The regime's repressive tactics were arbitrary and brutal, even unnecessary. They were similar to the initial reaction of the Bahraini regime

[7] *Bazaaris* are "urban bazaar merchants of Iran; ranging from large-scale import-export businessmen to merchants with a local client base ..." (Skocpol 1982: 271-2). They played an important role the revolution because they had the economic resources to support other coalitions, they were already organized thus could mobilize easily, and the bazaar was the center of collective action.

during the Arab uprisings, which I discuss in Chapter 5. For instance, amid water and electricity shortages in September 1977, police forces clashed with migrants in southern Tehran and demolished their shanty houses. The opposition used this episode to mobilize more protesters.

The regime's reaction to the opposition from the beginning to the end of the revolution was problematic. It rarely addressed the opposition's demands, and never genuinely; and its use of brutal repression fueled more unrest. Briefly, the regime veered from repression to concession, while massive killings by the coercive apparatus fueled a martyrdom mania and led to more demonstrations in which more people are killed (as in Bahrain and Libya during the Arab Spring).

The Shah made trivial concessions as early as 1977; he released 357 political prisoners and relaxed press censorship to a small degree in February 1977. He met with members of Amnesty International and the International Commission of Jurists in April and March 1977 and agreed to revise court procedures for political dissidents' trials. However, these gestures were symbolic; they did not open up the political space nor did they reduce the Shah's powers.

While the opposition was unifying in October 1977 and asking the regime to relinquish power, the Shah did not use repression, possibly doe to US pressure. However, he also did not address their demands despite repeated protests. During the Shah's November visit to the US 10,000 to 15,000 students clashed with the police, leading to one civilian death and 70 injuries. This episode triggered even more unrest which the regime met with increased repression, leading to the death of more students. This is reminiscent of the cycle of violence during the Arab uprisings which almost unseated the Bahraini emir and overthrew the

regime in Libya (which I examine in section 6.5). Like in Bahrain, commemorations for these deaths led to more clashes which, in turn, led to more deaths. The regime also set up groups through SAVAK to attack protestors and interrupt student meetings. In the absence of any concessions, this exacerbated the situations. As a result, triggered by a visit by President Carter, the Mujahidin and Fadaian movements bombed Iran's American Society offices.

By 1978, it was clear that the regime was not prepared to share power with the emerging opposition, and that genuine political opening would not take place under the Shah's rule. Knowing this, negotiation was no longer taken seriously by the opposition. Towards the end of the revolution, the Shah allowed symbolic participation (by meeting with leaders of the opposition) and to some extent protests (which were either ignored or arbitrarily repressed). However, he did not control the situation or manipulate the opposition as surviving monarchs did through their combined strategies. I explain this in greater detail further below.

6.3 A NEGATIVE CASE OF REGIME COLLAPSE OF A NON-MONARCHY: LIBYA UNDER GADDAFI

Colonel Muammar Gaddafi used a single tactic continuously to contain the Arab Spring: repression. Importantly, he did not use monetary concessions (despite his regime being oil-wealthy) or even illusionary liberalization to appease the opposition. In a time when Kuwait was handing over $4,000 cash rewards to every citizen and when Saudi Arabia was pledging billions of dollars to the public sector, there was a surprising lack of strategic monetary accommodation of the wider population in Libya- surprising given that a resource-wealthy country like Libya could afford to accommodate protestors.

While there was some unrest starting on February 2, 2011, the Arab Spring began in Libya on February 15 as a youth group organized a "Day of Rage" (Erdag 2017); and protestors gathered around police headquarters in Benghazi. Protestors were triggered by economic inequality and lack of political freedom, and they were sparked by the arrest of a human rights activist and lawyer, Fathi Terbil. As the regime harshly repressed the opposition, protestors clashed with pro-Gaddafi loyalists, and the situation escalated into a full-blown civil war. NATO established a no-fly zone over the country, and a coalition of states sent troops in March 21.

6.3.1 TRIGGERS OF THE LIBYAN REVOLUTION

Gaddafi was a domineering autocrat who- like Reza Shah- controlled all aspects of decision-making; protestors predictably were moved by the desire for more political freedom. However, they were significantly affected by economic hardship and, crucially, inequality. The regime did use oil rents to provide basic needs and subsidies (e.g. water and electricity) for its citizens, but these rents were mismanaged in light of egregious corruption. I refer to the rents as mismanaged because Libya- which had a small population and significant oil and gas reserves- faced economic consequences similar to much poorer states. For instance, the healthcare system was poor, personnel were paid poorly in certain sectors, and public schooling was inadequate; these issues caused social inequalities. Furthermore, economic disparity existed between the northern and southern regions; the eastern region saw high marginalization from the center (Erdag 2017). The state interfered with various economic sectors which made citizens wary. For instance, it limited private entrepreneurship, mainly developed the energy sector, and maintained low levels of production. Unemployment was

estimated to 33% and the state could not provide a successful employment policy (CIA 2011; Erdag 2017).

6.3.2 OPPOSITION ACTORS AND GOALS

The first protests were organized by youth movements; their demands were for more freedom and alleviation of economic hardship and equal distribution of resources. As the regime brutally repressed the opposition without any concession- monetary or political- the protests escalated, and other actors, such as militarized Islamist and non-Islamist groups, became involved. As more actors mobilized and became violent, their demands transformed. Furthermore, at one point during the Arab Spring, part of the military in Libya defected and Gaddafi hired mercenaries (a familiar practice for him e.g. in the Lebanon war). However, Libya was no Tunisia on the eve of Ben Ali's escape; Gaddafi had enough forces and resources to fight back.[8] The National Transitional Council (NTC), a body of anti-Gaddafi forces, formed on February 27 and assumed leadership of the country-wide opposition. The formation of the NTC increased the threat against the regime as it organized the opposition and solidified its agenda. After March 2011, anti-Gaddafi forces became focused on a return to the 1952 constitution and a multi-party democratic regime. In other words, Gaddafi had to go.

[8] Gaddafi enjoyed the loyalty of a large part of the Libyan army and had resources as well as mercenaries. However, unlike the Shah's experience, a number of military leaders turned on Gaddafi. Some defected to the opposition between March 2011 and September 2011, including: Generals Abdel Fatah Younes and Al-Barani Ashkal, and Brigardier-Generals Ghaiden Al-Mansouri, Ibrahim Al-Qirawi, and Dawood Isaa Al-Qasafi. Others soh asylum in Malta after refusing to carry airstrikes on civilians (Reuters 2011; New York Times 2011).

6.3.3 REGIME REACTION AND COLLAPSE

Similar to the case of Pahlavi Iran, the regime repressed protests harshly from the onset and did not address their demands at all during the first phase of unrest and before escalation was set into motion. However, unlike the Shah, Gaddafi's reaction to dissent was problematic not because he was indecisive but because he used a scorch-earth strategy aiming to completely destroy any opposition rather than negotiate or give monetary and/or political concessions. Far from negotiating reducing his powers, Gaddafi publicly claimed that he, like Elizabeth II of England, held very little power (Al-Jazeera 2011c).

Other than torture and execution, the regime used advanced and brutal technology against protests and funerals, including assault rifles, firearms, and machine guns. Security forces also denied injured protestors the use of ambulances and blood transfusions (International Federation of Human Rights 2011). The regime also used secret prison sites where protestors were starved and tortured, similar to the Tazmamart-style prisons discussed in Chapter 3 which Hassan II used in Morocco in the 1970s and 1980s following military and popular unrest attempting to unseat him. In February 2011 alone, 500-700 people were killed by the regime's forces *before* the opposition turned violent (ICC 2011). Similar to what the Shah did in 1977, Gaddafi also encouraged his supporters to attack opposition actors in their homes, often bribing them to do so (The Independent 2011). Perhaps to avoid what had

happened in Tunisia, the regime in Libya executed soldiers who refused to shoot protestors.[9] In one case, 130 soldiers were executed (International Federation of Human Rights 2011).

The regime also restricted freedoms early on during the unrest. International journalists were banned; the internet was censured, especially at night; members of the press had their movements monitored and limited; and there was retaliation against Libyans who gave interviews- e.g. novelist Idris Al-Mansouri was famously arrested hours after giving an interview to Al-Jazeera reporters. Even the regime's rhetoric vis-a-vis the opposition was defensive and aggressive. After the first protests of February 2, 2011 in Zawiya Square, the ensuing riots, and the demonstrations in front of police headquarters in Benghazi, officials warned people that the authorities would not allow them to create chaos, and portrayed protestors as infiltrated troublemakers (BBC 2011). As did Reza Shah early on in the Iranian Revolution, Gaddafi met with members of the opposition- mainly activists and journalists- in early February. Instead of listening to their demands and showing that he was ready to negotiate at least to a minimum, he threatened them and warned that they would be held responsible if unrest were to continue (Khaled 2011).

In the face of harsh repression, protests turned violent, with protestors using Molotov cocktails, throwing rocks, and vandalizing cars, opposition actors began demanding regime overthrow. As armed protests grew, security forces responded with lethal force and fired live ammunition into the crowds. In reaction, protestors attacked state and security buildings. Some military men joined protests in Benghazi around February 19. However, most of the

[9] Tunisian soldiers refused to shoot at protestors during the Jasmine Revolution, and the military leadership defected from the regime, refusing to use force against mass demonstrations.

army remained loyal to Gaddafi during the first phases of unrest and shot at anti-government crowds in Benghazi when they overpowered security forces.[10]

While repressing the opposition, Gaddafi tried to shift the blame to the government by calling for a rally against it on February 17. He also continuously antagonized the opposition actors whom he referred to as "rebels" and "rats". Most importantly, he made it clear to the opposition that he would not negotiate and that he was prepared to put an end to the opposition by "cleansing Libya house by house" (Gaddafi 2011a). As the regime's reaction fueled more violent unrest, more people mobilized, and Gaddafi lost control of Benghazi and Misrata by the end of February 2017 (Erdag 2017).

On March 17, 2011, addressing the Benghazi population, Gaddafi hinted at a potential deal by saying that the regime would forgive rebels who put down their arms (Gaddafi 2011b). This is reminiscent of the Omani regime's strategy in 1970 vis-a-vis Dhofari rebels. However, unlike Qaboos, Gaddafi did not offer monetary incentives to the rebels. Instead, he just expected them to surrender without anything in return. As regime violence increased, the opposition fired back, and the ensuing escalation gave foreign powers grounds to intervene militarily. Gaddafi and his forces continued to fight until they went into hiding in August 2011. The opposition ended when anti-Gaddafi troops captured and killed the leader in October 2011.

[10] Gaddafi enjoyed the loyalty of a large part of his army and had resources as well as mercenaries. However, unlike the Shah's experience, a number of military leaders turned on Gaddafi. Some defected to the opposition between March 2011 and September 2011, including: Generals Abdel Fatah Younes and Al-Barani Ashkal, and Brigardier-Generals Ghaiden Al-Mansouri, Ibrahim Al-Qirawi, and Dawood Isaa Al-Qasafi. Others sought asylum in Malta after refusing to carry airstrikes on civilians (Reuters 2011; New York Times 2011).

6.4 APPLICATION TO MY MODEL

My findings in my theory-building chapters show that, for any single successfully contained opposition event, the regime's use of repression, liberalization, and monetary concession is linked to the motivation, organization, and background of the opposition actors involved. Accordingly, to avoid losing power, monarchs react to different types of opposition events depending on how big a threat they represent (how much power loss they involve). My findings point to a pattern of **regime behavior** that builds on extant theoretical assumptions that rulers seek to avoid genuine liberalization because it decreases their control over the political sphere, but that they do not want to become overly dependent on the use of force.

Due to their regime wealth and type of rule as well as the levels of threat that the opposition events represented to the regime, three of the scenarios from my model apply to both Pahlavi Iran and Gaddafi's Libya: scenarios 2, 3, and 5.

S2: In a wealthy regime, major monetary concessions will ensure regime survival if opposition seeks mostly economic change.

S3: In a wealthy, absolute regime or a poor, non-absolute regime, a combination of repression and minor, illusionary, and/or promised political concession will ensure regime survival if opposition seeks mostly political change that would moderately reduce the ruler's power.

S5: In a wealthy, absolute regime or a poor, non-absolute regime, immediate and harsh repression ensures regime survival when the goals of the opposition would lead to high or complete power loss.

Scenarios 2 and 3 apply when the outcome of the opposition is moderate power loss, i.e., when the regime faces a threat would reduce its powers (e.g. through constitutional amendment) or impact its wealth (e.g. through economic reform or monetary concession). In Iran, this was the case in the beginning of the revolution (in 1977 and the first part of 1978) when the opposition wanted the Shah to share power, dissolve SAVAK, and loosen his control of the political, economic, and foreign policy spheres. In Libya, this was when the first Arab Spring protests against economic hardship and repression started and before the situation escalated, between the first weeks of February and March 2011.

Scenario 5 applies when the regime faces a high threat that will likely lead to great or total power loss, as was the case in Iran after the escalations and in 1978 when the opposition was determined to unseat the Shah and replace his military officers. In Libya, this was soon after Gaddafi brutally repressed and antagonized protestors and executed soldiers who would not shoot civilians.

The Iranian regime mishandled both stages and did not use the combination of strategies which my positive cases used successfully in similar types of events. Before 1978, the Shah faced not a revolution, but a series of protests, riots, and uprisings organized by various opposition groups that wanted economic and political reforms. In early February 2011, the Gaddafi regime did not face a civil war, but protests against corruption, economic inequality, and lack of political freedoms. This is not unlike the Arab uprisings in Morocco and Oman, when members of the citizenry and certain movements and civil society groups demanded

more political freedoms and economic reforms.[11] Similar to the Iranian and Libyan cases at the beginning of the protests, the majority of the opposition in Morocco and Oman during the Arab uprisings did not go to the streets expecting to remove the ruler. The Qaboos and Alaoui regimes first granted some concessions such as increased subsidies, more public sector jobs, constitutional reforms, dissolution of government or cabinet, and so on. It then repressed the opposition actors who continue to protest (since dissidence creates a greater risk of the status quo being disrupted, which prompts the ruler to use repressive action to eliminate the threat).

This combination of strategies whereby controlled liberalization and some widespread monetary accommodation was followed by repression contained the situation before an escalation of violence, broke up the opposition (some of which stopped mobilizing after the concessions), and ensured that the regime's 'compromise' was accepted by the opposition. The rulers in all of my positive cases, even the oil-poor ones, try to concede monetarily first before following up with repression. In contrast, before the escalations of violence that led to a full-blown revolution, the Shah did not address the demands to return to the 1906 constitution, reform the constitution text, dissolve SAVAK, subsidize goods and so on. Rather than use oil rents to address the economic situation brought on by his modernization efforts, he used them to fund more unpopular projects. Similar to the case of Pahlavi Iran, The Libyan regime repressed protests harshly from the onset and did not address their

[11] Of course, one should not discount the fact that other regimes in 2011 (including in Oman, Morocco, and Libya) had watched socio-economic and political protests in Tunisia rapidly escalate to an anti-regime uprising; so, they may well have viewed the early protests in this light. In other words, mid-level protests may be perceived by regimes as more threatening because of the way such protests had grown and developed in other countries. However, the fact remains that Morocco and Oman (like other monarchies I examine) used a nuanced strategy to avoid escalation while Libya (and Tunisia) did not.

demands at all during the first phase of unrest and before escalation was set into motion. However, unlike the Shah, Gaddafi's reaction to dissent was problematic not because he was indecisive but because he used a scorched earth strategy aiming to completely destroy any opposition rather than negotiate or give monetary and/or political concessions.

In Libya, the regime's complete refusal to negotiate or concede monetarily or politically to the opposition, as well as its violent overreaction to protests spurred more people to mobilize against Gaddafi and transformed their demands to complete overthrow of the regime. Importantly, until the end, Gaddafi refused to negotiate and never gave the opposition any incentive to surrender (Gaddafi 2011) like Qaboos did in 1970 when he successful contained the Dhofar Rebellion. The Libyan regime's behavior belied a gross miscalculation of the situation and a shocking lack of awareness of what had just happened in Tunisia and Egypt, as well as in other countries in the past (like Iran).

In Iran, since the opposition unified, the clerics took over at the end of 1977, and the violence escalated into a seemingly never-ending cycle, the Shah was facing a country-wide revolution whose most likely outcome was his overthrow. Similar events faced by my positive cases include the 1957-1959 Rif rebellions in Morocco, the 1954-59 Jabal Akhdar Wars in Oman, and the Arab Spring in Bahrain. In the face of such high-level threats, all three of these rulers repressed the opposition harshly, using long-term repression to contain future opposition, and granting no concessions. Their use of violence is precise and planned.

In the Rif rebellions, as soon as it was clear that the tribes only wanted secession, the regime sent an army of thirty-thousand soldiers and violently repressed the uprisings, causing close to a thousand deaths and thousands of injured rebels (Mouline 2016). After the opposition was squashed, Hassan II subjected the region to a military regime and marginalized it for

over four decades. In the Jabal Akhdar Wars, tribes in the Interior wanted to separate from the sultanate and wanted to replace the sultan's rule with one based on Ibadi religious ideology. Sultan Said repressed them harshly and consistently, often with the help of the British who still had forces in Oman at that point.

In Bahrain, where protests were complicated by the Shi'a-Sunni sectarian divide and the Sunni monarchy's persecution of the country's Shi'a majority in favor of its Sunni minority, the regime's repression of protestors led to violent opposition which almost unseated the Al-Khalifa monarchy. The opposition, which initially had demanded political reforms, moved on to violent dissent and calls against the royal family. Thus, the threat to the regime transformed from moderate to high as a direct result of regime behavior during the initial phase of the protests (which is similar to what happened in Iran). When opposition actors started calling for the abdication of the entire ruling family, the regime repressed them even more, this time with the help of its Gulf allies; unlike the Shah- who had the full support of a powerful army- the Bahraini monarchy lacked the military apparatus to maintain its power in a civil war, which is why it needed GCC military help. Once the threat to the regime had become so high that it could have led to regime collapse, the regime followed the steps laid out in scenario 5- it harshly repressed protestors (killing, imprisoning, and torturing them) until the opposition was so weakened that the threat was low.

Pahlavi Iran and Gaddafi's Libya- both wealthy, absolute regimes- should have used a combination of repression and minor, illusionary, and/or promised political concession to contain the initial unrest. Instead, both immediately used only excessive force and their security forces and military apparatus killed and injured opposition actors early on in the protests. Then, when the opposition's goals transformed to include overthrow, rapid

escalation of violence in Libya led to the militarization of the opposition and foreign intervention, while the Pahlavi regime failed to contain the escalation using repression and did not make use of its powerful army to lead a swift campaign, possibly due to US pressure though this is still unclear. While the Shah did impose martial law in September 1978, this was too late to contain the overgrown opposition. Instead, his switch to repression and quick implementation of the ban led to over 500 deaths and 4,000 injured which tipped the scales against the Pahlavi regime towards overthrow.

At the end, when the Shah was almost certain of his imminent fall from power, he proposed certain reforms as last-ditch effort (e.g., releasing political prisoners, forced his unpopular government to resign, and so on). This was similar to Gaddafi's proposed deal after losing Benghazi and Misrata that that the opposition surrender for nothing in return. It was too late, and the opposition in both cases saw these attempts for what they were; they refused to stop unless the rulers stepped down.

Towards the end of the Iranian Revolution, the Shah could only rely on his military, but- as I explained before- failed to use it. Overall, his measures were too late; never in the two years of upheaval did he adopt a preventative measure or even successfully address part of the demands. His too late concessions fueled more protests as they showed him as desperate and weak to first the opposition leaders, then the citizenry- as the head of a regime who could be toppled. As for Gaddafi, towards the end of his rule, the civil war has escalated so much that over 75% of the population wanted foreign troops to topple him (Gallup 2012). The regime's scorched earth approach to the protests in February and March had backfired, and there was no going back.

6.5 ARGUMENTS AND COUNTERARGUMENTS BASED ON MY NEGATIVE CASES

The cases I have examined in the last four chapters, both positive and negative, strongly support the causal role of regime reaction to dissent in containing threat (by avoiding or quashing escalation) and ensuring survival. However, I do not seek to claim through my findings and analysis that regime behavior is the only factor which leads to survival. There is a wealth of research on and beyond the MENA region which convincingly shows the importance for regime survival of the support of the coercive apparatus, external military aid, opposition persistence, the lack of foreign pressure, and the availability of resources (Albrecht and Ohl 2016; Bellin 2012; Heydemann and Leenders 2011; Gause 2013; Brownlee 2002; Snyder 1998; Whitehead, O'Donnell, and Schmitter 1986, to cite a few). Across the opposition events and cases that I examine, one of these factors stand out: foreign military intervention (e.g. in Bahrain, Libya, and Syria during the Arab Spring). In the section below, I discuss the role of foreign military intervention in in the outcome of my negative and relevant positive cases, as well as how it fits into the theory which I build through Morocco and Oman.

6.5.1 EXTERNAL MILITARY AID

Based on my findings, I see external military aid not as a causal factor of regime survival/collapse, but as a tool that can be used by the regime or the opposition- if it is available to them- to achieve their goals (e.g. to dispose of an actor, or to maintain or increase power). This is backed up by my findings in Chapter 5 on the Bahraini monarchy's endurance during the Arab Spring and in Chapter 4 on the Omani regime's survival during

the Jabal Akhdar Wars. Thus, I consider the role of external aid in regime survival/collapse as similar to the role of the coercive apparatus (which I discuss in greater detail in the following section). It is a repression tool that can be used by the regime or the opposition after escalation occurs during unrest, and it can thus be tied to the outcome of regime survival or collapse.

In the example of Bahrain during the Arab Spring, the regime's brutal repression of protesters from the onset of the protests led to escalation. After the protests escalated to a high-level threat event, the regime followed the strategy I outline in my theory (in scenario 5, when overthrow is likely) by using its own forces as well as military aid from the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC). Similarly, in the Jabal Akhdar Wars where opposition actors wanted to form a separate state, the Omani regime used the two-step repression strategy I discuss in chapters 2,3, and 4, and asked the British for military aid.

In both these cases, the outcome of survival is tied to foreign interventions, though we cannot ascertain to what extent- as a tool used by the regime. However, we must note that Bahrain in 2011 and Oman in the 1950s did not have independent and fully formed armies. Rather, they were both in agreement with foreign actors to be under their military protection (Oman as a pseudo-protectorate and Bahrain as a member of the GCC entitled to use the latter's Peninsular forces).

In the case of Iran, the regime had some foreign support, though the latter was not in the form of military aid. Importantly, the Shah did not need military support as he was in possession of one of the strongest armies in the world. It was not the lack of foreign military aid that led to the Pahlavi regime's overthrow. Rather, the regime's mismanagement of the initial unrest which led to an escalation of protests. Such mismanagement is also what led to

the escalation of protests in Bahrain and in Libya. The issue in Libya is not that Gaddafi did not receive foreign military aid; he did not need it as, like the Shah, he had a strong army (even though some troops defected) as well as resources to fight back. Rather, the issue is that a foreign military intervention was organized against the regime after protests escalated and Gaddafi was weakened. The question then becomes: would the regime have survived in the absence of foreign military intervention?

For obvious reasons, this question cannot be answered with certainty as these are real cases, not lab-controlled scenarios. However, it is clear from gathered evidence that the Libyan regime's harsh repression of protests during what was first only a moderate-threat event led to an extreme escalation of unrest and transformed the threat to the regime from medium to high. By the time the international military coalition became involved on March 19 (Erdag 2017), Gaddafi's regime had already weakened immensely under the historic escalation caused by his brutal repression. Comparatively, we learned from examples of wealthy, absolute regimes such as Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, the United Arab Emirates, and Oman that combining strategic monetary accommodation (targeting the wider population) with repression may probably have avoided escalation, and that Gaddafi's surprising refusal to grant widespread monetary concessions contributed to his demise. We also know from the Arab Spring cases of Morocco, Jordan, Algeria, Saudi Arabia, and Oman that the regime's willingness to negotiate and address part of the opposition's demands through some political concessions appeased some protestors and contained the threat (versus escalated it). The Libyan regime's complete lack of negotiation with opposition actors and its refusal to give any incentive for them to stop protesting played a role in the regime's collapse.

Furthermore, although we have no evidence to investigate whether the regime in Libya would have survived had foreign powers not intervened militarily, there have been other cases- Syria during the Arab Spring and Oman during the Dhofar Rebellion- where the regime survived despite foreign intervention and where rebels were trained, funded, given arms, and aided militarily by external powers. Moreover, in Syria, Assad's regime survived despite US airstrikes under the Trump administration and clashes with Turkish forces and the Syrian-Turkish borders, and despite pressure from the UK, France, and several MENA states that Assad step down (e.g. Saudi Arabia, Turkey, and Qatar). Yet the regime's survival was boosted by Iranian and Russian aid (as had been Said's regime by British aid to Oman in the Jabal Akhdar Wars). Importantly, however, for the most part. Syria's powerful army backed Assad who has the financial and military resources to counter protests; this is not an example of foreign powers fighting in the place of the regime.

Thus, I conclude that although pro and anti-regime foreign intervention can be tied to the outcome of regime survival/collapse, it should be seen as a tool rather than a causal factor, and its role and impact on the outcome are not consistent across various cases. My findings in this chapter show that regimes survive despite foreign military intervention (Syria) but cannot rely on external support to survive (Iran). This is similar to the role of the coercive apparatus in terms of regime survival/collapse which I discuss in the following section.

6.6 CONCLUSION

In this chapter, I investigate how regime collapse in 2011 Libya and Pahlavi Iran was tied to regime behavior. Specifically, I use the theory I developed in my empirical chapters to examine how the regime's mishandling of the opposition events in these two cases is tied to

the outcome of collapse. This chapter serves an explanatory purpose (Lieberman 2005); it provides insights into another possible causal factor (external support) and reviews how it complicates and complements my existing analysis.

Briefly, I find that when faced with a medium threat, the regime in Libya and Iran brutally repressed the opposition and gave them no concessions. Following a cycle of violence, this led to an escalation of the opposition event and a transformation of the opposition's goals. The event thus represented a major threat to the regime which, in the Iranian case, was unable to stop the cycle of violence and, in the Libyan case was not prepared to do so. The result of such escalation was regime collapse. Comparing this to my positive cases that had more nuanced reactions to medium threats highlights the importance of a regime's behavior to its survival. Most of the monarchies during the Arab Spring gave small and medium concessions while repressing the opposition moderately. This partly contained the opposition until smaller protests started in the following two years. These smaller protests were faced with repression which contained the threat.

My analysis in this chapter demonstrates that the failure to use this toolkit in a monarchy and non-monarchy contributed to the regime's downfall. This chapter thus contributes to my dissertation's wider aim, i.e., underlining a successful and systematic use of authoritarian survival tools by regimes that leads to their survival and is interlinked with the opposition event's level of threat. In the Iranian and Libyan cases, the way that regime behavior prompted escalation that lead to overthrow strengthens my theory.

Importantly, these negative cases show us that successful survival-seeking behavior is not merely reactive or defensive. Rather, it is a strategic multilevel game between regimes, opposition actors, wider population, and often external actors. This complements theories

developed by scholars like Heydemann and Leenders (2011) about authoritarian regime learning behaviors during the Arab Spring: "regimes develop strategies that aim to affect the strategic calculus of citizens, allies, and adversaries, even while constantly updating their own probabilities, both of successfully suppressing their opponents…" (Ibid: 649). While the latter theorizes about the interconnectedness of learning between regimes (i.e., how they learn from each other's successful and failed strategies vis-à-vis similar opposition events), my contribution is this project's focus on how regimes learn from their past interactions with various opposition actors.

This is not to argue that the only factor that shapes authoritarian regime survival is regime behavior; nor is it only the support of the coercive apparatus or of external actors that determines whether these regimes will endure. It would be an oversimplification to attribute a complex phenomenon such as regime survival to a single factor. However, I show through my findings that how regimes react to various opposition events often escalates or deescalates the situation and avoids regime collapse.

CHAPTER 7: CONCLUSION

"Does Arab monarchy matter? What does it mean that no Kings have thus far fallen..." asks Marc Lynch in an article on the survival of monarchies during the Arab uprisings.[12] Several scholars discussed in Chapters 1 and 2 have posed similar questions about monarchical survival during the Arab uprisings which they have linked to legitimacy, external support, and resource-wealth (Gause 2012; Lucas 2012, 2015; Bank 2014; Yom 2014). This study has sought to fill a gap in the current relevant literature and to investigate the phenomenon of Arab monarchical survival by re-directing these questions away from exceptionalism-based analyses focusing on specific events, countries, or sub-regional groupings (Spinks et al. 2008; Kirby 2012; Keyman 2012; Kaplan 2013).

My research looks beyond refutable personalist theories of regime survival that hinge on the exceptional legitimacy, wealth, and alliances of monarchs. Instead, I adopt a systematic approach, first investigating regime survival in two structurally different monarchies in terms of regime type and wealth- Morocco and Oman-[13] before examining the remaining MENA monarchies as well as collapsed regimes. In so doing, I develop a theory about successful regime behavior that leads to survival. This theory's main contribution is that (1) it argues that authoritarian monarchs survive by using a specific toolkit to contain (rather

[12] Lynch, Marc. 2012. "Does Arab Monarchy Matter?" *Foreign Policy*.

[13] This comparison allows me to examine the potentially different causal mechanisms behind regime survival in monarchies with different levels of wealth and types of rule.

than exacerbate) threats. This toolkit consists of various combinations of strategies which rulers choose consistently depending on the multidimensional perceived threat of the opposition by the regime. (2) Furthermore, my theory emphasizes the importance of the regime- opposition interrelationship by highlighting how active opposition impacts the process that leads to regime survival, and how survival-seeking regime behavior in turn affects immediate as well as future opposition. In so doing, my study builds on existing research on adaptive regime behavior in dictatorships (Heydemann and Leenders 2011) by showing how the process of authoritarian learning takes place long before the opposition event, and how the game between these various actors is repeated consistently by the regime in order to contain threat.

Thus, this project does not fall into the trap of adopting a too-narrow approach that focuses on just the Arab Spring or just the Gulf monarchies (Lucas 2014); such an approach misses the larger process of long-term regime survival across the region (and across different types of authoritarian systems) in the face of different types of opposition actors and events. Instead, this dissertation focuses on the period between the formation of the modern state in these monarchies (i.e., the 1950s) and 2018. This timeframe allows me to investigate regime survival across the rules of different kings. By examining survival strategies across several rulers (rather than just one), I determine the survival-seeking behavior of the monarchy rather than of a separate ruler; as such, my argument is not endemic to one ruler but should to apply to many.

Despite being built on in-depth case studies, the model developed and tested in Chapters 3, 4, and 5 relies on a rationalist framework that highlights authoritarian rulers' goals to survive and maintain power. It is thus framed in such a way that facilitates broader

application, first to other monarchies and potentially to other types of authoritarian systems within and beyond the MENA region. Indeed, the theory's fundamental components- regime behavior, regime-opposition interrelationships, and threat perception- have a wider applicability to regime survival outside of the MENA region and its monarchies.

Importantly, this dissertation does not seek to argue that the only factor that shapes monarchical survival is regime behavior; nor is it only the support of the coercive apparatus or of external actors that determines whether these regimes will endure. It would be an oversimplification to attribute a complex phenomenon such as regime survival to a single causal mechanism. However, I find through my findings that how regimes react to various opposition events often escalates or deescalates the situation and impacts the outcome of regime survival or collapse.

This concluding chapter is organized into two section. It first provides a concise summary of how my findings contribute to solving the puzzle of Arab monarchical survival. This section also overviews the contributions of my research to the fields of Comparative Politics and Middle Eastern studies and to the literature on authoritarian persistence, threat perception, and rentierism. It then highlights my recommendations and plans for future study on transitional democracy in the MENA region- specifically in Arab monarchies- by generating new insights into the micro-foundations of potential democratic transitions from soft authoritarian regimes, competitive authoritarian systems, and absolute monarchies. The final section situates my completed project in relation to the current political situation in the MENA region, overviewing the relevance of my findings given recent changes undergone by various Arab monarchies.

7.1 SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

To solve the puzzle of Arab monarchical survival, which I argue contemporary, post-Arab Spring theories (e.g. Kirby 2012; Keyman 2012; Kaplan 2013) do not adequately explain, this dissertation develops a theory that links long-term regime survival in the face of active opposition to regimes' systematic use of a toolkit of authoritarian strategies that contains (rather than exacerbates) threats- see Figure 2 below. This toolkit consists of various combinations of authoritarian strategies which rulers choose depending on the level of threat which they perceive. The former is determined by the goals and motivations of the opposition, the evolving interrelationship between the regime and the opposition, and various exogenous factors.

Specifically, my theory holds that the regime in these monarchies survives high- level threat events- i.e., when overthrow, significant power loss, or escalation is likely- by using a two-step repression strategy that contains immediate and future threats. When faced with low-level threats that involve minor power loss- i.e. actors seeking small (if any) changes to the status quo - the regime does not use repression but may use concession, or- similar to what Charles Tilly (1979) argues- it may ignore the opposition actors if they are too powerless to enforce their limited-scale demands.

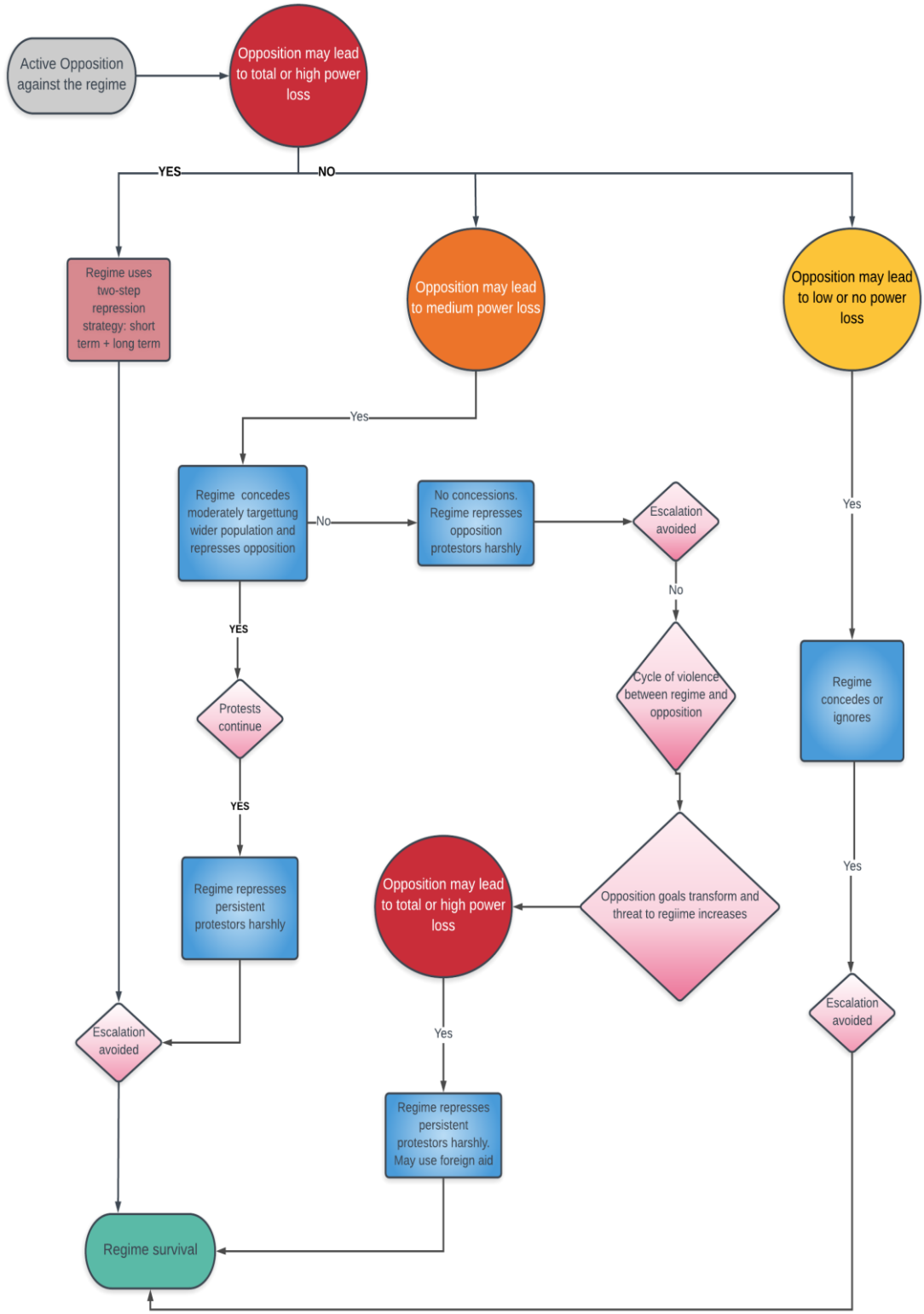
Beyond these extremes, monarchs successfully contain moderate-threat events by using nuanced behavior that targets opposition actors as well as the wider population from the onset of unrest. Here, repression is successful in containing the threat because it is used as a supplementary tool which ensures that offered concessions aimed at addressing some of the opposition's demands (monetary or political, depending on the triggers of dissidence) are

accepted and that further opposition is deterred. Thus, when used in context of my positive cases, my theory highlights the impact of the behavior of the opposition and the regime on the latter's survival.

My research builds on and challenges the massive literature on authoritarian persistence (Bellin 2004, 2012; Anderson 2011; Crystal 1994) and fills the gap left by the literature on monarchical resilience in the MENA region (Fandy 1999; Herb 1999; Kechichian 2001; Kostiner 2000; Gause 2012; Lucas 2012, 2015; Bank 2014). However, this project is not another analysis of the Arab Spring's monarchy- republic divide, nor does it provide merely a brief explanation for general monarchical survival in the region. Instead, this dissertation's usefulness and its contribution to existing theory stems from its analysis which reframes the debate on the survival of monarchical systems away from exceptionalism-based theories and the theme of monarchy-republic.

Briefly, my dissertation proceeds as follows: The introductory chapter frames the outcome of the Arab uprisings as a puzzle that has inspired a debate regarding monarchical survival in the MENA region, introduces and contextualizes my topic, establishes its significance for several fields of study, and outlines this dissertation's research design and contributions. Chapter 2 constructs my theoretical framework, situates my research in relation to the current scholarly literature on Arab monarchical survival, overviews the contributions and shortcomings of theories that attempt to justify monarchical endurance through cultural, structural, and foreign alliance-based approaches, and shows how the broader theories on authoritarian persistence theories provide a better foundation to build my argument.

FIGURE 2: CONCEPTUALIZATION OF MY THEORY



Source: Author's diagram based on empirical research in Chapters 3-6.

The theory building takes place in Chapters 3 and 4 through case studies of my main positive cases- Morocco and Oman- using various methods, including: comparative analysis of subsidies and cash-handouts, linear analysis of long-term regime repression (based on several datasets), in-depth interviews, archival research, and a study of legal reforms ratified in reaction to opposition events.

After I build a theory determining how these two regimes act to consistently contain threat during their modern history, I test the external validity of this theory in Chapter 5 which investigates the implications of my theory on my smaller positive cases- the other Arab monarchies (Saudi Arabia, Kuwait, Qatar, the United Arab Emirate, Bahrain, and Jordan). It examines the strategies used by these monarchies during the Arab uprisings to determine whether the strategies used by the other surviving monarchies fit the Moroccan and Omani pattern.

Finally, Chapter 6 further develops my theory by examining relevant negative cases; it investigates the causal pathway of regime overthrow in a non-monarchy and a monarchy- Pahlavi Iran and Gaddafi's Libya- and it evaluates how external aid complements and complicates my theory.

7.2 CONTRIBUTION OF MY DISSERTATION

While investigating how Arab monarchies contain active opposition, this dissertation makes several contributions to the fields of Comparative Politics and Middle Eastern Studies, specifically with relation to regime behavior, threat perception, regime-opposition interrelationships, and Gulf rentierism. I discuss these contributions in greater detail in the section below.

7.2.1 TOOLKIT OF COMBINED STRATEGIES

My findings from my positive cases discredit claims prevalent in the field of Area Studies that certain kings are more violent than others, and the claim in some Political Science works that regime reaction to opposition is determined by regime wealth or type (Arwa 2008; O'donnel and Schmitter 1988; Lust-Okar 2004; Menaldo 2013). I find that successful survival-seeking behavior is not merely king or regime-specific, but rather a strategic multilevel game between the regime, opposition actors, the wider population, and often external actors. The regimes in my positive cases use a varying combination of authoritarian tools to contain active opposition and avoid power loss; none maintains power by only co-opting opposition actors or only repressing them. The strategic nature of this process starts with the regime (1) first considering opposition actors' demands in the current context and predicting their reactions to potential trade-offs, (2) combining tools to contain opposition based on these calculations, and (3) modifying future behavior based on these interactions.

I find that, during the Arab uprisings, resource-wealthy Gulf monarchies used political concession (such as constitutional reforms, elections, cabinet reshuffling, etc.) as well as repression and cooptation to contain the opposition. Thus, while structural factors are important (i.e., greater regime wealth facilitates the use of concessions) they do not limit regimes from using other strategies when opposition actors seek non-economic change. Even absolute monarchies like the UAE and Saudi Arabia acted in a broadly similar way to oil-poor, non-absolute monarchies by using promised and illusionary liberalization.

Thus, I reject the widespread argument that Gulf monarchies are more repressive than Morocco and Jordan; Gulf monarchies, as well as Morocco and Jordan, use monetary accommodation when there is an economic trigger and repress opposition actors when they

cannot afford to concede. My argument (that monarchies endure because they employ a specific and sophisticated combination of authoritarian strategies depending on the threat that the opposition represents) also complicates the predictions of Gulf resilience faltering when oil prices fall or of resource-poor monarchies risking overthrow because of lack of rents. My findings show that the strategic value of monetary accommodation, repression, and political concession by the regime means that these tactics can be used interchangeably based on the goals, triggers, and motivations of opposition actors.

7.2.2 ESCALATION VERSUS CONTAINMENT OF THREAT

The toolkit used by these regimes highlights the importance of nuanced regime reaction during moderate-threat events to contain popular opposition and avoid escalation. In cases where the regime used mostly excessive and continuous force against the reform-seeking opposition, the unrest increased significantly- as was the case in Bahrain during the first days of the 2011 protests, the 2011 Shi'a unrest in Saudi Arabia's Eastern Province, and Jordan's infamous August 5, 2011 protests when security forces harshly repressed peaceful protestors. The regime in Gaddafi's Libya- a more striking example due to the outcome of regime collapse- failed to use a nuanced reaction overall during the Arab Spring; the regime's brutal repression fueled the crowds and exacerbated the threat. During the same moderate-threat event, the Moroccan regime contained the protests by conceding to and repressing protestors. Accordingly, the exacerbation or containment of the threat to the regime hinges on the way that the regime reacts to the opposition, which depends on the level of threat which the regime perceives. The latter is determined by the goals and motivations of the opposition, the evolving interrelationship between the regime and different opposition actors, and various exogenous factors.

7.2.3 REGIME PERCEPTION OF THREAT AND EXOGENOUS FACTORS

Through systematic analysis, this dissertation successfully outlines a pattern of repression, monetary concession, and liberalization used by authoritarian monarchs in a similar way and under similar conditions to contain opposition. A pattern exists because these regimes act consistently; I argue that they act consistently because their decision to use a tactic or a combination of tactics is linked to the multidimensional threat of the event as perceived by the regime (linked to potential power loss). However, the fact that a pattern exists does not nullify the impact of exogenous factors on how regimes react and/or how they perceive threat.

Historical context, for example, matters because upheaval does not happen in a vacuum. To illustrate: the current Moroccan king inherited a far more stable country than his predecessor, who dealt with the complications of ruling a newly- independent and divided country. Thus, when faced with protests seeking reforms, Mohammed VI perceives less danger than Hassan II did. On the other end of the spectrum, current kings' reactions to dissent are constrained by political context; more than their predecessors, they face pressure to use brutal force sparingly and maintain control through political and economic maneuvering. Jordan's King Abdullah, for example, cannot use mass torture and imprisonment like King Hussein did without international and domestic backlash, because brash and overt authoritarianism stands out in the 21st century in a way that it did not during the 20th century.

Furthermore, regimes' perception of and reaction to an opposition event also depends on the actors involved. During the same opposition event, the regime may perceive different

opposition groups as representing different levels of threat and treat them accordingly. This was the case in Saudi Arabia and Kuwait during the Arab uprisings. The Kuwaiti regime perceived the first protests organized by the stateless Bidoon people as less threatening than the later protests in which Kuwaiti citizens became involved. When only Bidoon protestors were involved, the regime perceived the protests as low-level threats, so it offered no concessions and ignored their demands. As soon as Kuwaiti citizens participated in manifestations, the regime perceived an increase in the level of threat and made concessions. The Saudi regime perceived protests organized by Shi'a protestors as more threatening because (1) the Sunni royal family bases its legitimacy on Sunni Wahabi teachings, (2) the regime feared the potential interference of rival Iran, a Shi'i country, and (3) major oil fields are located in the Shi'a-populated Eastern Province. Due to this perceived higher threat, the regime's reaction to these protests was harsher and more immediate.

7.2.4 REGIME-OPPOSITION INTERRELATIONSHIP

These regimes' different perception of the threat represented by various opposition groups highlights the impact of regime-opposition interrelationships on successful regime behavior vis-à-vis active opposition. My findings on how monarchs react to survive show that opposition actors and rulers learn from each other over time and modify their behavior to promote their respective interests. In Jordan, for example, prior to the Arab uprisings, protestors had learned from previous protests that, to obtain concessions from the regime, they needed to threaten it with a possible escalation to a mass revolution. The opposition then successfully used this tactic during the Arab uprisings to obtain some reforms.

My research on Morocco shows that, as early as 1962, opposition actors had learned from their interactions with the regime to begrudgingly accept small concessions to avoid full-

blown repression. In 1962, members of the Istiqlal party stopped opposing Hassan II and accepted reforms despite their dissatisfaction with the new constitution; they did this out of fear that the king would revoke the constitution altogether. Following this episode, the opposition was aware that the ruler would use loopholes in the text of the constitution to maintain or strengthen his position. Thus, during the 1970 legislative elections, the parties anticipated that the regime would rig the vote (to avoid having its powers limited) and protested accordingly.

Thus, as I discuss in greater detail in this dissertation's Introduction (specifically, in section 1.3.2), a regime-focused approach (that pays little attention to the role of opposition actors) does not adequately address the question of Arab monarchical survival during and prior to the Arab uprisings. Opposition actors, and their past and current interactions with the regime, are key to understanding why these monarchs survive when they act the way that they do- and why opposition actors persist or surrender.

7.2.5 MOVING BEYOND GULF RENTIERISM

Interestingly, my findings show that both resource-wealthy and poor monarchies use resources in the same way to successfully contain active opposition. Specifically, when faced with moderate threat-events triggered in part by economic hardship, these regimes target the wider population with monetary concessions; they then use repression to force persisting opposition members to accept the concessions and to avoid an escalation of the situation due to continued dissidence. In Chapter 2, I call this theory *strategic monetary accommodation*.

In Chapter 5, my research shows that- predictably- the data from the resource- wealthy monarchies' oil revenues linked to their monetary concessions, as well as the reaction of protestors when offered these concessions, point to a causal inference between the strategic use of wealth to target the citizenry and regime survival. As soon as the Jasmine Revolution started in Tunisia, the Al-Saud monarchy targeted the wider population with pay raises and promises of employment, vowing to spend $100 billion on the population. In Kuwait, the regime offered citizens jobs, free food, and cash handouts. In Bahrain and the UAE, the rulers pledged to increase government jobs for the unemployed, higher salaries for state employees, and welfare benefits.

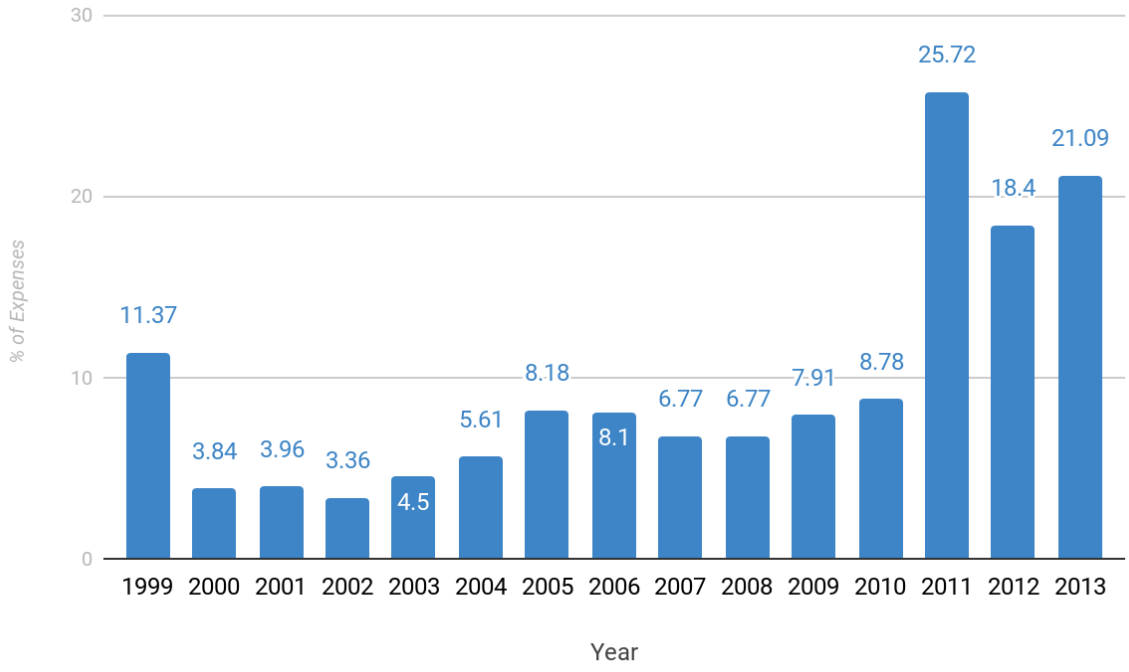
In Chapter 4, I show that the Omani monarchy does not tend to throw money at the opposition more than the poorer Moroccan regime does. On the other hand, despite Oman's moderate oil reserves compared to the super-rentier states of the UAE, Qatar, and Kuwait, it uses monetary concessions in a similar way (though at a different scale due to its economic realities). For instance, there was a 70% increase in government spending in Oman during and immediately following the Arab uprisings (see Figure 35). In Chapter 3, I show that Morocco, an oil-poor country, uses subsidies to offer monetary concessions in broadly the same way as the Gulf monarchies (see Figure 22 for how the regime used subsidies immediately before, during, and after the Arab uprisings).

My research on my negative cases bolsters this contribution. In Chapter 6, I show that the regime in oil-wealthy Pahlavi Iran did not offer protestors monetary concessions during the economic crisis that resulted from the decade-long oil boom and bust cycle, despite the regime's oil wealth. Instead, Reza Shah adopted austerity measures in 1978 which led to widespread unrest, oil strikes, and unemployment. Combined with the Shah's indecisive

strategy towards protestors, high inflation, high costs of living, and socioeconomic inequality, this contributed to the regimes' eventual overthrow.

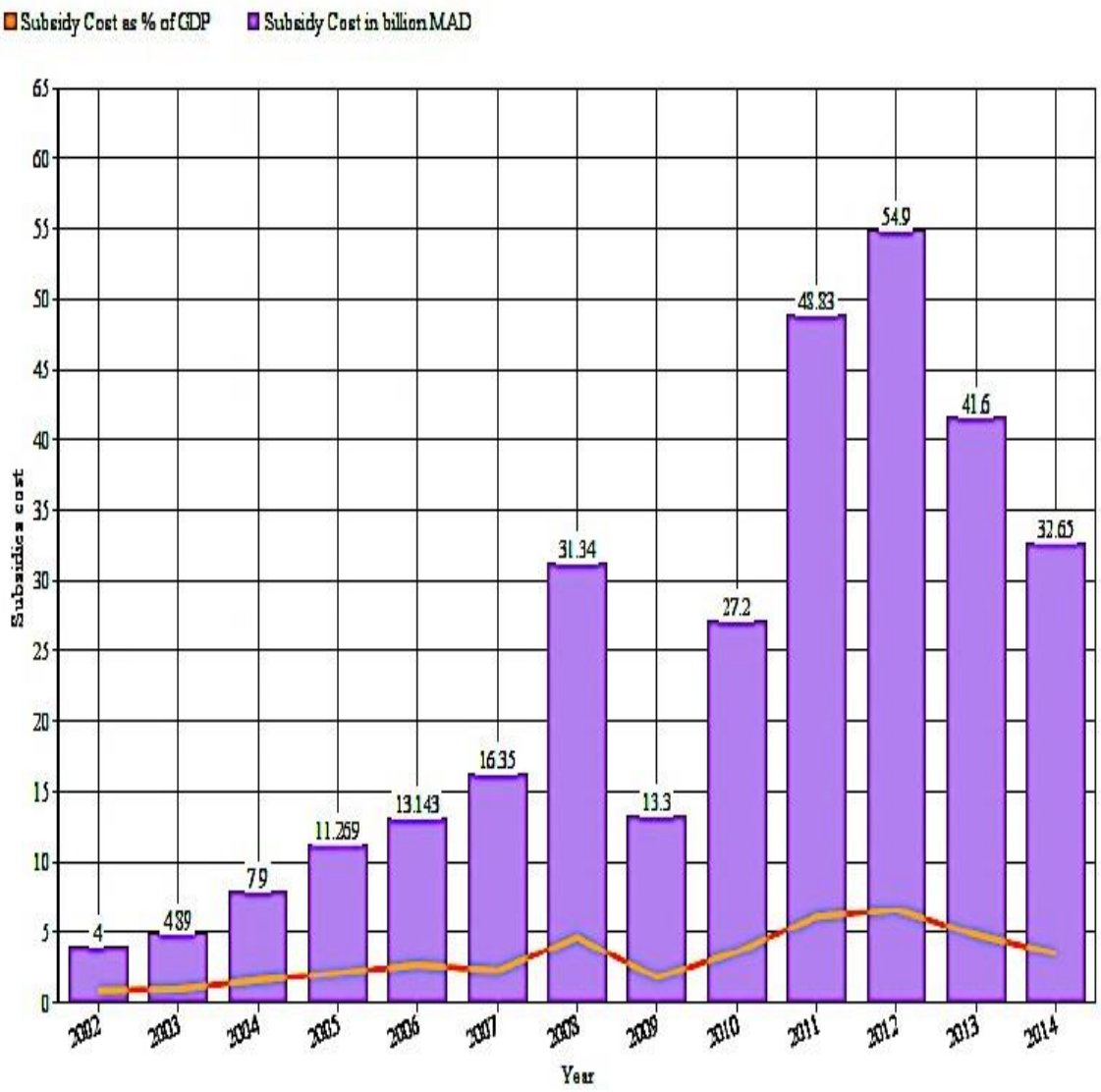
Thus, comparatively, regime wealth in itself does not lead to survival; what matters is when and how the regime strategizes wealth. My theory thus moves beyond the interesting, yet over-studied topic of Gulf rentierism towards a more sophisticated and scarcely researched theory of strategic monetary accommodation. While rentier- state theory holds that the regime in a rentier state uses rents to appease the wider population on a continuous basis, strategic monetary accommodation focuses on the regime's use of the state's resources (including but not limited to rents) to specifically stifle opposition and appease opposition actors.

FIGURE 35: OMAN'S SUBSIDIES AND OTHER TRANSFERS AS % OF EXPENSES.



Source: Author's figures using data from the World Data Bank

FIGURE 22: EVOLUTION OF SUBSIDY COST IN MOROCCO.



Source: Author's graph using data from Morocco's Ministry of Finances, the World Bank & IMF.

7.2.6 CLASSIFICATION OF AUTHORITARIAN SYSTEMS AND THE MONARCHY- REPUBLIC DEBATE

Putting it simply, my research reframes the debate on Arab monarchical survival away from arguments that hinge on exceptionalism by highlighting Arab monarchs' rational, authoritarian behavior. My findings in Chapters 3, 4, and 5 and my theoretical discussion in Chapter 2 show that the survival of Arab monarchies is not exceptional since these regimes do not survive simply because of factors tied to their monarchical structure. Rather, they survive because of the aforementioned strategic combination of authoritarian tactics.

My research on these regimes' behavior shows that monarchs, like all rational rulers, are endlessly opportunistic; their main goals are to avoid overthrow, and to lose as little power as possible at the expense of citizens' collective prosperity. To that end, monarchs use monetary accommodation, repression, and/or political concession to deter the wider population and elites from organizing, conspiring, and rising against them; and due to their strategic adaptation over the years, monarchs remain the most powerful political actors within their territory

This dissertation thus classifies Arab monarchies as part of the greater authoritarian regime umbrella. In so doing, it complements analyses made by Tetrault (2000)[14] and Lucas (2015)[15] and argues that, because Arab monarchies act as traditional authoritarian regimes

[14] As discussed in Chapters 1 and 5, Tetrault focuses only on Kuwait rather than on monarchies as a system and shows that the Kuwaiti regime uses traditional authoritarian tactics when dealing with political mobilization

[15] Lucas investigates regime survival during the Arab uprisings in the Gulf monarchies and emphasizes the evolving ruling bargain and types of opposition in these countries.

when dealing with political mobilization, their endurance is not exceptional, and they should not be classified outside of the "broad authoritarian family" (Przeworski et al. 2000).

7.3 LIMITATIONS AND FUTURE STUDY

Although this study develops and puts forth a theory of regime survival in monarchies in a convincing manner, it faces some limitations related to the nature of the question it investigates. Below, I discuss these limitations in greater detail (as well as potential question that might arise about my research) and overview how I might address them and develop my project further in my postdoctoral research. Finally, I recommend new methodological approaches for future researchers to build on my work.

7.3.1 POTENTIAL LIMITATIONS AND COUNTERARGUMENTS

First, one might argue that, since the surviving monarchies have endured, it is difficult to prove that in certain instances they almost collapsed or were seriously threatened. In other words, how can we determine that the Dhofar Rebellion was as threatening to the Sultan of Oman as the Iranian revolution was to Reza Shah, and that it almost led to regime collapse? This dissertation deals with this issue in two ways. It develops a system of categorizing multi-dimensional threat to the regime. This system takes into account both endogenous and exogenous factors that could impact threat and its perception. This study also assembles credible evidence from fieldwork, archives, and existing research that shows which events were perceived by these regimes as being high, moderate, or low-threat events.

Second, there might be questions about how other causal factors for authoritarian regime survival impact my theory, notably the support for the regime of external actors and of the coercive apparatus. While Chapter 5 deals with this question in great detail, this conclusion

seeks to clarify the following: Although this dissertation builds a plausible theory of regime survival based on behavior in Arab monarchies, it does not claim that the argument put forth is the definitive and only one that can explain regime survival.

Indeed, it would be an oversimplification to attribute a complex phenomenon such as regime survival to a single factor. Rather, this study posits that the toolkit of strategies at the center of my theory contains the threat to the regime, and it emphasizes that the way that regimes react to various opposition events often escalates or deescalates active opposition and greatly impacts the outcome of regime survival or collapse. External support and loyal coercive apparatuses are significant tools but must be used adequately by the regime to contain the threat; thus, regime behavior matters.

Third, some may argue that this study over-rationalizes the behavior of the regimes it examines by overstating the prescience and accuracy of the strategies they follow. However, this dissertation does not put forth a detailed action plan that dictators supposedly follow to survive. Rather, it successfully shows the pattern of varying combinations of broad strategies that they have used- and will likely use in the future- to contain opposition. Although this pattern was determined in hindsight, my findings show that it carries across rulers within a single case and across different types of monarchies (personalist, parliamentary, resource-wealthy, resource-poor, and so on).

Furthermore, the way that this research was undertaken (i.e., the three-part case study carried out separately, and the analysis of close to 70 years' worth of data) avoids over-rationalization and cherry-picking. I would challenge the view that specific monarchs, because they are personalistic rulers, would act in an irrational manner. Not only are these monarchs rational actors, but they are part of a cohesive set of systems of domestic and

international actors and institutions. It is an oversimplification to claim that the way that they act depends on their perceived character.[16] Of course, there may be country or context-specific circumstances that affect how a regime reacts, as is shown in Chapter 3 in the 1991 student protests which Hassan II repressed harshly due to domestic and international pressures. However, these circumstances heighten or lower the threat as perceived by the regime, which acts rationally to survive based on how it perceives threat (as I show through my theory).

Ultimately, my approach contributes to the literature on regime survival in- and beyond-monarchies by building a theory that does not merely focus on the last moment that precedes regime collapse or survival and that uses seven decades' worth of data to present an argument. This is important because, in many cases, it is difficult to conclusively point to a causal factor that led to the outcome of collapse or survival without theorizing based on past findings. Taking the case of Pahlavi Iran from Chapter 5 as a brief example, when looking at just the final months preceding the Shah's escape, one might be tempted to argue that the Shah did not receive external support and that this alone led to his overthrow.

However, analyzing data from the two years of uprising preceding his overthrow, as well as from similar events from years prior- e.g. the 1962 uprisings- provides the opportunity to make a more well-rounded argument. Thus, it is useful to determine what different regimes

[16] The author challenges the practice of drawing causal links between regime behavior and a ruler's personality (i.e., claiming that Hassan II repressed the military in 1972 because he is supposedly more repressive by nature or held a grudge). These arguments are oversimplified and misleading; there is no substantial evidence on which to base an analysis of these rulers' personalities, nor is it reasonable to suggest that a ruler acts based on their emotions rather than to survive. Finally, the very fact that there is a shared pattern of regime behavior that spans across the reign of different rulers in different countries disproves this argument and makes it irrelevant.

have successfully or unsuccessfully done in the past and to find a commonality between their tactics; by adopting this approach, I am able to highlight a toolkit of combinations of strategies that regimes use under different circumstances to contain threat and avoid escalation.

Finally, as I discuss in Chapter 1, the CIRI and Polity IV datasets I use to analyze repression levels have some limitations. However, despite these limitations- which I outline below- these datasets are useful to this research as they allow me to examine the trends in regime repression and events-based changes in regime behavior. An important limitation of Polity IV, for example, is that it uses narrow criteria used to determine democracy and repression (Munck and Verulam 2002). However, for the purpose of this study, Polity IV's main criteria- electoral competitiveness, openness, and participation- are useful to complement other sources such as interviews, archives, etc.

It is worth noting that CIRI provides data on the total repression across countries rather than the distribution of repression within each country. This means that CIRI data is useful for cross-country analysis but is not sufficient to understand the experience of groups targeting by repression. However, this limitation does not affect my research since I used the CIRI data to capture the trends in repression rather than for internal analysis, and because I use in-depth interviews, archives, and reports to examine how repression impacts the regime-opposition interrelationship.

Missing data is an important limitation for my cross-country analyses of regime behavior. In both CIRI and Polity IV, there is no data available on MENA states before the mid-to-late-1980s. This is because researchers had limited access to these countries during this period and some of these regimes continue to censure that information. This issue is not unique to

CIRI and Polity IV; there are no datasets that account for acts of repression in these countries during this timeframe. This is problematic, because in several of my cases- including Morocco and Oman- opposition events took place prior to the 1980s. I have addressed this problem by supplementing the scarcely available quantitative data with qualitative data.

7.3.2 PLANS FOR FUTURE STUDY

I plan to develop and build on this research in two ways: expanding my sample of cases to test my theory on authoritarian systems beyond the MENA region, and using new methodologies to further develop my theory- especially the parts on political liberalization and regime-opposition interrelations.

Expanding my sample of cases will allow me to test my theory on different authoritarian systems (other than monarchies) as well as other regions. In this dissertation, I was limited in the number of cases I could examine for practical reasons and because a large part of this study was dedicated to building my theory. I plan to complete an article whose aim will be to further develop my arguments by testing my theory on a broader sample of MENA and non-MENA authoritarian regimes. Testing my theory on more authoritarian republics in the MENA region will allow me to further determine my theory's external validity beyond my current cases. Examining dictatorships within and beyond the MENA region will allow me to re-examine my five scenarios of regime behavior that leads to survival based on data from different types of dictatorships - i.e., military regimes in Egypt and Algeria, personalist dictatorship in Russia, totalitarian rule in Syria, and so on.

Second, as a postdoctoral project, I plan to further investigate how monarchs use the different forms of liberalization I discuss in Chapter 2 through a large-scale analysis of royal speeches.[17] Thus, mirroring Lisa Wedeen's analysis of the rhetoric of domination in Syria (1999) and to differentiate between true, promised, and illusionary liberalization, I aim to identify monarchs' intentions and detect the existence of strategic rhetoric. This distinction will allow me to determine (1) the conditions under which the regime presumes it can avoid making real concessions, and (2) the decisive conditions that push the monarch to actually give up power and truly liberalize.

To carry out this analysis, I will use NVivo which allows me to examine the data at a particular level, thus improving the rigor of the analysis process by validating (or refuting) my impressions of the data (Richards and Richards 1991).[18] To be exact, the concept I will examine is political concession; I will focus on the dates of occurrence of certain terms related to this concept (i.e. constitution, reforms, etc.). My hope is that this project will contribute to the study on transitional democracy in the Middle East and North Africa, specifically in Arab monarchies, by generating new insights into the potential pathways of political opening in soft authoritarian regimes, competitive authoritarian systems, and absolute monarchies.

Finally, I plan to further develop my findings on the evolving interrelationship between the regime and the opposition and how it impacts regime survival, a major contribution of my

[17] Speeches (recorded and transcribed) are freely available online.

[18] As NVivo does not support Arabic, I will use translated speeches which are readily available online.

research. As this dissertation adopts mostly a regime-focused approach (other than in the field interviews through which I was able to collect data on the opposition), I will focus on various groups of opposition actors and members of the wider population using several series of lab experiments to further investigate the strategic multilevel game between regimes and these actors. Adopting this approach will allow me to triangulate on a process I have already examined using other methodologies and to collect further evidence to support my causal claim (McDermott 2002: 31). These lab experiments would bolster the regime-focused arguments laid out in this dissertation by illuminating the opposition and citizenry angles in my theory.

In the lab experiments, representative samples of various opposition groups and of the wider population (not affiliated with the ruling coalition, the government, or opposition groups) will be confronted to a series of scenarios of active opposition and regime reaction based on event categories elucidated by my theory. They will then be asked how they would react in various scenarios according to a list of set options. Figures 37 and 38 below each show three scenarios which will be put forth to participants, for a total of six scenarios, each containing three steps. The participants' reaction following each step will be recorded, and the goal is to determine how the majority within each group of participants (opposition, wider population etc.) would react. If the majority reacts in a way that would favor regime survival in the first scenario in both figures, then the results would bolster my dissertation's findings for moderate-threat events such as the Arab uprisings.

Figure 37: Template of lab experiment scenarios of economy-driven unrest

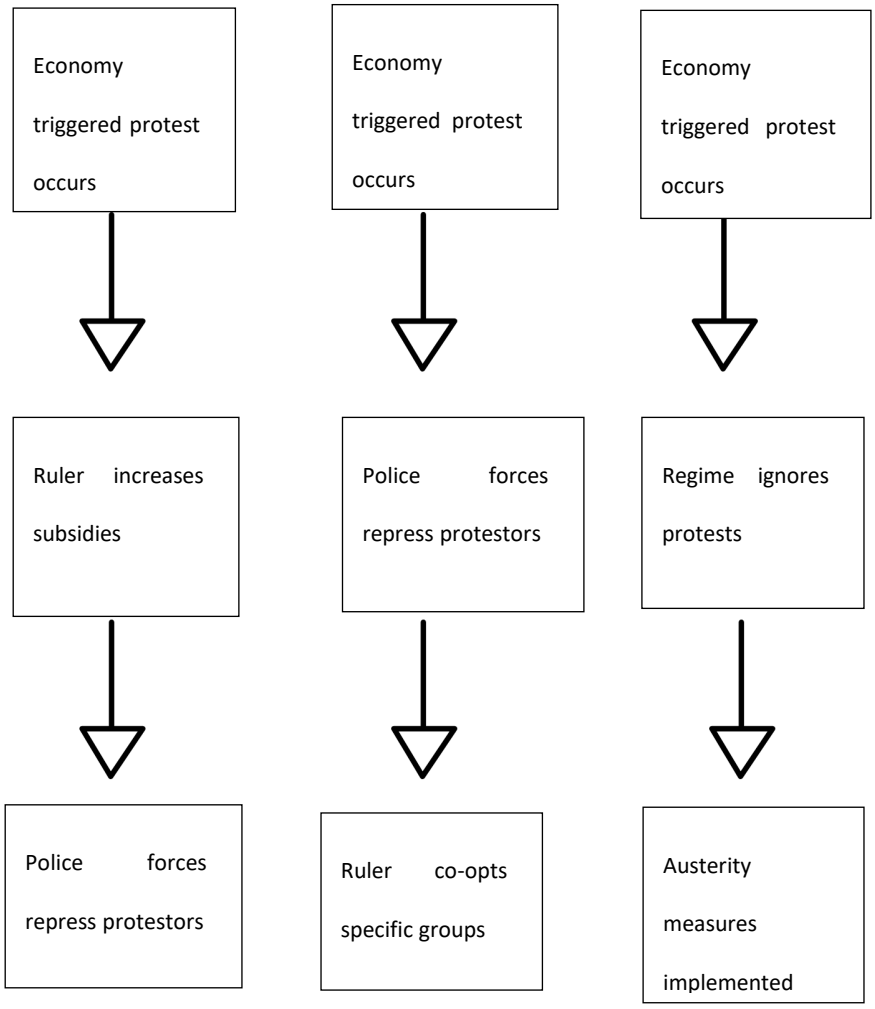
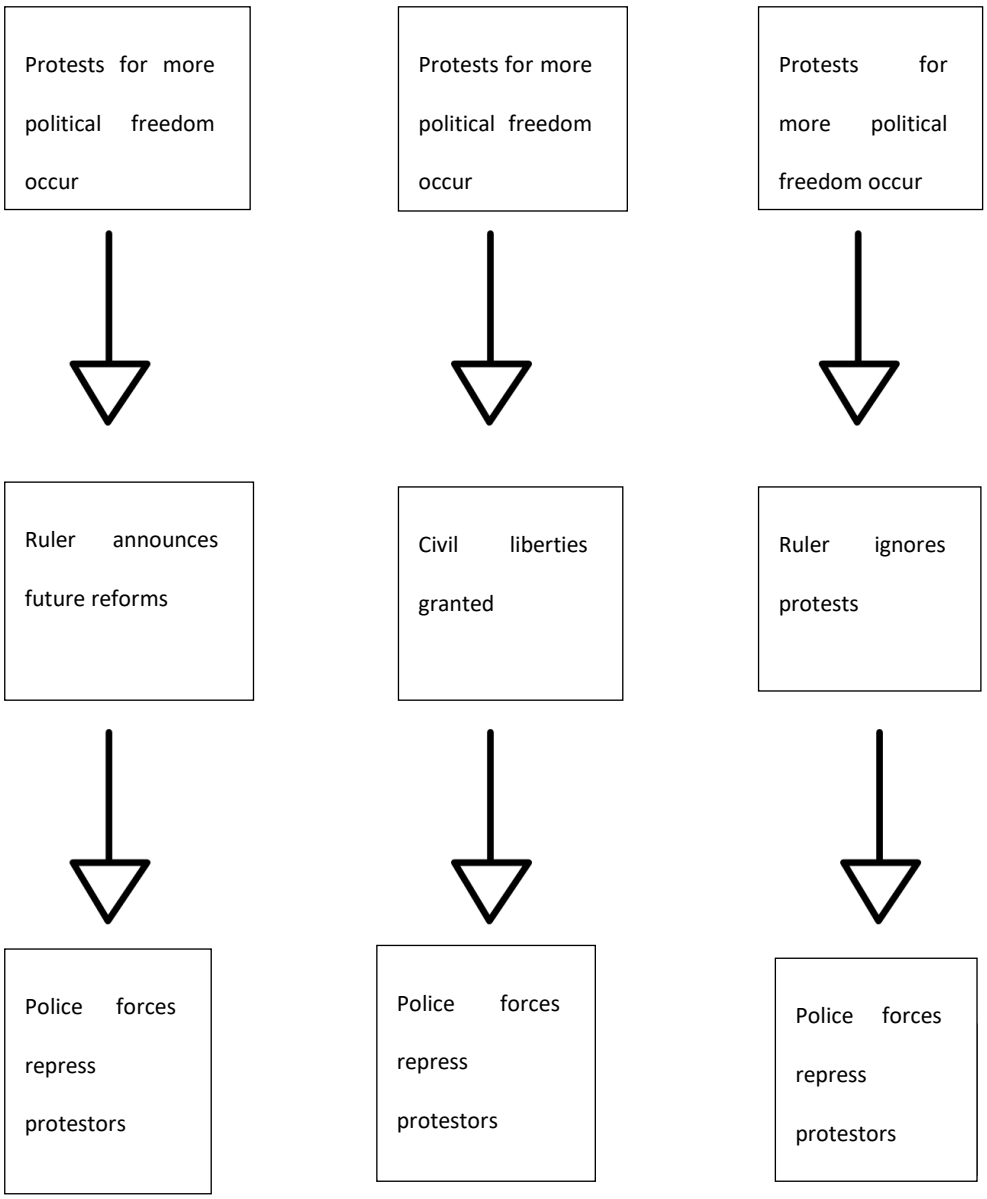


FIGURE 38: TEMPLATE OF LAB EXPERIMENT SCENARIOS OF REFORM-DRIVEN UNREST



7.3.3 RECOMMENDATIONS FOR FUTURE RESEARCH

The empirical research and theoretical debate presented in this study can provide a foreground for future research on regime survival in MENA monarchies which could build on this project methodologically and theoretically. My arguments challenging the theory of monarchical exceptionalism in Chapter 2 are a result of qualitative analysis; one of my main points is that the difficulty measuring legitimacy weakens theories hinging on exceptionalism. Future research that further investigates the link between legitimacy and regime survival using other methods could be valuable to the topic of Arab monarchical survival.

To gather this information, experimental researchers may design a list survey (which is ideal for sensitive topics) that targets various subsects of the population to measure a ruler's legitimacy. Ideally, this research would be carried out in different categories of monarchies and non-monarchies in the MENA region. This comparison would allow researchers to determine whether monarchs are perceived as their citizens as more legitimate than non-monarchs are perceived by their own citizens. By doing this, future researchers would have empirical evidence to definitively challenge or bolster exceptionalism-based arguments of regime survival.

Researchers can also build on my findings on the impact of the regime-opposition interrelationship on regime survival by using formal game-theoretic models. Broadly speaking, this could be similar to the aforementioned work done by Svolik (2012). To understand the strategic choices of the regime and the reactions of the opposition, new researchers can develop a formal model of regime-opposition interaction in authoritarian

monarchies. This model could provide predictions for the conditions under which opposition actors surrender, persist, or mobilize against the regime. This sort of study would complement the theory I develop which, as I explain in the preceding section, is often regime-focused.

7.4 BROADER IMPLICATIONS

Eight years after the start of the Arab uprisings, my dissertation's findings are especially relevant given the waves of unrest shaking various Arab monarchies. Jordan saw several general strikes sparked by a new tax law and IMF-imposed austerity measures, which escalated to a series of country-wide protests organized by youth movements, civil society groups, and professional associations in June 2018 and December 2018. Youth groups in Oman took to the streets in January 2018 to demand jobs as the unemployment rate reached 17% in 2017- with youth unemployment at almost 49% (World Bank 2018). Protests erupted in February 2018 in Bahrain where protestors were brutally repressed by security forces using tear gas and live ammunition.

Morocco saw a series of protests in Jrada, Errachidia, and Rif, with unrest in the latter escalating to country-wide protests against economic marginalization, corruption, and repression. The Saudi regime experienced a controversial shift in leadership from the ailing King Salman to his heir Mohammed bin Salman,[1] faced dissent from Shi'a protestors in the

[1] Soon after being named heir to the Saudi throne, Mohammed bin Salman orchestrated a purge during November 2017. Over 500 Saudi princes, businessmen, and government officials were arrested on charges of

Qatif region of the Eastern provinces between May 2017 and October 2018, implemented a crackdown on any form of opposition in the rest of the kingdom since then, and is currently struggling to contain the consequences of the killing of Saudi journalist Jamal Khashoggi.[2]

The regimes in these countries have thus far mastered the pattern of survival detailed in this dissertation but, as the opposition evolves and their populations undergo significant transformations,[3] they may have to change the way they act to contain opposition events. Monarchies with existing civil societies and political parties, such as Morocco and Jordan, are experiencing socioeconomic discontent that has inspired unrest within the wider population (not necessarily led by opposition groups or institutions). The Gulf monarchies, which have more restricted public spheres, are seeing new civil society pockets develop as young, educated people are becoming disillusioned with these countries' economic and political failures since the Arab uprisings. Falling oil prices since the 2014 crash have only exacerbated the matter.

Perhaps counterintuitively, these regimes are currently intensifying efforts to suppress civil and political freedoms. Yet, as existing opposition actors evolve, and new types movements emerge (e.g. the 2018 leaderless protests in Jordan, and the boycott movement in Morocco)

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corruption and held at the Ritz-Carlton hotel in Riyadh. Many were forced to sign over their fortunes in exchange for their freedom.

[2] Jamal Khashoggi was a Saudi journalist who was assassinated by agents of the Saudi government in the Saudi consulate in Istanbul in October 2018. Mohammed bin Salman is widely believed to have ordered the assassination and has faced worldwide criticism.

[3] Most notably, there are more young people than old in these countries', and they have easier access to education and social media.

these regimes will have to adapt and transform their strategies of survival when dealing with popular opposition and moderate-threat events. When this happens, it will offer an opportunity for researchers to re- investigate what we know about regime behavior that leads to survival.

7.5 CONCLUSION

Revolutions attempt to transform countries' political order. When they succeed in their goal, they become turning points that change the status quo. When they fail, they are remembered as momentous obstacles survived by enduring regimes. Several regimes within and beyond the Middle East and North Africa, both monarchies and republics, have fallen to revolutions. Many more have survived them.

At the center of my project is the observation that Arab monarchies have survived the Arab Spring, and have withstood the tide of revolutions, rebellions, civil wars, and uprisings before it. They have also contained smaller-scale events- such as strikes, riots, party elite opposition, and protests- that could have limited their powers or escalated to great or total power loss. When studied in hindsight, these events are immensely important to our understanding of how these regimes act repeatedly to survive and maintain power.

This is why my research- although it is inspired by the Arab Spring- moves beyond it and focuses on momentous opposition events that preceded it to build a theory of successful survival-seeking behavior used by monarchies to avoid power loss. The theory I develop challenges cultural and structural approaches to regime survival in MENA monarchies, showing that my positive cases endure thanks to specific and consistently used sets of

learned strategies. These monarchies are not saved by Western powers, regional allies, God, or oil; they have learned to save themselves.

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INTERVIEWS

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