Authoritarian Stability and Out-Group

Survival

MAIR Thesis

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GLOSSARY

CSF: Central Security Forces

HIs: Horizontal Inequalities

MB: Muslim Brotherhood

NDP: National Democratic Party

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I. INTRODUCTION

Every so often the news is dominated by the plight of a minority group being targeted violently by the state or its citizens. At the time of writing, the news focused on the plight of the Rohingya in Myanmar. Their abuse seems sudden, unless one would look at the history of the Rohingya in Myanmar, which shows it is part of a long tradition of exclusion of this group. More recently, they were labelled as threats to the Arakan State in pamphlets containing dehumanizing information that were spread by officials and religious leaders. In that same year humanitarian assistance for the Rohingya was blocked (Hindstrom, 2012). In 2013 125,000 Rohingya were displaced by force (Human Rights Watch, 2017). But only in 2017 did the UN Human Rights Chief state that genocide of the Rohingya by the Myanmar regime cannot be ruled out (BBC, 2017).

Contrastingly, the Rwandan genocide took place within 100 days, killing 800,000 Tutsis and moderate Hutus (BBC, 2019). The context of this genocide was vastly different than that of the Rohingya: Rwanda had a history of inter-ethnic fighting. Once an opportunity arose to scapegoat Tutsis, blaming them for the death of Rwanda's Hutu president and Burundi's Hutu president, Hutu extremists started their campaign of killing Tutsis and anyone who disagreed with this slaughter campaign (Pavri, 2005). Still, this genocide was unexpected even for Rwandans themselves. Despite years-long relations, even positive relations, between neighbors once the genocide kicked off regular citizens joined in on killing their Tutsi neighbors (Fujii, 2009, pp. 2-3).

Sometimes this sudden spike in violence comes unexpected. Other times the first inklings of this violence are present long before this minority group becomes world news. Whether the first or the latter, in far too many cases the international community has been an on-looking bystander as another gruesome episode of violence takes place. To understand the workings of authoritarian regimes much research has been dedicated to their violence against its own population as part of regime survival through repression (Davenport, 2007; Johnston, 2012). Theories on repression often do not specify the difference in treatment between in- and out-group members, and do not capture

the various forms of violence that minority out-groups face daily in addition to general repression. Much research with regards to minority groups in authoritarian regimes has also been focused on the causes of genocides and mass violence . There is consensus that authoritarian leaders do not pursue genocides or mass killings irrationally and suddenly; instead it is believed that these are planned and organized by key figures in the regime (Busch, 2016), and for strategic reasons (Valentino, 2000; 2014; Harff, 2003). Other forms of violence against out-groups has mostly focused on riots. Riot theory often revolves around the participants in riots (Wilkinson, 2009), their behavior, their goals and the consequences (Horowitz, 2001), but very little attention has been given to state responses to riots. In addition, riot theory does not account for other forms of low-level violence against out-groups in authoritarian regimes. Furthermore, changes in the intensity of low-level violence against out-groups has been under researched. This thesis aims to understand if authoritarian regimes also foster low-level violence specifically against out-groups for strategic reasons that go beyond the gains from repression. To do so, two questions will be researched: (1) how is low-level violence targeting minority out-groups permitted or supported by authoritarian regimes, and (2) how does low-level violence against out-groups vary in intensity over time?

This research adds to existing literature as it centers out-groups in authoritarian regime survival and stability. The answers to these questions may demonstrate to minority groups with why there are changes in violence against their community. By knowing these mechanisms, they may be able to better defend themselves against violence. It will be argued that out-group treatment is another tool for regime stability and survival, one that can foster or damage the other tools for regime stability such as legitimacy, co-optation, repression and external support. In doing so, agency is given back to minority groups who live in a regime that is ruled by a community that is not their own. In addition, external actors who would like to support out-groups will also benefit from understanding how their actions can help or worsen the survival, and the importance of timing their actions.

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II.   LITERATURE REVIEW

Globally, minorities face more abuse from states and other citizens alike, the most vulnerable groups being ethnic minorities (Gurr, 2000) and religious minorities (Grim & Finke, 2010). Though all citizens face repression in authoritarian regimes, minorities often face heightened repression in comparison to dominant in-group peers. Repression is one of the many tools regimes use for their survival and stability, the others being co-optation, legitimacy (Gerschewski, 2013), and international support (Bellin, 2004). Repression, though a much-used tool for regime stability, does not capture the breadth of abuse that minorities endure. This thesis will therefor put forward the concept of low-level violence to encapsulate various forms of violence that fall short of mass violence. Low-level violence will not only constitute direct violence and repression from the state, but also direct and indirect forms of violence from the population and from institutional structures.

The first section of this literature review will focus on the occurrence of low-level violence in authoritarian regimes. When authoritarian regimes permit, abet, perpetrate and support low-level violence against out-groups, they become crime-producing or criminogenic (Anderson, 2016, p. 85). Regimes become criminogenic in the following ways: 1) to provide an outlet for citizen grievances, to unify the in-group or to protect the out-group, and to create an opportunity for increased repression. First, a definition of low-level violence is provided, one that goes beyond regime repression. Then, theories on protests in authoritarian regimes and riot theory are used to demonstrate how forms of low-level violence against out-groups provide an outlet for oppressed citizens who have no way to communicate their grievances against the state. Third, riot theory will show how riots are used by local rival elites for their own gain or to damage another rival elite. Finally, the last subsection will show how allowing violence creates opportunity for authoritarian regimes to increase repression and to justify it.

The second section of the literature review will show how violence may vary in intensity over time. First, the tools for authoritarian regime survival are discussed: legitimacy, co-optation,

repression, and external support. These tools make it regime survival possible for extended times. Minority out-groups play a role in how these tools are used with their support or against them. It will be argued that variation in low-level violence against minority out-groups corresponds to regime survival tools in three ways: 1) when a regime faces losses in domestic legitimacy, 2) when an out-group refuses to be co-opted or support the regime, and 3) when it loses in external support. In this section, regime legitimacy and the role of out-groups are demonstrated first. Then, co-optation of out-groups will demonstrate how out-groups may support or not, with all its consequences. Lastly, it is demonstrated how changes in external support, such as financial or symbolic aid as well as naming-and-shaming campaigns, result in changes in low-level violence. The three possible explanations will be used to formulate three hypotheses. Before moving on to the last section of the literature review.

The last section consists of theory building based on the information of the first two sections. The stoking fire theory is an all-encompassing theory regarding low-level violence against out-groups which is used in the case analysis of this thesis.

A. THE OCCURRENCE OF LOW-LEVEL VIOLENCE IN AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES

I. Defining low-level violence

For this thesis, violence against minorities needs to be defined in a broader sense that authoritarian repression. Davenport (2007) defines repression as "the actual or threatened use of physical sanctions against an individual or organization, within the territorial jurisdiction of the state, for the purpose of imposing a cost on the target as well as deterring specific activities and/or beliefs perceived to be challenging to government personnel, practices or institutions" (p. 2). However, minorities often face more than the actual or threatened use of physical violence. Galtung (1969) defines violence as being physical, psychological (threat of violence), and structural. In structural violence there is no actor that directly harms, but a group still gets harmed or killed indirectly

through carrot or stick strategies. Structural violence then also includes unequal distributions of power and resources, and social standing of the victim group (pp. 169-176). Galtung further argues that violence constitutes those negative influences that were avoidable, but were nonetheless allowed to occur. That is why for the purpose of this thesis, only violence from high-capacity authoritarian regimes (HCAs) are considered. This is to account for the fact that in some states various forms of violence occurs due to state failings. Contrastingly, HCAs have a well-developed coercive apparatus used for repression, and a system of co-optation to counter any opposition and increase loyalty to the status quo (Frantz & Kendall-Taylor, 2014). Having more stability, resources, and control makes it possible for a regime to prevent or counter low-level violence against minority groups if it truly wants to. By not doing so, the regime is criminogenic and partakes in out-group violence that goes beyond repression.

Disproportionate low-level violence in authoritarian regimes is then defined as follows: failing to provide adequate legal, cultural, social and physical protection against hostile non-state actors or dominant in-group members, as well as directly physically, psychologically or structurally harming out-group members. Cultural protection is included because cultural aspects, such as religion, ideology, and language among others, can provide justification for violence (Galtung, 1996, pp. 291-301). As Johnston (2012) accurately describes: "When examining the varieties of state violence, these small injustices must be considered along with mobilization of the military or deployment of the riot police" (p. 62). Low-level violence against an out-group are important to understand varieties of state violence and repression, and give insight into regime stability. Low-level violence is physical, psychological and structural. *Physical* disproportionate low-level violence includes but is not limited to: vandalism, hostage taking, kidnapping, and murder (Ubhenin & Enabunene, 2011), torture, military invasion (Ruggiero, 2018), sexual violence (Wood E. , 2018), riots targeting out-groups (Horowitz, 2001), and crimes of control (Quinney, 2000). Criminogenic regimes actively support or tolerate these crimes; effectively giving a green card to perpetrators. Structural out-group violence is often expressed in discriminatory policies, and can be best captured by horizontal inequalities (HIs).

Stewart (2000) defines HIs as inequalities between societal groups in terms of (1) political participation, (2) economic assets, (3) incomes and employment, and (4) social aspects (p. 249). Members of the group often identify with each other and share the same language, cultural traditions or location. Horizontal inequality on the basis of these four aspects can form and reinforce group identity, and can be used as a source for political mobilization (pp. 246-247), either by the out-group or against the out-group.

II. Providing an outlet for grievances: protests and riots

Having defined low-level violence, this section demonstrates how repression and low-level violence give way to grievances that have to be expressed either through protesting or rioting. Gerschewski's (2013) argues that repressive authoritarian regimes are performance dependent and have to adhere to a "societal contract" in which political assent from citizens is traded for relatively acceptable economic performances (p. 20). However, when performances are not met, grievances can lead to various forms of dissenting mobilization in the hopes of changing the status quo, for which disadvantaged groups have a big incentive. Shadmehr (2014) argues that despite the risk they pose, regimes are surprisingly tolerant of protests and are able to counter the threat of mass mobilization through repression or concessions when necessary. Whether a state represses depends on the level of inequality or grievance: big grievances bring costly concessions with them, making a regime more inclined to repress instead. This pattern is related to the level of development of the state: higher levels of development often lead to lower dissatisfaction, making harsh repression less necessary (Henderson C. , 1991, p. 126). This relates back to HCAs who have a well-developed co-optation system, which can keep dissatisfaction at bay. According to Tarrow (1998) authoritarian regimes allow protests in order to gain information on popular support and grievances, while providing an outlet for their grievances (pp. 83-85).

Alternatively, citizens may turn to rioting instead of protesting to express their grievances. A society that is divided by group identities such as ethnicity, can encourage group animosity (Stewart

F. , 2000, p. 257), which can lead to ethnically-targeted riots. Horowitz (2001) defines an ethnic riot as "an intense, sudden, though not necessarily wholly unplanned, lethal attack by civilian members of one ethnic group on civilian members of another ethnic group, the victims chosen because of their group membership" (p. 1). Riots signal regime instability, and ultimately reflect ethnic tensions through violent means (pp. 9-14). Ethnic riots and other forms of collective violence represent societal conversation, even if it is brutal and one-sided (Tilly, 2003, p. 6). The rumors prior to riots are then a commentary on ethnic relations. The more severe the rumors are, the more severe the impending violence will be. These rumors often revolve around an out-group supposedly preparing for violence, or having committed a crime against in-group members. Rumors justify the impending violence against an out-group, and project the fears of the in-group (Horowitz, 2001, pp. 74-83). Stewart confirms this, and notes that privileged groups become violent because they fear losing their privileged position or even regime breakdown (2000, p. 248). The largest facilitator of ethnic riots is the authoritative social support for group violence. Leadership support may be intentional or not: their action, or lack thereof, can show their explicit or implicit approval, green-lighting rioter behavior (pp. 331-346). Especially in an oppressed society, where citizens cannot direct their grievances at the state, or in times of increased instability, the state has an interest in letting people direct their grievances to out-groups instead of toward the state.

III. Unifying the in-group or protecting the out-group

Apart from using riots to direct grievances to out-groups, elites incite riots for their own gain. Rioters often choose groups who are seen as a political threat able and willing to control the state; or have (supposed) external relations which may harm internal strength of the state (Horowitz, 2001, p. 343). Wilkinson (2009) argues that authoritarian leaders can take control of riots or incite them for their own gain. Riots against out-groups can unify the dominant group behind the regime, can help in elite purging and can put pressure on their opponents. Wilkinson argues that that ethnic riots are not the outcome of ethnic antagonisms, but of politicians who create these identities-based antagonisms

and increase their importance to grow party support for upcoming elections (pp. 336-337).

Sometimes, riots are provoked in order to heroically provide protections for an out-group, especially when it is in the government's electoral interest to do so. This is the case in two situations: when the minority group forms an important part of the regime's or party's support base, or when a regime is forced to form coalitions with other parties or elites that have big minority support bases (Wilkinson, 2004, pp. 6-7). Although authoritarian regimes do not rely on free and fair elections and coalitions like multi-ethnic democracies do, they still organize semi-competitive elections to be seen as a leader of the people both domestically and internationally (Dukalskis & Gerschewski, 2017), and to co-opt elites by including them in elections and institutions (Magaloni, 2008). Ultimately it becomes clear that Wilkinson's (2004) argument rings true: communal violence is incited by local leadership when these leaders can obtain electoral gains from such violence.

IV. Justifying increased repression

The first two sections have demonstrated that regimes have an interest in allowing protests and riots to occur to provide and outlet for grievances, or to demonstrate loyalty to the in- or out-group for (electoral) gains. However, sometimes regimes enable or provoke violence to justify their own violent, repressive counter-measures (Stephan & Snyder, 2017). Escribà-Folch (2013) argues that repression, the main instrument of authoritarian survival, is effective in two ways: by curbing rival elites and opposition leaders in their capacity to organize coups, and by prevent popular revolt. Repression can be high or low intensity, depending on the importance and visibility of the group that it targets (Gerschewski, 2013, p. 21). When excluded ethnic groups try to demand more rights or influence, regimes are willing to high and violent repression to maintain dominance (Rørbæk & Knudsen, 2017). Using repressive coercion can increase the cost of popular mobilization against the state, but too much can decrease the state's political legitimacy, evolving into general civil unrest (Frantz & Kendall-Taylor, 2014). Consequently, a regime may make use of this opportunity to increase measures of control in the name of public safety. In any case, repression following dissent

damages state legitimacy, creating a need for re-legitimation and de-legitimation in its justifications for repression.

To do so, a regime can use its extensive propaganda and media control. These are normally used to mobilize their citizens behind regime ideology and to conceal negative coverage (Stein, 2016, p. 9). Repression to quell large mobilization is often justified by de-legitimizing protest leaders as being unpatriotic criminal rioters. Part of this re-legitimization frames the state as the hero defending the country against them (Dukalskis & Patane, 2019). Re-legitimizing also consist of upholding the perception that the regime is performing well, sometimes whilst calling upon nationalist rhetoric. Alternatively, repression is justified as a means to protect the state against terrorism, extremism, and instability: all threats to the general population. International terrorism is often invoked to counter expected negative reactions from the international community and to justify the increased security measures it imposes (Edel & Josua, 2018). Increased security measures can go hand in hand with crimes of control, in which law enforcement agents in the name of rule of law unfairly arrest or charge specific people or groups who supposedly have committed violations (Quinney, 2000).

Altogether, low-level violence against out-groups goes beyond repression, and is perpetrated by regime and citizens alike. This section has demonstrated how allowing violence to occur, citizens can express their grievances at someone other than the state. In addition, low-level violence enables in-group or out-group loyalty to increase, depending on state actions during riots or other politically violent episodes. Lastly, supporting or permitting violence creates the opportunity for regimes to increase repressive security measures for the 'good' of the population. Understanding how low-level violence against out-groups is supported or permitted is necessary to understand what mechanisms can increase or decrease it. The next section will tackle this question.

B.   VARYING LOW-LEVEL VIOLENCE TO SUSTAIN REGIME STABILITY

Having demonstrated how low-level violence against out-groups occurs in HCAs, this section well delve into the tools used by regimes to maintain stability and survival through varying out-group treatment. Gerschewski (2013) argues that regime survival is based on three pillars: co-optation, legitimacy and repression. In addition, external support from the international community can provide regimes with financial or relational support, improving or damaging regime stability (Bellin, 2004). I identify three possible explanations and formulate corresponding hypotheses that demonstrate how low-level violence can change in intensity over time, namely: 1) decreased domestic legitimacy, 2) refusal of co-optation by out-group, and 3) decreased external support. Corresponding to these possible explanations, three hypotheses will be put forward.

In each explanation, a distinction is made between strategically relevant groups and non-relevant groups: their relevance determines whether they will face increased or decreased violence in relation to legitimacy, co-optation or external support. Public statements from the regime about the out-group can be an indication of whether the group is of strategic importance. They are made to signal a message or conduct of behavior towards the stakeholder and are only made when there is a gain in doing so. In addition, state-controlled media enables authoritarian leaders to manipulate information dissemination and content, resulting in the manipulation of beliefs and expectations (Simpser & Diaz-Cayeros, 2005, p. 68). State-owned media, together with public statements from leader offer insights into the priorities, signals and goals of regime leadership. The nature of the public statement depends on the needs of the regime at that moment in terms of domestic legitimacy, out-group co-optation or exclusion, or external support from democratic allies. Above all, these three explanations signal regime instability and need for leader or regime consolidation.

Need for regime consolidation is often paired with elite rivalry. Coup-proofing is necessary as coups organized by elites are the most important factor for leader survival (Sudduth, 2017). One coup-proofing strategy is relevant for out-group treatment: the creation of non-state militias.

Regimes are willing to share their monopoly on violence with the non-state militias it created because they become loyal counterweights to the military (De Bruin, 2014). Apart from coup-proofing, regimes also benefit from these militias in times of significant elite purging. Eck (2015) argues that they are prone to acting beyond their tasks of gathering intelligence and local information, and with more violence (pp. 925-929). Worse even, militias enable regimes to evade accountability for various human rights abuses. By blaming these 'independent' militias, regimes can increase repression without taking the blame (Mitchell, Carey, & Butler, 2014, pp. 814-815). Out-groups are disproportionally targeted by militias because local elites often recruit people from their own kin networks (Wood, 2008). However, in doing so, non-state militias may partake in heightened violence against any out-groups. Presence of non-state militias not only speaks on regime or elite instability, but also on how regimes may use them to increasingly target out-groups.

I. Minorities and state legitimacy

1. Ideological and Economic legitimacy

Authoritarian regimes are performance dependent: its citizens are willing to accept the status quo in exchange for relative good economic performances by the state (Gerschewski, 2013, p. 20), even more so with HCAs. Legitimacy can be defined as fulfilling the basic functions of government, based on the expectations of its societal members and powerful groups, and the ability to solve societal problems in an effective way and through its institutions (Lipset, 1959, p. 86). For HCAs, one defining factor of legitimacy is control over the economy. Economic control is possible through a highly developed administrative capacity: extensive, politicized, able and willing to effectively implement orders of regime leaders. A politicized bureaucracy makes it possible for regime leaders to directly influence trade policies, including import and export licenses, therefore controlling international trade (Seeberg, 2018, pp. 49-51). In addition, strong international networks can strengthen HCAs (Bellin, 2004), partly because of their economic support. Economic control also entails incumbent control over natural resources, land, and employment opportunities. Employment

opportunities correspond to a large public sector: the bigger, the more jobs are available even in a weak economy. Another factor for HCA legitimacy is ideological power (Seeberg, 2018, pp. 51-52). Such control over the economy, including natural resources, also makes the private sector comply in exchange for economic protection, and makes it costly for private donors to donate to opposition actors (Greene, 2007, pp. 40-41).

If a regime loses economic control, and fails to perform to expectation, it loses legitimacy. To counter these losses, it can engage in populist or nationalist policies. The Chinese Jintao and Jiabao administration experienced decreased legitimacy for two reasons: increased corruption and its pursuit of economic development, contra to its communist ideology. To counter legitimacy losses the administration implemented populist policies (Dickson, 2008, p. 239). This practice was also present when China's regime peacefully solved border disputes with Japan, which also caused nationalist legitimacy losses. In an attempt to compensate, the regime pursued nationalist propagandist policies (Downs & Saunders, 1999, pp. 120-122). These strategies were meant to perform on an ideological basis, to make up for performance losses. Ideological and actual performance are interlinked: high economic control gives the state the ability to bribe state challengers, control the media, link nationalism with regime leadership and drown out any opposition (Greene, 2007, p. 297).

2. *The domestic legitimacy hypothesis*

When compensating for domestic legitimacy losses through exclusionary nationalism, HCAs can become increasingly criminogenic with regards to out-group treatment. This happens if the strategic importance of the group is low at the time. When the state signals animosity towards the out-group through state-media and public statements, increased low-level violence ensues. Violence is extended or intensified when perpetrators are insufficiently punished by the regime. Either or both will signal to in-group citizens that the regime is loyal to them, increasing legitimacy while giving citizens an outlet for their grievances. This mechanism constitutes H1, the domestic legitimacy hypothesis: *Low-level violence, permitted, abetted, perpetuated and used by authoritarian regimes*

against out-groups, increases when the need for domestic legitimation toward dominant in-group members is high. Figure 1 demonstrates the domestic legitimacy mechanism.

Regime instability (low performance)

Decreased legitimacy, increased protesting

Increased scapegoating or nationalism in state-sponsored media and public statements

Increased low-level physical violence

Unlawful behavior is unpunished by state or media passivity is employed, or both

Increased domestic legitimacy

Signalling changes; low-level violence equalizes or decreases

Figure 1: Mechanism of domestic legitimacy hypothesis

II. Co-opting the strategically relevant out-group

Economic control is important to access funds and resources in order to increase or maintain legitimacy, but also to employ co-optation: the second pillar of regime survival. Co-optation is "the capacity to tie strategically-relevant actors (or a group of actors) to the regime elite (Gerschewski, 2013, p. 22), through direct sum payments, granting monopoly privileges powerful business elites,

and giving ethnic groups special privileges, among other tactics (Wintrobe, 1998, p. 336).

Presumably, only strategically-relevant out-groups will enjoy special privileges or policy concessions.

Co-opting different actors not only buys loyalty for the regime as is, but also sells current leadership

as a more beneficial option than different, more repressive, leadership at the helm. In addition,

increased rents distribution can also deter coups in periods of high coup-risk in the short term

(Sudduth, 2017, p. 14). Apart from distributing rents directly, Gandhi & Przeworski (2006) identify

policy concessions as another co-optation tool by making opposition members and other key elites

part of institutions. To do so, a political forum such as parties in legislatures are necessary (p. 2). The

political forum gives room to create parties and to hold elections. Both are beneficial to the regime

as they increase legitimacy because of these 'democratic' processes (p. 21). In addition, they provide

information on popular support, on popularity of opposition, and on demands for local public goods

(Reuter & Robertson, 2015, p. 236).

1. *The co-optation refusal hypothesis*
    Giving minority out-groups special privileges is not done freely. In times of decreased

external support, authoritarian leaders may decide to distribute extra rents in exchange public out-

group support for the regime. In the case that the out-group resists co-optation, it is probable that

they will face increased low-level violence. Here, violence is pursued to punish and repress the out-

group into acquiescence and to prevent such it from dissenting further. Strategically-relevant groups

or individuals are co-opted because their dissent would be a threat to regime survival. Refusal of co-

optation may be perceived by the regime as a threat of further dissent, bringing us H2, the co-

optation refusal hypothesis: *Low-level violence, permitted, abetted, perpetuated and used by*

authoritarian regimes against out-groups, increases when the targeted out-group has refused to be

co-opted.

III. External support and conditionality

Low-level violence may not only vary in intensity due to changes in domestic legitimacy and co-optation of the out-group: it may also be affected by changes in external support for the regime. Bellin (2004) demonstrates how support from international networks contribute to the robustness of the coercive apparatus, a necessity for repression. International networks provide either political or financial support to HCAs. For the purpose of this thesis external support will only focus on democratic support, as they often pursue democratization in HCAs. More democratization likely improves out-group treatment. Democratization is pursued by democratic support networks in various ways: through positive or negative conditionality, with varying effects. Generally, positive conditionality can be an effective incentive for democratization when the leader expects to stay in office after implementing the promised policy reforms, making his outlook on complying to conditionality more positive (Wright, 2009). However, despite the intention of democratic donors to only give aid based on improvements in democratization, empirical studies showed that the actual selection of recipient states was not selective. The presence of authoritarian regimes or low levels of democratization did not hinder foreign aid from coming in (Bader & Faust, 2014, p. 584). In addition, various authors have argued that aid only prevents authoritarian backsliding after prolonged democratization (Teorell, 2010, p. 76) or after a democracy has already been installed (Przeworski, Alvarez, Cheibub, & Limongi, 2000).

Negative conditionality, in the form of economic sanctions however, often results in poorer treatment of vulnerable out-groups such as ethnic minorities. Sanctions create incentives for regimes to make use of discriminatory policies because these groups are not the main support base of the regime (Peksen, 2014). This reinforces the domestic legitimacy hypothesis: discriminatory policies are pursued to increase legitimacy in the in-group. Apart from conditional aid, external support also consists of political or symbolic support. If a regime makes legitimacy claims based on international support, its loss can decrease domestic legitimacy (Donno, 2013). In addition, losses of external support may bolster rival elites to pursue a coup, as the losses directly influence the flow of foreign

aid and trade, limiting their rents and spoils (Wright & Escribà-Folch, 2009, p. 6). Conditional aid, specifically positive, can benefit out-groups when implemented under the right conditions: when democratization processes have already taken off and when aid truly is rescinded when there is autocratic backsliding. Negative conditionality often hurt out-groups more. Essentially, decreases in financial or relational external support can result in pressure on the regime to make changes. One way for a regime to do so would be by improving the treatment of out-groups either symbolically or actual.

1. External support hypothesis

HCAs that receive significant foreign aid, or benefit from international trade have a vested interest in maintaining positive international relations with other states and with international organizations (Bader & Faust, 2014). Leaders may decide to counter losses if they see that their human rights abuses, specifically against out-groups, has resulted in damages to their international support networks, specifically with democratic states. Where the international community was perhaps tacitly disapproving of out-group treatment in the HCA but willing to look the other way, increased abuses may result in outright disapproval in the form of sanctions, shaming campaigns or more stringent conditional aid. HCAs that are highly dependent on large sums of foreign aid are most motivated to counter losses of external support. The ways in which external support losses affect democratization in HCAs formulates the external support hypothesis, H3: *Low-level violence decreases when external support for authoritarian leaders is has decreased.*

C.   STOKING FIRE THEORY: USING LOW-LEVEL VIOLENCE FOR REGIME STABILITY

To answer the two research questions regarding the occurrence of low-level violence targeting out-groups and the varying intensity of it, I equip the information from the literature review to propose a new theory: the stoking fire theory. Having defined low-level violence as encompassing more than simple repression, I have argued that apart from partaking in it, tolerating low-level violence makes states complicit in actions that would normally be defined as criminal. HCAs become criminogenic and use low-level violence against minority out-groups in order to maintain or compensate for losses in regime stability. This strategy may be intensified over time if necessary and dialed down when the regime has found its stability equilibrium again. Out-group treatment is a trump card that is not only used in times of high elite rivalry or for strategic purposes to obtain difficult goals as some argue. Out-group treatment is also an asset in periods when regimes have lost their stability: treating them worse or better can bring a regime back in balance.

Research on protests and riot theory have demonstrated that these acts of mobilization are tolerated to provide an outlet for population grievances and to gather information on citizen priorities. In addition, riot theory indicated that elites spur group animosity and stir riots to unify the in-group behind them or to heroically protect the out-group in exchange for support. Larger protests and riots are also used by regimes to justify their subsequent repression, and using the moment to implement more security measures, essentially increasing their grip on control. However, as Horowitz (2001) argues, riots are an indication of worse to come, and thus an important indicator of possible regime instability.

This brings us to how regimes increase or decrease low-level violence actively. In times of decreased domestic legitimacy, perhaps due to low economic performance, a leader faces threats of large mobilization and in some cases increased elite rivalry. To counter these threats, a regime may try to direct blame and frustration toward out-groups instead of itself. By becoming criminogenic, the regime unifies the dominant in-group behind the regime through the use of propaganda and

nationalist statements and policies. In addition, targeting an out-group may affect a pillar of support for an elite rival as well. When present, non-state militias may be used to increase violence without linking it to the regime. Ultimately, pursuing this approach can improve domestic legitimacy for the regime. When it decides on this course, the out-group is of little strategic importance in comparison to the lost domestic legitimacy. Alternatively, when a group is of strategic importance, a regime may have tried to gain support from the out-group through co-optation. These carrots in the forms of privileges and concessions may result in out-group support, and can result in less violence. However, if the out-group refuses to be co-opted or changes its support, a regime may decide to punish an out-group once it refuses to be co-opted as part of its stick strategies. Punishment is not just because the group refused to support the regime, but also to ensure it will be complacent, preventing public criticism from the group. Different from domestic legitimacy and co-optation refusal, changes in external support from democratic states and the international community may actually decrease low-level violence. When the international community and democratic states are willing to look the other way when low-level violent episodes occur, the regime has no incentive to change its ways. However, when there is loss of financial or political support, a regime has reason to actively counter low-level violence. Enough international attention makes the out-group of strategic importance at the time, one that has to be treated better for leader and regime survival.

There can also be an interaction between the three variables. Foreign policy decisions in support of specific state donors may spark disagreement and outrage at the partnership, decreasing domestic legitimacy. Domestic legitimacy may also be hurt or improved by the direct targeting of out-groups who publicly refused to support the regime. This refusal could make others feel inclined to agree with the out-group, or the out-group may be accused of being unpatriotic and traitorous. When repression is used against the out-group to force it into acquiescence, the international community may condemn these actions and may put pressure on the regime to improve its treatment.

All in all, by keeping low-level violence as a present force in the regime, a regime benefits in various ways as the first section literature review has demonstrated. It allows the regime to stoke a small fire. As the second section of the has demonstrated, regimes may set the fire ablaze or quell it depending on the three variables, domestic legitimacy, co-optation refusal, and changes in external support to counter regime instability.
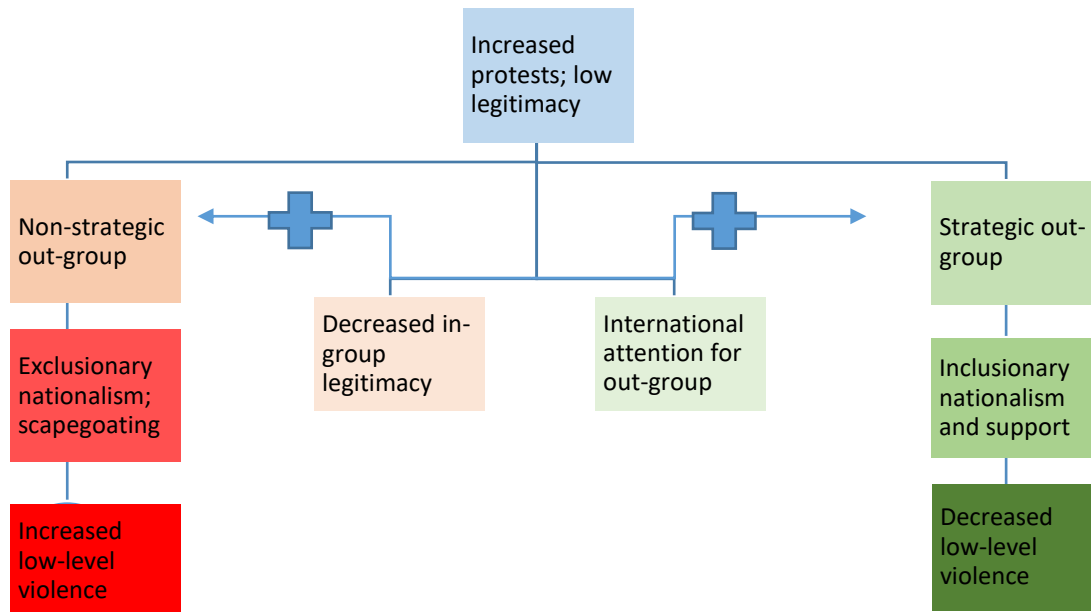

Figure 2: Stoking Fire Mechanism

III. RESEARCH DESIGN

The research use process tracing, as it allows the careful description of the situation of an out-group in an authoritarian regime throughout time. The stoking fire theory posits that low-level violence is allowed, supported and even pursued strategically by HCAs as a means for increasing domestic legitimacy or external support. An indication of the strategic importance of an out-group is the public recognition of the out-group by the HCA, whether negatively or positively, as leaders only would make public statements on this group for benefit of the regime and its stability. Before we move on to case selection, it is important to highlight the observable implications of the three hypotheses.

A. OBSERVABLE IMPLICATIONS

For the purpose of this thesis, an observable implication of decreased regime stability is measured in the number of protests against the state. Protests can occur because of instability in the form of (perceived) lower state performance. Depending on the position of a minority out-group, there are various possible observable implications. H1 is the *domestic legitimacy* hypothesis*: Low-level violence, permitted, perpetuated and used by authoritarian regimes, increases when the need for domestic legitimation toward dominant in-group members is higher.* H2, *co-optation refusal* hypothesis: *Low-level violence, permitted, abetted, perpetuated and used by authoritarian regimes against out-groups, increases when the targeted out-group has refused to be co-opted.* Both have similar observable implications including but not limited to: scapegoating for regime shortcomings, spreading negative rumors or even calls to violence in state-sponsored media, increasing exclusionary nationalism. The rumors may accuse the out-group of planning a coup, or of partaking in crimes against the in-group, or of being supported or sponsored by nefarious organizations or states.

The final hypothesis, H3, the *external support* hypothesis*: Low-level violence decreases when external support for authoritarian leaders is has decreased.* Observable implications of (H3) external

support losses are: the withholding of foreign aid that was previously given with less conditionality, or the existence of naming-and-shaming campaigns specifically about human rights abuses against an out-group. These actions make the out-group of strategic importance because of the international attention it garners, especially if the HCA receives large sums of foreign aid. In pursuing a decrease of violence, a leader may announce (and implement) symbolic, highly-publicized measures, organize mediatized meetings between regime leaders and key out-group leaders, or paint itself as the hero that saves the group from foreign forces who attack it in combination with increased security measures.

B.   CASE SELECTION

This research revolves around two questions: (1) how is low-level violence targeting minority out-groups permitted or supported by authoritarian regimes, and (2) how does low-level violence against out-groups vary in intensity over time? The focus of this research is on high-capacity authoritarian regimes with a clearly distinguishable minority out-group, either of an ethnic or religious nature. Such sectarian lines gives the opportunity for low-level violence to occur, be sustained and be traced over time. With regards to HCA survival, Mubarak's ouster came as a surprise to many. However, the ACLED dataset (2010), which measures various types of armed conflicts, protests, and sectarian violence on a local level, shows two things about the Mubarak's regime stability. First, that in the beginning of the '00s, political violence was relatively low, but that this increased from 2005 onwards. Secondly, the data shows that there were significantly more sectarian low-level violent incidents targeting Copts, also from that year onwards. Understanding how this happened may give insight into the nexus between out-group treatment and regime stability, related to domestic legitimacy, co-optation, and international support. Egypt is therefore single-case study of this thesis.

Coptic treatment will be traced through Sadat's and Mubarak's regimes. Copts faced significant sectarian violence under Sadat, because of the Islamization of society he fostered and used for his own gain. Though no data on sectarian violence and political incidents is available, academic research will inform the Sadat era. Tracing the position of Copts under Mubarak will be traced with ACLED data, combined with the Arab Awakenings dataset (starting from 2006) (Jenkins & Herrick, 2012), and EIPR (2010) field work for sectarian violence between 2008-2010. Graphs are made based on this combined data, Table 1 in Appendix A gives an overview of the data. Tracing starts in 2000 for three reasons. First, 2000 had the first significant episode of sectarian violence, namely the Kosheh Massacre, which indicated a change in the Mubarak-church cooperation followed by relative stability. Second, the run up to 9/11, which heavily influenced US support and pressure for Egypt, needs to be demonstrated before it can be traced how US support influenced out-group treatment. Third, due to the word limitation of this thesis, out-group treatment had to be limited. With this in mind, and based on changes in regime stability, Mubarak's regime is divided in three periods: 2000-2004 signifying relative stability, 2005-2007 signifying domestic and external challenges, 2008-2010 signifying regime breakdown. Years of high political incidents indicate regime instability, against which independent variables such as changes in domestic legitimacy, Coptic co-optation strategy, and external support will be compared (Graph IV-2).

By tracing the position of Copts in three authoritarian Egyptian regimes, we can see how their position improves or deteriorates in the face of changes in domestic legitimacy, out-group co-optation strategies, and external support. Three timelines and developments are traced: (1) lower public opinion for the leaders, relating back to regime legitimacy, (2) out-group support for the regime relating back to its willingness to be co-opted, (3) international support for the leaders, relating back to external support, and (4) public statements regarding the situation of the Copts from each president after a salient moment. By tracing their situation and violence against them in these periods we capture low-level violence under Sadat's regime, but also under Mubarak's stable regime, until his height of regime instability.

External support is defined here as US support, because Egypt received the most foreign aid from the US apart from Israel (Abbott & Teti, 2016, pp. 88-90). Its support will be determined based on changes in US aid over the years, as well as on the Political Terror Scale (2018).

These three hypotheses separately and together, if confirmed by the findings, would show that out-group treatment in the form of low-level violence is a variable in regime stability, and that the variance in intensity is due to strategic choices in regime response and orchestration. If confirmed, the theory building of this thesis has succeeded. It will have brought together the various separate arguments for the effects of domestic legitimacy, co-optation, and external support networks on out-group treatment in HCAs. A start will be made to fill the gap left by this research fragmentation surrounding theories on out-group treatment in HCAs.

IV. CASE ANALYSIS: COPTS UNDER SADAT AND MUBARAK LITERATURE REVIEW

The out-group of interest for this case study is the Coptic people of Egypt. As a minority group in Egypt, Coptic Christians have a long history of being subjected to discrimination and repression following the Arab invasion and subsequent Muslim rule. The 10% minority faces discrimination in education, and in employment. In addition, there is lower public spending for this group, and there is underrepresentation of Copts in political structures. They also face both violent and non-violent governmental repression (MAR, 2006). To see how low-level violence changes under different regimes with varying degrees of domestic legitimacy and external support we will trace the position of Copts under Sadat and Mubarak.

A. 1970-1981: COPTS UNDER PRESIDENT ANWAR SADAT

The Sadat era will be divided in three possible explanations for the rise in low-level violence targeting Copts. First, Sadat's legitimation process through ideology will be demonstrated. Then, Pope Shenouda's eventual refusal to be co-opted and confrontational approach will be discussed. Lastly, Sadat's foreign policy and subsequent external support will shed light on violence against Copts. These three variables are interlinked, but deserve to be discussed separately to understand how violence changed in Sadat's regime.

I. Legitimation through symbolic Islam and the effect on Copts

At the start of his presidency, Anwar El-Sadat showed his devoutness to Islam whilst also expressing his support for Copts and their contributions to civilization and society. His cabinets included more Copts than Nasser's cabinets did. In addition, more Copts were elected as parliament members on top of the quota of seats reserved for Copts. An unprecedented move was a Copt rising

to commander within the army. Despite these developments, Copts felt that superficial gestures such as these did little to combat the structural low-level violence they faced daily (Pennington, 1982, pp. 168-169). As Sadat's rule continued, so did his pandering to Islamic movements and groups. State-media became more Islamized under Sadat, adding to the Islamization of education under Nasser (Hassan, 2003, p. 173). Freeman (1992) explains that aligning himself with Islamic movements and groups was a move to counter leftist groups and lingering Nasserist influence and to consolidate his own power (p. 56). Under his rule, these groups grew significantly, and were mostly present in Upper Egypt, the region that also houses the most Copts. These Islamic groups have placed themselves in direct confrontations with Copts deliberately. State security forces were not willing to involve themselves in these confrontations, to the detriment of Copts. Increased sectarian violence, especially between 1972-1973 and 1977-1980 was paired with anti-Copt propaganda.

Sadat did nothing against these developments, but used these to provide an outlet for violence; keeping it between citizens instead of having them direct their it at the state (Freeman, 1992, pp. 57-59); diverting dissatisfaction with the state. According to Ayubi (1982), Islam was used to foster Sadat's legitimacy. First, this gave room for Islamic movements to flourish in various parts of society: fundamentalist Islamic groups became influential in universities, and legal Muslim societies. In both, anti-Copt rhetoric justified low-level violence. Fatwa's (Muslim legal opinions) were given to justify low-level violence such as vandalism, abuse and theft against Copts. Some groups even believed that Copts conspired with foreign forces against Muslims (pp. 276-279); another justification to target Copts. Sadat had weaponized Islam and used its concepts to make people comply in the name of religion. In addition, fundamentalist youth felt that state-sponsored Muslim institutions were not authentic, and thus no place to participate politically. The only way to participate was by opposing Sadat and state institutions directly by showing superior religious knowledge. Joining fundamentalist groups and partaking in anti-Copt low-level violence meant rebelling against the state indirectly and politically participating in a regime that had no avenues for that.

II. Coptic development and eventual refusal of Sadat

In the 1960s and 1970s the Sunday School Movement was meant to reinvigorate church life and create a Coptic identity, separate from the Arab-Egyptian identity, in an increasingly anti-Coptic environment. When Pope Shenouda III became the new Coptic Pope in 1971, having led the movement (Henderson R. , 2005, pp. 158-162), it was clear that he would not follow the traditional millet system as his predecessor did. Under the millet system, his predecessor would personally discuss Coptic grievances with state officials and could count on cooperation from the security apparatus in exchange for outspoken Coptic support for the regime. Pope Shenouda however, took on a confrontational approach following sectarian violence, and subtly denounced the national unity discourse, opting for the persecution discourse. This discourse emphasizes the minority status of Copts and their separate identity, which deserved its own rights (Sedra, 1999, pp. 221-225). When in 1972 a Coptic office that was used as a church was burned, he sent 100 priests and monks to protest and pray over the incident, resulting in more vandalism against Coptic property.

Tensions peaked when Sadat considered implementing proposed fundamentalist Islamist Constitutional changes in 1977. If implemented, sharia law would be the main source of legislation for the first time in Egyptian history. Pope Shenouda openly criticized the proposal and organized a five-day fast to shed light on Coptic grievances. Although Sadat abandoned the bill at the time, sectarian violence increased, as Muslims saw the pope's actions as unnecessary interference (McCallum, 2007, p. 930). Brown II (2000) explains how after Pope Shenouda III's unwillingness to accept these constitutional changes, riots were incited by conservative Muslims after rumors and pamphlets were spread. These accused the pope of aggressively wanting to convert Muslims and trying to take over Egypt. After the anti-Coptic demonstrations, riots and damaging of churches, a parliamentary inquiry blamed "foreign agents of stirring up religious animosity" (p. 1049). Ayubi suggested that if the state would defend Copts from fundamentalist Islamist attacks it would give these groups grounds for accusing Sadat of favoring the out-group over the in-group Muslims.

However, by not responding to these attacks, fundamentalists were able to make Sadat's regime appear weak and inefficient (Freeman, 1992, p. 60). Sadat opted for the latter, while trying to appear as being one of these Islamists. Not only did he foster these Islamic movements, he created and supported their militant offspring as well; he was known to brag about knowing the personal leaders of militant Islamist groups in his province (Ansari, 1984, p. 416). Under Sadat's Islamization, Copts also became more religious, but looked for leadership within the established church instead of outside of it. Not just religious leadership, but also political leadership from the Pope (Ayubi, 1982, pp. 281-282).

III. Camp David Accords, sectarian violence, and regime breakdown

Alongside pandering to Islamists for strategic domestic gain at the cost of Coptic survival, Sadat tried to solidify his rule by promising the recovery of the Sinai from Israel. He knew however, that this would not be possible without help from the US. When his diplomatic actions and agreement to enter into peace talks with Israel were not taken seriously by both the US and Israel, he opted for military action in the form of an Arab coalition through the Yom Kippur War in 1973. By gaining a foothold in the Sinai and defending it successfully, the US had no choice but to pressure Israel into returning the Sinai to Egypt. This resulted in a restored Egyptian pride, which was long lost after various military defeats in the twenty-five years prior (Bean & Girard, 2001). Sadat's grand strategy led him to further pursue peace talks with Israel afterwards. In his view, transforming a socialist economy to a capitalism one was tied to regional peace with Israel as a path to trade with the West. In the 1970s he started his open-door policy, to stimulate private investments in the economy. This went hand in hand with IMF negotiations. However, this took away from public sector funding and salaries: regular citizens had lower quality public resources and mounting expenses (Frerichs, 2016, p. 613). Sadat's legitimacy hit an all-time low when he agreed to IMF conditions to cut subsidies on basic goods in exchange for loans. This prompted the 1977 Bread Riots. The army

harshly repressed it: 1270 people were arrested, 800 people were injured and 70 died during the protests and subsequent repression (Hillal Dessouki, 1981, p. 415). Despite immediately cancelling the policies after the riots, the damage to his domestic legitimacy was done.

In the hopes of securing trade with the West by pursuing regional peace, direct diplomacy between Egypt and Israel commenced. When deemed unsuccessful, US president Carter organized the Camp David for peace talks in 1978: president Sadat and Israeli prime-minister Begin signed the Camp David Accords, a framework for peace in the Middle East. In 1979 an Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty was signed, which confirmed the return of Sinai to Egypt in exchange for Israeli access to the Suez Canal and normalized relations between the states. Although a diplomatic win for all three states, Sadat was confronted with isolation from the Arab world and expulsion from the Arab League (Camp David Accords, 2019). Sadat saw the short-term benefits of his pursuit in the form of food aid and economic support, but also increased prestige for the military through access and preferential treatment to US technology transfer and US weapons (Cohen & Ward, 1997, p. 206). Graph IV-1, based on USAID data, also demonstrates this influx of funds. These so-called 'peace dividends' did little for Sadat's domestic legitimacy. Egyptians disapproved of the accords and were against normalization of relations with Israel (Al-Sayyid Marsot, 2007, p. 160).
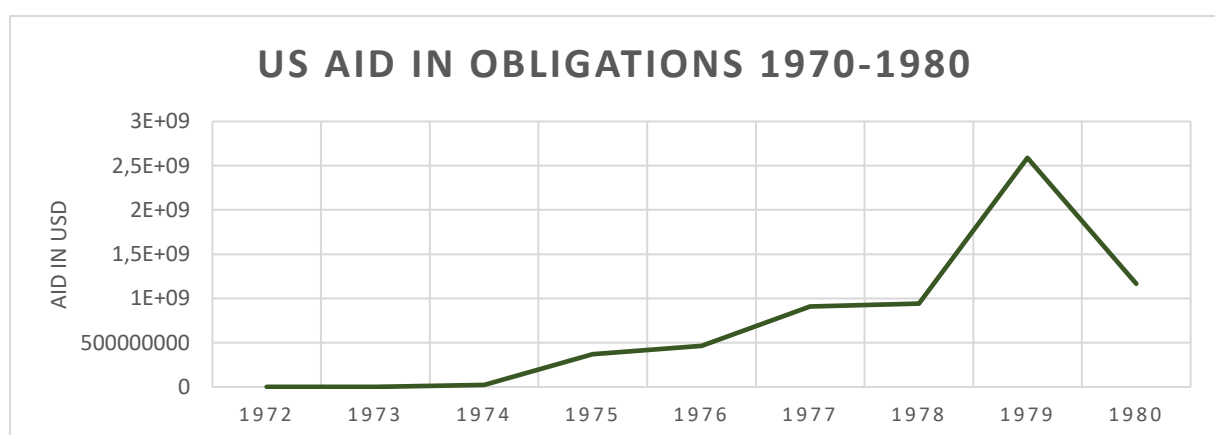

Graph IV-1: Obligations US Aid 1970-1980

In what can be seen as an attempt to gain back legitimacy, Sadat amended the Constitution in 1980, at the height of sectarian violence and public disapproval of his leadership. Sharia was now

the principal legislative source for Egypt. Pope Shenouda, having witnessed these developments

began directly criticizing Sadat's leadership. Separately from the Pope, emigrant Copts in the US

protested against Sadat's rule during his state visit to president Carter in 1980. The public Coptic

denouncement of Sadat's leadership drove him to make a public statement on the Coptic church

upon his return. He claimed Coptic leadership had exaggerated accounts of abuse, and had used

international links to stir up Coptic protest abroad (Pennington, 1982, p. 174). After, Pope Shenouda

softened his approach. The following year three sectarian violence incidents were all publicly

addressed by the President. In his statements he gave blame to both sides, and accused the Pope of

having political ambitions, despite Shenouda's recent silence. With domestic legitimacy at an all-time

low, with Muslim dissent now being directed at the regime, Sadat orchestrated a massive crackdown.

He arrested influential opposition members of all backgrounds, both Muslim and Copt. It also

resulted in cancelling the 1971 decree that named Pope Shenouda III the Coptic Pope, and putting

him in house arrest in a desert monastery (Farrell, 1981). From this position the Pope continued

leading his church in Egypt, while his position was officially shared by five bishops. Under their

leadership, they were officially in full support of Sadat until his assassination. Apart from targeting

the Pope, 1500 citizens were also arrested in his crackdown. This spurred fundamentalist Islamists

into action: in October 1981 assassinated president Sadat (Al-Sayyid Marsot, 2007, p. 165).

Overall, Sadat enjoyed relatively low domestic legitimacy. His approach to fostering Islamist

movements worked for a short period until militant groups opposed him and grew out of his control.

Obtaining domestic legitimacy came at the cost of Coptic survival, a price Sadat was willing to pay,

especially after Pope Shenouda's increasing vocal criticism. With high external support from the US

after the Camp David Accords, there was no incentive for Sadat to protect Copts for the sake of

external relations.

B.   COPTS UNDER MUBARAK

Hosni Mubarak had three objectives for his rule: continued alliance with the US, restoring relations with other the Arab regimes, and ruling with an iron fist with regard to Islamists (El-Hasan & Hiskey, 2005, p. 76). His rule is divided in three periods starting in 2000. Based on Graph IV-2, which depicts political incidents between 1997-2010, it becomes clear that 2000-2004 was a time of relative regime stability. 2005 was start of increased regime instability due to damaged domestic legitimacy, as determined by the rising number of political incidents between 2005-2007. Finally, signs of regime breakdown were present in 2008 and continued into 2010. This graph also demonstrates that incidents involving Copts (in red) increases toward the end of Mubarak's regime. Graph IV-3 emphasizes the number of political incidents targeting Copts to indicate the scale of these incidents. Based on these two graphs it becomes clear that salient years for Copts coincide with those for the regime: bigger instability resulted in more low-level violence targeting Copts.
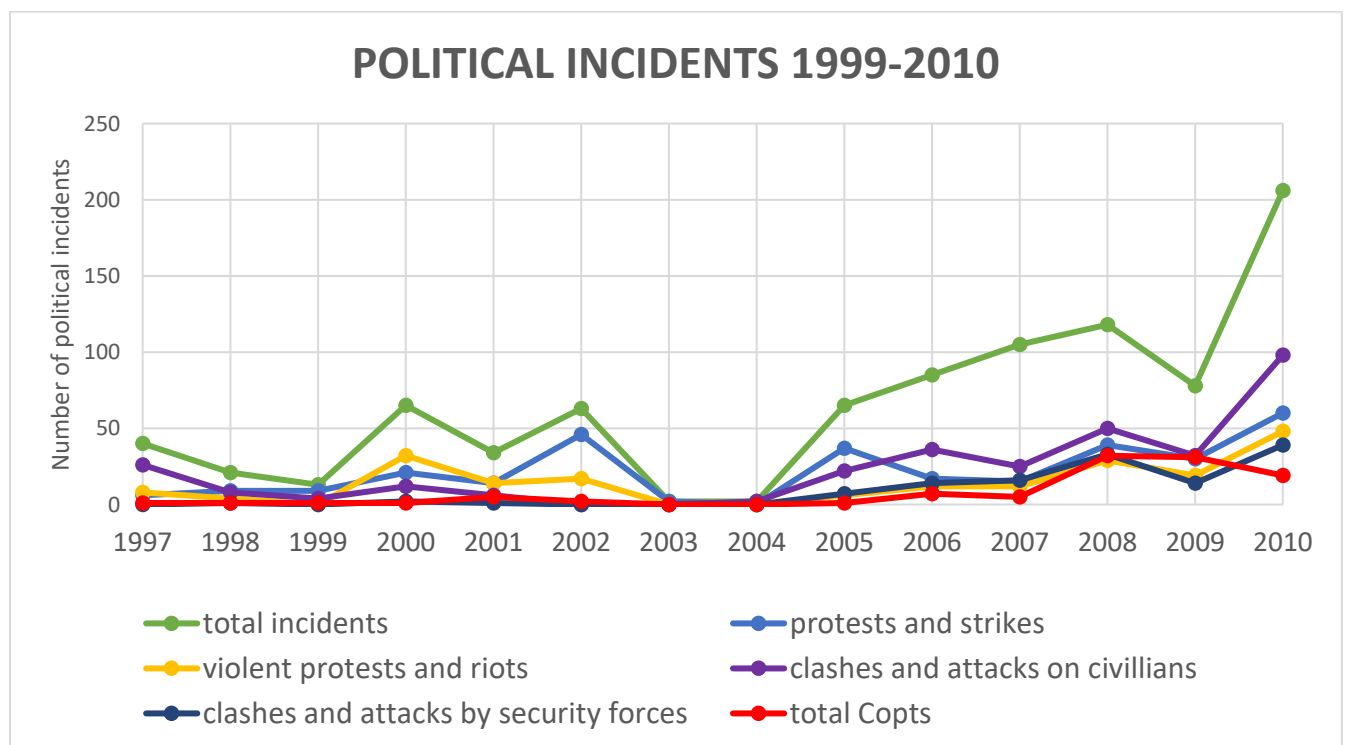
Graph IV-2: Political Incidents 1999-2010

COPTIC FATALITIES AS RESULT OF POLITICAL INCIDENTS 1997-2010
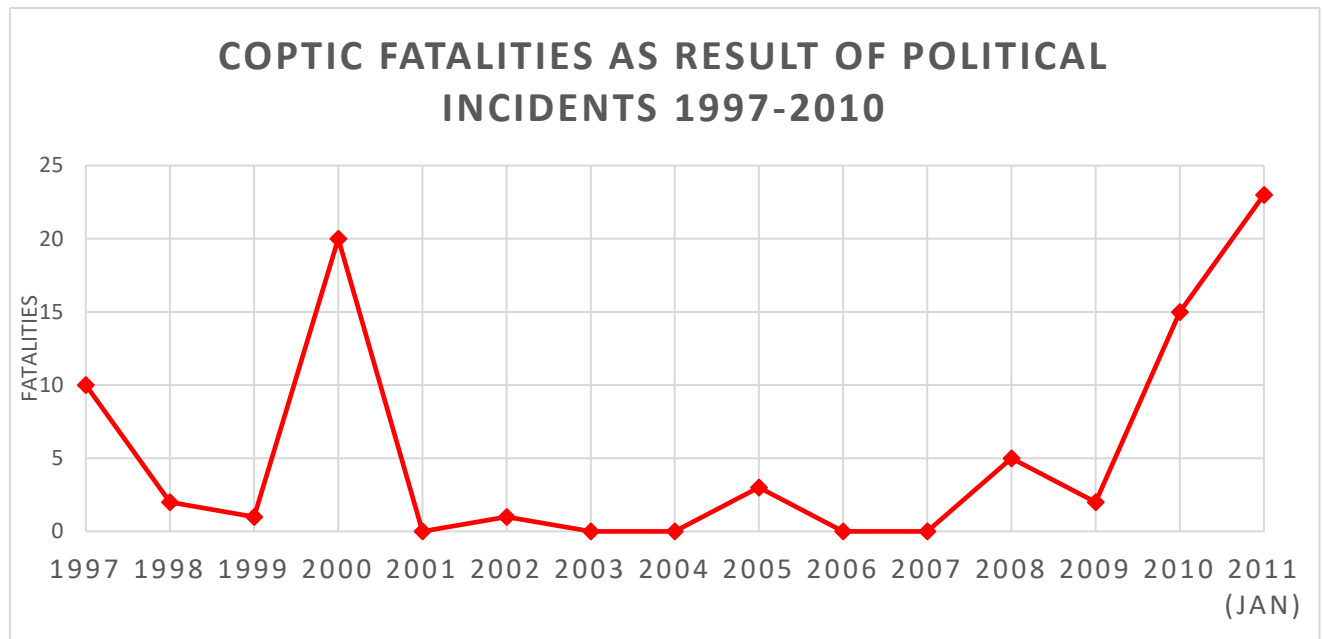
Graph IV-3: Coptic Fatalities 1997-2010

I. Laying down the foundations for Mubarak's regime consolidation

1. *Back to square one: electoral manipulation and broadening security*

By 2000, Mubarak had accomplished a few things to consolidate his rule. The country was still under emergency law (Blaydes, 2008, p. 58), which continued until his ouster (Auf, 2018). He made parliamentary elections a tool for rents distribution and secured hegemony for his National Democratic Party (NDP) (Blaydes, 2008, pp. 53-55), limited Muslim candidacy (Brownlee J. , 2007, pp. 124-126) and co-opted other existing parties through economic pressure or rewards all the while removing their outspoken members (Stacher, 2004, p. 232). Despite his manipulations, the MB managed to obtain seventeen parliamentary seats despite the increased repression they faced prior (Albrecht, 2013, pp. 137-138). Prior to the elections, the increase of riots was partly caused by electoral tensions regarding candidacy of various people.

It was also in this time that Mubarak had gradually implemented IMF reforms, but slower than either the US or the IMF would have liked. His tentativeness was due to fear of losing legitimacy among the working class (Bishara, 2018, p. 39), who were hit hardest with each new reform. Increasingly they were left dependent on government jobs from a progressively smaller public sector

(Blaydes, 2008, p. 121). While the working class suffered increasingly, he continued two of Sadat's coup-proofing strategies with regards to the security apparatus. Firstly, he expanded the paramilitary Central Security Forces (CSF) and police forces. Both were part of the Ministry of Interior, a rival to the Ministry of Defense in terms of state resources and an obstacle to any possible military coup because of their sizes, increasing elite dissatisfaction. Secondly, he give senior military officers top appointments in his bureaucracy post-retirement, allowing them to sell lands and companies; continuing the marriage between businessmen and the (retired) military (Nassif, 2015, pp. 261-262).

2. *Pre-9/11 foreign policy: nexus of domestic legitimacy and external support*

Mubarak's foreign policy was plagued with having to balance between pursuing policies in favor of Palestinians to maintain or increase domestic legitimacy, or pursuing pro-Israel policies to maintain US support. When Mubarak seemed to support Israel or the US, Egyptians disapproved of his support to US 'imperialist' actions in the Middle East (Abbott & Teti, 2016, p. 90). Many Islamist movements protested his support. After political attacks from fundamentalist Islamists in the early '90s, Mubarak introduced the broadly defined Anti-Terrorist Reform Act in 1992. With it, he could easily suppress citizen rights and political opposition in the name of safety. He did so by transferring cases to the Military and Emergency State Security Courts, where he could significantly influence their outcomes (Chiha, 2013, pp. 115-117). The US administration joined his anti-Islamist fight after the 1993 attacks on the World Trade Center, which were linked to Egyptian Islamists. As such, president Clinton was willing to look away as Mubarak surpassed Sadat in numbers of arrests and detentions; killing 1106 civilians in his fight against the Islamic Group (Brownlee J. , 2012, p. 61). The trend of anti-Israeli criticism on the regime continued in 2000: +/- 31% of protests were anti-Israeli nature, based on ACLED data. In suppressing these protests, Mubarak did not differentiate between moderate and extremist Islamists; he widely targeted any dissenters (El-Hasan & Hiskey, 2005, p. 115). Very important to note however, is that Mubarak never intended to fully eliminate the violent

branches of the Islamist threat: their existence gave him domestic legitimacy and external support (Hassan, 2003, p. 264), by portraying himself as the hero against terrorism.

Contrastingly, people were sympathetic and welcoming towards Islamists. Islam and these organizations were their only constant for help and relief in times of crisis and harsh repression under various Egyptian regimes (Al-Sayyid Marsot, 2007, pp. 172-173). Egyptians continued living in poverty due to lacking public resources, a vacuum which Islamic organizations such as the Islamic Group and the MB filled. In its cooperation with Egypt, the US foresaw the threat of fundamentalist Islamists to Mubarak's regime, and thus to its interests in the region. It was argued that quelling dissatisfaction would hinder Islamist growth. Further, it was advised that Egyptian economic development should be the first priority, which should be stimulated through all tools available, including international monetary organizations and international coalitions of financial donors, both private, public and non-governmental (Goedkoop, 1994, pp. 8-11), which would inform US aid over the years.

Widespread repression did result in a decrease of attacks on civilians between 1999 and 2004, as Graph IV-2 (purple line) demonstrates. Regime instability and damaged domestic legitimacy should have given way for increased low-level violence against Copts. However, Coptic out-group violence lessened for the first 20 years of Mubarak's regime in comparison to the Sadat era. One of the reasons was Mubarak's pursuit of Islamists, the other was Pope Shenouda's survival strategy.

II. A change in Coptic community survival tactics: agreeing to cooperate

Under Mubarak, Pope Shenouda changed community survival tactics. Instead of taking pursuing a hardened approach as he did under Sadat (Ansari, 1984, p. 416), he focused on organizational changes and continued the reinvigoration of church life through the Sunday School Movement. Henderson (2005) argues that the reorganization, which resulted in the appointing of four times more bishops, fostered a sense of protection for Copts. In addition, for Mubarak it meant

that dealing with Copts no longer meant dealing with a single Pope, but an institutional, well-organized, and unified community (p. 162). The Pope's approach consisted of three aspects: spiritual, social and political. Not only did the church and its leader become the political representative to the regime and Egyptian society, the church became a home for the social life next to the spiritual life as well. In addition, the ministry continued providing social services under Mubarak (McCallum, 2007). No longer did Copts have to rely on co-opted Coptic elites, who were perceived as being more interested in protecting their economic interests than fighting for equal rights (Sedra, 1999, p. 228).

Under Mubarak, Pope Shenouda pursued the millet system from the past. He signaled his change in strategy by sending two bishops to the US ahead of Mubarak's planned state visit, while still being under house arrest. These bishops convinced Coptic emigrants to greet Mubarak instead of protest him. This and other signaling resulted in his release in 1985. Mubarak, having seen the strategic relevance of Coptic support, especially in improving external support from the US, co-opted the church. He offered more church construction permits, that could be approved by governors instead of the President, in exchange for outspoken Coptic support. The millet system gave him autonomy over the Coptic community, and gave him the special privilege to nominate and appoint Copts in government quota-mandated positions, as well as cooperation from the security apparatus in times of sectarian violence (Tadros, 2009, pp. 278-279).

Pope Shenouda was willing to accept this trade because building churches had been a highly politicized venture ever since the introduction of the Azabi Pacha decree. The decree stipulates that building and renovating churches is only allowed after presidential approval of permits. Ten conditions could hinder permit approval, such as objections from local Muslims, the number of Copts living in the area, a mosque in 100m proximity of the intended site (which were often hastily built to deter permit approval once known), and more. When the permits passed these discriminatory restrictions, bureaucracy was slowed to such an extent that years-long delays made sure no more than five or ten per permits would be approved per year. In the past, the government had refrained

from improving on this issue, in fear of sparking sectarian unrest or appearing disloyal to Islamists

(Rowe, 2007). Thus, easing of the permit approval process was a worthy exchange. As such, Pope

Shenouda took up a non-confrontational approach to sectarian incidents as a result (Tadros, 2009, p.

277). He took on the 'national unity' discourse that argues for the integration of Copts in Egyptian

society instead of fighting for separate rights for his community (Sedra, 1999, p. 221). He addressed

cases of physical violence on Copts personally with the Minister of Interior. On a local level, bishops

would do the same with their governor. If there were good relations between bishop and governor,

grievances would be mitigated successfully (Hassan, 2003, p. 114). Despite these relative positive

developments, structural low-level violence in the form of HIs were not addressed. Most policy

changes with regards to Copts were superficial and symbolic. Coptic underrepresentation in local and

national politics, the media, university administrations and school curricula continued. Even as

extremist attacks by Islamists on Copts were met with resolute force by state security, the root of

such animosity was not battled effectively by the Mubarak regime (Barker, 2006, pp. 77-81).

III. 2000-2004: Copts, domestic legitimacy and external pressure

1. 2000 and 2004: The first cracks in the church-state cooperation

Pope Shenouda broke his silence after the Kosheh massacre in 2000, making it a significant

incident. In Kosheh, a Coptic-majority village, tensions arose because of a quarrel between a Muslim

and a Copt, which spiraled into the looting, destruction and burning of 260 Coptic-owned houses and

shops and the death of 20 Copts. The security apparatus had done too little to intervene. Right after

the massacre, Mubarak responded promptly in support of Copts, both in word and in action: all

seemed as though the church-state agreement, albeit damaged, was still intact (Strickert, 2000).

However, after the court hearing resulted in the blanket acquittal of 92 defendants and four

convictions of lesser crimes (Baker, 2001), Pope Shenouda publicly refused the outcome. His outright

criticism on the verdict, court proceedings and state security were unprecedented. Though the first

crack in the cooperation had shown, but Pope Shenouda's support still continued. It seemed to pay

off: between 2000 and 2005 there were limited political incidents involving Copts, as Graph IV-2 demonstrates, except for in 2004.

The Constantine crisis of 2004 started when the wife of a priest went to a police station to express her wish to convert to Islam. Normally, the Pope or a bishop would be informed to let the church resolve the case. Instead, she was taken up by the state security apparatus without informing anyone. Out of fear for her safety, Coptic protests erupted, resulting in clashes with the police. Because of failings from state security, the Pope openly accused them of mismanagement and directly appealed to the President for interference. Subsequently, Constantine was returned to the church safely (Tadros, 2009, p. 279). In that same year, Pope Shenouda went into seclusion to draw attention to Coptic grievances (BBC, 2004), another slight to the regime. Still, in the face of the 2005 election, he supported Mubarak.

IV. 2005-2007: Elections, a political opening, or not?

Graph IV-4 demonstrates US support in terms of aid in obligations[1], starting from 2000. External support is also shown in Graph IV-5, based on the PTS (2018). Important to note is that the US State Department first categorized Egypt as being on level 3, meaning there is extensive political imprisonment and that political brutality may occur. However, in 2005, it briefly moves into level 4. This indicates that civil and political rights have been rescinded for a large section of the population and that disappearances and torture are common. After 2006 Egypt is moved back down to level 3. These changes in aid and political terror have to do with 9/11, the War on Terror and Bush' freedom agenda, which he briefly tried to implement in Egypt in 2005, before abandoning that goal.

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[1] Aid in obligations: how much the US intended to give Egypt. Data on obligations is preferred over data on disbursements for two reasons: 1) data on US aid for Sadat is only available in obligations, and for consistency's sake we continue using this for Mubarak, 2) obligations also indicate political will, based on diplomatic negotiations and Congressional deliberations.

US AID IN OBLIGATIONS 1999-2011
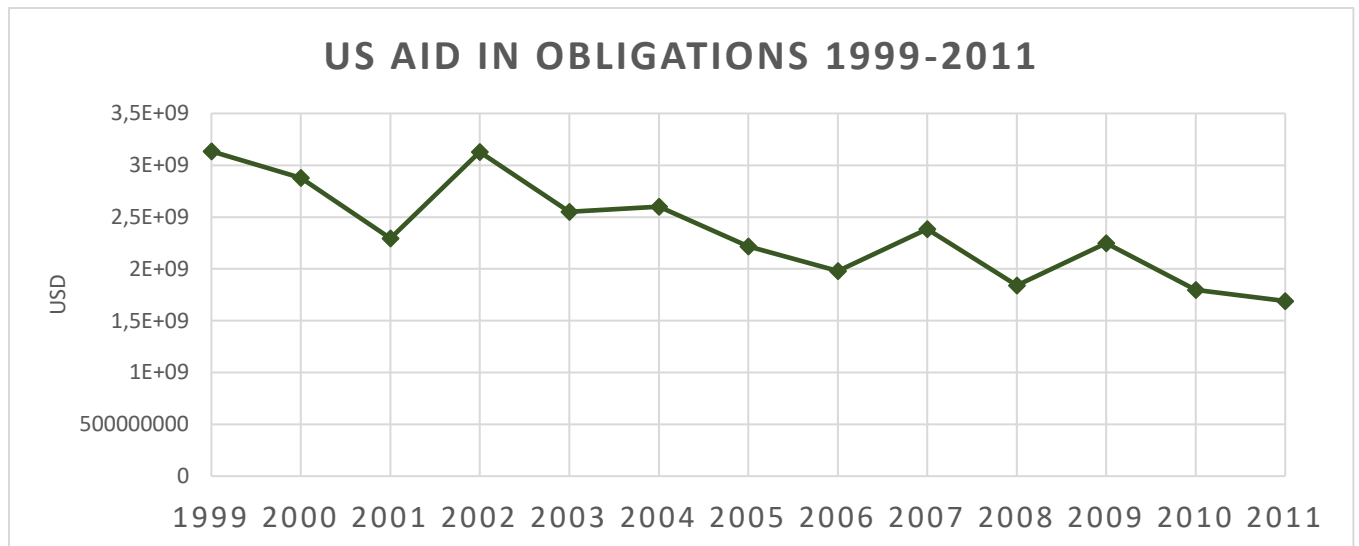
Graph IV-4: Obligations US Aid 1999-2011

POLITICAL TERROR AS DETERMINDED BY US STATE DEPARTMENT: 2000-2011
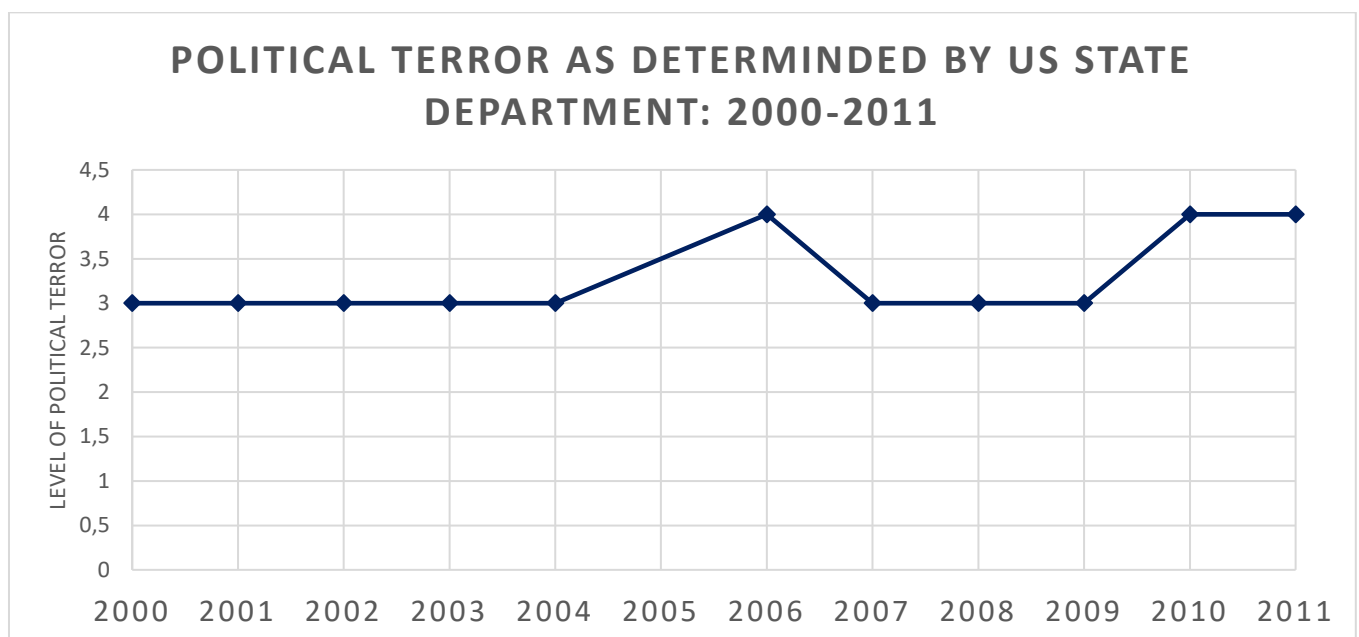
Graph IV-5: Political Terror Scale Egypt 2000-2011

Cooperation in between the US and Egypt increased after the terrorist attacks on the Twin Towers in the US in 2001 and the commencement of the 'War on Terror'. In the first few years of this war, the Bush administration was not willing to promote democratization in Egypt: US ambassador to Egypt reportedly said in 2002 that "the United States considers Egypt a friend and we don't put pressure on our friends" (Stacher, 2004, pp. 232-233). The Bush administration was focused on

retribution, until it needed to justify its intended war on Iraq: it did so under the notion that it would spread democracy as part of Bush' freedom agenda. US military action sparked protests in Egypt, with protesters demanding an official condemnation of the war. These were the first demonstrations that the regime had allowed so far. In an incredible show of opposition alliance, parties, unions and other leaders, including Pope Shenouda, denounced the war in solidarity with Palestinian, even calling for a stop of US aid to be accepted by Egypt (Benantar, 2007, pp. 233-237). Mubarak did not condemn the war (Albrecht, 2013, p. 151), because the US alliance was more important and beneficial than Arab solidarity (Benantar, 2007, p. 228). This choice damaged domestic legitimacy significantly. It has to be noted though that allowing this demonstration to take place was an interesting choice for Mubarak: perhaps made knowing that repressing it would have resulted in higher costs.

Two years into the Iraq war, Bush could not afford to ignore Egypt's human rights abuses any longer. US pressure became apparent in 2005. That year, domestic legitimacy and external pressure collided as the increase in protests revolved around the upcoming parliamentary and presidential elections. The Kifaya ('enough' in Arabic) movement began in December 2004, demanding an end to Mubarak's rule, and opposing the rumored possibility of Gamal Mubarak inheriting his father's position. Interestingly enough, security forces were present at the protest without breaking them up. Well into 2005, Kifaya went beyond Cairo, launching protests in fourteen cities at the same time, all decrying Mubarak's rule. Where protests normally were not allowed to directly criticize Mubarak himself, these protests specifically targeted him (Albrecht, 2013, pp. 72-73). Mubarak showed a surprising tolerance to these protests, and probable reason for this was US attention on Egypt.

1. *Resisting calls for democratization*

In 2005 president Bush appealed for Egyptian leadership in the region: "the great and proud nation of Egypt, which showed the way toward peace in the Middle East, can now show the way toward democracy in the Middle East" (Bush, 2005). In addition, Secretary of State Rice cancelled her

visit in protest of Ayman Nour's arrest, a leading opposition member (Brinkley, 2005). After this period of increased protests and US pressure for democratic reforms, Mubarak proposed a constitutional change: making it possible for multiple candidates to run for president. This would replace the presidential referendum held to determine the single candidate that is approved by parliament as president (BBC, 2005). Mubarak clearly chose to make this policy concession instead of using repression, the latter being too costly due to US scrutiny at the time.

The Pope could have viewed this as a window of opportunity to demand Coptic equality. Instead, he continued supporting Mubarak. Rather than staying out of politics, he used his position as political representative to actively endorse Mubarak as presidential candidate, calling upon Copts to vote unilaterally for the NDP and for Mubarak (Tadros, 2009, p. 276). He continued his non-confrontational approach, even after the 2005 Alexandria riots in which three Copts died at the hands of Muslim rioters. This makes sense according to Belge and Karakoç (2015): minorities whose status and security could be threatened should the regime democratize, will support authoritarian leaders more (p. 282). For Copts in Egypt, the Islamization of public life as a probable result of democratization would cost them the few freedoms they have, of which they had a taste under Sadat. Thus, Mubarak had secured Coptic support.

Despite US criticism, Mubarak was able to counter this internal and external pressure for democratization by managing expectations for both. As Youmans (2016) demonstrates, Mubarak made minimum and mostly symbolic changes, such as the constitutional change, in favor of democratization without honest follow through. He took on a paternal role with regards to democracy in Egypt: only gradual changes would be what Egypt was ready for, such as the very limited opening of presidential candidacy. In addition, Mubarak was able to exploit the hypocrisy of US foreign policy, knowing that US priorities lay with preserving the status quo. As Antar (2006) argues: these freer elections and the subsequent relative victory of the MB actually made the Bush administration abandon its spread of democracy in Egypt. In his positioning, Mubarak made the

choice to the Bush administration seem black-and-white: either it was his authoritarian rule, which would keep peace with Israel and continue close military cooperation, or it would be Islamist rule without these benefits. Thus, the limited participation of the MB actually stabilized the Mubarak regime (pp. 12-21), essentially curbing domestic and external pressure.

2. *2006, the start of the end: deteriorating Coptic relations as a result of domestic legitimacy*

2005 provided the political opening that sustained protests for the coming years until Mubarak's regime breakdown in 2010. Graph IV-6 shows how political incidents increased over the years. Interesting to note is that the clashes and attacks by security forces is on par with the trend of violent protests and riots, showing how the security apparatus was willing and able to step in. However, in 2009 that changes: security forces do not repress all riots and violent protests anymore. The same goes for number of arrests: where in 2006, there were more arrests of protestors, in 2008 these lessened significantly despite increased protests and riots. A few things happened in these years that facilitated regime breakdown later, which went hand in hand with increased violence against Copts: less US aid and a break in church-state relations.

POLITICAL INCIDENTS 2006-2010
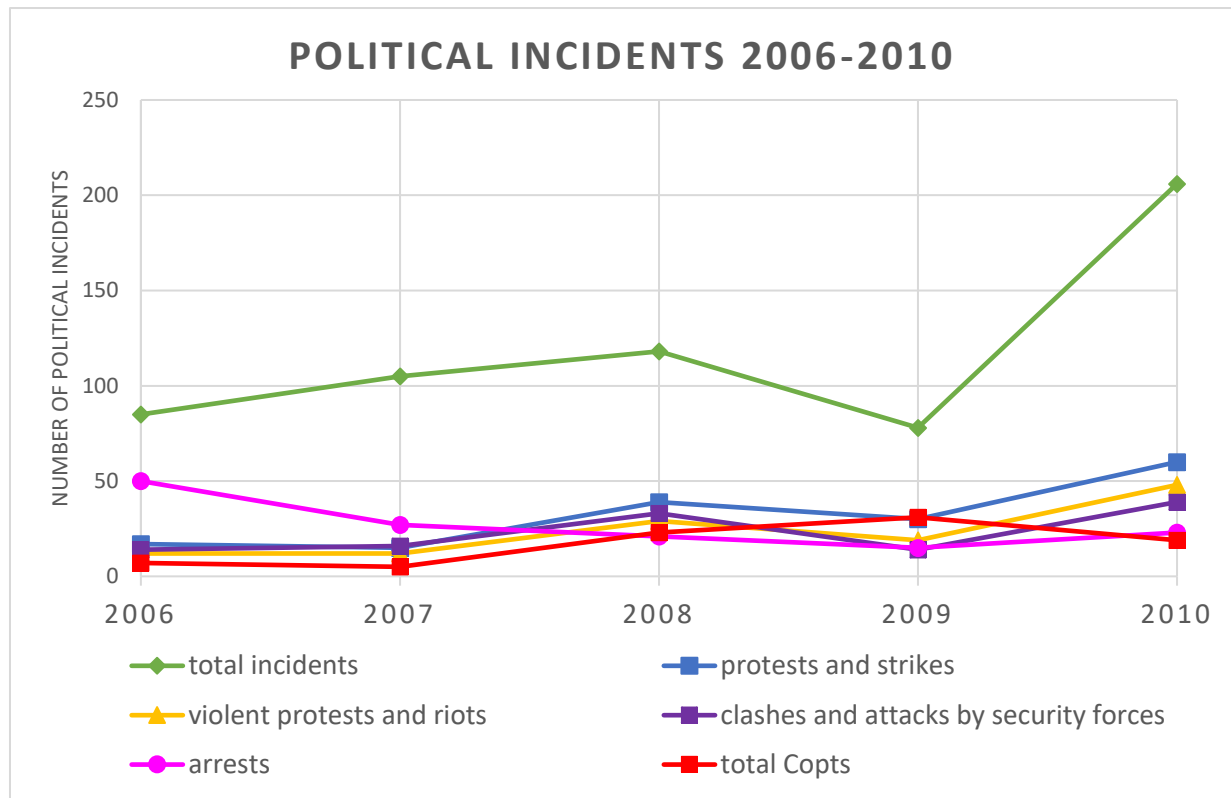
Graph IV-6: Political incidents, including police arrests 2006-2010

First, in 2006 Egypt received less US aid as a result of Congressional deliberations in 2005. The Foreign Relations Authorization Act 2006-2007 determined that despite the enormous economic assistance the US had provided, Egypt's economy and educational institutions were still underdeveloped, in combination with a very limited democratized political system. As a result, it decided that unless Egypt would improve, it would suspend or terminate the economic assistance altogether (US Congress (b), 2005). With less aid coming in, Mubarak enabled more economic liberalization. Bishara (2018) argues that the number of worker protests were tied to the pace of these economic policy implementations, which accelerated since 2004 (p. 39).

Popular dissatisfaction truly peaked in 2006 when a labor union, which was co-opted by the regime and became a regime-representative instead of worker-representative, did not deliver on its promises for its workers: 24,000 employees went on strike for three days to demand their bonuses. The regime tolerated these protests for three days before giving into their demands. Ali (2012) argues that this signaled a panic within the regime because it saw that the strike inspired others to

join (p. 19). Indeed, this started off many more protests and strikes that year: hurting Mubarak's legitimacy. This may explain Mubarak's refusal to uphold his end of the deal with Pope Shenouda in the 2006 Maximos affair.

3. An official break between church and regime

By law, the Ministry of Interior approves of church establishments and their permits. However, when priest Maximos established his own church parallel to the Coptic church and named himself archbishop, the Ministry seemed to support it instead of stopping it. The Coptic church made direct appeals to the regime and Mubarak, with little effect. Mubarak stated in a press conference that he does not interfere in religious affairs; a clear rebuff to the Pope. In response, Pope Shenouda signaled in a TV interview that Coptic support was unconditional or to be taken for granted if support for Maximos continued (Tadros, 2009, p. 281). Rowe's (2007) argument may be extended to this choice as well: Mubarak's hurt domestic legitimacy would have given him little room to openly support the church as was asked. Doing so could have sparked Muslim backlash. Contrastingly, perhaps this was a strategy to signal to the in-group his priorities and loyalties: both not being with the Copts. As a result, church-regime relations had been ruptured to such an extent that Pope Shenouda did not give his unilateral support for the NDP in local elections of that year. The next year, a riot targeting Copts prompted the Pope to discard his non-confrontational approach: he wrote an open letter to the president, accusing state security of complicity in sectarian violence. The letter was widely published and an embarrassment to the regime (Tadros, 2009, p. 281).

By now, the regime had to deal with increased dissatisfaction and a loss of US aid, perhaps the reason for his non-support for the church at the time. Mubarak was able to receive more US aid again in 2007 by implementing more US-IMF policies. Dissatisfaction however began to gain traction. People saw Mubarak's dependency on aid, which mostly served the military, as submissiveness to the US and the American-led IMF. Even elites felt that Egypt was under US control (Blaydes, 2008, p. 290). Inspired by strikes of 2006, more followed in 2007. Tactics changed when real-estate tax

collectors organized large sit-ins near government-buildings, moving away from the workplace. Since then, sit-ins at the center of decision-making became a regular occurrence, and as previously noted, were met with less arrests, and relatively little clashes with security forces. Bishara argues however, that the regime was not just tolerating this dissent, it was ignoring them by appearing dismissive of their demands, or insulting their intelligence. In doing so, the regime avoided true conversation with the mobilizers, and only offered small carrots which belittled them, to the indignation of protestors, fueling more mobilization (Bishara, pp. 67-72).

V. 2008-2010: the slow death of Copts and of the regime

1. Spiraling out of control

In, Mubarak had to deal once again with less US aid: in Bush' last year, aid decreased yet again when it became clear that aid meant to fund civil society, democracy, and governance programs had funded government activities instead (Stein, 2016, p. 28). US-relations had crumbled towards the end of the Bush administration. Obama's presidency starting in 2009 however, put Egypt back into its prided position as leader of the Arab world. It was clear that in Obama's attempt to improve Muslim-US relations, his administration would not admonish Mubarak and would even provide more aid (Brownlee J. , 2012, pp. 133-135). With external support secured, and thus the funds for his rents, Mubarak continued his policy of ignoring rising dissatisfaction. After dealing with disrupted water services in 2007, people in 2008 were dealing with diminished subsidies for flour and bread, without justification. This sparked large demonstrations in Fayum, and soon spread to other governorates. The protests only subsided when Mubarak made the army produce bread for distribution (Ali, 2012, p. 22).

In addition, church-regime relations had worsened to such an extent, that sectarian violence was on the rise from 2008 until the end of Mubarak's regime. It is no surprise that one of the governorates hardest hit with sectarian violence was Fayum, the place of demonstrations for subsidized bread. Other governorates in Upper Egypt, which have the most Copts, were also hit with

increased low-level violence targeting Copts according to the EIPR (2010). Having recorded sectarian incidents between 2008-2010, they determined there had been 53 incidents between January 2008 and January 2010, in 17 of 29 governorates. The biggest type of violence targeting Copts were acts of collective retribution. Secondly, Copts were targeted for engaging in their religion, not just by civilians, but also by state officials. Churches continued to be targeted, as well as Coptic-owned homes and businesses. EIPR's most interesting find was that the spread of rumors was significantly influential in inciting sectarian violence and their escalation, the most telling incident being the Nag Hammadi massacre in January 2010 (pp. 7-8).

Meanwhile, governors denied the existence of sectarian violence, viewing these incidents as security issues rather than sectarian. When there was intervention, it came from the security apparatus; Copts could not count on governor support anymore as they did before. In most cases, impunity was the outcome of criminal acts targeting Copts. Most incidents were followed by reconciliatory procedures that left perpetrators unpunished and victims insufficiently compensated and aided. Victims and perpetrators were forced to participate, as the Ministry of Interior made arbitrary arrests after the incidents and held people hostage, victim and perpetrator alike, until they surrendered their rights for proper procedure. Then, victims often had to withdraw their complaints and sign affidavits to confirm, while promising not to pursue legal proceedings or compensation. Meanwhile, perpetrators were assured that their crimes would leave no criminal record, and that they would not have to pay reparations. Before reconciliation occurs, incidents are either rapidly dispersed by state security, or left to breed for hours. In some cases, the police were involved in rioting against Copts when they were called to intervene on behalf of them. In others, police were unwilling to help Copts and protect their property, especially during times of collective retribution. In some cases, Copts were forcibly removed or temporarily expelled to appease Muslims in areas of violence (pp. 17-20).

Brownlee (2018) argues that this was to be explained by the idea of elevated Muslim primacy. When employed, the state facilitated professional and political advantages to Muslims, and enabled low-level violence targeting Copts to increase. Indeed, the longer Mubarak was in office, the more he employed this primacy (pp. 74-76). This tendency rose when Mubarak thought to gain domestic legitimacy or other gains by inviting anti-Copt conflict; similar to Sadat's motivation for excluding Copts (p. 78). However, Brownlee also translates this to the local level. Where bishops could count on support from the governor after sectarian violence in the early '00s, the breakdown of church-regime relations and Mubarak's needs for political legitimacy disrupted this. Indeed, governorates with large Coptic populations would have more conflicts during times of national volatility. Especially if their governors pursued Muslim primacy (regardless of their own identity). Governors who pursued shared 'Egyptian-ness' would have less sectarian violence on their hand (p. 85). This was the case with Coptic governor Ayyub in Qena. Due to his disinterest in protecting Copts equally to Muslims and signaling as such, he enabled escalation of private matters into sectarian ones in 2009 (pp. 81-82). Interestingly enough, Ayyub was installed as governor in 2005, perhaps as a result of Pope Shenouda's support for the NDP and Mubarak in that year. When rumors swirled regarding an accused Coptic rapist, a Muslim man held a drive-by shooting on Coptic Christmas eve in 2010, killing six Copts (EIPR, 2010, p. 10).

2. *A Fit of Rage*

In 2010, four developments took hold of Mubarak's regime in a fit of rage. First, El-Baradei, a Nobel Peace Prize awardee and diplomat, became massively popular among various opposition movements to run for president. Second, the tragic death of Khaled Said inspired inter-group solidarity and dissent among disillusioned Egyptians. It was said that he was targeted by police after he uploaded a video showing them seizing money in a drug bust, and after he refused to be extorted he was tortured to death (Ali, 2012, p. 22). Third, Mubarak's vote rigging in the 2010 elections resulted in a 97% win for the NDP. In response, the opposition organized a shadow parliament to

damage Mubarak's legitimacy. Mubarak responded as he did during previous protests: he ignored this and other showings of dissent. By 2010, it was reported that the streets in front of parliament looked like a "popular parliament", where different protests took place at the same time (Blaydes, 2008, p. 47).

The true, and final show of regime breakdown came just after the New Year of 2011: the Alexandria bombing killed 23 Copts. People took this as another sign that Mubarak was unable or unwilling to provide basic security. Some even speculated that the Minister of Interior had orchestrated this bombing together with Mubarak to spark sectarian violence in an attempt to divert attention away from regime failure (Brownlee J. , 2012, pp. 141-142). It did the opposite: Copts and Muslims alike protested against sectarianism and discrimination of Copts. In the meantime, official statements, including a joint public appearance from the Pope and Al-Azhar's Muslim leader, referred to 'foreign enemies' being the perpetrators; an excuse for the regime to justify its increased repression and security measures (Ali, 2012, p. 23). It was only days later that the 'Day of Rage' commenced on January 25, 2011: the official start of the Arab Spring. It was only weeks later that Copts could pray in public, while being protected by Muslims and vice versa (Alexander, 2011). Finally, a month later, Mubarak was ousted.

V. DISCUSSION AND CONCLUSION

I. Summary of observations and hypotheses validity

From process tracing the position of Copts under Sadat and Mubarak a few things become clear. Sadat and Mubarak both initially had very different approaches to increase domestic legitimacy, with differing outcomes. In addition, the strategy of the Coptic church also differed greatly under the two.

1. *Sadat*

Sadat used Islamist movements and militias to grow his legitimacy and gain control while increasingly targeting Copts and enabling others to do so as well. His legitimacy strategy confirms H1, the domestic legitimacy hypothesis. As Brownlee (2018) argues, Sadat used Muslim supremacy to gain domestic legitimacy. First this was done implicitly, but once Sadat began fostering Islamist movements to counter Nasserists and left-wing movements to increase legitimacy, he neglected Coptic treatment. Later on, he even bragged about knowing fundamentalist leaders personally. Fostering Islamist militias confirms the argument proposed by Mitchell et al (2014) that these gave Sadat room to blame any abuses on them without linking them to himself. Letting the violence happen knowingly was a way for Sadat to divert frustrations at the state and direct it towards Copts in the hopes that it would keep criticism off his regime. These findings are in line with Wilkinson's (2009) argument that leaders incite riots and create group antagonisms for their own political benefit.

As for H2, refusal of co-optation, we also find validity. Pope Shenouda took a took on a confrontational approach when it came to reaction to low-level violence of Copts and increasingly criticized Sadat, emboldening violence against Copts. With increased conspiracy theories and scapegoating of Copts, fatwas were approved to justify violence against Copts, while Sadat stimulated these developments. These findings are in line with mechanisms described by Horowitz (2001). Though his approach worked to a certain extent, the end of his regime was marked by critically low domestic legitimacy. Despite the high external support following the Camp David Accords, Sadat still employed violence against Copts to gain legitimacy. Therefore, validity is not found for H3 in the case of Sadat.

2. *Mubarak*

Contrastingly, Mubarak quelled Islamist movements over time, but deliberately did not eliminate them. Similar to Sadat, he deployed massive repression to unlawfully jail dissenters,

Mubarak mostly justifying this in the name of anti-terrorism, following Edel and Josua's (2018) argument that terrorism justifies increased repression. Under Mubarak, Pope Shenouda took the non-confrontational route and pursued the millet-system that would grant him autonomy over the community, part of Wintrobe's (1998) described special out-group privilege. In exchange the Pope would give outspoken support for the regime. A cooperation between church-regime commenced, which first resulted in a decrease of low-level violence. However, the longer Mubarak was in office, the more he employed Muslim supremacy in an effort to gain domestic legitimacy in times of increased protests and riots. This trend started in 2005 but gained traction in 2006 after the Maximos affair, which signaled a clear break of the church-regime cooperation. 2005 was a year of increased protests, an indication of unstable domestic legitimacy. Due to US scrutiny in that year, Mubarak tolerated these protests, not only for that year, but the years after as well. The choice to do so confirms Shadmehr's (2014) argument that HCAs consciously choose between concession and repression as Mubarak did in 2005. It also confirms Tarrow's (1998) argument that allowing limited protests without repression prevents outraged mobilization. Thus, validity for H1 is found.

Validity for H2, is harder to determine. Though the Pope openly opposed Egypt's support for the war in Iraq, he was not alone in doing so: it is not clear if Mubarak interpreted this as treason to the church-regime cooperation, and thus a refusal of co-optation. It is unclear if this motivated the Maximos affair to occur, result in a break of the cooperation. Still, the Pope used the national unity discourse all the way through, even after Mubarak's ouster, which should have signaled that Copts were still in support of the regime despite increased sectarian attacks.

In the first half of the '00s external support for Mubarak was stable. However, from 2005 onwards this fluctuated according to US wishes for more democratization and liberalism in Egypt. Pope Shenouda's support in these years did not warrant extra US attention on out-group treatment. In fact, Pope Shenouda's support gave way for external support. In addition, Mubarak successfully countered Bush' democratization agenda for Egypt resulting in Bush abandoning the idea altogether.

Generally, Egypt's strategic importance to US regional interests were too high to pressure Egypt into democratization to the benefit of Copts: H3 cannot be confirmed nor denied.

In sum, the biggest factor for out-group treatment seems to be domestic legitimacy: decreased legitimacy often translated into more sectarian violence. Refusal to be co-opted clearly resulted in more sectarian violence under Sadat. However, the case of Mubarak makes unclear what can be construed as refusal of co-optation. Is the slightest disagreement grounds for worsening out-group treatment? Lastly, external support wavered very little in the case of Egypt due to its strategic importance, making it unclear if out-group treatment would change if external support truly diminished.

II. Wider implications and Limitations

This thesis shows how the three factors for out-group treatment are interlinked and have an effect on regime stability: authoritarian leaders change out-group treatment according to the needs of their stability, the biggest need being domestic legitimacy. Despite varying validity of the hypotheses, this research has been able to unify the different arguments regarding out-group treatment in authoritarian regimes, turning them into a coherent theory named the stoking fire theory. It is the first step in arguing that low-level violence, perpetrated by state and citizen, is used for strategic purposes, as others have argued for mass violence. The insights in the nexus between the three factors for out-group treatment can help foreign policy makers in determining finding the best timing to pressure HCAs for democratization, if that is truly their pursuit, and when to support an out-group without becoming the topic of rumored 'evil' relations between out-group and democratic supporter. More importantly, by understanding how their position is used by autocrats, out-groups may better understand their predicament at a given time. Understanding their behavior and the changing needs of an HCA, they may be better able to see increased violence coming, giving them the chance to defend themselves against it.

There are significant limitations to this study. The reliability of this data is compromised due to a data gap and incongruence between datasets reporting political incidents for the Mubarak regime. Though this way mitigated by combining datasets, inaccuracy in numbers is unavoidable. Some years were not recorded as meticulously, as a result data was added based academic research for some years. In addition, when there were significant changes in out-group treatment, research was not always able to recover the cause for this. Probable assumptions were sometimes necessary to find a link, as the black box that is an authoritarian regime did not always give way for understanding specific leadership choices made. Lastly, the power of the authoritarian leader has also been assumed to be large: no clear distinction has been made between Mubarak and the security apparatus, making any failures on part of the latter equal to failures of Mubarak.

1. *Future research*

In terms of future research, it would be logical to test the same hypotheses under the Sisi regime as it is one that faces less external support from the Trump administration and varying domestic legitimacy. The 2015 Coptic massacre in Libya might prove to give new insights into the usage of Copts as a tool for domestic legitimacy and external support. In addition, it would be worthwhile to test these hypotheses in a different regime with an out-group that is less centralized and visible.

VI.   APPENDIX

A.   POLITICAL INCIDENTS EGYPT 1997-2010

year	total incidents	protests and strikes	violent protests and riots	riots involving Copts	clashes and attacks on civillians	clashes and attacks by security forces	arrests	against Copts	total Copts
1997	40	6	8	0	26	0		1	1
1998	21	9	4	0	8	1		1	1
1999	13	9	0	0	4	0		1	1
2000	65	21	32	1	12	2		0	1
2001	34	14	14	2	6	1		0	5
2002	63	46	17	2	0	0		0	2
2003	2	2	0	0	0	0		0	0
2004	2	0	0	0	2	0		0	0
2005	65	37	6	1	22	7	30	0	1
2006	85	17	12	2	36	14	50	4	7
2007	105	15	12	5	25	16	27	0	5
2008	118	39	29	2	50	33	21	2	23
2009	78	30	19	5	32	14	15	2	31
2010	206	60	48	8	98	39	23	2	19

Table 1: Categorized Political incidents 19997-2010

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