THE POLITICAL PSYCHOLOGY
OF REPRESSION AND POLARIZATION
IN AUTHORITARIAN REGIMES

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ABSTRACT

Polarization – defined as the difference in policy preferences along the salient axis of political competition – among non-regime elite actors has important consequences for successful democratic consolidation during authoritarian transitions. However, existing theories fail to explain why elites emerge more or less polarized from authoritarian contexts. In this dissertation, I develop an original two-stage theory of how the repression of opposition groups that defines authoritarian regimes affects processes of polarization in these systems. The theory builds on social psychology findings about the causes and consequences of group identification to posit that the nature of repression – whether it targets a specific group, or is more widespread – alters group members’ level of in-group identification, in turn affecting the distance between groups’ political preferences, and ultimately shaping the distribution of preferences and aggregate levels of polarization among these groups. I bring a variety of mixed methods evidence to support and test the theory. First, I present evidence from case studies of Egypt and Tunisia. Egypt serves as a case of targeted repression against a single opposition group, the Muslim Brotherhood, under authoritarian president Hosni Mubarak between 1981 and 2011, while Tunisia serves as a case of widespread repression against opposition groups under Zine el-‘Abidine Ben ‘Ali between 1987 and 2011. My theory helps to explain why elite actors converged and compromised in Tunisia, but failed to do so in Egypt following the “Arab Spring” uprisings. Second, I present lab experiments conducted in Tunis, Tunisia, in May 2016. The results demonstrate that informational primes of targeted repression increase the distance between groups’ policy preferences, while informational primes of widespread repression decrease this distance relative to a placebo control. Additional analyses demonstrate that in-group identification mediates the observed relationship between repression and polarization. Finally, I present evidence from former Soviet Bloc countries, demonstrating a correlation between variation in pre-transition repression and post-transition levels of polarization. I conclude with implications for the
literature on democratic transitions and emphasize the analytical importance of considering
the psychological and political legacies of authoritarian repression on subsequent political
developments.
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Introduction

Beginning in December 2010, the Middle East witnessed unprecedented mass uprisings popularly known as the “Arab Spring.” In their wake, four long-term authoritarian presidents were no longer in power, including Egypt’s Hosni Mubarak and Tunisia’s Zine el-‘Abidine Ben ‘Ali, both of whom resigned after weeks of unrelenting protests. Egypt and Tunisia initially underwent similar transitions. The resignations of the long-ruling authoritarian presidents empowered elites who had previously mobilized as opposition parties against the regime. They were elected to national constituent assemblies charged with drafting new constitutions and putting in place the rules and timelines for holding first legislative and presidential elections. In both countries, the religious-secular cleavage was the salient dimension of contestation, and Islamist parties, important members of the previous regime’s opposition, won 37% of the constituent assembly elections.

However, within three years of the transition, the two countries were in vastly different situations. In Egypt, secular parties walked out of the December 2012 constitutional proceedings after significant disagreements over the text and content, leaving representatives from the Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated Freedom and Justice Party with significant control over drafting and passing the constitution. Tension continued to increase between elites under Muslim Brotherhood-affiliated president Mohamed Morsi, elected in June 2012. Division among elites, and the subsequent defection of secular politicians, opened the door for a military coup in July 2013. By the next year, authoritarian retrenchment was well under
way. The Brotherhood was banned from politics and named a terrorist organization after a brutal regime crackdown on the organization and its supporters, culminating in the August 2013 Rabaa massacre which left close to 1,400 dead and 16,000 detained, and in May 2014, Army General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi was elected president in a typical authoritarian election, complete with opposition boycotts and a result of over 96% of votes cast in favor of the candidate.

Meanwhile in Tunisia, an inclusive constitution was passed in January 2014 with support from all major political groups despite a number of false starts, difficult debates, and the terrifying assassinations of two leftist politicians which had forcibly extending the national constituent assembly’s one-year mandate to a three-year period. Between October 2014 and January 2015, the country held second elections, its first post-authoritarian legislative and presidential elections. Tunisia then saw its first successful transfer of power through the ballot box when Islamist and former opposition party Ennahda lost to Nidaa Tounes, a newly formed party including many former regime members and united by an anti-Islamist platform. Tunisia continues to progress towards democratic consolidation despite a number of significant economic and security challenges, and is scheduled to hold municipal elections in December 2017.

Existing literature offers important insights for making sense of the divergence in trajectories for Egypt and Tunisia. Elite cooperation during a democratic transition is a major determinant of successful democratic consolidation (Rustow 1970; O’Donnell and Schmitter 1986; Di Palma 1990), crucial in the moment between the transition from one regime and the consolidation of another. Further, the level of political polarization among elite actors – particularly non-regime, opposition elites – is an important component of elite compromise and cooperative behaviors (Haggard and Kaufman 1995; Huntington 1984). Political polarization, or the distance in parties’ policy preferences on salient issues of contestation, conditions this cooperative behavior. A higher degree of polarization makes it less likely that actors will compromise and cooperate over fundamental questions of identity and pro-
procedure during moments critical to the success of democratic consolidation (for example, see Linz and Stepan (1996); Kitschelt et al. (1999); McFaul (2002); Mainwaring, O’Donnell, and Valenzuela (1992); O’Donnell and Schmitter (1986); Przeworski (1991); Brownlee, Masoud, and Reynolds (2013)). And indeed, as will be demonstrated in the following chapters, Egypt and Tunisia saw different levels of polarization during their transitions. In Egypt, legacy opposition parties were more extreme in their policy preferences, compared with a more centrist distribution in Tunisia on the salient axis of competition and debate during these initial periods – that of religion and politics in the political and public sphere.

Yet despite the centrality of political polarization in these explanations, scholarly work leaves unexplained the process by which different levels of polarization occur under authoritarian regimes. The transitology literature references the importance of polarization at the moment of transition without developing a robust theory of its origins as a product of authoritarian periods and contexts. The brief explanations put forward mirror existing theories of polarization, in which either the structural characteristics of political systems, or the strategic and ideological components of political actors, determine political preferences and resulting levels of polarization. Theories of polarization notably ignore established processes of preference formation. A foundational literature in psychology tells us that both context and resulting group identities matter for the way individuals form and update preferences. By failing to take this process into account, existing theories do not adequately explain how authoritarian contexts affect preference formation and resulting polarization. Authoritarian contexts are defined by repression, or severe state control of both society and politics (Linz 2000). These environments are thus rendered fundamentally different from democratic ones, which grant a high level of autonomy to elites in mobilizing underlying

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1 DiMaggio, Evans, and Bryson (1996) note that in academic literature, the term ‘polarization’ can refer both to a state of preference distribution at a given point in time, as well as to a process through which groups grow more (or less) distinct in preferences over time. I use the word in both ways. In 2011, there existed a level of polarization between parties’ preferences, measured at a single moment in time. In addition, I trace processes of polarization, documenting changes in the distance between groups’ policy preferences over time.
cleavages, and where the majority of studies testing and building theories of polarization processes are conducted. Although political scientists understand that individual preferences are conditioned by the context in which they are formed (Katzenelson and Weingast 2005), scholars have overlooked the effects of the very hallmark of authoritarian governance – state repression of opposition elites – on the formation of elite preferences and polarization.

In identifying this lacuna, I seek to contribute to a growing literature which endogenizes post-authoritarian political and party systems, political polarization, and political behaviors to the institutional conditions under which they form (Grzymala-Busse 2007; Hicken and Kuhonta 2015; Kalyvas 2006; Mainwaring 1989; Riedl 2014), expanding its scope to consider the influence of authoritarian repressive contexts. Exploring the effects of state repressive behavior is central to tracing how cleavages are translated into political contestation within authoritarian contexts, and to understanding how authoritarian states can exacerbate differences in preferences and set the stage for cooperation among groups during transition periods. In this dissertation, I develop and empirically test a two-stage theory of how the repression that defines authoritarian regimes affects processes of polarization in these systems, and affects levels of polarization at moments of transition. I argue that repression affects how actors come to identify themselves, shaping related political preferences and the distribution of these preferences among political elites as well as conditioning the likelihood of cooperative behavior among them. My theory builds on insights from social psychology on the causes and consequences of group identification, and centrally features lived experiences of repression. The nature of repression – i.e., whether it is targeted at a specific opposition group or pervasive and widespread across all opposition groups – varies across cases. Widespread repression decreases within-group identification within opposition groups, which in turn decreases polarization in political preferences among these elites. Targeted repression, following the logic of divide-and-conquer, increases polarization across the opposition. Repression, therefore, influences group identity and related preferences among
the opposition, thereby determining the level of preference polarization in the moment of transition from authoritarianism.

When a certain group is targeted exclusively, traumatic experiences borne of repression serve to strengthen in-group identification. Increased in-group identification then initiates well-established processes of group differentiation (Turner 1978; Brown 1984; Brewer and Brown 1998), resulting in increased political polarization as the targeted group seeks to distinguish itself from other groups along its defining characteristic. For a political group, this defining characteristic is its relative policy preference positioning (Greene 2004). Processes of group differentiation resulting from experiences of repression help to explain shifts over time and long-term cumulative changes in political polarization under systems of targeted repression. In contrast, when groups are jointly affected within a widespread repressive environment, repressive experiences are shared and do not increase in-group identification. Indeed, shared experiences, in exposing multiple groups to the same trauma, can even serve to change the reference group for identity formation from the particular in-group to the larger collective of opposition groups, strengthening intra-group identity. The relative strength of these identities does not activate processes of group differentiation, and groups increasingly find points of agreement and commonality rather than emphasizing differences on defining characteristics and positions.

In this chapter, I engage the existing literature in which I situate my inquiry: on successful democratic consolidation after authoritarian transitions, on the sources and processes of polarization, and on repression. I highlight their current state and limitations, and underline how focusing analysis on the determinants and consequences of political actors’ identities, formed through lived experiences of a given political context, best helps us to understand political preferences, aggregate polarization, and related political behavior and outcomes. I then introduce an approach which prioritizes a focus on processes of preference formation to theorize the effects of authoritarian repressive contexts. Specifically, I incorporate theories and findings from social psychology on shared trauma, identity formation,
and processes of group differentiation to theorize how experiences of repression exacerbate polarization among opposition groups. I conclude the chapter by outlining the plan of study for the rest of the dissertation.

**Elite Polarization and Democratic Consolidation**

History attests that democratic transitions from authoritarian regimes do not always lead to successful democratic consolidation. O’Donnell and Schmitter (1986, 6) define transition as “the interval between one political regime and another... transitions are delimited, on the one side, by the launching of the process of dissolution of an authoritarian regime and, on the other, by the installation of some form of democracy, the return to some form of authoritarian rule, or the emergence of a revolutionary alternative.” The definition itself betrays the multitude of outcomes that can result from a destabilized regime, rather than automatic progression from the initial phase of transition to consolidation. The central question concerning transitology studies is what facilitates a political system’s progression from the initial phase of transition to the second phase of consolidation.

Answers to this question fall into two categories: structural and contingent (or process-based) explanations. In structural explanations, scholars focus on how the form of socio-economic institutions facilitates the successful consolidation of a democratic transition. Structural theories were among the first defining debates of the discipline in the mid-twentieth century, and resurfaced to explain variation in successful democratic consolidation during the Third Wave. Here, aggregate phenomena, such as economic development and accompanying levels of urbanization, wealth, and education, facilitated by large historical processes of technological innovation and industrialization, create social institutions and forces that are thought to promote democracy (Lipset 1969; Rueschemeyer, Stephens, and Stephens 1992) and which have been subsequently found to increase the likelihood of consolidation as well (Boix and Stokes 2003; Epstein et al. 2006; Kennedy 2010). Higher scores on these measurements, particularly those of economic development, provide more
fertile ground for democracy to take hold (Diamond 1999; Huntington 1984). These structures and the interests they create are then reflected in actors’ – particularly elite actors’ – behavior (Lipset and Rokkan 1967).

The benefits of the structural approach are many. They approach uses concrete and enduring features of society that can be easily observed, described, and measured, and which lend themselves to country-level analyses and comparisons of the likelihood of democratic consolidation across cases. However, structural arguments have been correctly critiqued as pre-conditions or pre-requisites, rather than actual causes, of democratization and democratic consolidation; they may be necessary but are not sufficient. For one, successful democratization and consolidation have occurred at various levels of development and modernization, failing in contexts where structural theories would predict success and vice versa (Przeworski and Limongi 1997). In addition, it is not clear exactly how structural conditions affect democratic consolidation, and a number of linking steps and mechanisms must be assumed in these arguments. For example, to convincingly demonstrate that the level of development and the existence of a robust middle class facilitates democratic consolidation, a cross-national study must demonstrate that universally, “members of this class share a common political interest, that they act cohesively to express it, and perhaps most important, that they possess political instruments – like business associations or political parties – through which to aggregate preferences” (Bratton and van de Walle 1997, 22) – a standard that few studies meet. Structural theories thus may be helpful for generalizing important pre-conditions that are correlated with democratic consolidation, but they do not adequately explain how these factors matter during moments of transition.

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2 In addition, particular formations of these scores, such as a certain kind of class distribution (Moore 1993) or capital (Huntington 1984), make certain environments even more conducive to democratic consolidation.

3 As Bratton and van de Walle (1997, 23) continue, “a structural approach therefore is useful in explaining no more than the outer parameters of political transitions. For example, it may help to answer whether an old authoritarian regime will endure, or help to predict the kind of political equilibrium that will prevail after a transition is over. But a structural approach can never account for the cut and thrust of events during interludes between regimes, or play more than a partial role in foreseeing whether any given transition attempt will result in the installation of a democratic government.”
In answer to these critiques, explanations of contingency focus analysis on processes during democratic transitions, and prioritize the decisions and behavior of individual political actors. Instead of being predetermined, the progression of a transition to a democratic consolidation is contingent on compromise and cooperation by elite actors during the moment of transition (Kitschelt 1992; Schmitter 1995; Mainwaring, O'Donnell, and Valenzuela 1992). As Best (2010, 11) writes, “in these [transitional] moments, the fate of societies and politics depends on the willingness and ability to bring about comprehensive elite settlements which avoid the use of violence and the outbreak of outright civil war and which forge an agreement on the basic design of a new institutional order for the power system of a given society and polity” (see also Higley and Lengyel (2000) and Higley and Burton (2006)). The seminal article by Rustow (1970, 356) similarly argues that in crucial moments of transition regarding the course, substance, and procedures of a new regime, “a small circle of leaders is likely to play a disproportionate role.”

The way in which elite behavior – and which elites’ behavior – matters varies by the type of transition a country experiences. In transitions by extrication, negotiation, and pact- or bargain-making, like those observed during the third wave of democratization in Latin America, regimes negotiate either their full exit or increased liberalization as a means of survival in the face of economic, social, or political turmoil (O’Donnell and Schmitter 1986, 19). The elites under analysis in these cases are both regime and non-regime elite political actors, who negotiate on behalf of regime and opposition interests, respectively. In contrast, a transition from below, one initiated by extra-political forces, such as rapid mass mobilization that quickly destabilizes the system and removes the authoritarian leader and ruling party from power, requires different kinds of behavior from different elites. In these transitions by rupture (Rustow 1970; Share 1987), more common to transitions in Eastern Europe, Africa, and those observed recently in the Middle East, the old regime may not be completely removed from the political sphere, but former regime actors are largely absent from negotiations during the subsequent transition, whether by legal fiat or
the collapse of the old party structure. Non-regime political elites, including the opposition to the former regime, are charged with leading negotiations and making decisions during this period (Loxton 2016; Haggard and Kaufman 2016), and their collective (in)ability to compromise on issues of substance and procedure have clear and measurable effects on the progression of a democratic transition.

Contingency explanations are less parsimonious than long-existing structural determinants, but may be more useful for understanding the period of fluctuation that is a transition period. Successfully navigating a democratic transition entails debating and ultimately finding consensus on difficult, complex problems that both have history and that must be made new again. Chomiak (2016, 14) writes that in these situations, elites “have to construct an entirely new socio-political edifice, and thus debates surrounding the (re)definition of the state, as well as the relationship between citizen and state, figure prominently.” During transitions from staunch authoritarian regimes, elites debate how to define the state, distribute power in a more egalitarian manner, and protect against the future replication of past abuses at the hands of the state. These periods of flux include battles over how to delineate citizenship, which rights are affiliated with that citizenship, and what role the state will play in protecting those rights (O’Donnell and Schmitter 1986). While regular politics is an on-going negotiation with a shorter time horizon, establishing a new regime with a new constitution is a judgment with a very difficult course of appeal (Elkins, Ginsburg, and Melton 2009). In these processes so crucial to a transition, the stakes are higher, because they are meant to last longer and because they center on the nature of a state, a compromise which must be reached before discussing how that state will function and perform its role.

Elite negotiation, compromise, and cooperation, and the decisions made by elite actors which facilitate these processes, are thus of the utmost importance in the progression of a democratic transition towards democratic consolidation. But the question remains: how do political elites come to hold their political preferences, so central to their ability to
compromise, in these situations of transition? And what accounts for the level of polarization in political preferences across these groups?

Existing Explanations for Elite Polarization

In contingent theories of authoritarian transitions, the level of polarization, or the distance in policy preferences among politically relevant groups on salient issues of contestation,\(^4\) conditions the cooperative elite behavior that is so important for successful, contingent outcomes. A higher degree of polarization is found to decrease the likelihood that actors will compromise and cooperate over fundamental questions of identity and procedure during moments critical to the success of democratic consolidation (for example, see Kitschelt et al. (1999); Linz and Stepan (1978); McFaul (2002); Mainwaring, O’Donnell, and Valenzuela (1992); O’Donnell and Schmitter (1986); Przeworski (1991)). Pre-existing policy preferences serve as anchor points, and can prevent certain coalitions from forming and certain compromises from being reached. However, although the level of polarization among elites is cited as an important determinant of cooperative behavior, these studies do not adequately investigate the origins of this polarization. Turning to existing theories of sources and processes of polarization, explanations fall into three schools of thought: structural, strategic, and ideological.

In structural explanations, polarization is a reflection of factors external to the political system – namely, underlying social, political, and economic cleavages among society including divides along lines of class, sector, region, ethnicity, or conceptions of religion and state (Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Evans and Whitefield 2000; Deegan-Krause 2006). Polarization is assumed to be an objective representation of structural differences in society (Haggard and Kaufman 2016). Nation-building processes such as state consolidation, develop-

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\(^4\) Transitologists use the term polarization without defining the term; a variation on the same theme includes phrases such as “consensual unity” (Higley and Burton 1989). Despite a variety of definitions, a measurement of polarization is intended to capture the relative policy preference distribution of a system’s competitive parties, and is accepted as an indicator of differences in policy preference placement across competitive groups.
velopment, modernization, industrialization, and incorporation of territory create underlying cleavages and objective divisions among society, which determine placement and preferences of politically relevant actors. These differences, in turn, create the political placement and relative distribution of elite actors, who mobilize and represent these interests in political competition (Lipset and Rokkan 1967; Evans and Whitefield 2000; Deegan-Krause 2006). Variation in the distribution of preferences across cases thus stems from different underlying cleavage structures; cross-national variation in levels of polarization is attributed to varying levels of economic and political development (Sigelman and Yough 1978; Lupu and Riedl 2013; Brownlee, Masoud, and Reynolds 2013). Increased polarization in policy preferences is the result of shifting underlying cleavages.\(^5\)

In strategic explanations, parties still create platforms reflecting underlying cleavages, but party placement is ultimately not a direct reflection of those cleavages. Instead, internal aspects of the political system can interfere with how the distribution of societal cleavages aggregates up to create political polarization. Influential internal aspects are those features which define the internal workings of the political system, primarily electoral rules and institutions. These rules and norms complicate the translation of interests into political competition and enhance or diminish polarization (Sartori 1969; Cox 1987; Adams and Somer-Topcu 2009) – for example, by requiring certain thresholds for participation and thus forcing certain partnerships and strategic placement by elites. A third and final set of polarization explanations focus on parties’ motivating ideologies. These theories often focus on parties with religious or radical ideologies.\(^6\) In these explanations, ideological placement determines preferences (Huntington 1991) and structures aggregate levels of polarization (Przeworski and Sprague 1986; Mainwaring, O’Donnell, and Valenzuela 1992). Ideology is

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\(^5\) For example, Ura and Ellis (2011) and McCarty, Poole, and Rosenthal (2006) analyze how shifts in economic disparities and related social environments shaped policy preferences and levels of polarization in these preferences over time.

\(^6\) These parties include the Islamist ones analyzed in this dissertation project. Much of the argument underpinning in the inclusion-moderation theories that seek to explain changes in Islamist ideology and behavior over time and once participating in electoral institutions, however limited, in the Middle East.
fairly constant and changes only as a result of parties’ inclusion in electoral competition. This inclusion exposes the previously excluded actors to other ideologies and democratic procedures, which updates the groups’ preferences and results in observably changed behavior (Clark 2006; Wickham 2004).

The established explanations summarized above are important to understand because they dominate thinking about how party placement is determined and how polarization occurs. Yet each approach proves severely lacking when applied to empirical evidence. For example, structural accounts are framed as explanations for preferences, but often fail to explicitly define the causal link between structure and preference formation. Katznelson and Weingast (2005, 13) observe that in structural and institutional studies, “people and their preferences tended to be collapsed into categories established by the interplay of theory and history. Once defined, say, as peasants, kings, Protestants, bureaucrats, or other such positions in the social order, agents were, of course, recognized as the bearers of preferences, but their content almost could be taken for granted.” Similarly, strategic accounts analyzing polarization as the result of internal factors such as electoral laws and institutions generally find that these do not exacerbate underlying structural polarization (McCarty 2011). This may be because the majority of studies draw from democratic contexts, which by definition grant a high level of autonomy to elites in mobilizing underlying cleavages. Finally, parties assumed to be motivated by ideology often update their preferences – and not necessarily in response to increased liberalization, or shift emphasis on their ideology to reflect changes in preferences (Schwedler 2006).

The issues with each explanation stem from a common problem: they all fail to incorporate an understanding of the way in which political preferences actually form. Well-established psychology research, as well as a growing number of political science studies drawing on this work show, that preferences do not flow directly from structure, strategy, or ideology. Instead, a larger psychological process shapes preference formation. In the next section, I outline this approach.
A Preference Formation Approach to Elite Polarization

Theories of polarization are ultimately grounded in individual agency, particularly those of elites.\(^7\) I contend that better theorizing polarization requires a deeper investigation into the sources of preferences. The contemporary study of political behavior has increasingly incorporated findings from social psychology in order to understand the micro-foundational cognitive processes through which individuals form and update preferences. In psychological processes of preference formation, the lived experience of *context* and *resulting group identities* matter for the way individuals form and update preferences.

Preference formation is the process through which beliefs and evaluations emerge from and are updated by linkages between what people experience and what they feel, an “equilibrium between brain, body, and world” (Druckman and Lupia 2000, 3). A focus on the individual-level, cognitive processes of preference formation reveals an iterative causal chain through which lived experiences give rise to identities, which create or update related beliefs, and ultimately form preferences.\(^8\) How one identifies oneself, and who one considers to be a part of that identity group, affects how an individual processes experiences and new

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\(^7\) Much of the political science literature on preference formation focuses on the formation of voter preferences, while party placement has been consigned to structural explanations. Here, placement reflects underlying cleavages, as parties strategically create their platform in order to maximize voice choice (see Boix (2009) for a succinct summary of this literature). However, parties are formed by political elites, individuals who ostensibly come to hold and update their preferences through similar cognitive processes. These elites have significant agency in translating underlying conditions into politics; they are the actors moving objective inequalities into the political realm, turning inequalities into grievances and facts into mobilizing causes (Przeworski 1985, 99-101). Thus, understanding the formation of elite preferences in a similar way is immensely consequential for understanding the development of a political system. Elite preferences are particularly influential during moments of transition and new democracies, where corporatist representation of mass interests has not yet been established. In these highly fluid and unprecedented circumstances, elites appear to operate independently of demands from constituencies in the preferences they advance. My interviews with elites from both Egypt and Tunisia confirmed that elite actors advanced and advocated programs they considered to be the best path forward for the country, rather than in directly reflecting potential constituents’ demands.

\(^8\) What political scientists call preferences, psychologists call attitudes, defined by O’Keefe (1990, 18) as “a person’s general evaluation of an object.” “Object” in this usage includes a broad array of people, events, products, policies, and institutions; attitudes are people’s orientations towards these objects. Attitudes are shaped by beliefs. A belief is defined as a “neutrally held probability distribution over possible characteristics of an object” (Churchland and Sejnowski 1992; Kandel, Schwartz, and Jessell 1995). Beliefs depend on information, or “any data potentially relevant to” future choices (Druckman and Lupia 2000, 5).
information, and updates beliefs and related preferences (Lupia and McCubbins 1998). As a result, identity, and identity relative to other groups, ultimately determines what preferences one forms. When individuals are then presented with choices, their prior experience with related objects, as conditioned by their identity and identification, determines their preference in that moment.

The focus on internal cognitive processes does not detract from structure, the “world” component of Druckman and Lupia’s definition. Outside influences clearly matter; while individuals may have idiosyncratic tendencies, they also form opinions within certain structures, and identity only matters relative to other groups. Thus the historical processes, institutional settings, and ideologies which constitute structure are the starting point for politics and provide a baseline of identities, creating groups divided along specific dimensions of cleavage with potential for political contestation. But, as scholars of polarization and political cleavage formation have been careful to note, while patterns of polarization are clearly derived in some way from the structural context in which political actors find themselves, these differences are not themselves deterministic of preferences, and cannot fully explain variation in the distribution of political preferences along that axis across cases without engaging psychological theories focused on the individual. For example, the same levels of objective inequality or difference in opinion can result in varying levels of contentious politics and polarized preferences, and the way in which the translation occurs is conditional on the political context in which they are formed and in which elites mobilize these preferences.

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9 Katznelson and Weingast (2005, 3-4) write that the best contemporary approach to institutions and preference formation requires that an understanding of the “building blocks of preferences – including interests, desires, values, opinions, tastes, and morals – be located inside thickly inscribed temporal and spatial contexts.” The focus, however, remains on individual agency.

10 See Hall (2000, 2010) for a more in-depth discussion of the strengths and weaknesses of literature linking institutions and context with preference formation.

11 For example, comparative essays in Katznelson and Zolberg (1986) document how similar structural conditions produced very different notions of class formation in Europe, which they explain by engaging the historical realities of the actual lives of groups of working people.
be inferred from their ‘objective’ circumstances; political action is contextual and strategic, but it also reflects the ideologies, values, and perceptions of actors.”

The missing link in existing structural, strategic, and ideological theories of polarization is identity, a central and influential component of preference formation. Structure, institutional norms, and ideology do not matter in and of themselves, but rather in the way individuals and groups live this context and place themselves within it. Lived political experiences are therefore the basis for translating structural conditions, institutional norms, and ideologies into political preferences. And in modern politics, the lived experience which matters most for identity formation is that of the state. The state is the major realm of political contestation, political identities are constructed with relation to the state, and state behavior makes certain categories politically relevant (Laitin 1998; Chandra 2012; Horowitz 1985, 1993; Mansbach and Rhodes 2007; Posner 2005). Through repeated interactions with the state and its representatives, an individual receives new information about who she is, which group she belongs to, and what attributes her group claims. State behavior is particularly influential when it reveals information about the nature of state and society, and both an individual’s and group’s role and relative position therein. When state behavior is differential or unequal, an individual learns where his group stands relative to other groups. The iterative lived experience of the state induces learning and the updating of identities, which in turn updates related beliefs and preferences. This process mirrors the cognitive process of preference formation; individual experiences of the state update identities and explain related preference changes.

If levels of polarization within a political system are closely organized around the preferences of elites, and if these preferences are shaped by an identity formed through lived experience of state intervention and institutions, then we must locate the origins of polarization in these lived experiences and fully investigate the differential experience of various political actors. Groups come to see themselves as either in conflict or in harmony as a result of these lived political experiences, and form and adjust their political preferences
accordingly. The level of polarization on a given cleavage is thus idiosyncratic to group experiences within a given system, explaining how similar structures can produce divergent outcomes, and why structural theories are incomplete. By failing to take the process of preference formation into account, existing theories do not fully or accurately explore how context matters for processes of polarization. As a result, these theories cannot explain how the hallmark behavior of authoritarian regimes, political repression, can influence preference formation and determine resulting levels of polarization. In the next section, I delve into the literature on political repression as the defining characteristic of authoritarian regimes, and explore how this state behavior and the way in which states use it against opposition differentially can influence levels of polarization.

**Political Repression in Authoritarian Contexts**

Nearly all existing studies of polarization focus on democratic contexts, but the polarization that matters for democratic transitions and consolidation often occurs under a very different context, that of authoritarianism. Authoritarian contexts are characterized by repression, or severe state control of both society and politics (Linz 2000). Repression is further defined as the coercive actions undertaken by regimes against actors challenging regimes’ beliefs, institutions, and actions (Davenport 2015, 29).

In specifying the coercive nature of the behavior, the term most clearly refers to the physical tactics regimes utilize against opposition actors, including arrests, beatings, harassment, targeted assassinations, raids, torture, disappearances, targeted assassinations, and mass killings.\(^\text{12}\) The term can also include psychological warfare against oppositional actors.\(^\text{12}\)

\(^{12}\)Davenport notes that although physical repression is not the only strategy available to authoritarian regimes to confront mobilized opposition, it is the tactic used most, the one most feared by opposition activists, and the one which has received the most attention from academics, policy makers, and political activists, not least because it demonstrates the way a regime exploits the state’s monopoly on violence to demobilize challengers. It is also the only type of repression whose direct intentionality can be assumed (Hibou 2011); the individuals arrested and the groups targeted are known explicitly for their political opposition.
Other well-known repressive tactics include interfering with and imposing legal restrictions on permitted political opposition when they participate in electoral contests (Robinson 1998; Posusney 2002), and long-term state policies combining economic reward and punishment to redistribute to regime or ruling party supporters and away from opponents, identified through electoral outcomes (Blaydes 2011; Masoud 2014). While cooptation of opposition groups into ruling coalitions or institutions is often considered separately from repression and exclusion of groups, it is similarly a tactic through which regimes deliberately control, marginalize, and demobilize parts of the opposition (Levitsky and Way 2002). Regimes often employ cooptation in combination with other repression tactics, repressing specific opposition elites while coopting others into formal and informal institutions and alliances in order to divide and weaken the larger opposition’s resistance (Lust 2005; Albrecht 2006). In a word, repression is a blanket term for any coercive action taken by a regime intended to demobilize oppositional actors and threats. It is a strategy of state survival, consistently utilized by regimes for the same purpose: to maintain themselves in power (Arendt 1966; Davenport 2007; Peters 1985; Rejali 1991, 1994). In theory, repression can target any individual or group mobilized in opposition to some part of the regime, but in authoritarian studies the major focus of analysis is how repression targets and affects more elite-organized opposition parties and movements.

Existing studies overwhelmingly focus on the form and function of repression. The form of repression utilized by authoritarian regimes – i.e., which opposition groups repression targets – varies across cases. Early work on totalitarianism argued that repression was utilized with the intention of demobilizing entire societies (Arendt 1966). Similarly, a seminal piece by Bellin (2004) on the exceptional nature of the Middle East’s authoritarian regimes suggests that any and all democratic minded regime challengers can be targeted for demobilization by regime repression. However, Tarrow (1998, 49) observes that most contemporary authoritarian regimes rely on selective repression to divide opponents and perpetuate rule, though the relative balance and choice of targets differ significantly across
cases. Lust (2005) similarly argues that authoritarian regimes utilize certain “structures of contestation” to maintain their power.¹³

Analyses of the effects of repression find that it is most effective (from the perspective of the regime, i.e. least likely to lead to successful reform, electoral outcomes that award more seats to the opposition, or regime change) when it divides opposition actors and pits them against each other (Albrecht 2006; Howard and Roessler 2006; Lust 2005; Schwedler and Clark 2006; Shehata 2009; van de Walle 2006). This is more likely to occur under specific forms of repression, namely when state repression is targeted, affecting certain groups and not others. Conversely, the opposition is most effective at combating and winning reforms and concessions from the regime when it can unite and form a broad-based coalition, often based on a single issue. In these studies, scholars maintain that repression affects political opportunity structures. Opposition acts strategically, in response to favorable structures as created by and through repressive tactics used by the regime (Lust 2005). Repression alters the opposition groups’ calculus by changing constraints and opportunities in a manner which hinders their ability to individually mobilize and contest the regime. This then changes the probability of cooperation across groups when contesting the regime through elections, protest mobilization, or general demands of reform (Davenport 2015).

Existing accounts focus on strategy: the strategic environment and material incentives determine whether opposition parties can agree, converge on a set of preferences, and cooperate, as well as which parties will do so. However, contact theory demonstrates that simply bringing groups together will not force preference convergence or cooperation (Brewer 1996). Even under specific opportunity structures, “opposition cohesion or the ability of various groups to unite around a common agenda for change and to mobilize either

¹³Lust (2005) differentiates between opposition groups based on whether the state grants them legal status and permits them to officially contest elections, or whether the group is excluded from official routes of contestation. Different kinds of “structures of contestation” exist due to the relative balance of legal and banned opposition. As real-world examples demonstrate, and as Lust’s own commentary suggests, repression of a group is orthogonal to its legal status; both legal and illegal groups can be and are targeted by regimes. However, her larger point stands and is applicable to state repression: regimes utilize different kinds of repressive policies, differentially targeting certain groups in order to maintain their power.
jointly or concurrently against the authoritarian regime is not a given” (Shehata 2009, 11). Indeed, a careful study by Shehata (2009) finds that changes in polarization precede the behavioral outcomes often focused on in the literature; lower levels of polarization are found as a necessary precursor for cooperative behavior to occur, above and beyond a given, favorable political opportunity structure, which do not shift as much or as often as many studies assume. The distance between opposition parties’ policy preferences determines their level of cohesion, their ability to compromise, and ultimately their effectiveness in winning reform and concessions from the ruling regime (Bratton and van de Walle 1997, 198).

Similar to existing studies of polarization, scholarship on the effects of repression ignore established processes of preference formation. Research on repression has overwhelmingly focused on explaining dependent variables related to the longevity of regimes utilizing repression in different forms, and as a result, it has tended “to neglect the targets and victims of state repression... this leaves us in a situation where comparatively little effort is extended to understanding what impact repression has on the individuals subjected to it or on the broader society in which these actions take place” (Davenport 2015, 9). Existing accounts tend to focus exclusively on political opportunity structures, and to downplay the centrality of polarization. As a result, they do not interrogate the source of this polarization and whether or how repression might condition levels of polarization.

Personal accounts of repression reveal that it is not simply an extreme structural, behavioral constraint, but rather an influential emotional, psychological, and physical trauma. This is the exact type of experience that forms the basis of identity and influences related preference formation. The few studies that treat repression as a lived experience, rather than a structural constraint, suggest a pathway that mirrors the psychological formation of preferences through identity: experiences of repression affect individuals’ and groups’ perception of inequalities, differences, and identities, and thus the type of experience which exerts an influence on processes of preference formation. Peters (1985) demonstrates that repression does not always result in increased cooperation; different forms can lead to increased resis-
tance and opposition, or increased commitment to ideological positions, radicalizing those targeted for specific beliefs or actions depending on the form, target of repression, and personal reaction to these traumatic experiences (MacMaster 2004; Robinson 1996).

The following section introduces a new theory which helps to account for how differential lived experiences of repression influence identity and thus affects preference formation, levels of political polarization, and related cooperative behavior. The shared threat and trauma created by experienced repression is particularly effective in shaping identities, and thus particularly influential in processes of preference formation, a dependent variable which has been largely neglected in the repression literature. I highlight how the social psychological study of group identification lends additional credence to perceptual theories of preference formation, and explain how lived experiences of repression influence policy preferences and polarization among political groups. I then outline specifically how this theory explains the mechanisms linking state repression to polarization in authoritarian contexts.

A Theory of Repression and Polarization

The existing literature on democratic consolidation after authoritarian regimes, on the sources and processes of polarization, and on repression serve as important points of departure for this study. However, in its current state, the literature fails to adequately incorporate an understanding of preference formation processes. As a result, it does not investigate how the repressive conditions that define authoritarian contexts might shape levels of elite political polarization in the long term, or account for how variation in repressive conditions could help to explain comparative levels of elite polarization across authoritarian cases. This project takes a first step towards addressing this lacuna by putting forward a theory of the process through which repression conditions levels of polarization within authoritarian political systems. In doing so, I take seriously the notion that a repressive environment is not simply a constraint on rational, strategic behavior, but rather an influ-
ential physically and psychologically traumatic experience due to the humiliation, suffering, and exclusion necessarily involved in the act of being repressed. I turn to social psychology and specifically social identity theory, on which preference formation rests, to understand exactly how repression influences identities and preferences. These theories provide social-psychological explanations for the causes and consequences of group identity formation, with important implications for understanding polarization in group-based politics.

I posit that repression affects naturally occurring levels of political polarization through a two-stage process. In the first stage, experiences of repression, and the extent to which they are shared with other groups or are concentrated within one’s own, alter the salience and nature of in-group identification. Standard feelings of “groupness” – or a differentiation between one’s in- and out-groups – emerge from even the most arbitrary of group membership assignments and in basic group interactions (Brewer 1979; Tajfel, Bundy, and Flament 1971; Turner 1978). But importantly, the strength of group identification increases with experiences that treat or target groups as such (Brewer and Brown 1998). Shared experiences of trauma are particularly effective at increasing group identification. Durkheim (1912/2001) first observed that painful experiences promote cohesion and solidarity within pre-existing groups of people experiencing them together, and more recent studies have tested and confirmed this relationship (Bastian, Jetten, and Ferris 2014). In addition, shared traumatic experiences can create new in-group identities by exposing unconnected individuals to the same events (Campbell 1958; Wagner, Kronberger, and Seifert 2002; Schuman and Scott 1989; Brown, Touchton, and Whitford 2011; Schuman, Belli, and Bischoping 1997). Traumatic experiences are more influential than regular contact in enhancing pre-existing identities and creating new ones (Brewer 1996); shared trauma fosters bonding, emphasizing
shared identities and attributes, and re-categorizing group boundaries (Brewer and Brown 1998, 580).\(^{14}\)

As noted in the previous section, all authoritarian regimes by definition employ some level of repression against political opposition, but they vary in their targets.\(^{15}\) While some regimes use targeted repression, singling out a specific opposition group, others employ widespread repression against the entire spectrum of political opposition actors. In the first stage of the causal process, widespread experiences of repression should decrease in-group identification, as the groups targeted form a larger collective of victimized opposition sharing experiences of repression across multiple groups. In contrast, targeted experiences of repression should heighten in-group identification for the singularly targeted group, as only in-group members share experiences of repression.

In the second stage, heightened in-group identity conditions levels of political polarization among opposition groups by influencing processes of group differentiation. Social identity theory holds that individuals seek to maximize differences between their in-group and the out-group, and strengthened in-group identity necessarily induces comparatively higher levels of group differentiation (Tajfel and Turner 1986; Brewer and Brown 1998). The process of group differentiation occurs through in-group favoritism, in which group members exaggerate intergroup differences and the emphasize intragroup similarities (Brewer and Brown 1998, 58), largely through in-group favoritism. During the process, groups highlight their defining shared features and attitudes in contrast to those of the out-group. Characteristics that are more central for the definition of group identity are highlighted, while more peripheral traits are downplayed (Kelly 1989; Simon 1992; Hogg and Turner 1987).

\(^{14}\) In the study of collective memory, emotional and traumatic memories are found to spread deeper into networks because an individual is more likely to talk about an emotional experience than a regular one with other group members (Berger and Milkman 2012; Harber and Cohen 2005; Sperber and Hirschfeld 2004). Traumatic events are thus assumed to be most influential because they are more effective than regular shared experiences at creating and increasing the salience of shared identities. In the realm of political science, Fearon and Laitin (2000) have explored how shared violence solidifies ethnic identities.

\(^{15}\) I outline my assumptions about the origins of repressive institutions, and the causes of cross-national variation in repressive environments, in a section titled “Case Selection: Key Differences,” in the next chapter.
Processes of group differentiation cause individuals to become more extreme on in-group attitudes and preferences (Mackie 1986; Ng and Wilson 1989). With groups based on ascriptive characteristics such as ethnicity or gender, the emphasized difference may be a shared physical feature, and preferences change with regards to in-group-favoring policies. However, in political groups formed on the basis of common political ideologies, policy preferences related to group ideology and goals are the group’s defining characteristic and thus becomes the characteristic on which groups differentiate themselves when the strength of in-group identification increases. For example, for Greene (2004), processes of group differentiation “create a bipolar partisanship where individuals characterize the political parties into us and them and exaggerate perceived differences” in policy preferences across groups. The resulting political polarization is then an indication of political distance between groups.

Group differentiation is exacerbated by situations in which in-group identity is primed through differential treatment or experiences, such as combative situations, when groups are pitted against each other in conflict, or situations of relative deprivation, when a group is disproportionately discriminated against by a third party (Horwitz and Rabbie 1982). The stronger levels of group identification resulting from these situations lead to higher levels of group differentiation. To explicitly relate these psychological processes to the question under analysis here, the comparatively decreased in-group identification resulting from widespread experiences of repression leads groups to recategorize boundaries, identifying less with their individual group and more with a larger collective of opposition parties. By perceiving themselves as part of a larger collective of opposition parties, parties do not differentiate themselves and may even converge on certain defining policy preferences. In contrast, the increased in-group identification resulting from targeted repression activates processes of group differentiation, in which the targeted group distances itself from the policy preferences of others as in-group identity increases. The strength of in-group identification determines the size of the distance between groups’ preferences. The figure below visually
displays the theory, outlining both the general causal process as well as the specific processes put in place by different types of repressive environments:

Figure 1: Visual Representation of Theory

I highlight here the importance of in-group identification for the underlying logic of the causal chain outlined above. Group identification is an important, temporally prior condition for group differentiation; one cannot become more extreme on group-related attitudes without first identifying with a group. Yet in-group identification is necessary but not sufficient in the causal chain. Instead, increased levels of in-group identification induce processes of group differentiation, which then result in political polarization among political groups highlighting differences on defining characteristics (i.e. policy preferences). The second stage is both necessary and sufficient for causing political polarization.

Further Political Implications of Repression and Polarization

My theory of repression and polarization has a number of further important implications for understanding a variety of political outcomes. First, the level of political polarization between groups, as dictated by levels of in-group identification, influences groups' collective ability to compromise. The salience of the in-group/out-group distinction elicits cooperative social behavior among those considered part of the in-group, and competitive social behavior between those in the in-group and those considered part of the out-group (Schopler and Insko 1982). Realistic group conflict theory, originally developed by Campbell (1965), maintains that conflict is based on real competition for scarce resources whether these are material, in terms of power or prestige, or over opposing ideological worldviews.
Because intragroup attitudes and behavior tend to reflect group interests, real or perceived divergences in preferences on salient dimensions of contestation can increase conflict. As Brewer and Brown (1998, 565) write: “where group interests are incompatible, where what one group gains is at the expense of another, the social psychological response is likely to be negative [i.e., hostile behavior]. Where they are compatible or complementary, the reaction should be more positive.” These preferences result from the processes of political group differentiation outlined above and precede – indeed, determine – cooperation (Struch and Schwartz 1989; Brewer and Brown 1998). Thus, if group conflict is at its core fighting over real or perceived differences in preferences, the distance between groups’ articulated preferences, a measurement of the degree of group differentiation, is an important causal variable in explaining why these groups cooperate.

In addition, there may be a second-order effect of changes to in-group identification, most evident in a targeted repressive environment. The psychological literature demonstrates that group-differentiation processes occur automatically, but it is possible that political entrepreneurs exploit increased in-group identification to further distance political preferences and, in this way, increase polarization in the political system. Once repression has strengthened in-group identification, political entrepreneurs may strategically shift the group’s policy position to further differentiate it from competitors, hardening boundaries between opposition groups and increasing the cost to group members of defection. Although this strategic behavior point is beyond the scope of the dissertation, it is important to highlight for future research and extensions.

I also emphasize that because group differentiation occurs along dimensions that are centrally constitutive to groups’ identities, it not only strengthens their salience for group identity but also contributing to solidifying these characteristics as the salient dimension of political competition. For example, when the defining characteristic of political groups is a specific type of ideology related to conceptions of religion and state or economic redistribution, this characteristic will not only become increasingly more important for the group’s
own self-definition, but also for the way in which groups see themselves as being different from other groups. This point is also somewhat beyond the scope of the dissertation, but has important implications for political developments among opposition groups and how they behave during important moments of conflict, transition, and upheaval. Relative to any other type of divergence that might exist among groups during transitions, this is the dimension that is most emphasized in differentiating groups’ positions and determining contestation. I discuss this through real world examples in my case studies where relevant.

Finally, my theory has important implications for understanding the formation of political preferences for Islamists, the specific kind of political group analyzed in my cases. As demonstrated in careful comparative studies such as those by Clark (2006) and Schwedler (2006), similar Islamist movements hold significantly different policy preferences cross-nationally. Ideology alone cannot fully explain the differences, and the authors demonstrate how important the lived political experiences of Islamist group members are in shaping preferences and related behavior. These studies largely focus on inclusion in elections as an experience that can radicalize or moderate groups’ preferences. I further this line of inquiry and expand preference-shaping experiences to include those of repression. Islamist opposition groups are nearly always repressed by authoritarian regimes they contest, but the repressive environment within which they find themselves can vary in whether they are exclusively targeted, or repressed along with other opposition groups (Lust 2005). Conceptualizing Islamist preference formation and change within the framework presented here treats Islamist positioning as the result of the group identification and differentiation processes triggered by state repression. This framework can allow us to develop a better understanding of how changes in Islamist policy preferences and behavior are linked to the repressive environments of their country context, and can be altered by the relative positioning and favored status of other competing groups in the political system. Furthermore, my approach removes analyses of Islamist political preferences and behavior from essentialist explanations focused on religion and ideology without taking into account real-world context.
Plan of Dissertation Study

The central argument tested is as follows: a targeted repressive environment increases polarization and results in a more polarized political system, while a widespread repressive environment decreases polarization and creates a less polarized political system. These results obtain through psychological changes in in-group identification, and have important consequences for elite cooperative behavior during periods of transition.

The dissertation proceeds as follows. In chapter 2, I outline the dissertation’s mixed methods approach. In the chapter, I defend a number of methodological choices, the case selection, and define key concepts and describe my measurement strategy. In chapter 3, I document patterns of repression and levels of decreasing polarization in Tunisia under long-term authoritarian president Zine el-‘Abidine Ben ‘Ali between 1987 and 2011. Chapter 4 presents case study evidence from Egypt under authoritarian president Hosni Mubarak, linking increasing polarization among opposition groups in Egypt between 1981 and 2011 with increasing in-group identification within the Muslim Brotherhood as a result of targeted campaigns against the organization. Both case study chapters link changes in polarization with changes in in-group identification resulting from each country’s respective repressive environment.

The next two chapters extends the scope of the argument beyond the two case studies of Egypt and Tunisia, and tests the theory’s generalizability. Chapter 5 presents the results of lab experiments carefully designed to test the psychological mechanism suggested by the theory. The experiments serve as a form of dynamic process tracing of the psychological causal mechanism I advance in the dissertation’s theory, and results support the posited relationship between repression and polarization, mediated by in-group identification. Chapter 6 tests the theory using non-Middle East case studies, analyzing how previous patterns of state repression conditioned levels of polarization in the former Soviet bloc and helps to explain variation in these countries’ democratic consolidation success following transitions by rupture beginning in 1989.
I then conclude in chapter 7 with the implications of my original theory and supporting evidence for broader transitory theories, specifically the importance of considering the psychological and political legacies of authoritarian repression on subsequent political developments. I also briefly discuss how relative levels of political polarization among elites affected important negotiations and agreements in both countries’ initial transition periods after the 2011 uprisings.
A Mixed Methods Approach to Repression and Polarization

In this chapter, I outline a mixed methods approach for analyzing the relationship between repression and polarization. I first discuss the important complementarity of qualitative and quantitative approaches, and observational and experimental data. I then motivate the process tracing methodology used to test the theory’s implications through observational case study data, and the selection of two case studies – Tunisia, a case of a widespread repressive environment against political opposition, and Egypt, a case of a targeted repressive environment against the Muslim Brotherhood. I also discuss important assumptions necessary for drawing causal inferences from these cases, specifically related to the exogenous “assignment” of repressive environments. I locate the explanation for variation in repressive environments in national state-building projects preceding independence, which determined state capacity and had path-dependent implications for the nature of coercive institutions during the authoritarian period. This assumption is supported by historical and cross-national empirical evidence, and renders regime repression exogenous to initial levels and subsequent processes of polarization. Next, I motivate the usage of experimental methods in order to test the underlying psychological mechanisms underpinning the dissertation’s theory and the observable implications of which are present in the case studies. Finally, I define the dissertation’s core concepts – repression, in-group identity, and polarization – and outline how these concepts are measured in observational and experimental data.
The Benefits of Mixed Methods

I use a mixed methods approach which combines qualitative and quantitative approaches (Collier and Elman 2008, 780). The qualitative analysis focuses on observational data produced through paired case studies, while the quantitative analysis focuses both on cross-national observational data as well as experimental data produced through the lab studies. Mixed methods analyses provide the best of both worlds; each type of approach offsets the weaknesses of the other. Moreover, the combination of methods allows for integrative research, in which the hypotheses developed with one method can be substantiated by another (Seawright 2016). In this project, the qualitative case studies build the theory, which is then tested in the lab experiments. The experiments test the internal validity of the hypothesized psychological causal chain, and the cross-national qualitative and quantitative data confirms the generalizability of my argument. In addition, the combined use of observational and experimental data is analytically important for another reason: while the observational evidence addresses issues of external validity inherent in experimental data, the experimental set-up provided more complete leverage on issues of endogeneity. Thus, the two data sources should be treated as complements rather than substitutes. I discuss the intended purpose of each approach below.

Motivation for Process Tracing Methodology

In the two chapters that follow, I present evidence in support of the theory’s observable implications regarding the causal relationship between repression and polarization in authoritarian political systems through a structured comparison of two cases, Egypt and Tunisia, between the 1980s and the 2011 “Arab Spring” uprisings. Tunisia serves as a case of widespread repression of opposition and decreasing polarization among these groups, while Egypt represents cases of targeted repression against one opposition group (the Muslim Brotherhood) and increasing polarization among the opposition as a whole. I adhere to a
definition of a case study as “the intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of un-
derstanding a larger class of similar units” (Gerring 2007, 17). In each case study, I use
the methodology of within-case process tracing, or the analysis of diagnostic evidence from
processes, sequences, and conjunctures of events within a single case (Bennett and Checkel
2014; Mahoney and Rueschemeyer 2003). I selected Egypt and Tunisia as case studies be-
cause they are highly comparable on a number of variables, and vary on the independent
and dependent variables of interests (discussed in the next section on case selection).

I understand that analyzing historical processes of repression and polarization re-
quires the researcher to address complex phenomena. I may not, as Tilly (1984, 80) writes,
be comparing “the perfect pair of structures or processes, exquisitely matched on every vari-
able except for the purported cause and the purported effect.” I may also not be constructing
what he refers to as a “complete explanation,” leaving “no ounce of variance unaccounted
for.” Rather, the process-tracing method allows for the examination of the specific mecha-
nism through which an independent variable exerts an effect on a dependent variable over
time, creating comparable evidence-based narratives that facilitate causal inference across
cases (George and McKeown 1985; Collier, Brady, and Seawright 2010). The paired case
studies together serve as evidence that the proposed group identification mechanism explains
both temporal shifts as well as cumulative changes in polarization in settings that differ in
repressive environment, the independent variable of interest. Whereas correlations between
repressive environment and observable behavioral outcomes have been established by exist-
ing literature (as noted before in Albrecht (2006); Howard and Roessler (2006); Lust (2005);
Schwedler and Clark (2006); Shehata (2009); van de Walle (2006)), careful process tracing al-
 lows me to better specify the causal mechanisms and effects embedded in these relationships
(Humphreys and Jacobs 2015). The research design relies on comparative process tracing
to identify shifts in in-group identification and levels of political polarization among groups,
which temporally proceeds these observable behaviors and makes them possible.

George and Bennett (2005, 17) similarly refer to a case study as “an instance of a class of events.”
Process tracing places a high value on the importance of “thick description” (Geertz 1973, 5-6,9-10) in establishing and understanding causal mechanisms. Collier (2011, 824) writes that the “descriptive component of process tracing begins not with observing change or sequence, but rather with taking good snapshots as a series of specific moments.” These “snapshots” of thick description provide the diagnostic evidence referred to in the process-tracing definition above, and document important variation and instances of change in a manner that suggests causality. Thick description is not only important for establishing causal links and the trend data it provides for making cross-case comparisons (Tilly 1984). In addition, thick description allows for individual data points – in other words, individual stories and experiences – to emerge, and to validate the assumptions behind trend data. Creswell (2009) provides an apt example from the aftermath of the Katrina hurricane in the United States, during which commentators provided both aggregate numbers of displaced individuals as well as the stories of their plight in order to underscore the magnitude of the disaster. For the question at hand – that of how repression affects levels of polarization through individual experiences of it – the ability to focus on individual stories in combination with evidence of a larger trend is an important way to understand the broader causal mechanism and causal relationships.

In order to analyze the link between repression and polarization through a process tracing approach, I link specific instances of repression with subsequent changes in polarization among political opposition through observable changes in in-group identification over time in both Egypt and Tunisia. In my analyses, I draw on evidence from over 100 interviews, political memoirs, and other primary source party-related data collected during a year of fieldwork dedicated to this project in Tunis, Tunisia and Cairo, Egypt. I conducted interviews both in-country as well as with members of the Egyptian opposition currently located in London, Istanbul, and New York. The majority of these interviews and fieldwork was conducted between 2012 and 2017, but I also draw on significant in-country experience and interviews with opposition in both Egypt and Tunisia beginning in 2005. In addition, I
rely on secondary sources written about the history of each country’s political system and opposition groups written by local and domestic experts and scholars.

Case Selection: Important Similarities

I select Egypt and Tunisia as case studies in order to minimize differences and isolate variation on important causal and mediator variables. While this is not fully necessary to isolate this variation to compare instances of process-tracing, it was important to me to hold constant a number of important similarities that both cases demonstrate – including regime type, transition type, comparable periodization, political representation, and salient cleavages – in order to focus attention on interesting and measurable variation in state repression and resulting polarization.

In 2011, both Egypt and Tunisia were of the same regime type, classified as electoral authoritarianism after the ruline regime had institutionalized elections and permitted the participation of select opposition parties during the late 1970s and early 1980s.\textsuperscript{17} Egypt became a republic in July 1952, when a group of junior military officers overthrew a constitutional monarchy backed by Britain. Between 1952 and 2011, four military presidents ruled the country, the last of which was Hosni Mubarak.\textsuperscript{18} Tunisia gained its full independence from France in March 1956. The independent republic was ruled by two consecutive authoritarian regimes until the 2010 uprisings; Habib Bourguiba served as the country’s first president from the official establishment of the republic on July 25, 1957 through November 7, 1987, when he was declared medically incompetent and ousted in a bloodless coup d’état.

\textsuperscript{17} As Schedler (2002, 37) writes, electoral authoritarian regimes “neither practice democracy nor resort regularly to naked repression. By organizing periodic elections, they try to obtain at least a semblance of democratic legitimacy, hoping to satisfy external as well as internal actors. As the same time, by placing those elections under tight authoritarian controls, they try to cement their continued hold on power. Their dream is to reap the fruits of electoral legitimacy without running the risks of democratic uncertainty.”

\textsuperscript{18} In order, Egypt’s four military presidents were Muhammed Naguib (1953-1954), Gamal Abdel Nasser (1956-1970), Anwar Sadat (1971-1981), and Hosni Mubarak (1981-2011). Between November 14, 1954, and June 23, 1956, the Revolutionary Command Council governed the country under the chairmanship of Nasser.
by Zine el-‘Abidine Ben ‘Ali. Upon the eve of each country’s uprisings, both regimes were structured around a single ruling party, the National Democratic Party (NDP) in Egypt and the Rassemblement Constitutionnel Démocratique (RCD) in Tunisia. The ruling parties won inflated percentages in national elections and served as a means of governing, channeling and demobilizing dissent, and gathering surveillance on citizens. Both countries adopted multi-party elections during the same period. Though parliamentary elections had been held somewhat regularly in Egypt by Mubarak’s predecessors, the 1984 elections served as the first true multi-party contest. Similarly, Bourguiba had begun holding semi-competitive multi-party elections in 1981, but 1989 was hailed as the first competitive contest. The elections were intended to release pressure for demands of reform from mobilized opposition following economic crises and related unprecedented mobilization against the regimes beginning in the 1970s, streamlining and coopting opposition groups’ demands of reform through tightly controlled fraudulent elections (Perkins 2004; Schwedler and Chomiak 2006).

These similar temporal trajectories lead me to select specific periods of analysis for each country. I do not analyze repression and polarization through the entire post-independence authoritarian period, although patterns of repression are consistent throughout, as I detail in each case study chapter. Instead, I analyze the periods of 1987-2011 in Tunisia and 1981-2011 in Egypt. These time periods coincide with the periods of rule for Ben ‘Ali in Tunisia and Mubarak in Egypt. These presidents were second-generation authoritarian leaders, significantly less charismatic and engaged in authoritarian maintenance rather than the post-independence authoritarian consolidation of their predecessors (namely Bourguiba and Nasser). These periods of analysis represent “most likely” temporal cases. Because second-generation authoritarian leaders are comparatively less legitimate and thus more unstable than earlier generations, my assumption is that they rely more heavily on repression to maintain themselves in power. As a result, structural determinants, state capacity, and the way in which these factors constrain state repressive behavior is most evident during these periods, compared to both more charismatic first-generation leaders and periods
of regime consolidation. In addition, the regular competition and opposition contestation of the regime during these periods, however limited it may have been substantively, allows for observation of changes in policy preferences based on regularly issued political platforms, manifestos, and official statements. This period is also particularly important for understanding developments in both countries following the 2010-2011 uprisings. During these periods, the majority of leaders charged with governing each country after 2011 came of age politically, and experienced repression in ways that, I argue, subsequently shaped their policy preferences in an elite riff on political socialization theory (Greenstein 1965; Searing 1969).

The country case selection also holds constant the type of transition that occurred in both countries in 2011. Egypt and Tunisia experienced the unexpected and unprecedented exogenous shock of mass mobilization in rapid succession, which quickly destabilized the long-ruling regimes and created transitions by rupture (Rustow 1970; Share 1987). Regime actors were not entirely eliminated but were largely absent from central negotiations during the transition period after each country’s ruling party was legally disbanded and its members barred from participating in the 2011 elections for the constituent assemblies. In both countries, the elite who fared well in early post-transition elections and were thus charged with negotiating the political aspects of the transition period were drawn from organized opposition to the previous regime.

In addition, the political economy of opposition parties’ representation was similar in both Egypt and Tunisia. Though politics during transitional periods is a top-down process, and my interviews revealed that parties constructed their 2011 platforms by negotiating within party elites rather than catering to the preferences of voters, the representative

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19 In responses to my questions about how the movements created their political platforms both before and after the 2011 uprisings, political advisors from the main parties in both countries described a process that approached elite cue (Lupia and McCubbins 1998; Mondak 1993; Gilens and Murakawa 2002) and voter sorting (Fiorina and Abrams 2008) models of party placement. Negotiations over policy platform items occurred among party elites rather than reflecting constituent concerns, and the parties at best conducted limited public opinion polling focused more on popularity of the party rather than on positioning in specific issue areas.
similarity rules out an explanation in which different underlying socio-economic cleavages are driving variation in party preferences. The majority of these parties had been the active opposition to the old regime and represented middle class interests, the part of the electorate previously left out of systems of state patronage.\textsuperscript{20}

\begin{figure}[h]
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{Comparison_of_Egyptian_and_Tunisian_Partisans_2011}
\caption{Comparison of Egyptian and Tunisian Partisans, 2011}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{20} Blaydes (2011) and Masoud (2014) document this in Egypt, while the thorough history of opposition parties provided by al-Madini (2012) demonstrates the same in Tunisia.
Finally, the Islamist-secular axis of competition was salient among the opposition under successive authoritarian regimes as well as during the elections and the transition period in both Egypt and Tunisia. Islamists won by considerable and comparable margins (both the Muslim Brotherhood and Ennahda won roughly 37% of the vote) in the first free and fair elections of 2011 for the national constituent bodies charged with drafting constitutions and negotiating the immediate transition period. Competing parties and political actors presented themselves as secular opposition to these Islamist groups, and public debates during this period centered on the role of religion in public life, legislation, and the constitution.

**Case Selection: Key Differences**

*Repressive Environments*

Despite a number of important similarities, the cases of Egypt and Tunisia differ in important ways on the independent variable of interest – how each country’s regimes utilized repression to control mobilized opposition parties and movements. In terms specific to my typology of repressive regimes, Egypt represents a targeted repressive environment, with significantly more repression carried out against the Muslim Brotherhood than other mobilized groups, while Tunisia represents a widespread repressive environment against political opposition.

I detail the specifics of each repressive environment in the case study chapters, but highlight the country-level variation here. Available aggregate data point to different types of repressive experiences within each country, particularly under the regime immediately preceding the 2011 uprisings. Egypt and Tunisia were both estimated to have 30,000 political prisoners under Mubarak and Ben ‘Ali, respectively.  

These figures empirically

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21 See Holder (1994) and Khalil (2014). These numbers were also confirmed to me in interviews with former political prisoners, activists, and members of human rights organizations, though individuals were quick to mention that these numbers were based on commonly accepted figures and did not rely on firm documentation. However, even if they are not precisely accurate, the figures demonstrate a difference in perception of repression among opposition in each country.
suggest a different level of saturation of repression within each country; Egypt’s population totaled 79.39 million in 2011, while Tunisia’s population was only 10.67 million in the same year. Yet statistics, particularly on sensitive topics such as repression and political prisoners, are inherently political, and so while these numbers tell us something about repression in comparative perspective, there is more to be understood in terms of the degree to which repressive experiences were perceived to be shared across the political opposition in each country.\textsuperscript{22} Qualitative evidence provides a more accurate description of variation in repressive environment in Egypt and Tunisia, and emerges through a comprehensive understanding of these environments as created through interviews with individuals who experienced these systems firsthand and their memoirs. In Tunisia, repression became a ubiquitous experience for the regime’s active political opposition, as the regime targeted Islamist, centre-right, and secular parties of various communist, socialist, and other leftist ideologies, while in Egypt, repressive experiences were concentrated within the Muslim Brotherhood during the period under analysis.

In order for this variation to have meaningful explanatory power, its source must by fully exogenous to the dependent variable under analysis. In other words, the presence of a certain type of repressive environment cannot be correlated with initial levels of polarization in a country. Though the determinants of how an authoritarian regime comes to utilize a specific repressive strategy (i.e., an analysis in which repressive regime type is the dependent variable) are temporally and logically prior to the main subject of inquiry in this dissertation (i.e., an analysis in which repressive regime type is the independent variable), they are important for my exploration of the effects of these environments on the opposition actors they target. The topic demands its own dissertation, but I note here relevant evidence and

\textsuperscript{22} Hibou (2011, 17) writes, “By definition, statistics is political – this has long been known and analyzed. Statistics is state knowledge: the state’s knowledge about itself. The reason behind it is practical – more precisely, prescriptive. Since it is impossible to dissociate statistics as a conception of the state and as a way of thinking about society, statistics is the reflection of a state-controlled knowledge, and even more of the link between power and knowledge. Indeed, statistics are inseparable from mechanisms of control.” Yet, as she continues, “rejecting the quantitative does not mean rejecting the technical – quite the opposite.”
provide documentation that suggests a generalizable theory for variation in the repressive strategies of post-colonial authoritarian regimes. In short, I locate the explanation for variation in repressive environments in the state-building projects preceding independence, which determined state capacity and had path-dependent implications for the nature of coercive institutions during the authoritarian period. The state-building projects were dictated by an overarching colonial strategy and favored the economic and strategic interests of the colonizer, creating institutions that vary in predictable ways by former colonial type (with exceptions noted where applicable). This assumption renders regime repression exogenous to initial levels and subsequent processes of polarization, and is supported by historical and cross-national empirical evidence.

Existing theories attribute observable variation in authoritarian repressive regimes (Tarrow 1998; Lust 2005) to choices authoritarian leaders make when they come to power. Authoritarian leaders construct coercive institutions based on the dominant perceived threat when they assume power. Leaders face at least two – foreign and domestic Greitens (2016) – and more likely three – external, internal mass-based, and internal elite-based (Svolik 2012; Brownlee 2007) – types of threats. In designing their internal security apparatuses, leaders face organizational trade-offs in either facing a popular threat or protecting themselves against rival elites. The choices made by leaders in response to these threats create repressive institutions that vary on a number of different attributes, such as exclusivity (social composition) and organization centralization. The resulting repressive institutions are either more violent because they are fragmented and unable to adequately collect intelligence on their populations, constructed as such to defend against rival elites, or are less violent because they penetrate society better and thus can preemptively address possible mass mobilization, having been constructed to defend the regime against mass uprisings. Embedded in these arguments is a sense of path-dependence conditioned by decisions

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23 Rival elites can include the military, other members of the ruling party, and other non-military and non-military elite institutions.
made in an initial period. Organizational tradeoffs and institutional stickiness (Mahoney and Thelen 2010) make it nearly impossible for regimes to adapt as new threats arise, resulting in predictable patterns of state coercive organization and violence across time and in the face of new threats. While existing theories differ in the details, they are united in assigning significant autonomy to leaders and their strategy in determining the nature of coercive institutions. In addition, these theories depict the leader as having a full set of choice options available to him in crafting the appropriate coercive institution given perceived threats.

However, in my reading, these theories are only convincing in a world in which leaders start from scratch in creating a state and crafting its institutions. In post-colonial regimes, such as those in the Middle East, independence leaders do not possess complete agency in creating coercive institutions. Rather, leaders inherit states with certain pre-established capacities, repressive and otherwise, from the states that preceded them. During the 19th and 20th centuries, European colonial actors intervened in developing countries and undertook a number of important modernizing and state building programs. The effects of colonial intervention are particularly pronounced in the Middle East, when the colonial period coincided with a consequential period of modern state-building and consolidation. These projects – undertaken by both domestic and colonial forces – varied across country-context and determined state capacity at independence, with path-dependent implications for the nature of many central institutions post-independence (Acemoglu, Johnson, and Robinson 2000; North 1990). For example, Anderson (1986) persuasively demonstrates that colonial legacies caused the institutionalization of a more professional bureaucracy in Tunisia, colonized by the French, than in Libya, which was colonized by the Italians.

Similarly, choices made by colonial regimes established a beginning for path-dependent coercive institutions. As a result, the survival techniques employed by post-colonial authoritarian regimes in the Middle East correlate with former colony type. Lust-Okar and Jamal (2002, 349) find a correlation between the type of colonial regime (French or British) and post-independence electoral strategies, part of the strategies utilized for regime survival;
former French colonies have electoral rules that divide oppositions, while former British colonies use electoral rules which ensure the ruling party’s victory. The fragmented versus centralized approaches to electoral rules and survival strategies hints at the way colonial strategies of rule affected the nature of inherited coercive institutions in former British and French colonies, as has been demonstrated in historiography on the subject (Méouchy and Sluglett 2004). French propensity for increased bureaucratization and indirect rule polices led to more fragmented, decentralized policing practices (Blanchard 2014), while British propensity for direct rule by military forces led to a more centralized repressive and intelligence structures, focused on preemptively dealing with potentially challenging mobilization (Martin 2008). These institutions varied because European powers had different objectives in obtaining and maintaining colonial holdings. The British colonial strategy focused more on economic extraction, while the French strategy was more concerned with maintaining strategic interests and extending its civilizing mission. The institutions these policies created reflected variation in interests dictated by these overarching strategies.

Evidence from both in as well as outside the region collectively demonstrates that reforming sticky coercive institutions that predate an independence leader’s tenure will be challenging, if not impossible, barring significant exogenous economic or security shocks. Work on coercive institutions in countries as diverse as post-Soviet Russia (Anderson 2008), Burma (Callahan 2003), China (Perry 2006), Taiwan and the Philippines (Matsuzaki 2011), Zimbabwe (Weitzer 1990), Egypt, Algeria, and Turkey (Cook 2007) demonstrates that coercive agencies are particularly sticky and very successful at resisting reform. This is not dissimilar to assumptions underlying political science arguments focused on the path-dependence of coercive institutions, though it moves the starting point back in time significantly.

If the types of institutions adopted by colonial regimes are too sticky for post-colonial independence leaders to reform, and a model holds in which colonial experience predicts the nature and type of state survival strategies and the shape of related institutions, then colonial legacies account for the observable variation in independent authoritarian regimes’ use of
repression. Moreover, former French and British colonies should demonstrate meaningful variation in post-colonial patterns of state repression of opposition. Coercive institutions in former French colonies should be more decentralized, violent, and reactionary, while coercive institutions in former British colonies should be more centralized, constrained in their targets, and pre-emptive. And indeed, this appears to be the case within the population of post-independent Arab republics, outlined in the table below.\(^\text{24}\)

Table 1: Colonial Legacies and Repressive Environments in Arab Republics

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Colonial history</th>
<th>Post-colonial politics</th>
<th>State repressive policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>British</td>
<td>One-party state</td>
<td>Targeted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>British</td>
<td>One-party state</td>
<td>Targeted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palestine</td>
<td>British</td>
<td>One-party state</td>
<td>Targeted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libya</td>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>One-party state</td>
<td>Widespread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>One-party state</td>
<td>Targeted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>Multi-party republic</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>One-party state</td>
<td>Widespread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunisia</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>One-party state</td>
<td>Widespread</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In my coding (discussed further in the final section of this chapter), widespread repression refers to a reactive use of repression against opposition, with higher aggregate levels of state violence against more of the population, predictably resulting from former French colony status. Targeted repression refers to preemptive use of repression against opposition with lower aggregate levels of state violence against a smaller portion of the population, predictably resulting from former British colony status. The notable exception in the table is Algeria, which was under French colonial influence between 1827 and 1962 but resulted in the targeted state repressive policy typical of former British colonies. In Algeria, the French sought not only to implement its typical civilizing mission and to maintain

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\(^{24}\) The table includes only Arab republics, as a comparable group of cases with similar mechanisms of control and legitimation. This pattern also holds across monarchies in the Middle East, the other major regime type in the region. See Appendix A for longer table.
strategic interests but also to extract significant economic resources, and thus administered the colony differently than its other holdings. Algeria was considered to be a part of France and incorporated more directly into the French economy, and it became a French settler colony (Ruedy 1992). Both of these approaches contrasted sharply from French policy in other colonies with implications for its resulting institutions and repressive environment.

The assumption of repressive environment exogeneity does not completely strip rulers of agency, nor does it preclude shifts in regime ideology or targets. For example, rulers in both Egypt and Tunisia were able to decrease the level of repression during periods of strategic liberalization. For both the Mubarak and Ben ‘Ali regimes, this occurred most noticeably when the rulers came to power, following moments of heightened repression under their predecessors. In addition, the victims of targeted repression shifted in Egypt under different rulers; Nasser and Mubarak targeted the Brotherhood while coopting liberal and secular opposition, while Sadat coopted the Brotherhood and attacked their competition. However, as Brownlee (2002, 8) observed in Egypt, whatever freedoms might be enjoyed during a given period “easily slipped away. And they easily slipped away because the “openings” of that earlier decade had no institutional basis, coming as they did solely at the discretion of the regime.” Predictable patterns of state repression – correlated with former colony status, beginning at independence, and continuing over the course of the following decades – suggest that these institutional legacies significantly constrain leaders in employing repression against opposition as a survival strategy. Ultimately, targeted or widespread coercive institutions prevailed and are evident when viewing the full course of each country’s post-independence repressive histories as a unit. Thus, the choice of one former French colony (Tunisia) and one former British colony (Egypt) for the main cases studies is important to capture variation in repressive strategies. In the cases under consideration here, Egypt displays a pattern of targeted state repression between independence and the 2011 uprisings, while in Tunisia, a pattern of widespread state repression emerges during the same time period.
Levels of Polarization, 2011

Egypt and Tunisia also differ in levels of polarization following the 2011 uprisings. Although religion and politics was the salient division in both countries, the distribution of elite preferences was significantly different in Egypt and Tunisia, with Egypt emerging more polarized and Tunisia demonstrating a centrist tendency after almost six decades of authoritarian rule.²⁵

Figure 3: Comparative Party Polarization in Egypt and Tunisia, 2011

The level of divisiveness on this issue was centrally important during the transition period, which revolved around processes of drafting and passing a constitution, establishing new rules of the game, and moving the country from a democratic transitional moment towards democratic consolidation. The relative distribution and level of disagreement about

²⁵ See Appendix B for information on how political platforms issued by the parties were coded for this visual representation.
the identity of the state dictated the contentiousness of debate and ability to compromise among elites. The level of polarization in large part explains the divergent outcomes the two countries have witnessed; while Tunisian political elites participated in constitutional negotiations that were ultimately successful in January 2014 despite a number of delays and challenges and Tunisia continues moving towards democratic consolidation, Egyptian politicians remained fractured and failed to pass a constitution on which they agreed and in which they compromised on the nature of the state, and the country has witnessed authoritarian retrenchment since 2013. These developments, and the role of polarization in them, are discussed in chapter 5. Chapters 3 and 4 link widespread repression of and decreasing polarization among opposition in Tunisia, and targeted repression against one opposition group (the Muslim Brotherhood) and increasing polarization among the larger opposition in Egypt, over time, resulting in each country’s political system being differently polarized following the uprisings.

Motivation for Experimental Methodology

In this section, I discuss the motivation behind my choosing the methodology, location, and design of the lab experiments featured in chapter 5. An experimental test was necessary to address potential issues of endogeneity inherent to the observational data demonstrating a correlation between repression and polarization. The main benefits of an experimental setting are total control of variation, and the ability to isolate the causal effect of interest (Falk and Heckman 2009). In terms of controlling variation, the lab experimental setting allowed me the ability to prime different kinds of repressive environments. Obviously, actual repression or experimental conditions approaching a repressive environment cannot ethically be used as an experimental treatment. Thus, priming the experience of specific repressive contexts and bringing this to the forefront of respondents’ minds during the experiments was the most effective way of measuring the effect of these environments.
on preferences and behavior. The priming approach also gave me the ability to control the information participants received about its differential use, namely which types of groups would be affected in a certain type of repressive environment. In addition, the lab setting allowed me to maintain the highest ethical standards in fully debriefing participants about the primes as well as their real-world inspiration and possible effects. In terms of measurement, this particular lab set-up provided the opportunity to measure the extent to which group identification and policy preferences were affected by the priming of certain repressive environments, in order to isolate and compare the size and direction of the effects across treatment groups. The placement of important questions after the priming of specific repressive conditions also allowed me to establish that the causal direction was plausibly in the hypothesized direction (from repression to polarization), and not reversed. The randomized assignment of group membership and repressive environment addresses potential issues of endogeneity inherent in observational data linking repression and polarization. The lab set-up eliminated potential confounders – such as relative group size or other observable group characteristics affecting a regime’s choice of repressive strategy, pre-existing cooperative or combative relationships between groups, and group membership selection bias – from consideration, providing me additional leverage to test whether the basic causal process advanced in my theory holds.

I chose Tunisia as the site for the lab experiments because it is a context in which the content of repressive primes are relevant and realistic. The primes should be expected to be most believable and effective in a context where politically-motivated repression has previously been employed by the state. In Tunisia, respondents were likely to have real-world reference points for political repression because of the country’s long and widespread experience with it under its two previous authoritarian presidents. Although state repression has significantly decreased since the 2011 uprisings unseated long-ruling president Ben ‘Ali and destabilized the authoritarian state, it remains a salient political topic. Tunisia’s Transitional Justice Law, passed in December 2013, established the Truth and Dignity Commission and
granted it a legal mandate to document past abuses taken by the state, to provide reparations to victims, and to pursue criminal accountability for serious and systematic crimes. By the end of its mandate in June 2016, the commission had received 62,544 complaints and had held listening sessions to collect additional information for nearly 27,000 files, documenting the ubiquity of repressive experiences among Tunisian citizens. Local press closely follows reports and statements issued by the organization. In addition, activists remain concerned that the state may revert to past repressive behavior. In November 2015, current Tunisian president Beji Qaid Essebsi instituted a state of emergency following a terrorist attack in which a suicide bomber affiliated with the terrorist organization known as the Islamic State targeted the presidential palace and killed 12 presidential guards. Officials have renewed the law twice, in March 2016 and in June 2016, citing on-going terror threats against the state. Local and international human rights organizations have recorded the government’s “disproportionate and repressive use” of the emergency law to “trample on human rights.”

They cite arbitrary arrests, detentions, violations of civil liberties, and other discriminatory measures against journalists and political activists, which are reminiscent of repressive behavior taken by the regime during the past authoritarian era.

The main goals of the experiment were to determine whether the relationship predicted by the dissertation’s theory holds in a lab experimental setting, and to measure the comparative size and direction of the effect across treatment groups of different repressive environments. In the lab experiments, individuals were randomly assigned to groups and then primed with reminders of different kinds of repressive environments. I chose to use a meaningful characteristic – common preferences – as the basis for group membership rather than generic identifiers alone, such as Groups A and B or Teams Red and Blue, as sometimes employed in the minimal group paradigm (Tajfel, Bundy, and Flament 1971). Although countless studies have demonstrated that individuals do meaningfully identity with ran-

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26 See Amnesty International’s June 2016 report, titled “Tunisia: Severe restrictions on liberty and movement latest symptoms of repressive emergency law.”
domly assigned groups in lab experimental settings, it was unclear to me what individuals’
group-related preferences would be in these situations beyond simple material group inter-
estests, or how these preferences would then be altered or updated. Assigning membership to a
group with more content than the typical minimal group was intended to capture movement
in political opinions related to the basis of that group membership later in the experiment.

I assigned respondents to one of two types of groups: one based on economic policy
preferences, or one based on policy preferences related to religion and politics. This was a
deliberate choice to test whether group membership defined by similar preferences regarding
religion and politics may be different or affected differently than economic-preference based
groups by repressive conditions. Although the salient cleavage addressed in the dissertation
relates to the latter, I wanted to provide myself additional leverage over whether there is
something unique about groups based on religious preferences. Lipset and Rokkan (1967,
94) observed that “systems will come under much heavier strain if the main lines of cleavage
are over morals and the nature of human destiny than if they concern such mundane and
negotiable matters as the prices of commodities, the rights of debtors and creditors, wages
and profits, and the ownership of property.” Their observation suggests that certain kinds
of preferences, specifically those related to economics and tangible material compromises,
may be more malleable than differences with less clear, concrete compromises and solutions.

Key Definitions and Measurements

Before turning to the empirics of the dissertation, I outline here a number of impor-
tant definitions, and how these terms are measured in the comparative qualitative process-
tracing case studies and in the experiments.

First, the definition of repression used in this dissertation is state control of political
opposition mobilization through a number of coercive actions, similar to the definition used
by Davenport (2015, 29): “coercive actions undertaken by regimes against actors challeng-
ing regimes’ beliefs, institutions, and actions.” My focus is on repression targeting elites mobilized as opposition groups, not regular citizens. I conceptualize repression as a type of regime maintenance against organized elites threatening to compete with or destabilize the regime, similar to existing studies of repression. I code repression in terms of the number of opposition groups affected by state repression. In my typology, targeted repression refers to a regime that represses opposition groups differently in a divide-and-conquer approach. In Egypt, the regime specifically targeted one group with repression while the other groups remained untouched. In a widespread repressive environment like Tunisia, the regime repressed all groups in a similar way. My categorization of Egypt as a case of targeted repression is not intended to deny the plight of non-Brotherhood opposition who suffered for their political beliefs and behavior under the country’s authoritarian regimes. This categorization simply indicates that a key feature of regime maintenance in Egypt involved an explicit divide-and-conquer approach, permitting some opposition to exist and operate within severely limited spaces of contestation while repressing those deemed the most threatening. I measure each country’s repressive environment through historical primary documents published in newspapers and by local organizations, as well as through interviews with practitioners. The lab experiments include two repressive primes, one priming a targeted repressive environment in which one of two groups is affected by repression, and another priming a widespread repressive environment in which both groups are affected by repression.

Second, in-group identification is defined as the extent to which an individual identifies with an in-group. Full identification includes categorizing oneself as part of the group, and thinking and feeling positively about the group (Ellemers, Spears, and Doosje 2002). An in-group is always contrasted with the out-group, which is by definition a group with which one does not identify, and towards which group members hold negative ideas or feelings. In the case study evidence, I measure in-group identification primarily through interviews with members of the opposition who experienced these events first hand, supported by historical primary documents from parties and personal memoirs, and look for evidence of whether
groups primarily identified themselves as individual organizations or as part of a larger collective of opposition. In the lab experiments, I measure in-group identification through a battery of social identity questions developed from the Identification with a Psychological Group (IDPG) scale developed by Mael and Tetrick (1989) in line with established studies researching questions of group identification.

Finally, polarization is defined as the distance between parties’ policy preferences on salient issues of contestation (Barber and McCarty 2015) This is measured through official and public demonstrations of preferences, especially party platforms or roll-call voting. In the case studies, I measure polarization by coding party platforms by adapting existing coding schemes from the Manifesto Project for the salient axis of competition in my cases, that of religion and politics specific to Muslim countries.27 I use Manifesto Project data in the comparative chapter on post-Soviet bloc countries to measure polarization along the left-right divide, the salient axis of competition in these countries during their transitions. The Manifesto Project is a collaborative project by Volkens et al. (2015) and provides quantitative measurements of parties’ policy positions generated through content analysis of parties’ political platforms. The dataset includes observations from over 1000 parties in 50 countries beginning in 1945, and provides comparative data important for observing relative party placement using standardized measurements across time and cases. As mentioned in the previous chapter, I focus on polarization at the elite level, and in the form of parties and movements, because of the importance of these actors in contingent theories of democratization (Kitschelt et al. 1999; Linz and Stepan 1978; McFaul 2002; Mainwaring, O’Donnell, and Valenzuela 1992; O’Donnell and Schmitter 1986; Przeworski 1991), as well as because of these actors’ agency in mobilizing socio-economic cleavages into political cleavages (Przeworski 1985, 99-101).28 To measure political polarization in the lab experiments, respondents

27 The coding of the party platforms is discussed in detail in Appendix B.

28 My assumption is that preferences of parties then structure mass polarization in a top-down process, as partisans sort their preferences based on the parties they identity with and support. Empirical evidence supporting this is further discussed in Appendix C.
were asked their opinions on a number of policies – and were told the average opinion of the
other group *before* reporting their level of agreement. I included these questions before the
treatment in order to account for and control baseline opinions, and my analysis relies on
comparisons across treatment groups.
Repression and Polarization in Tunisia (1987-2011)

This chapter presents case study evidence of repression and polarization in Tunisia under the rule of authoritarian president Zine el-ʿAbidine Ben ʿAli, who took office in 1987. I demonstrate that the political opposition targeted by regime repression during this period was mixed in its composition. Those targets included both members of the country’s leading Islamist opposition group, Ennahda, as well as members of a variety of ideologically leftist, communist, and center-right parties, who shared a secular orientation to politics. Repression against the opposition appears to have come in waves, first against the Islamists (1989-1991), then against leftist parties (1991-2002), and finally against center-right parties (1997-2005). This widespread repression resulted in a shared experience, not only literally in terms of overlapping periods in prison and in exile, but also more importantly in a shared identification as a broader opposition created through collective victimhood. I document evidence of decreasing political polarization through the mechanism of decreased in-group identification – as groups increasingly identified with a larger collective of victimized opposition – as repression became an increasingly ubiquitous experience during this period. This decreasing polarization was evident both in changes in individual parties’ political positions as well as in collective initiatives among multiple groups.

The Tunisian Opposition before the 2010 Uprisings

On the eve of its January 2011 revolution, Tunisia was a classic case of electoral authoritarianism, particularly after institutionalizing regular national and municipal elections, however unfree and unfair, in 1981. In 1956, the Bourguiba regime established a ruling
party, the Rassemblement Constitutionnel Démocratique (RCD), which he and his successor used to govern, surveil, and coopt the general citizenry into obedience through 2010. The two successive authoritarian regimes faced a number of opposition parties from across the ideological spectrum. As noted in the methods chapter, I define an opposition party as “an institution located within a political system but outside the realm of governance that has decisive organizational capacities and engages in competitive interactions with the incumbents of a political regime based on a minimum degree of mutual acceptance” (Albrecht 2010, 3).

When I refer to the Tunisian opposition before 2011, there are at least two and possibly three types of political groups which can be included in this term. There were two trends within the Tunisian opposition before 2011 for those groups which are in full accordance with the above definition. These tendencies could be differentiated by either a secular or Islamist ideology guiding the party’s policy preferences regarding reform objectives and the type of state that should result from any successful democratization. My ideological grouping of these parties does not imply any formal coordination or automatic affinity between those groups placed in either category. Rather, I find distinguishing between parties in this way helps to understand their initial goals and policy preferences, and to make sense of subsequent changes in preference positioning. The first group of opposition parties was of a leftist orientation and advocated reform towards a democratic and modern civil state divorced from religion, and included two generations of activists. The older generation was comprised of the country’s original opposition parties of various communist, Arab nationalist, and other leftist ideologies, mobilized against Bourguiba. These included the Tunisian

29 Hibou (2011, 86-93) provides a detailed discussion of how the diffuse structure of the RCD served the dual functions of transmitting the party’s omnipresence throughout the country as well as collecting surveillance on local members and opposition activities, channeling the information to higher intelligence institutions through the party structure. In 2010, the party had 7,500 local cells, 2,200 professional cells, and 2 million members in a country of only 10 million people.

30 I exclude from consideration political opposition in the form of jihađi groups, which were present and active in Tunisia during this period. These groups were motivated by agendas of revolutionary reform but utilized extra-political means and channels to achieve their goals, thereby violating the “minimum degree of mutual acceptance” of Albrecht’s criteria.
Communist Party (الحزب الشيوعي التونسي إلى طرف، al-Ḥizb ash-Shyu’ī et-Tunsī in Arabic), founded in 1934; the Tunisian branch of the Ba’athist party, formed in 1955; حراك تحالف القوامى العربي, an Arab nationalist, Nasserist party known as Tajammu’, founded by lawyer Bechir Essid ahead of the 1981 elections; and حراك تحرير الشبيبة العربيّة-تونس, which became active in Tunisia’s industrial sectors ahead of economic protests in the late 1970s.

The second generation of the leftist tendency included secular parties formed later in the twentieth century. In 1983, Nejib Chebbi founded the Rassemblement Socialiste Progressiste (later renamed the Parti Démocrate Progressiste and known by the acronym PDP). The Tunisian Communist Workers Party (حزب عمال الشيوعي التونسي, and known by the acronym PCOT) was founded in 1986 by Hamma Hammami. The Social Liberal Party (Parti Social-Libéral, or PSL) was founded as a liberal opposition in 1988 as the Social Party for Progress under the chairmanship of Mondher Thabet. The Ettajdid Movement (حراك تجدد, or the renewal movement) was formed in 1993 when the Tunisian Communist Party (unrelated to the PCOT) abandoned its communist ideology and adopted a center-left secular political platform. Ahmed Ibrahim served as the party’s First Secretary from 1993 through the 2010 uprising. In April 1994, the Democratic Forum for Labour and Liberties (in French, the Forum Démocratique Pour le Travail et les Libertés, known as Ettakatol), a social democratic party, was founded with Mustapha Ben Jaafar as Secretary General and officially recognized by the state in October 2002. Finally, the Congrès pour la République (المعتمر في أجل الجمهورية, known as CPR) was established on July 2011 through a declaration signed by 31 people including human rights activist Moncef Marzouki, Naziha Rejiba, Abberraoud Ayadi, and Samir Ben Amour. This party advocated a secular state but had heterogeneous leadership, mixed between secularists and Islamists, and was banned by the regime in 2002. Many of the various parties’ founders

31 The Communist Party went through periods of being permitted to operate legally. It was banned by the Vichy regime from 1939-1943, and from 1963 through 1981. Mohamed Nafaa served as its first secretary general from 1946 to 1981, and Mohamed Harmel served as its second.

32 The Ben ‘Ali regime did not formally recognize PCOT, but did initially allow them to operate freely (al-Madini 2012, 260).
had previously participated in – and been repressed as part of – the student opposition movement of the 1960s and 1970s. Known as Perspectives (in Arabic El-‘Amal Et-Tunsi), this student movement was established in 1963 and brought together individuals from a number of leftist ideologies, including those from the communist, Marxist, Trotskyist, and Maoist, and Ba’athist trends (al-Madini 2012, 209-210).

The second tendency was the Islamist opposition, represented politically by Ennahda. Rachid al-Ghannoushi and ‘Abd al-Fatah Mourou founded the organization in 1979, in the wake of regime’s brutal suppression of the previous year’s general strike, and released its founding manifesto in June 1981. The movement first took the form of a clandestine organization, al-Jama’a al-Islamiyya fi Tunis (The Islamic Association in Tunisia). It discreetly gave lectures, sponsored conferences, and created a cell of activists by preaching an Islam that was not simply “prayers and rituals” but also addressed Tunisia’s specific spiritual, economic, and political problems. After Bourguiba announced a program of political liberalization and called for elections in April 1981, leaders dissolved the jama’a and applied for a government license to operate a political party under the name Mouvement de la Tendance Islamique/Harakat al-Ittijah al-Islami (the Movement of the Islamic Tendency, known as MTI). The organization never received a response to its request for formal recognition, and as a result was not permitted to contest the 1981 elections. The movement rebranded itself Harakat Ennahda during the 1989 elections under Ben ‘Ali, settling on a name that did not include an overtly religious reference in order to comply with a law prohibiting religious political parties, but continued to be denied formal recognition. Ennahda was only legalized after the uprising on March 1, 2011.

The possible third group of opposition challenges parts of Albrecht’s definition. This group is comprised of political parties which emerged as splinters from the ruling party, including the Mouvement de l’Unité Populaire (MUP), the Mouvement des Démocrates Socialistes (MDS), the Union Démocratique Unioniste (UDU), and the Parti de l’Unité Populaire (PUP). These groups referred to themselves as opposition to the ruling party, and party
leaders sincerely believed they contributed to Tunisia’s democratization by participating in
governing institutions – and, indeed, they were sometimes punished by the regime for their
behavior. However, the parties do not fully qualify as legitimate opposition movements. The
parties’ legality was never threatened by the regime in the same way it was for the previously
mentioned opposition groups. Moreover, the parties were not created to represent emerging
social constituencies, new social groups, or major reform initiatives, but rather were formed
as the product of personal rivalries within the ruling party (Haugbolle and Cavatorta 2011,
330). The parties maintained the RCD’s vaguely socialist ideology, differing only slightly
in which type of policies should be implemented and with the splinter parties calling for
slightly more checks on the president and the RCD. Members of the groups were also kept
on a meager state payroll.33 Perhaps the most telling sign that these parties might better
be considered an extension of the ruling party was how quickly they became irrelevant to
political life after the uprisings, fading with the dissolution of the ruling party. However,
because these groups sometimes worked with the more classically defined opposition, were
often referenced in my interviews with the more “legitimate” opposition leaders, and were
affected by regime repression, albeit at lower levels, the names of these parties and stories
appear throughout this chapter where appropriate.

Widespread Repression of Tunisian Opposition
1956-1987

Repression of political opposition was a defining feature of Tunisian authoritarianism
from the beginning of the post-colonial period. In March 1956, Tunisia gained independence
from the French and Habib Bourguiba served as the country’s first president. Although
the Bourguiba era is not the focus of this chapter, the widespread repressive environment
of this period reveals the stability of repression in Tunisia, and deserves a brief mention.

33 Mohamed Moncef Chebbi, one of the founders of the Mouvement des Démocrates Socialistes and former
RCD middle-ranking leader. Interview with the author, December 5, 2014, Tunis, Tunisia.
Bourguiba first began consolidating power in the nascent nation by targeting a rival faction of the nationalist movement led by fellow independence leader Salah Ben Youssef. He then stripped other competitors of their official functions and expelled them from the party, in many cases punishing their disobedience with execution.\footnote{In addition to Ben Youssef, Bourguiba clashed with other independence leaders including Ahmed ben Salah, Taher Ben ‘Ammar, Salah al-Din Baccouche, and Muhammad Mzali, all of whom challenged Bourguiba’s political primacy within both the country and the ruling party.}

After purging the RCD, Bourguiba confronted newly mobilized opposition from outside of the ruling party. The regime coupled superficial gestures toward pluralism and liberalization with near constant repression of mobilized opposition groups during the last three decades of Bourguiba’s rule. State repression targeted groups involved in organizing major strikes and protests. In 1963, the government outlawed the Tunisian Communist Party and shut down its political journal, *Tribune de Progrès*, while it arrested members of *Perspectives* and the Ba’ath movement who participated in the March 1968 nationwide student strikes, laden with anti-government tones.\footnote{The regime arrested 200 people following the March demonstrations and incarcerated 81, holding them without trial until September 1968 (Naccache 2009, 97). Leading members of the groups were tried in separate state security (*Amn al-Dawla*) courts and received sentences of up to sixteen years for charges such as “participation in an illegal organization” and “attempted subversion against the state” (al-Madini 2012, 60).}

Economic and political protests culminated in the two debilitating nationwide events – the January 26, 1978 general strike, which became known as “Black Thursday” as a result of the government’s brutal response to the largely peaceful protests, and the January 1984 “Bread Riots.” On Black Thursday, 500 people were killed (al-Madini 2012, 75), and police injured or killed hundreds more during the Bread Riots (Perkins 2004, 157-170). In the wake of these events, the regime employed systematic round-ups of leading communist and leftist organizers as they organized protests and strikes, and encouraged the mobilization of university students.\footnote{Afif Bouni, Habib Karray, Othman Bel Hadj Omar, founding members of the Ba’ath Movement in Tunisia. Interviews with the author, November 27 and 28, 2014, Tunis, Tunisia.} The regime believed the MTI had been involved in planning the 1984 riots and responded by arresting scores of its sympathizers, in addition to jailing leaders of the leftist and communist parties (Gana \footnote{Afif Bouni, Habib Karray, Othman Bel Hadj Omar, founding members of the Ba’ath Movement in Tunisia. Interviews with the author, November 27 and 28, 2014, Tunis, Tunisia.}
The government also began to target opposition groups contesting the regime in a more formal manner. In the midst of increasing protest mobilization, Bourguiba announced multi-party elections in 1981, with a second contest held in 1984, intended as a mechanism to release reform pressures. The regime then rounded up opposition during the periods surrounding the elections. For example, in July 1981, the government arrested 61 high profile MTI activists, including founding leaders Rachid al-Ghannoushi and Abdelfattah Morou, and charged them with “forming an illegal organization, defaming the president, and publishing false news” (Alexander 2010, 52).

1981-2010

The widespread repression that defined the Bourguiba regime continued and increased in intensity under his successor, Zine el-‘Abidine Ben ‘Ali. On November 7, 1987, Ben ‘Ali came to power through a bloodless coup in which he had Bourguiba declared medically incompetent and unfit to lead the country. Upon seizing power, Ben ‘Ali initially promised a number of reforms that appeared to differ significantly from his predecessor. He released the thousands of political prisoners that had been held under Bourguiba in December 1987. Parliamentary elections were held in 1989 and were aggressively promoted by the new regime as the most free and fair in the country’s history. In reality, the regime manipulated the contests both on election day and during the three days between voting and the announcement of results. Despite significant interference, the Islamist organization, now under the name Harakat Ennahda, performed well. Official – and most likely, altered – tallies released by the government saw the movement win roughly 17 percent of votes nationally, and between 20 and 30 percent in both Tunis electoral districts, Bizerte, Gabes, 

37 Hemadi Jebali, Secretary General of Ennahda through December 2014 and Prime Minister of Tunisia from December 2011 to March 2013. Interview with the author, December 10, 2014, Sousse, Tunisia
Kebili, Sousse, and Tozeur. However, due to manipulation of seat assignment formulas, Ennahda was not assigned a single seat.

The strong electoral showing led to Islamists being the first targets of regime repression under the new president. The regime slowly began to arrest individual members in the weeks after the elections on trumped up charges, but waited until 1991 to initiate a major campaign in the wake of two incidents, both of which appear to have either been fabricated or exaggerated by the regime to justify the crackdown. During the first incident, armed militants attacked the ruling party headquarters located in the Bab Souika neighborhood of Tunis, in February 1991. The militants claimed allegiance to a known militant Islamist separatist group, but the lukewarm condemnation by the Ennahda leadership led to a roundup of top and middle leadership on various charges in addition to the 23 individuals charged with the crime itself. The second was known as the Barraket Essahel affair, named after the town near Sousse where alleged coup plotting had taken place. On May 22, 1991, Minister of the Interior Abdallah Kallel announced that the regime had thwarted a coup in which military officers had conspired with Islamists from the Ennahda movement to overthrow the president. As a result of these two major incidents, roughly 8,000 of the Ennahda’s top and middle leadership were arrested between 1990 and 1992. 279 members were tried in two cases in Tunisia’s military tribunal, with 46 individuals receiving life sentences and

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38 In a September 6, 2006, classified cable from the U.S. Embassy in Tunis, Ennahda leader Jebali claimed that a journalist from French newspaper Le Monde had heard from French Embassy sources that Ennahda had actually won the election with over 60 percent of the vote.

39 Ennahda leader Rachid Ghannouchi remarked from abroad that although the party leadership had neither planned the attack nor had any awareness of the plot, he thought it was an “understandable reaction undertaken by a group of Muslim youth activists against the tyrannical and oppressive politics of the regime” (Ritter 2015, 116).

40 To date, no evidence has been produced to substantiate the claims put forward by the regime surrounding the alleged coup. In addition, at least two members of Ennahda charged with involvement in the coup were already being held in prisons by the regime at the time of the alleged plot.

41 This figure was consistently recited to me in interviews with Ennahda and former secular opposition leadership, and appears to be a commonly accepted tally despite scant documentation of individual arrests.
219 receiving between one and 24 years in prison.\textsuperscript{42} During this period, a select number of important members fled the country for Europe due to health and safety concerns ahead of the crackdown or by escaping during it.\textsuperscript{43}

Initially, it appeared that Ben ‘Ali would deviate from his predecessor and implement a divided structure of contestation (Lust 2005), permitting some opposition to operate legally and relatively unfettered while excluding other opposition. In 1988, claiming true political pluralism, the regime legalized a number of loyal opposition parties including the MDS, the PUP, the UDU, as well as the Ettajdid Movement and the RSP/PDP. These groups had legal mandate to contest elections throughout the 1990s and 2000s, though they were not permitted to win a significant portion of seats during any election or implement reform while serving in elected bodies. The regime later denied legal recognition to Ennahda and the PCOT (al-Madini 2012, 260), as well as the Ettakatol and CPR parties when they formed in 1994 and 2001, respectively. However, legal or semi-legal operating status did not prevent the regime from punishing these groups when they were vocally critical or mobilized. During the 1991 sweep against Ennahda, a number of student activists of various ideological stripes were arrested, such as when the regime arrested members of the Union Générale des Étudiants de Tunisie (UGET), dominated by Ennahda supporters. The regime banned the activities of the Tunisian Ba’athist Movement after the second Gulf War (al-Madini 2012, 63) and arrested its known active leadership. The Communists in particular faced severe repression throughout the 1990s. PCOT leader Hamma Hammami was arrested in 1991, 1992, and 1994 on charges related to running the opposition newspaper El Badil, after it was banned in 1991; again in 1998 for possible involvement in university protests and other trumped up charges; and in 2002, when he emerged from hiding to contest his conviction in absentia during a 1999 political trial during which he and 21 other communist defendants


\textsuperscript{43} Al-Ghannoushi had been released from jail on May 14, 1987, and left for Europe through Algeria due to health issues.
were sentenced to prison terms. In 1998, five students were singled out after student demonstrations and given 4-year prison sentences for their membership in the PCOT.

Leaders of Ettakatol and CPR faced similar types of repression. Ettakatol’s Secretary General Mustapha Ben Jaafar was revealed to be on a travel ban in 1997, after having his passport seized two years earlier during a politically motivated investigation that did not result in any criminal charges. In October 1999, he was interrogated for five hours at a police station in Carthage, facing charges of maintaining an “unrecognized association.” Ettakatol member Khemais Ksila was imprisoned from 1997 through 1999 on charges of defaming the state. CPR co-founder Mohamed Abbou was arrested in March 2005 for publishing critical articles in the press. CPR co-founder Moncef Marzouki, who had been arrested after having his presidential candidacy rejected during the 1994 elections on charges that his “calls for greater political freedom and the legalization of [Ennahda] defamed the state” (Perkins 2004, 197), moved into semi Official exile in France in 2002 after near constant harassment by police and the confiscation of his official documents. Even the loyal opposition was not immune from repression during this period; in 1995, MDS secretary-general Mohammed Mouada published an open letter criticizing the president’s behavior and the political environment he was creating, which resulted in the arrested of Mouada and MDS vice president Khemais Chamami. Mouada was sentenced to 11 years, and Chemmari to five.

During the last decade of the Ben ‘Ali period, the regime exploited increased international attention to local jihādī threats to legalize repressive behaviors. In December 2003, the Tunisian parliament passed expansive domestic terrorism laws as part of its partnership

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45 Human Rights Watch’s 1999 World Report noted that Ben Jaafar and human rights activist Sihem Ben Sedrine had been placed on a travel ban in late 1997, after having their passports seized in 1994 and 1995, respectively. Neither had been charged with a crime and were only made aware of the ban through a report issued to European parliamentarians about judicial complicity into false, politically motivated criminal investigations.
with the United States in the ‘War on Terror.’ In text, the laws focused on combating terrorism, but the language defined terrorism so broadly that it also included any form of opposition against the regime. In practice, the laws legalized the regime’s pre-existing, politically motivated repressive tactics (Welchman 2012), increasing its ability to limit mobilized opposition and ban newly forming political parties. Under the new laws, state repression was also expanded to allow the regime to persecute personal enemies of the president’s second wife, Leila Trabelsi, and her family as they accumulated wealth through deliberate and rampant cronyism (Rijkers, Freund, and Nucifora 2014). The regime arrested about 4,000 people under the new terrorism law between 2003 and the December 2010 uprising.

As the regime continued, repressive experiences became ubiquitous among members of each of the opposition parties mobilized against Ben ‘Ali’s regime. Those affected demonstrated certain important commonalities of experience, whether in exile or being repressed at home. Repressed opposition members sometimes came to literally share repressive experiences when they were jailed or exiled in the same physical places. Political prisoners were largely concentrated in a select few of Tunisia’s overcrowded prisons, particularly the Borj er-Roumi prison in Bizerte and the April 9 prison in Tunis. Prisoners were also sometimes arbitrarily rotated through many of the country’s 27 prisons as a further form of psychological torture. In these places, prisoners of different ideological stripes shared physical space. Many prisoners were held in small-group isolation, which involved confining a small number of prisoners to a cell and preventing them from seeing other inmates or accessing prison facilities and activities available to the general prisoner population. For example, Samir Dilou, a current member of the executive committee of Ennahda who was arrested for participating in opposition mobilization as a UGET student leader in 1991, described being kept with

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46 This, of course, applies only to political prisoners not subjected to solitary confinement. As of 2004, between 30 and 40 Ennahda ranking members were held in solitary confinement for 23 hours daily. These individuals were high ranking leaders who were tried and convicted in the 1992 Barraket Essahel trial. Some were held in solitary confinement for upwards of a decade, including Ali Lareydh, Hemadi Jebali, Karim Harouni, Sahbi Attig, Abdelhamid Jelassi, Lotfi Snoussi, Ziad Douletli, Ridha Sadi. See Human Rights Watch’s 2004 report titled, “Tunisia: Long-term Solitary Confinement of Political Prisoners” (https://www.hrw.org/sites/default/files/reports/tunisia0704.pdf).
other student activists, showing me picture of him in his prison cell with 10 to 12 other prisoners during the interview. None of his cellmates were from Ennahda but were active in other—notably, secular—political parties and movements at various points both before and after 2011. They were limited in their exposure to other prisoners, but interacted with each other quite intimately.\textsuperscript{47}

The shared nature of prison experiences was highlighted by a slight improvement in the mistreatment of prisoners beginning in 1996, when political prisoners began to be permitted to eat and pray in groups, and had more opportunities to socialize and communicate with other prisoners.\textsuperscript{48} Members of the opposition also figuratively shared experiences. Those arrested as members of the opposition commonly experienced the same torture, humiliation, and dehumanization tactics. A striking consistency in individuals’ jail experiences emerged from my own interviews with former political prisoners, as well as from the testimonies released by the Truth and Dignity Commission. Many political prisoners’ stories are nearly identical, starting with an arrest in a local precinct and continuing with being tortured in the underground chambers of the Ministry of the Interior for an unknowable amount of time. These stories vary only in the length of prison time served, not in the experience of imprisonment. Political prisoners’ stories similarly included references to severe physical torture designed to illicit false confessions and names of co-conspirators. They also recounted being subjected to psychological torture such as sleep deprivation, arbitrary searches, and solitary confinement, practices intended to break their spirits. And the trauma of repression did not end once prisoners were released. Former political prisoners were subjected to “administrative control,” arbitrary practices mandated by the state’s terms of release, such as

\textsuperscript{47}Dilou also noted that this shared space fostered communication among the members from various groups during their prison stay. After the men were released, Dilou said that they remained in contact with each other. Samir Dilou. Interview with the author, November 17, 2014, Tunis, Tunisia.

\textsuperscript{48}A July 2004 Human Rights Watch report titled “Long-Term Solitary Confinement of Political Prisoners” quoted interviews with a number former political prisoners—including Taoufik Kabaoui, who served from December 1990 until July 2003; Ennahda’s Samir Dilou, who served from 1991 to 2001; and human rights lawyer Nejib Hosni, who was imprisoned from 1994-1996 and 2000-2001—in which 1996 marked a change in prison policies.
frequent, mandatory check-ins at police stations, often multiple times per day and at inconvenient locations, and the revocation of essential administrative and identification papers. By the early 2000s, as the result of successive waves of repression against opposition groups, administrative control affected 90 percent of known political opponents (Hibou 2011, 5).

Members of the opposition also shared experiences of the state persecuting their families. Families of jailed opposition were subjected to police surveillance, arbitrary house searches, and confiscation of passports and other important documents for no other reason than being related to an activist. The wife of Ennahda leader Ali Lareydh was raped by state security on one such visit. The wife of PCOT leader Hamma Hammami, Radhi Nasraoui (who was also a leading human rights lawyer in her own right) was harassed by state security and jailed during the 1990s, and their daughters were denied passports. The children of Habib Karray, a leader of the Ba’ath Movement, were unable to study and work in Tunisia because of their father’s political activism and jail time, and were forced to set up lives as medical professionals in other Arab countries. By 2010, the trauma of repression had become a shared collective experience among political opposition as a result of the widespread nature of the state’s repression.

**Decreasing Political Polarization**

In line with the theory of the dissertation, the widespread repressive environment in Tunisia should result in a less polarized opposition, both in comparison to other countries’ targeted repressive environments and over time within Tunisia, as repression became increasingly widespread during the final years of the Ben ‘Ali regime. Developments in

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49 See Human Rights Watch’s 1999 World Report for descriptions of these widespread experiences (available at https://www.hrw.org/legacy/worldreport99/mideast/tunisia.html). These details were also confirmed and often repeated to me during interviews with former opposition members.


51 Habib Karray. Interview with the author, November 27, 2014, Tunis, Tunisia.
Tunisia between 1987 and the 2010 uprisings support both manifestations of this argument; the political system became less polarized over time and was comparatively less polarized than in Egypt in 2011. In this section, I present evidence of the observable implication – i.e. decreased polarization – resulting from the internal psychological processes of group differentiation. The next section links these changes with repression by documenting changes in in-group identification within the Tunisian opposition.

Two sources provide evidence that the Tunisian opposition became less polarized between the late 1980s and the 2011 uprising on policy preferences related to the type of state that would result from successful reform or overthrow of the regime. First, party platforms, manifestos, and official statements issued by parties ahead of electoral contests demonstrated convergence on central issues of state identity.\(^{52}\) Initially, parties’ platforms indicated a high level of division on policy preferences related to religion and politics. The political platforms put forward by the PDP and leftists in the 1989 parliamentary elections included strong language against religion in political and public life, asserting the secular and civil nature of the Tunisian state and framing the legitimation for legislation and reform projects in liberal secular principles. In addition, the documents made reference to and indicated support for the ban put forward by the regime on parties formed on the basis of religion, as part of a larger commitment to a secular public sphere. In contrast, Ennahda’s platform indicated preferences which remained true to the Islamic reform commitments of its June 1981 party-founding manifesto. Despite being banned from officially participating in the 1989 elections, Ennahda ran independents unified under a political platform. The platform rearticulated the main points of the 1981 manifesto, advocating wealth redistribution along regional lines and calling for the installation of genuine political pluralism through an “Islamic approach,” i.e. implementing the Islamic shari’a (though the document did not use this word specifically). The 1989 platform called for a resurrection of the Islamic way of life in Tunisia and the

\(^{52}\) See Appendix B for an extended discussion of how “Islamist” and “secular” policy preferences are conceptualized and coded for the party polarization graph.
renewal of Islamic thought through a return to more moral and religious values. In addition, the document outlined the party’s main goals: the reconstruction of economic life on a more equitable basis, the end of single-party politics, the acceptance of political pluralism and democracy, and a limitation on Westernization and foreign influence.

During the 1994 and 1999 elections, Ennahda was forcibly absent from politics, and while its heavily repressed leadership issued statements about the contests, it was unable to issue formal political platforms during this period. Similarly, the PCOT did not issue political platforms since it was formally banned by the regime, though it did release statements outlining a political platform should they be allowed to contest elections. Throughout the 1990s elections, the platforms of non-Islamist parties contesting elections were generally consistent. Each advanced a vision of a state whose legitimacy was derived from secular, humanist principles, and most called for a relatively moderate state role in imposing this vision on its citizens by limiting rights and freedoms. Notably, Ettajdidid wanted a stronger state role in imposing notions of secularism on the behaviors of citizens and limiting freedoms of worship and public displays of religion). These platforms captured the opposition’s collective reform goals, focused on limiting state intervention into individual liberties, but indicated these rights were limited to secular notions of liberties of speech and press, and did not include rights related to freedom of worship or public displays of religion.

However, by the 2004 elections, some leftist parties’ platforms came to include language in which religious freedoms were noted as a type of individual liberty to be protected against state intervention. The additions included the CPR\textsuperscript{53} and Ettakatol parties, whose party platforms focused not only on secular liberties but also freedoms of worship as part of a general freedom from state intervention. Similarly updated language in the PDP’s platform moved the left closer to center on issues related to religion and politics. The language demonstrated a softening of positioning on state-enforced secularism, and provided space

\textsuperscript{53} Although CPR was banned and not permitted to contest elections, the party issued platforms outlining its vision of reform and the policies it would advocate if permitted.
for freedom of individual religious practices and displays. Between the 1989 elections and the 2010 uprisings, the RCD’s policy preferences were consistent. The ruling party issued political platforms of various lengths and forms ahead of elections, and in each it advanced a program that features a secular state with a strong state role in the lives of citizens and imposing on their individual freedoms.

By 2011, parties’ platforms had come to reflect changes in the distribution of policy preferences regarding religion and politics. The shift came from movement over time by both Islamist but more importantly secular opposition groups, and was largely driven by shifts in how groups conceptualized the state’s role in enforcing either a combination or a separation of religion and politics (depending on the party’s orientation), and protecting related individual liberties. Parties articulated a preference for state involvement in which state institutions protected differences in opinion and practices, rather than enforcing their version of Islamism or secularism on the behavior of all citizens. For example, Ennahda’s 2011 platform did cite Islam as the principal source of all legislation – but the reference to the religion as a whole than to shari’a specifically indicated that the party saw Islamic values as a guide, rather than as an exclusive legal code. In addition, the party supported a strong state role in promoting and enacting ideals of social justice, and again saw notions of social justice stemming from Islamic values rather than specific Islamic tenets that needed to be enacted. CPR’s policy platform outlined a state in which liberal secular principles serve as the basis for legislation. The party envisioned a weaker state in which a strong civil society imposes limitations on the influence of religion, resulting in a state that does not interfere in the religious (or conversely, secular) rights of individual citizens. The political platforms for Ettakatol and PDP similarly cited liberal secular principles as the basis for all legislation. Notably, the platforms did not mandate a strong state role in removing religion from public life, but rather saw the importance of a strong state in guaranteeing the neutrality of the state towards religion and individual religious rights. None of the main parties’ platforms advocated an extreme division between religion and politics, or a total influence of religion
on politics, but rather advancing a policy of a strong, centralized but neutral state that protected differences of opinion regarding these matters.

Second, formal agreements among opposition parties, and the joint statements they issued as a result, demonstrated similar convergence on central issues of state identity. In 1989, the opposition was noticeably polarized on the role of religion in the state, as captured by stated policy preferences in various collective initiatives. In 1988, all significant opposition parties signed the 1988 National Pact, put forward by the regime as a vision for increased pluralism and political participation. Signatories, which included Ennahda, assumed that their participation in the pact guaranteed the right to participate in the democratization of the country and upcoming elections. However, over the next year, Ben ‘Ali moved to ban Ennahda as a party based on religion. Competing opposition parties’ reaction to this move revealed policy preference divides over the appropriate role of religion in politics. The majority of parties, led by the Tunisian Communist Party (later Ettajdid) and the
Democratic Communist Party, stated that their policy preferences – related to their stance that political Islam is in inherent contradiction to democracy, and religion has no place in politics – were the polar opposite to those of Ennahda. The parties thus supported the regime’s denial of Ennahda’s democratic right to participate as congruent with their policy preferences (Haugbolle and Cavatorta 2011, 334). Only the PDP publicly argued that legalization was a democratic right no matter how conservative the party’s political positions (al-Mawqif, February 21, 1989).

Yet by the mid-2000s, Tunisia’s opposition was significantly less polarized on issues related to religion and politics, as evident in a number of sustained cooperative initiatives beginning in 2003. The agreements were similar in text and tone, and touched on a variety of shared political visions of individual liberties, human rights, and the institutional forms these protections would take. Most importantly, the agreements demonstrated convergence on matters related to religion, politics, and the Tunisian state. The first initiative was the 2003 Appel de Tunis (“Call from Tunis”). In May 2003, 32 members of the Tunisian opposition met in Aix-en-Provence, France, to negotiate a common agreement and present a common front to the Ben ‘Ali regime. Participants included representatives from Tunisia’s most influential and visible political movements, including Marzouki from CPR, Samir Dilou from Ennahda, Chebbi from the PDP, and Ben Jaafar from Ettakatol. On June 17, 27 of the participants signed a pact resulting from the secretive meeting. It was the first formal and public agreement between secular and Islamist opposition groups. The agreed upon document underscored the freedom of religion, the neutrality of mosques, and a pro-Palestine and pan-Arab position as points of agreement among the opposition. It is important to note that five participants did not sign the 2003 Appel agreement, including Ben Jaafar of Ettakatol and Chebbi from the PDP. The May 26th press release announcing the agreement lamented these defections, noting that they effectively split the opposition between legal movements based in Tunisia and illegal parties headed by leadership in exile. Chebbi subsequently explained his refusal as reflecting his party’s reticence in overtly collaborating with
Ennahda and inviting additional state repression, while Ben Jaffar noted that Ettakatol had only received formal accreditation as a legal opposition party in October 2002 and did not want to provoke the regime to revoke that status (Jaafar 2014, 120).

The second initiative was the 2005 *Collectif du 18 October* (October 18th Collective), which ultimately passed a document very similar to the 2003 *Appel*. The Collectif was a joint effort by legal and illegal opposition, both in Tunisia as well as in exile, with the aim of formulating a shared set of principles and reform demands around which to challenge the Ben ‘Ali regime. The initiative drew its name from the day on which eight members of the opposition had announced a month-long hunger strike to protest state abuses related to freedom of expression and human rights.\(^5\) In December, the strikers announced a political platform called the *Collectif du 18 October pour les Droits et les Libertés*. The content of the document mirrored many of the articles from the 2003 Appel, but went further by collecting additional signatures from individuals representing a more diverse array of parties and groups (Jaafar 2014, 130-132), all agreeing to one set of principles for the first time. In addition to the core signatories from the 2003 document, the 2005 document included signatories from the PDP, Ettakatol, and the PCOT, thus fully incorporating Tunisia’s leftist opposition. However, while Abderraoud Ayadi and Fethi Jerbi signed the 2005 Collectif for CPR, Marzouki’s name was absent from the final document. In February 2006, a coordinating committee was formed in Paris. It was led by ideologically mixed leadership from the PDP, CPR, and Ennahda (Haugbolle and Cavatorta 2011). Its founding document included signatures from representatives of CPR, Ennahda, Ettakatol, PCOT, and PDP, as well as smaller leftist parties.

The 2005 document included an entire section titled “Relations between Religion and the State” which focused on issues of religious freedom, national identity, and the

\(^{5}\) Six of the eight strikers had also participated in the 2003 *Appel de Tunis* – Chebbi from the PDP, Judge Mukhtar Yahiaoui, Aberraoud Ayadi from CPR, Sami Dilou from Ennahda, Mohamed Nouri from the International Association for the Support of Political Prisoners, and Ayachi Hammami from the Tunisian League of Human Rights. These men were joined by Hamma Hammami, Secretary General of the PCOT, and Lotfi Hadj, from the unrecognized Tunisian Union of Journalists.
state’s future role in institutionalizing these ideas. Individual liberties with regard to religion were considered central to reconciling a civil state with a religious orientation. The section begins by outlining general individual freedoms of conscience, but quickly turns to individual freedoms related to religion and beliefs such as religious rituals, practices, and teaching. The document states that freedom of choice over these matters are to be protected by the state in law and in practice. In addition, signatories agreed that the guarantee of these liberties was “not in the least in contradiction with the place and importance of Islam” in the Tunisian state. The vision strikes a balance between the independence of religion from the state, and the independence of the state from religion. The result was a democratic state that is “a civil state grounded in republican principles and respect for human rights” yet one which “must give special consideration to Islam... while avoiding any monopoly or any misuse of religion, as well as guaranteeing the right to practice any religion and belief in the effective implementation of religion and worship.”

These joint agreements raise two important points. First, convergence on these issues – at the very least, increased convergence rather than full agreement – preceded sustained cooperative behavior among the Tunisian opposition. The timing is important, as it indicates that this agreement was not strategic, as the convergence would occur after an agreement was reached or coordination began. The Collectif was active for five years (2005 through the 2010 uprisings). In 2010, the Collectif published a volume entitled “Our Way Towards Democracy,” in which the groups involved in the initiative articulated their agreed upon democratic principles of governance and argued that they were not simply “a short-term political coalition, but a social project for society”55 and which demonstrated that the parties had agreed on the kind of reform that should be put into action once the regime was overthrown. Second, these cooperative agreements were not the result of changing political opportunity structures. In fact, political opportunities for the opposition were practically nonexistent at the time, and had certainly not changed significantly from previous periods.

Indeed, repression remained widespread in its political targets and was increasing during this period as a result of the 2003 terror law and related domestic and international developments at the turn of the century. The cooperation thus was not the result of less repression, and did not appear to be strategic in order to better achieve progress on reform demands. As such, there was no apparent benefit to agreeing to these sets of principles in an environment where the prospects for participation and reform remained bleak.

**Linking Widespread Repression and Decreasing Polarization: Changes in Group Identification**

This dissertation argues that polarization occurs through processes of group differentiation, necessarily induced by changes in in-group identification. Thus, the convergence of policy preferences documented above should be preceded by a decrease in the strength of in-group identification, and an increase in cross-group identification, resulting from shared experiences of repression. The strongest effects should be noticeable in the mid-2000s, as repression became a ubiquitous shared experience. Because these are internal psychological processes, of which participants themselves may not be aware, it is difficult to conclusively prove that these types of changes occurred in the absence of time-series survey or interview data. However, there is evidence from different sources – including interviews I conducted after the 2010 uprising, as well as from statements made and memoirs written by opposition leaders throughout the Ben ‘Ali period – that is suggestive of changes in in-group identification preceding convergence in policy preferences, ultimately facilitating the two agreements issued by the Tunisian opposition in the 2000s.

My argument is that over time, widespread repression became a shared experience for the Tunisian opposition, one in which in which individuals’ identification with their immediate opposition groups was not primed or made more salient, and through which individual groups came to identify with a larger collective of active opposition. In addition to the sheer number of political prisoners, indicating that repressive experiences permeated each
political opposition group, a number of similar experiences within the Tunisian repressive space further enhanced the shared quality of these experiences, emphasized the personal experience of repression as a shared characteristic across opposition groups and within a larger victimized collective, and heightened repression’s effect in altering levels of group identification.

As the number and variety of groups targeted increased, these experiences became increasingly ubiquitous. I noted above that administrative control affected 90 percent of known political opponents by the early 2000s (Hibou 2011, 5) – meaning that by this period, 90 percent of known political opposition had been affected by state repression. As the Ennahda leadership began to be slowly released from prison in November 1999, rejoining the general population, and as repression affected a younger generation of leftist activists, repression was increasingly a shared experience that bridged and decreased ideological divides across the opposition. The opposition’s collective experience of repression does the work of significantly decreasing polarization among these groups by altering levels of in-group identification. In 1989, ahead of elections and as the young Ben ‘Ali regime moved to ban Ennahda despite its agreement to the National Pact, the opposition did not identify itself as a unified bloc. The atmosphere was described as collegial; groups even sometimes coordinated small protests or demonstrations against the regime. However, both Ennahda and secular opposition leadership did not consider other opposition groups as part of a larger collective. Members of the opposition described their relationship with Ennahda in 1989 as “competitive” and “full of distrust.” Similar, Ennahda leadership noted that at the time, relationships between opposition groups, both legal and illegal, were generally cordial,

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56 Amnesty International reported that hundreds of prisoners, mainly from Ennahda and 10 identified as PCOT members, were released by the Ben ‘Ali regime ahead of meetings with the European Union’s Council of Ministers in Brussels, scheduled within a framework of the U.S.-Tunisian Association Agreement (effective March 1, 1998).

57 Rachid al-Ghannoushi. Interview with the author, November 19, 2014, Tunis, Tunisia.

58 Samia Abbou, then of CPR. Interview with the author, September 9, 2014, Tunis, Tunisia.
but because there was no agreement about the best path forward and “significant distrust” among groups, the opposition lacked a sense of camaraderie and unity.\(^{59}\)

The strength of in-group identification, and identification with a larger collective of opposition, began to shift as repression became an increasingly shared experience. As early as 1991, Harakat Tahrir under the leadership of Bechir Essid came to regard themselves and the Islamist opposition group Ennahda as being “‘in one trench,’ because repression had come to affect anyone demanding democratic reforms” (al-Madini 2012, 105). Essid, a lawyer by trade, legally represented many political prisoners of various ideologies who were illegally detained by the state. Habib Karray of the Ba‘ath movement reflected that the party’s experience of repression in the early 1990s was common: “repression affected the relationships between parties, because all of us were exposed to it. These experiences created a common unity among the opposition, united as one against the regime.” By the early 2000s, group identification had significantly shifted ahead of the cooperation seen in the mid-2000s. Fathi Jerbi, one of the founders of CPR, said that by 2002 the party was open to working with the Islamists because “they were similarly victims of the Ben ‘Ali regime” and CPR leadership felt that as common opposition members they “did not have the right to deny [the Islamists] participation.”\(^{60}\) There was a consistent narrative in my interviews with former secular opposition leaders about past repression that both demonstrated a sense of collective victimhood and camaraderie, and which acknowledged that Islamists “got it worst.”\(^{61}\) Similarly, Islamists understood that they were not the only victims. The narrative put forward by Ennahda about the brutal regime campaign targeting the movement in the early 1990s always places it within a larger framework of widespread repression: “after [Ben ‘Ali] attacked the Islamists, he attacked secularists. Anyone who demanded freedom, he

\(^{59}\) Hamadi Jebali. Interview with the author, December 12, 2016, Sousse, Tunisia.

\(^{60}\) Fathi Jerbi, founder of CPR and the Wafa’ Movement. Interview with the author, November 13, 2014, Tunis, Tunisia.

struck them.” Both parts of the victimized opposition recognized the suffering of competing groups as fellow victims of a larger collective in a larger fight against the regime. As Ennahda leader Rachid al-Ghannoushi remarked, “the struggle against [the regime]... that common struggle, has become the most important of the memories of the past.”

Discourse surrounding how groups came to participate in and compromise during the October 18 Collectif similarly points to the importance of a softening of identity boundaries and decreased polarization during the 2005 initiative. The parties involved were convinced of and committed to the importance of true political pluralism and inclusion of all opposition forces that accepted non-violent reform, directly citing decades of repression that had touched all opposition groups as the reason for commitment to pluralism. PDP leadership had come to the conclusion that the democratization process in Tunisia was a sham and that the on-going War on Terror provided the regime with continuing legitimation to repress and demobilize all political opponents. Ahmed Brahim of Ettajdid cited the October 18th agreement as the culmination of the collective opposition’s cooperation. He described the group as historically being “the strongest opponents” of mixing religion and politics. The group had long remained hesitant to a formal agreement with Islamists; “opposition to Ben ‘Ali does not require a [formal] political alliance in order to unite against repression and dictatorship.” However, in the wake of the 2003 terrorism and having members wrapped in various state repressive campaigns, Ettajdid had “become more open to negotiations and compromise with our fellow oppressed opposition,” including Islamists. Commonly held experiences of suffering were considered to be an indication of a true commitment to political pluralism, and allowed both secularists and Islamist to move center on and compromise over various positions regarding the role of religion in the Tunisian state and the inclusion of Islamists as fellow victims.

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63 Issam Chebbi, former PDP member and now Spokesman of the Republic Party. Interview with the author, October 1, 2014, Tunis, Tunisia. See also Durac and Cavatorta (2009).

64 Ahmed Brahim. Interview with the author, December 2, 2014, Tunis, Tunisia.
A final anecdote from Ali Lareydh, a leading member of Ennahda who served as its spokesperson in the 1980s, is demonstrative of how boundaries between groups had changed following collective experiences of repression. As a leading member and spokesperson of Ennahda in the 1980s, Lareydh was imprisoned from 1990 to 2004 and spent much of that time in solitary confinement. A few days after being released, Ahmed Nejib Chebbi, Maya Jribi, and other members of the PDP came to visit him at his house and they had what Lareydh called a “political discussion.” Because of his limited access to newspapers and other people while in solitary confinement, Lareydh told them that he felt distant from what had occurred in Tunisia during his imprisonment. The guests sat with him for hours and explained the political situation in Tunisia, updating him on the major events he had missed and popular reactions to them. Lareydh remarked that despite their origins on opposite sides of the political spectrum, “they told me this as if I were sitting in their office... what I mean by this is that there was no longer anything that divided us at all” as opposition.

Conclusion

In this chapter, I traced developments among the Tunisian opposition between 1987 and 2011, linking political repression and policy preference polarization through evidence of decreased in-group identification, in line with the causal relationship implied by the dissertation’s theory. Individual opposition groups came to see themselves more strongly as part of a larger collective, an indication that the strength of their in-group identification was decreasing as they came to focus on a common identity. This convergence of identification preceded and facilitated policy preference convergence, which was then institutionalized in formal agreements and cooperative behavior among elites during the mid-2000s, lasting until the 2010 uprisings. The above agreements were important but should not be taken

65 Chebbi had served time in prison after being arrested in 1966 for plotting against the state. In 1970, he was sentenced to 11 years in prison but was shortly released and put under house arrest. He fled to Algeria and later to France, returning to the country only after Bourguiba was deposed.
as indicators of perfect unity among the opposition or as a guarantee of party consensus post-uprising. Divisions within the opposition remained on more peripheral issues, such as which tactics (revolutionary versus incremental reform) were most efficient for contesting the regime (Jaafar 2014, 132). However, the policy preference convergence on issues related to state identity left a less polarized opposition on issues centrally important to the impending transition on the eve of the 2010 uprising. Leaders agreed that other opposition parties’ preferences were valid, and that any disagreement was not insurmountable.66 I further explore how low levels of polarization on these issues facilitated the success of negotiations during Tunisia’s transition period in chapter 5.

In the next chapter, I present evidence of repression and polarization in Egypt between 1981 and 2011 under authoritarian president Hosni Mubarak. In contrast to Tunisia, Egypt serves as a case of targeted repression against the Muslim Brotherhood between 1987 and 2011. I document how repeated repressive campaigns against the organization increased members’ in-group identification, and link changes in in-group identification with movement in policy preferences. These changes ultimately created high levels of polarization among the opposition on policy preferences regarding religion and politics by 2011.

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66 Samir Ben Amour, one of the founders of CPR. Interview with the author, November 28, 2014, Tunis, Tunisia.
Repression and Polarization in Egypt (1981-2011)

In this chapter, I present case study evidence of repression and polarization in Egypt under president Hosni Mubarak, who took office in 1981. I demonstrate that the vast majority of political opposition members jailed under the Mubarak regime were from the Muslim Brotherhood. The regime singled out the Brotherhood in a targeted repressive environment, rounding up its leaders and other members at regular intervals without any immediate cause. In addition, the regime lashed out at the organization in retaliation both for legitimate Brotherhood-led mobilization as well as for unrelated incidents for which it was assigned blame. The targeted nature of the repression was evident both in the number of arrests of and the severity of punishment (namely, the regime’s use of military courts and sentences including hard labor) against prominent Brotherhood members, which differ significantly from its treatment of secular opposition groups during the same period. I document evidence of increased polarization via increased in-group identification within the Brotherhood as targeted repression against the organization continued.

The Egyptian Opposition before the 2011 Uprisings

Similar to Tunisia, Egypt was a model of electoral authoritarianism preceding its 2011 uprising. The country was governed by a hegemonic ruling party, the National Democratic Party (NDP), which was founded by Mubarak’s predecessor Anwar Sadat in 1978. Parties mobilizing in opposition to the NDP were numerous, but the regime denied legal status to the majority of these groups. Ahead of the 2011 uprisings, there were 24 opposition parties operating legally in the country. According to Human Rights Watch, between
1977 (when Sadat pushed a political parties law through parliament) and 2004, the regime’s Political Parties Commission rejected 63 applications for legal status and approved only two small parties, those of the Wifāq al-Watānī (National Accord) Party and the Jil al-Dīmōqrāṭī (Democratic Generation) Party (though it later suspended the activities of the former in 2001, citing a dispute within the leadership of the party). The remainder of parties were legalized through presidential decrees or court orders. For example, in 2004, the Mubarak regime legalized eleven parties as it superficially liberalized its political sphere under international pressure (Kassem 2004, 57). However, most parties with sizable followings and mobilizational capacities continued to be denied permits by the regime.

The Egyptian opposition to the ruling party and regime can be divided into two camps based on the ideology legitimating and motivating each group’s behavior. Similar to the introduction to the Tunisian opposition discussed in the previous chapter, the division outlined here is not to imply that those parties contained within each group were perfectly united in ideology or automatically cooperated with each other. Rather, it is meant to demonstrate that Egypt’s party system hosted a full spectrum of ideological offerings along the secularist-Islamist axis of competition, and that a party’s legal status was not synonymous with targeted repression by the state. In one camp lay a number of parties mobilizing on state reform programs inspired by secular leftist, socialist, Arab nationalist, and Nasserist ideologies, while the latter contained parties inspired by Islamist ideologies.

On the secular end of the spectrum lie parties motivated by the secular notions of Arab socialism ideologies, many closely related to Nasserist ideologies following the ideas of the country’s first president. The motivating ideologies of these parties were not intrinsically in opposition to religion, and actively acknowledged the contributions of Islam to Arab civilization. However, their reform programs sought to create a state based on liberal secular principles. I highlight here the few larger parties that consistently contested the regime, although they were never permitted to win more than marginal shares of national governing bodies. The Egyptian Arab Socialist Party (Hīzb Misr ʿArabī Al-Ishtirākī in Arabic)
was established in 1976 by Mamdouh Salem (prime minister from 1975-1978) as part of the political liberalization period introduced by Sadat. Its platforms outlined its commitment to preserving the gains of the 1952 revolution and a secular state. The National Progressive Unionist Party (ُهَيْثُب الْتَغْمَمُّر الْوَطْنِيَّ الْتَقَادُمِيَّ الْوَاحِدِيَّ) was founded in 1977 by former Free Officer Khaled Mohieddin with the similar goal of maintaining the accomplishments of the 1952 revolution. The party’s platforms vehemently reject religious extremism, a term which for the party not only includes terrorism but also the general influence of religion in the public and political spheres, and advocate a strong state socialism to address political and social issues in critical reaction to the increasing privatization programs of the state throughout second half of the twentieth century. The Karāma party (meaning “dignity” in Arabic) emerged first as a faction within Tagammu before splitting and founding a separate Arab nationalist party in 1996. The party similarly put forward a reform platform which was intended to result in a strong, state-led socialist program addressing political and social issues, with guiding liberal secular principles.

The New Wafd party was another secular group established in 1978 and operated legally as a revival of the Wafd Party. The party’s platform was guided by a nationalist liberal motivating ideology between state-driven Arab socialism and private capitalism, assigning the state a moderately strong role in alleviating social and political problems through economic reform. Its presidential candidate, Numan Gomaa, won 2.8 percent of the vote during the 2005 elections. In 2001, Ayman Nour left the New Wafd Party to form the Ghad (meaning “tomorrow” in Arabic) Party and was granted a license in October 2004. The party similarly advanced a centrist, liberal secular program. Nour also contested the 2005 presidential elections, winning 7.3 percent of the vote, and shortly thereafter was sentenced

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67 The Free Officers were a group of young, nationalist officers in the Egyptian military, and led the 1952 revolution which ended monarchy in Egypt.

68 The Wafd had been a nationalist movement founded in 1919 and was instrumental in moving Egypt towards a constitutional monarchy and establishing the national parliament in 1923 before being dissolved after the 1952 revolution.
to five years in prison for politically-motivated forgery charges. All of the above mentioned parties entered lists in the 2011 NCA elections.

On the Islamist end of the spectrum was the Muslim Brotherhood, the largest of opposition groups denied legal status. It was founded in 1928 by Hassan al-Banna and combined political activism with community building. The initial activities of the organization focused on Islamic education and charity, and the organization had integrated into communities by providing schools, health clinics, and other social services, particularly to those left out of state patronage systems (Masoud 2014). The organization conceives of its Islamic daʿwa (preaching) and tarbiyya (education) programs as being closely related to its political mission, in that these activities were intended to prepare society to demand reform or undertake reform itself to install a shariʿa guided state. The Muslim Brotherhood never became a legally licensed party before 2011; the Freedom and Justice Party (Hizb al-Hurriya wal-ʿAdala in Arabic) was established as an official party only after the revolution, and was nominally independent from the Brotherhood. In 1996, members of the organization’s reformist generation broke away from the Brotherhood when Abou Elela Mady founded the Wasat (meaning “center”) party. Those who left disagreed with the Brotherhood’s leadership about the party’s tactics in achieving reform (Wickham 2004). The organization was denied a formal party license each of the four times it applied for one.

There were a number of smaller Islamist parties that served as marginal political players in the 1980s. The Socialist Labor Party, later known as the Egyptian Islamic Labor Party, was formed in 1978, succeeding the earlier Maṣr al-Ḥattāḥ movement. It was originally founded as a socialist party and in the late 1980s adopted an Islamist approach to economic reform, calling for a socialist economic system based on principles of the shariʿa. The Liberal Socialists Party was established in 1976 on a reform platform encouraging privatization and promoting shariʿa as the main source of legislation. The Umma party was established in 1983

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69 Much of the historical description of the party system under Mubarak derives from the thorough history written by Rabia (2003).
and was one of the few parties to receive an official state license. However, none of these parties attracted a significant following; in the 2000 parliamentary elections, the Liberal Socialists Party won 1 out of 444 seats, and the Umma party fielded a single candidate. None were major players after the 2011 revolution.

Targeted Repression of Egyptian Opposition

1952-1981

As noted in the methodology chapter, my categorization of Egypt as a case of targeted repression is not intended to deny the plight of non-Brotherhood individuals who suffered for their political beliefs under the country’s successive authoritarian regimes; indeed, during the 1970s, it was the Brotherhood who was spared while the regime targeted leftist opposition groups. The categorization of a targeted regime simply indicates that a key feature of regime maintenance in Egypt involved an explicit divide-and-conquer approach, permitting some opposition to exist and operate with severely limited spaces of contestation and coopting them when possible while repressing others to keep the opposition fractured.

Targeted repression in Egypt did not simply begin under Mubarak; it was a feature of the Egyptian state beginning at independence. In July 1952, a group of junior military officers who became known as the Free Officers overthrew Egypt’s constitutional monarchy. Though the Free Officers and the Muslim Brotherhood had worked together closely in opposition to the monarchy before the coup, the Brotherhood soon became the target of brutal state repression. While all political parties were dissolved by a 1952 decree, the Brotherhood was explicitly banned in January 1954 after violent clashes between Brotherhood university

70 It is worth noting that despite the shift in repressive target, the Brotherhood’s narrative remained one of isolated victimhood at the hand of the state, and the group felt exploited by the Sadat regime when it was not being targeted with violence. As Husayn el-Qazzaz, a long-term senior advisor and member, said in an interview with me: “The conflict [between the regime and the Brotherhood] was extremely explicit under Nasser, tacit under Mubarak, and was manipulated by Sadat, when the Brotherhood became part of an internal political game.”
student supporters and the police. In October of the same year, a Muslim Brotherhood member attempted to assassinate the president. In response, Nasser initiated the largest political crackdowns in the modern history of Egypt (Aburish 2004, 54). Between 1954 and 1971, the Brotherhood was the main target of the Nasser regime, a period which the organization refers to as *al-miḥna* (“the ordeal”).

The repression faced by the Brotherhood under Nasser occurred in two waves. During the first wave, six leaders of the Brotherhood were hanged, roughly 1,100 were given various prison sentences, and an additional larger group of Brotherhood supporters and low-ranking members were incarcerated without any charges (Davis 1984; Mitchell 1993; Zollner 2007). The second wave of persecution began in 1965, following another Brotherhood-related assassination attempt. The repressive wave expanded its focus from members of “Organization 1965” involved in the assassination and coup attempt to a much wider circle of individuals affiliated with the Brotherhood, resulting in the arrest of hundreds of Brotherhood members.

Vice-president Anwar Sadat succeeded Nasser on his death in 1970. The decade of Sadat’s rule was self-defined as a “correction of the revolution.” This included a number of policy reversals, including a purge of Nasserists and socialists from posts in the upper echelons of government and the Arab Socialist Union, the country’s sole legal political body. Sadat, who was significantly less charismatic than Nasser, also sought legitimacy and authority by invoking religious themes and values, presenting himself as the “Believer–President.”

The shifts in regime policy and legitimation strategy led to Sadat granting a general amnesty

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71 While serving a sentence of twenty-five years of hard labor, Brotherhood ideologue Sayyid Qutb wrote his most influential tract, *Ma’ālik fi-Tariq* (Signposts Along the Path), first published in 1964 but informally distributed and circulated among Brotherhood members for many years previously. In the book, he developed the concepts of *jihālīyya* (ignorance) and *hākimīyya* (absolutely sovereignty of God), repurposing Quranic terms for an analysis of the Brotherhood’s persecution under Nasser. He also called for a *jihād* against the modern *jihālī* system that was the Nasser government. A Brotherhood off-shoot, dubbed in Egyptian courts as “Organization 1965,” sought to follow Qutb’s directions. Formed in 1957 by Brotherhood activists, many of whom had been newly released from jail, they were discovered by security police in 1965 and accused of plotting to overthrow the regime. Qutb, who had been released, was re-arrested during this trial and was hanged on August 29, 1966, for treason against the state.
to the Brotherhood and releasing its members from prison in stages between 1971 and March 1975, and encouraging those Brothers in exile abroad in Gulf countries to return home. Sadat viewed the Brothers as a counterweight to the Nasserist left, which he considered the “great challenge to his authority” (Kassem 2004) and targeted as such.

The relationship between the Brotherhood and Sadat was collegial through the 1970s. The Brotherhood only became critical of the Sadat regime by the decade’s end, first in response to the economic and social inequality caused by his economic liberalization (infitāh) policies, and then in response to his visit to Jerusalem in 1977, which culminated in a peace treaty with Israel in 1979. By 1981, Sadat’s tolerance for the Brotherhood’s public dissent had worn thin. In September of that year, security services rounded up 1,500 civil and political leaders, including many high ranking Brotherhood leaders, after they discovered an assassination plot by an unrelated militant group named al-Jihād. On October 6, 1981, Sadat was assassinated by a militant from al-Jihād during a military parade, with Mubarak, his vice president, sitting at his side and suffering minor injuries as a result of the attack.

1981-2011

Upon taking office in 1981, Mubarak initially pursued a policy of accommodation and tolerance towards the Brotherhood. He released in stages those members of the opposition imprisoned by Sadat during the last years of his rule, and permitted the Brotherhood to resume usage of its downtown Cairo headquarters and publication of its periodicals. Throughout the first decade of his presidency, Mubarak consistently pursued a policy of non-confrontation with political opposition, including the Brotherhood. However, as the Brotherhood increasingly demonstrated its ability to challenge the regime, the government’s

72 With the passage of time and benefit of hindsight, scholars have reflected on why Mubarak allowed policy during this period of regime consolidation. Rashwan (1995, 2) reasoned that, “[c]onvinced that the Brotherhood posed no real threat, the regime continued to overlook its growing presence.” Abdalla (1993) summarized the gentleman’s agreement between the state and its Islamist opposition as follows: “the government turned a blind eye to Islamist grassroots power. In return, the Islamists did not confront state corruption and inefficiency.”
tactics of repression reverted back to patterns of targeting the organization. The Brotherhood increasingly threatened the regime on three fronts: in parliament, in the country’s strong professional associations and syndicates, and in the streets. First, the Brotherhood won 8 seats in alliance with the secular Wafd Party and 36 seats in alliance with the Liberal and Socialist Labor parties during the 1984 and 1987 elections, respectively, for the 360-member People’s Assembly. It also joined a boycott of the 1990 elections, the outcomes of which were expected to be heavily manipulated by the regime. Second, the Brotherhood worked to establish a presence and get its members elected to leadership roles within the country’s strong professional associations and syndicates (Abed-Kotob 1995). By 1990, it held political control of the professional syndicates for doctors, engineers, dentists, merchants, and pharmacists, and in September 1992, it won a majority of seats in the bar association. Third, the Brotherhood proved adept at public displays of strength and mobilizational capabilities. The Brotherhood was vocal in its opposition and organized protests against the regime’s participation in the October 1991 Arab-Israeli Madrid peace talks. The organization also quickly mobilized to assist victims in downtown Cairo during the 1992 earthquake, putting the government’s 36-hour response (due to the earthquake’s occurring on a weekend) to shame.

The targeted approach routinely utilized by the Mubarak regime combined media campaigns, aiming to label the group a terrorist organization operating with or financing radical segments of the Islamic movement, and waves of targeted arrests of Brotherhood leadership and prominent members. Targeted arrests began to occur regularly, both in

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73 The media campaigns included articles in Egypt’s semi-official newspapers and magazines like Al-Akbār, Rose al-Yūsuf and al-Mussawar, with statements issued by high-level ministers insinuating or claiming direct links between the organization and militant Islamist groups. As early as April 1989, then-Interior Minister Zaki Badr made this claim in a highly publicized press conference.
response to Brotherhood-organized mass mobilization of various kinds\textsuperscript{74} as well as randomly, to collect information on the organization.\textsuperscript{75} The regime also began to pass legislative initiatives specifically aimed at curtailing Brotherhood influence in professional syndicates (Campagna 1996, 294-296). The Mubarak regime was aided by an emergency law that had been in place for all but a few months since 1967 (Brownlee 2002), which gave the executive extraordinary powers intended for times of war and granted legal permission for violations of citizens’ rights and freedoms.

The regime’s targeted repression against the Brotherhood occurred in regular intervals. Brotherhood leader Khairat el-Shatir described repression by the Mubarak regime regularly targeting the Brotherhood during this period as follows:

[The goal was] to create internal chaos within the Brotherhood, to scare its membership on all levels, by organizing continuous security raids. The raids took two forms. They were either tied to certain events – for example, the Brotherhood will organize a march or a demonstration, or put out a statement criticizing one of the tactics of the state, or perform well in the elections. Then the regime arrests a few members of the Council, a few members that were at the march. These [arrested individuals] normally serve three to four months in jail, and then they are released. The other, more organized and more tactical approach, was a programmed arrest that happens almost twice or three times a year, on vertical sections of the Brotherhood itself. Mubarak... consecutively arrested members each year. He would arrest members from the guidance council, members who are governing different areas at the district level, and members from the grass-roots body of the organization.

\textsuperscript{74}For example, 20 Brothers and 80 Brotherhood-affiliated children were arrested after holding a four-day recreational camp in Alexandria without permission from the Interior Ministry in August 1989, according to a report from the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights. In October 1991, after the Brotherhood organized a number of protests demonstrating against the Madrid peace talks, 185 individuals were arrested including 15 known Brotherhood leaders. Between 1992 and 1994, Brotherhood leaders were regularly arrested after staging demonstrations that, for example, supported the plight of Muslims in Bosnia-Herzegovina and protested the death of Islamist lawyer Abdel Harith Madani while in police custody. The charges levied against the organization were “calling for agitation,” “holding contacts with foreign elements, giving to foreign news agencies statements and reports designed to create confusion, incite citizens, and to distort Egypt’s image abroad,” and “financing terrorism” (Campagna 1996).

\textsuperscript{75}The most well known incident was the Salsabil affair. In February 1992, security forces raided the offices of the computer company by the same name owned by prominent Muslim Brotherhood members, including Khairat el-Shatir and Hassan Malek. The information obtained during the raid was later used to arrest 11 leaders in December of the same year.
This repression was most evident in close proximity to national parliamentary elections, which were scheduled at regular five-year intervals in the 1990s and 2000s. During the 1995 elections, 1,392 Islamist campaign workers, supporters, and poll-watchers were arrested. In addition, over 1,000 Muslim Brotherhood candidates were arrested during the first and second rounds. This particular campaign against the organization may have been exacerbated by the June 1995 assassination attempt on Mubarak while in Addis Ababa, in which the Sudanese Muslim Brotherhood was implicated. In retaliation, the regime arrested 81 of the Brotherhood’s leading activists and tried them in a special military tribunal. During the 2000 elections, held in three stages in October and November, 49 of the 161 candidates the Brotherhood fielded were arrested ahead of the first round of elections (International Crisis Group 2008). During the second round of the elections, 1,400 individuals were arrested, and more than 1,000 of them were said to be Muslim Brotherhood supporters who were arrested to prevent them from reaching the polling stations (Wickham 2013, 97). Ahead of the 2005 elections, during which the Brotherhood won an unprecedented 88 seats, the International Crisis Group reported that 800 Brotherhood members, including some prominent top leaders, had been arrested, though the group claimed that the real number exceeded 2,000. Those arrested included Mahmoud ‘Ezzat, the organization’s Secretary General and the most senior figure arrested since 1996. In addition, a report issued by the Center for

76 Other types of elections also occurred at regular intervals during this time period. For example, presidential elections were held in 1981, 1987, 1993, 1999, and 2005 – though only the 2005 contest included more than one candidate and could be considered more than a referendum on Mubarak. Elections for the upper house of the bicameral parliament of Egypt, known as the Shura council, were held every three years between 1983 and 2010. In 2005, 88 from a total of 264 seats were up for election during each election, and another 44 were appointed by the president. The Shura council elections were highly controlled, and rarely saw more than a few seats go to non-NDP candidates. Municipal elections followed a similar schedule to the legislative elections (although the 2005 elections were delayed to 2008 following the outcome of the parliamentary elections), but were mainly competitive within the ruling party (Blaydes 2011). While these electoral contests were much more controlled than the legislative elections, the regime displayed similar behavior during these periods when threatened by possible outcomes.


Equal Human Rights and Anti-Discrimination, which featured both Arab as well as western election observers, broke down arrests by governorate and by round. These numbers showed disproportionate arrests, in addition to killings, in Brotherhood strongholds like Damietta and Dakahlia.

The Brotherhood’s major electoral showing during the 2005 elections marked a final wave of repression against the group, mirroring earlier repressive efforts. What was particularly notable about the 2005 period was that activism by both secular and Islamist opposition had reached a new level in what became known as the “Cairo Spring.” Despite the broad mobilization, the regime continued to overwhelmingly target the Brotherhood with repression, punishing it for events it was responsible for and incidents in which it was not involved alike. Though the group had faced significant difficulties convening and operating since the mid-1990s, a 2008 report from the International Crisis Group noted a “quantitative and qualitative change,” describing this period as “the most widespread campaign against the group since the 1960s, even if the level of repression is far less and its aim is to control and contain rather than eradicate the group.” Following the elections, the regime re-initiated a press campaign focusing on the dangers of the group and its possible linkage with militant groups, and began mass arrests again in earnest. Between March and June 2006, while the Brotherhood led demonstrations in support of judges put on trial for their role in reporting electoral fraud, 850 Muslim Brothers were detained, and the “Al-Azhar militia” incident led to the arrest of 140 Muslim Brothers in December 2006 (Shehata and Stacher 2006). Several hundred Muslim Brothers were arrested before and during the June 2007 Shura Council elections, which resulted in the organization failing to win a single seat (International Crisis Group 2008, 9). Ahead of the April 2008 municipal elections, 830 potential Brotherhood candidates and their supporters were arrested, and only 498 out of 5,754 MB candidates were able to register due to administrative and police obstruction.79 During the November 2010 parliamentary elections, held on the eve of the 2011 uprising, the

regime maintained this pattern of media campaigns against the Brotherhood and arrested almost 400 Brotherhood candidates and supporters. The majority of parties including the Brotherhood to boycott the contest. Reports of repression from domestic and international observers during this period noted that the regime was systematic, using techniques such as intimidation against both Brotherhood members as well as suspected voters, illegal search and seizure of campaign offices, and arbitrary arrests of known Brothers or those suspected to be related to the organization.

The targeted nature of repression against the Brotherhood was also evidenced in the regime’s legal strategy. Beginning in 1995, the Mubarak regime began referring a large number of Brotherhood leaders to military tribunals. The regime had not used this tactic against political opposition since 1965 under Nasser (Al-Awadi 2004) and the same tactic was not used against the secular opposition leaders who were arrested during the same time period. Importantly, military tribunals could sentence those found guilty to sentences longer than one year (typical judgments included three, five, seven, and ten-year sentences) and could include punishments of hard labor. In 1995, 81 prominent and leading Brotherhood organizations – all of them “former parliamentarians, leading civic activists, or parliamentary candidates” (Campagna 1996) – who were rounded up in arrests surrounding the elections were referred for prosecution in two trials before the Supreme Military Court for the attempted assassination of Mubarak. On November 23, the Court sentenced 54 of these individuals to prison terms ranging from three to five years with hard labor, in addition to ordering the closure of the Brotherhood’s unofficial headquarters in Cairo and confiscating its publicly known funds (Wickham 2002, 215; el Ghobashy 2005, 373). In 2000, 20 Brotherhood members were tried by a military tribunal a few days ahead of the first round of elections. Among those detained in December 2006, 41 high ranking members – including Deputy General Guide and major Brotherhood financier Khairat al-Shater – were referred to a military tribunal to face charges of belonging to and funding an illegal organization, money laundering, and financing terrorism. On April 15, 2008, after ignoring two lower court decisions calling the
trial illegal for trying civilians in a military court, the military tribunal returned a verdict in which al-Shater and prominent businessman and Brother Hassan Malek received sentences of seven years each, sixteen others received sentences between eighteen months and five years, and seven others who were tried in absentia were given ten year sentences (the remaining 15 were acquitted) (International Crisis Group 2008). Many of those sentenced remained in jail, concentrated in the high-level security Tora Liman prison, through the 2011 uprisings. As previously noted, internal Brotherhood statistics maintained that during the last decade of Mubarak’s rule, 100,000 arrests had been carried out against the 30,000 members of the group. This figure totaled roughly three arrests per active member during this period.\(^80\)

This detailed history of Brotherhood repression does not deny that other groups were affected by repression under Mubarak. After the 2005 presidential elections, the second- and third-place finishers were both the victims of state repression. Ghad party candidate Ayman Nour was imprisoned on January 29, 2005, on allegations of forgery, charged with forging Powers of Attorney to form the party (although notably he was tried in a criminal court, and not the military courts reserved for the Brotherhood). He was released on health grounds on February 18, 2009, having served almost his entire sentence. From the New Wafd party, candidate Gomaa, two other party members, and four bodyguards were detained on April 1, 2006 after clashes at the party headquarters between his supporters and other party members disappointed by Gomma’s performance in the race and his supporters.\(^81\) In addition, Hamdeen Sabahi of the Karama party reported to have been arrested 17 times under Sadat and Mubarak for various incidents of political activism largely focused on economic and foreign policy issues (such as a 1991 speech at Cairo University condemning American airstrikes in Iraq and leading demonstrations against the Americans using the Suez Canal as part of the 2003 invasion of Iraq). However, repression of these opposition groups occurred in response to specific incidents and affected visible leaders, rather than systematically, regularly,

\(^{80}\) Husayn al-Qazzaz, Muslim Brotherhood advisor. Interview with the author, June 15, 2016, Istanbul, Turkey.

\(^{81}\) As reported in *Al-Sharq al-Awsat*, April 2, 2006.
or repeatedly targeting the groups in their entirety. Aggregate data suggest that a divide-and-conquer approach defined regime control of opposition under Mubarak, and repression clearly targeted the Muslim Brotherhood as the regime worked to keep opposition threats in check.

**Increasing Political Polarization**

During the late 2000s, an often-repeated claim in academic and policy work on the Brotherhood was that the organization was moderating politically (for example, el Ghobashy 2005). These arguments left the term “moderation” undefined (Schwedler 2011) but many cited two main behaviors: increased cooperation with competing opposition groups and the incorporation of democratic rhetoric into its official statements and platforms.

In terms of increased cooperation, the Brotherhood worked with other opposition forces to organize a number of events between 2000 and 2003, such as protests in support of the Palestinian Intifada (including the Egyptian Popular Committee in Support of the Palestinian Intifada) and in opposition to the American invasion of Iraq (including a major protest held in Cairo Stadium in 2003). During a referendum held in early 2005 on direct presidential elections, the Brotherhood joined a boycott called for by other opposition parties. The Brotherhood participated in *at-Taḥāluf al-Waṭanī min ajl al-Islāh wal-Taḥyīr* (The National Coalition for Reform and Change), a coalition of parties and civil society organizations committed to reforming the Egyptian political system. The organization also cooperated with initiatives put forward by *Kefāya* (meaning “enough” in Arabic), a grass-roots political movement building on the Egyptian Popular Committee in Solidarity with the Intifada (EPSCI) and which protested political corruption, economic stagnation, and the possibility of Mubarak’s son Gamal inheriting the presidency. In addition, the organization increasingly articulated a commitment to democratic values in its public statements. In 1994, the organization published a book containing statements highlighting its progressive
positions on political pluralism and women’s political rights, and a 1995 statement similarly reaffirmed its commitment to the rights of non-Muslims, human rights issues, and a non-violent approach to politics (Shehata 2009, 62). Following the 1995 crackdown on the group, the Brotherhood announced its intention to form a formal political party that was civic in nature with guiding principles derived from Islam, and stated that the party would be open to all Egyptians including Coptic Christians.

However, a closer reading of this time period demonstrates that simultaneous to these developments, the Brotherhood’s central policy preferences – on issues of religion, politics, and state identity – were becoming more distant from those of competing opposition groups. The Brotherhood did increasingly articulate a public commitment to democratic values and non-violent contestation of the regime, but this was not an indication of a development in ideology or a change in approach towards democratic contestation; indeed, the group had maintained a non-violent reformist approach to political contestation since the 1950s. Rather, the statements appear to have been repeatedly issued in response to continued targeted state repression against the group, which the regime publicly legitimized through a narrative linking the Brotherhood’s opposition to terrorism. In addition, where the Egyptian opposition did demonstrate some agreement was over peripheral policy issues related to international issues, or general themes of protest and reform. Even in instances of cooperation, the Brotherhood’s participation was tenuous; the group often remained on the sidelines or backed out of agreements and events, sometimes at the last minute, for fear that the group would be singularly targeted for these cooperative initiatives with further arrests and imprisonments. Ultimately, the National Coalition and Kefaya initiatives failed to establish any robust and enduring cross-partisan alliance, or to resolve central issues of disagreement. As George Ishaq, a leader of the Kefaya movement, remarked when asked whether the two sides had resolved their differences on the issue of shari’a, he replied that the issue “never came up” (“لام تتفاهم”); the discussion of contentious issues was reserved for a later time (Wickham 2013, 115).
While these developments were important, they were orthogonal to parties’ central policy preferences and issues, and did not represent a decrease in polarization among the opposition groups because they did not capture the salient divide. In 1971, Article 2 in an updated constitution passed under Sadat stated that shari’a was “a principle source of legislation,” and a May 1980 referendum updated the language to read “the principle source” (emphasis added). This was ultimately the salient axis of differentiation and competition – how to define the nature of the state with regards to religion and politics, and how to enforce this amendment as part of a larger program of reform. The political opposition was increasingly polarized on this dimension of competition over the course of Mubarak’s rule, with the movement of the Muslim Brotherhood doing much of the work of polarization. The party was not moderating on its key policy preference – that of incorporating Islam into politics – during this time period. Rather, the Brotherhood was slowly articulating policy preferences for a future state with a stronger role for religion in politics, and was becoming more distant from those of competing opposition groups, particularly after 2005.

During the 1980s, there was relative agreement on issues of religion and politics among the active opposition. In the 1984 elections, the Brotherhood ran in an alliance with the Wafd party and issued a joint statement as a common political platform. The Wafd’s leadership was representative of small businessmen lacking personal connections to the regime, and the political platform centered around policies to decrease government corruption, linked with calls for increased democracy and budgetary transparency as part of the solution. Implementing the shari’a was a secondary concern in the reform platform, and the language outlined a plan in which strengthening the role of Islam in society was the primary means of achieving this rather than having the state or religious institutions enforce this. In 1987, the Brotherhood also ran in an alliance with the Socialist Labor Party and the Liberal Socialists Party, two other small Islamist parties, under the banner *Al-Islām Huwwa al-Hal* (“Islam is the solution”). The joint party platform included a section titled “The
Application of the Shari’a” which specified that the implementation of Islamic law was not only the duty of government institutions, but also of individuals:

The great work which is required in this direction is not the task of the legislator alone, but is an integrated task, parts of which the legislator carries and others which jurists, law professors, scientists, economic specialists, and trade and industry employees hold, as well as others. They are required to put forward learned, accurate effort and to apply a sharp eye to the circumstances of the times and the needs of the people.

During this early period of parliamentary participation, much of the Brotherhood’s activity in parliament largely focused on the application of shari’a as well as clarifying and better implementing Article 2 of the constitution. Throughout parliamentary sessions in 1984 and 1985, the Brotherhood-Wafd bloc held several sessions in which high ranking Brothers (including Umar al-Tilmisani, the organization’s third General Guide) were invited to offer guidance (Wickham 2013, 52). A 1985 Arab Strategic Report observed that “a general consensus was reached in these [parliamentary] sessions on the necessity of applying the Shari’a in a gradual manner, beginning with the cleansing of existing laws, that is, the removal of elements in conflict with shari’a rulings.” The Brotherhood criticized the government on its slow pace of applying the shari’a and linked this behavior with other corrupt and undemocratic regime behaviors, finding support from other opposition groups in this critique.

As early as the 2000 platform, the Muslim Brotherhood articulated the group’s collective preferences for a state with a stronger role in enforcing the shari’a. As Wickham (2013, 106) writes, “Islam and the ‘fixed values of the nation’ would hence serve as the ultimate reference point for the new political order, setting the outer limits of free expression and assembly.” The elections came on the heels of the last releases of those jailed during the 1995 military trials, during a moment of non-confrontation between the organization and the regime. In order to not antagonize the regime, the Brotherhoods limited its numbers, contesting only 75 of the 444 seats available for contestation, and downplayed its religious

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82 The preferences indeed guided the organization for the next five years: they were reiterated nearly verbatim during a conference outlining the Brotherhood’s reform initiative in March 2004.
discourse; it exchanged its normal controversial campaign slogan, “Islam is the solution,” for the more universal “The Constitution is the Solution” (Shehata 2009, 55). In addition, the Brothers continuously emphasized its commitment to democracy and pluralism in official campaign statements and events. At the same time, the organization’s platform outlined preferences for a stronger state, enforcing notions of morality, political and economic reform, and freedoms defined in terms of Islamic tenets and practice. The platform outlined preferences for state behavior including “giving the proponents of the da‘wa the freedom to explain the principles and characteristics of Islam, the most important of which is its comprehensiveness as a guide to all aspects of life,” “encouraging people to worship and to abide by good and upright morals,” and “purifying the media of everything which violates the rulings of Islam and established norms.” All “freedoms” were couched in language that framed them as providing space for individuals to practice their religion and promote Islamic reform, but implied a strong role for the state in actually mandating these behaviors in working towards reform.

Preferences for a strong state also included a stronger role for state institutions than previously articulated. The judiciary would be given a mandate to “adjust the laws and cleanse them to hasten their conformity with the principles of shari‘a,” while the national education system would be charged with “the spread of religious values, moral principles, good examples, and national belonging” in accordance with Islamic values. Similarly, the platform articulated preferences for state control over media outlets in order to ensure proper content to deepen society’s education of and commitment to Islamic values and principles. As Wickham (2013, 107) continues, “To ‘rebuild the Egyptian person,’ it suggests, the levels of the state – such as its control over education, the media, and the mosques – must be employed to spread Islamic beliefs and values.” The Brotherhood’s preference for any

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83 Al-Awadi (2004, 176-193) documents that this occurred not only in elections at the national level but also in syndicate elections held during the same year. In the campaigning for these events, Brotherhood-affiliated candidates de-emphasized their commitment to the organization and focused more on their professional identity as lawyers, in contrast to previous contests.
successful reform was increasingly to create a strong state in order to promote Islamic values and behaviors, as defined by the organization. Increased polarization among political parties, and the continued movement of the Brotherhood, on preferences regarding the salient axis of competition were most evident after 2005. Between 2005 and the 2011 uprising, both the Brotherhood’s officially issued as well as its unofficially leaked political platforms articulated the party’s strong Islamist preferences for a state in which Islam featured prominently as the basis for laws, and both the state and religious institutions played strong roles in advancing the particular version of Islamism outlined in these documents. The 2005 electoral program stated, “Islam is in a need of a state that will institute it and protect it and abide by its teachings,” diverging from previous platforms that prioritized reforming society as a path towards Islamic reform. The platform rejected the notion of direct clerical control but did articulate the party’s notion of the state’s strong role in implementing shari‘a:

The state in Islam is a lay state which implements shari‘a and God’s limits... the civic nature of the state deprives it of any sanctity but it must nonetheless abide by the principles of Islam, for Islam has prescribed certain limits and rights. It is a state that blends religion and politics without either separation or merger.

The 2007 platform largely mimicked the 2004 reiteration of the 2000 platform and the 2005 electoral program, articulating a strong role for state institutions in implementing the Brotherhood’s interpretation of shari‘a. However, in 2007, the Brotherhood formally issued a party platform that diverged from previous documents. A number of leaked drafts were circulated in the months before, and were similar to official party documents from the early 2000s. The document was not prepared in anticipation of applying to the Political Parties Committee for legal status, but rather was intended to clarify and signal its preference positioning to the electorate. Similar to previous platforms, the content focused on strengthening state institutions to best implement Article 2 of the amended constitution, which delineated to what extent shari‘a was the source of legislation. Where the document diverged was increasing the
role of non-state institutions in aiding this task. Although Brotherhood leadership had previously emphasized that they “rejected the idea of a country ruled by religious authorities, preferring a state of institutions, with laws passed by an elected parliament but conforming to shari’a,”\textsuperscript{84} the platform outlined a vision of religious oversight for legislation. A Higher Ulema Council was advanced as an elected body of clerics who were charged with playing an advisory role in reviewing pending and existing legislation and offering non-binding suggestions to reform these in better accordance with shari’a. The body was intended to be separate from Al-Azhar, but to play the role the institution should have served had it not become coopted by the regime. This new feature of the party’s platform articulated the group’s preference for an increased role for religious institutions in more effectively implementing shari’a, and marked a new preference for stronger non-state institutions to assist in this goal.

Finally, the Muslim Brotherhood issued a party platform ahead of the 2010 elections, although the contest proved to be highly corrupt and controlled by the state. The program outlined the party’s accomplishments in parliament over the past five years, and focused on its achievements in further incorporating the values and principles of shari’a into legislation. The freedoms the party credited itself with achieving were in line with the Islamic versions of freedom of expression and worship articulated in previous platforms. The 2010 platform called for the continuation of this program, in addition to outlining a strong role for state institutions in implementing shari’a as well as Islamicizing society. In a section titled “Religious Leadership,” the platform continued with the change noted in the 2007 party platform, in calling for a religious body with an advisory role over existing and pending legislation. This role was assigned to al-Azhar rather than a new institution; however, Al-Azhar was to be constrained by a number of democratizing reforms including selecting the Grand Imam and the Center for Islamic Research (a council of senior scholars) by election. These reforms

\textsuperscript{84} Mohammed Habib. Interview published on Ikhwan Online, January 18, 2007.
would permit the institution to play an important legislative role in addition to its religious and educational functions.

Between 1981 and 2011, secularist opposition movements were relatively stable in their preferences for the nature of the state resulting from any successful reform. After an initial shift away from articulating preferences for shari‘a as the basis of legislation while in partnership with the Muslim Brotherhood, the Wafd party remained committed to a civil secular state that respected the private right of individuals to practice their religion while maintaining a secular public sphere, with a moderate role for the state in enforcing these notions. Tagammu‘ articulated a similar platform with a slightly stronger but still somewhat moderate role for the state in enforcing secular public and political spheres. These positions persisted throughout the 1990s, and shifted as later platforms articulated a stronger state role in imposing secular notions of legitimacy and regulating religious behavior in the 2005 elections. The cumulative effect of changes in party preferences and positioning, largely driven by changes from the Brotherhood, was a highly polarized society on the eve of the 2011 uprisings.85 While both Islamist and secularist opposition desired change and reform of the existing regime and state, they differed significantly in their preferences over what that state would look like, how it would derive its legitimacy, and how strongly it could legally intervene in citizens’ lives with regards to religion and politics.

85 See Appendix B for an extended discussion of how “Islamist” and “secular” policy preferences are conceptualized and coded for the party polarization graph.
Linking Targeted Repression and Increasing Polarization: Changes in Group Identification

This dissertation argues that polarization occurs through processes of group differentiation, triggered by changes in levels of in-group identification. In this explanation, the divergence in policy preferences documented above was largely driven by changes in the Muslim Brotherhood’s positioning, and should be preceded by an increase in in-group identification within the organization as it was targeted and treated differently by state repression. As I noted in the previous chapter, the causal mechanism outlined in the theory is an internal psychological process, which is difficult to conclusively document. However, a variety of interview and other data suggest that changes in in-group identification preceded the increasing divergence in policy preferences and resulted from repeated instances of targeted repression, in a process that left the Egyptian opposition highly polarized on
the eve of the 2011 uprisings. Drawing on the observable implications of social identity theory, I highlight here language and behavior that indicate a level of identification with the Brotherhood beyond simple affiliation or membership, such as positive differentiation of the in-group from other opposition groups and denigration of out-groups.

Brotherhood narratives about the early Mubarak era exuded a stronger sense of identification with other opposition groups than what would follow in later periods. Both my interviews with active leadership and public Brotherhood narratives of this period point to the joint electoral lists as evidence of closeness between the Brotherhood and other opposition forces, in addition to convergence and agreement in political preferences. This period followed one in which the Brotherhood had once again been permitted to contest politics and enter public life during the 1970s, after the severe repression between 1954 and 1970 under Nasser. As a result, the organization felt adequately embedded in political life and connected to other opposition parties, which included many leaders with whom they had worked while revitalizing the organization through political activism and related recruitment on college campuses (Al-Arian 2014). Leftist and liberal opposition similarly noted increased affinity – and related political cooperation – at the beginning of the Mubarak era. In addition to the joint electoral lists between the Muslim Brotherhood and the more secular Wafd party and Ḥizb al-‘Amal, the opposition worked together in a formal committee (in Arabic Lajna al-Aḥzāb al-Mu‘āriḫa), an initiative which brought together members of political opposition parties, civil society, and the Brotherhood, notably including active participation from ʿUmar el-Tilmisani, then the third General Guide of the Brotherhood. It was late in the 1980s, as the regime began to repress the Muslim Brotherhood, that the relationships began to worsen as parties disagreed both about reform goals – i.e., the nature of the resulting state if reform succeeded – and tactics for confronting the regime. Ayman Nour, founder of the Ghad party, noted that relations between opposition parties significantly worsened during the tenure of

86 In addition to the interviews I personally conducted included in this section, I thank Joshua Stacher for access to an unpublished interview he conducted with Khairat el-Shatir in Cairo, Egypt, in March 2011. El-Shatir was imprisoned for the entirety of the period during which I conducted my fieldwork.
Zaki Badr, who served as Minister of the Interior between 1986 and 1990. Badr issued the first statements in which the Mubarak regime likened the Brotherhood to jihadi terrorists, and was known as a particularly confrontational and violent minister; under his leadership repression against opposition, and the Muslim Brotherhood, began to increase.

However, with the onset and continuation of targeted repression against the Muslim Brotherhood organization under the Mubarak regime, the Brotherhood demonstrated increasing in-group identification and decreasing identification with other groups, which had implications for the relative positioning of the organization’s political preferences and for linked behaviors. Targeted repression increasingly made the Brotherhood feel like an organization under siege, and it behaved as such. El-Shatir remembered that during the late Mubarak era, particularly as the frequency of raids increased, “it was very common for nearly all members to have a ready-set bag of clothes and necessities by the door. They took it with them when they left the house every day, and every night their wives slept with clothes by the bed, because if a raid came in they would need to dress quickly.” In addition, the Brotherhood increasingly organized itself in reaction to targeted repression against the group. The Brotherhood’s senior leadership held meetings in secret (Wickham 2013, 60), and increasingly opted for smaller meetings of cells and remote voting instead of convening large meetings – though these decentralizing tactics did not dissuade additional regime repression. The Brotherhood’s status as targeted also influenced its working relationship with other opposition groups and dissuaded other parts of the opposition from working with the organization. El-Shatir noted, “when [the Brotherhood] invited [other political groups] to events, they were hesitant to participate in them because they feared the backlash from the Mubarak regime,” attributing repression against Ghad to the party taking a closer position to the Muslim Brotherhood than that of the “red line” state of the Mubarak regime.

87 Ayman Nour. Interview with the author, February 11, 2017, Istanbul, Turkey.
88 Khairat el-Shatir. Interview with Josh Stacher, March 24, 2011, Cairo, Egypt.
Targeted repression also altered the group’s internal psychology and identity, and the organization increasingly depicted itself as an isolated group, not identified with a broader opposition, by the end of the Mubarak era. An internal report titled “The Muslim Brotherhood and Mubarak: From Appeasement to Confrontation,” circulated within the organization following the 2005 campaign against the group, was emblematic of this narrative.\textsuperscript{89} The report claimed that the regime detained 40,000 members, levied seven military trials against the Brotherhood, and launched systematic media campaigns intended to undermine the group’s legitimacy, popularity, and success. The report claims that Mubarak used the organization as a “scarecrow,” but goes even further in its language, claiming that by the hand of the regime, “[the Brotherhood] has received consecutive blows and been subjected to the ugliest shades of injustice, abuse, and racism – like what happened in South Africa and America between those with white skin and [those with] black skin.” What is interesting about the report is that it begins by documenting cohesion between the Brotherhood and other opposition in both political preferences and cooperation during the early years of the Mubarak regime, and then builds the case for Brotherhood’s unique victimhood status by documenting targeted repression against the group. Other parts of the website detail the Brotherhood’s military trials of the 1990s and 2000s, and a detailed report of the harsh conditions facing Brothers while being held in jail. The documentation includes photographs of Brothers in handcuffs and prison jumpsuits, transcriptions of official documents related to the cases, the testimonies of those who were “unfairly” tried, and opinion pieces that condemn the justice system for its “systematic targeting” of the Brothers on “false accusations.” El-Shatir similarly remarked that waves of repression against the group “resulted in a feeling of oppression and being tied down.” In the immediate aftermath of the 2011 uprisings, rhetoric revealing a lack of identification with the broader opposition persisted. On February 10, 2011, three days after Mubarak resigned, \textit{al-Hayat} reported that an unnamed

\textsuperscript{89} Accessed on Ikhwan Wiki, an official website maintained by the Brotherhood with curated information about the organization.
Muslim Brotherhood leader told the newspaper that the new period presented opportunities for achieving some of “our legitimate rights after lean years during which the group was repressed.” In June 2012, Gamal al-Banna, brother of founder Hasan, said in an interview, “Brotherhood members alone have spent eighty years in prisons and in detention camps, because they alone wanted to reform the Egyptian society.”

These narratives centrally featured differential experiences of repression, evidence that the regime’s divide-and-conquer approach succeeded in creating increasingly divergent identities among the larger opposition. Brotherhood descriptions of the Mubarak period went so far as to accuse its secular opponents of actively supporting the regime in its systematic persecution of the group. For example, Gamal Heshmat, a member of the Shura Council who served in parliament and was jailed under Mubarak, noted that leftist and liberal opposition to the regime “also opposed the Brotherhood... it even encouraged the security apparatus in its tyrannical goal. Liberals in Egypt wore the garments of liberalism while always preparing for military rule” which Heshmat said they knew would target the Brotherhood in its violence. Moreover, Heshmat described the support of the secular opposition for the regime as follows: “they did what they did, and in the end, they don’t feel a thing. They said, God is with you. Good luck while you’re in jail. We’re far from you.”

The non-Islamist opposition had a different narrative, which nonetheless displayed similar evidence of an opposition divided in identity. After initially having been divided as a cohesive opposition through repression, the non-Islamist opposition increasingly adopted the state’s rhetoric, labeling the Brotherhood an extremist, undemocratic organization and implying that the organization was linked to terrorist operations (Stacher 2010). Non-Islamist opposition also pointed to instances of the secular opposition also being oppressed and often pointed to the suffering of the liberal movement in the 1970s under Sadat. The narrative established by the eve of the 2011 uprisings did acknowledge that the Brotherhood had been repressed more severely under the Mubarak regime, but attributed to these experiences a

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90 Gamal Heshmat. Interview with the author, June 18, 2016, Istanbul, Turkey.
number of negative attitudes. A prominent activist wrote, “the Muslim Brotherhood has faced the worst kind of political repression over the past three decades yet the group still exhibits authoritarian tendencies... over six decades, the Brotherhood has used its experience of political repression as a pretext to suppress any calls for internal change. The group sought to maintain its internal homogeneity at the expense of democratic structures and decision-making processes.” The op-ed noted that liberal opposition groups were different and capable of incorporating younger generations and democratic change.\footnote{Khalil al-Anani. “Brother-tarianism.” \textit{Egypt Independent} April 6 2011}

As noted above, though it was overwhelmingly the Brotherhood which was pursued by regime repression, other individuals were intermittently targeted as well. One example is Ayman Nour, a liberal who founded the Ghad party, and the effect of his experience of repression is the exception that proves the rule in the case of Egypt. Nour suffered disproportionately to other members of the non-Islamist opposition; he described the “repression and harassment” used by the regime against him as tactics normally reserved for the Muslim Brotherhood. Compared to other non-Islamist opposition, Nour expressed more cordial views towards Brotherhood as an important part of a larger collective opposition movement engaged in democratic reform:

I believe that a liberal must recognize the right of the other to exist. I believe that Islamists are a part of political life in Egypt – not just the Brotherhood, all Islamists, and all Christians, and all communists, and all liberals accepting the others, that’s part of my principles. It is necessary that we maintain a position in line with our principles. It is not necessary that we are fully agreed with Islamists; we were not fully agreed with anyone, and opposed many often. But in the end, at a minimum, I recognize them, for in democratic principles, it is necessary that we respect each other.

His language about the Brotherhood, and related cooperative behavior after 2011 (as discussed in the next chapter), suggests similar experiences of repression caused him to more closely identify with the organization than other, less persecuted opposition. This does not suggest a formal alliance between Nour and the Brotherhood, but rather a higher level of affinity and closeness than that experienced by other self-described liberals and leftists.
High ranking members of the Brotherhood explicitly tied their unique identity of victimhood, and their increased identification with it, back to a number of inward-facing and defensive behaviors, which provide additional evidence of the lack of identification between the Brotherhood and the broader opposition. Amr Darrag, a member of the Brotherhood’s political organization from 2000-2006 and a founding member of the Freedom and Justice Party, said “part of the reason why some of the people in the Brotherhood were not capable of good communication is that they felt the others did not appreciate the kind of sacrifice [Brotherhood leaders] went through to maintain the protest movement” during this period. In these statements, the ‘others’ were identified as non-Islamist members of the opposition, particularly those who were actively involved in the parliament and who might have benefited electorally from sidelining the Brotherhood. Narratives of a divided opposition focused on a difference in identities, separating those who had suffered and paid a price for their political activism from those who had not, accusing the latter of cooptation and collusion with the regime. Darrag said this major difference between the opposition from before the uprising carried over after 2011, with the persistence of “feelings within the Muslim Brotherhood that [the organization] had paid a high price,” and other members of the former opposition “did not have the right to impose what they want.” Another senior member remarked that by the end of the 2000s, “the Brotherhood was unfortunately not a very open organization... oppression tends to close organizations down on themselves, and this got worse with time.”

He continued,

When you select your members through a very rigorous process, because you’re concerned about people joining who are not aligned with the ideology, or people joining who are not aligned with the safety of the organization, then you tend to be very close minded, very centralized, very hierarchical. The organization was based on loyalty to those higher ranking and was very sensitive to any criticism... Repression and being closed go hand-in-hand. You cannot be [both] an open-minded and open-spirited organization, and oppressed people. It doesn’t work.

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92 Husayn al-Qazzaz. Interview with the author, June 15, 2016, Istanbul, Turkey.
Additional Evidence: Different Levels of In-Group Identification among Generations of the Muslim Brotherhood

Before concluding, I note one final important observable implication of targeted repression against the Muslim Brotherhood, that of generational differences in levels of in-group identification between an older generation, more acutely affected by repression, and a younger generation that came of age in a comparatively freer environment. In addition to high levels of aggregate in-group identification within the Brotherhood, the organization demonstrates important within-group variation in levels of identification, which corresponds with temporal variation in experiences of state repression. As noted at the beginning of the chapter, the Mubarak period was not the first time the group had witnessed systematic targeted repression: the organization had been the target of severe repression during the miḥna period (1954-1970). Wickham (2013) has previously documented that the Muslim Brotherhood is not a monolithic organization, but instead is comprised of different generations of Brothers, most notably divided between “old guard” and “reformist” generations, described by members as “two completely different currents.”93 The younger generation focused on the group’s contributions to society and advocated for opening up, becoming more visible in society, and cooperating with other opposition groups to achieve additional progress. In contrast, the older generation was afraid of external threats and remained focused on maintaining the organizational strength and integrity of the group.

My argument explains the differences in these generations through the experience of repression and resulting relative levels of in-group identification. The targeted repression of the miḥna period under Nasser created the old guard generation, composed of more committed and conservative Brothers hardened by the severe repression and prison experiences of the 1956-1970 period and who drew from these experiences in leadership positions. Many Brothers wrote memoirs providing first hand accounts of the group’s perception of this

93 Husayn Al-Qazzaz. Interview with the author, June 15, 2016, Istanbul, Turkey. Wickham also notes a third generation of younger activists, many of whom were Islamist bloggers with different strengths of affiliation with the organization.
targeted period, its experience in squalid prison conditions, particularly in the Tora liman prison, and how internally bonded the organization became under such heavy repression (Zollner 2007). As a result of these experiences, the old guard generation was internally cohesive, demonstrating a high level of in-group identification while, in contrast, not identifying with other groups as members of a larger opposition movement. They often focused on what differentiated them from other groups and how their goals were incompatible with other opposition movements, often to much internal and external criticism. They valued sacrifice, loyalty, and obedience over competence in choosing leadership, and valued maintaining the group and its core principles over working with others and compromising in order to more successfully achieve reform (Shehata 2009, 58-61).

In contrast, the generation of Brothers who came of political age during the more liberalized atmosphere of the late 1970s and 1980s, known as the reformist – or in Arabic, the Wasat (“middle”) generation, developed a worldview more open to competing groups and more centrist political preferences, particularly with regards to how to incorporate religion into politics. Scholars of the Brotherhood have noted this generational variation, and attributed the differences in the reformist generation to the traditional inclusion-moderation thesis (Schwedler 2006). In this argument, the reformist generation’s access to liberal and secular groups through participation in student and other political programs during the more open period introduced them to new ideas, which changed their own ideas and general ideology. However, while activists themselves have given credence to this causal process (carefully documented by Wickham 2002, 2013), it is not clear from a social psychological perspective why individuals would be influenced by the ideas of other groups if they did not identify with them. And indeed, within the statements made by reformists is evidence that part of what drove the cross-generational differences in worldview and cooperation was a different level of group identification with other opposition movements.

The difference in levels of identification was most evident in the critiques the reformist generation levied against the old guard. ‘Esam Sultan, a prominent Islamist in the
lawyers syndicate and a member of the reformist generation, stated in an interview that among the older generation of Brothers, “there was a rejection of the Other and a lack of acceptance of him” (Wickham 2013, 64). In addition, an in internal Wasat party document highlights how in-group identification was central to the reformist generation’s critique of the old guard, including a lecture titled “A Broad Psychological and Practical Opening” (al-infitāḥ al-nafsī wa-l-‘amalī al-‘āmm) that was circulated among members of the Wasat generation.94 This lecture, which was delivered at an unknown date and time, was composed of a number of thinly veiled critiques of the older generation’s approach and behavior:

Conditions in the world have shifted from rejection and wars, to mutual acceptance and truce and co-existence and understanding and admiration, but this global change in views on Islam and Muslims has not been accompanied by a change in our repertoires of activity and our movement which would enable Muslims to benefit from this development.

The lecture further identifies a number of behaviors that are damaging to the Islamist movement, including the “tribal” (clannish) practice of limiting one’s interactions to others in the movement; painting a harsh and rigid picture of what a Muslim should be; a pattern of self-concealment and isolation from advocates of reform; and an unwillingness to adapt the Brotherhood’s methods to changing circumstances. This is a revealing critique and demonstrates variation in the strength of identification defines the different generations of the Brotherhood. It is indicative of comparatively less in-group (i.e., Brotherhood) identification among the reformist generation and a stronger level of identification with other opposition groups, in contrast to the high level of in-group identification demonstrated by the older generation.

Despite internal variation, the Brotherhood generally demonstrated high levels of in-group identification, and the larger Muslim Brotherhood narrative was largely dominated by that of the older generation. The older generation was able to socialize younger gener-

94 As published in Tal’at Ramih’s 1997 book, titled al-Wasat wal-Ikhwān (The Wasat and the Brotherhood), which documents the beginning of the Wasat party and details the lives of Aboul ‘Ela Madi and other middle-generation leaders (Wickham 2013, 91).
ations into this narrative, particularly as repression continued and increasingly touched the middle and younger generations. Thus, although in 2011 only four of the 16 members of the Guidance Council, those in charge of the organization, were from the older generation, their narrative persisted and won out among the reformist generation. The organization identified strongly as a uniquely victimized opposition group. “During the last 10 years of Mubarak, there was always a new attack against us,” said el-Shatir, noting that none of the 12 reformists “survived this era without jail time, some with very hard experiences.”95 As a result, “a good part of the Brotherhood narrative was the experience of people in jail, under siege.”

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The opposition’s collective narrative of the Mubarak period indicates that the era ended with a severe lack of identification between the Brotherhood and other political opposition groups. Although the various opposition groups had worked together and agreed to joint electoral platforms in 1984, the Brotherhood had since diverged significantly, no longer identifying with the larger opposition movement. The regime’s targeted repression and divide-and-conquer tactics proved successful in creating separate – rather than collective – identities among the opposition, strengthening the boundaries of these identities, and decreasing affinity between these groups. The increasing divergence in identities, due to differential experiences of repression, ultimately resulted in increasingly divergent political preferences, with dire implications for the post-2011 transition process, as discussed in the next chapter. As Nour summarized, “during the time of Mubarak, [the opposition] knew the thing that we didn’t want. After Mubarak, we couldn’t agree on the thing we did want.”96

95 In his March 2011 interview with Stacher, Shatir said “The murshid himself received five years from a military tribunal. His first deputy, Mohamed Ezzat, and others received five from the same tribunal, and others had periodical arrests that ranged from three to six months. All the members [of the leadership] have experienced different types of jail time.”

96 Ayman Nour. Interview with the author, February 11, 2017, Istanbul, Turkey.
Conclusion

This chapter has traced developments among the Egyptian opposition between 1981 and 2011. I link repeated targeted political repression by the Mubarak regime to increased policy preference polarization among the opposition. I further provide evidence of increased in-group identification within the targeted group, the Muslim Brotherhood, in line with the causal relationship implied by the dissertation’s theory. The Muslim Brotherhood increasingly viewed itself as an unfairly and uniquely victimized organization. Throughout this period, it demonstrated in both its rhetoric as well as its behavior an increasing in-group identification and decreasing common identity as part of a larger opposition movement. This divergence of identities facilitated increased polarization along the salient axis of division, the incorporation of religion into the Egyptian political sphere and state institutions. This division prevented substantive cooperation among elites during the decade preceding the uprisings, and left the opposition polarized on issues of central importance at the critical moment of transition. In the conclusion, I return to Egypt and Tunisia, and briefly discuss how the relative levels of political polarization among elites affected important negotiations and agreements in both countries’ initial transition periods. In Egypt, the transition period lasted from February 18, 2011 when Mubarak resigned, through June 2013, when the country reverted to authoritarian rule through a coup d’état undertaken by the Egyptian military. In Tunisia, it began on January 14, 2011, when Ben ‘Ali resigned, through October 2014, when the first parliamentary elections were held. Though the ability of actors to compromise and cooperate is affected by a number of factors, I highlight how levels of polarization regarding the nature of religion in the state contributed to divergent behavioral outcomes during comparable transition periods.
Lab Experimental Test of Causal Mechanism

This chapter presents the design and results of lab experiments testing the causal process and mechanisms outlined in my theory. In this chapter, I first discuss in detail the experimental design and instrument, which I carefully crafted to test the two-stage causal process and in-group identification mechanism posited by my theory in a controlled laboratory environment. Next, I state my expected hypotheses derived from the dissertation’s theory, and discuss the sample and recruitment procedure. I then present the results, providing descriptive and regression results which collectively demonstrate that the expected relationships hold in the experimental data. I also conduct a causal mediation analysis and find that in-group identification is a significant mediator for the treatments, and is particularly so the targeted repressive condition. Finally, I discuss the results and implications of these lab experiments for the larger dissertation project, in addition to future extensions.

Recruitment Procedure

I worked in partnership with One-to-One for Research and Polling, an independent research company based in Tunis, Tunisia. A team of One-to-One staff translated the instrument into Tunisian Arabic, and we continued to workshop and update the instrument during enumerator training to ensure that the correct meaning of questions was captured in the translation. The lab experiments were conducted with a sample of 434 Tunisian adult citizens between May 13-20, 2016.97 The first 10 sessions (n = 49 respondents) were conducted at a small conference hall rented by my partner firm at the Yadis Ibn Khaldoun hotel, located

97 No sessions were run on May 14 or May 15, as these days fell on the weekend.
at 30 Rue Kuwait in the Lafayette neighborhood of Tunis. Due to an unforeseen scheduling issue, the remaining 79 sessions (n = 385 respondents) were conducted at a rented space located at 9 Avenue de Madrid in the Bab el-Khadra neighborhood of Tunis. The space is situated close to the Place de la République train station, commonly known as Le Passage, a busy central station on Avenue de la Liberté.\footnote{The location of the respondent was controlled for in analyses and was not found to have any significant influence on the results.} Experiments were conducted between 8:30 am and 7:30 pm in order to recruit a diverse group of Tunisians passing through the busy neighborhood. A rotating, mixed-gender team of four enumerators positioned themselves outside of the space to recruit participants. Recruited individuals were asked if they were willing to spend roughly 30 minutes completing an exercise about Tunisian society and were required to be over 18 years old to participate. Potential participants were not told that they would be compensated for their time. A session began when five respondents had been recruited. Each respondent was paired with an enumerator who read the instrument to the respondent and filled out her answers on a tablet computer.

**Experimental Design**

The visual below outlines the flow of the lab experiment, highlighting the placement of key batteries of questions:
Respondents were first asked a number of questions recording basic demographic information, basic policy preferences, previous political behavior, and current real-world group membership. Next, respondents were told they had been assigned to a group based on their previous answers. All respondents were assigned to a fictitious grouped called “The Tunisian Organization for Social Dignity,” but whether this group was composed of members with similar opinions regarding economic policies or regarding policies related to religion and politics was randomized. The below text was read to each respondent, and the bracketed text was randomized across participants:
Since 2011, many organizations working on political issues have been created. Based on your answers to the previous questions, you have been assigned to The Tunisian Organization for Social Dignity with other individuals who have the same opinions and ideas as you do in terms of [policies pertaining to matters of religion and politics / policies pertaining to economic matters]. The group holds events, debates, and conferences about political and social issues affecting Tunisians on [matters of religion and politics /economic matters]. In addition, the group mobilizes its members to demonstrate for causes the group supports.

Your group, The Tunisian Organization for Social Dignity, is a very popular one and membership is highly exclusive. It has a number of peer organizations including The Tunisian Forum for Freedom and Social Justice, which runs similar events but whose members hold different opinions about [religion and politics policies/economic policies] from yours.

Please keep your membership in The Tunisian Organization for Social Dignity group in mind as you proceed with the tasks ahead of you.

The group names – “the Tunisian Organization for Social Dignity” and “the Tunisian Forum for Freedom and Social Justice” – were chosen to represent a generic name similar to those used by organizations that have formed during the liberalized period following the 2011 revolution. Similar types of names invoking themes of social justice and political equality are used by groups that mobilize on a number of political, social, and economic causes, and which are both secular and Islamist in their orientation.

Respondents then completed a priming task in which they were asked to think more about the group to which they were assigned. This task was intended to increase the salience of this group in each respondent’s mind before continuing with the experiment. Respondents were asked to think through the policies, slogans, and activities of the group, and to describe other members of the group to the enumerator. The answers to the priming questions are beyond the scope of the analyses contained in this chapter, but overall demonstrated that respondents understood their group assignment and found it to be believable.

Next, respondents were randomly assigned to one of three repressive treatments: one of which served as an active control, a second which primed a widespread repressive environment, or a third which primed a targeted repressive environment against the respon-
dent’s assigned group. The treatment assignment occurred through informational primes, which included facts about the emergency law currently in place in Tunisia, and varied in terms of the policies’ targets.

CONTROL: As you may know, the Tunisian government extended the state of emergency for three months on March 22, 2016. The emergency measure allows the government to ban any type of strike or gathering. However, over the past few months, various groups have been involved in organizing events to denounce terrorism and participating in strikes demanding security and protection in the country.

WIDESPREAD: As you may know, the Tunisian government extended the state of emergency for three months on March 22, 2016. The emergency measure allows the government to ban any type of strike or gathering. However, over the past few months, various groups have been involved in organizing events to denounce terrorism and participating in strikes demanding security and protection in the country.

The police claim that the events violate the terms of the state of emergency, and are placing all groups, including your group, The Tunisian Organization for Social Dignity, as well as The Tunisian Forum for Freedom and Social Justice, under investigation to determine whether they have been involved in planning or participating in these events. Until the investigation is concluded, the groups will not be able to hold meetings or host events, and members will be put under surveillance. The police maintain the right to arrest group members pending the results of the investigation.

TARGETED: As you may know, the Tunisian government extended the state of emergency for three months on March 22, 2016. The emergency measure allows the government to ban any type of strike or gathering. However, over the past few months, various groups have been involved in organizing events to denounce terrorism and participating in strikes demanding security and protection in the country.

The police claim that the events violate the terms of the state of emergency, and are placing your group, The Tunisian Organization for Social Dignity, under investigation to determine whether it has been involved in planning or participating in these events. Until the investigation is concluded, the group will not be able to hold meetings or host events, and members will be put under surveillance. The police maintain the right to arrest group members pending the results of the investigation.
Outcome Variables

In order to test my two-stage theory, I measured two important outcome variables – in-group identification and political polarization – in questions following the repressive condition assignment. To measure in-group identification, respondents were asked six questions about the strength of their identification with the group to which they had been assigned. These questions were adapted from the battery of social identity questions, known as the Identification with a Psychological Group (IDPG) scale developed by Mael and Tetrick (1989). This is a standard battery used for determining individuals’ level of identification with a number of social and political groups (Brewer and Silver, 2000).

1. When someone criticizes the Tunisian Organization for Social Dignity, it feels like a personal insult.
2. I am very interested in what others think about the Tunisian Organization for Social Dignity.
3. When I talk about the Tunisian Organization for Social Dignity, I would usually say ‘we’ rather than ‘they.’
4. The Tunisian Organization for Social Dignity’s successes are my successes.
5. When someone praises the Tunisian Organization for Social Dignity, it feels like a personal compliment.
6. If a story in the media criticized The Tunisian Organization for Social Dignity, I would feel embarrassed.

Recorded responses to the questions loaded onto one factor (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .75$, using responses only from the control (i.e. non-treated) group), and thus were summed and rescaled to range between 0 to 100 for ease of interpretation.

To measure political polarization, respondents were asked their opinions on a number of policies – and were told the average opinion of the other group before reporting their level of agreement. The questions posed to respondents varied based on their group assignment. Respondents who were told they were assigned to a group composed of members with similar opinions on economic policies received the following three questions:
1. The government should privatize more public companies, like SONEDE and STEG. For comparison, the average member of the other group, The Tunisian Forum for Freedom and Social Justice, answered 7.

2. The government should impose both a wage cap as well as a minimum wage to ensure equality of income. For comparison, the average member of the other group, The Tunisian Forum for Freedom and Social Justice, answered 3.

3. The government should increase taxes on the wealthy in order to increase spending on social welfare programs. For comparison, the average member of the other group, The Tunisian Forum for Freedom and Social Justice, answered 5.

Meanwhile, respondents who were told they were assigned to a group composed of members with similar opinions on policies related to religion and politics received the following three questions:

1. The Tunisian government should prioritize legislation that preserves the Islamic heritage of the state. For comparison, the average member of the other group, The Tunisian Forum for Freedom and Social Justice, answered 7.

2. The parliament should enact personal status laws according to Islamic law. For comparison, the average member of the other group, The Tunisian Forum for Freedom and Social Justice, answered 3.

3. The government should mandate the separation of religion from politics. For comparison, the average member of the other group, The Tunisian Forum for Freedom and Social Justice, answered 5.

Principal component analysis revealed that the three questions asked in each of the group assignments loaded onto one factor. I pool results across the three dependent variables questions for each type of group, constructing a dependent variable measuring the respondent’s average distance from the out-group positioning across the three questions.\(^{99}\)

\(^{99}\) Because the internal reliability was not remarkably high for these indexes (Chronbach’s \(\alpha = .44\) for the economic questions; Chronbach’s \(\alpha = .63\) for the religious questions), I also run separate regressions dis-aggregating the three components into separate variables. I present results by each individual post-treatment question in Appendix D.
Hypotheses

I post a two-stage process through which repression affects processes of polarization. Repression alters individual opposition groups’ levels of within-group identification, and this in turn affects the distance between group preferences and aggregate levels of polarization in political preferences among these elites. When state repression targets a certain group exclusively, traumatic experiences borne of repression serve to strengthen in-group identification. Increased in-group identification necessarily initiates well-established processes of group differentiation, resulting in increased political polarization as the targeted group seeks to distinguish itself from others in terms of relative policy preference positioning. In contrast, when groups are repressed together within a widespread repressive environment, these experiences are shared and do not increase in-group identification. The comparative relative strength of this identity does not activate processes of group differentiation, and groups increasingly find points of agreement and commonality rather than emphasizing differences on defining policy preference positions.

This theory leads to three hypotheses to be tested in the data generated by the experiment. The first hypothesis concerns the relationship between the treatment group and distance from the stated preferences of the out-group, a proxy measurement used here for level of polarization between the in- and out-group.

**Hypothesis 1:** The highest level of polarization (i.e., the largest distance from the out-group) will be observed in the targeted treatment group, while the lowest level of polarization (i.e., the smallest distance from the out-group) will be observed in the widespread treatment group.

The second and third hypotheses capture the centrality of in-group identification as the mechanism through which different repressive environments alter levels of polarization per the dissertation’s working theory. One hypothesis concerns comparative levels of in-group identification across treatment group, detailing the first stage of the causal process outlined in the theory. The other hypothesis concerns expectations about the way in which in-group
identification mediates the causal relationship between the repressive treatments and levels of polarization, or distance from the stated preferences of the out-group.

**Hypothesis 2:** Primes of repressive environments will *increase* in-group identification in the targeted treatment group, and *decrease* in-group identification in the widespread treatment group, relative to the control.

**Hypothesis 3:** In-group identification will significantly mediate the effect of both repressive (targeted and widespread) primes on levels of polarization.

**Data**

434 Tunisian adult participants were recruited to participate in the lab experiments. Participants were randomly assigned to one treatment and one type of group. The randomized assignment of participants succeeded, and the samples were balanced across treatment groups on a number of important observable demographic and preference covariates.\(^{100}\)

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\(^{100}\) The sample for these lab experiments was not intended to be nationally representative; for experiments, balance across treatments is more important. However, I compare the demographics of the sample with the nationally representative sample surveyed during the third wave of the Arab Barometer in February 2013 for the sake of comparison in appendix D.
Table 2: Balance Across Treatment and Group Assignment

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Treatment Assignment</th>
<th>Repressive Condition</th>
<th>Control 143</th>
<th>Widespread 143</th>
<th>Targeted 148</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Group</td>
<td>Economic</td>
<td>Religion</td>
<td>Economic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>74</td>
<td>69</td>
<td>69</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demographics</td>
<td>Age</td>
<td>29.96</td>
<td>30.84</td>
<td>29.80</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent Female</td>
<td>29.73</td>
<td>34.78</td>
<td>39.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Education Level</td>
<td>4.59</td>
<td>4.33</td>
<td>4.59</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent Urban</td>
<td>91.89</td>
<td>97.10</td>
<td>92.75</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent Employed</td>
<td>77.03</td>
<td>76.81</td>
<td>75.36</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency of Friday Prayer</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>2.26</td>
<td>1.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Frequency of Qur’an Reading</td>
<td>3.32</td>
<td>3.01</td>
<td>3.68</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Attitudes (Strongly Disagree = 1, Strongly Agree = 4)</td>
<td>“The government should enact laws in accordance with Islamic law”</td>
<td>3.27</td>
<td>3.23</td>
<td>3.11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“The government should take an active role in the economy instead of allowing a free market economy.”</td>
<td>2.40</td>
<td>2.83</td>
<td>2.55</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>“Would you say that most people can be trusted?”</td>
<td>2.32</td>
<td>1.97</td>
<td>1.98</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Results

Descriptive Results

I first present descriptive results, generated from the data itself rather than through a model. Observed values support hypothesis 1: priming a widespread repressive environments fosters less polarization, or distance from the out-group in policy preferences, than priming the control and targeted repressive environments. Figure 1 displays the average distance from
the out-group and the marginal treatment effect by treatment group. The widespread treatment group is closest to the out-group, and significantly more so than not only the targeted treatment group but also the control. The control was an average of 70.72 percent of the total distance away from the out-group, while the widespread treatment group was an average of 55.2 percent and the targeted treatment group an average of 76.7 percent.

![Figure 7: Distance from Out-Group by Treatment Group](image)

In addition, observed values support hypothesis 2: in-group identification is significantly lower in the widespread treatment condition and significantly higher in the widespread treatment condition when compared with the baseline in the control. The below figure

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101 In the body of the paper, the distance measurement has been standardized to measure distance as a percentage of total possible distance. Appendix D presents the non-standardized (i.e. total distance from reported out group position) results.
presents the average level of identification with the respondent’s assigned in-group. In the pooled data, respondents in the control, widespread, and targeted treatment groups reported average levels of in-group identification of 66.3, 61.11, and 76.79, respectively, on a scale of 0 to 100.

Figure 8: In-Group Identification by Treatment Group

In-Group Identification and Polarization: Further Mechanism Tests

Descriptive results demonstrate that comparative levels of in-group identification and levels of polarization across treatment groups were as expected. Beyond simple observable differences by primed repressive environment, I posit in hypothesis 3 that repression alters level of polarization through increased in-group identification. Basic correlations
demonstrate that there is a significant and positive relationship between higher levels of in-group identification and higher levels of polarization, or distance from the stated position of the out-group, within each treatment group, offering preliminary evidence of the proposed causal relationship.

Figure 9: Correlation between In-Group Identification and Distance from Out-Group by Treatment Group

What remains to be determined is whether differences in these variables are causally linked. In order to determine whether the data support hypothesis 3 regarding the relationship of in-group identification in the observed treatment effects, I conduct a number of additional analyses to test whether increased in-group identification mediates the relationship between repressive environment and polarization per the mechanism outlined in the dissertation’s theory. Here, the independent variable is treatment assignment, the mediator is in-group identification, and the dependent variable is average distance from the out-group’s position across the three post-treatment questions as the dependent variable.
Baron and Kenny (1986) outline a four-step procedure for determining whether one variable (the mediator) mediates the effect of a second variable (the independent variable) on a third variable (the dependent variable). In the first step, the researcher must show that the independent variable is correlated with the outcome variable, to establish the existence of an initial effect which may be mediated. The second step requires that the researcher demonstrate an additional correlation between the independent variable and the mediator. In the third step, the researcher must demonstrate a correlation between the mediator and the dependent variable. Finally, the researcher determines whether mediation is complete or partial by determining whether the effect of the independent variable becomes insignificant when controlling for the mediator.

Regression results presented in tables 3 through 6 demonstrate that the relationships necessary to proceed with mediation analysis largely hold in my lab experimental data.\footnote{In the text of the chapter, I present results from the pooled data. I also run separate regressions disaggregating the three components into separate variables, and results hold. These analyses are available from the author by request.} In the first instance, regressing distance from out-group position on treatment group reveals a significant relationship, which remains in models controlling for a number of pre-treatment covariates.\footnote{The covariates included a number of attitudinal, demographic, and enumerator measurements. First, a respondent’s relevant pre-treatment preferences were included; for the economic group, this was the respondent’s level of agreement with the statement, “The government should take an active role in the economy instead of allowing for a free market economy,” and for the religious group, this was the respondent’s level of agreement with the statement, “The government and parliament should enact legislation according to Islamic law.” In addition, a number of demographic controls were included. For the economic group, these variables captured the respondent’s self-reported employment status, level of education, and household income, while for the religious group, the models included the respondent’s self-reported frequency of attendance at Friday prayer and Qur’an readership in addition to level of education. Models run using the pooled data included both sets of attitudinal and demographic covariates. Another set of covariates included pre-treatment “groupness” variables, including self-reported current group membership (coded as 1 if the respondent reported being a member of a political, social, or economic group) as well as levels of general trust. I also included enumerator gender and, if female, whether the enumerator wore a veil in order to control for related enumerator effects that may influence individual answers related to identification and trust (Blaydes and Gillum 2013). In models using the pooled data, a dummy variable for group assignment was included (coded as 1 if the respondent was assigned to the religion and politics group), and all standard errors are clustered by the respondent’s session.} I run these models pooling the data as well as within each group assignment, and the only exception to the relationship between treatment and out-group distance is in the
religion and politics group assignment, where the targeted condition is not highly significant ($p = .3$). Secondly, treatment assignment is significantly correlated with strength of in-group identification, and in the hypothesized direction (the widespread treatment decreases in-group identification, while the targeted treatment increases it). However, a similar exception emerged; in the religion and politics group assignment, the widespread treatment was not a significant predictor, although the sign of the coefficient is correctly negative.\footnote{Note that for model 4, $p = 0.11$, for model 5, $p = 0.14$, and for model 6, $p = .24$.} In the third step, in-group identification is significantly correlated with distance from out-group across all models, and in both the pooled and subsetted data. Fourth and finally, adding in-group identification into a regression of out-group distance on treatment group suggests that the variable does serve as a mediator, particularly for the targeted treatment group. The size of the treatment effect decreases for the widespread treatments, and the significance of the treatment effect disappears for the targeted treatment, when in-group identification is added to a basic model. A similar pattern holds in models including covariates (the tables are included in appendix D).
Table 3: Mediation Analysis Results: Step 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dependent variable: Distance from Out-Group</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1) Pooled with Controls (2) Pooled with Controls (3) Economic Group with Controls (4) Economic Group with Controls (5) Religion + Politics Group with Controls (6) Religion + Politics Group with Controls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widespread</td>
<td>−0.155*** (0.027) −0.154*** (0.027) −0.172*** (0.034) −0.168*** (0.034) −0.136*** (0.043) −0.138*** (0.045)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment</td>
<td>−0.060** (0.027) 0.063** (0.027) 0.074** (0.034) 0.077** (0.033) 0.051 (0.042) 0.043 (0.044)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeted</td>
<td>0.707*** (0.019) 0.746*** (0.089) 0.731*** (0.024) 0.650*** (0.090) 0.682*** (0.030) 0.662*** (0.092)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covariates</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>66.316*** (1.584) 69.006*** (7.996) 66.737*** (2.174) 71.229*** (8.267) 65.871*** (2.326) 71.413*** (6.545)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>421 417 212 210 215 214</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>0.134 0.191 0.200 0.283 0.091 0.127</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>0.130 0.163 0.192 0.247 0.083 0.084</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01

Table 4: Mediation Analysis Results: Step 2

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Dependent variable: In-Group Identification</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>(1) Pooled with Controls (2) Pooled with Controls (3) Economic Group with Controls (4) Economic Group with Controls (5) Religion + Politics Group with Controls (6) Religion + Politics Group with Controls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widespread</td>
<td>−5.209** (2.323) −4.649** (2.246) −5.593* (3.119) −5.048 (3.157) −4.700 (3.231) −3.750 (3.222)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeted</td>
<td>66.316*** (1.584) 69.006*** (7.996) 66.737*** (2.174) 71.229*** (8.267) 65.871*** (2.326) 71.413*** (6.545)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covariates</td>
<td>✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓ ✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>62.111 60.200 61.121 60.190 60.102 60.224</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>421 410 206 204 214 213</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>0.107 0.172 0.112 0.148 0.093 0.186</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>0.107 0.172 0.112 0.148 0.093 0.186</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
### Table 5: Mediation Analysis Results: Step 3

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>(1)</th>
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<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
<th>(6)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dependent</td>
<td>Distance from Out-Group</td>
<td>Pool with Controls</td>
<td>Pooled Economic Group with Controls</td>
<td>Economic Group with Controls</td>
<td>Religion + Politics Group with Controls</td>
<td>Religion + Politics Group with Controls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Group</td>
<td>0.003***</td>
<td>0.003***</td>
<td>0.003***</td>
<td>0.003***</td>
<td>0.003***</td>
<td>0.003***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.001)</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification</td>
<td>0.470***</td>
<td>0.542***</td>
<td>0.491***</td>
<td>0.351***</td>
<td>0.453***</td>
<td>0.460***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.042)</td>
<td>(0.102)</td>
<td>(0.056)</td>
<td>(0.108)</td>
<td>(0.062)</td>
<td>(0.116)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covariates</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.061</td>
<td>0.117</td>
<td>0.070</td>
<td>0.150</td>
<td>0.054</td>
<td>0.096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.042)</td>
<td>(0.102)</td>
<td>(0.056)</td>
<td>(0.108)</td>
<td>(0.062)</td>
<td>(0.116)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>211</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>0.061</td>
<td>0.117</td>
<td>0.070</td>
<td>0.150</td>
<td>0.054</td>
<td>0.096</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>0.059</td>
<td>0.088</td>
<td>0.066</td>
<td>0.111</td>
<td>0.049</td>
<td>0.056</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:**

* p<0.1;  ** p<0.05;  *** p<0.01

### Table 6: Mediation Analysis Results: Step 4

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
<th>(6)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Dependent</td>
<td>Distance from Out-Group</td>
<td>Pool with Controls</td>
<td>Pooled Economic Group with Controls</td>
<td>Economic Group with Controls</td>
<td>Religion + Politics Group with Controls</td>
<td>Religion + Politics Group with Controls</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widespread</td>
<td>−0.155***</td>
<td>−0.147***</td>
<td>−0.172***</td>
<td>−0.168***</td>
<td>−0.136***</td>
<td>−0.125***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment</td>
<td>(0.027)</td>
<td>(0.027)</td>
<td>(0.034)</td>
<td>(0.034)</td>
<td>(0.043)</td>
<td>(0.043)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeted</td>
<td>0.060**</td>
<td>0.042</td>
<td>0.073**</td>
<td>0.057</td>
<td>0.053</td>
<td>0.032</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Treatment</td>
<td>(0.027)</td>
<td>(0.028)</td>
<td>(0.034)</td>
<td>(0.035)</td>
<td>(0.042)</td>
<td>(0.043)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Group</td>
<td>0.002***</td>
<td>0.002**</td>
<td>0.002**</td>
<td>0.002**</td>
<td>0.002**</td>
<td>0.002**</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Identification</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
<td>(0.001)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.707***</td>
<td>0.586***</td>
<td>0.731***</td>
<td>0.641***</td>
<td>0.682***</td>
<td>0.545***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.019)</td>
<td>(0.044)</td>
<td>(0.024)</td>
<td>(0.056)</td>
<td>(0.030)</td>
<td>(0.066)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>427</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>212</td>
<td>206</td>
<td>215</td>
<td>211</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>0.134</td>
<td>0.161</td>
<td>0.200</td>
<td>0.231</td>
<td>0.091</td>
<td>0.116</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>0.130</td>
<td>0.155</td>
<td>0.192</td>
<td>0.220</td>
<td>0.083</td>
<td>0.104</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Note:**

* p<0.1;  ** p<0.05;  *** p<0.01
While the regression results support the notion that in-group identification serves as a mediator for repressive treatments in some capacity, they do not provide a full answer for the relationship between these variables. They do not confirm the direction of the mediation effect, or whether the mediating relationship varies significantly by different values of the treatment. I also conduct formal causal mediation analysis using software from Imai, Keele, and Tingley (2010) to determine whether the effect of the treatment on distance from out-group positioning is mediated completely or partially through the mechanism of in-group identification. I did not design the experiment to directly manipulate the mediating variable of in-group identification per guidelines from Imai, Tingley, and Yamamoto (2013) and in a manner which achieves total sequential ignorability with regards to both observed and unobserved pre-treatment confounders. But the experimental data does allow me some leverage in determining whether in-group identification mediates the relationship between repressive environment and polarization per the mechanism outlined in the theory. Because no pre-treatment covariates are correlated with the mediator or treatment assignment, I can plausibly assume sequential ignorability.

The figure below presents the results of the formal causal mediation analysis for the pooled samples. I consider the mediated effect of the widespread and the targeted treatments in comparison with the control separately. For the widespread treatment condition, the average casually mediated effect (ACME) of in-group identification is small, less than -.01, as suggested by table 5 above. It is, however, significant, as the confidence interval does not cross 0, even if it explains only 4 percent of the total effect in the model with controls. The fact that the average direct effect (ADE) is large despite the presence of this mediator suggests that there may be other variables mediating the effect of widespread repression on distance from the out-group. The analysis confirms that the treatment effect is partially mediated by in-group identification, as the direct effect remains significant after controlling for the mediator. In contrast, the ACME of in-group identification for the targeted treatment

\[^{105}\text{See appendix D for an analysis of the economic and religion and politics groups separately.}\]
condition is both significant and large. The ACME’s significant coefficient of .016 contributes roughly 25 percent of the total effect of .06. More importantly, the ACME renders the direct effect of the treatment insignificant, though the treatment effect is significant on its own before the addition of in-group identification. This indicates in-group identification more fully mediates the targeted treatment condition in its effect on distance from out-group.

Figure 10: Effect of Treatments Mediated Through In-Group Identification
Ruling Out Alternative Mechanisms

The instrument included questions measuring a number of other post-treatment variables that could have plausibly served as alternative mechanisms. These potential alternative mechanisms arose from various changes found to be associated with increased in-group identification in the social psychology literature, or were suggested by evidence from my case studies.

First, I measured out-group identification in order to determine that the strength of in-group identification, rather than out-group denigration, was primed by repressive treatment condition. Though the processes of group differentiation central to my theory are normally found to be caused by increased in-group identification,\textsuperscript{106} I wanted to conclusively rule out changes in identification with the out-group. Respondents were asked the same six questions listed above for strength of in-group identification, but the wording was modified in terms of the group to which they referred; “the Tunisian Organization for Social Dignity” was replaced with “The Tunisian Forum for Freedom and Social Justice,” the name of the rival group to which respondents were not assigned. Similar to the out-group identification battery of questions, recorded responses to the questions similarly loaded onto one factor (Cronbach’s $\alpha = .68$, using responses only from the control (i.e. non-treated) group), and thus were summed and rescaled to fall between 0 and 100 for ease of interpretation. Respondents were also asked a number of questions about other feelings towards both their assigned in-group as well as the out-group. The first set of questions asked whether respondents trusted, empathized with, and were willing to punish other members of their in-group, the Tunisian Organization for Social Dignity, on a scale from 1 (not at all) to 10 (absolutely). Similarly, respondents were asked whether they trusted and empathized with members of their out-group, the Tunisian Forum for Freedom and Social Justice, on the same scale.

\textsuperscript{106}See Brewer and Brown (1998, 58) for a succinct discussion of the relationship between in- and out-group identification.
None of the differences in these variables were significant across treatment groups, with two minor exceptions: average self-reported levels of in-group cooperation were significantly lower than the control in the targeted treatment group, while self-reported levels of out-group cooperation were significantly less in the widespread treatment group.\textsuperscript{107} There were no consistent patterns suggestive of an alternative mechanism through which repressive conditions influence levels of polarization. The lack of significant differences across these other variables strongly suggests that increased in-group identification, and the processes of group differentiation it necessarily induces, is driving the change in polarization, rather than alternative mechanisms.

**Conclusion**

The above design is a hard test of the dissertation’s theory, using randomly assigned fictional groups and plausible yet subtle priming in an artificial lab environment. The results consistently suggest that repressive primes do affect individuals’ relative positioning with regards to the preferences of an out-group, and can condition levels of polarization more generally, through the mechanism of in-group identification. The relationship holds both in the widespread and targeted treatment groups. Moreover, in-group identification significantly mediates the effect of the treatment groups on distance from an out-group’s position, most significantly for the targeted repression treatment.

While lab environments are often criticized for their lack of external validity, they provide the ideal environment in which to isolate and properly measure the effects of these hypothesized relationships. The controlled setting allows random manipulation of the treatment and a quantifiable, comparable measurement of effects of the treatment on both the proposed mechanism and dependent variables. The experimental data complement the externally valid process tracing evidence presented in previous chapters, which address the

\textsuperscript{107} See Appendix D for comparison of the means for these variables across treatment groups.
real-world settings in which repression has taken place, and the real-world results of these types of repression. I sought to increase the validity of the lab environment, or at least the believably of the exercise for respondents, by creating groups that were united by shared preferences rather than completely arbitrary. In addition, I included a prime with real-world relevance for Tunisian respondents.

This study should serve as a point of departure for additional experimental analyses of the theory’s hypothesized relationship between repression, in-group identification, and political polarization. First and most importantly, the small magnitude of in-group identification’s significant mediating effect in the widespread treatment suggests that there may be other variables mediating this relationship. My theory and case study evidence from the larger project point to decreased in-group identity in these types of repressive environments. However, it may also be possible that groups come to recategorize boundaries as the result of shared trauma, and experience increased intra-group identification with a larger collective of oppressed groups (as opposed to their individual group). Although I included a question capturing respondents’ level of identification with the out-group, I failed to include a question that captured the level of intra-group identification, which may be doing the mediating work of the widespread treatment effect. In addition, future experimental tests should investigate whether iterative primings of repression further increase in-group identification and levels of polarization in a lab setting, more closely approximating real-world conditions than the one-time treatment utilized here. Authoritarian regimes often repress groups over time on multiple occasions, and the historical process tracing evidence from previous chapters documents that the effect is cumulative. Future studies might also assess whether initial levels of polarization between groups affect the subsequent levels of polarization resulting from repressive environments. In my analyses, I controlled for respondents’ pre-existing preferences, as recorded before the treatment, and found no consistent effect of these preferences on distance from the out-group. I similarly found no effect for whether a respondent’s initial self-placement on relevant policy preferences was in agreement or disagreement with
the out-group’s preferences. However, a future replication might extend the experiment by randomizing or manipulating out-group placement within the same policy area to more rigorously investigate this question.

The results obtained through this study have important implications for how scholars understand the political effects of state repression and the causes of polarization in authoritarian regimes, as well as the psychological mechanisms which link these two phenomena. The primes I use in the experiments are nowhere near as strong a treatment as real world exposure to state repression. Yet I am encouraged by the differences across treatment groups which support the hypothesized relationship between repression and polarization, mediated through in-group identification. Extremely subtle priming of repressive environments, lasting only a few minutes and comprising a few lines of text, caused individuals to alter their level of identification with content-full but ultimately random groups, and also altered individuals’ preference positioning relative to other groups which have either also been repressed or excluded from repression. The implications for the politically polarizing effects of state repression are enormous. It is more than plausible to expect that these effects should occur in much greater magnitude when repression personally, psychologically, and physically affects individuals over the course of multiple years and even decades, and when these state-inflicted traumas target groups about which members much more intimately care and to which they more strongly relate.
Repression and Polarization in the Soviet Bloc

In this chapter, I test my theory of repression and polarization using non-Middle East cases. I analyze whether these cases conform to the observable implications of the mechanism and causal relationship I have posited by determining whether previous patterns of state repression correlate with levels of polarization in the former Warsaw Pact countries of the Soviet bloc, and how this helps to explain variation in these countries’ democratic consolidation success following transitions by rupture beginning in 1989. Admittedly, the case study evidence presented here for six former Soviet bloc countries is less in-depth than the previous chapters documenting repression and polarization in Tunisia and Egypt. Specifically, I have not conducted significant fieldwork in these countries, interviewed those individuals who experienced repression and participated in politics after the 1989 transition, or mined Soviet-era primary documents in order to fully document differences in group identification resulting from repressive environments. However, I draw on rich existing studies to gather as much evidence as possible in support of the observable implications of my argument and to assert that similar processes occurred in these cases.

The chapter proceeds as follows. First, I motivate the selection of Soviet Bloc cases, and outline both the ways in which these cases are comparable with Egypt and Tunisia as well as how they differ. In motivating the case selection, I also discuss why repressive environments differ among countries during the post-Stalinist period. I locate the explanation in the strategic interests of the Soviet Union with regards to each country. Variation in these interests determined whether and the extent to which countries undertook economic and accompanying political reforms, liberalizing from the extreme and widespread repres-
sion characteristic of the Stalinist period to a more moderate and targeted repression. I then summarize general periods of repression in the Soviet Union, and how repressive environments differed across individual Soviet Bloc countries, documenting significant divergence in the post-Stalinist period. Next, I compare levels of polarization along the salient axis of competition during the first free and fair elections following the collapse of the Soviet Union beginning in 1989. Finally, I conclude.

Motivation for Case Selection and Comparison

In this chapter, I analyze variation in repressive environments and resulting polarization in six Soviet Bloc countries: Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Poland. I make this case selection for a number of reasons. First, I follow this case selection because it has been used by experts on politics in former Soviet bloc countries (for example, Pop-Eleches and Tucker (2011)), and allows for a controlled comparison between cases that received the same Soviet Union “treatment.” Throughout the Soviet period, the Soviet bloc countries were governed by authoritarian single-party rule through national communist parties, who collaborated with the Soviet Union in control, governance, surveillance, and administration. The Soviets also occupied these countries militarily. These countries experienced the Soviet era and more similarly than other Communist states, which were less directly affected by Soviet policies; countries that emerged after the collapse of the Soviet Union, with different histories of national unity, party competition, and self-governance; and Russia, the imperial seat of Soviet power during this period.\(^{108}\)

\(^{108}\) East Germany was also part of the Soviet bloc states of Eastern Europe. It was similarly a Soviet satellite state governed by the Socialist Unity Party and occupied by Soviet forces between 1949 and 1990. However, it is a difficult case to include in an analysis of how Soviet legacies affected elite polarization at the national level in early elections. East Germany held free elections on March 18, 1990, but a new contest was held on December 2, 1990 after the eastern Soviet-influence part of the country was reunited with NATO-aligned West Germany over the course of the previous year. As a result, the parties in this election represented the entirety of the newly reunified country, which had been influenced by a number of different World War II-era developments and their legacies. Due to the country’s specific circumstances, it is unclear what party placement during these early elections tells us specifically about Soviet legacies.
Where these countries differ is in their post-Stalinist era repressive environments, which I document in a later section of this chapter. Similar to my earlier case studies, the origins of the cross-national variation in repressive environment remains beyond the scope of my inquiry, but providing evidence that repressive environments are plausibly exogenous to initial levels of polarization is important for making a credible claim here. I locate the explanation in the strategic interests of the Soviet Union with regards to each individual Soviet bloc country. This is similar to well-established arguments in Soviet historiography, in which the previous relationship and strategic interest between Moscow and individual communist countries determined Soviet policy towards that country with heavy influence on its domestic policies. Although repression of opposition groups was technically a domestic policy undertaken by national communist regimes, the Soviet Union was heavily influential on the behavior of local ruling parties, as Moscow financed and thus heavily swayed domestic policies on a number of levels. Thus, what position an individual country held in Soviet strategic, ideological, and economic interests determined Soviet policy towards that country, and domestic policy in that country. Countries which were more important strategically for the Soviet Union – such as Poland and Hungary, and to a lesser extend Romania – were permitted and encouraged to undertake increasing economic and related reforms in the face of mounting economic crises and opposition mobilization, in an effort to keep these most important strategic assets within the Soviet sphere of influence.\footnote{The historical arguments are highly evident in analyses of why the Soviet Union intervened differently in the Hungarian and Polish revolutions of 1956, and of the Warsaw Pact invasion of Czechoslovakia in 1968. See Bromke (1978), Vali (1961), Litvan (1997), and Gunter Bischof and Ruggenthaler (2009). Although the political science literature has not fully analyzed these historical trends in the same way, Pop-Eleches and Tucker (2011, 12) note that there exist “significant differences in pre-communist economic, political and cultural legacies” across the Warsaw Pact countries that matter immensely for variation on a number of political variables across these countries.} Other countries which were less important were not encouraged or permitted to reform to the same extent; Albania was even permitted to withdraw from the Warsaw Pact.

Finally, these cases demonstrate a number of important similarities to Egypt and Tunisia, and these similarities suggest important scope conditions for the argument at hand.
In the Soviet bloc cases under analysis, the Soviet period serves as a type of colonial occupation, with effects on local politics in similar ways (Annus 2011). In the Soviet bloc, the identity of the colonial power is held constant across cases, and variation occurs as the result of Soviet interests in each individual country. Similar to the Middle East, both repressive environment “treatments” and later transitions from authoritarianism were, to a high degree, exogenous to pre-colonial characteristics such as level of development, type of opposition, and initial levels and processes of polarization (Pop-Eleches and Tucker 2011, 3); Soviet forces occupied and affected countries that varied on a number of different attributes, the most important one for my analysis being national repressive environment. In addition, both the Soviet and Middle East cases demonstrate significant divergence in political trajectories and success of democratic consolidation following their transitions from authoritarianism. Finally, both the Soviet bloc cases and the Middle East cases were either legally or de facto one party regimes where repression of political opposition was a key component of regime survival, and opposition groups that had been excluded from power were involved with negotiating potentially turbulent transition periods.

There are some important differences in the details between the Soviet cases discussed here, and the Middle East cases which constitute the bulk of the dissertation. For example, the numbers referenced in the following section demonstrate that the one-party regimes in the Soviet bloc were more repressive and penetrated more deeply into society those in the Middle East. In addition, former ruling communist parties quickly reconstituted themselves after the 1989 revolutions (Grzymala-Busse 2002), while former ruling parties were absent from Egypt and Tunisia’s first national constituent assemblies. However, overall this case selection allows for a relevant comparison, and where the Soviet cases differ most from the Middle East cases are in the salient axis of competition – in the Soviet bloc cases, this was the left-right divide, while in Middle East cases, this was a religious-secular division – and in the details of which social and economic groups and types of actors mattered for politics and thus were affected by repression in the post-Stalinist Soviet era.
Political Repression in the Soviet Union

Repression of political opposition was a central component of regime survival in the Soviet Union and across the Soviet Bloc. In this section, I describe the evolution of repression within the Soviet Union itself, which guided policy in Soviet-aligned communist countries and which sets the baseline for comparisons and contrasts with the repressive environments across the wider Soviet bloc, as detailed in the next section. The periodization of repression under the Soviet Union is delineated temporally by the ruling party’s well-known general secretaries and is characterized by differences in the policies implemented under each man’s leadership.

Joseph Stalin served as the leader of the Soviet Union in his capacity as General Secretary of the General Committee of the Communist Party from 1922 and 1953 and oversaw the most repressive period in the Soviet era. His tenure was characterized by political purges within the party of perceived rivals, opposition, and enemies of both Stalin personally and also the party more generally, demonstrating classic – though certainly excessive – authoritarian consolidation behavior. The most significant moment of repression under Stalin was the Great Purge of 1936-1938. The Great Purge was ostensibly precipitated by the assassination of Sergey Kirov, a prominent early Bolshevik leader, outside of his office in December 1934. The event served as a pretext for escalating repression against dissidents and disarming members of the party. Official rhetoric described the purge as targeting counter-revolutionaries and enemies of the people, and the widespread repression affected Communist Party members, rival factions within the party, such as those led by Leon Trotsky, Nikolai Bukharin, and the Bolsheviks, government officials, and Red Army leadership. Those who were tried through the Soviet legal system were convicted of anti-Soviet agitation and slander, and labeled “social parasites.” The Stalin regime institutionalized widespread punishment of political opposition through the use of mass arrests, forced exile, and sentences in reappropriated gulags, or forced labor camps (which had previously been reserved for convicted criminals). Estimates of casualties from the Great Purge range between 600,000
and 3 million people (Getty 1987; Conquest 2008). Though repression peaked during the Great Purge, Stalin used widespread repression against opposition through his reign and appropriately developed police, coercive, and judicial institutions in order to do so (Bacon 1994; Hagenloh 2009; Soloman 1996).

Nikita Khrushchev emerged victorious from the power struggle triggered by Stalin’s death and succeeded Stalin as First Secretary of the Communist Party and Chairman of Council of Ministers, or Premier, from 1958-1964. Khrushchev had been a high ranking member of the party under Stalin and initially appeared to support the purges, at least tacitly; he personally approved thousands of arrests and in 1938 was sent to Ukraine to oversee purges there (Tompson 1995). Yet despite his involvement in Stalin’s purges, Khrushchev positioned himself and his policies in opposition to his predecessor. Khrushchev first distanced himself from Stalin in the “Secret Speech” at the 20th Party Congress in February 1956. In the speech, he denounced Stalin’s purges and revealed previously unknown details of the depth of the previous ruler’s repressive behavior. His tenure as leader was known as the “Khrushchev thaw” and characterized by significant de-Stalinization reforms; repression and censorship were relaxed, and hundreds of thousands of political prisoners were released from prison and gulag labor camps. Repressive policy against opposition was reformed, from an extraction and elimination approach, to one focused on re-education and reintegration (Dobson 2009). The gulag labor camp system was first reformed and then officially terminated by an order from the Ministry of Internal Affairs in January 1960. Khruschev also commissioned a joint investigation into the Stalin purges by the Soviet Union’s General Prosecutor, Interior Ministry, and Justice Ministry. A February 1954 report listed the total number of people prosecuted for counter-revolutionary crimes between 1921 and 1954 as 3,777,380. 642,980 individuals had received the death penalty, while 2,369,220 individuals were given sentences up to 25 years, and another 765,180 were exiled or deported. The report stated that as of 1954, 467,946 individuals were interned in labor camps and prisons (Conquest 1969, 112, 163). Khrushchev’s policies of relative political liberalization moved
the Soviet Union beyond a phase of authoritarian regime consolidation, from overt repression to a phase of “socialist legality.” Instead, the penal and legal systems began to criminalize undesirable economic behavior such as unemployment, linked to economic reforms he sought to implement in the Soviet Union.

Khrushchev had lost favor with party leadership after the failure of his economic and political reforms and increasingly erratic and autocratic behavior, and was replaced by Leonid Brezhnev as First Secretary of the party in October 1964. The Brezhnev period was characterized by two main developments. First, a number of reforms were implemented with the intention to reinvigorate the Soviet economy and the reforms eventually decentralized and further liberalized economic and related governance structures (Kontorovich 1988). While the reforms reestablished several central ministries related to economic development and planning, the effect of the policies within the larger Soviet Union was a trend of decentralization in an attempt to establish a corporatist economy through increased economic openness towards the West, major price reforms, an overhaul of the enterprise incentive systems, and the expansion of the welfare state (Bunce 1983). At first, these reforms appeared to create economic growth, but by Brezhnev’s death in 1982, the Soviet economy had completely stagnated. The policies had largely failed on their own in addition to having been stalled by economic hard-liners within the party who halted the reforms, fearing they would weaken the party’s control over the economy and over aligned countries. Second, repression witnessed a revival under Brezhnev. An anti-regime dissident movement became visible as early as 1965, though this opposition took the form of “gradualists” (Brown 2009, 412) advocating reform and slow change to the Soviet system from within the party rather than as organized movements or parties separate from the party. There existed country-level variation as to how this opposition manifested, but the relative related economic and political liberalization which had began under Khrushchev created more space for opposition to Soviet policies both in Russia and in aligned countries. During this period, the Brezhnev regime began using psychiatry as a means of silencing dissent in the place of sentences in-
volving gulags, exile, or prison (van Voren 2009). The regime labeled those who undertook political or economic protest clinically insane and confining them to mental institutions and hospitals.

Finally, Mikhail Gorbachev served as the final Soviet leader and General Secretary of the Communist Party between 1985 and 1991, when the party was formally dissolved. Gorbachev’s reformist polices of glasnost (meaning “openness”) and perestroika (meaning “restructuring”) further decentralized governance in the Soviet Union while also increasingly liberalizing the political sphere. His reform program centered on the notion that addressing problems with the Soviet economy would be impossible without reforming existing political and social structures. As a result, “tens of thousands of unofficial groups and political parties emerged in the USSR” after Gorbachev came to power (Weigle and Butterfield 1992, 1). The emerging groups represented significant regional, nationalist, and anti-communist opposition. In addition, the repercussions of previous state investment in foreign military capabilities rather than internal policing and stabilizing reforms became increasingly visible as opposition movements became threatening to the survival of national communist parties and the larger Soviet Union. As a result of these developments, the Soviet Union was formally dissolved on December 26, 1991. In the six months prior, the individual republics comprising the union had all seceded following years of increasing nationalist mobilization, violence, and local civil wars.

**Variation in Soviet Bloc Repressive Environments**

Within the general narrative of decreasing political repression accompanying economic and political reforms in the Soviet Union is significant variation in the repressive environments in countries comprising the Soviet Bloc during the same period. In this section, I document variation in repression in the post-Stalinist period, beginning with noticeable

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110 Beissinger (2002) correctly notes that this opposition most likely preceded the Gorbachev period and was simply triggered by economic shocks and made visible through the political liberalization of the later Soviet period.
changes and reforms that occurred under Khrushchev’s leadership in the early 1960s. As noted above, I focus only on the Soviet Bloc countries of Albania, Bulgaria, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Romania, and Poland. Although these countries initially experienced similar repressive regimes under the height of the Stalin period and all transitioned to communist regimes within a three-year period, they later had divergent experiences of communism which left distinct legacies.

Pop-Eleches and Tucker (2011, 61-63) provide a helpful framework for conceptualizing variation in communist experiences; as they write, “‘communism’ was not a monolithic experience across countries and over time.” They create a typology of the types of communism that existed over time and space within Soviet bloc countries:

The Stalinist period is essentially the high-water mark of communist orthodoxy and repression... “Post-Stalinist Hardline” refers to regimes that moved beyond Stalinism, but essentially still pursued hardline policies (e.g., low dissent tolerance, an active repressive state apparatus but without widespread terror, active security service, etc.). “Post-Totalitarianism” is taken from Linz and Stepan (1996), and refers to communist regimes where the communist monopoly on power was still in place, but true believers in the ideology were few and far between, with most party members now associating with the party for careerists as opposed to ideological reasons. Post-Totalitarian regimes are also known for the tacit trade-off of political power for economic security; limited pluralism was tolerated so long as the state was not directly targeted. Finally, Reformist communism refers to periods like the Prague Spring, Gorbachev’s perestroika, Poland’s various flirtations with greater political openness and independent trade unions like Solidarity, etc.

While the authors are interested in a different question than the one I pose here, their typology provides a useful starting point for conceptualizing variation in repressive environments in the post-Stalinist period. A country’s reform status and repressive environment appear to hang together in these cases; indeed, the authors reference changes and differ-

111 Pop-Eleches and Tucker (2011) analyze how individuals of varying ages and cohorts were exposed to different kinds of communism, and how variation in communist socialization experiences resulted in systematically different types of preferences across these age and cohort groups.
ences in state repressive policies, correlated with economic reforms, as an important way to distinguish between different communist periods.

Like all authoritarian regimes, the Soviet bloc communist regimes utilized repression against those who opposed their rule. These regimes were particularly repressive in comparison with authoritarianism in other time periods and in other parts of the world, and the regimes were generally successful in preventing widespread opposition mobilization, and denied nearly all movements and groups which did manage to exist legal recognition. In the post-Stalinist period, opposition were referred to as “dissidents,” those who disagreed with aspects of Soviet ideology and governance. Dissidents mobilized primarily on issues of human rights and violations of laws, and secondarily on political abuses and reforms. Dissidents also mobilized on issues related to the rights of oppressed religious, ethnic, or national identities. Yet even if opposition to communist ruling parties was more diffuse than traditionally understood political opposition due to the particularly repressive nature of these regimes, repression was similarly used to ensure regime survival and had the same effect on the opposition, according to Shlapentokh (1990, 5):

The intellectuals’ political cohesiveness is directly proportional to the extent of the repression in their society and the unity of the dominant class. In a society ruled by mass terror, the intellectuals as a group almost entirely cease to exist. They resuscitate only when society enters a period of milder and more selective repressions... the situation changes yet again if the regime makes progress towards liberalization and if the dominant class breaks into factions offering different programmes for coping with society’s crises. In this case, intellectuals begin to lose their unity and split into warring camps.

I replicate below a table from Pop-Eleches and Tucker (2011) demonstrating how the countries under analysis in this chapter fit into their typology, from least to most reformist from the Stalinist period to the eve of the 1989 transitions. I add an additional two columns for

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112 The way in which dissidents existed in the Soviet Union is not dissimilar to opposition movements under authoritarian regimes in the Middle East. With the possible exception of Islamist opposition movements, who are generally more embedded in local communities and provide various social services, these groups were similarly intellectual movements among elites.
reform status and correlated repressive environment, which I document in the remainder of the section.

Table 7: Communist Experience by Year and Country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Transition to Communism</th>
<th>Stalinist</th>
<th>Post-Stalinist</th>
<th>Post-Totalitarian</th>
<th>Reformist Status</th>
<th>Repressive Environment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>1944</td>
<td>1945-1990</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Less Reformed</td>
<td>Widespread</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: Table draws on periodization produced by Pop-Eleches and Tucker (2011)

The Soviet bloc countries all transitioned to communism between 1944 and 1948. Notably, these transitions occurred after Stalin’s Great Purge. Yet across the cases, the beginning of communist rule inaugurated widespread repressive periods as the ruling parties consolidated their rule in typical hegemonic authoritarian party style, aided by a number of centralized policies during the particularly repressive Stalin era. Increased decentralization began to occur during the 1950s, initiated by Kruschev’s ascent to the head of the Soviet Union in 1958, the economic and political reforms he initiated, and an accompanying thaw in political repression across the Soviet Union. Within this general shift in policies, significant variation began to emerge in the type and extent of reform undertaken by local communist parties in individual country contexts. This includes not only economic reform, but also political reforms altering the way in which individual regimes utilized repression against mobilized opposition. Ultimately these reforms established very different types of post-Stalinist repressive environments across the Soviet bloc countries that persisted until the collapse of one-party rule.

Differences in ways in which countries categorized as either widespread or targeted repressive environments was evident in the intensity of repression and in the nature of those
targeted as opposition and comprising political prisoner populations during the post-Stalinist era. Communist regimes in Albania, Bulgaria, and Czechoslovakia continued to heavily rely on repression for regime stability, and are categorized in my typology as widespread repressive environments. The communist regime in Albania continued to utilize high levels of repression against mobilized opposition until it collapsed, and was perhaps the most repressive system in the post-Stalinist era. Enver Hoxha served as First Secretary of the communist ruling Party of Labour of Albania from 1941 until his death in 1985, and his tenure as the country’s leader was characterized by brutal repression of all mobilized opposition. Hoxha was against revisionist Marxism-Leninism\textsuperscript{113} and maintained a Stalinist political system long after other communist regimes in the Soviet Union had implemented reforms. His over forty-year rule was characterized by elimination of all political rivals in a manner similar to Stalin’s approach to opposition. The widespread nature of repression was evident in widespread utilization of sham trials and forced labor camps – including six institutions for political prisoners and 14 labor camps with both political prisoners and common criminals – through the end of the Soviet era. Those considered to be opposition included rival politicians within the party, members of prewar political opposition groups, and ethnic and religious groups, both Muslim and Eastern Orthodox. It was estimated that there were approximately 32,000 political prisoners in Albania in 1985, when Enver died (O’Donnell 1999, 134).

Bulgaria and Czechoslovakia similarly maintained widespread repressive environments, though they were relatively less repressive than Albania; both countries reduced the intensity of that repression following policy shifts in the early 1960s. Bulgaria was ruled by the Bulgarian Communist Party from 1946 through 1990. Widespread repression was instituted against all mobilized opposition as the ruling party consolidated itself during the Stalinist period. After Stalin’s death, the intensity of repression decreased under Todor Zhivkov’s leadership beginning in 1954. Bulgaria had 100 forced labor camps, which were

\begin{footnote}{In a November 1961 speech, Hoxha famously called Kruschev “a revisionist, an anti-Marxist, and a defeatist.”}

\end{footnote}
used with particular intensity until those reforms. 12,000 political prisoners passed through these camps between 1944 and 1953, with an additional 5,000 prisoners housed there between 1956 and 1962 (Todorov 2010, 39-42). Noticeable decreased in the intensity of repression began after 1962, when the state reformed its economy and related political structures, but continued to target wide swaths of society. Meanwhile, Czechoslovakia was ruled by the Communist Party between 1948 and 1989. The ruling party initially reappropriated labor camps to repress political opposition, and by the end of 1950, there were approximately 350 camps and prisons containing as many as 120,000 interned persons and prisoners. The usage of these camps persisted until their formal abolition in 1961. In both countries, the political prisoner populations included diverse groups considered to be enemies of the state and dissidents: clergy, members of minority religious and ethnic groups, and a variety of individuals variously labeled as “capitalist collaborators,” “antifascists,” and “reactionists.”

In contrast, communist regimes in Hungary, Poland, and Romania undertook significant economic and political reforms. As a result, these countries relied on targeted repression to divide and conquer mobilized opposition in order to maintain regime stability, and are categorized in my typology as targeted repressive environments. Romania was ruled by the a ruling communist party, first known as the Romanian Workers’ Party from 1948 to 1965, and later as the Romanian Communist Party between 1965 and 1989. The regime implemented an increasingly targeted repressive environment as it moved from the tenure of first General Secretary Gheorghe Gheorghiu-Dej (1947-1965) to the second Secretary General Nicolae Ceaușescu (1965-1989). The ruling communist party became less repressive in line with economic and related political reforms undertaken following the Stalinist period. Between 1965 and 1971, Ceaușescu de-Stalinized the party’s approach to opposition and renounced a number of Stalin-era policies, relaxing rigid ideological controls and curbing the expansive power of the secret police through increased party surveillance of its activities. Ceaușescu implemented political reforms as he undertook economic reforms, which opened the country to the West and increased investment in giant economic investments (for example, the
building of the Danube-Black Sea Canal). Beginning in 1972 through the final years of the Ceaușescu regime, a more definitive pattern emerged in the ways in which repression was utilized against opposition. The regime undertook cyclical anti-intellectual campaigns which culminated in dramatic elite transformation; as Tismaneanu (1998, 7-8) writes, this occurred through “the elimination of Dej’s “barons” from all significant positions and the promotion of Ceaușescu’s loyalists.” After 1974, Ceaușescu’s favoritism and differential treatment was on full display as he promoted close family members to high party and government positions. The targeted repression of opposition was driven by an efficient police state with party oversight, which effectively collected more accurate information about dissidents and provided it to the ruling regime (Deletant 1993, 1995)

Hungary and Poland also undertook liberalizing economic reforms, and with them political reforms that resulted in more limited and thus targeted usage of repression. The Hungarian Working People’s Party was the ruling communist party between 1948 and the Hungarian Revolution of 1956. Hungary was then governed by the Socialist Workers’ Party (reformulated by remaining members of the Working People’s Party) between 1956 and 1989. The beginning of the communist era was highly repressive as the ruling party consolidated itself, repressed and absorbed all opposition parties, and faced a more persistent resistance than most other communist states (Graville and Garthoff 2004).\footnote{Reportedly 350,000 Hungarian officials and intellectual party members purged from Hungarian Communist Party between 1948 and 1956. 150,000 were also imprisoned, and 2,000 were summarily executed.}

In 1956, the Hungarian Revolution began as student demonstrations against the ruling policy and Soviet-imposed policies on October 23, and quickly escalated into country-wide protests after state security police fired on unarmed protesters. A newly formed, Soviet-backed government promised to hold free elections and withdraw from the Warsaw Pact, but the Politiburo quickly changed course and responded violently. Soviet troops occupied Budapest and other regions of the country to restore order. In the wake of the revolution, repression was initially severe and all public opposition was suppressed (Gyorgy Litvan and
Legters 1996). However, beginning in 1962, leaders of the Socialist Workers Party developed what became known as “goulash” communism, taking its name from a popular Hungarian dish. This type of communism incorporated elements of free market economics, valued the present material well-being of citizens, and thus relied more significantly on public opinion and far less on repression in order to maintain its power. Liberalizing economic reforms were accompanied by shifts in repression: for example, party Chairman Imre Nagy implemented a number of political reforms – such as removing state control of the press, encouraging public discussion on political topics, holding multi-party elections, and withdrawing from the Warsaw Pact – as he undertook different economic reforms, such as increasing government production and distribution of consumer goods. Dissident *samizdat* publications were even tolerated to a limited extent in Hungary. This is not to say that the Hungarian communist party was anything but an authoritarian regime, but rather that dissent was more widely tolerated than in the rest of the Soviet bloc and repression was targeted, utilized against the most extreme and disruptive elements of Hungarian society.

Finally, Poland was governed by the Polish United Workers’ Party from 1948 to 1989. Similar to other communist countries, the party consolidated itself through harsh purges of anti-Soviet communists. Following the suspicious death of the party’s first Secretary General and the end of the highly repressive Stalinist period in 1956, Władysław Gomułka served as the First Secretary of the ruling party until 1970. Gomułka initially instituted a political “thaw” but came under Soviet pressure, which ultimately stalled further liberalization. His tenure was marked by the persecution of the Roman Catholic Church, a 1968 anti-Zionist propaganda campaign, arrests of intellectuals and students, and continued censorship of the media. It was under his successor, Edward Gierek, who was First Secretary of the party from 1970 to 1980, that increased reforms were initiated (Mieczkowski 1978). Gierek instituted a number of economic reforms intended to modernize industry and increase the availability of consumer goods, mostly financing these projects through foreign loans. Deteriorating economic conditions following the 1973 oil crisis and price increases in 1976 spawned riots,
which the state forcibly repressed. The brief one year tenure of Stanisław Kania followed Gierek’s forced resignation amidst economic and social unrest, and inaugurated increasingly targeted repression against opposition during the last decade of the Soviet era, as the state continued to implement economic reforms and struggle with economic crises. Kania publicly admitted the party had made a number of economic policy mistakes, worked with Catholic opposition groups, and even went so far as to meet with critics of the party from the Solidarity Union and other unionist groups. While the final First Secretary of the Polish United Workers’ Party, Wojciech Jaruzelski, first implemented martial law in December 1981 in an attempt to demobilize a number of pro-democracy movements, he later legalized the Solidarity Union, which became the only recognized non-Communist trade union in the Warsaw Pact countries, and conceded the right to strike (Ost 1991).

**Comparative Polarization after the Collapse of the Soviet Union**

The Soviet Union was officially dissolved on December 26, 1991. Its dissolution came in the wake of a number of important and related developments, including continued significant economic decline (Easterly and Fischer 1995); the political liberalization, decentralization, and institutional change produced by Gorbachev’s policy of glasnost (Strayer 1998); and increasing nationalist mobilization against communist regimes (Beissinger 2002). In the lead up to the formal dissolution, a wave of revolutions in 1989 ended communist rule in a number of countries. Peaceful protest mobilization demanding the end of one-party rule and additional reforms began in Poland, and followed by Hungary, East Germany, Bulgaria, and Czechoslovakia, and then Albania. Protests in Romania in 1989 turned violent before Ceaușescu’s communist regime was overthrown. Over the course of 1990 and 1991, 14 Soviet republics declared themselves independent from the larger union.

The overthrow of communist regimes inaugurated a series of legislative elections held beginning in 1990. These multi-party contests were the first free and fair elections since
the imposition of single-party communist rule, and marked the end of the communist period in each countries.

Table 8: Dates of First Post-Soviet Era Legislative Elections by Country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Date of Election</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>March 25-April 8, 1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>May 20, 1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czechoslovakia</td>
<td>June 8-9, 1990</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>March 31-April 14, 1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>October 13, 1991</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>October 27, 1991</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These elections had a number of important similarities in addition to their temporal proximity. First, each election hosted a communist successor party drawing on the ideologies, membership, and infrastructure of the previous ruling parties (Grzymala-Busse 2002, 2007; Pop-Eleches 2008), and these parties generally fared well, albeit to varying degrees. In Albania, Bulgaria, and Romania, communist successor parties won between 47 and 68 percent of the vote, while in Czechoslovakia, Hungary, and Poland, communist successor parties won between 10 and 14 percent of the vote. Second, newly formed parties drew from groups that had been part of the opposition to communist regimes prior to their collapse. These groups had some expertise in opposition mobilization but little experience with formal politics and electoral contestation from the communist era. Many of these parties were formed by former dissidents, such as leaders of the student movements that contributed to the collapse of communist regimes (in the case of the Democratic Party of Albania), intellectuals (as in the case of Czechoslovakia’s Civic Forum, founded by playwright Václav Havel), and minority groups that had suffered under communist rule (such as the Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania). Third, the left-right dimension was the salient axis of political competition and
party and voter placement.\textsuperscript{115} One of the important political legacies of the communist era is that preferences about various aspects of the economy and the state’s role in it became a central division in these first elections, and remained important through many subsequent elections (Evans and Whitefield 2000).

\textsuperscript{115} Pop-Eleches and Tucker (2011) note that while this dimension is the important axis of competition in post-communist countries, there is often variation in the ways in which individuals define this axis, due to individual- or country-level variation in past experience with communism.
Table 9: Results of First Post-Soviet Era Legislative Elections by Country

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Percent of Vote Share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Albania</td>
<td>Party of Labour of Albania</td>
<td>56.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Democratic Party of Albania</td>
<td>38.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bulgaria</td>
<td>Bulgarian Socialist Party</td>
<td>47.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Union of Democratic Forces</td>
<td>36.21</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Movement for Rights and Freedoms</td>
<td>8.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Bulgarian Agrarian National Union</td>
<td>6.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Czechoslovakia</td>
<td>Civic Forum</td>
<td>49.50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Communist Party of Czechoslovakia</td>
<td>13.24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Movement for Autonomous Democracy</td>
<td>10.03</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Party for Moravia and Silesia</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Christian and Democratic Union</td>
<td>8.42</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hungary</td>
<td>Hungarian Democratic Forum</td>
<td>23.9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Alliance of Free Democrats</td>
<td>21.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Independent Smallholders’ Party</td>
<td>10.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Hungarian Socialist Party</td>
<td>10.2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Christian Democratic People’s Party</td>
<td>5.8</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Poland</td>
<td>Democratic Union</td>
<td>12.3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Democratic Left Alliance</td>
<td>12.0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Catholic Elections Action</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Center Civic Alliance</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Polish People’s Party</td>
<td>8.7</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Confederation of Independent Poland</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Liberal Democratic Congress</td>
<td>7.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Peasants’ Agreement</td>
<td>5.5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Solidarity</td>
<td>5.1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Romania</td>
<td>National Salvation Front</td>
<td>67.02</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Democratic Union of Hungarians in Romania</td>
<td>7.20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>National Liberal Party</td>
<td>7.06</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note: Parties in italics are communist successor parties*
Across these cases, variation in individual party placement and aggregate levels of polarization along the salient axis of competition – the left-right division – appears to correlate with variation in repressive environment under the former communist regime. In these first elections, parties emerged less polarized from the widespread repressive environments in Albania, Bulgaria, and Czechoslovakia, while parties were more polarized in formerly targeted repressive regimes in Hungary, Poland, and Romania.\(^{116}\)

![Comparative Party Polarization in First Post-Communist Elections, 1990–1991](image)

Figure 11: Repression and Polarization in the Soviet Bloc at Collapse of USSR

\(^{116}\) The data used in this graph comes from the Manifesto Project (Volkens et al. 2015). The indicator plotted here is the project’s ‘rile’ measurement, which combines 26 different measurements to place party manifestos along a general-left-right scale (Laver and Budge 1992). Following guidelines implemented by Kitschelt et al. (1999) for analysis of only relevant parties, my discussion and the accompanying graph plotting party placement only includes those parties that won more than five percent of the vote in first elections.
Conclusion

In this chapter, I have demonstrated a correlation between repressive environment in the post-Stalinist era and levels of polarization in first post-communist elections in six former Soviet bloc countries. While this correlation does not establish causation, evidence drawn from analyses and studies produced by country and regional experts suggests that these two phenomena are linked in meaningful ways, and the patterns conform to the observable implications of the dissertation’s theory. To conclusively link these two phenomena through the posited mechanism of in-group identification, additional research must be done similar to the type I conducted in Egypt and Tunisia, utilizing primary sources to determine how repression affected group identities and identification, and to establish that that individuals who existed in targeted repressive environments identified less stronger as part of a Soviet-era opposition than those in widespread repressive environments.

Variation in polarization across the former Soviet bloc cases has been identified as an important factor for explaining divergent transitions and democratic outcomes, as variously measured by scholars of the post-Communist transitions (Levitsky and Way 2010; Kitschelt et al. 1999; Diamond 2002). Polarization is particularly important for the first post-transition elections and governments, when path-dependent decisions are taken with durable implications for democratic consolidation. Understanding that polarization may be at least partially determined by previous repressive environments is an important component currently missing from explanations of the Soviet transitions.
Implications and Extensions

To conclude the dissertation, I first outline how polarization factored into Egypt and Tunisia’s transitions, briefly summarizing the course of events between 2011 and 2014 as the two countries significantly diverged in the trajectories of their transitions. I then summarize the implications of my dissertation, and the importance of incorporating social psychological explanations into understandings of polarization during moments of democratic transition. Finally, I discuss future extensions of the dissertation.

Polarization in Perspective During the Egyptian and Tunisian Transitions, 2011-2014

To paraphrase Beissinger (2009), history involves complex causation, and it would be foolish to attribute variation in such complex events as democratic consolidation to the single causal factor of polarization among elites during early elections and periods of decision-making. As with any social phenomenon, this divergence likely admits of multiple causes (Shapiro 2006), and I address some of these factors here, pointing to where polarization mattered over other differences during the Egyptian and Tunisian transitions.

In most accounts of the “Arab Spring” uprisings, the narrative begins with the events of December 17, 2010, when Mohammed Bouazizi, a fruit vendor in Sidi Bouzid, Tunisia, set himself on fire in front of a local municipal office (Cummings 2015). The self-immolation was in response to a prior incident in which police confiscated his cart because he lacked a permit, beat him up when he resisted, and then refused to hear his complaint. It came to represent protesting against declining economic conditions, unrestrained police corruption
and violence, and rampant un- and under-employment. Protests drawing on these themes began the same day in Sidi Bouzid, then spread to similarly economically disenfranchised interior regions such as Kairouan, Sfax, and Ben Guerdane, as well as to Tunis, the country’s capital. Over the next two weeks, protests, rallies, and strikes continued in these cities and were organized by a variety of economic actors, such as the Tunisian Federation of Labor Unions (known by its French acronym, UGTT), the Tunisian Bar Association, and groups of the unemployed. Police initially respond to the unprecedented mobilization with low levels of violence, but between January 8 and 12, reports of increasing attacks on unarmed protesters sparked nation-wide protests.117 Ben ‘Ali appeared on television a number of times during this period to first condemn the protests, next to impose a state of emergency and dismiss the country’s government, and then to announce a number of concessions and reforms and to promise he would not seek re-election in the next contest scheduled for 2014. On January 14, 2011, Ben ‘Ali departed the country by plane, eventually landing in Jeddah, Saudi Arabia and leaving Prime Minister Mohamed Ghannouchi in charge.

As events unfolded in Tunisia, activists in Egypt called for a similar protests against worsening economic conditions, government corruption, and Mubarak’s rule. January 25th, originally a national holiday to commemorate the contributions of the police forces, was reclaimed by protest organizers as a demonstration against police brutality and regime corruption, and saw thousands of Egyptians marching in Cairo, Alexandria, the Nile Delta cities of Mansoura and Tanta, the cities of Aswan and Assiut in Upper Egypt, and Suez and Port Said. This began 18 days of sustained protest, which increased significantly as hundreds of thousands demonstrated in Egypt’s major cities on Friday, January 28th, known as the “Day of Rage.” The regime initially responded to the protests with brute force, teargassing, beating, and arresting protesters, as well as members of leading opposition movement the Muslim Brotherhood, despite the fact that the organization publicly stated they were not the

117 Regular police forces continued to be charged with maintaining the peace and protecting the regime in the face of mounting protests. The national military waited until after Ben ‘Ali resigned to assume control of security issues in the country (Brooks 2013).
organizers behind the events. The regime responded to later increases in protest mobilization in a number of ways – shutting down Internet service and mobile phone text messages, replacing regular police forces with the military, and imposing a curfew. February 2nd began a significant escalation in violence by the regime (and this, despite the fact that the military had announced on January 31st that it would not fire on civilian protesters). Journalists were targeted by pro-Mubarak demonstrators, and, in what became known as the “Battle of the Camel,” plainclothes policemen rode into Tahrir Square on camels and horses attacking unarmed protesters. The increase in violence sustained protest mobilization. Mubarak appeared on television a number of times, first pledging to form a new government, then promising not to seek another term in the next elections and additional reforms, all the while asking for protesters to return to normal and becoming increasingly defiant about not stepping down. On the evening of Thursday, February 10th, protests again grew in number, in anticipation of Mubarak’s rumored impending resignation and ahead of a call for increased protests the following day. On February 11th, General Omar Suleiman announced that Mubarak had resigned and the Supreme Council of Egyptian Armed Forces (SCAF) would assume leadership of the country.

Following the resignation of each country’s authoritarian regimes, the initial transition periods in Tunisia and Egypt demonstrated a number of similarities. Upon Ben ‘Ali’s departure from Tunisia on January 14, long-serving Prime Minister Ghannouchi formed a new government under Interim President Fouad Mebazaa, another member of the ruling party. In Egypt, SCAF governed between Mubarak’s resignation and June 30, 2012. Protests continued in both countries against these interim governments, which demonstrated deemed illegitimate as the perceived continuation of RCD rule in Tunisia, and as the installation of military rule in Egypt. In both countries, these governments were replaced once elections were held for national bodies, charged with drafting new constitutions and forming new governments. In Tunisia, elections for the 217-seat National Constituent Assembly (NCA) were held on October 23, 2011. Ennahda won 37.04 percent of the vote and 89 seats. The
NCA then elected Moncef Marzouki president, with 155 votes in favor, 3 against, and 42 abstentions. In Egypt, elections for the 498 elected seats of the People’s Assembly of Egypt were held between November 28, 2011 and January 11, 2012. The Muslim Brotherhood’s newly formed party, the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP), led the Democratic Alliance and won 37.5 percent of the vote. This resulted in a breakdown of 213 seats awarded to the FJP and 22 “allies,” the largest blocks being 9 independents and 6 members of the Dignity Party. FJP candidate Mohamed Morsi later went on to win the presidency the in a two-stage runoff election in June 2012.

Table 10: National Constituent Assembly Election Results (Tunisia, 2011)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Percentage of National Vote</th>
<th>Seat Share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Ennahda</td>
<td>37.04</td>
<td>89</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CPR</td>
<td>8.71</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Population Petition</td>
<td>6.74</td>
<td>26</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ettakatol</td>
<td>7.03</td>
<td>20</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>PDP</td>
<td>3.94</td>
<td>16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Initiative</td>
<td>3.19</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Modernist Pole</td>
<td>2.79</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Afek Tounes</td>
<td>1.89</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunisian Workers’ Communist Party</td>
<td>1.57</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>People’s Movement</td>
<td>0.75</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Table 11: People’s Assembly of Egypt Election Results (Egypt, 2012)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Party</th>
<th>Percentage of National Vote</th>
<th>Seat Share</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Alliance</td>
<td>37.5</td>
<td>235</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom and Justice Party</td>
<td>213</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Dignity Party</td>
<td>6</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ghad al-Thawra Party</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Civilization Party</td>
<td>2</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic Labor Party</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egyptian Arab Socialist Party</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egyptian Reform Party</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Affiliated independents</td>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Islamic Bloc</td>
<td>27.8</td>
<td>123</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al-Nour Party</td>
<td>107</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Building and Development Party</td>
<td>13</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Authenticity Party</td>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Wafd Party</td>
<td>9.2</td>
<td>41</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egyptian Bloc</td>
<td>8.9</td>
<td>35</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Democratic Party</td>
<td>16</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Free Egyptians Party</td>
<td>15</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Progressive Unionist Party</td>
<td>4</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Al-Wasat Party</td>
<td>3.7</td>
<td>10</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Revolution Continues Alliance</td>
<td>2.8</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Socialist Popular Alliance Party</td>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom Egypt Party</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Equality and Development Party</td>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Reform and Development Party</td>
<td>2.2</td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Freedom Party</td>
<td>1.9</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>National Party of Egypt</td>
<td>1.6</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Conservative Party</td>
<td>1.0</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egyptian Citizen Party</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>5</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Democratic Peace Party</td>
<td>0.9</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Justice Party</td>
<td>0.7</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Arab Egyptian Unity Party</td>
<td>0.6</td>
<td>1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Union Party</td>
<td>0.5</td>
<td>2</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
In both countries, the previous regime’s Islamist opposition won equal percentages of the popular vote and were assigned equal percentages of the newly elected body based on electoral laws. By holding a plurality of seats, both parties were charged with the responsibility of forming new governments and drafting new constitutions, and the choice of potential partners included members from the previous regime’s opposition (though the exact process of government formation, as detailed in this section, differed slightly in the two cases). It is during the constitutional proceedings and government formation where these countries start to diverge, and polarization becomes an important issue.

As the majority of the new Egyptian parliament, the FJP led the formation of Egypt’s Constituent Assembly. Per articles issued by SCAF, parliament was required to form a Constituent Assembly committee to draft and approve a permanent constitution for the country. A first 100-member Constituent Assembly was elected by the FJP-led parliament in March 2012. The assembly was criticized for being unbalanced and unrepresentative; while only 38 of the 50 parliamentary members of the Constituent Assembly were members of the FJP and the Salafi Nour party in line with the party’s percentage of representation in the parliament, opponents claimed a total of 66 Islamist leaning-members. Of the 100 members, only 75 attended the Assembly. Members from leftist and social democratic parties including the Free Egyptians Party, the Socialist Popular Alliance, the Dignity Party, the Social Democrats, the Tagammu Party, the New Wafd, and the Freedom Egypt Party boycotted the election to determine the makeup of the Constitution Assembly. On April 10th, the Assembly was dissolved by a decree from Cairo’s Supreme Administrative Court on the grounds that it violated 1 March 2011 Constitutional Degree, which stated that parliament members were responsible for electing the Constituent Assembly but could not elect themselves to that body. Though the Assembly was dissolved on legal grounds, members of the secular opposition had filed a suit out of fear that the body could implement a strong role for Islamic religious law in the new constitution.
In the wake of the dissolution of the first Assembly, members of parliament, the country’s major parties, and SCAF reached an agreement surrounding the composition of a new assembly on June 7, 2012. The new Assembly was to be composed of 39 members of parliament (divided according to parliamentary proportions), six judges, nine legal experts, 13 union leaders, and 21 public figures, in addition to one member of the armed forces, one member of the police, and one member of the justice ministry. Five additional seats would be filled through appointments by al-Azhar University and four by the Coptic Orthodox Church. Because 61 of the non-parliamentary seats were allotted to individuals who might be affiliated with political parties and movements, the agreement further outlined the ways in which these seats could be divided up to result in a 50-50 split between Islamists and non-Islamists, according to statements by Mohie El-Din, vice president of the secular Ghad al-Thawra Party. In addition to outlining the division of power, this agreement was important because it indicated that the constitution draft process “was specified, understood, and agreed to by all 22 parties, despite what the opposition” later claimed in 2012 (El-masry 2013). In addition, the percentage of seats held by the FJP did not surpass the proportion of its publicly mandated power as dictated by recent election results.

However, when the list of suggested names was approved by parliament on June 12, 57 MPs walked out and refused to participate in the process, claiming that the Brotherhood was attempting to secure a voting majority of Islamists in the assembly through the appointment of Islamist-leaning independents. Members of Egypt’s major political parties, including the Egyptian Bloc and the Revolution Continues Alliance, the Wafd party, the Hurriyah Party, the Socialist Party Alliance Party, the Egyptian-Arabic Union Party, and the Egyptian Citizen Party as well as several independent candidates, participated in the walkout (Ottaway 2012). While many leftist members had legitimate concerns about some of the document’s articles, they withdrew form the process before exhausting debate and

118 See “Egypt parties end deadlock over constitutional panel,” by Bethany Bell, June 8, 2012, BBC.
discussion options, and refused to return to the assembly after repeated official invitations from the FJP to discuss contentious articles.

The second Assembly was as fraught with issues as the first. The body again faced legal charges regarding the parliamentary membership of some of its members and for being unrepresentative, but decisions by the Supreme Administrative Court were delayed such that the Assembly continued carrying out its tasks throughout the fall. During a marathon session held on November 29, 2012 to pass the constitution, 21 members of the elected body and seven members of the alternate list withdrew, again citing Islamist domination of the process and criticizing ambiguous language on human rights and freedoms of expression. Only 85 members, including members of the alternative list, of the 100 person body attended the marathon session, but that number fulfilled the minimum attendance requirement to hold the vote. The Assembly then issued a 234-article draft constitution. The document was again criticized as being pushed through by an Islamist-dominated Assembly, which was approved in a low turn-out referendum and signed into law by Morsi on December 26.

As one journalist observed, “the process of drafting it was more controversial than the text itself.”\textsuperscript{119} However, secular opponents and newspapers pointed to the final text of Article 2 and Article 4 as evidence of the Muslim Brotherhood’s undue influence on the document. The final text of Article 2 read, “Islam is the religion of the state and Arabic is its official language. The principles of Islamic shari’a are the principal source of legislation.” A second article, Article 219, titled “Principles of an Islamic shari’a,” included a conservative interpretation but was in fact introduced by members of the Nour Party. The article specified that “principles of the Islamic shari’a” included “general evidence, foundational rules, rules of jurisprudence, and credible sources accepted in Sunni doctrines and by the larger community.” In addition, Article 4 upheld Al-Azhar as an independent, fiscally autonomous Islamic institution and also included language that stipulated it should

have sway over matters related to religion ("Al-Azhar’s Council of senior scholars is to be consulted in matters relating to Islamic shari’a"). Taken together, the entire process belied a level of distrust, discord, and an inability to cooperate by both Islamists as well as leftist members of the Assembly.

In contrast, the Tunisian constitution process was significantly more inclusive and ultimately successful, though not without its fair share of issues. The 217-person NCA elected by popular vote in the fall of 2011 was jointly charged with drafting the constitution; no sub-body was individually responsible for passing the document. To streamline the process, a Consensus Committee within the NCA drafted and reviewed every article before presenting it to the general session of the NCA for debate and vote. The 22-member body included both Islamists as well as secularist members of the NCA. The NCA worked in fits and starts for almost two years. Tension between the Islamist-dominated body and opposition peaked in the summer of 2013, after huge opposition-led protests occupied government spaces in downtown Tunis and a second leftist politician was assassinated. Leaders of the country’s major civil society organizations and political parties agreed to a National Dialogue and reached an agreement about the course of a way forward on September 17, 2013. This approved roadmap had four main points: the replacement of the government by an "independent technocratic" government, the choice of fixed dates for parliamentary and presidential elections, an agreement to preserve national identity (this included a nod to both secular and Islamic heritages) in the new constitution, and deadlines for agreed upon steps necessary for the transition to a democratic government. Though four civil society organizations were recognized by the Nobel Peace Prize for organizing and leading the National Dialogue effort, the ability of parties which had become significantly polarized to agree to this initiative was the only fact that mattered for its political success and implementation.

Voting on the new constitution began on January 3, 2014. The constitution incorporated mentions of Islam as the religion and culture of the Tunisian people, while also establishing a state role for protecting freedom of religious worship and expression. This
balance between respecting Islam and enshrining shari’a as the basis for legislation and legitimacy was led by Ennahda, which dropped its insistence that the new constitution should refer to Islamic law as “a” or “the” primary source. Amr Larayedh, a senior-ranking member of the party, said the party “has decided to retain the first clause of the previous constitution without change. We want the unity of our people and do not want divisions,” reversing previous positions articulated by leadership during a radio interview in March 2012.

The constitution established the new republic as a “civil” state but identified its religion as Islam and expressed the Tunisian “people’s commitment to the teachings of Islam... from our enlightened reformist movements that are based on the foundations of our Islamic-Arab identity.” Perhaps the most important article related to religion and politics in the constitution was Article 6, which stated:

> The state is the guardian of religion. It guarantees freedom of conscience and belief, the free exercise of religious practices and the neutrality of mosques and places of worship from all partisan instrumentalization. The state undertakes to disseminate the values of moderation and tolerance and the protection of the sacred, and the prohibition of all violations thereof. It undertakes equally to prohibit and fight against calls for takfīr [apostasy] and the incitement of violence and hatred.

The language related to religion and politics to which both Islamist and secular parties agreed during the drafting process acknowledged the importance of Islam but was not the strongest possible language possible, or even that proposed. When the Islamist-dominated body was given opportunities to be more explicit and enshrine a stronger role for Islam, it did not. For example, an amendment to replace “drawn from the teachings of Islam” with “expressing the commitment of our people to the teachings of Islam” in the third paragraph of the preamble passed (157 for, 20 against, 6 abstentions), with 69 members of the Ennahda bloc voting in favor. Similarly, another amendment to the third paragraph that proposed to replace “Based on the teachings of Islam” with “Expressing the commitment of our people to the teachings of Islam as an example and complete higher principles, whereas (Islam) is one of the main founders of modern humanity and universal human rights” did not pass (7 for, 138 against, 21 abstentions) with Ennahda’s block either
voting against or abstaining in its entirety. The full paragraph with the less strong language passed with near consensus (168 for, 7 against, 11 abstentions). A later amendment to the first article of the constitution, which would have read “The Qur’an and Sunnah are the main source of legislation,” did not pass, and 54 Ennahda bloc members either voted against the amendment or abstained from voting (only 21 voted in favor).

Another article institutionalized freedom of worship, and established the state as the protector of this freedom. The final text of Article 6 (approved with a vote of 149 for, 23 against, and 13 abstentions) read:

The state is the guardian of religion. It guarantees freedom of conscience, belief, and worship. It is the protector of the sacred, and guarantees the neutrality of mosques and places of worship from partisan manipulation.

Before passing the final resolution, Ennahda successfully led a vote to remove amendments regulating freedom of conscious and worship. 53 members of the bloc also voted against an amendment to add language that would prohibit “all forms of apostasy charges and incitement to hatred and violence” from being added to the end of the article, prohibiting the amendment from passing. This type of language is typically viewed to be used by Islamist governments to punish anyone who defames Islam.

The constitution writing processes proceeded very differently in Egypt and Tunisia. While both parties had similar mandates, the FJP used its plurality to pass a constitution despite the walk out of significant members of the leftist opposition; though technically within legal requirements, this created additional issues between an already polarized and split political scene. Though Tunisia’s constitution writing process was not without its problems, Ennahda deliberately sought out other parties and included alternative voices to create a constitution that was widely supported by all political factions. My focus on the constitutional drafting proceedings should not be interpreted as an assertion that polarization is the singularly important causal variable in explaining the two countries’ divergent trajectories; certainly other issues existed and contributed to the variation in the outcome.
Yet Egypt’s higher levels of polarization decreased the possibility of agreement between political actors during a critical moment, and ultimately began the country’s descent into authoritarian retrenchment. After the constitutional debacle, tension, division, and distrust continued to increase between elites. Major protests on June 30, 2013, the one-year anniversary of Morsi taking office, ended in his removal by military coup on July 3. This coup was in aided in no small way by the polarization and division among political elites; secular elites supported the anti-Morsi protest and the military intervention, serving as a civil justification for this intervention. Their support was driven not only by dislike and distrust of the Brotherhood but also severe disagreement with the FJP’s political preferences and policy initiatives. Meanwhile in Tunisia, less polarization on issues of central importance and potential division allowed politicians to ultimately pass an inclusive constitution, and to focus on next steps, such as holding further democratically consolidating second elections and to being to tackle reforms to address long-term economic and security issues inherent to transitioning authoritarian political systems. Thus, levels of polarization ultimately contributed to each country’s probability of successful consolidation.

Summary and Implications of Findings

As I wrote in the introduction of this dissertation, scholars agree that polarization is central to the contingent outcomes dictated by elites during democratic transitions. However, while polarization has been established as an important component of contingent theories of democratic transition and consolidation, this literature has not fully explained when and why polarization exists in the first place, relying on problematic existing explanations. In this dissertation, I develop and empirically test an original theory about the origins of polarization in authoritarian political contexts. I have focused on repression as the defining feature of authoritarian political contexts and as a legacy with long-term consequences.
I have developed here a two-stage process through which the repression that defines authoritarian regimes affects processes of polarization in these systems, and results in comparatively different levels of polarization at moments of transition. I argue that repression affects how actors come to identify themselves, shaping related political preferences and the distribution of these preferences among political elites as well as conditioning the likelihood of cooperative behavior among them. My theory builds on insights from social psychology on the causes and consequences of group identification, and locates the explanation for polarization at the moment of potential political transition in the repressive nature of previous authoritarian regimes. Repressive environments either target repression at a specific opposition group, or are pervasive and affect all opposition groups. Targeted repression, following the logic of divide-and-conquer, increases polarization across the opposition. In contrast, widespread repression decreases within-group identification within opposition groups, which in turn decreases polarization in political preferences among these elites. Repression directly influences group identity and related preferences among the opposition, and the legacies of these experiences determine the level of preference polarization in the moment of transition from authoritarianism.

The main contributions of this dissertation are theorizing and documenting the effect of important authoritarian legacies on subsequent political developments, and identifying and testing the mechanism through which these institutions create meaningful legacies and exert an effect. The idea that historical legacies matter is not a new one, and my research is line with a growing number of studies that endogenize individual behaviors and preferences to the behaviors of the state context in which an individual exists. However, I offer a new take on which part of authoritarian contexts matter, focusing here on coercive and repressive institutions rather than economic or political institutions. I find that these types of institutions create legacies of consequence through a political identity mechanism. The logic of the argument has a broader implication as well, beyond the specific research question posed here: political outcomes determined by human actors are at least partially determined
by the political identities of those actors, and these identities are influenced and formed in reference to the state and its behavior, particularly when this behavior is coercive. My theory better explains how authoritarian legacies set the sociological stage for transitions, and how these legacies can sow seeds among political actors that undermine democratic consolidation, and does so in a way that expands our theoretical understanding of polarization beyond explanations rooted in structure, strategy, or ideology.

Future Extensions

This project begins a larger research agenda analyzing the causes and consequences of repressive institutions, and I conclude this dissertation by outlining a number of future extensions. First, future work will more thoroughly investigate the origins of repression institutions and the mechanisms of their continuation in the authoritarian Middle East and other post-colonial regimes. In chapter two, I outlined a structural account for variation in authoritarian repressive environments, locating the explanation in the path-dependent coercive institutions developed prior to independence by colonial powers with different interests and related policies. This question which was important for rendering repressive environment exogenous to processes of polarization, but because it was temporally and logically to the research question at hand, it remained beyond the scope of the current research project. However, it remains an important question because these institutions are central to democratizing processes and potential in the Middle East. Bellin (2004, 2012) has convincingly argued that particularly muscular coercive institutions have kept the Middle East undemocratic by repressing potential opposition groups. My research confirms that repression matters not only for maintaining regimes but also in any potential transition, because it affects the probability of successful transition. My research nuances the uniform applicability of Bellin’s argument, and suggests that important variation exists within this particularly repressive region that must be accounted for in our studies. I envision a thorough analysis
of the origins of the Middle East’s coercive institutions as is as a major research project, one that will most likely become a second book project (after developing this dissertation into a manuscript). The project will draw on research in British, French, and Middle East archives to document the development, institutionalization, and continuity of different types of repressive institutions in former colonies.

Second, future work will build on the experiments and comparative data presented in chapters five and six. Additional studies will replicate and extend my lab experiments testing the psychological mechanism underpinning the causal chain in my theory. In particular, I intend to conduct a study very similar to the current version but which directly manipulates in-group identification, and thus permits a more accurate measurement of its mediation on the relationship between repression and polarization. In addition, I intend to develop a larger dataset of transitions beyond those considered here in the Middle East and in the former Soviet bloc to include in my book manuscript. The dataset will include similar measurements of polarization along the salient axis of competition during first elections as well as previous repressive environment. As demonstrated in chapter six, this requires going beyond existing datasets and relying on significant amounts primary and secondary literature to code a single party in a single country. While the data collection will be tedious, it is important to develop as it will permit me to consider whether and how these dynamics work within a broader set of democratic transitions, such as those in Latin America and Africa. These countries hosted authoritarian regimes which utilized repression against mobilized opposition, faced potential transitions during similar historical periods, and have similar colonial experiences, with important implications for within-region variation in repressive environments. The similarities make these countries helpful for comparative analyses, and important differences – namely, transition type – will help further specify the scope conditions of my argument.

Finally, future work might also expand the scope of analysis beyond authoritarian republics, to determine whether and how similar dynamics occur in other types of regimes. This may include other types of authoritarian regimes – such as monarchies, with different
systems of legitimation in which the regime relies on more fractured opposition (Lust-Okar and Jamal 2002) and which thus witness different relationships between the regime and repression and other methods of control in a manner which differs from republics. Future work might also compare whether similar dynamics exist in democratic contexts. I have focused here on authoritarian regimes because they are defined by repression of political opposition (Linz 2000). In contrast, democracies do not have the same relationship between state use of repression and control of political opposition, but many democratic regimes do sometimes use violence to maintain themselves against mobilized opposition. For example, democratic regimes often respond with violence to groups representing marginalized segments of society (such as students, racial and ethnic minority groups, immigrants, and women) and utilizing extrapoltical oppositional, mobilizational, and protest tactics. These state reactions are more subtle and significantly less severe than commonplace behaviors in authoritarian contexts, but they are nonetheless coercive and may have the same effect on group identities, group-related preferences, and the relative placement of these preferences vis-à-vis other targeted and non-targeted groups.
Appendices
### Table 12: Colonial Legacies and Repressive Environments in the Middle East

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Country</th>
<th>Colonial history</th>
<th>Type of rule</th>
<th>Consolidated state</th>
<th>State repressive policy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Algeria</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>One-party state</td>
<td>Widespread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bahrain</td>
<td>British</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>Monarchy</td>
<td>Widespread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Egypt</td>
<td>British</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>One-party state</td>
<td>Targeted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Iraq</td>
<td>British</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>One-party state</td>
<td>Targeted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jordan</td>
<td>British</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>Monarchy</td>
<td>Widespread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Kuwait</td>
<td>British</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>Monarchy</td>
<td>Widespread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lebanon</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>Multi-party republic</td>
<td>–</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Libya</td>
<td>Italian</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>One-party state</td>
<td>Widespread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Morocco</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>Monarchy</td>
<td>Widespread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Oman</td>
<td>British</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>Monarchy</td>
<td>Widespread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Palestine</td>
<td>British</td>
<td>Direct</td>
<td>One-party state</td>
<td>Targeted</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Qatar</td>
<td>British</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>Monarchy</td>
<td>Widespread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saudi Arabia</td>
<td>British-ish</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>Monarchy</td>
<td>Widespread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Syria</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>One-party state</td>
<td>Widespread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Tunisia</td>
<td>French</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>One-party state</td>
<td>Widespread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>UAE</td>
<td>British</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>Monarchy</td>
<td>Widespread</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yemen</td>
<td>British</td>
<td>Indirect</td>
<td>Monarchy</td>
<td>Widespread</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix B: Party Platform Coding

In order to compare different manifestos across cases and in different time periods, I devise a coding scheme to rank manifestos based on parties’ stated policy preferences related to religion and politics. I draw on coding methodology as outlined in the documentation provided by (Volkens et al. 2015), the principal investigators of the Manifestos Project. Like the project, I consider the manifestos, official statements, and platforms released during electoral competition to be parties’ “only... main authoritative policy statements and, therefore, as indicators of the parties’ policy preferences at a given point in time.” However, the salient axis of competition and differentiation in my cases differs from how the religious-secular divide has existed, and thus how the project has measured it, in other regions of the world.

The parties’ political preferences related to religion and politics are shaped by debates about the politics of Islam and secularism in Muslim societies. I outline these complex concepts here in detail; it is important to correctly define them in order to correctly measure them and their political impact (Fair, Littman, and Nugent 2017). At the highest level of abstraction, secularism is situated at one end of the spectrum as the notion of separation between religion and politics. At the other end of the spectrum lies Islamism, the notion that the religion’s tenets as outlined in the shari’a should serve as the basis of political legitimacy. Similar debates occur in non-Muslim societies between those seeking a total separation of religion and politics and those seeking a politics guided or influenced by Judaism, Christianity, or other religious ideologies. Here, I isolate Islam because I am specifically interested in the political ideologies and philosophies it has generated, and in notions of secularism contrasted against it. While Asad (2003) has argued that the secular and the religious exist as two distinct modes of being in the world, the real-world political application of these concepts is better thought of as a spectrum along which individuals and parties can have varying digress of different preferences.

In debates on secularism and on Islamism, there are three main ways in which differences between these two different types of systems are manifested that can be summarized by answers to the What?, Who?, and How?. First, parties’ preferences regarding religion and politics can differ in terms of the basis of legislation and guiding laws (what is being enforced in terms of religion and politics). This refers to whether the basis of law is liberal secular principles, or Islamist and Qur’anic principles.

Additional nuances that are secondary to this typology might include answers to the questions of Where? and When? for notions of secularism, most important for a mixed system in which certain kinds of laws only apply in certain times or places. In addition, another consideration would be Whose? interpretation of secularism or Islamism is applied within systems of law.
Second, parties’ preferences regarding religion and politics can differ in terms of the role of religious institutions (a question of who is doing the enforcing). For secularists, this is the extent to which secular, state institutions have oversight over religious ones, while for Islamists, this is the extent to which religious institutions have oversight over political ones.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Islamist</th>
<th>Secularist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Strict interpretation of shari'a (total application)</td>
<td>Strict interpretation of secularism (total division of religion and politics)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Some application of specific shari'a principles</td>
<td>Some application of division of religion and politics</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Generally based on Islamic principles</td>
<td>Generally based on liberal secular principles</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Third, parties’ preferences regarding religion and politics can differ in terms of the strength of state involvement in enforcing said laws, grounded in either religious or Islamic justification. For secularists, this is the extent to which the state institutions can enforce the separation of religion and politics and how much it can infringe on individual liberties in doing so. Conversely for Islamists, this is the extent to which state institutions can force the integration or independence of religion into and over politics, and how much it can infringe on individual liberties in doing so.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Islamist</th>
<th>Secularist</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High</td>
<td>Full religious institutional oversight</td>
<td>Full state institutional oversight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Some religious institutional oversight</td>
<td>Some religious institutional oversight</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low religious institutional oversight</td>
<td>Low state institutional oversight</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

These three components combine to form the following typology and coding scheme:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Basis of law</th>
<th>Institutional Oversight</th>
<th>Strength of State intervention</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>More Islamist</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 <em>High Scores</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 <em>Medium Scores</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td></td>
<td><em>No mention of religion &amp; politics</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 <em>Medium Scores</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td></td>
<td>2 <em>High Scores</em></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>More Secular</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Appendix C: Mass Preferences and Elite Polarization in Egypt and Tunisia in 2011

A question that naturally follows from a discussion of elite polarization is whether partisans of these parties are similarly polarized. Public opinion collected after the uprisings suggests that partisans in Egypt were more polarized than those in Tunisia, particularly on matters related to religion and politics. The second wave of the Arab Barometer was conducted after the uprisings in 2011 and included a question about preferred regime type in both countries. Referencing the political system in Egypt in the coming time period, the first question asked respondents about the nature of their preferred state, giving them the option to answer “a civil state” and “a religious state.” Egyptian and Tunisian partisans overwhelmingly supported a civil state, at roughly 75% in both countries. A follow-up question probed into how respondents defined a civil state. Options included the same base definition: “a civil state is one in which the people are the source of power, and the state is governed by the constitution and the law with citizenship being the highest value irrespective of religion or race.” Two further options continued, “Islam constitutes its cultural and civilizational frame of reference” or “secularism constitutes its cultural and civilizational background.” Egyptian voters were significantly more polarized on this question than Tunisian voters: in Egypt, voters were divided 44.8% in support of secular civil state and 55.1% in support of an Islamic frame of reference, while in Tunisia over 70% of voters agreed on an Islamic frame of reference.

Figure 12: Definitions of a civil state in Egypt and Tunisia, 2011 (Source: Arab Barometer)
Data collected from the Transitional Governance Project similarly demonstrates higher levels of polarization among Egyptian partisans compared with Tunisian partisans using a more traditional method. The instrument asked respondents to place both themselves and political parties on two axes of competition: the religious-secular and economic divides. Voters perceived parties to be more polarized in Egypt than in Tunisia, and similarly vote self-placement demonstrated less polarization in Tunisia, clustered around a middle point.

Figure 13: Placement of parties in Egypt and Tunisia, 2011 (Source: Transitional Justice Project)
This raises a second question: is mass polarization a cause or a consequence of elite polarization? The academic debate on these questions is both vast and largely inconclusive.\footnote{See Barber and McCarty (2015) and Boix (2009) for comprehensive reviews on the current state of the literature regarding the causal direction of elite and individual placement and polarization.} I do not seek to engage directly with the literature on or offer new insights into the relationship between elite and mass polarization. However, I address it in this appendix because if mass polarization is indeed a cause of polarization at an elite level, it would suggest an alternative causal pathway than the one investigated at length in the dissertation.

I maintain that higher levels of mass polarization in Egypt than in Tunisia is an artifact of variation in elite polarization, rather than a cause of it. I base this assumption on interviews with Egyptian and Tunisian party strategists, as well as a reading of arguments
relevant to the low-information settings of first elections.

First, interviews with the political strategists of main parties in both countries revealed that these parties were not catering to voters during the early period and elections. Each party issued a political platform articulating a set of policy preferences, but these preferences reflected those of the party’s elite members and leadership rather than current or potential constituencies. Part of this was unfamiliarity with the electorate, particularly for newly formed or newly mobilizing parties.\textsuperscript{122} Within the Muslim Brotherhood, drafting the 2011 platform was a top-down approach; the preferences of the Guidance Bureau were those articulated, with little feedback even from lower levels of membership.\textsuperscript{123} The process had been similar before the uprisings. In one particularly illuminating quote, Amr Darrag, a member of the political committee charged with drafting the organization’s platforms, said, “Of course you want to attract people to elect you, definitely. But you don’t just want any voters. You want voters who believe in your idea and are proponents of what you believe. These are the kinds of people you are interested in, and you want to spread these ideas so more people are convinced.”\textsuperscript{124} When these parties did utilize public opinion polling, questions included vote choice rather than explicit policy preferences.

Second, findings from various established literature support the idea that parties are not catering to the policy preferences of voters in moments of transition – and, indeed, may be shaping the electorate’s preferences as well as the distribution of said preferences. The body of work on elections under authoritarian regimes collectively agrees that individuals are not making choices about policies or politicians in these kinds of contests (Gandhi and Lust-Okar 2009). Rather, individuals vote either to accrue material benefits from opposition or ruling parties (Blaydes 2011; Lust 2009; Magaloni 2006; Stokes 2005), or to bravely signal disapproval of the regime (but see de Miguel, Jamal, and Tessler (2016) for an analysis that takes seriously policy preferences as a motivation for voter turnout in authoritarian regimes). This is not to say that individual policy preferences did not matter before 2011 in either of these countries, only that they were underdeveloped in systems where vote choice and political competition were not based on and did not offer substantive differences in policies by design of electoral authoritarianism.

\textsuperscript{122} Mohamed Nour. Interview with the author, May 25, 2012, Cairo, Egypt. Nour was a chief strategist for the Nour Party’s parliamentary campaign in 2012.

\textsuperscript{123} Husayn al-Qazzaz. Interview with the author, June 15, 2016, Istanbul, Turkey. Al-Qazzaz was a long-term advisor to senior members of the Muslim Brotherhood, including President Morsi, and a close friend and confidant of Khairat el-Shatir. Referring to the 2000s, he said that, “all the political behavior throughout this period was the direct outcome of the preferences of the leadership of the Ikhwan. There wasn’t any room left for anyone to maneuver alone.”

\textsuperscript{124} Amr Darrag. Interview with the author, June 13, 2016, Istanbul, Turkey. Darrag served a member of the organization’s political committee from 2002-2006, and was a founding member of the Muslim Brotherhood’s Freedom and Justice Party. As early as March 1984, Umar al-Tilmisani, the third \textit{marshid} (general guide) of the Muslim Brotherhood, was quoted in an interview as saying, “The only thing the Brotherhood cares about is the spread of its ideas” (Wickham 2013, 49).
In addition, the literature on polarization assumes a top-down process, whereby elites polarize first and then partisans follow. A review of existing studies by Fiorina and Abrams (2008, 581) notes that there is “general agreement” that party sorting, and the mass polarization it implies, is largely a top-down process. In a review on the study of polarization within the American context, Barber and McCarty (2015) note that while there may be a feedback loop between parties and constituents, its existence has not been empirically tested or proven. This finding speaks to ideas embedded in the literature on elite cues and other elite heuristics voters utilize in making choices based on the preference positions of elites they trust or like (Mondak 1989; Lupia and McCubbins 1998; Mondak 1993).
Appendix D: Additional Experimental Results

Comparing Experimental Sample with Nationally Representative Sample

Though the sample for my lab experiments was not intended to be nationally representative, I compare the demographics of the sample with the nationally representative sample of adult Tunisian citizens surveyed during the third wave of the Arab Barometer in February 2013 to demonstrate how my sample compared on a number of covariates.

Table 13: Comparison of Lab Sample with 2013 Arab Barometer Sample

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>Lab Sample</th>
<th>Arab Barometer Sample</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Average Age</td>
<td>30.89</td>
<td>39.38</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Female</td>
<td>34.79</td>
<td>50.54</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Level of Education</td>
<td>4.67</td>
<td>3.08</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Urban</td>
<td>95.62</td>
<td>62.12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Employed</td>
<td>76.04</td>
<td>30.61</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Percent Public Sector (of employed)</td>
<td>16.74</td>
<td>32.67</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of Friday Prayer</td>
<td>2.03</td>
<td>2.25</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequency of Qur’an Reading</td>
<td>3.31</td>
<td>3.22</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Compared to a nationally representative sample, the respondents in the lab experiment are slightly (an average of 9 years) younger, significantly less likely to be female, and slightly more educated, with an average education level in the secondary school range rather than in the primary school range. The sample was significantly more urban. In addition, the percentage of lab sample currently employed is more than double that of the nationally representative sample – possibly because the experiment was conducted in a busy area of the city during business hours – though the lab sample is nearly half as likely to be employed in the public sector. The samples are similarly religious.
Distance from Out-Group by Group Assignment

Respondents could be assigned either to a group based on shared preferences regarding religion and politics or regarding the economy. The same pattern of distance from out-group, or polarization, observed in the pooled data is consistent with each of the different group assignments.
Distance from Out-Group by Question

Though the level of significance varies by the question asked, the same general pattern of polarization is consistent across different dependent variables. In the economic group, those in the widespread repressive treatment reported lower levels of distance from the out-group in comparison to those in both the control as well as the targeted repressive treatment condition. Results were suggestive of the same pattern for those assigned to the religious group.

Figure 16: Polarization by Dependent Variable (Economic Group Assignment)
Figure 17: Polarization by Dependent Variable (Religion and Politics Group Assignment)
Non-Standardized Distance from Out-Group by Question and Group Assignment

Figure 18: Non-Standardized Distance from Out-Group by Question (Religion and Politics Group Assignment)
Alternative Mechanisms

Out-Group Variables
In-Group Variables

![Graph 1: In-Group Trust by Treatment Group](image)

![Graph 2: Empathy for In-Group by Treatment Group](image)
**Additional Regression Analysis**

Below are regressions in which in-group identification is added to models regressing the distance from out-group on treatment assignment. The size of the treatment effect decreases for the widespread treatments, and the significance of the treatment effect disappears for the targeted treatment, when in-group identification is added to the basic model.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>(1)</th>
<th>(2)</th>
<th>(3)</th>
<th>(4)</th>
<th>(5)</th>
<th>(6)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Distance from Out-Group</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Widespread Treatment</td>
<td>−0.154***</td>
<td>−0.150***</td>
<td>−0.168***</td>
<td>−0.168***</td>
<td>−0.138***</td>
<td>−0.131***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Targeted Treatment</td>
<td>0.063**</td>
<td>0.047*</td>
<td>0.077**</td>
<td>0.068**</td>
<td>0.043</td>
<td>0.023</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In-Group Identification</td>
<td>0.001**</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td>0.002**</td>
<td>0.001</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Covariates</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Constant</td>
<td>0.746***</td>
<td>0.660***</td>
<td>0.650***</td>
<td>0.582***</td>
<td>0.662***</td>
<td>0.522***</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(0.089)</td>
<td>(0.098)</td>
<td>(0.090)</td>
<td>(0.104)</td>
<td>(0.092)</td>
<td>(0.114)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Observations</td>
<td>417</td>
<td>407</td>
<td>210</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>214</td>
<td>210</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>R²</td>
<td>0.191</td>
<td>0.217</td>
<td>0.283</td>
<td>0.311</td>
<td>0.127</td>
<td>0.155</td>
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<tr>
<td>Adjusted R²</td>
<td>0.163</td>
<td>0.187</td>
<td>0.247</td>
<td>0.272</td>
<td>0.084</td>
<td>0.108</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Note:* *p<0.1; **p<0.05; ***p<0.01
Results of Additional Mediation Analyses

Figure 19: Effect of Treatments Mediated Through In-Group Identification (Economic Group Assignment)
Figure 20: Effect of Treatments Mediated Through In-Group Identification (Religion and Politics Group Assignment)
Bibliography


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