

CONCEPTUALISING COMPARATIVE POLITICS

# TRUST AND TERROR

**Social Capital and the Use of Terrorism  
as a Tool of Resistance**

**Ammar Shamaileh**



This book provides a very unorthodox treatment of the Arab Spring by looking into the association between interpersonal trust and terrorism. Shamaileh develops a novel theory that explains how the state of social capital at the individual level might have shaped the differential outcomes of the Arab Spring in Egypt, Libya, Syria, and beyond. The theoretical and empirical analysis presented in this timely book is a fine example of social scientific inquiry at its best. The author brings a wealth of evidence ranging from in-depth analysis of cases to large-N quantitative analysis to test the rich theoretical propositions. *Trust and Terror* will be a valuable resource for students of comparative politics and Middle Eastern studies as well as to policymakers.

Sabri Ciftci, *Michael W. Suleiman Chair in Arab and Arab-American Studies, Kansas State University*

To illustrate the critical interaction between general levels of interpersonal trust and the options to which individuals resort when addressing grievances, Shamaileh shows the depth of his analytical range, adeptly bringing together formal modeling, case studies, interviews, statistical analysis, and even Foucauldian interpretative analysis of satirical comic caricatures of Assad and popular comedy skits. Throughout the work, the author's logic drives home the mechanisms behind the inevitable outcome of the Syrian protests and the relationship between the cultivated lack of trust in Syrian society and the recourse to terrorism as the means to counter the state.

Michael Wuthrich, *Academic Director of Global & International Studies Programs, University of Kansas*

Shamaileh offers a novel and persuasive argument about the effects of trust and interpersonal ties on individuals' choices to pursue non-violent versus violent means of resistance. The book makes a major contribution to growing research on how the characteristics of societies and relations between militants and communities affect the trajectory of violent movements. It provides a fascinating lens through which to analyze variation in the protest movements that emerged in the Arab Spring – and beyond.

Risa A. Brooks, *Allis Chalmers Associate Professor, Marquette University*

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# Trust and Terror

Why do some individuals choose to protest political grievances via non-violent means, while others take up arms? What role does whom we trust play in how we collectively act?

This book explores these questions by delving into the relationship between interpersonal trust and the nature of the political movements that individuals choose to join. Utilizing the examples of the Arab Spring uprisings in Egypt, Libya, and Syria, a novel theoretical model that links the literature on social capital and interpersonal trust to violent collective action is developed and extended. Beyond simply bringing together two lines of literature, this theoretical model can serve as a prism through which the decision to join terrorist organizations or violent movements may be analyzed. The implications of the theory are then examined more closely through an in-depth look at the behavior of members of political movements at the outset of the Arab Spring, as well as statistical tests of the relationship between interpersonal trust and terrorism in the Middle East and globally.

*Trust and Terror* will be of interest to scholars of Comparative Politics and International Relations.

**Ammar Shamaileh** is an assistant professor in the Department of Political Science at the University of Louisville, USA. His current research agenda focuses primarily on the relationship between informal institutions or cultural phenomena and political behavior and violence in the Middle East.

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### **Trust and Terror**

Social Capital and the Use of Terrorism as a Tool of Resistance

*Ammar Shamaileh*

# **Trust and Terror**

## **Social Capital and the Use of Terrorism as a Tool of Resistance**

**Ammar Shamaileh**

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**To Jens Grosser**



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# Preface

Writing this book brought me no joy and no comfort. It is the offspring of my experiences in Syria, a theoretical model that predicted non-violent protests could not be sustained in Damascus, and an empirical reality that corroborated my hypothesis. While I was not raised in Damascus, I spent most of my childhood and adolescent summers there doing what normal children do, and experiencing what normal Syrians experience. I visited pools, drank apple soda, ate shawarma, laughed with friends and family, and engaged in mischief when the opportunity availed itself. I also was slapped by police, hid from security officials, discussed politics in secret with friends, believed that anybody could be a secret agent in Syria (even my own family members), and learned to hate and fear Hafez Al Assad like most of those who surrounded me. While I was always shielded by my United States passport from the most heinous of acts the regime was known for, and comforted by the fact that I could always go home if I experienced too much discomfort, these experiences provided me with fleeting glimpses of what growing up in Syria in the 1990s was like. These glimpses were the difference between feeling sympathy for those who sought regime change and feeling empathy.

I wanted to see hundreds of thousands of Damascenes take to the streets and call for Bashar Al Assad to step down. I wanted to witness a transition to democracy take place in Syria; a democracy created by Syrians on their own terms and aimed at restoring the vibrant political atmosphere that, if the historians are to be believed, once inhabited Damascus. Of course, I wanted all of this to occur without the chaos and assassinations that had accompanied that vibrant political atmosphere in Damascus prior to Hafez Al Assad's reign. I wanted all of this well before the Arab Spring. The problem was that I long had a sneaking suspicion that it could not occur in Syria given the political and social climate in a post-Hama Massacre, Assad-ruled Syria. This book is the development of that sneaking suspicion into something slightly more tangible and accessible to those existing outside of my mind.

When Tunisians overthrew Ben Ali, I began to hope for change, but that sneaking suspicion did not go away. When Egyptians gathered in Tahrir

Square, I had yet more hope, but I still believed Syria was different. When protests broke out in Daraa, I began to believe regime change might be possible, but I remembered that Daraa was different. When protests subsequently gathered steam in Homs and Hama, my pessimism began to wane, but I knew Damascus was different. Unfortunately, Damascus did turn out to be different, and this book serves as no consolation for the implications associated with that fact.



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# 1 Introduction

One young man from a small rural town in Tunisia, angered by the actions of a low-level government official, and frustrated by the perceived grievances he faced from a political system stacked against him, hastily decided that he had had enough. After attempting to go through institutional channels to remedy his situation, he opted to seek redress through other means. The status quo was no longer acceptable to him, and he was willing, at least at that moment, to take extraordinary measures in order to be heard. He could have continued to petition the government through more formal means. He could have held a sign in front of a government building, or tried to organize a protest. More importantly, he could have reacted violently and attacked the officials or government office that offended him. Instead, Mohammed Bouazizi chose to stand in front of the government building that housed the offending officials, douse himself in gasoline, and light himself on fire.

While it is unlikely that he understood the precise implications of his actions, his actions were the product of a choice, a choice that is often, but not always, neglected by the scholarly literature on violent and non-violent resistance. The actions that this one man took led to an explosion of protest activity in Tunisia, and brought about the sudden fall of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. Moreover, his actions, as well as the success of the protest movement in Tunisia, led to increased political activity, protest, and calls for reform throughout the Arab world. Just like Mohammed Bouazizi, those who sought change after his self-immolation faced choices with regard to how they would seek change. Would they seek redress through non-violent protest or more costly and dangerous means?

In particular, this project seeks to examine the choice of terrorism over other, less costly, options for political resistance. Given the level of political instability that characterized many of the Arab states that experienced the political rumblings of the Arab Spring, why did movements so often rely on peaceful means? Why did Tunisians not turn to violence in the aftermath of Mohammed Bouazizi's self-immolation? Why were the Egyptian protesters of 2011 able to maintain a largely peaceful and cohesive demeanor? Given the success of the peaceful Egyptian protests, why

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was the means of protest organized in Libya largely violent? More importantly, why did some in Syria turn to terrorism in their attempt to remove the Assad regime from power?

It is my contention that the choice of mechanism or tool of political resistance that an individual or group of individuals ultimately turn to in order to achieve their goals is driven to a large extent by the variables that influence the organization of social order. Moreover, among these variables, interpersonal trust, and, more broadly, social capital, play a significant role in shaping how resistance ends up being organized, and what type of tools are used for resistance. In particular, this exploration is driven by a desire to understand why individuals and groups at times utilize terrorism rather than other modes of political resistance, especially when there is a ground-swell of support for resistance among many within society.

The idea that individuals face a choice with regard to collective action is by no means a new one; however, much of the literature has focused on when individuals will collectively act rather than how they will collectively act. Mancur Olson's path-breaking book *The Logic of Collective Action* set into motion a long line of literature focusing on the application and extension of the collective action problem and the solutions that Olson offers (Olson 1965). Along with other lines of literature, the scholarly work on violent political conflict picked up on the importance of the collective action problem, and the critical role the collective action problem plays in understanding how groups mobilize rebellions (Popkin 1988; Lichbach 1994; Lichbach 1998; Mason 2004). Perhaps most relevant among these works, Mark Lichbach's *The Rebel's Dilemma*, offers a thorough analysis of the potential solutions to the modified collective action problem facing rebels presented in his book, finding that there are a significant number of rational solutions to the problem, but many obstacles to producing fair outcomes (Lichbach 1998). While Lichbach's seminal work provides a robust analysis of the collective action problem within different contexts, it served as a crucial starting point for many potential research agendas rather than the end of the study of the rebel's dilemma (Lichbach 1998).<sup>1</sup> Although *The Rebel's Dilemma* explicitly discusses how various solutions to the rebel's dilemma influence the tactics that may be used, much of the literature on political violence and terrorism has not theoretically explored the motivations for participating in such collective endeavors as a choice to be weighed against other options.<sup>2</sup>

Some scholars, however, have framed the issue of when individuals turn to terrorism rather than other means of political dissent as a choice. A long line of literature on participation in, and support for, terrorism has established a link between the availability of political channels for opposition and decreased terrorist activity (Crenshaw 2000; Krueger and Maleckova 2003; Krueger and Laitin 2008). Yet, even in the most authoritarian contexts, there remain a number of tools of resistance

available to those wishing to remove a regime or alter the dominant paradigm (Lichbach 1998). Moreover, civil resistance is, in and of itself, a choice to actively dissent through means other than those institutionalized by the state, whether violent or non-violent (Schock 2004). Both non-violent protest and violent protest have been used as means to institute large-scale paradigm shifts, and not just to influence shifts in policy. Given the grave costs generally associated with forms of violent protest like terrorism, whether formal political avenues for change exist or not, why would individuals choose to support the use of terrorism over non-violent protest or other means of resistance?

This book seeks to extend the literature on the relationship between political opportunities and participation in forms of violent political protest, such as terrorism. While credible institutional channels may provide alternative pathways for change, the absence of these formal institutional channels does not necessarily mean the absence of choice (see Bakker, Hill and Moore 2016). An individual or group that carries out terrorist attacks is not doing so in light of the absence of any other options outside of those explicitly provided by the state. It is also not the case that political violence is always, nor usually, a more efficient way to bring about change (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011). Thus, the option to protest non-violently, or through some other form of violence, is available to individuals and groups who choose terrorism.

Just as the demand for resistance through terrorism may dampen when formal political channels are present, the viability of non-violent resistance makes terrorism comparatively unappealing. However, in order for a non-violent protest movement to be viable, it must be able to attract a significant amount of support from throughout society. This not only requires some unity of purpose and preferences among a wide range of individuals, but a belief that individuals who would support change will participate in bringing it about (Olson 1965; Lichbach 1998). This further requires those who support resistance to, en masse, contribute to the costs of resistance and share in the risk related to it. Terrorism, on the other hand, can be executed by a relatively small group to produce the desired results. When an individual desires a paradigm shift, but does not believe that others are willing to join a non-violent movement or other movements that require mass participation, participating in terrorism may appear relatively appealing.

It is through interpersonal trust's relationship to the perceived viability of various forms of resistance that it conditions the choice of broad strategy adopted by individuals and groups within society. When individuals generally trust that others are willing to bear the costs of protest, they are more willing to join, form, or participate in movements that require vast participation. When individuals do not trust others, and they, themselves, are willing to take on the cost of protest, they will seek to effect change through those whom they do trust, a subset of the population that cannot bring about change through traditional means of non-violent protest. Just as interpersonal trust and, more broadly, social capital condition

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economic behavior, institutional performance, and social interactions, they shape the type of resistance that individuals will join and that characterize a society (Arrow 1972; Ciftci 2010; Knack and Keefer 1997; Putnam 1993; Rothstein 2000; Coleman 1988; Benson and Rochon 2004).

The connection between interpersonal trust and a belief in others' willingness to bear the costs of protest is tied together through a conceptualization of trust that borrows from the behavioral economics literature on reciprocity. The scholarly literature on reciprocity, trust, and other-regarding behavior is well-developed, thorough, and provides significant theoretical insights into the other-regarding motivations of individuals that are supported by empirical evidence gathered mainly in laboratory settings (Fehr and Schmidt 1999; Fehr and Gächter 2000; Fehr et al. 2003; Andreoni and Miller 1993; Panchanathan and Boyd 2004, Nowak and Sigmund 2005). Trust is conceptualized as the belief that others are concerned with fairness and are not simply self-interested (Fehr and Schmidt 1999; Fehr and Gächter 2000). It is this concern with fairness that drives individuals to contribute to the cost of collective action. Where an individual believes that others in society are not likely to be other-regarding or willing to help her address her grievances, she will turn to those whom she knows and trusts to help her address these grievances.

Perhaps one of the most persistent criticisms of theoretical models that seek to address the motivations for joining violent dissident movements through the prism of the traditional collective action framework is the reliance of such work on the assumption of rationality at the level of the individual or strategic models (Tilly 1978; Abrahms 2008). While other scholars have addressed these criticisms head-on, and have provided ample theoretical and empirical support for the assumption that dissidents and terrorists behave rationally, the heart of the criticism of rational models of terrorism is that they generally fail to account for the social dimensions of dissident and terrorist behavior (Abrahms 2008; see Moore 1995; see Kalyvas 2006). For Charles Tilly, rationality is a reasonable assumption at the group level, but not at the individual level (Tilly 1978; Lichbach 1998). Max Abrahms, on the other hand, summarized his criticism of the strategic, or rational, model of terrorism as follows:

None of the common tendencies of terrorist organizations advances their official political agendas, but all of them help to ensure the survival of the social unit. Together, they reveal the operating decision rules of terrorist members. Whereas the strategic model locates the motives of terrorists in the official goals of the terrorist organization, the trade-offs it makes provides direct insight into its members' incentive structure. Just as economists measure utility functions through revealed preferences, terrorism scholars need not make comparisons among utilities.

(Abrahms 2008: 102)

Both Tilly and Abrahms reject the assumption of individual strategic behavior, but with very different underlying arguments. For Tilly, rationality operates at the group-level, while Abrahms believes that terrorist groups in particular have motivations beyond their stated aims that relate to social cohesion. Tilly essentially sidesteps individual rationality, perhaps due to a widely held belief that a benefits and costs analysis cannot explain individual participation in mass movements and a preference for psychological or collective behavioral explanations (Tilly 1978; Olson 1965; Gamson 1990; Gurr 1970). Abrahms takes a drastically different approach, and attempts to attack rational models of participation in terrorism head-on (Abrahms 2008). While Chenoweth, Miller, and McClellan (2009) make a particularly strong counter-argument to Abrahms that is rooted in the empirical literature, perhaps the most relevant criticism of his argument lies in how he relates rationality to the stated aims of the group. Rationality merely requires that individuals have transitive and complete preferences, and not a manifesto that clearly outlines the preferences of groups or individuals, nor that the preferences of a group or individual actually mirror their stated preferences. Although Abrahms acknowledges rationality in some sense, he rejects arguments that root that rationality in a preference for accomplishing strategic aims beyond group cohesion. A preference for social cohesion, or group longevity in addition to policy preferences, may indeed exist within a strategic rational choice framework. Moreover, a rational model that ignores strategic considerations and relies fundamentally on a preference for social cohesion cannot explain why resources and lives are expended on terrorism rather than other bond-forming activities. If the end goal of the members of terrorist organizations is social solidarity, what is preventing them from establishing that solidarity without taking on extreme costs? Thus, Abrahms' criticism of rationality appears to primarily relate to rationality as it has been conceived by some scholars utilizing the strategic model, and not the underlying assumption of rationality or strategic behavior. It should be noted that recent work by Abrahms indicates that he has revised his opinion on the usefulness of strategic explanations for the behavior of terrorist organizations (Abrahms and Conrad 2016).

Nevertheless, while these criticisms of rational choice models as applied to potential terrorists and dissidents are not particularly damning, they do highlight the need for more theoretical modeling that integrates the social, psychological, and behavioral motivations of those who participate in rebellion, whether through mass movements or smaller groups. By incorporating both the interpersonal trust dynamics within a society, as well as other-regarding preferences, the theoretical model presented in this book seeks to address these valid concerns. All forms of collective action, whether conducted in a small group or a large group, are inherently social endeavors and not all of an individual's preferences relate to narrow self-interest or maximizing a direct payoff. Yet, while social, psychological,

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and behavioral forces should factor into our analysis of the motivations for participating in collective action movements and terrorist groups, none of this prevents us from viewing the problem through a strategic or rational lens.

The following chapter, Chapter 2, will present a broad overview of the uprisings that occurred in Egypt, Libya, and Syria in the aftermath of Tunisia's 2011 revolution, and how dissent in each state was organized. The Arab Spring offers us a unique opportunity to examine how different uprisings inspired by the same event can take divergent turns. While some scholars have taken a top-down approach to study how different states experienced the Arab Spring, this examination seeks to look at how collective action was organized in each of these three states at the outset of the uprisings (Brownlee et al. 2014). The primary implication that can be drawn from this analysis is that citizens organized around those who they had grown accustomed to cooperating with prior to the revolution. In Egypt, where cross-community civil society flourished, citizens organized mass demonstrations that eventually led to the overthrow of the Mubarak regime. Qaddafi's Libya, on the other hand, managed to quash civil society, but reinforced tribal and regional identities through both the institutionalization of these identities and through the manner in which institutional power was allocated. When the Libyans organized after the Tunisian Revolution, they quickly formed militias that mirrored the tribal and regional divisions that Qaddafi had reinforced, and loosely coalesced under a national banner of resistance with the aid of foreign intervention. Finally, in Syria, where the Assad regime had systematically destroyed civil society and actively promoted mistrust among citizens, the country experienced a more fractured uprising. This, in turn, led to smaller, less capable groups organizing around less efficient strategies, including terrorism.

The intuitions gleaned from the analysis in Chapter 2 are discussed more thoroughly, and subsequently formalized, in Chapter 3. The chapter begins by defining and conceptualizing interpersonal trust and social capital, and relating them to both reciprocity and cooperative behavior. The chapter then subsequently analyzes the existent literature, and identifies how the literature on social capital, interpersonal trust, and reciprocity may provide insights into why individuals may join terrorist organizations. The connection between interpersonal trust, other-regarding preferences, and the choice of terrorism over other means of resistance is presented formally, and extended by relaxing a number of different assumptions. This theoretic examination produces a number of implications that are potentially testable, chief among which is that when all other variables are held constant, and terrorism is a viable option, individuals who seek retribution for the grievances they have suffered will turn to terrorism when they possess relatively low levels of generalized trust.

Chapter 4 analyzes three cases of Salafist political mobilization in Egypt, Libya, and Syria during the Arab Spring, and demonstrates how

the social order influenced the manner in which they mobilized and the tools of resistance that they used. Salafist movements, while ranging from jihadist groups characterized by the use of terrorism to quietist groups that disavow the fomenting of any political unrest, have largely been discussed as ideologically static and rigid by nature. The Arab Spring, however, revealed the extent to which Salafist movements were willing to adjust to changing conditions in ways that contradicted their previously stated religious positions. Such shifts illustrate both their willingness to behave strategically at the expense of their stated religious preferences and how the connections that characterize society influence the behavior of political elites and those who follow them.

Throughout the book, Syria is discussed as an exceptional case in terms of the interpersonal trust and social dynamics within the state, and Chapter 5 provides an interpretive analysis that explores interpersonal trust, as well as how a paucity of trust in Syria produced an inefficient and ineffective non-violent movement in Damascus. It begins with an analysis of the state's response to dissident portrayals of the regime, and I find that it is portrayals of the regime's relative coercive capacity as weak, rather than depictions of grievances perpetuated by the regime, that Assad and his allies have attempted to stifle. The ties between the regime's relative coercive capacity and interpersonal trust are then presented through the representative analysis of an episode of a Syrian sitcom that presents a relatively typical depiction of both the trustworthiness of others, and how this lack of trustworthiness enhances the regime's coercive capacity. Relying on data drawn from my own field notes from Syria immediately prior to the Arab spring, unstructured interviews, conversations, and interactions with Syrian protesters during the early stages of the revolution, and semi-structured interviews conducted in 2016, I present an analysis of how a lack of generalized trust in Damascus decreased the effectiveness of even active protesters.

Implications drawn from my theory are subsequently tested on individual-level data drawn from the first wave of the Arab Barometer in Chapter 6. I find significant evidence to support the contention that there is a negative correlation between generalized trust and support for terrorism. Moreover, I also find significant evidence to support the hypothesis that there is a positive correlation between particularized trust and support for terrorism in the Middle East and North Africa. The predicted probabilities analysis that follows presents a significantly large gap in predicted support for terrorism between generalized trusters and particularized trusters.

Chapter 7 then tests the relationship between generalized trust and the amount of domestic terrorism produced within a state at the country level. This analysis finds a strong and significant correlation between generalized trust and the amount of domestic terrorism produced within a state. Given the potential for endogeneity in this analysis, a two-stage model is utilized to produce the results of the central analysis of this chapter. In addition,



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this analysis provides an interesting empirical picture regarding the relationship between economic and government performance and the amount of domestic terrorism a state experiences.

The final chapter of the book, Chapter 8, concludes by returning to the motivational examples presented in Chapter 2, and relating these examples to the theoretical and empirical results discussed in the chapters that follow while simultaneously summarizing my results. This chapter then examines the policy implications of this study with regard to preventing, predicting, and combating domestic or localized terrorism (see Sánchez-Cuenca and De la Calle 2009). The book concludes with a brief discussion of potential avenues of research that may flow from this project, and focuses on the potential benefits of studying how social networks may influence the tools of resistance used within a society.

The relationship between interpersonal trust, collective action, retribution, and terrorism is undoubtedly a complex one. The goals of this particular book are not to provide the final word on this issue, but, rather, to start a conversation regarding the relationship between these variables and provide a framework for future analysis. Nevertheless, the findings of this book should lay an empirical and theoretical foundation that provides convincing evidence of the existence of a relationship between generalized interpersonal trust, particularized interpersonal trust, and support for terrorism in the Middle East and beyond.

### Notes

- 1 It should be noted that, although this book explores a more specific phenomenon and is concerned with other-regarding behavior, Mark Lichbach's exemplary framing of the rebel's dilemma significantly influenced the way the decision to participate in terrorism was framed in this book.
- 2 As Erica Chenoweth and Maria Stephan note in their book *Why Civil Resistance Works*, this may be due, in part, to the, perhaps dubious, assumption made by some scholars that violent political resistance is more effective or can achieve results more quickly than non-violent resistance (Chenoweth and Stephan 2011).

## 2 Trust, Terror, and The Arab Spring

### Egypt, Libya, and Syria

#### 2.1 Introduction

On December 17, 2010, Mohammed Bouazizi, a young man from a rural town in Tunisia, frustrated after being publicly humiliated by a police officer and ignored by a public official, doused himself in gasoline in the middle of an intersection outside of a government building, and lit himself on fire. His frustration and humiliation mirrored the sentiments of many in the Middle East and North Africa, and his self-immolation was received as a call for political action throughout the Arab world. As protests pushed President Zine Ben Ali out of office in Tunisia, they swelled in other Arab states, threatening once seemingly stable dictatorships. Soon after President Ben Ali's ouster, Hosni Mubarak's 30-year reign in Egypt would come to an end as protesters cheered in Tahrir Square, and people around the world discussed the prospects of democracy in a region that months prior appeared to be content with authoritarian rule.

While popular uprisings brought about the sudden fall of dictatorial regimes in Tunisia and Egypt, political opposition took on a more violent nature in Libya and Syria. Libyan protest movements evolved into militias that soon began cooperating under the direction of the National Liberation Army and the authority of the National Transitional Council. This united, yet decentralized, front presented by the Libyan rebels soon provided an opportunity for international intervention, and, in turn, led to the death of President Muammar Al-Qaddafi and the downfall of his regime. The Syrian opposition also turned to violence, yet has been unable to unite the various militias in a manner that would allow for cooperation and coordination within the movement (Weiss 2012). As the Libyans relied to a greater extent on more conventional violent operations against combatants, the fractured Syrian insurgency has utilized less effective modes of violent opposition and turned to terrorism at times. Why did Mohammed Bouazizi's self-immolation spark non-violent protests in some countries and violent uprisings in others? Moreover, why did the Syrian uprising take on a more sinister nature than the uprising in Libya?

## **2.2 The Uprisings in Egypt, Libya, and Syria**

Although Mohammed Bouazizi's self-immolation and the subsequent removal from office of Tunisia's President Ben Ali sparked political uprisings, or at least increased calls for regime change, throughout the Middle East, the nature of the political uprisings or turmoil that occurred varied greatly by state. The analysis in this chapter will focus on the uprisings in Egypt, Libya, and Syria. In Egypt, large-scale political protests in the immediate aftermath of Tunisia's revolution led to the swift removal of Hosni Mubarak from office, ending his 30-year reign over the country. Muammar Al-Qaddafi's end in Libya came about more slowly and violently, as militias loosely organized under the National Transitional Council, with the support of foreign governments and transnational actors, took over Libya and ended Qaddafi's life. In Syria, as of the date of this book's submission, over five years since the uprising began, the Syrian Civil War still rages, and has been characterized by a fractured opposition, elements of which have often resorted to acts of terrorism in their fight to end President Bashar Al Assad's authoritarian regime.

It is my contention that one of the fundamental reasons for the divergent reactions observed in these three states in response to the 2011 Tunisian Revolution are the differing levels of generalized interpersonal trust, or social capital, observed in each state. Each of the three states were controlled by long-standing dictatorial regimes, are culturally predominantly Arab, violently repressed opposition movements, and witnessed wide-scale corruption throughout the tenures of their respective leaders. One of the essential differences between these three states is in the prevalence of private civic organizations within them, and the actions taken by the dictatorial regimes that influenced both levels of generalized interpersonal trust within society as well as whom individuals trusted. These differences influenced how dissident citizens organized to bring about political change.

### ***2.2.1 Egypt: Civil Societies and Political Change***

While the Egyptian government throughout Hosni Mubarak's tenure was characterized by militaristic dictatorial rule, corruption, and repressive politics, it allowed for a greater degree of freedom of organization than many of its Arab neighbors (Al-Sayyid 1993, Norton 1993). Perhaps due to the sheer size of the nation and its population, and the government's inability to control or replace the services and assistance provided by non-governmental organizations, charities, and other groups that arose, civil associations gained a prominent place in Egyptian society prior to the Arab Spring to an extent greater than many other Arab states. According to estimates, between roughly 16,000 and 19,000 non-governmental organizations existed in Egypt around the turn of the century (Cook 2011).

Although the Egyptian government attempted to control and restrict the ability of these organizations to operate effectively or efficiently, non-governmental organizations and civil societies continued to play a prominent role in Egypt (Official Gazette 2002).

Perhaps the most notable and well-known Egyptian civil associations is the Muslim Brotherhood, a relatively moderate Islamic organization, and its affiliates. Having adopted a non-violent strategy to achieving their political and policy-related goals, in the early 1970s and beyond it had set out to provide services and resources to places and people whom the government could not or would not reach, and achieved substantial amounts of success doing so (Leiken and Brooke 2007; Berman 2003). The Muslim Brotherhood's university organizations and members soon played a prominent role on campuses throughout Egypt, providing transportation and clothing to students in need, and often winning student association elections (Berman 2003). Later on, Muslim Brotherhood members would begin entering and winning elections in professional associations across various disciplines, and use those organizations to increase their influence over Egyptian society. The Muslim Brotherhood developed a wide network of grassroots organizations that encouraged engagement among citizens throughout Egypt, bringing together individuals from different socio-economic strata and encouraging individuals to work together toward common goals (Berman 2003).

While conservative Islamic groups, both those associated with the Muslim Brotherhood and Salafist clerics, dominated the realm of civil society in Egypt prior to the 2011 Egyptian Revolution, they were not the only members of civil society operating in Egypt, nor the groups that played the most significant role in the earliest stages of the revolution. One of the most prominent non-Islamic organizations that arose prior to the revolution was the April 6 Youth Movement, an organization whose active and passive Facebook membership numbered approximately 70,000 in 2009 (Shapiro 2009). While the April 6 Youth Movement did not afford the social services that its Islamist counterparts provided, it created a mechanism to organize and gather individuals to support causes that were often not directly related to their own immediate grievances. In fact, the organization's leaders and members, who were predominantly well educated and hailed from middle-class backgrounds, were initially organized to support a labor strike in a community that was as distant to most of them socially and economically as it was physically. They, along with other organizations, both Islamist and non-Islamist, allowed individuals to gather to support causes both directly related to their wants and needs, and those of other communities in Egypt.

At the time of Mohammed Bouazizi's self-immolation and the beginning of the subsequent Tunisian uprising, Egypt's GDP per capita (in current United States dollars) was \$2,804, and its economic growth had stagnated due to the global economic downturn (World Bank 2013).

Among the three states being examined in this section, Egypt possessed the lowest literacy rate at 72 percent in 2010 (World Bank 2013). Corruption, or at least perceptions of government corruption in 2010 as measured in the Corruption Perceptions Index (CPI) produced by Transparency International, was a pervasive problem, as it was in much of the Arab world (Transparency International 2010). More importantly, brutality by government agents and the use of torture by police was commonplace, and had been increasing in recent years (Abdel-Aziz 2007). The economic problems, rampant corruption, and human rights abuses victimizing Egypt were characteristic traits of most of the non-Gulf Cooperation Council Arab states at the end of 2010 and beginning of 2011.

The 2011 Egyptian Revolution began in earnest on January 25, 2011, Egypt's official National Police Day, a holiday founded by Mubarak in 2009 to commemorate the service of police officers. For those who opposed the military dictatorship of Mubarak, National Police Day was the optimal time to protest the abuses of the Ministry of Interior and the police for their human rights violations and use of torture (*Al-Masry Al-Youm* 2011). Leftist and Islamist groups organized and provided ancillary support to begin and sustain protests in Tahrir Square and around Egypt. The government responded to these protests repressively and forcefully, as approximately 846 individuals were killed during a revolution that lasted under three weeks (*Haaretz* 2011). Yet the citizens of Egypt continued to protest, reaching approximately 2 million protesters in Tahrir Square alone at one point in time. Egypt's police force and intelligence officers loyal to the Mubarak regime who had been charged with handling the protests were eventually replaced with the military, which showed greater restraint as the protests continued (Hauslohner 2011). During the evening of February 11, 2011, less than three weeks after the revolution began, Hosni Mubarak resigned, and effectively abdicated control of Egypt to the Supreme Council of the Egyptian Armed Forces. On February 13, 2011, the Egyptian Parliament was dissolved by the Supreme Council, which announced that it would maintain power until elections could be held.

### **2.2.2 Libya: Tribes Become Militias**

Libya lacked the sophisticated and widespread civil societies and grass-roots movements present in Egypt prior to the Arab Spring (Anderson 2011). Under the rule of Muammar Al-Qaddafi, Libya's citizens, lacking dependable government institutions or civil associations to turn to for their needs, had relied on their tribes for support, which produced intra-tribal cooperation at the expense of the development of entities within the state to facilitate cooperation among different segments of society (Anderson 2011). Qaddafi, rather than attempting to establish centralized authority under his control in Libya and/or take actions aimed at unifying the nation and developing a national identity, reinforced tribal structures in

order to decrease cooperation and collusion among the different political and social cleavages within Libya (Hweio 2012). Moreover, Qaddafi utilized the institutions of the state to afford greater power to his own tribe and key tribes in Libya to ensure that they were well positioned in a fractured Libya, and these actions served to further reinforce tribalism within the country (Hweio 2012). The lack of a strong central authority or national identity, deficiencies in the quantity, quality, and organization of both Islamic and secular civil associations, and the deeply entrenched tribal cleavages contributed to the fractionalization of Libya.

The institutionalization of tribalism in Libya did not begin with Qaddafi, yet Qaddafi's understanding of how tribal cleavages could be exploited was one of the keys to his longevity as the leader of Libya. The post-colonial government of King Idris laid the foundation for the fusion of government institutions and informal tribal institutions in the politics of Libya's modern nation-state. Given the instability and institutional underdevelopment inherent to state formation brought about exogenously, a reliance on tribal institutions to maintain order may have been an inevitable outcome (Anderson 1990).<sup>1</sup> By formalizing King Idris' position and a line of succession that flows down to his nearest male heir, Libya's post-colonial constitution entrenched his tribe at the top of the hierarchy of Libya (Anderson 1990; 1951 Libyan Constitution). The banning of political parties led to the organization of political interests along tribal lines, which the King brought under his control through the strategic allocation of government positions based on tribal loyalties, and informally blended a hierarchal system of patronage that relied on tribal nobility (First 1974; Anderson 1990). Moreover, the weakness of Libya's central state led to the significant delegation of authority at the local level to regionally powerful tribes (Anderson 1990).

While Muammar Al-Qaddafi and his cadre of officers took power in a bloodless coup d'état, he framed his coup as a revolution that was meant, in part, to cure the injustices associated with the tribal nepotism of King Idris' regime (El-Katiri 2012; Anderson 1990; Huesken 2012). Among the notable reforms instituted by Qaddafi that were aimed at reducing tribal authority within Libya, the "revolutionary" government redrew administrative lines so that they did not mirror tribal lines, and sacked local government officials who had predominantly been drawn from tribal nobility (Anderson 1990; El Fathaly and Palmer 1980). Qaddafi's initial attempt to break down the existing tribal order by redrawing administrative lines and allocating government positions absent regard for tribal authority, however, did not last long (Hweio 2012; Vandewalle 1991; Anderson 1990). Perhaps due to the lack of a coherent ideology that could unite a faction of supporters, within a decade, Qaddafi had begun to lean on his own family, tribe, and tribal allies to maintain a network of support (Al-Gaddafi 1976; Hweio 2012; Paoletti 2011; Anderson 1990). The allocation of key security and government positions under Qaddafi soon became decided

primarily on the basis of lineage and tribal affiliation (Hweio 2012; Paoletti 2011; Anderson 1990).

The integration of tribalism into Libya's government under Qaddafi went well beyond merely favoring those closest to the leader and his tribe. More relevant to this book's inquiry is the manner in which authority was delegated to tribes and tribal leaders under Qaddafi. The allocation of administrative positions within the regime was not statically determined on the basis of a set hierarchy of tribes, but, rather, fluctuated on the basis of the actions of tribal leaders and their perceived loyalty to Qaddafi (Hweio 2012). Thus, Qaddafi engaged in a form of collective retribution and reward at the tribal level, which reinforced tribal ties. Moreover, through people's congresses, as well as the delegation of authority at the local level, tribal leaders were able to exert a modicum of power, and reestablish their roles as integral players in the provision of services (Anderson 1990; Hweio 2012).

The incorporation of tribal elements into the institutions of the state reinforced tribalism, but it was the weakness of the institutions themselves that led to the pervasive reliance on tribal ties and norms throughout the state (Hweio 2012). Individuals, in essentially all contexts, are not just governed by the formal institutions of the state, but also by informal or cultural institutions that create norms that shape human interactions (North 1990). Where the formal institutions of the state fail to govern adequately, reliance on these informal institutions should be significantly greater. These informal institutions, however, are often more likely to be sustained within smaller groups that are capable of enforcing reciprocal norms (Olson 1965; North 1990; Axelrod 1984).

In Qaddafi's Libya, the institutions of the state could not be relied upon by its citizens (Hweio 2012). In part due to the weakness of the institutions the regime inherited from King Idris, as well as Qaddafi's capricious use of institutions within the state, individuals could not turn to the state and expect them to resolve disputes or develop sustainable remedies to the problems that they faced (Anderson 1990; Hweio 2012). With a long history of cooperation occurring at the tribal level, an informal institutional framework was present for individuals to rely on in the shadow of ineffectual government institutions. Rather than turning to the government for assistance with regard to economic and social dilemmas and dispute resolution, people within Libya increasingly sought the assistance of their tribal orders instead (Hweio 2012). Thus, the Qaddafi regime, perhaps purposefully, fostered an environment that nurtured the deepening of tribal ties and the growth of tribal institutions.

Libya's economy at the time of the Arab Spring, while not particularly robust, was stronger than that of Egypt and Syria due, at least in large part, to the country's oil wealth. In 2009, Libya's GDP per capita (in current United States dollars) was \$10,456, substantially larger than those of Egypt and Syria (World Bank 2013). In addition, Libya's literacy rate

was significantly higher than both that of Egypt and that of Syria (World Bank 2013). The Libyan government, however, according to its CPI, was perceived to be more corrupt than those of both Syria and Egypt (Transparency International 2013). Under the rule of Qaddafi, much of the criticism within Libya of government corruption was related to tribal nepotism. Moreover, the Qaddafi regime was notoriously brutal and repressive, much like the Assad regime in Syria.

Small protests and acts of civil disobedience took place in Eastern Libya, far from the capital, on the heels of the Tunisian Revolution in January 2011. These small protests turned into larger protests in February, as Eastern Libya quickly slipped out of the regime's control. Protests soon arose around Libya, but these protests lacked the cohesion and organization of Egypt's protests and failed to reach a critical mass in Tripoli in the early stages of the uprising. Soon, a National Transition Council would be formed to organize and manage the opposition, yet the National Transition Council largely allowed the various militias that were organized on the basis of tribal and regional affiliations to operate independently (Lacher 2011). International support for the uprising and the National Transition Council provided the resources and assistance needed for the disparate militias to overtake forces loyal to Qaddafi, and by May 2011 the opposition forces had begun to overpower Qaddafi's loyalists. In August 2011, Tripoli fell to the opposition forces, effectively removing Qaddafi's regime from power; and in October 2011, Qaddafi's hometown of Sirte was taken over and Libya's longstanding dictator was violently killed.

### ***2.2.3 Syria: Can You Trust Your Brother?***

While Egypt was awash with civil associations, both Islamic and non-Islamic, and Libyans turned to their tribes for support, the Assad regime in Syria had effectively destroyed and prevented the formation of non-governmental entities and structures that would allow for Syrian citizens to organize outside of the careful watch of the Ba'ath party and Assad loyalists. Unlike Mubarak and Qaddafi, Syria's ruling Assad family belongs to a religious minority, the Alawites, who were historically marginalized in the region prior to the rise of the Ba'ath party in Syria. The rise of Assad's Alawite dynasty came on the heels of successive coupes in a politically tumultuous Syria where Alawites had slowly gained strength from within the country's military institutions (Faksh 1984). After an uprising led by the Muslim Brotherhood challenged the authority of the late President Hafez Al Assad in the early 1980s, the Syrian regime responded with brutal force, which included a massacre in Hama in 1982 that lasted 27 days and caused at least 10,000 fatalities (Fisk 2007). After the Muslim Brotherhood's uprising, the Assad regime under Hafez Al Assad cracked down not just on political dissent, but on civil associations



that were unaffiliated with the regime, and on political discourse that did not conform to the cult of personality and narrow confines of permissible discourse in Syria (Wedeen 1998, 1999).

Hafez Al Assad's reign from 1982 until his death was characterized by a cult of personality that transcended yet lived parallel to reality, and touched upon every aspect of Syrian life (Wedeen 1999). Syrians were forced not only to refrain from speech that challenged the authority of the regime, but to actively participate in fortifying the regime's narrative through abiding by the restrictive realm of permissible language and communicating in the manner approved by the regime. Even dissidents, who attempted to undermine the authority of the regime through sarcasm and artistically rendered criticisms of social and political phenomena, reinforced the regime's status by failing to directly offer their criticisms, which signaled their obedience to others and fostered an atmosphere of mistrust (Wedeen 1999). The regime further spread rumors of the extent to which it was observing the behavior and discourse of its citizens, and more importantly, who was watching them. Syrians were told that they could not trust their brothers or family members, since they may secretly be government agents ready and willing to report their opinions to the regime (Wedeen 1999). While the regime under Hafez Al Assad did allow for a modicum of economic liberalization to occur during the 1990s, such economic liberalization did not spur any significant growth in the quantity or ability of civil associations (Hinnebusch 1993). Moreover, the military was organized in a manner such that Alawites of lower rank acted as both spies and de facto leaders of brigades that were ostensibly under the command of non-Alawites (Wedeen 1999). The Assad regime strictly enforced and monitored communication between military units such that any communication would flow up to trusted regime insiders prior to flowing back down to the relevant unit, and placed units that were directly commanded by Alawites in more strategically important locations (Wedeen 1999, Faksh 1984).

With Hafez Al Assad's death came hope that his son, Bashar Al Assad, given his youth and exposure to the West, would embark on a course of political liberalization and modernization. Any hopes for drastic change were dashed when what has been referred to as the Damascus Spring came to a screeching halt as forums and associations dedicated to social and political discourse and advocacy were shut down, organizers of the forums and associations were imprisoned, and Syria's nascent free press was forced to cease operations (Houry 2009). The cult of personality surrounding Hafez Al Assad was extended and altered to surround Bashar Al Assad. Although civil societies were present under Hafez Al Assad and grew under Bashar Al Assad, these civil societies were inextricably linked to loyalists, the government, and the Ba'ath Party. Syria's relatively closed economy had opened up under Bashar Al Assad, but in a manner that was strictly controlled and where the primary beneficiaries of the economic liberalization were regime insiders.

Syria's GDP per capita (in current United States dollars) in 2010 was roughly equal to that of Egypt's, and stood at \$2,747 (World Bank 2013). The country's literacy rate was 84 percent, placing it below Libya but well above Egypt. The level of corruption in Syria according to its CPI in 2010 also placed it in between Libya and Egypt; however, Syria was significantly closer to Libya's relatively high level of corruption (Transparency International 2013). Economic liberalization, rather than quelling concerns regarding corruption exacerbated them, as regime insiders and relatives, such as Rami Makhlouf, became the primary beneficiaries of Syria's limited economic reforms while amassing large sums of wealth and becoming the new face of corruption and nepotism within Syria.

While Tunis, Eastern Libya, and Cairo exploded with political activity at the outset of the Arab Spring, Damascus laid dormant, as Syria experienced only a few minor protests. Despite the many legitimate and perceived grievances of Syria's residents, it entered the Arab Spring late, as eyes throughout the country witnessed the toppling of two longstanding Arab authoritarian regimes. Tranquility did not last in Syria. On March 15, 2011, protests broke out in the Daraa province in response to the brutal torturing of children who had sprayed anti-regime graffiti on walls by government officials.<sup>2</sup> These protests soon reverberated throughout Syria, yet failed to reach significant proportions in the major urban centers of Damascus and Aleppo despite calls for mass protests receiving a large amount of attention from regional and international media outlets. As the regime responded with repressive and brutal force, and protests failed to swell to numbers capable of bringing down the regime, the Syrian armed forces began witnessing defections, and soon civilians began raising up arms as well. The Free Syrian Army was subsequently formed, but lacked, and continues to lack, central authority over the armed opposition. The opposition was poorly organized, poorly equipped, and deeply fractured, much more so than their Libyan counterparts who had been able to organize along tribal and regional lines (Tabler 2013). Soon elements within the opposition and the uprising began to be characterized not just by the use of violence, but by the use of terrorism in order to achieve the opposition's goals. While terrorist acts within Syria have often been attributed to the influx of foreign fighters into the country, the use of suicide bombers and other forms of terroristic means, such as car bombs, by the opposition preceded the large-scale migration of fighters from Iraq and other countries. It is also important to note that from among the fractured opposition, it is those groups that have utilized terrorism that have achieved the most success fighting Assad and his loyalists.

### **2.3 Discussion**

The Arab Spring uprisings in Egypt, Libya, and Syria illustrate three key points:

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- 1 Dissidents will generally prefer less costly, non-violent or less violent uprisings than more violent uprisings;
- 2 A highly organized and developed Islamic political organization is not necessarily more likely to increase violence or violence toward civilians in an uprising, and may actually contribute to a less violent uprising; and
- 3 The type of uprising that springs from a set of grievances is highly dependent upon whom individuals trust and the tools and resources available to the dissidents.

In all three countries, citizens faced economic challenges, government corruption, and brutality from government officials. Moreover, in all three countries, those who protested were subjected to extreme repression during their uprisings. The country with the lowest literacy rate, Egypt, was the only one where dissidents successfully brought about regime change through non-violent protests. Neither the economic conditions, the level of brutality utilized by the government, or the level of education of the citizens appear to account for the variation observed in the uprisings that occurred.

All three uprisings began with unarmed protests, yet two of the three uprisings turned violent after protests failed to reach the critical masses necessary to produce regime change. In Egypt, the protest movement quickly gained steam, and resulted in the overthrow of the Mubarak regime, despite facing high levels of brutality from the Egyptian police force and intelligence agencies. In Libya, the uprising also began with unarmed protests, but turned into an armed insurrection when protests failed to reach substantial levels in Tripoli and other Western Libyan cities. Syria entered the Arab Spring late, but dissidents in the country began protest movements that reached substantial levels in Homs, Hama, and Daraa, but failed to produce many notable protests in Aleppo or Damascus, the country's two largest cities. The protest movement turned to violence when calls for unarmed protests in Damascus and Aleppo did not produce the desired results. Elements within the deeply fractured opposition began utilizing suicide bombers and car bombs after the Free Syrian Army was unable to adequately unify the opposition, even within a decentralized structure. The manner in which these three uprisings evolved indicates a preference for less violent protest than more violent protest. It was only after non-violent protests failed to produce the desired outcome that violent insurrections arose in Libya and Syria; and, terrorism became a viable tool for elements within the opposition in Syria when the opposition failed to unify its efforts.

Moreover, the presence of well-organized Islamic political movements not only failed to lead to more violence in the respective uprisings, their presence appeared to lead to a less violent result. Egypt, the country with the most developed Islamic organizations, produced the most successful

non-violent movement. While this may be credited by some to the Muslim Brotherhood of Egypt's moderate political and religious stances, many members of the extremist Salafist movements within Egypt also participated in and supported the uprising through peaceful means. In addition, the initial protests were organized by more liberal or secular movements, and the Islamic organizations, both Salafist and moderate, joined in the revolution peacefully and cooperated with the non-Islamic movements.

Perhaps one of the fundamental differences between Syria and the other two countries discussed in this chapter is that it is ruled by a religious minority group. There is evidence to support the contention that countries ruled by minority groups may be more likely to experience civil wars (Gellner 1983; Fearon et al. 2007).<sup>3</sup> While much of the attention regarding the effect of minority-rule on civil war onset has focused on the resentment such rule may foster among the majority or plurality within a state, little attention has been paid to how minority rule affects the cohesiveness of society and how the cohesiveness of a state may affect the probability of minority-rule. As Fearon, Kasara, and Laitin (2007) note, "minorities may be more likely to hold power where 'background' levels of ethnic nationalist sentiment are lower." Thus, where societal cohesiveness is strong, minority-rule may be less likely to occur. It would logically follow then that it would be in the interest of minority-held regimes to both increase the cohesiveness of their group while decreasing the overall cohesiveness of the rest of society. In Syria, Assad seized and subsequently maintained power in a politically unstable and divided country. Minority-rule in Syria reinforced the strong ties that had been developed by the previously marginalized Alawites and increased inter-Alawite cooperation in maintaining the regime's position. The Assad regime further instituted policies that would prevent the organization of groups that would foster cooperation among other segments of society, leaving the Alawites in the strongest position in a fractured state.

This brings us to the final point listed at the outset of this section, and the primary contention presented in this chapter: The level and nature of interpersonal trust within a state appears to have affected the amount of violence utilized and the nature of the uprisings that were produced. While this book refers more often to generalized interpersonal trust than particularized interpersonal trust or other potential forms of trust, it does so for the purpose of maintaining the simplicity of the theoretical framework presented. Based on the uprisings in Egypt, Libya, and Syria, it appears as though not only generalized interpersonal trust, but also how wide the network of individuals you trust, matters. In Egypt, the presence of viable civil associations, both Islamic and non-Islamic, allowed for citizens from various socio-economic strata to cooperate with each other to achieve their common goals and produced higher levels of trust that others were willing to bear the costs associated with protests. In Libya, tribalism and regionalism led to intra-tribal and intra-regional cooperation, which

subsequently led to the formation of tribal and regional militias loosely organized under the National Transition Council, which received substantial assistance from the international community that helped it hold together the substantially decentralized Libyan armed opposition. In Syria, the systematic breakdown of trust and prevention of genuinely private civil associations from arising led to an even more fractured opposition than that of Libya's. While similar calls for protest were made in Syria as were made in Egypt and Libya, political entrepreneurs largely failed to convince residents of Syria in Damascus and Aleppo to join in the protests. Although many individuals eventually joined the armed Syrian insurrection, the opposition failed to unify the various dissident groups in a manner capable of bringing about regime change as quickly as in Libya. Not only was the Free Syrian Army unable to bring Islamist and other elements of the opposition in under its umbrella, they failed to effectively organize the many brigades that claimed to be a part of the Free Syrian Army. I contend that the Free Syrian Army has, thus far, failed to unify the opposition for two primary reasons:

- 1 The Free Syrian Army lacks the resources necessary to convince many of the elements in the opposition that they have the ability to produce regime change; and
- 2 The lack of trust among the dissidents has resulted in a deeply fractured opposition characterized by small armed units that have been unable to effectively cooperate under the banner of the Free Syrian Army.

As a result, some of these small groups of armed insurgents, unable to effectively strike the regime through traditional means and unwilling to cooperate with the various other groups in an organized manner, have resorted to the use of terrorism.

## Notes

- 1 This, however, does not mean that various groups did not attempt to bring about institutional development prior to Libya's independence. As Lisa Anderson (1990) notes, "The earlier efforts at state building – on the part of the Ottomans, the Sanusiyya, the Tripoli Republic, and even the Italians – to construct and maintain more elaborate administrations were all short-lived experiments that had ended in horrifying failure."
- 2 It is important to note that while the Assad regime generally managed to reduce inter-tribal and intra-tribal communication and cooperation, Daraa is a border province sharing significant cultural similarities to its Jordanian neighbors and its residents had significant business and personal relationships with Jordanians. As a result, Daraa maintained some of the tribal customs and institutions rarely observed among those in Damascus and many other major cities within Syria.
- 3 It should be noted that Fearon et al. (2007) find that the evidence to support this claim is weak and uncertain.

## 3 Theory

### The Relationship between Trust and Terror

#### 3.1 Introduction

What is the relationship between interpersonal trust and domestic terrorism? While much scholarly attention has been paid to the determinants of participation in terrorism and of the prevalence of terrorist activities within societies, little work has been conducted regarding the relationship between how people connect with others and their likelihood of participating in terrorist activities; and less, if any, scholarly research has attempted to establish a relationship between generalized interpersonal trust or, more broadly, social capital and participation in terrorism. The theory presented in this chapter is premised upon the notion that an individual's willingness to trust those outside of their immediate community affects the nature of the political endeavors, if any, that an individual ends up pursuing. Rooted in Robert Putnam's seminal work, *Making Democracy Work*, my theory draws from the literature on social capital and interpersonal trust's relationship to democratic performance and political activity, and applies their concepts to study participation in domestic terrorism (Putnam 1993).

#### 3.2 Trust and Social Capital

What is social capital? According to Knack and Keefer, "Trust, cooperative norms, and associations within groups each fall within the elastic definitions that most scholars have applied to the term social capital," and this is a position widely supported by the literature (Knack and Keefer 1997; Coleman 1990; Jamal 2007; Uslaner and Conley 2003). While Putnam defines social capital broadly, and in a manner that invokes notions of reciprocity and civic norms within a society, the concept of generalized interpersonal trust among a citizenry lays at the heart of Putnam's conceptualization of social capital since it is the trust-building capability of associational life that leads to a greater adherence to civic norms under his theoretical framework (Putnam 1993; Jamal 2007). Indeed, the connection between generalized interpersonal trust and social capital is so

theoretically and empirically strong that social capital has itself been defined and operationalized as generalized interpersonal trust by some scholars (Rothstein and Stolle 2008).

While generalized interpersonal trust may be inextricably linked to social capital, not all forms of interpersonal trust generate social capital. I define trust herein as the belief that if an individual were to take some risk in relation to another person, that individual would reciprocate (Ostrom and Walker 2003). The literature within political science has generally discussed two forms of interpersonal trust relevant to this project: generalized interpersonal trust and particularized interpersonal trust (Uslaner and Conley 2003). Generalized interpersonal trust is the belief that strangers or outsiders can be trusted and often share common values (Benson and Rochon 2004; Uslaner and Conley 2003; Uslaner 1998). Particularized interpersonal trust, on the other hand, only extends to those whom an individual considers to be a part of her group (Uslaner and Conley 2003; Uslaner 2002). Individuals who are particularized trusters tend to form strong bonds within their communities, but they will often shy away from interacting with individuals who are from outside of their group (Uslaner and Conley 2003; Yamigishi and Yamagishi 1994). It is the generalized trusters within societies who tend to create the social ties between members of different communities that produce social capital (Uslaner and Conley 2003; Benson and Rochon 2004).

### ***3.2.1 Conceptualizing Social Capital***

Although it is easy to provide a broad, sweeping conceptualization of social capital, establishing precisely what the term of art means has proven difficult. As noted by Knack and Keefer (1997) in the quote cited above, different scholars have defined the term social capital in different ways. While these meanings often overlap along certain dimensions, there is no uniform definition that has been applied consistently by a large subset of scholars. Thus, clearly establishing what social capital is, and what relationship it shares to trust, is crucial within the context of this project.

James Coleman, the progenitor of essentially all modern, scholarly conceptualizations of social capital, clearly placed interpersonal trust at the center of his analysis of the term (Coleman 1988: S101). In his seminal article, "Social Capital in the Creation of Human Capital," he states that:

Just as physical capital and human capital facilitate productive activity, social capital does as well. For example, a group within which there is extensive trustworthiness and extensive trust is able to accomplish much more than a comparable group without that trustworthiness and trust.

While it is clear that trust plays a crucial role in Coleman's conceptualization of social capital, he does not simply define social capital as the aggregate level of trust and trustworthiness within society. To Coleman, social capital can be broken down into three general types: reciprocity, information exchange, and norms and effective sanctions. Each of these types of social capital may be characterized by a different phenomenon, but all of them require some form of trust in order to provide benefits to society.

Although Coleman's categorization of social capital into three different types is reasonable, at its core, social capital is simply about reciprocity and the belief that others will behave reciprocally (Coleman 1988). In the case of information exchange, the capital that is provided by social channels is the product of the costly acquisition of information by each individual, and reliable transfer of such information to others. Contributions of information can be viewed as akin to contributions of wealth in the traditional public goods game, whereby holding private information may provide an individual with some advantage, but at a cost to the group as a whole. More importantly, norms and effective sanctions are essentially simply robust behavioral responses that revolve around reciprocal behavior. If we were to define social capital by the norms produced within a group, we would ultimately be aggregating behavior across a group with regard to reciprocity exhibited along a specific dimension, and then combining those dimensions. While norms of selfishness may be established by a set of individuals, it is clear that the social capital literature discusses norms in relation to behavior that is beneficial to the group or other individuals within society (Putnam 1993; Coleman 1988; Knack and Keefer 1997).

It is for these reasons that interpersonal trust has been the focal point of much of the research on social capital's relationship to political, economic, and cultural phenomena (Rothstein 2000; Rothstein and Stolle 2008; Knack and Keefer 1997). If trust is the belief others will reciprocate when an individual takes on some cost in relation to herself (Ostrom and Walker 2003), social capital can be defined as the capacity for reciprocity and the belief that others will behave reciprocally among a group of individuals. Thus, trust and trustworthiness are the foundational elements of social capital.

While the definitions I have chosen for social capital and trust certainly relate both concepts to reciprocity, an analysis of the relationship between trust and reciprocity may better serve to illustrate how the two concepts relate to one another, and how they shape interactions among groups. In order to do so, we can take a cursory look at how other-regarding preferences and trust affect behavior in the classic, one-shot prisoner's dilemma game (Rapoport and Chammah 1965). The prisoner's dilemma is traditionally formulated as a choice facing two prisoners regarding cooperating with one another or turning in the other person, but, for our



purposes, it may be better framed as a decision between business partners. Let us imagine that two individuals, Brenda and Carey, have decided to open up a business with one another. Each of them has a decision to make; they can choose C, cooperate, and not steal from the business; or D, defect, and steal from the business' resources. The payoffs for each of these actions is listed in Figure 3.1.

The only Nash equilibrium of the one-shot game is for both players to defect and steal from the business if they are purely self-interested. This prediction, however, does not necessarily match the results of experimental tests on gameplay in a laboratory setting (Andreoni and Miller 1993; Fehr and Schmidt 1999; Fehr and Gächter 2000). Whether looking at behavior in the prisoner's dilemma, the dictator and ultimatum games, or other economic games played in the laboratory, scholars have often found some degree of other-regarding behavior exhibited by individuals (Andreoni and Miller 1993; Fehr and Schmidt 1999; Fehr and Gächter 2000). While a more thorough discussion of other-regarding behavior follows in Section 4.4, let us assume that players are averse to inequality and concerned with fairness. If the utility derived from playing this game for a self-interested player is defined as  $z_i$ , we can assign an inequality-averse player the utility function  $z_i - |z_i - z_j|$ , where  $j$  represents the payoff to the other player (Fehr and Schmidt 1999; Fehr and Gächter 2000). Thus, for example, whereas a self-interested player receives a payoff of 4 for defecting when the other player cooperates, an inequality-averse player receives a payoff of  $4 - |4 - 0|$ , or 0. A full list of payoffs associated with the game when played by inequality-averse players is presented in Figure 3.2.

		Carey	
		C	D
Brenda	C	3,3	0,4
	D	4,0	1,1

Figure 3.1 Prisoner's Dilemma (Self-Interested)

		Carey	
		C	D
Brenda	C	3,3	-4,0
	D	0,-4	1,1

Figure 3.2 Prisoner's Dilemma (Other-Regarding)

Whereas cooperation was never in equilibrium when the game was played by self-interested players, cooperation by both players is one of the equilibria of the one-shot, normal form game. Essentially, the game shifts from the prisoner's dilemma to a coordination game. If we analyze the game as an extensive-form game, the only pure-strategy subgame perfect Nash equilibrium ends with both players choosing to cooperate. For the game with selfish players, the only pure-strategy subgame perfect Nash equilibrium ends with both players defecting. While this ties reciprocity to cooperative behavior, where does trust fit into all of this?

Previously, we defined trust as the belief that others would reciprocate if an individual took on a risk or cost in relation to them (Ostrom and Walker 2003). Our discussion has presented two types of individuals – one that is selfish, and another that is other-regarding. This other-regarding individual may be viewed as willing to reciprocate if an individual takes a costly risk in relation to her. Thus, the inequality-averse type may be viewed as trustworthy, and trust can be conceptualized as the belief that an individual is of the other-regarding type.

We can incorporate this into the extensive form game by assigning a probability,  $p$ , that an individual is of the other-regarding type, and  $1-p$  that an individual is selfish. Let us assume that Brenda is of the other-regarding type. In order for her to choose to cooperate in the first round of the game, she must believe that the probability that Carey is trustworthy is above some critical threshold  $p^*$ . Given the values associated with the game, Brenda will only cooperate with Carey if she believes that Carey is sufficiently likely to be trustworthy,  $p^* \geq 5/7$ . Even if both Brenda and Carey are of the other-regarding type, both of them will choose to defect unless Brenda trusts that Carey is of the other-regarding type. Moreover, even if Brenda is of the selfish type, her belief that Carey is of the other-regarding type can induce her to cooperate since she can potentially receive a higher payoff through cooperation. In fact, for this specific game and these specific payoff values, a selfish individual only requires a  $p^* \geq 1/3$  to choose to cooperate, a substantially lower threshold than an individual who is unselfish. In order for a cooperative pure-strategy equilibrium to exist, some level of trust must exist, and, thus, interpersonal trust plays a fundamental role in bringing about cooperation between individuals.

Interpersonal trust, however, does not just play a role in shaping how individuals interact with one another; it shapes whom individuals are willing to interact with as well. To illustrate this, we can build upon the extensive form prisoner's dilemma game so that Brenda now first chooses whom to play the game with, and add another player, Drew, who we will assume to be from outside of Brenda's community. In this game, the payoff gained from cooperating with Drew is higher than the payoff associated with cooperating with Carey when the other player reciprocates. Thus, Brenda stands to benefit from working with Drew rather than Carey. The game is presented in Figure 3.3.

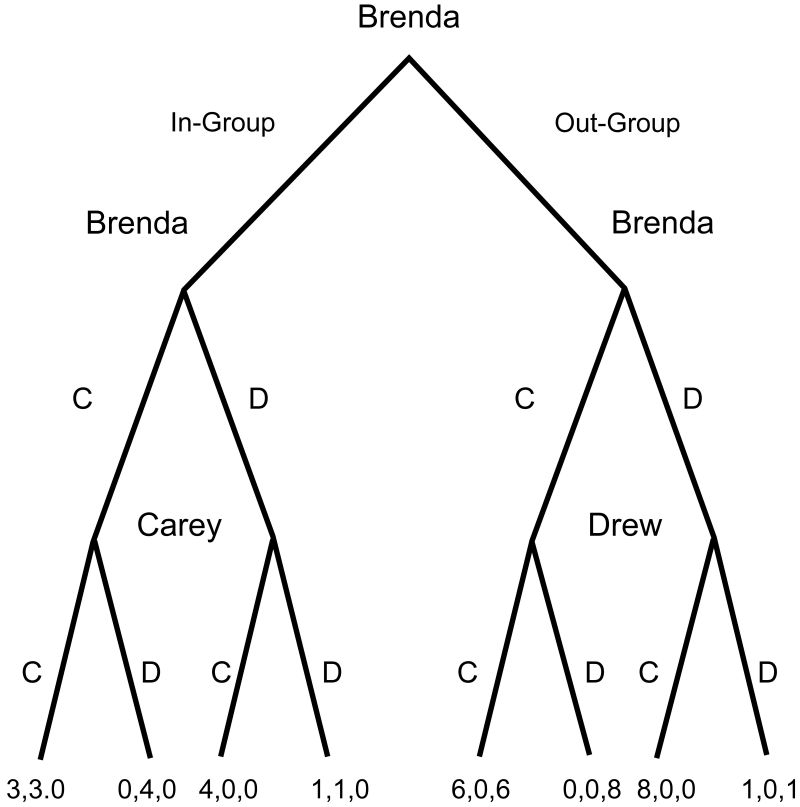


Figure 3.3 Cooperating with Outsiders

Each of the players may be concerned with either only her own payoff, or may also be concerned with fairness in addition to her payoff. Thus, each player can either have a utility function of  $z_i$  or  $z_i - |z_i - z_j|$ , where  $j$  only represents the other person in the transaction. Let us assume that Carey is drawn from Brenda's own community, and Drew is a stranger or outsider. We can assume that the level of trust Brenda places in Carey is higher than that placed in Drew; and, without loss of generality, we can simply assume that Brenda completely trusts Carey, and places a probability  $p$  on Drew being trustworthy. While this is done to simplify our definitional exploration, it is reasonable to assume some maximal level of trust being placed in some group an individual identifies herself to be a part of, whether that group is the person's own family, friends, local community, tribe, or ethnic group.

Whom should Brenda choose to do business with? As you would expect, whether Brenda would prefer to do business with Drew depends on how much Brenda trusts others, or, in other words, how much generalized trust

Brenda possesses since Drew is from outside of the community. Since Brenda knows that Carey is trustworthy, she will always prefer to cooperate with Carey than to not cooperate when that node is reached. Thus, any pure strategy used by Brenda where she chooses to work with Drew will require that the expected utility be greater than 3, the payoff achieved from cooperation with Carey. Since both selfish and unselfish players would choose to defect when the other player defects, the only viable option left for Brenda in equilibrium is to cooperate with Drew if she reaches that node. Brenda will only choose to cooperate with Drew rather than Carey when  $p^* \geq 1/2$  if Brenda is selfish, and  $p^* \geq 11/14$  if Brenda is unselfish. If we were to explicitly incorporate particularized trust into this analysis, so that Brenda only trusts Carey to some extent greater than Drew, then the level of generalized trust needed to sustain cooperation with Drew would decrease as the level of particularized trust decreases.

Interpersonal trust does not simply affect how we interact with others, it influences whom we interact with as well. Cooperation between Brenda and Drew would not only have produced the optimal result capable in equilibrium for Brenda, it would have produced the greatest total payoff to society. Where Brenda does not generally trust others, and, therefore, cannot trust Drew, her options are limited. She can only expect cooperation to be reciprocated by Carey, and will, therefore, choose to work with Carey despite the potential advantages associated with working with Drew. While the immediate example discussed economic considerations, the same logic can be applied to relationships between individuals taking on other political, charitable, or social activities where some risk or cost is being taken in relation to another person.

In the aggregate, a society or group characterized by inefficient actions should produce unsatisfactory results. It is in this manner that social capital and interpersonal trust dynamics shape, condition, and influence important political, economic, and social outcomes. A society characterized by a lack of trust or trustworthiness will also be characterized by an economic landscape with fewer partners, institutional inefficiency, and a less robust civil society. It is my contention that just as social capital influences both how and whom an individual interacts with others economically, it influences both how and with whom an individual protests in response to grievances perpetuated by a government.

### ***3.2.2 Social Capital and Political Behavior***

How can social capital affect political institutions and mobilization within societies? Putnam's *Making Democracy Work* explores the relationship between social capital and the performance of democratic institutions through analyzing the differences in civic associational membership between Northern and Southern Italy (Putnam 1993). His treatise contends that civic associations have the ability to build trust between citizens, which, in turn, should enhance institutional performance within

democracies. He finds significant evidence of a causal link between the prevalence of civic associations in Northern Italy and its higher level of democratic performance relative to Southern Italy. Subsequent scholarship has provided support for the existence of a relationship between social ties and voter turnout (Grosser and Schram 2006). However, while civic associations may increase trust and democratic performance in democratic environments, they may have the opposite effect in undemocratic settings (Jamal 2007; Putnam 1993). In addition, where individuals form insular civic organizations and stronger ties with their own groups, they may become less willing to interact with members from their society who do not belong to their group (Uslaner and Conley 2003). But can interpersonal trust affect the types of associations and organizations that arise? More specifically, can an individual's level of generalized interpersonal trust affect whether or not that individual joins a domestic terrorist organization?

This attempt to uncover the relationship between interpersonal trust and participation in terrorist activities is guided by the work of Michelle Benson and Thomas Rochon (2004), who found that high levels of generalized interpersonal trust are positively correlated with protest activity. They argue that individuals who trust others are more likely to protest since they assign a higher probability of others joining in their cause, and, thus, assume that the costs of protesting are low. But why do some individuals choose to participate in inherently very costly political opposition? More specifically, why do some individuals choose terrorism over other, less costly, channels for political opposition; and, why do some societies produce more terrorists than others? It is my contention that interpersonal trust does not merely affect whether people protest or do not, but also affects the type of opposition movements individuals join, and the nature of political mobilization within different societies.

### **3.3 Why Do Individuals Become Terrorists?**

While there is no consensus on the definition of terrorism, in order for an attack to be characterized as an act of terrorism, most definitions require that there be aggression against non-combatants, and that the aggression not be meant to directly achieve the primary political objective of the perpetrator, but rather, to alter the behavior of the target audience (Badey 1998; Lacquer 1999; Victoroff 2005). Although terrorist groups have at times succeeded in achieving their primary objectives over time, terrorism is generally an inefficient tool of weak groups whose ultimate goals are at times unintelligible or unrealistic (Crenshaw 2000; Brannan et al. 2001; Sandler and Enders 2004). Given the relative inefficiency of terrorism, why then do some individuals choose terrorism over other forms of political mobilization that aim to achieve their objectives more directly?

The literature on the motivations of individual terrorists shows great variation in the underlying reasons individuals choose to join terrorist

groups. There is little evidence that psychological or developmental problems lead individuals on a path toward terrorism, although there is evidence to suggest that suicide bombers are more likely to be suicidal and loners (Sageman 2004; Merari 2004; Merari 1998). Moreover, there is evidence, drawn from a pool of failed Palestinian suicide bombers, that terrorists are not generally motivated by religious fervor (Merari 2010). One underlying theme that can be found in the literature on the motivations for terrorism is that terrorists often cite grievances, real or perceived, as their reason for joining terrorist groups. Some of the grievances that have been reported in studies are of a direct and personal nature, such as the loss of a family member or abuse suffered at the hands of an enemy of the terrorist group (Hassan 2001; Atran 2003; Atran 2006). Other studies cite oppression by governments of a more general nature as a common explanation for why individuals chose to join terrorist organizations (Crenshaw 1981; Crenshaw 1986; Taylor and Quayle 1994). Such oppression may lead to feelings of humiliation and a desire for retribution by individuals who then turn to terrorist groups to help them exact their revenge (Juergensmeyer 2003). While this may explain why some individuals are willing to bear the high costs of participating in terrorism, it does not explain why they choose terrorism over avenues of mobilization that are less costly and may be more effective, particularly when the target of the terrorist group is unpopular and the terrorist group's policy preferences closely resemble that of its constituency.

Much of the literature on participation in terrorism has focused on the economic condition of states and individuals. At the macro-level, economic development has been shown to reduce participation in terrorism (Blomberg et al. 2004a, 2004b; Burgoon 2006; Blomberg and Hess 2008a, 2008b). More recent evidence has appeared to uncover a nonlinear relationship between per capita gross domestic product and terrorism, with terrorism tending to be concentrated in middle-income countries and sensitive to evolving conditions over time (Enders, Hoover and Sandler 2016). At the micro-level, however, individual income has appeared to be uncorrelated with participation in terrorist activities (Sageman 2004), and may even increase the probability that an individual participates in terrorism (Krueger and Maleckova 2003; Berrebi 2003). Ethan Bueno de Mesquita (2005) argues that counter-terrorism operations conducted by states weaken their economies, potentially producing a larger pool of highly skilled, newly unemployed individuals. Since terrorist groups prefer to recruit highly skilled employees, their pool of potential recruits grows as a result of the reduced economic performance of the state, which in turn leads to an increase in the quality of terrorism in the state. There is evidence to support Bueno de Mesquita's theory, as at least one study has found a positive correlation between the interaction of education and poverty and participation in terrorism (Kavanaugh 2011). While the selection-effect that Bueno de Mesquita proposes may indeed exist, his theory does not

explain why terrorism is chosen over more effective forms of political mobilization.

Other lines of inquiry explore the availability of institutionalized political channels, and the effects of a government's repression of dissent on participation in terrorism. Some have argued that participation in terrorism is more attractive to individuals when political opportunities are limited (Crenshaw 2000). A government's repression of civil and political rights appears to significantly increase the amount of participation in terrorism produced by a state (Krueger and Maleckova 2003; Krueger 2007). Furthermore, the presence of strong political institutions appears to decrease terrorist activity (Krueger and Laitin 2008). While a consensus has developed surrounding the importance of institutional structures and regime type on the production of terrorism, the relationship is nuanced and contested. The liberties and rights afforded to individuals in democracies may dampen the demand for terrorism, but it may also make democracies more attractive targets of transnational terrorists (Eubank and Weinberg 1994; Eubank and Weinberg 2001; Krueger 2007). While democracies may make more attractive targets, democratic participation may reduce terrorism, and empirical evidence supports the contention that it is constraints on the executive that increase terrorism in democracies (Li 2005). Moreover, autocracies that are sensitive to audience costs may also make more appealing targets (Conrad, Conrad and Young 2014). Finally, domestic terrorism appears to be positively correlated with state repression, and above a certain threshold, democracy may reduce state repression (Piazza 2015; Davenport and Armstrong 2004). This suggests that potential terrorists consider other channels through which they may be able achieve their goals, and are less likely to choose terrorism when other viable options are available. It does not, however, explain why terrorism is chosen over other forms of mobilization such as the organization of mass non-violent protest or armed insurgency aimed at combatants, options that are open even when direct political channels are closed.

This project seeks to extend the literature by examining how interpersonal trust affects an individual's decision to join a terrorist organization, and how social capital within a state affects the amount of terrorism produced within it. As noted earlier, participation in terrorism is often motivated by perceived grievances that an individual seeks to remedy. These grievances may cause some to be willing to bear a high cost in order to exact retribution against the group or entity that they perceive to have hurt them. While these individuals may be willing to bear a high cost to exact retribution, they would prefer to incur a lower cost if the same amount of retribution can be achieved. Thus, although terrorists may be motivated by objectives that do not result in material or political gain for themselves, they are nevertheless often strategic actors who rationally pursue their goals and weigh the costs and benefits of their actions (Moore 1995; Kalyvas 1999).

Terrorism is generally less efficient than other forms of political mobilization. Other viable forms of political mobilization, however, require higher levels of participation from individuals within a society. When the target of an individual's angst is the government, the cost of participating in a popular revolution or a military insurgency may be significantly less than that of joining a terrorist organization, but joining a terrorist organization requires lower levels of participation throughout society in order for an individual to succeed in achieving some level of retribution against the government. Those willing to bear a high cost in pursuit of retribution will weigh the probability of other modes of retribution succeeding before choosing a highly costly and inefficient form of mobilization, such as terrorism. Individuals with high levels of generalized interpersonal trust will seek out less costly forms of retribution since they assign a higher probability to the success of such forms of mobilization than those with low levels of generalized interpersonal trust.

Where a state is characterized by low levels of generalized interpersonal trust, individuals will turn to others with whom they have developed a form of particularized trust when seeking retribution rather than utilize mechanisms that require the cooperation of strangers (see Hardin 1992: 154). As Eric Uslaner (2002) has noted, certain groups may have the tendency to reinforce particularized trust among group members rather than increase generalized interpersonal trust. I argue that low initial levels of generalized interpersonal trust will lead to a greater reliance on groups with whom an individual has developed particularized trust when seeking collective action (see Jamal 2007). Presuming that the perceived oppressor is a citizenry's government, this would lead to more fractured opposition movements that are less efficient and require members to bear higher costs. The more fractured and weak the opposition movement is, the more likely it is that the sub-groups that make up the opposition will utilize terrorism as a tool.

The following section presents a simple formal model that incorporates interpersonal trust into an individual's decision-making process when choosing if, and with whom, to seek retribution for perceived grievances caused by a government. By formalizing the theory discussed above, it is my hope to more clearly identify its premises, and how they lead to the hypotheses I present. The formal model produces propositions from which implications that will be tested in subsequent chapters will be derived.

### **3.4 The Model**

In this section, I develop a simple model that illustrates the paths an individual who has suffered some grievance at the hands of the government can take, and how generalized interpersonal trust affects the path that is chosen. This model demonstrates the relationship between generalized interpersonal trust and whether an aggrieved individual resorts to terrorism or delegates authority to a political entrepreneur seeking large-scale



collective action against the government. While the model offers a simple framework from which to analyze the relationship between trust and an individual's choice regarding seeking retribution against a government, it produces interesting equilibria, and the implications of the core finding of this chapter will be subsequently tested.

Assume that there are three players, labeled  $i = B, E,$  and  $G$ . Player  $B$  is a citizen aggrieved by the government,  $G$ , and  $E$  is a political entrepreneur from outside the citizen's community who is trying to organize large-scale collective action against the government. All three players possess an initial normalized wealth of 1. The game has three stages. In stage 1, player  $B$  has some portion of his wealth,  $x$ , where  $0 < x < 1$ , stolen from him by the government, so that after the theft, player  $B$ 's wealth is equal to  $1 - x$  and  $G$ 's wealth is equal to  $1 + x$ . In stage 2, player  $B$  can choose among three actions,  $b \in \{0, 1, d\}$ , where the player can choose to do nothing and maintain the status quo ( $b = 0$ ), seek costly retribution through a terrorist group whom the player trusts to seek out retribution ( $b = 1$ ), or delegate the duty to punish by transferring resources to a political entrepreneur ( $b = d$ ). If player  $B$  decides to delegate the duty to punish, then in stage 3 player  $E$  can choose to either use the resources given to her by  $B$  to punish the government ( $e = 1$ ), or may keep the resources for herself ( $e = 0$ ).

Punishment is costly, whether executed by  $B$  (i.e.,  $b = 1$ ) or  $E$  (i.e.,  $e = 1$ ); however,  $E$  can more efficiently punish the government than the terrorist group. Player  $B$  is able to reduce the government's wealth by  $l_B$ , where  $l_B$  equals the cost,  $c$ , multiplied by the ability,  $a_B$ , of player  $B$  to punish the government, where  $l_B = a_B c$ ,  $1 < a_B$ , with  $0 < c < 1 - x$ . The political entrepreneur can punish the government more effectively, and thus,  $l_E = a_E c$ , where  $1 < a_E < a_B$ . If the entrepreneur chooses not to punish the government after being delegated the duty, she keeps  $c$  (i.e., the resources transferred to her by  $B$ ). The payoff structure of the one-shot game is presented in Table 3.1.

Table 3.1 Two-Player Game Payoffs

Strategy	$B$ (Aggrieved Citizen)	$G$ (Government)	$E$ (Entrepreneur)
$b = 0$ (status quo)	$1 - x$ [ $1 - 3x$ ]	$1 + x$	$1$ [ $1 - 2x$ ]
$b = 1$ (retribution by $B$ )	$1 - x - c$ [ $1 - x - c -  a_B c - 2x - c $ ]	$1 + x - p_B$	$1$ [ $1 -  a_B c - 2x - c $ ]
$b = d, e = 1$ (delegation, retribution by $E$ )	$1 - x - c$ [ $1 - x - c -  a_E c - 2x - c $ ]	$1 + x - p_G$	$1$ [ $1 + c -  a_E c - 2x - c $ ]
$b = d, e = 0$ (delegate, no retribution by $E$ )	$1 - x - c$ [ $1 - 3x - 2c$ ]	$1 + x$	$1 + c$ [ $1 - 2x$ ]

Note: Payoffs  $z_i$  and  $z_i - |z_B - z_G|$  (in brackets) are for players who are of the selfish and unselfish (or inequality-averse type), respectively, and are derived using expressions (1) and (2).

If all players were narrowly self-interested, in the one-shot game, an aggrieved citizen would always choose to maintain the status quo in equilibrium, anticipating that the self-interested entrepreneur will keep  $c$  and hence not punish the government. Individuals, however, have been shown to often be motivated by inequality aversion, and this motivation has been used to explain why individuals seek retribution and are concerned with fairness (Fehr and Schmidt 1999; Fehr and Gächter 2000). This model presumes that players can vary in type, and that players are uncertain as to the type of other players. In order to formulate a simple model, players can only be one of two types, selfish or unselfish. Selfish types are only interested in their own outcome,  $z_i$  while unselfish types are also interested in fairness. I abstract away from the government's behavior, and thus treat  $x$  as exogenous and assume that  $0 < x < 1$  since the focus of this book is on the behavior of the aggrieved individual. For  $i = B, E$ , we have the following utility functions:

$$U_{\text{selfish}}(Z) = z_i \quad (1)$$

$$U_{\text{unselfish}}(Z) = z_i - |z_B - z_G| \quad (2)$$

Notice that while both unselfish  $B$  and  $E$  are motivated by concerns with fairness, I assume that  $B$  is motivated by inequality aversion between himself and the government, and  $E$  is motivated to maintain equality between  $B$  and the government, but is unconcerned with inequality between herself and  $B$  or the government. There is substantial evidence in the literature that individuals do seek indirect retribution when they witness harms committed against others, and that such forms of retribution play a role in establishing and maintaining cooperation (Panchanathan and Boyd 2004; Nowak and Sigmund 2005). The citizen relies on indirect negative reciprocity from the entrepreneur when delegating the duty to punish to her. This reflects an unselfish entrepreneur's desire to ensure that a fair result is achieved, and inequality aversion between  $E$  and others is left out in order to maintain the simplicity of the model. Moreover, since  $E$  likely suffers from similar grievances as  $B$ , such indirect reciprocity is likely to be observed. Player  $B$  trusts that player  $E$  is unselfish with probability  $p$ ,  $0 \leq p \leq 1$ , and selfish with probability  $1 - p$ .

In the interest of simplicity, both the basic model and the extensions to the model rely on a standard conceptualization of trust that is rooted in the definition of trust outlined by Ostrom and Walker (2003) and applied uniformly across all strangers in society. Thus, the likelihood that an individual believes that the political entrepreneur, political entrepreneurs in general, and strangers within society are other-regarding is the same. The political entrepreneur, however, in the basic model acts as a representative of society-at-large. The extensions to the model in the following section distinguish between the political entrepreneur and society-at-large, and illustrate how trust in others in general affects an entrepreneur's actions, and how the citizen's level of trust in both the entrepreneur and others within society affects her decision, yet

both utilize a common variable for trust. Since there is a substantially high likelihood that both trust in a political entrepreneur from outside an individual's community and trust in others of a more general nature are highly correlated, utilizing a common variable for trust should not be problematic.

Introducing inequality aversion between  $E$  and  $B$ , or  $E$  and  $G$ , should not change the qualitative predictions of the model. Moreover, providing a more nuanced payoff structure for the players would unduly complicate the model while shedding little, if any, light on the subject explored in this book. The model in this chapter provides a very simple illustration of the relationship between trust and the mechanism of political action an individual ultimately chooses. The structure of the game is presented in Figure 3.4 and Figure 3.5.

The analysis of the model will utilize the perfect Bayesian equilibrium ("PBE") concept. Where an unselfish player  $B$  is indifferent between two or more actions, it will be presumed that the player will choose the action that is less costly in absolute terms when her play is optimal. Thus, if the optimal amount allocated for  $c$  when strategy  $d$  is played is less than the optimal amount allocated when strategy 1 is played, player  $B$  will choose strategy  $d$ . Only the one-shot game will be analyzed in this project. Proofs for the propositions are provided in Appendix A.

Prior to moving on to the analyses related to an unselfish player  $B$ , I will briefly note the only viable equilibrium strategy for the aggrieved citizen if he is of the selfish type. Since retribution, whether delegated or not, is costly and provides no direct benefit to the player, a selfish aggrieved citizen will always choose to maintain the status quo.

***PROPOSITION 1: In order to seek costly retribution, an individual must be other-regarding and not purely self-interested. A retributive strategy, delegated or otherwise, is only played by an unselfish aggrieved citizen in the one-shot game. A selfish citizen will always choose strategy  $b = 0$ , no matter how trustworthy he believes the political entrepreneur to be.***

In the one-shot game, a selfish citizen will always prefer to not seek retribution. Retribution is costly and provides no benefit to the selfish citizen since the selfish citizen is not other-regarding. The unselfish citizen is averse to inequality, and, thus, may have an interest in seeking retribution if the ability of the terrorist organization, or that of the entrepreneur, is large enough to justify the cost of seeking retribution. Moreover, if retribution is sought by a citizen, it derives from that individual's aversion to inequality. As such, a concern with fairness is a necessary, but insufficient, condition for seeking retribution, whether through working with the political entrepreneur or seeking retribution through the terrorist organization.<sup>1</sup>

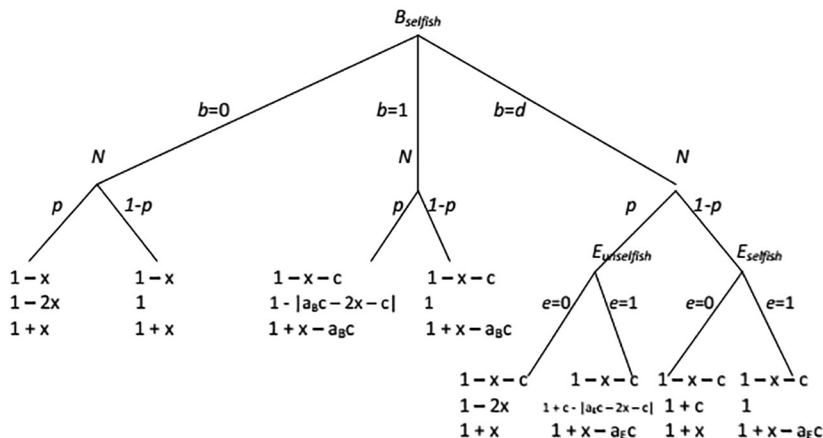


Figure 3.4 Delegated Retribution (Self-Interested)

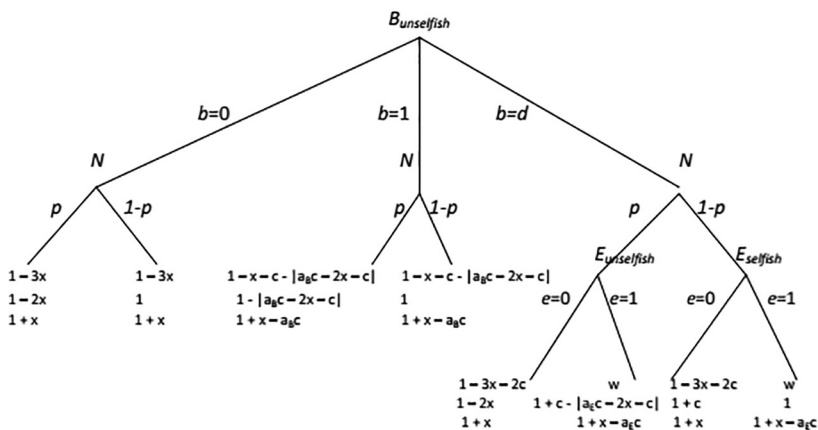


Figure 3.5 Delegated Retribution (Other-Regarding)

**PROPOSITION 2:** *Where both the terrorist group and the political entrepreneur are capable of punishing the government at a rate that reduces inequality to a sufficient extent, an unselfish aggrieved citizen will always choose to punish the government. When neither the terrorist group nor the political entrepreneur can efficiently punish the government, the aggrieved individual will take no action. In equilibrium, maintaining the status quo is never an optimal strategy for an unselfish citizen when  $a_B > 2$ , and is always the optimal strategy for a citizen when  $a_E < 2$ .*

While being other-regarding is a necessary condition for an individual to choose either of the retributive strategies in equilibrium, it is not a sufficient condition. A selfish player will always choose to not seek retribution, but an unselfish player may also choose not to seek retribution when no viable options exist. When retribution reduces inequality to a large enough degree to justify the cost, player *B* prefers to seek retribution. If, however, neither the entrepreneur nor the terrorists can exact retribution efficiently enough, player *B* will always prefer the status quo over seeking retribution through either mechanism. Thus, even if an aggrieved citizen would prefer retribution, whether through terrorism or through large-scale collective action, that citizen requires the sufficient capacity, or trust in an entrepreneur with the sufficient capacity, to effectively punish the government. More importantly, a citizen who eventually chooses retribution through terrorism weighs other options prior to choosing terrorism.

PROPOSITION 3:

*a A selfish political entrepreneur will always choose to steal the resources allocated to her by the aggrieved citizen, and an unselfish entrepreneur will always choose to punish the government. More formally, with regard to the entrepreneur:*

- 1 *A selfish entrepreneur's best response to strategy  $d$  is always to not punish in equilibrium.*
- 2 *When  $a_E > 2$ , an unselfish entrepreneur's best response to strategy  $d$  is to punish in equilibrium. When  $a_E \leq 2$ ,<sup>2</sup> an unselfish entrepreneur's best response to strategy  $d$  is to not punish in equilibrium.*

*b In order for an aggrieved citizen to delegate the duty to punish the government to the entrepreneur when no viable terrorist group exists, the probability that the entrepreneur is unselfish must be relatively high, but that threshold is decreasing in the ability of the entrepreneur. More formally, when  $a_B < 2$  and  $a_E > 2$ , an unselfish citizen:*

- 1 *Will prefer to delegate the duty to punish to the entrepreneur over all other options when  $p > 2/a_E$  in equilibrium; and*
- 2 *Will prefer to maintain the status quo over all other options when  $p \leq 2/a_E$  in equilibrium.*

*c If both the terrorist group and the political entrepreneur are capable of punishing the government efficiently, the probability that the entrepreneur is trustworthy must be relatively high, but the necessary threshold is decreasing in the ability of the entrepreneur and increasing in the ability of the terrorist group. More formally, when  $a_B > 2$ , an unselfish citizen:*

- 1 *Will prefer to delegate the duty to punish to the entrepreneur when  $p \geq a_B/a_E$  in equilibrium.*
- 2 *Will prefer to punish through terrorism when  $p < a_B/a_E$  in equilibrium.*

So long as an entrepreneur is capable of punishing the government efficiently enough to reduce inequality, an unselfish entrepreneur will always prefer to use the resources allocated to it by the aggrieved citizen to punish the government than to keep the resources afforded to it. A selfish entrepreneur always prefers to keep the resources given to it by the citizen since it does not value reducing inequality and punishment is costly.

This book centers around Proposition 3(c). Where trust is high enough, individuals will choose to delegate the duty of retribution to an entrepreneur who can punish the government more efficiently than the terrorist organization. In order for  $d$  to be played in equilibrium by player  $B$  when  $a_B > 2$ , the following inequality must be satisfied:

$$p(1 - x - c - |1 - x - c - (1 + x - a_{Ec})|) + (1 - p)(1 - x - c - |1 - x - c - (1 + x)|) \geq 1 - x - c - |1 - x - c - (1 + x - a_{Bc})|$$

This inequality is satisfied when  $p \geq a_B/a_E$ . The amount of trust necessary for an individual to delegate punishment to the entrepreneur depends on the ability of the entrepreneur to punish the government. This would suggest that the weaker an entrepreneur is, the higher the level of trust must be in order to maintain an equilibrium strategy where the citizen delegates retribution.

**PROPOSITION 4:**

- a ***An unselfish citizen will always allocate an amount to punish the government that brings the two closest to parity. More formally, in any PBE, an unselfish citizen will prefer to allocate  $c = 2x/(a - 1)$  when  $2x/(a - 1) < 1 - x$ , and  $c = 1 - x$  when  $2x/(a - 1) \geq 1 - x$ .***
- b ***Since the terrorist group is less capable than the political entrepreneur, the amount that is allocated towards punishing the government when done through the terrorist group is always more than the amount allocated to the political entrepreneur. More formally, given that  $a_B < a_E$ , in response to any  $x$ , an unselfish citizen will be willing to allocate an equal or higher cost to punishing through terrorism than she would delegate to the entrepreneur,  $c_B \geq c_E$  and  $c_B > c_E$  if  $2x/(a_E - 1) < 1 - x$ .***

Given the parameters of the model, an unselfish citizen's utility is maximized when inequality is reduced to 0. Whether an unselfish citizen chooses to delegate punishment to the entrepreneur, or chooses to seek retribution through the terrorist group, he will allocate the maximum amount necessary to minimize the inequality between himself and the government, but no more than that (see Appendix A). Therefore, the amount allocated will need to satisfy the following condition:

$$2x - ac + c = 0 \Leftrightarrow c = \frac{2x}{a - 1}$$

The amount of retribution sought,  $c$ , is increasing in the amount that was taken by the government (i.e., grievance), and decreasing in the ability of  $B$  or  $E$  to punish the government (see Figure 3.6).

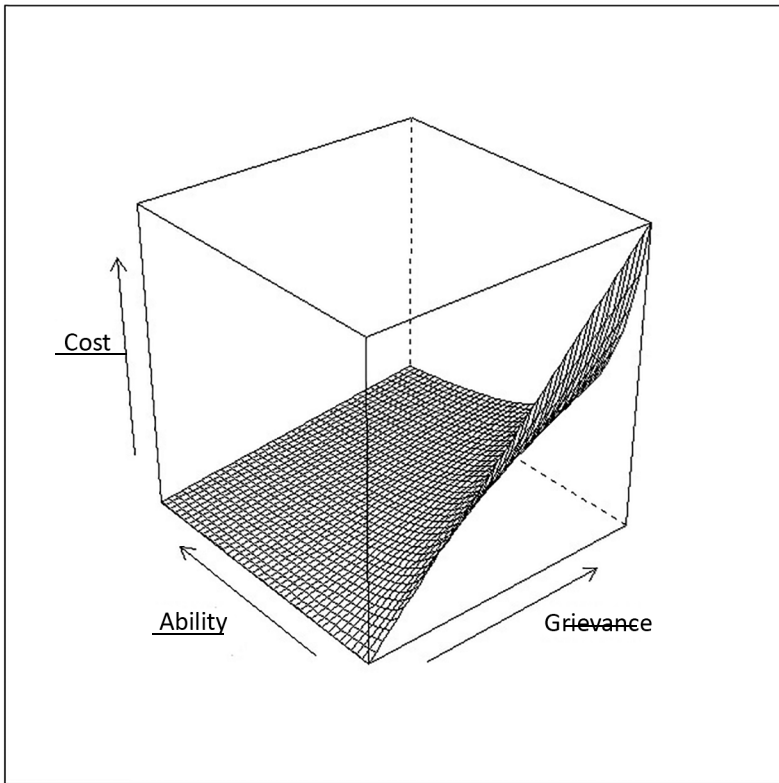


Figure 3.6 The Cost of Retribution

More importantly, assuming that Proposition 4(b) is true, the cost that an unselfish citizen allocates toward retribution via terrorism is equal to or greater than the cost that an unselfish citizen will delegate to the entrepreneur in response to the same action by the government.

### 3.5 Extending the Model

While the model presented above provides a basic representation of the fundamental concepts studied in this book, I apply a simple extension to the model above that provides a closer approximation to reality and allows us to explore the implications of alternative model specifications more readily. This section not only ties the model to reality more thoroughly, but also acts as a robustness check of the model and the crucial propositions derived from it. Moreover, this exploration will also yield important theoretical hypotheses and predictions related to the relationship between interpersonal trust and the choice between the forms of collective action that an individual participates in.

In the basic model, it was presumed that if player  $E$  chose to punish the government, such punishment would be successful. Now presume that if  $E$  chooses strategy  $e = 1$ , there is a probability  $q$ ,  $0 \leq q \leq 1$ , that the punishment will be successful. Also presume that  $q$  is a function that is increasing in  $p$  (Benson and Rochon 2004). In other words, the likelihood of the entrepreneur succeeding in punishing the government is larger when individuals within the society are generally trustworthy, or averse to inequality, than when they are not generally trustworthy. In this scenario, we presume that players  $E$  and  $B$  share common perceptions of the probability of individuals within society being trustworthy and of the probability of  $E$  successfully punishing  $G$  when choosing strategy  $e = 1$ .

The addition of element  $q$  to the model does not affect the probability of a selfish player  $E$  choosing to punish the government since the player does not derive utility from other-regarding behavior. The addition of element  $q$  to the model, however, does introduce a condition under which an unselfish player  $E$  will prefer not to punish  $G$ , even when  $a_E > 2$ .

#### PROPOSITION 5:

- a *A selfish entrepreneur will always choose to steal any resources allocated to her. For all values of  $q$ , a selfish player  $E$  will always choose  $e = 0$  in response to  $b = d$  over all other strategies in equilibrium.*
- b *An unselfish entrepreneur will choose to use the resources to punish the government when the probability of success is relatively high. More formally, an unselfish player  $E$  will choose strategy  $e = 1$  when  $q > \frac{2x+2c}{a_{EC}}$ , and will choose strategy  $e = 0$  when  $q \leq \frac{2x+2c}{a_{EC}}$ , in equilibrium.*



Although the section below will further modify the assumptions of the model to incorporate a selfish player  $E$ 's motivations for punishing the government, the model has not yet incorporated those motivations, and a selfish entrepreneur's best strategy under all conditions remains to not punish the government. An unselfish entrepreneur, however, no longer always chooses to punish the government when sufficiently capable of doing so. Where the probability of successfully punishing the government is sufficiently low, an unselfish entrepreneur will prefer to keep the allocation afforded to him by the citizen.

Proposition 5(b) suggests that even a political entrepreneur who is other-regarding may be coopted by the government or utilize the political capital of the citizens who back them for their own purposes when the probability of successful political resistance is low. This holds true even when the political entrepreneur is strong and possesses significant ability. Since this analysis is primarily concerned with trust, the relationship between  $a$  and  $q$  was not noted. We could further presume, however, that element  $q$  is increasing in  $a$  without qualitatively altering the predictions of the model. Another important implication of this proposition is that the requisite probability of successful political resistance in order for the entrepreneur to choose resistance is decreasing in the amount that the citizen provides to the entrepreneur when  $a_E > 2$ . Proposition 2 notes that an unselfish citizen will not choose a retributive strategy when  $a_E < 2$ . This implies that the greater the costs that a citizen is willing to bear for resistance, the more likely an unselfish entrepreneur is to choose to punish the government when all other variables are held constant.

The addition of  $q$  to the model also alters the behavior of an unselfish citizen. Once again, a selfish citizen will always choose to maintain the status quo. With the addition of  $q$ , an unselfish citizen's likelihood of choosing to delegate retribution is less than that of the basic model for all values of  $q$  lower than 1.

**PROPOSITION 6:**

- a *A selfish aggrieved citizen will always choose to not allocate any resources towards punishing the government. For all values of  $q$  and  $a_E$ , a selfish citizen will always choose to maintain the status quo in equilibrium.*
- b *When both the terrorist group and the political entrepreneur can efficiently punish the government, an unselfish aggrieved citizen will only delegate the duty to punish to the political entrepreneur when both the probability that the entrepreneur is trustworthy and the probability of success are relatively high. Otherwise, the aggrieved citizen will punish the government via terrorism. More formally, when  $a_E > a_B > 2$ , an unselfish citizen will choose:*

- 1 To delegate retribution over all other strategies when  $p \geq \frac{a_B}{qa_E}$  AND  $q > \frac{2x+2c}{a_Ec}$  in equilibrium; and
  - 2 To seek retribution through the terrorist organization over all other strategies when either  $p < \frac{a_B}{qa_E}$  OR  $q \leq \frac{2x+2c}{a_Ec}$  in equilibrium.
- c **When only the political entrepreneur can efficiently punish the government, an unselfish aggrieved citizen will only delegate the duty to punish to the political entrepreneur when both the probability that the entrepreneur is trustworthy and the probability of success are relatively high. Otherwise, the aggrieved citizen will choose to not punish the government. More formally, when  $a_E > 2 \geq a_B$ , an unselfish citizen will choose:**
- 1 To delegate retribution over all other strategies when  $p > \frac{2}{qa_E}$  AND  $q > \frac{2x+2c}{a_Ec}$  in equilibrium; and
  - 2 To maintain the status quo over all other strategies when  $p < \frac{2}{qa_E}$ . OR  $q \leq \frac{2x+2c}{a_Ec}$  in equilibrium.
- d **When neither the government nor the terrorist group can efficiently punish the government, the aggrieved citizen will do nothing. When  $2 \geq a_E$ , an unselfish citizen will always choose to maintain the status quo in equilibrium.**

While Proposition 6 does not introduce new predictions with respect to the behavior of a selfish citizen, or an unselfish citizen when  $a_E \leq 2$ , it narrows the parameters under which an unselfish citizen will choose to delegate power to an entrepreneur when the entrepreneur is strong enough to efficiently punish the government. In addition, trust affects both the likelihood that the citizen ascribes to the entrepreneur being interested in punishing the government, as well as the likelihood of the entrepreneur succeeding in punishing the government. Moreover, since the probability of the government being successfully punished by the entrepreneur is increasing in trust ( $p$ ), trust also indirectly affects the citizen's decision to delegate punishment to the entrepreneur via  $q$ , the probability of the entrepreneur succeeding. It may be argued, however, that political entrepreneurs are often motivated by self-interest rather than a concern for others. Ascribing element  $p$  to the political entrepreneur served to simplify the model and how trust is incorporated within the model. Having introduced element  $q$ , we can now explore how trust affects a self-interested entrepreneur's behavior, and, in turn, the behavior of the aggrieved citizen.

### 3.5.1 *Self-Interested Entrepreneurs Desiring Power*

In order to simplify this analysis, presume that the political entrepreneur is self-interested. Also presume that the leader is motivated by a desire to take power away from the government, and that taking power away from the government can only be achieved by successfully punishing the government and reducing the government's payoff such that it is less than the entrepreneur's payoff.<sup>3</sup> To avoid introducing a new variable at this stage of the analysis, the benefit derived by the entrepreneur for achieving power is presumed to be 1. In order for the entrepreneur to choose to punish the government, the probability of success must be high enough for the entrepreneur to forego utilizing the costs allocated to her by the aggrieved citizen.

***PROPOSITION 7: A selfish political entrepreneur will only choose to punish the government when the probability of success is relatively high. When an interest in achieving power is incorporated into the model, a selfish player  $E$  will only choose  $e = 1$  in equilibrium when  $q > c$  AND when  $x < a_E c$ . A selfish player  $E$  will choose  $e = 0$  in equilibrium whenever the inequalities above are not satisfied.***

In order for the entrepreneur to choose to punish the government, the probability of the punishment being executed and the entrepreneur taking power must be greater than the amount allocated to the entrepreneur by the aggrieved citizen. While the specific value at which this condition is met is dependent upon the value of achieving power being 1, for all positive values attributed to taking power, the entrepreneur's threshold level for  $q$  with regards to utilizing  $e = 1$  is increasing in  $c$ . Since  $q$ , by definition, is increasing in  $p$ , an increase in  $p$  when all other variables are constant should increase the probability that the entrepreneur punishes the government. In addition, in order for the entrepreneur to choose to punish the government, the entrepreneur's ability and the costs allocated to the entrepreneur by the aggrieved citizen must be capable of reducing the strength of the government enough for the entrepreneur to take power. As a result, the unselfish aggrieved citizen's strategy profiles in equilibrium are altered.

**PROPOSITION 8:**

- a ***A selfish aggrieved citizen will always choose to not punish the government. For all values of  $q$  and  $a_E$ , a selfish citizen will always choose to maintain the status quo in equilibrium.***
- b ***Where both the terrorist group and the political entrepreneur are viable options for retribution, an unselfish aggrieved citizen will only choose to delegate the duty to punish to the entrepreneur when***

**the likelihood of successful punishment is relatively high and the grievances suffered are relatively low. Otherwise, an unselfish aggrieved citizen will choose to punish the government through the terrorist group. More formally, when  $a_E > a_B > 2$ , an unselfish citizen will choose:**

- 1 To delegate retribution over all other strategies when  $q \geq \frac{a_B}{a_E}$  AND  $q \geq c$  AND when  $x < qa_{EC}$  in equilibrium; and
  - 2 To seek retribution through the terrorist organization over all other strategies when either  $q < \frac{a_B}{a_E}$  OR  $q < c$  OR when  $x \geq qa_{EC}$  in equilibrium.
- c **Where only the political entrepreneur is a viable option for retribution, an unselfish aggrieved citizen will only choose to delegate the duty to punish to the entrepreneur when the likelihood of successful punishment is relatively high and the grievances suffered are relatively low. Otherwise, an unselfish aggrieved citizen will choose to do nothing. More formally, when  $a_E > 2 \geq a_B$ , an unselfish citizen will choose:**
- 1 To delegate retribution over all other strategies when  $q \geq \frac{2}{a_E}$  AND  $q \geq c$  AND when  $x < qa_{EC}$  in equilibrium; and
  - 2 To maintain the status quo over all other strategies when  $q < \frac{2}{a_E}$  OR  $q < c$  OR when  $x \geq qa_{EC}$  in equilibrium.
- d **When  $2 \geq a_E$ , an unselfish citizen will always choose to maintain the status quo in equilibrium.**

Under the parameters of the model presented in this section, an unselfish aggrieved citizen will choose to delegate the duty to punish the government to a selfish entrepreneur when the entrepreneur's interests favor punishing the government, the entrepreneur has the means to punish the government, and the probability of successfully punishing the government is high enough. As noted earlier, the probability of success is increasing in the trustworthiness of others, and thus, when all other variables are held constant, an increase in trust should decrease the probability that a citizen chooses to participate in terrorist activities. While the basic model simplified the exploration of trust's relationship to the decision to delegate authority to outsiders, the introduction of element  $q$  and the desire of an entrepreneur to attain power allowed us to more precisely model the dynamics involved.

### 3.5.2 Relative Trust and Terror

While the basic model, and extensions of the model above, do not account for levels of particularized trust afforded by the aggrieved citizen to the

constituents and leaders of the terrorist organization, in essence, the model presumes that trust in the terrorist group to seek retribution against the government is absolute, which is a simplification of the underlying dynamics that are at play. Although the basic model does not explicitly discuss particularized trust, one of the crucial underlying premises of the model and this project is that terrorism is chosen over larger-scale collective action when the level of trust the individual places in outsiders is low relative to the level of trust the individual places in the terrorist organization.

A brief examination of the implications of explicitly exploring the addition of particularized trust to the model may help provide a somewhat more realistic picture of the dynamics at play. If we expand the definition of  $q$  such that it may be applied to the terrorist group's probability of successfully punishing the government, and assume that  $q_B$  is a function that is increasing in  $p_B$ , analyzing the unselfish citizen's decision in equilibrium when both the terrorist group and the political entrepreneur are capable of punishing the government,  $a_E > a_B > 2$ , is fairly straightforward. In order for the citizen to choose delegating authority to the political entrepreneur, the following inequality must be satisfied:

$$q_E p_E a_E \geq q_B a_B \xrightarrow{\text{yields}} p_E \geq \frac{q_B a_B}{q_E a_E}$$

The level of trust necessary for the citizen to delegate authority to the political entrepreneur,  $p_E$ , is increasing in the probability of success of the terrorist group,  $q_B$ , which is a function that is increasing in trust,  $p_B$ . Thus, when all other variables are held constant, as particularized trust increases, the requisite level of generalized interpersonal trust necessary to delegate authority to the political entrepreneur also increases.

### 3.6 Discussion

An inequality-averse individual who has perceived some grievance chooses to operate through more efficient, but less trustworthy, channels only when levels of trust are high enough. For example, an individual whose brother has been killed in a government operation may desire to seek retribution. If he trusts others in society, he will be more likely to join a political movement organizing large-scale protests to oust the government. Where his level of trust in others is low, seeking out a terrorist organization within his community and volunteering to be a suicide bomber may be more appealing.

As mentioned earlier, this book centers around Proposition 3(c), which deals with how trust affects an unselfish aggrieved citizen's decision to seek retribution through a terrorist organization or delegate the duty to an

entrepreneur who utilizes more efficient mechanisms for retribution. While the model does not directly incorporate how collective action affects the probability of an entrepreneur's strategy succeeding, the model demonstrates that when aggrieved individuals who are willing to bear the cost of retribution do not trust outsiders, they will seek out less efficient, yet more reliable, outlets for retribution. Where a society is characterized by low levels of generalized interpersonal trust, individuals should seek out retribution against the government through those whom they trust, and shun utilizing a strategy that requires them to delegate power to outsiders. In such societies, levels of terrorism should be higher when all other variables are held constant since individuals are unwilling to delegate authority to those operating outside of their networks. Given that most terrorists are recruited by family members and friends, and are seeking redress for grievances, the model provides a simple framework through which we can analyze an individual's choice between terrorism and other means of seeking retribution (or reducing inequality).

In Chapter 2, this book broadly explored the Arab Spring uprisings in Egypt, Libya, and Syria in order to shed light on why the citizens of some states turn to terrorism when seeking to oust a government. While the model presented in this chapter does not directly discuss collective action within a state, it presents an explanation of why, on average, a citizen of each of the states may be more or less likely to participate in non-violent protest, large-scale and conventional resistance, or terrorism. In Egypt, where the prevalence of civil societies allowed for greater levels of trust among its citizens, a citizen who was capable of and willing to join the resistance was more likely to trust that other citizens who supported the removal of the Mubarak regime would be willing to incur the costs of joining a large-scale non-violent movement. In Libya, the Qaddafi regime's reinforcement of tribal and regional conflict reduced trust enough to prevent many individuals from joining protest movements, yet enough individuals trusted that others would join in the resistance that large-scale violent protest was possible. In Syria, where Assad's Ba'ath regime systematically attempted to reduce interpersonal trust among its citizens, an individual seeking regime change was significantly more likely to turn to terrorism within small networks of individuals whom the aggrieved citizen trusted. Some significant proportion of citizens of each of these countries desired political retribution and regime change, yet each uprising became characterized by radically different methods of resistance. The model presented in this chapter, in part, explains why citizens of Egypt, Libya, and Syria who resisted the government behaved differently.

### **3.7 Conclusion**

What is the relationship between interpersonal trust and an individual's likelihood of participating in terrorism? This chapter attempts to answer this

question by presenting a simple formal model that illustrates how trust affects the decision making of a potential terrorist. In this model, whether or not an individual chooses terrorism over taking no action or joining a more conventional political movement is influenced by the following factors:

- 1 Inequality aversion;
- 2 Perceived grievances;
- 3 The strength of the terrorist organization;
- 4 The strength of the more conventional political movement; and
- 5 Interpersonal trust (both generalized and particularized).

While it is unlikely that these five variables, or any five variables, can completely capture what motivates or influences individuals to participate in terrorism, the model presented in this chapter provides a representation of how generalized interpersonal trust affects participation in terrorism that is consistent with previous findings on terrorism and individual political and economic behavior. Moreover, the model utilizes premises based upon a long line of literature regarding social capital as a foundation to explore participation in terrorism.

The remainder of this book will test the predictions and the implications of the predictions of the model related to generalized interpersonal trust and what I define as relative interpersonal trust. This exploration of the relationship between interpersonal trust and terrorism will be analyzed empirically via individual-level survey data and through cross-sectional, country-level data. While the relationship between interpersonal trust and participation in terrorism is likely to be more nuanced than that presented in this book, it is important to note that the focus of this book is on generalized and particularized interpersonal trust as independent variables. This project is an initial examination of the relationship between trust and how it affects an individual's choice of terrorism over other avenues of political action, and further research will likely be necessary in order to more fully capture this relationship. A more nuanced analysis of network structures, interpersonal trust, and responses to government repression that result in participation in terrorism may be particularly fruitful (Siegel 2011).

## Notes

- 1 It is important to note that the model is meant to examine why and how individuals choose to participate in inherently costly political activity when there are no tangible benefits. As such, this model does not incorporate selective incentives associated with participation. While incorporating selective incentives would create a range under which selfish individuals would participate in some form of collective political action, it would not qualitatively alter the fundamental predictions of the model. Moreover, since this analysis is meant to explore the actions of individuals who join movements rather than the leaders

who may stand to benefit financially or politically from organizing such movements, the assumption is fairly reasonable. Ultimately, many individuals join political organizations or movements in the absence of selective incentives, and this model seeks to explore their behavior and why some might join terrorist organizations rather than groups adopting less costly strategies.

- 2 Without loss of generality, I assume that an indifferent entrepreneur chooses not to punish, and similar assumptions will be made in other cases for the entrepreneur and citizen, below.
- 3 For simplicity, I assume that the entrepreneur must utilize all or none of the resources allocated to her by the aggrieved citizen, and that she may not utilize her own resources within this model.



## 4 Islamist Political Mobilization in Egypt, Libya, and Syria

### 4.1 Introduction

Salafists, Islamic extremists, and Islamic fundamentalists are all labels that have long served as placeholders and catch-all designations for a subset from within the Islamic world that is believed to be both pious and uncompromising when it comes to the acceptance of democratic principles. Where Islamic organizations have voiced support for democratic institutions, they often face significant skepticism or increased scrutiny as to their conceptualization of democracy. Moreover, that skepticism has clouded perceptions of the willingness of Islamists to commit to the use of non-violent means to achieve their social and political objectives (Wolf and Lefevre 2012). While skepticism with regard to their motivations and commitment to non-violent means of political activity may be healthy, the Orientalist or Islamophobic premises upon which this skepticism is often founded is not. Focusing on the ideological foundations of Islamist organization may provide some insight into the means and tools of change that such an organization may use, but this analysis must come from within a framework that accounts for the variables that influence political activity more broadly. In short, the focal point of any criticism of the commitment that an Islamist organization has to utilizing non-violent means should be its interest in increasing its political, social or coercive capacity rather than its particular policy preferences.<sup>1</sup>

Lost in a narrative that has conflated Islamism with terrorism and undemocratic principles is the diversity of the tools for political and social change that have been utilized by Islamists. Both secular and religious organizations have historically proven to be capable and willing to utilize terrorism and other violent means, as well as non-violent means, to achieve their political objectives in the Arab world and beyond. Even a cursory and narrow-sighted view of political mobilization in the Middle East and North Africa reveals that an Islamic identity is neither a necessary nor sufficient condition for a political organization to utilize terrorism. In Lebanon, during its long and bloody civil war, violent atrocities were committed against civilians or with an apparent disregard for the loss

of civilian life by organizations that were implicitly or explicitly associated with various Christian faiths, Shia Islam, Sunni Islam, and secularism, such as the Syrian Social Nationalist Party.<sup>2</sup> The use of terrorism as a tactic by the Palestinian resistance against Israel has largely been associated with Hamas and other Islamic organizations in recent years, but the secular Al Aqsa Martyrs Brigade has historically served as one of the most successful purveyors of terrorism in this struggle (Frisch 2005). Hamas, deriving from the same ideology as the Muslim Brotherhood, may have incorporated terrorism into its tactical arsenal, but its ideological and territorial neighbors in Egypt, the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood, have largely bound themselves to non-violent tactics in their pursuit of political and social change in recent years (Abed-Kotob 1995). The commitment of Hizb Ut-Tahrir to non-violent means of political change alongside an ideology that must be categorized as both extremist and fundamentalist (if the terms Islamic fundamentalist and Islamic extremist are to retain any meaning that is not endogenous to Islamic political violence) further challenges the notion that an organization's espousal of an extremist Islamic ideology is a sufficient condition for that organization to utilize terrorism (Karagiannis and McCauley 2006). The use of terrorism and violence by Islamist organizations appears to be a tactical or strategic decision based upon the perceptions of these organizations of the political tools that are likely to succeed in a given context.

Nevertheless, skepticism with regards to the commitment of any particular Islamist organization in the Arab world to non-violence or restraining the violent tactics that it uses is justified. This is not due to the Islamic nature of such an organization, but, rather, due to their nature as political entities. Whether secular or Islamist, a shifting strategic landscape will alter the tactics utilized by a particular political entity.<sup>3</sup> More importantly, organizations that bear similar ideologies may behave very differently when organizing political activity in different atmospheres (see Bakker, Hill and Moore 2016). Thus, drawing inferences about the likelihood of an Islamist organization acting in some manner based simply on similarities between its ideological and religious proclivities and preferences and that of another Islamist organization may not be particularly appropriate.

The onset of the Arab Spring set off a flurry of discussions regarding the role that Islamist organizations will play in the newly destabilized secular and authoritarian Arab states that experienced marked increases in political activity. Yet while these premature discussions focused on the compatibility of Islam with democracy, most failed to note the wide array of behaviors that Islamists and Islamist organizations exhibited during the onset and rise of collective action movements throughout the Middle East. The Islamists in Egypt did not organize in the same manner as those in Syria or Libya, and did not utilize the same tools of dissent. The mobilization of Islamists in each of these three states was shaped by the political dynamics and conditions within their states rather than an ideological or

religious commitment to a particular mechanism for bringing about change. Thus, the effects that interpersonal trust had on the type of resistance an individual chose, played a significant role in shaping the strategic decisions made by Islamists as well.

A series of brief analytic narratives that build upon the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 3 will be presented in the following section. These narratives will explore the decisions made by the Salafists in Egypt, Jabhat Al Nusra in Syria, and the Libyan Islamic Movement for Change, the rebranded and reconstituted Libyan Islamic Fighting Group. Each of these organizations exhibited a keen awareness of the social and political dynamics within their states, and the behavior of each group indicates a greater fundamental interest in adapting their strategies to successfully position themselves within their respective states than maintaining a strategy that aligns with a particular religious preference. Moreover, between these organizations, as well as within the organizations, we see a wide range of political activity, from encouraging an apolitical stance to encouraging mass collective action to utilizing terrorism to achieve their aims. Not only did each of these organizations utilize a different set of strategies, their own strategies seemed to evolve based on the evolving nature of their own political struggle.

## **4.2 Salafist Political Mobilization in Egypt, Libya, and Syria**

### ***4.2.1 Egypt's Salafists: A Call to Inaction and Mass Action***

While significant attention has been paid to the relatively late entry the Muslim Brotherhood made into the revolutionary foray that arose out of the January 25, 2011 protests, it is the actions of the organization's ideologically more extreme counterparts, the broad coalition of Salafists inhabiting Egypt, that are particularly puzzling (Shehata 2011). Considering the tense relationship between the Mubarak regime and many of the religious elites who represent various Salafist social and religious movements, the vast differences between their own policy preferences and those of the regime, and the history of torture experienced by many of their notable clerics, the expectation might be that the Salafist elite would have been early investors in the uprising against Mubarak (Al-Anani and Malik 2013; Gauvain 2011). In fact, despite efforts on the part of pro-government newspaper outlets to paint the protests as being driven by Salafists, the clerics and movements labeled as Salafist largely took a more neutral, and at times hostile, stance toward the protesters (Hamdy and Gomaa 2012; Stein 2011; Gauvain 2011). Why would the Salafists not immediately seize the opportunity to exert their own influence to topple a secular regime? Moreover, given the purported causal link between extremist Islamic ideologies and political violence, why would the Salafists choose to not encourage armed resistance amid the chaos engulfing Egypt?

The answer lies not in any particular ideological configuration of the Salafists of Egypt, but in the rational interests of the movements. Their political maneuvering during the tumultuous period that followed the January 25 protests and the fall of Mubarak demonstrates a shrewd understanding of both the social and political climate surrounding the revolution, as well as a keen awareness of the range of possible outcomes that could occur in a restructured political paradigm. The behavior of the organizations that comprise the umbrella of dominant Salafist groups was characterized by an appreciation of the likelihood of collective action succeeding, and what role they could play in shaping outcomes both before and after the revolution. Both their inaction prior to Mubarak's removal from office and their collective action in the aftermath of the January 25 Revolution appear to be strategic rather than motivated by rigid ideological and religious preferences.

There is no one unified organization that broadly represented the Salafists of Egypt prior to the protests that removed Mubarak, nor did the Salafists always or often speak with one voice. Nevertheless, the adjective "apolitical" has often been affixed to descriptions of the Salafist stance toward political engagement in Egypt during the Mubarak era (Utvik 2014; Høigilt and Nome 2014; Roy 2012; Brown 2011). To a large extent, this is due to the statements and dictates offered by Salafist scholars themselves, which, on their face, often appear to support this narrative.<sup>4</sup> When juxtaposed against a conflicting narrative that depicts Salafists as political pariahs seeking the immediate and absolute institutionalization of Islamic doctrines through force, a seemingly paradoxical ideology is presented (Wolf and Lefevre 2012). This paradox has traditionally been resolved by scholars and policy analysts by classifying the heterogeneous mix of Salafist beliefs into quietist, activist, and jihadist groupings, or other similar classifications (Mamdani 2005; Olidort 2015, Roex 2014; Wagemakers 2011).

The post-revolutionary political activity of the supposedly quietist Salafists of Egypt, however, defied this conceptualization of Salafists as confined to a narrow and particular position on political activity. Salafists, like other social and political actors, respond to the political context in which they are placed, and the vast majority are far more politically flexible than they have been portrayed (Høigilt and Nome 2014). For the vast majority of Salafist clerics in Egypt, the decision to remain apolitical was an inherently political decision dictated by the social and political forces which they found themselves struggling against. Their quietist positions, as well as the quietist positions of many Salafists elsewhere, were the product of political calculations and a long-term strategic outlook. Even an analysis that takes the statements of non-Madkhali Salafists that have been presumed to be quietist as completely truthful and accurate reveals that the quietist strategy is an ephemeral one, based upon the belief that the development of the appropriate social conditions within the state must

precede the political framework that they seek. Their commitment to primarily focusing on educational, religious, and social endeavors over the course of the last 20 years of Mubarak's rule may have been derived from this strategic perspective, if not the political conditions within the state. Thus, the decision on the part of Egypt's most well-organized and influential Salafists to commit to an apolitical stance was itself the product of strategic political considerations.

When the January 25 protests began, the most prominent Salafist preachers in Egypt voiced opinions that ranged from passionate disapproval of the potentially destabilizing protest movement to tepid endorsements of the goals of the protesters. The prominent Salafist Sheikh Muhammad Hassan delivered a sermon that clearly promoted stability and was moderately supportive of the protests in Tahrir Square that turned it into a global symbol for non-violent protest and democratic transitions (Hassan, February 1, 2011). While Sheikh Hassan later framed his position as one of pride in the undertaking that had been achieved, he remained steadfast in his resolve to maintain order and support the Egyptian army (Hassan, February 11, 2011).<sup>5</sup> His position has often been interpreted as being resolutely against the protests initially and then shifting toward support later, but I find little evidence of a drastic shift.<sup>6</sup> Sheikh Yasser Borhami of the Salafist Call clearly stood in opposition to the protests initially, but fell short of condemning them as sinful (Ahram Online 2011). Most opinions relayed by Salafist clerics in Egypt fell somewhere near the positions of those presented by Sheikhs Hassan and Borhami.

While the Salafist reaction to the protests may be interpreted as the product of a belief that the protest movement did not have a substantial likelihood of succeeding, which could be the product of a belief that individuals were not willing to contribute to collective action, it is not clear how the Salafist clerics and organizations could have benefited from supporting the revolution. The regime, through state-sponsored and semi-official media, had actively attempted to frame the protest movement as one dominated and led by Salafists in a bid to dampen support for the movement (Hamdy and Gomaa 2012). If the government was painting the protests as inspired by Salafists, it would be a fair assumption that the protests being associated with Salafists would have been perceived negatively by many potential and active protesters. Why would the Salafists join a protest movement that it hoped would succeed if their involvement would reduce the probability of it succeeding? Moreover, this presumes that the Salafists wanted the protests to succeed, which may have not been the case given that they were relatively poorly positioned compared to their ideological competitors, the more moderate Muslim Brotherhood (El-Sherif 2015).

A strategy rooted in supporting the Egyptian protests would have been strictly dominated for the Salafists. Salafist involvement at the level of its

leaders would have likely dampened support for the protests from the liberal protesters who initiated the movement. It is unlikely that their ambiguity and hedging would have drastically altered their electoral competitiveness in Egypt post-Mubarak. Had the protests not succeeded, the clerics who had actively supported the protests would have likely faced the wrath of the Mubarak regime. Thus, the middle-of-the-road path that the Salafist clerics largely took, encouraging stability without voicing opposition to the military or to the ultimate goals of the protesters, left them in the best possible position for the future, whether the protests succeeded or not.

Moreover, had the Salafist clerics and organizations decided to utilize violence to further their position in Egypt, such a strategy would have been counterproductive. In an atmosphere where non-violent protests could succeed, like that of Egypt in 2011, their use of violence would have undermined the protests and encouraged violent repression of the Salafist movement by the security apparatus and the military. The use of violence would only have been a viable strategy had they anticipated that the protest movement would fail and armed militias would begin to challenge the regime. In such a situation, the arming of the Salafists would have provided them with means to use their violence-producing capabilities to exert their authority. In an environment where individuals are likely to protest and believe that others are likely to protest non-violently, turning violent would not have increased their clout. Their decision to refrain from violence indicates a belief that citizens were willing to bear the costs of protest, and that the protest movement could succeed in removing the regime.

The post-Mubarak political mobilization of the Salafists indicates a belief that their base of support would be willing to contribute to their efforts. In the aftermath of Mubarak's fall from power, the supposedly quietist Salafists of Egypt immediately inserted themselves into the political realm. They did this in a number of ways, including cooperating with the army, forming the Al Nour Party, and organizing protests to flex their strength (Tadros 2011; El-Sherif 2015). While each of these activities indicates that the party was not committed to remaining completely apolitical, its organization and participation in non-violent protests is of particular relevance to this inquiry. The willingness of individuals to bear the costs of protest in order to defend their positions regarding the imposition of Islamic law and the transition away from military rule in Egypt led the Salafists to choose to mobilize collective action to assert their authority (Chick 2011; Awad 2011; Wedeman 2012). Had the requisite belief regarding the willingness of others to contribute to collective action not been present, such avenues for organizing collective action would not have been viable.

The influential Salafists of Egypt were faced with a number of options before, during, and after the protests that removed Mubarak from power, and, at each juncture, they appeared to behave both strategically and in the interest of furthering their own political clout. Prior to the protests,

their political interests led them to adopt a quietist stance. When the January 25 protests began, their ambivalent stance toward the protests was likely the product of their belief that such a movement could succeed rather than an indication that they did not believe that the protests were viable. After Mubarak's fall, the Salafist clerics of note immediately transitioned away from an apolitical stance, and attempted to exert their authority via the mass mobilization of their supporters. At each turn, rather than exhibiting a rigid preference for one dogmatic ideological prescription, the Salafists of Egypt displayed both ideological dexterity and strategic acumen in their actions and statements leading up to, during, and after the 2011 revolution.

#### **4.2.2 Libya's Salafists: Repackaging a Militant Movement**

The behavior of the Libyan Islamic Fighting Group (LIFG) and its core members also challenges the notion that the political strategies and tactics adopted by Salafists are rooted in religious dogma rather than rational self-interest. The LIFG, while ostensibly created for the purpose of pursuing regime change in Libya, had been initially composed primarily of veterans of the war in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union, and continued to recruit from Libyan veterans of foreign jihadist endeavors (Lacher 2011). Its connection to anti-Western forces in Afghanistan and Iraq, along with its use of violence and adoption of a Salafist belief system, had generated for the group significant suspicion that it was an Al Qaeda affiliate (Farrall 2011; Steinberg and Werenfels 2007). Nevertheless, by the time the Libyan uprising of February 17 had begun, the former members of the group found themselves rebranded as moderates and working with the other militias loosely organized under the banner of the National Transitional Council. In the aftermath of the successful overthrow of Mubarak, the former Emir of the LIFG, Abdelhakim Belhadj, suddenly was thrust into the spotlight as a voice of Islamist moderation in post-Qaddafi Libya (Asharq Al-Awsat 2011).<sup>7</sup>

In the years leading up to the Libyan uprising of 2011, the former members of the LIFG had renounced violence, cooperated with the regime through Muammar Al-Qaddafi's son, Saif Al-Islam Al-Qaddafi, and adopted a non-violent approach to politics (Al Jazeera 2008; Asharq Al-Awsat 2011; Ashour 2011). This approach, which verged on quietist in the domestic context, had earned these former regime opponents praise from Saif Al-Islam Al-Qaddafi and the release of many of the LIFG-held prisoners by the regime. In what was meant to be a demonstrative turn of the Salafists away from their past association with violent domestic and international resistance, they collectively published the *Corrective Studies in Understandings of Jihad, Enforcement of Morality, and Judgment of People*, a treatise disavowing their previous conceptualization of jihad and *takfir*, or the pronouncement that an individual is an infidel (Sadiki 2014).

Just as the prominent Salafists of Egypt had adopted a quietist approach during the pre-revolutionary period due to political considerations, so too did the Salafists of Libya who had attempted to overthrow Qaddafi in the past take on an ideology that was accommodating to the regime. Their relative weakness placed them in no position to challenge Qaddafi, and they were left with either the option to remain in prison and actively repressed by the regime, or to adopt an ideology that validates Qaddafi's rule (Sadiki 2014). They chose to survive rather than to maintain their previous ideological positions.

Despite their professed adoption of a quietist Salafist approach, it did not take long for the former members of the LIFG to enter the revolutionary fray. Within six months of the publication of the newer, less radical religious ideology, the former leaders of the LIFG had shifted back toward a violent stance with regards to the regime (Sadiki 2014). This shift did not, however, appear to have occurred through premeditation or internal pressures within the organization. The Arab Spring had altered the political landscape in Libya, creating avenues of opportunity for the former militants to press their claims through the use of violence.

In a matter of months, the former members of the LIFG had shifted from a position that supported tacit obedience to the regime to a fighting force organized to help bring about the collapse of the regime as a part of a broad coalition (Nordland 2011). Their professed change of heart had been the product of political opportunism, and that political opportunism would influence their decision to disband the LIFG in order to form the Libyan Islamic Movement for Change and enter the civil war alongside other militias seeking regime change.<sup>8</sup> Rather than their agreement with Saif Al-Islam Qaddafi acting as a barrier to them being accepted by the mainstream opposition, that agreement strengthened their position in the aftermath of the events of February 17. They were able to successfully use that agreement as proof that they had become more moderate, and claim that it was the regime's brutality that forced them to use violence. This particularly paid dividends to the former leadership of the LIFG who carried with them experience organizing and participating in armed combat, and were able to take on leadership positions in the National Transitional Council due to their recent espousal of a more moderate stance.

While Salafists were willing to join a broad coalition, and that decentralized coalition was willing to accept them, like other rebels in Libya, they joined as armed insurgents with a clear local orientation (Lacher 2011). The remnants of the LIFG were largely recruited into brigades located in Northeast Libya, in Benghazi and the towns of Baida and Darnah (Lacher 2011). The organization of the Salafists in Libya mirrored that of the rest of the nation, despite proponents of the movement espousing a set of ideological beliefs meant to cross tribal and local boundaries. Rather than organizing a unified movement, the socially



structured constraints and boundaries forced them to join the opposition movement as disparate groups loosely organized under the same banner as others who joined the mainstream opposition.

Had they not taken up arms, their interests would not be represented in a post-Qaddafi Libya made up of tribal and local militias that had the capacity to use violent means against their competitors and coerce obedience from citizens in the locations they controlled. A strategy rooted in non-violence would have prevented them from leveraging their strength into roles in the government that would follow. Moreover, had they not joined the mainstream opposition, any success they had on the battlefield would have likely contributed to the mainstream opposition gaining power, at least tentatively, without affording them a proportional share of that power in the aftermath of Qaddafi's fall. In order to position themselves best, the former leaders and members of the LIFG tentatively accepted a more moderate stance to join the National Transitional Council, and found themselves divided along similar lines as others who had joined the coalition.

#### ***4.2.3 Syria's Salafists: The Syrian-ification of Al Qaeda***

In Syria, Salafist involvement in the uprising was characterized from the outset by violence and terrorism of the nature often associated with "extremist" Islam. This case can be viewed as, perhaps, the simplest case; a jihadist Salafist organization maintains a jihadist Salafist disposition throughout. Such a characterization, however, would not provide an accurate portrayal of the significant amount of political maneuvering and ideological concessions made by an organization that was affiliated with Al Qaeda. Jabhat Al Nusra's focus on the removal of Assad from power, its overtures towards pluralism, choice of name, and willingness to, at times, cooperate with more moderate elements of the opposition all indicate that the organization possessed political savvy and a willingness to compromise to further its ambitions. Rather than behaving as a caricature of a jihadist organization zealously pursuing its religious objectives absent concern for strategic imperatives, they adroitly navigated a difficult terrain and rose to prominence in the Syrian uprising prior to their civil war with the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (IS).

Jabhat Al Nusra's brand of political violence, while both utilizing terrorism and means of violence commonly attributed with terrorism and guerrilla warfare, took on a more restrained nature than that later adopted by IS (Stern and Berger 2015). From the outset of their entry into the conflict, the group has exhibited a keen sensitivity to how it is perceived (Abouzeid 2012). At least outwardly, it has depicted itself as being native to the Syrian conflict and not the offspring of global jihadism, concerned with limiting civilian casualties to some extent, and as part of a larger opposition open to some degree of pluralism. While its affiliation with Al

Qaeda proved to be an obstacle to gaining legitimacy from outside of Syria, it did briefly receive some support for its activities from both civilians in Syria and other opposition groups.<sup>9</sup> This support was due to the combination of its willingness to selectively cooperate with others, as well as the success it was having in combating the Assad regime (Jones 2013).

Nevertheless, in a fractured society, where both interpersonal trust and social capital were low and fear of the security apparatus ran high, terrorism offered the most efficient pathway to challenging the regime's monopoly on coercion.<sup>10</sup> While the Free Syrian Army was often presented as a major force in the early stages of the armed Syrian uprising, it, at best, represented a franchise adopted by various militias to signal their preferences rather than a cohesive coalition with a central command (Lynch 2016). Syria was not an environment ripe for the fostering of a cooperative revolutionary or military endeavor of the scope and magnitude necessary to bring about regime change. This, along with the significant support the regime was receiving from its benefactors in Iran and Russia, made more conventional means of challenging the regime's authority less likely to succeed in bringing about regime change or effectively challenging the regime. Jabhat Al Nusra's flexible network structure, willingness to use suicide tactics in urban settings, and experience with utilizing the tools of terrorism made it particularly effective when contrasted with other groups in Syria fighting at the time. The group's dramatic rise can be attributed to its efficient use of terrorism and suicide bombings in a political environment characterized by the inefficiency of the opposition. As suicide bombings inflicted wounds to the regime in Damascus, Aleppo, and elsewhere, Jabhat Al Nusra's standing in Syria rose (Jones 2013).

While their initial entry into the uprising does not resemble that of the Salafists in Egypt and Libya, their strategic maneuvering and initial success relative to their counterparts betrays an ideological or religious commitment to a particular mode of organization or resistance. They have strategically framed their goals in nationalistic terms rather than global or purely religious terms, and have focused on regime change. Moreover, their coordinated, yet decentralized and flexible network structure has allowed them to utilize a number of different strategies when conducting operations against the regime, including working with moderate elements of the opposition. They have voiced hope for an Islamic, yet vaguely pluralistic outcome in Syria, despite, later on, contributing to the fragmentation of Syria along sectarian lines (Mousa 2016). Although their use of terrorism was predictable, it was also a rational decision based on strategic calculations that took into account the local conditions in Syria.

The entry of IS directly into the Syrian conflict complicates the picture, but Jabhat Al Nusra's largely Syrian nature makes it the more cogent example in this case. The civil war that ensued between Jabhat Al Nusra and IS led to the waning influence of Jabhat Al Nusra as the powerful IS

swallowed up the resources, manpower, and territory that had once belonged to it. This does not, however, negate the success that Jabhat Al Nusra had in the early stages of the uprising. Moreover, the success of both IS and Jabhat Al Nusra in Syria demonstrates that the use of terrorism in a fractured environment that is not conducive to large-scale cooperation may be relatively efficient when compared to other means of resistance.

### **4.3 Discussion**

The Salafists of Egypt, Libya, and Syria faced choices with regard to the strategies and tactics they would use to compete for power in their newly destabilized environments. Scholars have recently begun to categorize Salafists into groups based upon the political role that citizens should play within the scope of their ideology. This conceptualization may provide more nuance than those that depict Salafists through one-dimensional jihadist or quietist lenses, yet provides a fixed and predetermined course of action to groups that fall into a certain category. Within such a conceptualization, Salafist groups, elites, and common adherents simply react to situations based upon a religious script without having the freedom to choose between the options available to others. Quietists remain quiet; jihadists continue to wage war; and the ideologies of these groups remain static. The Arab Spring challenged this line of thought by revealing the strategic and ideological flexibility of the supposedly homogeneous group of rigid belief systems categorized as Salafist. Rather than simply reacting according to their previous statements regarding political participation, they appeared to weigh their options and were willing to make decisions that clearly contradicted their previously stated positions. Their strategic behavior indicates that a rational choice framework is appropriate for an analysis of their behavior.

Each of the three groups showed a willingness to adjust to the conditions with which they were faced. The preachers who had urged stability and a focus on educating the Egyptian people rather than organizing political movements found themselves forming a successful party that competed nationally and leading massive protests throughout Egypt. In Libya, global jihadists who had settled back down in Libya to try to bring down the Qaddafi regime in the 1990s renounced their violent, takfiri past, and immediately reverted back to a militant position when the uprising in Libya began. Al Qaeda's affiliate in Syria, Jabhat Al Nusra, utilized terrorism, but did so while presenting a more moderate image than its benefactors or its neighbors in Iraq, and in a context where terrorism clearly produced successful results for the group. When necessary, all three groups showed a willingness to make ideological sacrifices in order to achieve their objectives, and chose the tool of resistance that appeared to be the most appropriate given the conditions of their state.

The Salafists in Egypt, Libya, and Syria were faced with similar choices in very different environments with regard to their entry into the opposition

movements in their respective countries. In Egypt, where bridge-building civil society had flourished under Mubarak, the expectation that a non-violent movement could oust Mubarak was high, and the Salafists behaved accordingly. Rather than entering the revolutionary movement, where their presence would have possibly undermined the protests, they generally maintained an ambivalent stance, and then furiously organized in the aftermath to position themselves well in post-Mubarak Egypt. The Libyan Salafists of the LIFG chose to enter the revolutionary fold as militants fighting under the banner of the National Transitional Council despite renouncing violence months prior to the uprising. Their organization mirrored the organization of other members of the opposition in that they were locally oriented, and highly independent of the other militias involved. Jabhat Al Nusra entered the Syrian uprising as an independent and highly secretive organization amenable to the use of terrorism, yet also actively attempted to package itself as more moderate than its affiliation would indicate. The pairing of a more moderate tone with the use of terrorism and urban guerrilla tactics in a fractured Syria that found its mainstream opposition unable to coalesce under the command of a central authority allowed Jabhat Al Nusra to rise quickly to the top of the violent opposition's hierarchy. The social dynamics of each state conditioned the behavior of these groups by altering the cost-benefit analysis associated with the relevant tools of protest that were available to them.

#### **4.4 Conclusion**

While the choices facing ideologically extreme organizations are often ignored, the Arab Spring and its aftermath have highlighted the interaction between ideology and strategy. They are not pre-programmed entities, destined to behave according to their inflexible ideologies, but, rather, competitors in the market for political clout with other groups, organizations, and individuals. The belief systems labeled as Salafist include groups with a wide range of opinions on a number of different matters, including political involvement. One of their defining features has been their rigid adherence to a set of religious ideals, yet even they deviated from these principles when presented new opportunities and challenges.

Just as interpersonal trust dynamics conditioned the organization and evolution of movements in Egypt, Libya, and Syria, they influenced the decisions made by these ideologically extreme groups. Where the social order was fractured, political mobilization was fractured and terrorism was a more appropriate tool than others to influence the political situation. When generalized trust was low, but there existed broad local or tribal networks to organize around, forming militias based upon these affiliations offered the most effective means of bringing about their desired objectives. Where generalized trust is high, organizing large-scale collective action may be the most appropriate way to achieve political objectives

if the participation of the group in such a movement does not undermine it. These conditions influence the behavior of virtually all political actors, and not just those with more moderate stances.

## Notes

- 1 This does not imply that an organization's policy preferences and ideological proclivities do not matter. They may serve to increase or decrease the potential pool of supporters that they are able to attract, which may significantly alter the tools of political change that are available to them.
- 2 Amal's shift from a non-violent pluralist political organization to an organization that supported a powerful militia when the Lebanese Civil War began also highlights how political environments shape the nature of the contestation that an organization uses.
- 3 This shift could be either toward a greater or lesser reliance on terrorism and the use of political violence, depending on how the strategic landscape has changed.
- 4 In particular, the Madkhali-Salafist religious framework offers a rigid and extreme interpretation of the concept of Khurooj 'an al-hakim, or rebellion against a ruler, that lays the foundation for a quietist approach to politics (El Gomati 2014; Olidort 2015). The Madkhalis, however, are an exceptional case, and by no means the predominant voice in the Salafist world.
- 5 Later, Sheikh Hassan would be called upon by the Egyptian army to help resolve disputes related to a church burning, and the discontent this caused within the Coptic community (Tadros 2011).
- 6 This may be due to a YouTube video that falsely dates a sermon of his as taking place on January 25, 2011 when it relates to labor strikes that occurred in 2008.
- 7 See Abdelhakim Belhadj's interview with EuroNews as one example of the rebranded Belhadj (EuroNews 2015)
- 8 In actuality, the former members of the LIFG broke down into a more complicated subset of militias, with former members joining militias primarily rooted in Libya's Northeast (Lacher 2011).
- 9 At the time of the drafting of this book, Jabhat Al Nusra had rebranded itself Jabhat Fateh Al Sham, and disassociated itself from Al Qaeda with the approval of Al Qaeda's leadership (Al Raya 2016).
- 10 While the focus of this analysis is on the opposition movements, it is also notable that the Assad regime largely relied on Shabiha and local militias loosely organized as the National Defense Forces to protect its interests, man checkpoints and support the regime's military. This has been necessary despite the significant amount of financial and military support the regime has received from Russia, Iran, and Hezbollah. Thus, not only was the resistance to the regime highly decentralized, the regime was also forced to allow pockets of the citizenry to seize power locally, often utilizing such power for their own purposes.

## 5 The Syrian Protester's Dilemma

What makes Syria so different from the other Arab countries that experienced an increased level of political activity in the aftermath of Tunisia's successful revolution? While, ultimately, a confluence of factors influenced how resistance to the Assad regime progressed in Syria, the protests that arose in Syria occurred under the control of a regime that appears to have long been acutely aware of the role that interpersonal trust dynamics play in organizing resistance. Beyond preventing the rise of non-governmental civil society and groups capable of fostering cooperation within Syria, the regime actively promoted an atmosphere of mistrust that pervaded Syria's urban centers. When the exogenous shock of the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions hit Syria, the low-cost tools that the government used to manipulate trust and beliefs regarding the inevitability of Assad rule throughout the areas that threatened them the most paid dividends. Individuals who wished to organize and join movements of resistance did so judiciously and deliberately, weighing the likelihood that spies may be in their midst. Others who disapproved of the regime chose to remain silent.

Although the model presented in Chapter 3 explains why an other-regarding individual who has suffered grievances might choose not to protest, it does not explain how the actions of those who protest non-violently may be constrained by their belief that others are likely to be trustworthy. This chapter explores the actions, strategies, beliefs, and perceptions of a group of individuals who chose to protest in Syria at the outset of the Arab Spring, and the environment that this protest movement arose in. The crucial insight gleaned from this analysis is that interpersonal trust shapes the methods and tactics used by non-violent protesters, which, in turn, affects the probability of such a movement succeeding. In Syria, where the government's domination and control over discourse fostered an atmosphere of mistrust among citizens, particularly among those in Damascus and Aleppo, the fruits born from their efforts can most tangibly be seen by examining the behavior of those who attempted to bring about regime change in the immediate aftermath of the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions.

The next two sections of this chapter build upon Lisa Wedeen's seminal Foucauldian analysis of the Assad regime's battle for hegemony over discourse in Syria (Foucault 1977; Foucault et al. 1991; Wedeen 1998, 1999, 2002, 2013). Beyond developing a robust cult of personality, the Assad regime under the rule of Hafez shaped and competed within a restricted domain for the expression of political beliefs where individuals were not only expected to refrain from criticizing the regime, but also to actively make obviously fallacious statements that perpetuated the cult of Assad (Wedeen 1998, 1999). The death of Hafez Al Assad in 2000 ushered in the rule of Bashar Al Assad, Hafez's young and seemingly cosmopolitan son who was thrust into the role as his father's successor after his brother, Bassel, died in a car accident in 1994. While Bashar Al Assad's rule did bring about a modicum of economic and political liberalization, his regime did not bring about a paradigm shift.<sup>1</sup> The cloaked language, symbolic requirements, and cult of personality remained in place despite early attempts by some to push the government into opening up a space within Syria for freer political expression.

Bashar Al Assad's regime was particularly sensitive to the idea that it could possibly be displaced. The regime's sensitivity to the notion that a Syria without Assad could exist is particularly evident in the regime's response to Ali Farzat's cartoons during the Arab Spring. As leaders were removed from power, Farzat's depiction of a Bashar Al Assad destined to experience the same fate as Ben Ali, Mubarak, and Qaddafi drew the ire of Bashar Al Assad's allies. While some of his caricatures had been prohibited or disapproved of in the past, Farzat's depictions of Assad on his way out led to the brutal and near fatal beating of perhaps Syria's most well-known cartoonist. As Farzat's cartoons shifted away from broad criticism of the regime to insinuating that the regime's end might be imminent, Farzat transitioned from being a nuisance to the regime to a threat to its existence. A native Syrian voice expressing discontent with the status quo may have been acceptable within certain limits, but expressing the belief that the Assad regime could be replaced was not. The next section of this chapter will examine the regime's response to Ali Farzat's cartoons to illustrate the Syrian government's sensitivity to the notion that it, like other governments, could be replaced.

What role does trust and trustworthiness play in shaping the perceptions of the regime's ability to maintain control of Syria? I explore this relationship through the analysis of an illustrative example drawn from one of the historically most popular satirical comedic television shows in Syria, Yasser Al Azmeh's *Maraya* ("Mirrors"). The particular episode that is the focus of this analysis presents a poignant portrait of the relationship between the Syrian government and its citizens. In particular, it delves into the willingness of individuals to turn on one another when called upon to do so by an agent of the government, and the reliance of the government on citizens to turn on one another to maintain control. Rather than

presenting the government as omnipotent and supremely powerful, it depicts a mindless government agent who does not know why he is doing what he is doing, and a manager who does not have the information he needs. In order to obtain the information, he relies on citizens to willingly discuss the details of another individual's life simply because he has requested those details. To the agent's astonishment, each person questioned reveals all that they know or think about the person in excruciating detail. The regime's ability to gather information does not lie in its own innate strength, but the willingness of individuals to offer up all that they know to the regime and turn on one another.

The final section of this chapter will explore the Syrian protest movement through the eyes of Damascus-area protesters who participated in non-violent resistance. Semi-structured interviews with individuals involved in the protests were conducted in 2016, and this data is paired with data from the product of my fieldwork in 2010–2011 in Syria and notes from discussions with protesters during the protests. The portrait these protesters paint is of a movement trapped between a desire to seek change through large-scale revolution and an inability to create the interpersonal connections necessary to bring about change in the manner that they seek. In particular, this section focuses on their motivations for seeking change, the effect that the revolutions in Egypt and Tunisia had on their actions, why they chose the strategies and tactics that they chose, and why they ultimately gave up on the movement that they sacrificed so much for at the outset of the Arab Spring.

The analysis within this chapter can broadly be construed as Foucauldian in nature (Foucault 1971, 1982). This is not due to a strict adherence to the methodological underpinnings born of Foucault's seminal analytic framework, but, rather, due to the applicability of the tools utilized by Foucauldian analysts in the context of Syria (Hook 2007). The cloaked nature of political discourse in Syria throughout the duration of the Assad regime requires the application of interpretive tools of analysis to derive meaning from such discourse (Wedeen 1998). The political messages and signals sent by writers, producers, artists, and other residents of Syria are virtually all veiled in symbolic and sarcastic rhetoric due to the political landscape and repressive institutions of the Syrian regime.<sup>2</sup>

## **5.1 Caricature of a Dictator**

In the early stages of the Syrian uprising, while images of protesters in Homs, Hama, and Daraa spread across television screens throughout the world, Damascus heated to a near boil but never crossed that critical threshold at which the rumblings would have transitioned into a revolution. Despite the paucity of protest activity in the capital, the atmosphere in the capital had changed. The fear of the Assad regime that had cloaked Damascus prior to the Arab Spring had drastically dissipated. More



people were willing to express political discontent directly rather than through coded messages. Political discussions took on a frank and earnest tone, and even many supporters of the regime were willing to discuss political qualms in a manner that acknowledged the existence of legitimate grievances, albeit while absolving Bashar Al Assad of responsibility for those grievances. It was in this atmosphere that the notoriously sarcastic and metaphorical nature of artistic political expression in Damascus began to take on a darker and more direct form, and Ali Farzat decided to take a risk he had avoided throughout his long and celebrated career: He drew Assad's face.

Through both the closed, socialist reign of Hafez and the neoliberal autocracy of Bashar, Ali Farzat's cartoons provided comedic relief from the latent angst experienced by many dissatisfied by the regime in Damascus (Wedeen 1998, 2013). Touching upon the pervasiveness of the security apparatus, corruption, military inefficiencies, and political overreach, many of Farzat's cartoons are unmistakably critical of the Syrian regime and the political elite, yet many of them were permitted to be published in government-affiliated outlets. Lisa Wedeen's analysis of Farzat's cartoon submissions to the government newspaper, *Tishrin*, provides an interesting look at the fuzzy and ambiguous line between what was deemed acceptable and what was not by the regime under Hafez's rule (Wedeen 1999). Although none of the caricatures dissected by Lisa Wedeen presented direct criticisms of Hafez Al Assad, let alone portrayals of the man himself, and each of the cartoons is critical of the government and society, those deemed acceptable by government agents refrained from challenging the strength of the coercive apparatus of the regime. Those that were rejected by government agents very clearly presented portrayals of the regime that could be interpreted as highlighting its weaknesses.

But why allow any of these critical cartoons to be published in government-affiliated newspapers? What possible benefit can accrue from expending government resources on the dissemination of information that is critical of the regime? Some have argued that allowing for such artistic representations diffuses political tension, while others have argued that allowing for such discourse provides a mechanism for the regime to elicit signals from citizens regarding their level of support for the regime (Guha 1983; Wedeen 1999). Lisa Wedeen broadly argues that such representations are the product of a battle over the symbolic domain in Syria, a domain that may be dominated by the regime, but where the regime and others battle over cultural discourse. Nevertheless, the Syrian government not only opted to allow certain forms of dissident expression, but actively promoted certain types of dissident expression. Why would a government newspaper in an autocracy publish material that is clearly critical of the regime?

By allowing dissident material to be published in its newspapers, the Syrian regime could mold the type of dissident content that is produced.

This did not only mitigate the risks associated with the spread of material that is critical of the regime, but allowed the regime to select material that presented an image that strengthened the perception of the regime's ability to maintain power. This point can best be illustrated by briefly examining a subset of the cartoons examined by Wedeen in her book, *Ambiguities of Domination* (Wedeen 1999). The first image, Figure 5.1, depicts two individuals having a conversation, and an individual with a head as a tape recorder sitting at the next table. The implications are clear: The government's ears are everywhere. The second image, Figure 5.2, shows the image of a baby urinating into a sewer, and generals scurrying from another hole in the sewer while frightened. Here, the generals are presented not only as lowly, but also cowardly. Figure 5.1 was eventually approved for publication by a government agent, Figure 5.2 was not.

Figure 5.1 reinforces the idea that the regime is everywhere. It presents an image of an environment where honest communication and unmonitored discourse are not possible. More importantly, the person sitting at the next table listening in on the conversation is dressed in a similar outfit as those conversing. The regime's informants are hiding in plain clothes, and others are not to be trusted. This image, while highlighting a potential grievance attributable to the regime, also presents the security apparatus as strong and well-informed due to the willingness of people who are indistinguishable from the average citizen to act as its agents. Figure 5.2, on the other hand, presents the coercive ability of the regime as feeble. Not only are they morally inferior, convening in sewers, but frightened by a baby's urine. Whereas Figure 5.1, perhaps unintentionally, serves to strengthen the perception of the regime's strength and dampen the belief that honest political discourse can take place, Figure 5.2 presents a weak regime whose dominant military figures would scurry away like rats when confronted by the innocent. Both images implicitly present the regime in a



Figure 5.1 Approved Cartoon

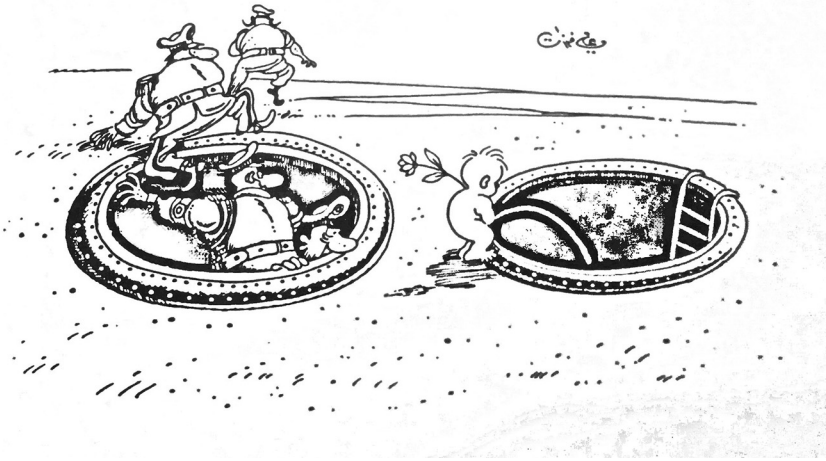


Figure 5.2 Rejected Cartoon

negative light, but one presents an atmosphere where confronting the government is possible, while the other presents the regime as essentially omnipotent due to its agents hiding in plain clothes.

Neither image, however, crossed the line that Farzat leaped over during the Arab Spring when he decided to draw Assad. While both of these images were drawn and submitted during Hafez's reign, Bashar's presidency did not provide a large-scale pivot away from the restrictions on discourse that characterized Syria during Hafez's reign after successfully thwarting his brother's coup attempt. Inevitably, technological advancements and the opening up of the Syrian economy provided avenues of discourse less tightly controlled by the regime, yet tolerance of dissent that propagated messages that exceeded boundaries was minimal. Moreover, the cult of personality that surrounded Hafez did not disappear, but, rather, mutated into a form amenable to Syria's new leader. Although a brief glimmer of hope shined through the fog that had enveloped Damascus under Hafez during the early days of Bashar's rule, hopes for political liberalization were dashed when the dissent and open political discourse that had presented itself during the Damascus Spring, as well as the newspaper Ali Farzat cofounded, *Al Doumari*, were put down forcefully by the regime. It was not until Tunisia and Egypt rose up to remove their dictators that artists like Ali Farzat were willing to openly and brazenly criticize the regime directly.

Ali Farzat's decision to draw Bashar Al Assad was not particularly shocking, given the political temperature of Syria in the aftermath of the protests that sprung up in Daraa in March of 2011. Even prior to the protests in Daraa, many Syrians observed that the fear of speaking out

about Assad had disappeared and that there was a sudden shift in the willingness of individuals to blatantly speak candidly about political matters.<sup>3</sup> The nature and scope of Farzat's artistic attack on the regime mirrored that of the Damascene-educated middle class who were avid followers of his work. As those in Damascus began to criticize the regime more forcefully, so too did Farzat, culminating in his portrayal of Assad in a number of cartoons as a president who was on his way out.<sup>4</sup> Although the decision to draw Assad may not have been surprising, it encapsulates the turn in discourse taken by those critical of the Assad regime during the spring and summer of 2011.

More important than Farzat's decision to draw Assad, however, is the manner in which he chose to depict him. In the summer of 2011, Ali Farzat chose not to draw Bashar Al Assad as a brutal dictator, but as a weak despot who was counting down his days in office. His cartoons mirrored the waning fear of Assad in Syria, as well as the belief among many that there was a very real possibility that Assad would be swept out of power during the Arab Spring. Moreover, he drew parallels between Assad and other leaders, equivalencies that had scarcely been presented by Syrian critics of the regime in the past. Whether critical or laudatory, the vast majority of depictions of the relationship between the Syrian people and the regime were often presented or viewed as unique to Syria.<sup>5</sup> Within this paradigm, Assad played a preeminent role in defining the uniqueness of politics and political discourse in Syria. Farzat and other producers of dissident political content challenged both the presumption of the existence of an inextricable link between the Assad family and governance in Syria, and the belief that Assad's Syria was inherently different from other Arab states.<sup>6</sup>

Figure 5.1 and Figure 5.2 represent the type of political criticism that Farzat produced prior to the Arab Spring. While Figure 5.1 was allowed to be published and Figure 5.2 was rejected by officials, both present indirect, though poignant, political criticisms that operate within the bounds of political discourse that Syrians had grown accustomed to throughout the Assad regime. Figure 5.3, Figure 5.4, and Figure 5.5, on the other hand, were drawn in the aftermath of Syria's entry into the Arab Spring, and do not operate within the constraints previously abided by Syrian critics of the regime.<sup>7</sup> Beyond Assad being caricatured, Farzat's cartoons were revolutionary in their depiction of the regime as one with a lifespan that is nearing its end. Figure 5.2 was rejected by authorities for its depiction of a key component of the regime's coercive apparatus as corrupt and weak. The three cartoons presented herein that were drawn after the Arab Spring go beyond Figure 5.2 by directly challenging Assad's ability to maintain power.

In Figure 5.3, Bashar Al Assad is depicted as a small, frail man, standing in front of a mirror and staring at a reflection of himself that shows him as large, strong, and powerful. Bashar Al Assad's strength is an



*Figure 5.3* The Illusion of Power

illusion, and he is delusional to believe that what he sees in the mirror is true. While the message may be interpreted as one regarding Bashar Al Assad's own state of mind, the primary implications of the message relate to Assad's ability to coerce.<sup>8</sup> Assad's strength is an illusion, not just to Assad, but to all who perceive him to be powerful. In reality, Assad is weak, and not the domineering figure that appears in the mirror. The image is one of Farzat's earlier depictions of Assad during the Arab Spring, and is meant to undermine perceptions of his ability to coerce submission to his rule in Syria.

While Figure 5.3 presents Bashar Al Assad as weak, Figure 5.4 goes beyond presenting him as weak, and insinuates that his days are numbered. Unlike Figure 5.3, Figure 5.4 does not leave to the reader room to interpret what Assad's weakness means with regard to his fate. Bashar Al Assad is portrayed covering his eyes, pulling a day off of the calendar, afraid of what will follow the next day. The day that's being torn off the calendar is a Thursday, the day before Friday, when "Days of Rage" took place in Syria and elsewhere during the Arab Spring. Assad is worried that his tenure as the leader of Syria may be coming to an end and that his days are numbered. Moreover, his fear is related to what might occur on Friday, a day that individuals had organized non-violent protests around.



Figure 5.4 Counting Down the Days

Implicit in this portrayal is the message that collective action can defeat Assad, and that the Syrian people have the power to remove Assad. In Farzat's cartoon, Assad's power is not intrinsic, it relies on the complacency of the Syrian citizens. If the individuals unite in protest against Assad, Assad can be removed from power.

Finally, in Figure 5.5, Assad is shown trying to hitch a ride with Muammar Al-Qaddafi, clearly linking his fate to the fate of Libya's autocratic ruler. This cartoon was released in early August, when Qaddafi's removal from power was virtually certain, and protests spread throughout Syria outside of the main population centers of Aleppo and Damascus. His portrayal of Assad moves beyond insinuations of weakness or the potential for his removal to a direct statement regarding the inevitability of his demise. Moreover, much of the cult surrounding both Hafez Al Assad and, subsequently, Bashar Al Assad revolved around differentiating the



Figure 5.5 Hitching a Ride with Qaddafi

relationship between the Assads and Syria from that between other rulers and their citizens. This cartoon explicitly draws parallels between the fates of other dictators in the region and Bashar Al Assad. While it would be impossible to locate the precise moment at which the frustration of the regime and its supporters with Farzat reached the boiling point, Ali Farzat was brutally attacked by regime-affiliated militiamen soon after releasing this cartoon.<sup>9</sup>

Ali Farzat's decision to draw Assad in his cartoons during the Arab Spring represented a challenge to the regime's authority, but how he represents Assad is also relevant. In each of Farzat's cartoons, including those not presented in this book, Farzat depicts Assad and his coercive capabilities as weak and ineffectual. Even prior to the Arab Spring, the regime showed a particular sensitivity to representation of its coercive apparatus as fragile and inept, as is exemplified by the regime's rejection of Figure 5.2 in the 1990s. During the Arab Spring, Farzat built upon his previous criticisms of the regime, and extended them to Assad himself, challenging the cult of personality surrounding him directly. In seeking to challenge the authority of Assad, Farzat did not choose to highlight the grievances of citizens living under Assad's rule, nor his brutality. Rather, Farzat chose to portray Assad's power as an illusion, depicted the people as being capable of influencing his future in Syria, and shows him fleeing his country with Qaddafi, drawing parallels between Assad and the former leader of Libya. In doing so, Farzat hoped to reduce the perception of Assad's strength, and the inevitability of his family's rule over Syria.

As Lisa Wedeen has previously noted, the battle over hegemony in Syria extends beyond physical political positioning and into the symbolic realm,

yet the acquiescence of individuals to the existing symbolic order is itself a form of subservience to the regime. Ali Farzat, alongside other dissident voices, challenged that symbolic order by defying a number of the limits set by the regime for approved discourse. He accomplished this not just by drawing Assad, but by drawing him in a manner that undermined the pillars upon which the cult of personality surrounding Assad stood. He attacked the perception of Assad's inherent coercive capabilities and the notion that to be dominated by Assad is to be Syrian. Through these cartoons, Farzat attempted to foster the belief that removing Assad from power was a genuine possibility, and that such an action could be made possible through endogenous channels by Syrians. While each of these cartoons challenges Assad's authority, the final cartoon shown, Figure 5.5, challenged the relationship between Assad and Syria most directly by likening Assad to Qaddafi, and this led agents of the regime to violently attack Farzat. In resorting to violently attacking Farzat after he released Figure 5.5, the regime revealed its particular sensitivity to both discourse that influences perceptions of Assad's ability to remain in control of Syria and undermines narratives that present Syria as a unique landscape that cannot be related to political phenomena outside of its borders.

## **5.2 Caricature of a Neighbor**

The regime's concern with how Assad's ability to coerce is portrayed and discussed within Syria may be intuitively appealing, as well as supported empirically, but what is the relationship between interpersonal trust and the regime's strength? Throughout the tenure of the Assad regime, a systematic attempt to reduce interpersonal trust and cooperative behavior can be inferred from the behavior of the government. This occurred through both the dismantling of civil society and non-governmental sub-state organizations, and the promotion of an extreme form of cult of personality that encouraged, if not required, citizens to frequently and blatantly lie about their beliefs and opinions related to the Assad family. The Syrian regime's manipulation of interpersonal trust operates as a low-cost mechanism for preventing collective action against the government, and increasing the regime's power relative to any potential opponents (Wedeen 1998).

The coercive capacity of any entity can only be assessed in relation to the ability of the target to resist such coercion. A government that possesses large reservoirs of power in one environment may be relatively weak in another due to the strength of the opposition in that environment (Hirschman 1978). Thus, a state's relative coercive capacity does not only increase when its own resources and tools increase, its ability to coerce also increases when the target's ability to resist coercion decreases. Since collective action is inherently a social endeavor, by reducing the capacity of citizens to create the kind of bonds necessary to successfully collectively



act, a state can increase its relative coercive capacity. It is for this reason that the Assad regime dedicated resources to reducing social capital and interpersonal trust in Syria, particularly in the major urban centers of Aleppo and Damascus.

The efforts of the Assad regime to suppress the rise of civil society and non-governmental organizations in Syria have been well documented. While Hafez and, subsequently, Bashar slowly instituted economic and political reforms intended to provide a modicum of liberalization to its closed system, such reforms rarely extended to the domain of civil society (Hopfinger and Boeckler 1996; Wedeen 2013; Hinnebusch 1993, 1995; Heydemann and Leenders 2013).<sup>10</sup> This aversion to opening up the doors to autonomous associational life is not merely the product of elite preferences. While limited economic liberalization allowed for more competition in the marketplace, the increased privatization of the provision of social services in Syria would have led to greater levels of cooperation to occur outside of the immediate control of the regime. This, in turn, would have led to social network structures that could potentially produce political competitors, and increase the belief that others in society are willing to cooperate to achieve their goals independent of the government. Unlike in Egypt under Mubarak, where the state's inability to provide adequate services led to the increased tolerance of a robust and autonomous civil society (Berman 2003), the Syrian regime did not provide avenues for the formation of autonomous associations capable of delivering social services. Where associations that brought people together in Syria were allowed to take hold, such associations were either directly or indirectly under the control of the Ba'ath Party, government institutions or officials, or members of the political elite who were the primary beneficiaries of the political paradigm in Syria. Not only did these associations reinforce clientelistic and authoritarian norms, they further highlighted the inability of individuals to cooperate without the assistance of the regime. Thus, the Syrian regime allowed for limited privatization of the economic domain since this did not represent a significant long-term threat to the regime without privatization extending to associational life as well.<sup>11</sup>

The Assad regime's efforts to reduce social capital were not just relegated to its suffocation of associational life in Syria. The cult of personality and culture surrounding acceptable discourse in Syria fostered an atmosphere of mistrust (Wedeen 1999). As has been noted, the cult of personality created in Syria went beyond the realm of forcing individuals to repeat believable lies regarding the regime and the Assads, and well into the territory of the absurd (Wedeen 1998). Through the promotion of rhetoric that contains blatant lies, the Syrian regime was able to coerce citizens into actively signaling their unwillingness to bear the costs of challenging the regime, as well as their willingness to lie to protect themselves from the regime (Wedeen 1998). While such lies accentuated the perception that other citizens were not willing to contribute to any

resistance, the mere decision to operate within the boundaries of acceptable critical discourse within Syria signaled an individual's unwillingness to risk challenging the regime.

Moreover, through the government's ability to shape discourse throughout Syria, they were able to control the type of criticisms of the regime that proliferated, and tie those criticisms to the social dimensions of life in Syria. Through their manipulation of critical representations of the regime, Assad and his allies were able to use such representations to their advantage by deflecting much of the blame for the political paradigm in Syria on the unwillingness of Syrians themselves to bear the costs of bringing about positive change. Thus, even discourse that was critical of the Assad regime often served to foster a paradigm that was favorable for political elites. Such discourse did not only present the regime as strong, but also often presented a regime that relied on the cowardice and untrustworthiness of citizens to maintain dominion over Syria.

There is no paucity of critical political discourse in Syria. For a state that has been characterized by rigid restrictions on speech, absolute authoritarian rule, and a capable security apparatus, throughout the reigns of both Hafez and Bashar Al Assad, Syria has produced a wide array of artistic material that presents criticisms of the regime and the social order in Syria, much of which has been tacitly or expressly authorized by government agents. While such discourse rarely directly referred to Assad or specific individuals within the regime prior to the Arab Spring, their intended target was often made clear to those familiar with the political terrain in Syria. On television, a heavily regulated and controlled broadcast medium in Syria both before and after the regime began to tacitly allow satellite television to proliferate throughout the country; Syrians are often presented with depictions of their government and its relationship to the ordinary citizen in an unfavorable light.

The various works of Duraid Lahham, the collaborative effort that produced the satirical sketch comedy show *Spotlight (Buqa't Al Daw)*, and Yasser Al Athma's groundbreaking comedy series *Maraya*, have all been held up as examples of the poignant, yet cryptic, sarcastic, and often dark, commentary on political and social relations that can be found in Syria.<sup>12</sup> Such works often provide metaphorical, or at least fictional, representations of the political and social dynamics in Syria, and the logic and tone of such representations abound in every day discourse throughout Syria.<sup>13</sup> These works and discussions touch upon the relationship between the citizenry and the regime, and seldom present either in a particularly favorable light. While this analysis could have suitably chosen any one of a number of different artistic representations relating the Syrian political system to society, it will focus on a particular episode of *Maraya* to illustrate the relationship between interpersonal trust and the regime's relative coercive capacity as viewed through the eyes of those critical of the regime.<sup>14</sup> Moreover, given the scarcity of data from Syria on interpersonal

trust and social capital, such representations may help shed light on Syrian perceptions of the trustworthiness of individuals in their country, and the relationship that this shares with the strength of the Assad regime.

The relevant episode of *Maraya* aired in 2004 and depicts an intelligence agent searching for information about an individual in what appears to be a neighborhood of Damascus.<sup>15</sup> It begins with an intelligence agent being called into his manager's office and given an assignment. His assignment is to go into the field and look into the background of the Engineer Shagr and his family.<sup>16</sup> His manager tells him that the public has a negative perception of the intelligence apparatus, and for him to go out and obtain information on the Shagr family without using the old techniques. Rather than using force, he is asked to approach people in a respectable manner to procure information from them. The agent appears befuddled by this request, and has trouble initially questioning the first individual he encounters due to his inexperience with conducting his job in a respectful manner.

The first person the agent questions is a store owner who appears to sell goods at questionable prices.<sup>17</sup> After purchasing a box of milk at an exorbitant rate while struggling to restrain himself from losing his temper, the intelligence agent politely and calmly reveals to the store owner that he is an intelligence agent. This revelation immediately strikes fear in the store owner, who subsequently begins to apologize for a joke that was told in his store. He soon begins to name the person who told the joke, and states adamantly that he did not laugh when it was told. The intelligence agent cuts off the store owner, telling him that they can return to the subject of the joke at another time, and that he wanted to inquire about another subject. After asking the store owner about the Engineer Shagr's family, the store owner proceeds to tell the agent about the family in excruciating detail while also claiming to have not known the family very well. These details are tinged with the store owner's nationalistic tone, but are all seemingly innocuous and minor. Nevertheless, the intelligence agent pays close attention to all of the remarkably unremarkable observations the store owner has remembered about Shagr and his family, who had moved to the neighborhood two years prior to this investigation. Among the observations the store owner makes are: 1) Shagr shops at another store; 2) His daughter only eats large bars of foreign chocolate, and claims to be allergic to Syrian chocolate; 3) His son prefers physics to chemistry despite the fact they pay a physics tutor a significant amount to tutor him; 4) Neither Shagr nor his son have a particularly strong command of the Arabic language; and 5) The family both lives an extravagant lifestyle and is cheap. After unloading a long list of details about the family, the store owner points the agent to the Shagr family's former neighbor, Haifa, who he claims can provide the agent with more information than him. This scene ends with the intelligence agent leaving the store, and the store owner frustrated that he forgot to mention that the Shagr family only buys skim milk.

Haifa, who also claims to not know the family very well, picks up where the store owner left off by discussing the family's preferred variety of milk. After providing a long list of details of her own regarding the family, she points him to another neighbor whom she claims knew the family better than her. Although no one points to any real indiscretion on the part of Shagr or his family, none of these neighbors of the Shagr family present them in a positive light, presumably because they believe that the agent is investigating them due to their suspected involvement in politically unacceptable behavior. All of those questioned both attempt to distance him or herself from the family, while also providing the agent with minute details about the family discussed in a manner that conveys general disapproval with the family's choices and decisions. The one exception to this is the trash collector who, while familiar with the details of the family, neither distances himself from them, nor presents them in a negative light.

The agent himself is unaware of the purpose of his investigation. After concluding his interviews, the agent returns to his manager to deliver the product of his work. The manager is astounded by the amount of information he has collected, and remarks that the whole agency would not have been able to gather all of the information he obtained in two days. The agent then tells him that he believes that they should go take Shagr by force and bring him in for questioning. At this point the manager realizes that the agent has no idea why he was conducting the investigation, and informs the agent that Shagr has been nominated to fill a ministerial post and that is why the intelligence agency needed to explore his background.

The security apparatus in this episode of *Maraya* is not presented as omnipotent, nor even particularly competent. The agent was sent on a mission to obtain information regarding Shagr and his family, but was not provided with details of what he was investigating. His manager, while informed of the purpose of the investigation, does not think to provide this information to the agent prior to the agent going out into the field. The only instructions the agent receives is to refrain from utilizing the older, more strong-handed techniques when questioning people. The agent seemingly struggles with this simple task, and does not appear to be trained in conducting an interrogation without utilizing violence or the threat of violence. Nevertheless, the agent was able to obtain more information than the agency expected him to obtain.

Moreover, by the manager's own admission, the whole agency could not have obtained the information as efficiently as the agent did. The manager's surprise at the amount of information the agent obtained indicates that the manager did not expect the experiment to be so successful. What the manager had pitched as a way of enhancing the public perception of the security apparatus turned into a successful strategy for obtaining the necessary information.<sup>18</sup> While the agent refrained from threatening the individuals he questioned, the threat of coercion existed through the position he held. The old, violent methods of the regime may not have been necessary for the

agent to obtain the information, but the previous use of violence contributed to the willingness of the individuals to cooperate with the authorities. The combination of his affiliation with the security apparatus of the Assad regime, and the willingness of individuals to divulge that information to the regime resulted in the agent being able to obtain the information without resorting to force.

When the agent divulged his position as a member of the intelligence agency, the store owner did not simply grow fearful and absolve himself of wrongdoing, he noted a minor incident involving a joke that the agent was unaware of and immediately attempted to shift the blame on to somebody else. The store owner, without prompting, states:

You are from security. You are welcome and hello. It is a pleasure meeting you, brother, but as God is my witness, it was not me who told the joke. It was Abu Sa'id the butcher who told the joke, and he said he heard it from his brother-in-law. And believe me, brother, when the joke was told here in my store, I did not laugh. I did not laugh at all.

(*Maraya* 2004)

The immediate reaction of the store owner was to turn on his friend prior to being asked about the incident or Abu Sa'id. This portrayal of a typical local convenience store owner goes beyond insinuating that individuals in Syria are unwilling to bear the costs associated with resisting the government. This individual is willing to turn his back on others in order to prevent any potential harm from occurring to him, however remote the possibility that any harm will actually be inflicted. Not only can cooperation not be expected from others, they cannot be trusted with private information regarding political preferences. Assad's regime and its supporters are not the only threat to those seeking regime change; those who surround you are accomplices to the regime.

The store owner's fear-induced testimony quickly turned into an enthusiastic and detailed description of the lives of the Shakr family. This enthusiasm was highlighted by the store owner's disappointment at neglecting to note the family's milk preferences. His zeal, however, was only surpassed by that of the neighbors who the agent subsequently interviewed. There was no hesitancy on the part of any of the individuals to immediately cooperate with the agent. While a single store owner's untrustworthiness may not send a message about society as a whole, each of the individuals interviewed showed little concern for the wellbeing of the Shakr family.<sup>19</sup>

More striking than the speed with which each of the individuals divulged the minutiae of the lives of the Shakr family is how each attempted to distance themselves from the family. Both the store owner and Haifa did this explicitly by claiming that they did not know the family

particularly well. The agent reveals near the end of the episode the list of individuals whom he questioned, and states that each apologized to him for not having much information for him since they did not know the family well. Beyond distancing themselves explicitly from them, with the exception of the trash collector, each person placed space between him or herself by implying that he or she was not favorably disposed to the Shagr family. The shop keeper subtly challenges their patriotism by discussing their daughter's aversion to Syrian chocolate, Shagr and his son's grammatical errors when writing or speaking in Arabic, Shagr's foreign educational credentials, and the family's use of English in daily conversations. All of those interviewed present the family as different from the people in the community. While the trash collector discusses the family using more positive adjectives to describe them, ostensibly he, himself, would be from outside of the social and economic orbit of the other members of this community.

The familiarity of the Shagr family's neighbors with the details of their lives presents an inherent contradiction to the claim that they do not know the family very well. The neighbors are either their friends and lying to the agent, or eavesdropping on the family and taking careful note of all of their actions and tendencies. The fact that the Shagr family has only lived at their current address for two years implies that, perhaps, they do not know the family well relative to their other neighbors. Their apologies for not knowing more about the Shagr family indicates that they have more details about other members of their community. Either interpretation would imply that it is an environment in which others are not to be trusted, particularly considering the context in which this information about the Shagr family is being revealed.

The agency would not have been able to efficiently collect the information about the Shagr family without their neighbors both actively collecting information about the Shagr family and possessing a willingness to readily disclose this information to the authorities. Yasser Al Athma frames the government's tactics as representative of a new strategy that utilizes softer mechanisms of interrogation that rely on the willing compliance of citizens. Although such a tactical shift may have occurred to some degree under the rule of Bashar Al Assad, this depiction of others watching and taking note of the actions of others for the benefit of the government is not new (Wedeen 2013). Figure 5.1, Ali Farzat's cartoon that features a man with the head of a tape recorder listening in on the conversation of the neighboring table, succinctly makes virtually the same point and was published under the rule of Hafez. The regime's exploitation of the social dynamics within Syria, and the perception that a paucity of trustworthiness exists within the state, is not new, but has developed into a long-standing tradition.

Also of note is the regime's analysis of the information that was collected by the agent. The agent had presumed that Shagr was viewed as a potential enemy of the regime, and recommended that they bring him to

their department using force. The manager laughs at this recommendation without having examined the files that the agent presented to him. Presumably, had Shagr been investigated for more nefarious purposes, the results of the investigation would have led to the agent's recommendation being followed. While the regime utilizes ordinary citizens to collect information, the application of that information is at their discretion and not according to any legal or regulatory code. Shagr's status as a potential high level official means that the innocuous testimonials of the neighbors will not pose a threat to him. Citizens contribute to the maintenance of the regime, but do not sway the decisions of the regime, nor the actions of government officials.

While this episode of Yasser Al Athma's *Maraya* provides an insightful glimpse into domestic perceptions of the intersection between social dynamics and the coercive capacity of the state within Syria, it is hardly unique in its portrayal of Syrians as untrustworthy. In a remarkably apt exemplification of the collective action problem, a 2011 episode of *Maraya* presents the story of a village anticipating the visit of an important government official to their village. The villagers decided to each pour a cup of their own honey into a large crock, and present it to the official. Each villager, preferring to cut their own costs and assuming that others will pour honey into the crock, decides to pour a cup of water into the crock instead. In the end, the official is presented with a large crock of water that the villagers present as honey. Each villager preferred to free ride on the contributions of others, and thus no honey was contributed to the gift.

### **5.3 Off the Equilibrium Path: Protesting Without Trust**

The mistrust and fear that had been actively fostered by the regime under both Hafez and Bashar Al Assad paid dividends in Damascus and Aleppo in the aftermath of the Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions. While Syria was a late entrant into the Arab Spring, the March protests that hit Daraa in 2011 produced a revolutionary fervor in Syria that many had believed could topple the regime. In a sense, the protests that grew from the arrest and torture of a group of young boys in Daraa were a necessary second spark needed to bring about a larger movement. While protesters in Damascus had been inspired by what they had observed in Egypt, Tunisia, and elsewhere, they recognized that Syria presented challenges unique to their situation.<sup>20</sup> When Daraa's protests gained steam, sympathetic rumblings spread throughout the country, but never managed to approach the critical threshold in Damascus necessary to challenge the regime in the capital.

While the relationship between the grievances being addressed by protesters likely varied considerably by region, they also varied by age, and whether a person had experienced the regime of Hafez Al Assad, or had primarily awakened politically during the reign of Bashar Al Assad. A

young protester who was in college during the time of the protests notes that prior to the Arab Spring, he had largely held a positive opinion of Bashar Al Assad while simultaneously holding a negative opinion of the regime (Interview #1, 2016). A slightly older protester who had gone through adolescence under Hafez Al Assad did not bear the same positive sentiment toward Bashar as the younger protester (Interview #2, 2016). Both individuals cite corruption and the state's repressive security apparatus for opposing the regime, but the older protester had significantly more direct experiences with the state security apparatus during his adolescence than the younger protester despite not having been involved in any political movement in his youth.<sup>21</sup> For the younger protester, his primary grievances related to corruption, and its seeming omnipresence throughout society.<sup>22</sup> Moreover, for the younger protester, the Tunisian revolution sparked an interest in reexamining the history of the regime, and led him to anticipate future grievances. Thus, while the younger protester had experienced a fraction of the repression that the older protester had experienced, the past behavior of the regime led the younger protester to anticipate that the behavior of the regime would cause himself and others to fall victim to the repressive security apparatus of the regime. This did not dampen the enthusiasm of younger protesters, however, as both the prospect of regime brutality and the corruption they had been exposed to provided them with sufficient motivation to join the protests.<sup>23</sup>

Throughout my interactions with individuals who were involved in the non-violent protests in Damascus, what stood out the most was the extreme level of prudence and judiciousness exhibited by them during their participation in the protests. At one point during the protests, communications between myself and protesters were relegated to empty virtual poker rooms on Zynga's Facebook poker application due to a function that allows you to see when somebody enters the room, and the belief that communications on the app were less easily tracked by the government and its agents.<sup>24</sup> While open Facebook pages and groups did exist to communicate information about the uprising, and often tried to announce calls to action on specific days, most of the protesters in Damascus organized through secret Facebook groups that were limited in terms of reach and participation. Of the participants in the group whom I knew, each had joined the group with a Facebook account that used a nickname that would only be familiar to those close to the individual.<sup>25</sup> Such care was the product of an overriding fear of the security apparatus and the reach it has throughout Syria.

This fear, while seemingly universal, did not appear to grip younger protesters to the same degree that it had touched protesters who were adolescents during Hafez Al Assad's reign. An anecdote relayed to me by the "older protester" noted above provides a glimpse into the fear that touched those who had grown up with Hafez Al Assad as their president. He traveled to Midan from a northern suburb of Damascus on a Friday



during the early stages of the uprising, and waited outside of a mosque for the protest to begin. When the Friday prayer had finished, individuals exited the mosque and began to shout a number of different slogans typical during that period of the protests. The “older protester” marched with them and tried to shout, but found himself unable to speak initially. Eventually, he was able to shout along with the other protesters during the short march, but he was taken aback by his inability to shout slogans against the regime. Later, he reached out to other protesters whom he had long-standing relationships with and told them about his experience. These protesters, who were approximately the same age as him, reassured him when they told him that they had also experienced the same phenomenon when they first attempted to shout at a protest.<sup>26</sup> The “younger protester” experienced no such paralysis when he joined his first protest that began in the Umayyad Mosque, but did note that he was afraid at the time. Moreover, both note that many of these initial protests shied away from specifically mentioning Assad, which represents a tacit form of compliance with the norms engrained into Syrian society by the regime.<sup>27</sup>

While fear played a crucial role in shaping the behavior of protesters, much of this fear was not simply the product of the belief that the security apparatus possessed significant technological advantages over them, but a belief that the security apparatus had covert agents in every corner. Protesters communicated to me during the protests, as well as in interviews afterwards, that they had not exchanged their real names with others during any protest. Generally speaking, cooperation between protesters ran almost exclusively through preexisting networks, and protesters did not generate new connections with other protesters. On the rare occasions where new connections were made, they were made only on the basis of a recommendation presented by a close and trusted friend. None of those who discussed their protest activity noted ever meeting a stranger without a referral during the course of their participation in the uprising.

Furthermore, the protesters themselves did not expect that strangers would trust them enough to reveal their true identities to them.<sup>28</sup> One individual noted that he had attempted to reach out to another protester regarding organizing together. They began discussions, but neither could trust the other enough to collaborate effectively, and no cooperation took place. While protests grew in the aftermath of the incidents in Daraa in areas where the preexisting social order allowed for greater collaboration, those in Damascus remained small and heavily decentralized.<sup>29</sup> As noted by the same protester, “Trust was a big problem for us.”

The formal model presented in Chapter 3 was framed as the exploration of the decision to delegate the duty to punish the government through a political entrepreneur or navigate more familiar and trustworthy networks, yet the model is equally applicable to the decision to trust any other self-proclaimed member of the opposition. By trusting another protester with her or his own personal information, a network connection is made that

allows for them to coordinate more efficiently. This increased utility deriving from developing a new network connection, however, comes at a cost derived from the risk that the other person will pass along your information to the regime. Where the risk is too high that the other person cannot be trusted with your personal information, an individual will turn to her or his preexisting network of confidants. Where the size of this network is small, should they choose to utilize non-violent protest over other means, their actions are unlikely to be efficient or produce any meaningful results. Moreover, where an opposition movement is characterized by these small networks that have few bonds between them, the movement as a whole is unlikely to be able to coordinate and collaborate at a level sufficient to bring about their desired results. Thus, interpersonal trust does not only condition an individual's belief regarding the likelihood of protests succeeding, it directly affects the development of broad networks necessary to mobilize large-scale collective action.

In Damascus, a group of protesters were committed to a specific set of tools of resistance, namely the use of non-violent methods of protest to challenge the regime. Small sub-groups of these protesters collaborated with one another through secretive channels to organize protests, but these communities were based on pre-existing networks that had developed organically prior to the Arab Spring. These networks, while seemingly demographically skewed, did not break down along sectarian divisions. One protester adamantly noted the non-sectarian nature of his network, and highlighted that one of his closest compatriots was a member of a prominent Alawite family in Syria.<sup>30</sup> None of the anecdotes or interviews conducted indicated that individuals tended to split along the lines of kin networks. Protesters turned only to their pre-existing likeminded friends for collaboration, if they turned to anybody at all.<sup>31</sup> These networks were small, inefficient, and never managed to produce any tangible results in Damascus.

The intent of this discussion is not to undermine the importance of other potential explanations for why the protest movement during the Arab Spring did not gain steam. Certainly, the security apparatus's coercive capacity played a role, both directly, through its use of violent repression to allocate severe costs to protesters, and indirectly, through its fostering of the belief that anybody could be a covert agent of the regime. The strength of the broader coercive apparatus, which included non-governmental and non-native actors, prevented citizens from laying the foundation for large-scale protests by allowing protests to take place on streets, but stopping them from taking central squares that could house large numbers of people. Moreover, a significant portion of the Damascus population did appear to hold positive opinions of Bashar Al Assad, even if not the regime as a whole. These factors, along with others, contributed to stifling of dissent in Damascus, but at the heart of the non-violent opposition's difficulties resided the abiding mistrust fostered by the regime

through its control of speech and use of the security apparatus before and during the uprising.

## 5.4 Conclusion

The Assad regime's restrictions on discourse and cult of personality were not exercises in vanity. They contributed to the fostering of an environment that could be more easily manipulated and controlled should a political spark ignite in Syria. Of fundamental concern to the regime was that the perception of its relative coercive capacity remain high, both through the maintenance of the belief in its own strength and the weakness of the citizenry. By reducing generalized interpersonal trust in its main population centers where kin, tribal, and ethnic affiliations were less salient, the regime was able to prevent a credible non-violent opposition from arising.

The collapse and containment of civil society under the Assad regime contributed to the reduced levels of generalized trust in Damascus and elsewhere, but was only one of many ways in which the regime fostered the belief among citizens that others are generally untrustworthy. The cult of personality and restrictions on criticisms of the regime that were put in place in the 1980s, and were modified, but continued, under Bashar's reign served to signal the untrustworthiness of the citizens and reinforce the belief that the state could not be shaken. Portrayals of the regime as cruel, dictatorial, or capable of seeing inside the minds of its citizens were tolerated. Portrayals of the regime as weak, or potentially expendable, were not.

The security apparatus also played a significant role in manufacturing mistrust among the residents of Damascus. Through its active and notorious use of secret agents, citizens learned to fear one another, and believe that individuals within society were highly likely to be regime collaborators. Even if they were not, they would likely cooperate with the regime if called upon to do so. Whether individuals in Syria could be trusted during the time of the protest or were actually highly likely to cooperate with the regime is not testable given data limitations. The belief that other individuals were likely to be covert agents can be observed, however, and it had a clear and demonstrable effect on the organization of non-violent protests. Where individuals protested without trust, their movements were unable to form the type of networks necessary to produce the results they sought.

## Notes

- 1 Such liberalization efforts often masked a shift of economic and political power away from the traditional military elites to economic elites more closely tied to the Assad family. One particularly notable beneficiary of this liberalization was

Rami Makhlouf, Bashar Al Assad's cousin, who was said to have had a hand in up to 50 percent of the Syrian economy. While such estimates may appear exaggerated, they illustrate the amount of power and wealth that was channeled to the Makhlouf family during Bashar Al Assad's rule prior to the civil war. It should also be noted that many of the liberalizing policies came with caveats that greatly limited who could actively participate. For example, Bashar Al Assad allowed privatized banks to open, but under institutional and regulatory constraints that greatly limited access to the Syrian market, and ensured that the regime and its allies would maintain majority control over such banks.

- 2 Lisa Wedeen covers the nuances of Syrian political discourse in sufficient detail (Wedeen 1998). The focus of this chapter is on how interpersonal trust fits into the narrative rather than explicating the nuances of political discourse in Syria. Nevertheless, a brief illustration of the difficulty of interpreting political statements, even relatively benign statements, made by Syrians in Syria, may help highlight the need to utilize a structured interpretive framework. I observed a toast that was made "to the health of the President" in a public setting in Old Damascus (Author Notes, 2010). The individual who began the toast had long been privately against the Assad regime, and later would become a participant in the peaceful uprising against Assad. Those who participated in the toast ranged from holding mildly critical views of the regime to being long-time opponents of the political order. The tone of the toast was no different from the tone that would be used by individuals who supported the regime. The knowledge necessary to understand that the toast was made sarcastically relates to the individuals making the toast, and not the words, phrasing or tone used while making the toast. Rather than this being an aberration, it is the norm in Syria, and, thus, it is necessary to use interpretive methods to locate the intent, if not the truth, behind any political statements being made.
- 3 In the semi-structured and unstructured interviews conducted for this project, many specifically noted that something had drastically changed in Syria, and that the "fear was gone" after Mubarak was overthrown in Egypt. This sentiment echoes the conversations I had with individuals in Syria during the early periods of the Arab Spring, including conversations that took place prior to the protests in Daraa. While the willingness of individuals in Damascus to speak out against the government in a very direct manner increased with each successful uprising during the Arab Spring, as well as with rising levels of protest activity in other parts of Syria, I noted a marked increase in the propensity and specificity of criticisms targeting the government prior to the Tunisian Revolution gaining steam. There are no instances of public criticism of Assad noted in my field notes, but on six different occasions between December 15, 2010 and January 2, 2011, in public settings, individuals expressed very negative views regarding the president's cousin, Rami Makhlouf, and the free reign he was given over private enterprise in Syria. Sharp and direct criticisms of the corruption and government incompetence were also noted. Moreover, rather than criticizing the government through symbolic rhetoric and sarcasm, private conversations were often more dark and to the point than in years past. This implies that, although the Arab Spring appears to have had a profound impact on political discourse in Syria, Syrians were already beginning to express their political beliefs more openly prior to the Arab Spring.
- 4 It should be noted, however, that while Farzat has significant and strong ties to Damascus, he was born in, and is from a family associated with, Hama, the site of the Syrian regime's most brutal massacre.
- 5 This inference can be gleaned from Wedeen (1999), but is also backed up by my own field notes from 2010–2011 in Syria, interviews conducted for this

project, as well as anecdotal evidence based upon interactions with Syrians in and outside of Syria. In one particularly striking example of how unique Syrians view their politics and political commentary, an individual remarked to me, outside of the context of a formal interview, that only a Syrian could fully understand Syrian political satire.

- 6 This does not imply that Farzat's work never targeted other regimes, nor does it mean that his cartoons never provided criticisms of generic archetypes of Middle Eastern governments.
- 7 Although only of tangential relevance to this immediate project, it should be noted that the crossing of these boundaries did not become commonplace until after protests in Daraa occurred. While the exogenous shock of protests and uprisings in other Arab states did lead to increased political activity in Syria, discourse in Syria surrounding the Syrian regime did not fundamentally change until a spark from within Syria signaled to individuals that what occurred elsewhere may also be possible in Syria.
- 8 As Farzat himself has noted in a number of interviews, his primary objective in portraying Assad during the Arab Spring was to reduce the fear that paralyzed political opposition in the past (Samar Media 2012).
- 9 The regime has denied responsibility for the attack, but reports from Farzat and witnesses, as well as circumstantial evidence, clearly point in the direction of the regime (Samar Media 2012; Bakri 2012).
- 10 It should be noted that Hinnebusch's 1993 article presumes that along with increased privatization in Syria, there will be an increase in civil society, but allows for the possibility that such civil society may be linked thoroughly enough to the regime to enforce authoritarian norms. Economic liberalization in Syria, however, did not appear to bring about any significant rise in autonomous civil organizations. To some degree, this may be due to which groups were the primary beneficiaries of efforts to liberalize Syria's economy, as well as the strict limitations placed on associational life in Syria. While the rise of forums for political discourse and associational endeavors that was witnessed during the Damascus Spring may indeed provide evidence for the notion that economic liberalization led to an increased demand for civil society, the regime's swift dismantling of that civil society evinces its unwillingness to liberalize along this dimension.
- 11 Had the regime instituted more robust liberalizing measures, such economic privatization may have led to alternative sources of power as well. The regime, however, under both Hafez and Bashar did not allow liberalization to lead to the rise of elites capable of challenging the regime. The primary beneficiaries of liberalization were individuals who can be characterized as members of the regime itself. Moreover, government corruption served to prevent the transition of small businesses into larger sources of economic power, and brought them under the control of regime insiders, often directly under the control of members of the Makhlof or Assad families. In addition, the government instituted formal mechanisms that gave it significant control over the conduct and operation of private entities.
- 12 The case of Duraid Lahham provides a particularly cogent example of the ability that systems of preference falsification have to mask the willingness of individuals to protest against authoritarian rule (Kuran 1989, 1991). Prior to the Arab Spring, Duraid Lahham played a fundamental role in any discussion regarding dissident discourse in Syria. He and Yasser Al Athma were among the most notable individuals involved in the production of comedies that were critical of the Syrian regime (Wedeen 1998). This led many to expect that Duraid Lahham would come out in support of the Syrian protesters during the Arab Spring. Instead, he vocally and forcefully voiced his support for Bashar

Al Assad's regime (Alhakim 2012). Thus, while having played a critical role in shaping dissident discourse prior to the Arab Spring, the mechanisms in place in Syria that were meant to prevent individuals from directly communicating their willingness to support collective action movements against the regime did create noise with regards to the signals that he sent prior to the Arab Spring. The signals he and other Syrians sent regarding their political preferences prior to the Arab Spring were not credible signals of their actual willingness to oppose the regime.

- 13 This can be gleaned from both my own anecdotal experiences and fieldwork notes from Syria, as well as the work of Lisa Wedeen on Syria before and after the Arab Spring (Wedeen 1998, 2013).
- 14 While a number of different episodes of various television shows were considered for inclusion, this particular episode provided the most lucid and direct portrayal of the relationship between the social dynamics of Syria and the regime's ability to maintain control.
- 15 This inference is not made due simply to the appearance of the locations in which the episode was filmed. Yasser Al Athma often highlighted the location of each episode through the use of various regional accents, along with filming in either rural or urban settings. His use of the Damascene accent for this episode indicates that this commentary is particularly related to the political and social atmosphere in Damascus, although it does appear to also serve as his default. In addition, based upon the architecture and landscape, the location of the episode is set in the upper middle-class neighborhood of the Dummar Projects (Mashro' Dummar) area of Damascus. The neighborhood experienced an economic uptick prior to the uprising in Syria, and has been considered one of the most affluent and desirable locations to live in near Damascus. Nevertheless, the Dummar Projects around the time of the release of this episode was an up-and-coming middle-class neighborhood, primarily known as a neighborhood for the educated members of the middle class who were not a part of Damascus' political or economic elite.
- 16 The title, engineer, is used in Syria and throughout the Arab world for those who work as engineers or have obtained degrees in engineering. The title is similar to that afforded to doctors in the United States, as well as in other parts of the world.
- 17 We learn this almost immediately, as this scene begins with the agent buying a personal-sized box of milk at the exorbitant rate of 30 Syrian Pounds, well above the price for the product at the time that the episode aired. Later, the store clerk complains about Shagr usually buying goods from a market further away, despite his store selling products at a reasonable price. He also notes that Shagr was angry when he discovered that the store owner double-charged him for a product.
- 18 The request made by the manager may have, in fact, been due to the nature of the inquiry, which was a simple background check of a potential minister rather than an investigation of a potential dissident or threat to the regime.
- 19 The implication here is not that Syrians are untrustworthy, but, rather, that the perception in Syria of people generally being untrustworthy is relatively deep-rooted and widespread. Having noted that, as shown in Chapter 3, when my conceptualization of trust and inequality aversion is applied to the prisoner's dilemma, a lack of trust among trustworthy people may lead them to take seemingly selfish actions that are often attributed to untrustworthy people.
- 20 This is reflected in both my author notes from 2011 and 2012, as well as two semi-structured interviews that took place in 2016 (Author Notes, 2011; Author Notes, 2012; Interview #1, 2016; Interview #2, 2016). In both interviews, the interviewees noted, without prompting, that they recognized that the

situation in Syria made it more difficult of a terrain for the opposition to navigate than Tunisia or Egypt. Discussions that took place with future protesters prior to Daraa also indicate an appreciation for the difficulties associated with organizing an opposition movement in Syria. Neither my notes nor the interviews indicate that protesters felt that these difficulties were due to social conditions. All individuals that I had interacted with had indicated that their fears were largely related to the level of brutality the regime was willing to engage in.

- 21 In particular, Interviewee #2 stated, "You know how it was, we would be slapped walking into the station and slapped walking out of the station." He goes on to discuss at length the pervasiveness of the security apparatus and the terrifying atmosphere in Syria in the 1990s (Interview #2, 2016).
- 22 Interviewee #1 led off his discussion of grievances with an anecdote about bribing a police officer and followed it up with discussions related to others paying for grades at his university (Interview #2, 2016).
- 23 Interviewee #2 notes that college students and younger individuals were the most active in the protest movement, and he attributes this to their campus communities (Interview #1, 2016). The experiences of Interviewee #1 also reveal a vigor for political activity, but much of that activity appeared to take place without the active communication and coordination of these activities with others (Interview #2, 2016). Moreover, as has been noted by other scholars, youth involvement in the Arab Spring protests may be the product of more complex underlying reasons than the direct grievances they have experienced (Hoffman and Jamal 2012).
- 24 I could not validate whether this mode of communication was, in fact, more secure than other messaging and chat systems (Author Notes, 2011).
- 25 I had been invited to and joined three private Facebook groups dedicated to organizing protests. In each of the groups, I recognized the accounts of a number of individuals, none of whom utilized their real names or photos of themselves. These groups, moreover, were not of tangential importance to the protesters; they were one of the most crucial tools for organizing protests in 2011 and 2012 (Author Notes, 2011; Interview #1; Interview #2).
- 26 Interviewee #2 went on to note that the protest was short-lived and ended upon them reaching a central square that had been blocked off by security personnel along with non-government personnel whom he identified as "Shabiha" (Interview #2, 2016).
- 27 These protests did eventually turn towards direct attacks against Assad, but in the initial stages of the uprising, their refraining from mentioning Assad by name mirrors Ali Farzat's compliance with this unofficial boundary set by the regime (Interview #1, 2016; Interview #2, 2016; Author Notes, 2011; Author Notes, 2012).
- 28 This was noted directly and indirectly by Interviewee #2, and implicitly by Interviewee #1 (Interview #1, 2016; Interview #2, 2016). Interviewee #2 discussed how if names were exchanged, he would exchange a fake name, and that the other person would also exchange a fake name. My notes from discussions with protesters in 2011 further support the answers that the protesters interviewed in 2016 provided (Author Notes, 2011).
- 29 The duration of these protests is also notable. Protesters in Damascus devised creative ways to signal protest without placing themselves at extraordinary risk during the initial stages of these protests. The duration of these protests was generally less than 15 minutes, and protesters would often disperse immediately before entering a square where security officials and regime supporters would be awaiting them (Interview #1, 2016; Interview #2, 2016; Author Notes, 2011). The use of "tayar" protests, which are essentially flash protests, to

signal disapproval with the regime may have been counterproductive (Interview #2, 2016). While such protests may signal a desire for the regime to be removed, they also signaled fear of the regime.

Also of note is Interviewee #2's discussion of the use of violent coercion by security officials in Damascus, which he portrays as relatively restrained in the early days of the uprising. As he describes it, the regime would use significant levels of brutality outside of Damascus, while simultaneously restraining themselves within Damascus. The regime's considerations regarding the use of repression and the product of their repressive activities appear to support how fear and anger were conceptualized by David Siegel in "When Does Repression Work?" (Siegel 2011). While the regime's use of violent repression in Damascus may have been more restrained than in other areas of Syria, it did utilize violence and torture during the early stages of the protests in Damascus, and its use of violence in Damascus escalated throughout the uprising.

- 30 This person also noted that he had known this individual since his days in high school. Other details related to this individual and related to the individual who disclosed this information have been redacted in order to protect the individual's identity.
- 31 Interviewee #1 only attended 1 out of the approximately 10 protests he participated in with individuals whom he knew. On each of the other occasions, he would learn of a protest, often through a secret Facebook page, and attended the protest on his own without communicating with others directly (Interview #1, 2016). Nevertheless, he would have needed to have been loosely associated with a subset of individuals involved in the protests in order to be invited to such a group.



# 6 Generalized and Particularized Trust and Support for Terrorism

## Evidence from Five Arab States

### 6.1 Introduction

What factors influence whether an individual supports terrorism or considers terrorist activities to be acceptable tools for political resistance? While two individuals may possess substantially similar ideological preferences and goals, those individuals may differ drastically with respect to their beliefs regarding the appropriateness of certain tools that may be utilized to further their preferred outcomes. Perhaps the most fundamental concept underlying this project is that individuals will tend to utilize or support the use of tools that they deem to be viable. Where an individual believes that others within society are untrustworthy, that individual will be more likely to seek out or support movements of resistance that do not require large-scale support from those within society.

This chapter statistically examines the relationship between generalized and particularized interpersonal trust and support for terrorism in the Arab world. Support for terrorism, in this sense, is not necessarily active support for terrorism in the form of financial assistance or participation in the operational aspects of terrorism, but, rather, approval of the use of terrorism as a tool to further political, economic, or social objectives that align with the preferences of an individual (Bueno de Mesquita and Dickson 2007). Such support may be active or passive, and is tied to the perceived legitimacy of the use of terrorism rather than the role any particular individual serves in directly supporting terrorism. Moreover, while this project generally focuses on the use of terrorism in a domestic context, the purpose of this particular chapter is to explore the relationship between generalized and particularized interpersonal trust and support for the use of terrorism itself as a tool.

To the best of my knowledge, this study is the first to empirically test the relationship between generalized interpersonal trust and support for terrorism. Much of the scholarship on the motivations for supporting or participating in terrorism has focused on demographic, institutional, psychological, or ideological explanations (Bueno de Mesquita 2005; Bueno de Mesquita and Dickson 2007; Crenshaw 1986, 2000; Sageman 2004;

Merari 2004). Chapter 3 of this book extended the literature on participation in terrorism by developing a theoretical model that integrated the literature on terrorism with the line of work produced on social capital and generalized interpersonal trust as explanatory variables (Putnam 1993). This chapter is devoted to empirically testing one of the implications of the model on survey data drawn from the Middle East.

## **6.2 Theoretical Implication: Interpersonal Trust and Support for Terror**

While the theoretical model developed in the previous chapter dealt more directly with participation in terrorism, the implications of the model with regard to support for terrorism as a tool of resistance flows in a fairly direct manner from the framework outlined earlier. Just as an individual's beliefs regarding the trustworthiness of others affect that individual's preferred tool of retribution, that individual's beliefs regarding the trustworthiness of others affect the form of retribution or political resistance that they believe others who share their beliefs or preferences should take in order to achieve the outcome that the individual desires.<sup>1</sup> In the model outlined in the previous chapter, reducing generalized interpersonal trust affected an individual's likelihood of joining a terrorist organization by reducing the perceived viability of large-scale collective action. Similarly, trust will have the same effect on an individual's perception of the viability of large-scale collective action that other individuals may participate in. So long as a movement's goals are congruent with that of a particular individual, that individual will be more likely to adjust their preferences as to which tools should be utilized by the movement based upon how viable the available tools are. Thus, individuals possessing low levels of generalized interpersonal trust will be more likely to support the use of terrorism by movements whose objectives they agree with.

*H<sub>1</sub>: On average, when all other variables are held constant, an individual possessing low (high) levels of generalized interpersonal trust will be more (less) likely to support the use of terrorism by others in furtherance of objectives that the individual prefers.*

Although the hypothesis above is not a direct conclusion of the model presented in the previous chapter, it is a straightforward logical extension of an implication of the model, and evidence that would support the hypothesis in this chapter would also, albeit less directly, provide support for the relevant propositions derived from the formal model in Chapter 3. Utilizing similar logic, we can extend our analysis to test a second hypothesis related to particularized interpersonal trust. Those who have high levels of particularized interpersonal trust should turn to smaller, less efficient networks to address their own grievances, and prefer that others utilize similar networks when furthering objectives that they support

*H<sub>2</sub>: On average, when all other variables are held constant, an individual possessing high (low) levels of particularized interpersonal trust will be more (less) likely to support the use of terrorism by others in furtherance of objectives that the individual prefers.*

The section that follows will layout the research design utilized to test the hypothesis presented in this section, and the results of the analysis produced through the research design will be presented in Section 6.5.

### **6.3 Research Design**

This chapter will test the hypothesis that generalized interpersonal trust reduces support for terrorism, and particularized trust increases support for terrorism, via the specification of an ordered probit regression model that will be run on survey data from the Middle East and North Africa. The data utilized for this analysis will be multiply imputed and drawn from the first wave of the Arab Barometer which collected data from seven Arab countries/territories: Algeria, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Morocco, Palestine, and Yemen (Jamal and Tessler 2008; Shamaileh 2016). Due to potential errors regarding the data collection process in Kuwait, and Yemeni respondents not being asked the question that is utilized as a proxy for support for terrorism, our analysis excludes both Yemeni and Kuwaiti respondents. The null hypotheses for our analysis are:

*H<sub>0a</sub>: On average, when all other variables are held constant, an individual possessing a higher or lower level of generalized interpersonal trust does not affect that individual's likelihood of supporting terrorism.*

*H<sub>0b</sub>: On average, when all other variables are held constant, an individual possessing a higher or lower level of particularized interpersonal trust does not affect that individual's likelihood of supporting terrorism.*

It is important to note that this particular chapter is not dedicated to directly testing whether generalized or particularized interpersonal trust have an effect on an individual's participation in terrorism, but whether they approve of the use of terrorism as a tool for political change.<sup>2</sup>

The dependent variable for this analysis is *Support for Terrorism* as a tool for political resistance, and is operationalized through the use of a proxy derived from a survey question that asks respondents:

“Do you agree that armed groups are justified in attacking civilians in Iraq in order to resist the American occupation?”

Opposition to the Iraq War, and the subsequent occupation of Iraq by the United States, was overwhelming in the Arab world during the period in which the data for the first wave of the Arab Barometer was collected. In a

2007 poll conducted in five different Arab countries, negative views of the United States' role in Iraq reached as high as 96 percent in Jordan (Zogby International 2007). This relatively monolithic attitude toward the Iraq War allows us to utilize this proxy since those who hold favorable opinions regarding the occupation of Iraq by the United States do not generate an exceedingly significant amount of noise. The use of this survey question as a proxy is intended to capture an individual's approval for the use of terrorism to further political or social objectives (see Tessler and Robbins 2007). Responses to this question were coded as a 0 for Strongly Disagree, 1 for Disagree, 2 for Agree, and 3 for Strongly Agree.

The use of Arab Barometer data, which was funded in part by a United States government grant, to analyze the sensitive subject of support for terrorism in order to resist the United States' occupation of Iraq may be viewed as problematic. Any such fears, however, should be allayed by the overwhelming likelihood that any misrepresentation of the beliefs of respondents due to the sensitivity of the subject matter would likely bias the results of this analysis in the opposite direction of the relevant hypothesis being tested. An individual who generally does not trust others should be less likely to truthfully state in the survey that they agree that attacking unarmed civilians is justified. Thus, the models are more likely to underestimate the strength of the relationship between generalized interpersonal trust and *Support for Terrorism*.

The first independent variable of interest in this analysis is *Generalized Trust*, and it is captured through a survey question that asked respondents:

“Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted?”

While there has been some debate regarding this question's ability to capture the concept of generalized interpersonal trust, studies have shown it to be a reliable measure of social capital (Glaeser et al. 2000; Anderson et al. 2004; Rothstein and Stolle 2008). Survey respondents who answered “No” were coded as a 0, and those that responded “Yes” were coded as a 1. Due to data limitations, alternative measures for generalized interpersonal trust are not utilized as robustness checks in any of the regression models specified. The second independent variable of interest in this analysis is *Particularized Trust*, which is operationalized through the use of a question that asks respondents which affiliation is of greatest importance to them. Those who responded by saying their family/tribe, the smallest available unit provided by the survey, were coded as a 1. All others who answered the question were coded as a 0.

The primary model specified for this analysis will control for *Income* and *Education*. *Income* is operationalized as a categorical variable that ranges from 0 to 9, and corresponds to an individual's decile ranking within her or his country. *Education* also takes the form of a categorical variable and ranges from 0, illiterate, to 6, possessing a graduate

degree. Due to an interaction that has been observed between *Income* and *Education* in studies on participation in terrorist activity, an interaction term between these two variables was also specified (Kavanaugh 2011).<sup>3</sup>

The analysis in this chapter also controlled for religious identity by including variables that capture whether an individual identifies as a *Muslim* and, among Muslims, an individual's level of *Fundamentalism*. Those who were identified as Muslims were coded as a 1, and non-Muslims were coded as a 0. The first wave of the Arab Barometer did not present data on religious identity in Algeria and Morocco. Given that both countries' populations are nearly entirely Muslim, the data for *Muslim* has been coded as a 1 for all Moroccan and Algerian respondents. In a model specified and run exclusively on Muslim respondents, a variable for *Fundamentalism* was included. This variable is derived from answers to four questions on the Arab Barometer, and ranges from 0 to 4. The variable captures four dimensions of Islamic Fundamentalism: 1) whether Islamic law (*sharia*) must be the law of the land; 2) whether women in Islam must wear a headscarf (*hijab*); 3) whether Islam requires the segregation of the sexes; and, 4) whether banks may be allowed to charge interest in a Muslim country. Further information regarding the wording of the survey questions used to create the variable for *Fundamentalism* is included in *Appendix B*.

Additionally, the primary model specified in this analysis also controls for whether an individual is a *Female*, an individual's *Age*, whether the respondent is *Married*, and the respondent's country. Any fears or suspicions regarding utilizing fixed effects via the addition of country-level dummy variables are allayed by the large number of observations present for each country. *Algeria*, *Jordan*, *Morocco*, and *Palestine* are included in the model, and *Lebanon* is reserved as the reference category.

The primary regression analysis was run on a multiply-imputed dataset that was created using the *Amelia II* program and the EMB algorithm it implements (Honaker et al. 2011; Rubin 1987). Due to a significant amount of missing data primarily related to *Income*, 50 imputations were run on the dataset. In addition to the variables included in our analysis, the imputation model includes variables related to *Tribalism*, *Perceptions of Male Superiority*, *Internet Use*, *Economic Conditions*, *Neighborhood Safety*, and signing *Petitions*. The dependent variable, *Support for Terrorism*, was forced to remain ordinal due to the nature of this analysis. All other imputed variables were left unbounded and allowed to take on the full range of values utilized by *Amelia II*, as is the standard protocol (Honaker et al. 2011). A parallel complete case analysis utilizing list-wise deletion is included in Appendix B of this book. Appendix B also contains diagnostics related to the imputation model and the missing data in the raw dataset.

## 6.4 Analysis

What is the statistical relationship between interpersonal trust and *Support for Terrorism* among individuals in the Arab world? The regression analysis and the analysis of the predicted probabilities and first differences that spring from the full model show substantial evidence of a negative correlation between generalized trust and support for terrorism, and a positive correlation between particularized trust and support for terrorism. It should be noted that analyses of the confidence intervals of the cut points and t-tests that were conducted demonstrate that each category of the dependent variable, *Support for Terrorism*, is statistically different from the other categories. Thus, the use of the ordered dependent variables with four distinct categories is appropriate.<sup>4</sup>

The results of the primary regression models that were run are presented in Table 6.1. In each of the models that is in Table 6.1, *Generalized Trust* is found to be statistically significant at the  $p < 0.01$  level, and is negatively correlated with *Support for Terrorism*. Models run as robustness checks can be found in *Appendix B*, and substantially support the results found in the three models discussed within this section that include *Generalized Trust* as a variable. Moreover, *Particularized Trust* is also significant at  $p < 0.01$  in each of the models run here and in the appendix. While these results provide significant support for the hypotheses discussed, they simply tell us that individuals who generally trust others are less likely to be found among those who strongly agree, and more likely to be found among those who strongly disagree, that attacks against civilians are justified. The same would apply to the results of our analysis with regard to *Particularized Trust*, but with the direction of the correlation being reversed for these categories. These results do not tell us about how generalized interpersonal trust or particularized trust relate to the likelihood of observing a response within the middle categories. Nevertheless, these results provide significant support for the contention that individuals who generally trust others are less likely to support the use of terrorism.

Among the interesting tangential results of these models are those related to *Income*, *Education*, and the interaction term for the variables. None of these models found a significant relationship between *Income* and *Support for Terrorism* at the  $p < 0.05$  level, and this includes the models that were run as robustness checks and those that did not include the interaction term between *Income* and *Education*. In addition, the interaction term between *Income* and *Education* did not appear to be significant at the  $p < 0.05$  level in any of the models specified, including the robustness checks in *Appendix B*. *Education*, on the other hand, did appear to be statistically significant at the  $p < 0.05$  level in each of the models. While this analysis indicates that *Income* does not share a conditional or unconditional relationship with *Support for Terrorism*, given the non-linearity of the model, further analysis would need to be undertaken in order to determine

Table 6.1 Support for Terror – Summary Statistics

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Observations</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
Attacking Civilians Categories	5674	0.734	0.812	0	3
Attacking Civilians Dummy*	5674	0.147		0	1
Generalized Trust	5983	0.260		0	1
Particularized Trust	6190	0.245		0	1
Income	4218	4.519	2.78	0	9
Unemployed*	6155	0.535		0	1
Education	6178	2.752	1.748	0	6
Muslim	6190	0.881		0	1
Fundamentalism	5969	2.382	1.099	0	4
Female	6187	0.488		0	1
Age	6174	1.743	1.439	0	6
Married	6140	0.595	0.491	0	1
Algeria	6190	0.210		0	1
Jordan	6190	0.185		0	1
Lebanon	6190	0.194		0	1
Morocco	6190	0.206		0	1
Palestine	6190	0.205		0	1

\*Variable only relevant for analysis in Appendix B.

whether a relationship does in fact exist. This analysis will not be undertaken within this chapter since it falls outside of the scope of this project.<sup>5</sup>

Perhaps more interesting than the results observed with regard to *Income* and *Education* are those related to religious identity and fundamentalist beliefs. Muslims did not appear to be significantly more likely to support terrorism than non-Muslims at the  $p < 0.05$  level in any of the regression models that were specified. Moreover, in each of the models, an individual identified as Muslim was, if anything, less likely to support terrorism than a non-Muslim. Given the substantially homogenous nature of the sample, however, this result may be due to the relatively few non-Muslims in the study. More striking is the fact that Islamic *Fundamentalism* did not appear to significantly affect *Support for Terrorism* at the  $p < 0.05$  level in the model run exclusively on the Muslim population, and was, if anything, more likely to decrease the likelihood that a respondent supported terrorism. While this analysis was not specifically designed to examine the relationship between Islamic fundamentalism and

support for the use of terrorism, and this specific result was not expected, the results achieved indirectly buttress one of the underlying themes of this project: Participation in and support for terrorism are more directly related to the tools of resistance that individuals believe are viable than ideological extremism.

In order to further examine the relationship between *Generalized Trust* and *Support for Terrorism*, predicted probabilities based on the full model presented in Table 6.1 were calculated using Stata's CLARIFY package, which allowed me to incorporate the uncertainty with regards to the imputation model into the predictions that are calculated and presented. The results of my analysis of the predicted probabilities of a Single Jordanian Muslim between the ages of 25 and 34 and with a primary education and income in the 5th decile are presented in Table 6.2. In the first scenario, the predicted probability of a citizen with characteristics noted above was calculated on the basis that the individual does not trust others, and in the second scenario, the individual does generally trust others. The first differences presented show that we can predict with 95 percent confidence that an individual who generally trusts others, given the characteristics noted, is less likely to agree or strongly agree that the use of terrorism is justified in order to resist the American occupation of Iraq, and more likely to strongly disagree with this statement. On average, generally trusting others under the parameters noted reduces a person's likelihood of strongly agreeing or agreeing with the statement supporting the use of terrorism a total of over 4 percent, and results in an over 20 percent change in the probability that an individual will be found to strongly agree that the use of terrorism is justified. The results achieved for a Jordanian citizen were substantially similar to results achieved for the predicted probabilities calculated for respondents from the other countries in my analysis (Table 6.3).

The results achieved are even more pronounced when we analyze particularized trusters alongside generalized trusters. The predicted probability that somebody who possesses *Particularized Trust* is likely to strongly agree with the use of terror is 13.3 percent when all other variables are held constant, as opposed to those who are not particularized trusters, who have a probability of 10.5 percent of strongly agreeing with the use of terror (Table 6.4). If we divide our sample between generalized trusters – individuals who generally trust others but are not particularized trusters – particularized trusters – individuals who do not generally trust others but have particularized trust – and all other individuals, we can see how these groups compare with one another. With 95 percent confidence, we can confirm that particularized trusters are more likely to support terrorism than generalized trusters. Particularized trusters were over 58 percent more likely to support the use of terrorism than generalized trusters (Figure 6.1). When we consider how small the proportion of individuals who strongly supported the use of terrorism was, these differences are relatively large.



Table 6.2 Support for Terror – Ordered Probit Dependent Variable: Support for Terrorism

	Only Generalized Trust	Only Particularized Trust	Only Muslims	Full Model
Generalized Trust	-0.125**		-0.103**	-0.124**
Particularized Trust		0.149**	0.125**	0.141**
Income			0.010	0.003
Education			-0.044*	-0.050**
Income * Education			-0.0005	0.001
Muslim				0.02
Fundamentalism			-0.025	
Female			-0.124**	-0.121**
Age			-0.055**	-0.043**
Married			0.018	-0.001
Algeria	0.293**	0.323**	0.379**	0.311**
Jordan	0.612**	0.607**	0.667**	0.599**
Morocco	0.003	0.094	0.005	-0.003
Palestine	0.343**	0.347**	0.402**	0.341**
N	6190	6190	5455	6190

\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$

Table 6.3 Support for Terror – Predicted Probabilities

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
Predicted Probability (Scenario 1)	0.278 (0.249, 0.311)	0.435 (0.421, 0.448)	0.181 (0.162, 0.200)	0.106 (0.088, 0.125)
Predicted Probability (Scenario 2)	0.323 (0.287, 0.358)	0.432 (0.418, 0.447)	0.161 (0.141, 0.180)	0.084 (0.067, 0.101)
Difference	0.045 (0.019, 0.071)	-0.003 (-0.001, 0.014)	-0.020 (-0.032, -0.009)	-0.022 (-0.035, -0.010)

(Confidence Interval in parentheses)

Table 6.4 First Differences – Only Generalized Trust

	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
Algeria	0.050*	-0.017*	-0.019*	-0.014*
Jordan	0.045*	-0.003	-0.020*	-0.022*
Lebanon	0.051*	-0.027*	-0.016*	-0.008*
Morocco	0.051*	-0.028*	-0.015*	-0.007*
Palestine	0.049*	-0.015*	-0.020*	-0.015*

\* Statistically significant (95% confidence interval)

When my predicted probability analysis is viewed in conjunction with the regression analysis that it was derived from, substantial support is provided for the contention that *Generalized Trust* shares a negative relationship, and *Particularized Trust* shares a positive relationship, with *Support for Terrorism*. In each of the models presented in this chapter and *Appendix B*, *Trust* appeared to be negatively correlated with *Support for Terrorism*. Moreover, the analysis of the first differences of the predicted probabilities that were calculated showed that an individual generally trusting others decreased their probability of either agreeing or strongly agreeing with the justifiability of attacking unarmed civilians in order to resist the United States’ occupation of Iraq. Although the statistical relationship observed in this analysis does not necessarily show that generalized interpersonal trust shares a negative causal relationship with support for terrorism, nor that particularized interpersonal trust causes support for terrorism, it provides substantial support for the hypotheses being tested, and generally corroborates the theoretical framework from which it was derived.

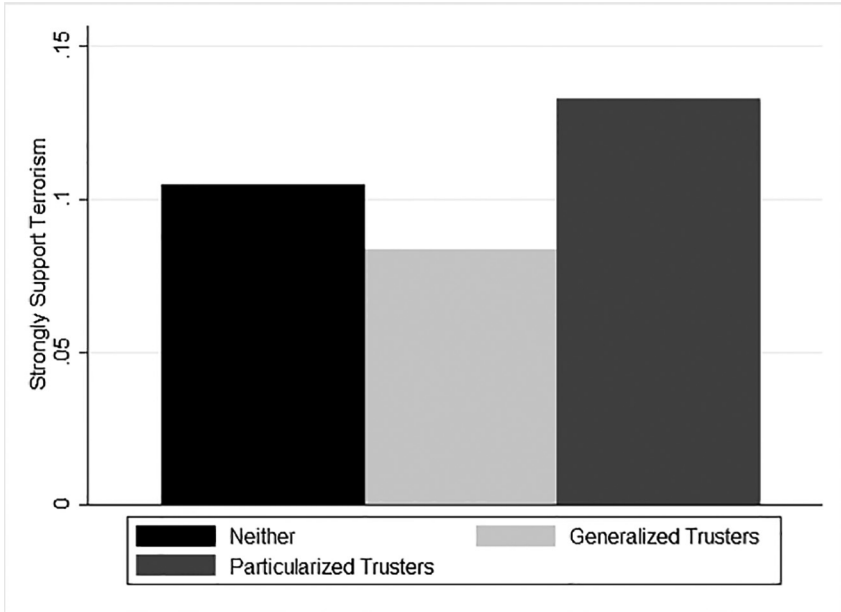


Figure 6.1 Predicted Probabilities for Generalized and Particularized Trusters

### 6.5 Conclusion

What is the relationship between an individual’s level of generalized interpersonal trust or particularized interpersonal trust and the probability that the individual supports terrorism? This chapter provided substantial support for the contention that individuals with low levels of generalized interpersonal trust and/or high levels of particularized trust are more likely to support the use of terrorism. Although the theoretical model presented in Chapter 3 related more directly to participation in terrorism, the underlying premises of the model lead to the conclusion that individuals with low levels of trust will discount the likelihood of large-scale collective action producing the desired outcome, and will, in turn, increase the likelihood that they endorse the use of terrorism.

Societal support for terrorism not only increases the supply of potential terrorists, it creates an environment for terrorist groups to operate and allows these groups to further engrain themselves in the societies whose interests they purport to represent (Mishal and Sela 2006; Bueno de Mesquita and Dickson 2007; English 2004). Support for the use of terror, even when passive, increases the threat of terrorist groups sprouting up or taking hold within a state. The findings presented in this chapter indicate that increasing generalized interpersonal trust and social capital via genuinely autonomous civil associations that bring together individuals from

various sectors of society may reduce support for the use of terrorism as a tool of resistance (Jamal 2007).

Future work on the relationship between trust and support for, or participation in, terrorism may be able to test the causality of the relationship at the micro-foundational level via an experimental or quasi-experimental research design (see Coleman and Ostrom 2011). Nevertheless, the study presented in this chapter presents an important correlational finding, which, when viewed in light of the theoretical framework presented earlier, provides significant evidence of a relationship between generalized interpersonal trust and support for terrorism as an acceptable tool for political resistance. While this chapter presents evidence of a relationship between generalized trust and support for attacks on civilians, it does not test whether or not individuals are more likely to be terrorists when they generally do not trust others. The following chapter will provide further support for the key implications of the model by testing whether generalized interpersonal trust at the country level is negatively correlated with the number of terrorist incidents a country experiences.

## Notes

- 1 While those surveyed in the empirical analysis that follows may not have directly suffered any grievance due to the US invasion of Iraq, it is my contention that the relationship between generalized trust and the acceptance of terrorism as tool of resistance would be similar had they directly suffered such a grievance.
- 2 Nevertheless, support for the use of terrorism as tested may be an adequate proxy for support for terrorism.
- 3 *Appendix B* contains models utilized as robustness checks that substitute *Unemployment* for *Income* and regress *Unemployment* alongside *Income*.
- 4 Nevertheless, a logistic regression analysis on a binary variable that collapses those who “Strongly Agree” with those who “Agree” and those who “Strongly Disagree” with those who “Disagree” with attacks on civilians is presented in *Appendix B*.
- 5 It should be noted, however, that these results do not undermine in any respect previous studies which found income to be conditionally related to participation in terrorism through education (Kavanaugh 2011; Bueno de Mesquita 2005). In particular, Kavanaugh’s study, which found a conditional relationship between income and participation in terrorism, was rooted in Bueno de Mesquita’s economic market-based theory of terrorist recruitment rather than a theoretical framework that relies on beliefs regarding the justifiability of the use of terror. If anything, a negligible result with regards to income’s relationship with support for the use of terrorism eliminates one potential alternative explanation for the results achieved by Kavanaugh, and indirectly provides further support for the theoretical mechanisms outlined by Bueno de Mesquita.

# **7 Generalized Interpersonal Trust and the Prevalence of Domestic Terrorist Activity**

## **A Cross-Country Study**

### **7.1 Introduction**

Do states with lower levels of generalized interpersonal trust among their citizens experience greater levels of domestic terrorist activity? Citizens of any given nation who wish to challenge a government or its policies have available to them an essentially infinite array of possible activities that they may undertake in protest, even when they are constrained by dictatorial rule. Why do the citizens of some nations choose to resist their governments through terrorism, while others protest utilizing means that avoid attacking non-combatants?

While there are a number of variables that may influence the prevalence of terrorism within a society, the central proposition of this book is that low levels of generalized interpersonal trust lead to higher probabilities that individuals choose terrorism and that political resistance within societies is characterized by terrorist activity. Chapter 2 explored the Arab Spring uprisings in Egypt, Libya, and Syria, and presented evidence of the role that generalized interpersonal trust plays in the decision regarding which kind of resistance movements individuals join and form in response to similar political and economic grievances. That analysis, however, does not present any evidence outside of the Arab world and is provided as a motivational exploration, while this chapter will empirically analyze the relationship between generalized interpersonal trust and domestic terrorism globally. This chapter will extend the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 3 in order to provide theoretical clarity, and subsequently, test the hypothesis that states with lower levels of generalized interpersonal trust, on average, experience greater levels of domestic terrorist activity utilizing a two-stage ordinary least-squares regression model.

### **7.2 Theoretical Extension and Hypothesis**

While Chapter 3 presented a theory that related generalized interpersonal trust to an individual's decision to participate in terrorism, it did not directly link generalized interpersonal trust to the prevalence of terrorism

within a state or society. The preeminent theoretical proposition presented in Chapter 3 stated that the choice of terrorism over large-scale collective action by an individual is the product of low levels of generalized interpersonal trust. In other words, on average, individuals with lower levels of interpersonal trust are more likely to participate in terrorism than individuals with higher levels of generalized interpersonal trust when all other variables are held constant.

But how does generalized interpersonal trust affect the amount of domestic terrorist activity a state or society experiences? If we accept the aforementioned proposition regarding an individual's level of generalized interpersonal trust and their likelihood of participating in terrorism as true, we can utilize it as a premise. We can then add the following proposition as a premise:

*On average, where a condition or characteristic of individuals leads those individuals to be more likely to participate in terrorism, a state whose residents are more likely to possess that condition or characteristic will experience higher levels of terrorism within their states.*

If we accept these two premises as true, we can then conclude that, on average, states whose residents possess lower levels of generalized interpersonal trust will experience higher levels of domestic terrorism. This produces the hypothesis that the remainder of this chapter is dedicated to studying and testing:

*Hypothesis: On average, when all other variables are held constant, a state with higher (lower) levels of generalized interpersonal trust among its residents will have lower (higher) levels of domestic terrorist activity.*

The following section will provide an explanation of the research design utilized to test the hypothesis above.

### **7.3 Research Design**

The correlation between generalized interpersonal trust and domestic terrorism will be tested using a two-stage least-squares regression model due to the potentially endogenous relationship between terrorism and trust (Blomberg et al. 2011; Echebarria-Echabe and Fernandez-Guede 2006). Studies have shown that terrorist attacks may lead to increased levels of racial prejudice and mistrust within the attacked society (Echebarria-Echabe and Fernandez-Guede 2006). Moreover, a recent cross-country study that explored the effects of terrorism on economic performance found that terrorism influences economic growth both directly and indirectly through its effect on trust. Given the relatively intuitive reasons why terrorist attacks may reduce generalized interpersonal trust within a society, as well as the empirical support for the claim, the empirical

Table 7.1 Domestic Terror – Summary Statistics

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Observations</i>	<i>Mean</i>	<i>Standard Deviation</i>	<i>Minimum</i>	<i>Maximum</i>
<b>Trust</b>	110	24.3	13.1	3.8	74.2
<b>Grievances</b>	110	5.7	2.2	1	9.9
<b>Ethnic Fractionalization</b>	109	0.41	0.24	0.002	0.93
<b>Internet Usage</b>	109	0.0075	0.0167	0.00000003	0.1259
<b>Terrorism</b>	110	46.5	127.4	0	877
<b>Economic Development</b>	108	13491	12764	645	48157
<b>Government Performance</b>	110	0.23	0.96	-1.67	2.19
<b>Education</b>	110	91.2	9.0	39.2	100
<b>Unemployment</b>	110	9.0	7.4	.9	48
<b>Democracy</b>	110	5.4	5.8	-10	10
<b>Population</b>	109	16.6	1.5	12.6	21.0
<b>Civil War</b>	110	0.027	0.164	0	1

analysis in this chapter will center on a two-stage model that attempts to instrument trust with three variables.

The null hypothesis to be tested is:

*H<sub>0</sub>: On average, when all other variables are held constant, the proportion of a state's citizenry that generally trusts others (i.e., has generalized interpersonal trust) is not correlated with the number of domestic terrorist incidents a state experiences.*

The first-stage equation will utilize ordinary least squares to estimate the level of generalized interpersonal trust in a state. The second-stage equation will regress the coefficient estimates of interpersonal trust, along with the other independent and control variables, on the dependent variable, incidents of domestic terrorism. The unit of analysis is the country, and 108 countries are included in the full model. Summary statistics are presented in Table 7.1.

### **7.3.1 First-Stage Equation**

#### *7.3.1.1 Instrumented Variable*

The dependent variable for the first-stage equation is the level of generalized interpersonal *Trust* exhibited by individuals within a state. This

analysis will utilize data from the Legatum Institute's Prosperity Index (2011), where data from the World Values Surveys and the Gallup World Polls was compiled to measure *Trust* in 110 countries. *Trust* is measured by the normalized percentage of survey respondents in a country who claimed to trust others. While there are mixed results regarding how well survey measures that ask respondents whether most people are trustworthy actually measure trust, it is a reliable measure of social capital when the data is aggregated at the group or state level due to the relationship that these measures share with how trustworthy individuals are (Fehr et al. 2003; Glaeser et al. 2000).

### 7.3.1.2 *Instruments*

*Population Density* has been speculated to reduce levels of interpersonal trust (Rosenthal 1964), and is measured by the number of citizens per square kilometer in a state. For this variable, I used data from the World Development Indicators ("WDI") for the year 2008 (World Bank 2011). Given the relationship that the use of social networking internet sites has been shown to have on trust (Valenzuela et al. 2009), this regression includes a variable to measure *Internet* usage within each state. Internet usage per capita is operationalized as the contracted internet bandwidth capacity of a state in megabytes per second per capita, and is drawn from the latest WDI dataset. Given that ethno-linguistic divisions within a state may decrease levels of *Trust* between people within a state, I also include a measure of ethno-linguistic fractionalization (*Ethnic Fractionalization*) by Alesina et al. (2003) in the first-stage regression. Although it could be argued that ethno-linguistic fractionalization may lead to an increase in domestic terrorist incidents, numerous regression models showed no evidence of an independent relationship between ethno-linguistic fractionalization and terrorist activity, and the claim is buttressed by other studies regarding the relationship between ethnic fractionalization and conflict (Fearon et al. 2007). While these variables may not be the best measures of *Trust*, they have been chosen since they appear to have an effect on *Trust*, while there is little evidence that they directly affect levels of domestic terrorism, and are suitable instruments relative to other available options. Moreover, the addition and removal of *Ethnic Fractionalization* from the first-stage equation did not appear to significantly affect the results of my two-stage regression analysis.

Variables for age and gender were left out of this regression and the second stage of the model since they failed to show any evidence of being significantly related to either *Trust* or *Terrorism*. Unemployment and education did appear to be significantly related to the number of incidents of *Terrorism* in various iterations of the model, and are included in the second stage of the model.



### 7.3.2 *Second-Stage Regression*

#### 7.3.2.1 *Dependent Variable*

In order to test my theory, I utilized a dataset assembled by Walter Enders, Todd Sandler, and Khusrav Gaibulloev which alters the Global Terrorism Database by distinguishing between domestic and transnational terrorism (Enders et al. 2011). For the purposes of this project, I define *Terrorism* as the threatened or actual use of force by a non-state actor in order to induce fear and intimidation while in pursuit of a domestic political, social, religious, or economic goal (National Consortium 2011). *Terrorism* is measured by the number of domestic terrorist incidents that occurred in a state from 2000 to 2009. Like all data on terrorist incidents, there are significant issues with the reporting of incidents. However, the GTD data, which Enders et al. (2011) rely upon, provides the most comprehensive listing of domestic terrorist incidents that is publicly available.

#### 7.3.2.2 *Control Variables*

In addition to the coefficient estimates from the first-stage regression, I analyzed *Economic Development's* effect on *Terrorism*. Economic development is measured as the average Gross Domestic Product per capita (PPP) from the year 2000 to 2009, and is drawn from the WDI 2011 database (World Bank 2011). I also analyzed *Government Performance* using the World Bank's World Governance Indicators from 2009, which measures perceptions of the quality of government institutions based on expert and population survey data.

I control for the size of the *Population* by taking the natural log of the average population of the state from 2000 to 2009 according to the WDI database (World Bank 2011). The WDI database is also used to collect data on *Education*, which is operationalized as the net primary enrollment in a state in 2008. *Democracy* is controlled for, and operationalized as a State's Polity IV score from 2009 (Marshall et al. 2011). *Civil War* is controlled for through the use of a dummy variable to indicate whether a state experienced a civil war at any point in time between 2000 and 2008, and I rely upon the Major Episodes of Political Violence dataset for my data (Marshall 2010). Historical *Group Grievances* are likely to decrease *Trust* between citizens since past negative interactions, and the use of scapegoating of groups viewed as outsiders by the majority population or the government, condition beliefs about how groups will be treated by others in the future, and increase *Terrorism* directly by providing individuals with a justification for committing terrorist acts. Therefore, a variable for group grievances is added to the model in the second stage, and is operationalized using the Failed States Index measure for group grievances which ranges from 1 (lowest) to 10 (Foreign Policy 2010). Since both

statistical tests and theory point to group grievances having a direct effect on *Terrorism*, it is not treated as an exogenous first-stage variable. Finally, the model controls for *Unemployment*, which is measured using Gallup World Poll survey data from 2010 (or the most recent year) and was taken from the Legatum Institute's Prosperity Index (2011).

## 7.4 Analysis

### 7.4.1 Preliminary Analysis

My analysis begins with an exploration of graphical representations of the relationship between *Trust*, *Economic Development*, *Government Performance*, and *Terrorism*. This section will analyze data related to *Economic Development* and *Government Performance* due to the substantial amount of research linking *Trust* and social capital to these variables (Putnam 1993; Knack and Keefer 1997). My preliminary analysis indicates that *Trust*, *Economic Development*, and *Government Performance* all share a statistical relationship with levels of domestic terrorism, yet that these relationships are vastly different, and not necessarily linear. Moreover, I ran a simple ordinary least-squares regression that indicates that *Trust* is more closely related to levels of domestic terrorism than either *Economic Development* or *Government Performance*.

Figure 7.1 presents a graphical illustration of the relationship between domestic terrorist incidents and generalized interpersonal trust. States with lower levels of generalized interpersonal trust appear to have experienced substantially more domestic terrorist attacks between the years 2000 and 2009. On average, states where less than 25 percent of the population answered that others could be trusted experienced nearly 40 more terrorist attacks during the time frame examined (Figure 7.2). While there appears to be a negative correlation between *Trust* and *Terrorism*, a basic examination of the data suggests that this relationship may not be linear, and that *Trust* may not have an effect on *Terrorism* until it crosses a certain threshold. Moreover, the relationship between trust and terrorist activity may be conditional upon some other variable, given the large variation in terrorist activity between states with similar levels of trust. An examination of terrorist incidents per capita, however, is slightly more supportive of a linear relationship between *Trust* and *Terrorism*. Testing whether the relationship is in fact nonlinear will be reserved for future research projects.

*Economic Development* also appears to be negatively correlated with terrorist activity (Figure 7.3). Given the variation in behavior between states, this relationship may also be conditional. More interesting, however, is the relationship between domestic terrorist activity and *Government Performance* depicted in Figure 7.4. It appears as though governments that perform either very poorly or very well experience fewer terrorist

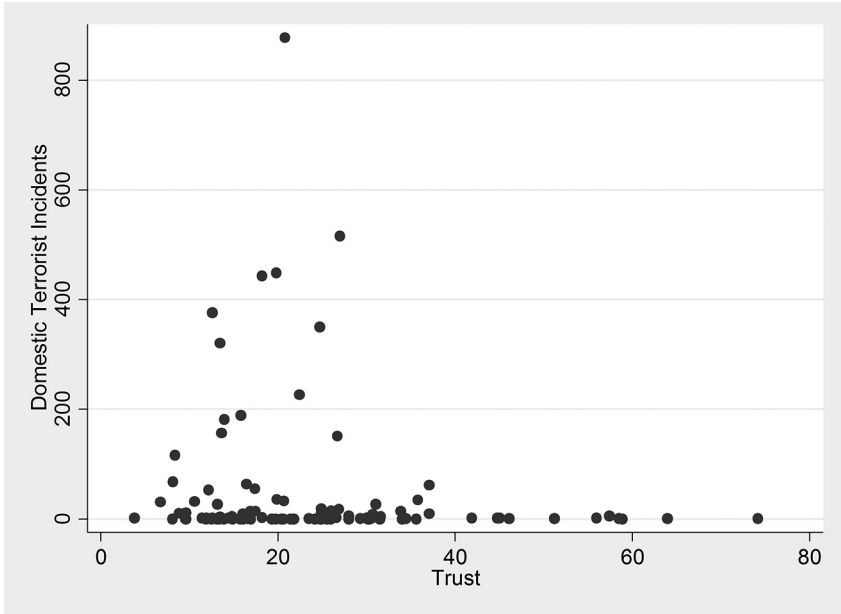


Figure 7.1 Generalized Trust and Domestic Terrorism

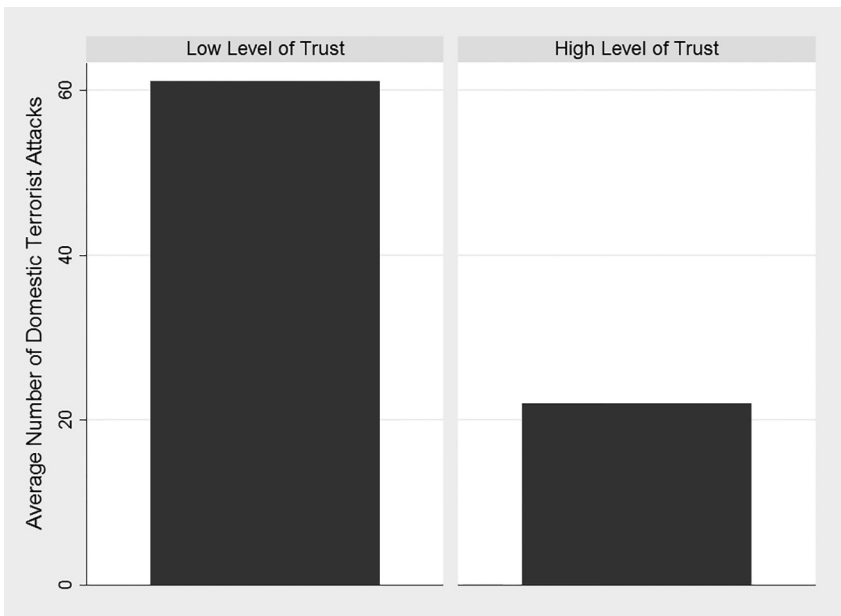


Figure 7.2 Trust Above/Below 25% and Domestic Terrorism

attacks than those in the middle of the spectrum. While such a relationship could be the result of *Government Performance's* relationship to democracy, and stem from dynamics explained by the "more murder in the middle" theory, democracy appears to share a positive correlation with terrorist activity (Fein 1995).<sup>1</sup> Although this relationship is interesting, a more nuanced analysis of *Government Performance's* relationship to *Terrorism* is outside of the scope of this project's analysis. It should also be noted that other analyses were run that do provide some evidence of a correlation between *Trust* and *Economic Development* that has been noted by other scholars (Putnam 1993; Knack and Keefer 1997). More specifically, a bivariate ordinary least-squares regression of *Trust* on *Economic Development* revealed that the variables are positively correlated ( $p < 0.001$ ), with an  $R^2 = 0.19$ .

The results of the ordinary least-squares regression analyses run with the primary independent variables indicate that domestic terrorism shares a stronger relationship with *Trust* than *Economic Development* or *Government Performance* (Table 7.2). While the negative correlation between *Trust* and *Terrorism* is statistically significant at the  $p < 0.01$  level when regressed alone, *Economic Development* is only significant at the  $p < 0.1$  level and *Government Performance* does not appear to be significant. Moreover, the  $R^2$  when *Trust* is regressed alone against domestic terrorist incidents is higher than when either *Economic Development* or *Government Performance* is regressed alone against *Terrorism*. In addition, when *Trust* is regressed with either *Economic Development*, *Government Performance* or both, the coefficient remains negative and significant at the  $p < 0.05$  level, while neither *Economic Development* nor *Government Performance* are ever significant when regressed along with *Trust*. Similar results are achieved when regressions, which are not shown in the book, were run on terrorist incidents per capita, or when regressions were run that controlled for population size.

Although these results are promising, the negative correlation observed between *Trust* and *Terrorism* may be due to the effect *Terrorism* may have on *Trust* (Blomberg et al. 2011). Statistical tests did reveal evidence of endogeneity between *Trust* and *Terrorism*, and thus, I utilized a two-stage least-squares model to test the hypotheses presented in this chapter. Nevertheless, these preliminary results, when viewed in light of the evidence others have shown regarding the relationship between *Trust* and *Economic Development*, do indicate that past relationships observed between participation in *Terrorism* or terrorist activity and *Economic Development* may, in part, be due to *Trust's* relationship with *Economic Development*.

#### **7.4.2 Two-Stage Regression Results and Analysis**

The results of the two-stage regression model largely provide evidence to support the hypotheses presented earlier in the chapter. Table 7.3 shows that *Trust* is negatively correlated with incidents of domestic terrorism,

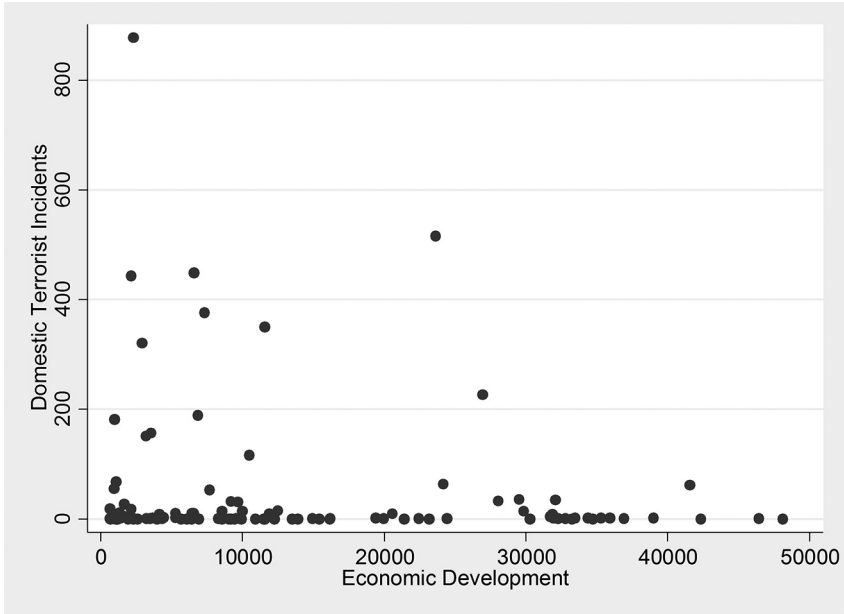


Figure 7.3 Economic Development and Domestic Terrorism

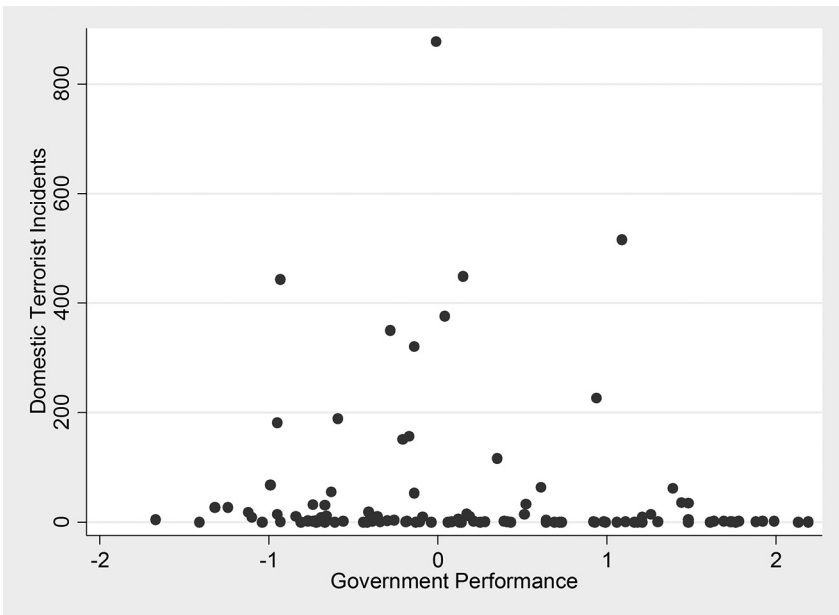


Figure 7.4 Government Performance and Domestic Terrorism

Table 7.2 Domestic Terror – OLS Regressions with Robust Standard Errors Dependent Variable: Domestic Terrorist Incidents

<i>Independent Variable</i>	1	2	3	4	5	6
<b>Trust</b>	-1.26*** (0.43)			-0.93** (0.39)	-1.10** (0.46)	-1.01** (0.45)
<b>Economic Development</b>		-0.0012* (0.0008)		-0.0009 (0.0008)		-0.0013 (0.0013)
<b>Government Performance</b>			-11.65 (8.11)		-4.51 (8.92)	7.76 (15.72)
<b>Constant</b>	77.08*** (20.32)	64.60*** (20.28)	49.16*** (12.81)	81.52*** (22.28)	74.35*** (20.20)	87.40*** (29.66)
<b>N</b>	110	108	110	108	110	108
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.017	0.016	0.008	0.024	0.018	0.025

\* $p < 0.1$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.01$

and the result is statistically significant at the  $p < 0.05$  level. Moreover, *Economic Development* is not significant at the  $p < 0.1$  level, and does not appear to share a significant relationship with domestic terrorist activity. While I cannot argue that *Economic Development* has no effect on *Terrorism*, the results do find that it is far from significant in most models. In addition, *Economic Development* does not appear to share a relationship with *Trust*, indicating that *Economic Development* may not indirectly affect terrorist activity through *Trust*. When these results are taken in conjunction with previous work on the relationship between *Trust* and *Economic Development*, and *Economic Development*'s relationship with participation in terrorism, they would suggest that previous work tying *Economic Development* to terrorist activity may, in part, be due to the relationship *Trust* shares with *Economic Development*. It should be noted, however, that various model specifications that excluded *Trust* as an explanatory variable failed to show that *Economic Development* has a significant effect on terrorist incidents, but that other studies have shown that development broadly construed may increase domestic terrorism (Piazza 2015) and *Unemployment* is negatively correlated with *Terrorism* in this analysis. The analysis in this chapter was, however, limited by the scope of the statistical exploration. The results related to economic development should be tempered by these limitations. It is also important to note that *Ethnic Fractionalization* does not appear to be significantly correlated with *Trust* in the first-stage model, yet appeared significant in other specifications. Its removal from or addition to the model, however, does not significantly affect the results achieved.

Domestic terrorism appears to share a far more complicated relationship with *Government Performance* than *Economic Development*. *Government Performance* is positively correlated with *Trust* and is statistically significant at the  $p < 0.05$  level. While it is overwhelmingly likely that *Trust* increases *Government Performance*, it is also likely that the causal arrow runs both ways. Those who run governments are likely strangers to most who reside within a state, and thus when they perform their duties well, *Trust* in strangers is likely to increase. If *Government Performance* does increase *Trust*, it would have an indirect negative relationship with *Terrorism*. *Government Performance*, however, also may directly increase *Terrorism*, given that it is positively correlated with domestic terrorist incidents and this result is significant at the  $p < 0.1$  level. Although this result may appear surprising at first glance, this relationship may be due to a strong government's ability to provide subsidies to its citizens while refusing to respond to their other domestic and foreign policy needs. Nevertheless, the relationship between *Government Performance* and *Terrorism* is not significant at the 95 percent confidence level.

The results of this analysis indicate that many of the variables that are commonly associated with increasing or decreasing terrorism may share much more complicated relationships with terrorism than previously

noted. Absent any indirect effect that democracy may have on terrorism via government performance, may democracy actually increase the likelihood of domestic terrorism being adopted as a tool of resistance? Does a higher level of education within a state directly decrease, or potentially increase, the likelihood that a state experiences domestic terrorist activity, or does an educated population pose a greater risk due to its effects on social dynamics within a state. What exactly is the relationship between economic performance and domestic terrorism? While the research design presented in this chapter was not meant to analyze these issues directly, the results presented herein suggest that these subjects will likely require further inquiry and the development of more nuanced theoretical explanations and empirical tests of the specific ways in which these variables relate to participation in terrorism and the prevalence of domestic terrorist activity within a state.

Nevertheless, the results above indicate that *Trust* shares a closer relationship with domestic terrorist activity than *Economic Development* or

*Table 7.3* Domestic Terror – Two-Stage Least-Squares Regression (Second-Stage Results) Dependent Variable: Domestic Terrorist Incidents

<i>Independent Variable</i>	
<b>Trust</b>	-3.20** (1.60)
<b>Economic Development</b>	0.0007 (0.0015)
<b>Government Performance</b>	50.49* (26.99)
<b>Democracy</b>	5.27*** (1.67)
<b>Group Grievances</b>	27.41** (11.59)
<b>Civil War</b>	132.5*** (34.19)
<b>Education</b>	-1.81 (1.35)
<b>Unemployment</b>	-3.61** (1.58)
<b>ln(Population)</b>	29.31* (14.93)
<b>Constant</b>	-371.74* (192.96)
<b>N</b>	107
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.31

\* $p < 0.1$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.01$



Table 7.4 Domestic Terror – Two-Stage Least-Squares Regression (First-Stage Results) Dependent Variable: Trust

<i>Independent Variable</i>	
<b>Population Density</b>	-0.003** (0.001)
<b>Internet Usage</b>	174.20*** (65.21)
<b>Ethnic Fractionalization</b>	-4.33 (4.63)
<b>Economic Development</b>	-0.00008 (0.00019)
<b>Government Performance</b>	5.86** (2.53)
<b>Democracy</b>	-0.62** (0.27)
<b>Group Grievances</b>	-2.60*** (0.82)
<b>Civil War</b>	1.07 (4.24)
<b>Education</b>	-0.40*** (0.11)
<b>Unemployment</b>	-0.14 (1.32)
<b>ln(Population)</b>	1.91** (0.76)
<b>Constant</b>	48.97*** (17.14)
<b>N</b>	107
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.42

\* $p < 0.1$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.01$

*Government Performance*. Neither *Government Performance*, nor *Economic Development*, appear to share a direct negative correlation with terrorist activity, while *Trust* does appear to be negatively correlated with *Terrorism* in the two-stage model. Moreover, if *Government Performance* does have a negative effect on the number of domestic terrorist incidents a state experiences, that effect appears to be indirect and tied to its relationship with generalized interpersonal trust and social capital.

## 7.5 Conclusion

While the previous chapters of this book focused on the relationship between generalized interpersonal trust and participation in or support for

terrorism at the individual or group level, this chapter extended the theoretical framework presented in Chapter 3 in order to relate it to levels of domestic terrorism experienced by a state. This chapter builds upon my previous exploration of three Arab Spring uprisings and presents evidence to support the contention that levels of interpersonal trust within a state affect the likelihood that political dissidents will utilize violence or terrorism. Where a state is characterized by low levels of generalized interpersonal trust, individuals will turn to smaller insular groups to participate in political activity and retribution, which, in turn, will lead to higher levels of domestic terrorism within the state. The results of my quantitative analysis largely support the hypothesis presented in this chapter, and show a significant negative correlation between generalized interpersonal trust and domestic terrorist activity. Although the relationship between generalized interpersonal trust and domestic terrorism is more nuanced than the quantitative test presented in this chapter might imply, the results of this analysis suggest that further exploration of the relationship between interpersonal trust and terrorism may help shed light on when and where terrorism might arise..

### **Note**

- 1 Such an argument could contend that since extremely politically free and repressive governments utilize violent repression less often, groups will feel less compelled to commit retributive terrorist acts. Another argument could be made that the costs of terrorism are too high when governments are extremely oppressive, and that democratic outlets make terrorism less appealing than operating alternative political channels.

## 8 Conclusion

The legacy left by the Arab Spring has yet to be determined, but what has become clear in recent years is that the product of the uprisings will be far more complicated than most anticipated when they witnessed the awe-inspiring protests in Tahrir Square come on the heels of a successful and peaceful revolution in Tunisia. The stagnant authoritarianism, corruption, and brutal use of repression that characterized the politics of the Arab world left many who were most familiar with the states relieved that hypotheses related to the inevitability of dictatorial stability in many states within the Middle East and North Africa had been challenged (Bellin 2004). What was lost in the excitement of the early stages of the Arab Spring was that authoritarians are not the only, or even the fundamental, obstacle to democracy. It is the conditions that allowed such authoritarians to take root within a state that largely impede the democratic progress of a state or society. Moreover, while there were similarities between many of the Arab states structurally, as well as socially, each had a unique combination of institutions, colonial and historical trajectories of development, relationships between and among the governed and the governing, and social dynamics that exerted influence over political phenomena (Walt 2011a; Walt 2011b).

Despite the similarities between Egypt, Libya, and Syria, they experienced the Arab Spring in vastly different ways, and their subsequent experiences after the initial moments of the uprisings also varied dramatically. While Egypt enjoyed a brief, yet tumultuous, period with seemingly democratic institutions put into place, a counterrevolution placed the country back in the full control of the military under the leadership of Abdel Fattah El-Sisi who subsequently took over as president.<sup>1</sup> The election of Abdel Fattah El-Sisi occurred in an undemocratic and repressive environment that has seemingly continued to deteriorate with time. Egypt's post-Arab Spring experiences may not have produced particularly inspiring results, yet it has experienced significantly greater levels of stability than Libya or Syria.

In Libya, the loose coalition that managed to wrestle power away from the Qaddafi regime with the assistance of the international community

never managed to coalesce to the degree required to maintain order and establish functioning institutions within the state. The armed militias that beat Qaddafi remained armed, challenged attempts to form a central authority, and helped plunge the nation back into civil war as Libya's elected government faced an armed challenge from militias supporting the rival General National Congress. While reconciliation efforts have had some success, the central government remains weak and unable to exert its authority throughout much of the country.

The situation in Syria has proven to be particularly grim, as its bloody civil war has not enjoyed even a brief respite over the course of the last five years. The war has cost Syria over 400,000 lives, destroyed its economy, seen large swaths of the relatively moderate population swallowed up by the Islamic State, and has left millions displaced.<sup>2</sup> As both the regime and the various elements of the fractured opposition continue to find benefactors and other sources of income, the situation has persisted to a dynamic stalemate. Moreover, while international discussions have taken place regarding finding a solution, little hope of a negotiated settlement appears to be on the horizon. While a resolution is conceivable, both the opposition and the regime's armed support is fractured and likely incapable of disarming groups that are not invited to participate in settlements. Even if it were conceivable that the major players in the Syrian Civil War could all be invited to participate in negotiations, the conflict has produced a new breed of war lords throughout Syria on both sides of the conflict, and these local powerful figures are unlikely to abide by the terms of any negotiated settlement that strips them of power.

This project did not concern itself with stability, but the theoretical underpinnings of the theory presented herein would support the argument that regime stability is influenced by interpersonal trust. In addition, conflict duration may also share a relationship with the interpersonal trust dynamics of the state, and such avenues of inquiry should be explored. Similarly, death tolls would likely also be related to interpersonal trust, and an analysis that is capable of addressing endogeneity between these variables sufficiently would also likely be of interest to many scholars. Beyond it being possible to derive these hypotheses through extensions of the model, these propositions appear to be corroborated anecdotally by the post-Tahrir Square experiences of Egypt, Libya, and Syria.

As has been noted, this project was designed to provide a preliminary exploration of the relationship between interpersonal trust and support for terrorism. The empirical analysis, due primarily to data limitations, does not provide a robust quantitative causal test of the theoretical model. Future work should be conducted to ensure that the causal mechanisms outlined in Chapter 3 are producing the results found in Chapters 6 and 7. More importantly, the theoretical analysis should be further refined in the future to provide a more nuanced analysis. In particular, a model that accounts for network structure and the decision to delegate retribution

should be explored within the framework of a computational or agent-based model (Siegel 2009, 2011).

The model developed in this book can also be applied to a range of phenomena that deal with collective action and retribution. For example, the model can be adapted to explore an individual's reliance on tribal or familial networks over institutional alternatives. The role that trust plays in the formation of gangs can also be examined through this general framework. Moreover, the generality of the model allows for it to be readily extended and explored in the laboratory. Such studies could help provide us with broad insights into how an individual seeks retribution, and the role of indirect reciprocity in fostering cooperation.

Finally, the overarching goal of the model is to provide a framework through which analysts and scholars may be able to predict whom individuals will turn to when deciding to collectively act, and what tools they will ultimately use; and this model can be applied broadly to other revolutionary and non-revolutionary settings.

This book provided a humble attempt at exploring the role that social capital and interpersonal trust play in shaping collective action. While it focused on the Arab Spring uprisings, its implications stretch beyond the Arab world. Where interpersonal trust and social capital are low, the result of collective endeavors necessarily suffers. In Egypt, Libya, and Syria, we witnessed collective action in pursuit of regime change utilizing drastically different means to achieve these goals. While other variables certainly played a role, the interpersonal trust dynamics within each state also shaped the product of these attempts at collective action. Terrorism is not simply produced by evil men doing evil things. It is, to a certain extent, the end result of strategic decisions made by individuals who perceive a limited set of viable or efficient options necessary to achieve their goals and satisfy their preferences, whatever those goals and preferences may be.

## Notes

- 1 There is a reasonable argument to be made that the initial revolution was, in fact, a military coup that took place on the heels of a revolution (Stein 2012).
- 2 While casualty figures are difficult to estimate, these estimates have been based on numbers provided by the United Nations special envoy for Syria and the United Nations High Commissioner for refugees (Al Jazeera 2016).

# Appendix A: Ancillary Analyses for Chapter 3

## Proofs of Propositions

### *Proof of PROPOSITION 1.*

Since  $B$  is selfish, she receives a payoff of  $1 - x$  when choosing not to seek retribution, and  $1 - x - c$  when choosing to seek retribution through a terrorist group or delegating retribution to the political entrepreneur. In order for retribution through the terrorist group or the political entrepreneur to be the optimal strategy, the following must be true:

$$1 - x - c \geq 1 - x \leftrightarrow c \leq 0$$

Given that  $c$  is by definition greater than 0, choosing a strategy that requires a selfish player  $B$  to allocate some amount  $c$  towards retribution is never optimal.

### *Proof of PROPOSITION 2.*

An unselfish citizen receives a utility of  $1 - x - |1 - x - (1 + x)|$  when choosing to maintain the status quo after suffering a grievance. The unselfish citizen receives a payoff of  $1 - x - c - |1 - x - c - (1 + x - a_{BC})|$  when choosing to seek retribution through the terrorist group. In order for the unselfish citizen to prefer maintaining the status quo to seeking retribution, the following inequality must be satisfied:

$$1 - x - |1 - x - (1 + x)| \geq 1 - x - c - |1 - x - c - (1 + x - ac)| \leftrightarrow 1 - 3x \geq 1 - x - c - |-2x - c + ac|$$

In order for this inequality to be true,  $a_{BC} \leq 2c$ , and therefore,  $a$  must be less than or equal to 2. Thus, in order for maintaining the status quo to be

the optimal strategy for an unselfish citizen, the ability of the terrorist to punish must be equal to or less than 2. The unselfish citizen will never choose to maintain the status quo in equilibrium when  $a_B$  is greater than 2.

In order for an unselfish citizen to seek retribution of any kind,  $a$  must be greater than 2. If we were to presume that the probability that an individual is trustworthy is 1, the inequality above would hold when a citizen is choosing between delegating punishment and maintaining the status quo. Therefore, an unselfish citizen's optimal strategy is to maintain the status quo when  $a_E$  is less than 2, the probability that the entrepreneur is trustworthy is 1, and when options are limited to delegating punishment and maintaining the status quo. Given that the utility of delegating punishment decreases in  $p$ , this result holds for all values of  $p$ . In addition, since  $a_B < a_E$ , an unselfish citizen will always choose to maintain the status quo when  $a_E$  is less than 2.

***Proof of PROPOSITION 3.***

- a In order for a selfish entrepreneur to prefer punishing the government, he must prefer a payoff of 1 to a payoff of  $1 + c$ . Since  $c$  is by definition greater than 0, a selfish entrepreneur will always prefer receiving a payoff of  $1 + c$ , and thus, choose not to punish.

In order for an unselfish entrepreneur to prefer not punishing the government, he must prefer a payoff of  $1 + c - |1 - x - c - (1 + x)|$  to a payoff of  $1 - |1 - x - c - (1 + x - a_E c)|$ . This reduces to:

$$c - |-2x - c| \geq -|-2x + ac - c|$$

This condition never holds when  $a_E$  is greater than 2.

- b Assume that Propositions 2 and 4 (proven below) are true. Since  $a_B \leq 2$ ,  $b = 1$  is never an optimal strategy (Proposition 2). Since  $a_E > 2$ , in order for the citizen to be indifferent to each strategy, the following condition must hold:

$$p(1 - x - c - |1 - x - c - (1 + x - a_E c)|) + (1 - p)(1 - x - c - |1 - x - c - (1 + x)|) = 1 - 3x$$

$$p = 2/a_E$$

Therefore, where  $p > 2/a_E$ , the citizen will prefer  $b = D$ , and where  $p \leq 2/a_E$ , the citizen prefers strategy  $b = 0$ . Any deviation from these strategies would be suboptimal.

- c Assume that Propositions 2 and 4 (proven below) are true. Also assume that  $c \leq 2x/(a_E - 1)$ , and that  $a_E > a_B > 2$ . An unselfish citizen is indifferent between seeking retribution through a terrorist group and delegating retribution to a political entrepreneur when the following condition holds:

$$p(1 - x - c - |1 - x - c - (1 + x - a_{EC})|) + (1 - p)(1 - x - c - |1 - x - c - (1 + x)|) = 1 - x - c - |1 - x - c - (1 + x - a_{BC})|$$

$$\begin{aligned} p(-| - 2x - c + a_{EC} |) + (1 - p)(-| - 2x - c |) \\ \geq -| - 2x - c + a_{BC} | \end{aligned}$$

$$pa_{EC} = a_{BC}$$

$$p = a_{BC}/a_{EC}$$

Given that Propositions 2 and 4 are true, an unselfish citizen is indifferent between seeking retribution through a terrorist group or delegating to an entrepreneur when  $p = a_{BC}/a_{EC}$ .

***Proof of PROPOSITION 4.***

- a Assume  $a > 2$ . An unselfish citizen's payoff when punishing the government is  $1 - x - c - |-2x - c + ac|$ . So long as  $-2x - c + ac$  is less than 0, the citizen is indifferent between the amount allocated for punishment when  $ac = 2c$ , and prefers to increase  $c$  when  $ac > 2c$ . Since  $a$  is by definition greater than 2, an unselfish citizen always prefers to increase  $c$  until  $-2x - c + ac = 0$ . The unselfish citizen never prefers to increase the  $c$  so that the inequality component of the equation is greater than 0 since the citizen's payoff is decreasing in both the inequality term and the self-interested component of the payoff. Thus, so long as  $a > 2$ , the citizen prefers to allocate:

$$c = \frac{2x}{a - 1}$$

Since a citizen cannot punish more than she possesses, the amount she can punish by is capped at  $1 - x$ . Therefore, an unselfish citizen will choose to allocate  $2x/(a - 1)$  to punish the government when this amount is less than  $1 - x$ , and will allocate  $1 - x$  when she cannot reduce inequality to 0.



- b Assume that Proposition 4(a) holds true. Where  $\frac{2x}{a-1} > 1 - x$ , given that  $a_E > a_B$ , when  $b = 1$  or  $b = D$ , the unselfish citizen will always choose to allocate  $c = 1 - x$ , and therefore allocates the same cost to punishing the government. Since  $a_E > a_B$ ,  $c_E > c_B$  where  $c_B > 1 - x$ ,  $c_E \geq c_B$  under all circumstances.

***Proof of PROPOSITION 5.***

- a Presume Proposition 4 is true.  $U_E(1, \text{Selfish}) = q(1 + c - c) - (1 - q)(1 + c - c) = 1$ .  $U_E(0, \text{Selfish}) = 1 + c$ . So long as  $c > 0$ ,  $1 + c > 1$ . Since  $c \geq 0$ ,  $U_E(1, \text{Selfish}) \geq U_E(0, \text{Selfish})$ . When  $b = D$ ,  $c > 0$ . Therefore,  $1 + c > 1$ , and  $U_E(1, \text{Selfish}) > U_E(0, \text{Selfish})$ .
- b An unselfish player  $E$  will choose strategy  $e = 1$  when  $q > \frac{2x+2c}{a_Ec}$  and will choose strategy  $e = 0$  when  $q \leq \frac{2x+2c}{a_Ec}$  in equilibrium. Absent the presumption that a player will prefer the strategy that utilizes less  $c$  when indifferent between strategies, an unselfish player  $E$  will be indifferent between  $e = 1$  and  $e = 0$  when the following inequality is satisfied:

$$1 + c - |1 + x - (1 - x)| = q(1 - |1 + x - a_{EC} - (1 - x - c)| \\ + (1 - q)(1 - |1 + x - (1 - x - c)|)$$

$$q = \frac{2x + 2c}{a_{EC}}$$

An unselfish player  $E$  will always prefer for punishment to be successful rather than unsuccessful when  $e = 1$  if  $c > 0$ , and  $c > 0$  when  $b = D$ . Thus,  $e(D, E=\text{Unselfish}) = 1$  when  $q > \frac{2x+2c}{a_{EC}}$  and  $e(D, E=\text{Unselfish}) = 0$  when  $q \leq \frac{2x+2c}{a_{EC}}$ .

***Proof of PROPOSITION 6.***

- a Assume Proposition 1 is true. Selfish player  $B$ 's payoff under all values of  $q$ ,  $p$ , and  $a_E$  is  $1 - x - c$  for  $b = 1$  and  $b = D$ . Selfish player  $B$ 's payoff is  $1 - x$  for  $b = 0$ . Since  $c > 0$  when  $b = 1$  or  $b = D$  are played,  $1 - x > 1 - x - c$ . Thus, a selfish player  $B$  will always prefer  $b = 0$  over all other options.
- b Assume Proposition 3 and Proposition 5 are true. In order for player  $B$  to choose to delegate the duty to punish, an unselfish entrepreneur must prefer  $e = 1$ , which is both always and only true when  $q > \frac{2x+2c}{a_{EC}}$ . Thus,  $q > \frac{2x+2c}{a_{EC}}$  is a necessary condition for an unselfish player  $B$  to choose  $b = D$ . In addition, the expected utility of delegating the duty to punish must be greater than the expected utility of punishing

- through the terrorist organization. In order for this to hold true,  $qpa_{EC} \geq a_{EC}$ , and, therefore,  $p \geq \frac{a_B}{qa_E}$ .
- c Assume Proposition 2, Proposition 3, and Proposition 5 are true. According to Proposition 2, player  $B$  will never prefer  $b = 1$  over  $b = 0$  when  $2 \geq a_B$ . In order for an unselfish player  $B$  to prefer  $b = D$  over  $b = 0$ ,  $qpa_E > 2$  or  $q > \frac{a_B}{qa_E}$ . In order for player  $B$  to choose to delegate the duty to punish, an unselfish entrepreneur must also prefer  $e = 1$ , which is both always and only true when  $q > \frac{2x+2c}{a_{EC}}$ . Thus,  $q > \frac{2x+2c}{a_{EC}}$  is a necessary condition for an unselfish player  $B$  to choose  $b = D$ . An unselfish player  $B$  will only prefer  $b = D$  over  $b = 0$  when both  $p > \frac{a_B}{qa_E}$  and  $q > \frac{2x+2c}{a_{EC}}$ .
- d Assume Proposition 2 is true. Since  $q \leq 1$  and  $a_B > 0$ ,  $qpa_E$  can never be greater than 2 when  $a_E \leq 2$ . Thus, player  $B$  will always prefer  $b = 0$  over  $b = D$  when  $a_E \leq 2$ . Since  $a_E > a_B > 0$ , player  $B$  will also always prefer  $b = 0$  over  $b = 1$  when  $a_E \leq 2$ .

**Proof of PROPOSITION 7.**

In order for a selfish player  $E$  to prefer  $e = 1$  over  $e = 0$ ,  $1 + q(1) > 1 + c$  when successful punishment will result in achieving power. Therefore,  $q > c$  must hold true in order for player  $E$  to choose  $e = 1$ . In order for successful punishment to result in player  $E$  achieving power  $1 + x - a_{EC} < 1$ , which is only true when  $x < a_{EC}$ . If  $x \geq a_{EC}$ , player  $E$  cannot take power, and therefore will be assured of earning 1, which is always less than  $1 + c$  since  $c > 0$ .

**Proof of PROPOSITION 8.**

- a Assume Proposition 1 is true. Selfish player  $B$ 's payoff under all values of  $q$ ,  $p$ , and  $a_E$  is  $1 - x - c$  for  $b = 1$  and  $b = D$ . Selfish player  $B$ 's payoff is  $1 - x$  for  $b = 0$ . Since  $c > 0$  when  $b = 1$  or  $b = D$  are played,  $1 - x > 1 - x - c$ . Thus, a selfish player  $B$  will always prefer  $b = 0$  over all other options.
- b Assume Proposition 2 and Proposition 7 are true. In order for an unselfish player  $B$  to delegate the duty to punish to player  $E$ , player  $E$  must prefer  $e = 1$ , which is only true when the conditions listed in Proposition 7 are satisfied. When those conditions are satisfied, the efficiency of delegating retribution with regards to reducing retribution must be greater or equal to the efficiency of retribution through the terrorist group, which is true when  $qa_{EC} \geq a_{BC}$  or  $q \geq \frac{a_B}{a_E}$  if player  $E$  chooses  $e = 1$ .
- c Assume Proposition 2 and Proposition 7 are true. According to Proposition 2, player  $B$  will never prefer  $b = 1$  over  $b = 0$  when  $2 \geq a_B$ . In order for an unselfish player  $B$  to prefer  $b = D$  over  $b = 0$ ,  $qpa_E > 2$  or  $q > \frac{2}{a_E}$  when player  $E$  will choose  $e = 1$ . In order for an unselfish

player  $B$  to delegate the duty to punish to player  $E$ , player  $E$  must prefer  $e = 1$ , which is only true when the conditions listed in Proposition 7 are satisfied.

- d Assume Proposition 2 is true. Since  $q \leq 1$  and  $a_B > 0$ ,  $qpa_E$  can never be greater than 2 when  $a_E \leq 2$ . Thus, player  $B$  will always prefer  $b = 0$  over  $b = D$  when  $a_E \leq 2$ . Since  $a_E > a_B > 0$ , player  $B$  will also always prefer  $b = 0$  over  $b = 1$  when  $a_E \leq 2$ .

### Perfect Bayesian Nash Equilibria for the Primary Model

- 1 Where  $2 \geq a_E > a_B$ :  $b(B = \textit{Selfish}) = b(B = \textit{Unselfish}) = 0$ ,  $e(0) = e(1) = e(D) = 0, 1$
- 2 Where  $a_E > 2 > a_B$  and  $p > 2/a_E$ :  $b(B = \textit{Selfish}) = 0$ ,  $b(B = \textit{Unselfish}) = D$ ,  $e(0) = 0, 1$ ,  $e(1) = 0, 1$ ,  $e(D, E = \textit{Unselfish}) = 1$ ,  $e(D, E = \textit{Selfish}) = 0$
- 3 Where  $a_E > 2 > a_B$  and  $p \leq 2/a_E$ :  $b(B = \textit{Selfish}) = b(B = \textit{Unselfish}) = 0$ ;  $e(0) = e(1) = 0, 1$ ;  $e(D, E = \textit{Unselfish}) = 0, 1$ ;  $e(D, E = \textit{Selfish}) = 0$
- 4 Where  $a_E > a_B > 2$  and  $p > a_B/a_E$ :  $b(B = \textit{Selfish}) = 0$ ;  $b(B = \textit{Unselfish}) = D$ ;  $e(0) = 0, 1$ ;  $e(1) = 0, 1$ ;  $e(D, E = \textit{Unselfish}) = 1$ ;  $e(D, E = \textit{Selfish}) = 0$
- 5 Where  $a_E > a_B > 2$  and  $p \leq a_B/a_E$ :  $b(B = \textit{Selfish}) = 0$ ;  $b(B = \textit{Unselfish}) = 1$ ;  $e(0) = 0, 1$ ;  $e(1) = 0, 1$ ;  $e(D, E = \textit{Unselfish}) = 1$ ;  $e(D, E = \textit{Selfish}) = 0$

# Appendix B: Ancillary Analyses for Chapter 6

Table A.1 Arab Barometer Key Survey Questions

<p><b>Perception of Superiority</b></p> <p>The following questions are your personal opinions about the principles that should determine the behavior and situation of women in our society. For each of the statements listed below, please indicate whether you agree strongly, agree, disagree, or disagree strongly.</p> <p>“On the whole, men make better political leaders than women do.”</p>	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
	36.51%	35.88%	20.03%	7.58%	
<p><b>Internet</b></p> <p>“How often do you use the internet?”</p>	Daily or almost daily	At least once a week	At least once a month	Several times a year	I do not use the internet
	9.56%	11.74%	7.04%	5.08%	66.58%
<p><b>Fundamentalism</b></p> <p>In your opinion, how important is each of the following principles as a guide for making the laws of our country?</p> <p>“The government should implement only the laws of sharia.”</p>	Strongly agree	Agree	Disagree	Strongly disagree	
	35.88%	34.65%	16.93%	12.54%	
<p>Today as in the past, Muslim scholars and jurists sometimes disagree about the proper interpretation of Islam in response to present-day issues. For each of the statements listed below, please indicate whether you agree strongly, agree, disagree, or disagree strongly with the interpretation that is presented.</p>					
“Banks in Muslim countries must be forbidden from charging even modest interest on loans because that is forbidden by Islam.”	49.44%	32.98%	11.78%	5.8%	
“It is acceptable in Islam for male and female university students to attend classes together.”	23.04%	37.94%	25.39%	13.62%	
“In Islam a woman should dress modestly, but Islam does not require that she wear a hijab.”	22.27%	34.46%	23.17%	20.20%	
<p><b>Trust</b></p> <p>Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted?</p>	Yes		No		
	71.66%		28.34%		
<p><b>Economic Conditions</b></p> <p>How would you rate the current overall economic condition of [respondent’s country] today?</p>	Very Good	Good	Bad	Very Bad	
	3.24%	30.14%	34.82%	31.78%	

### Imputation Diagnostics

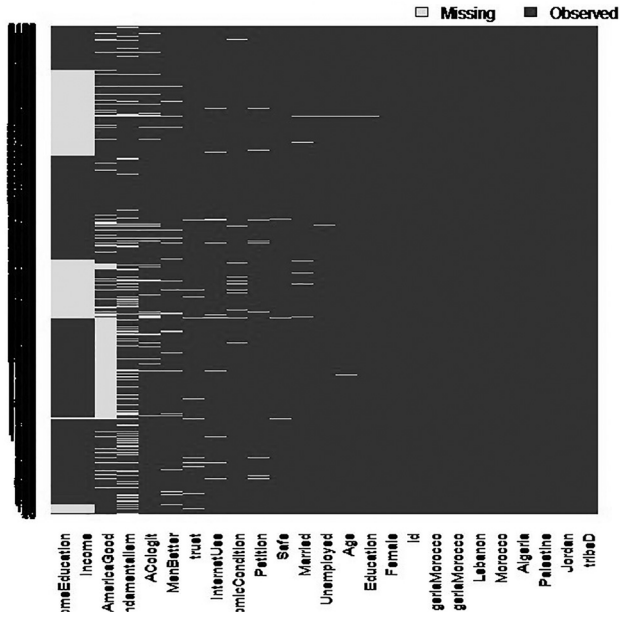


Figure A.1 Missingness Map

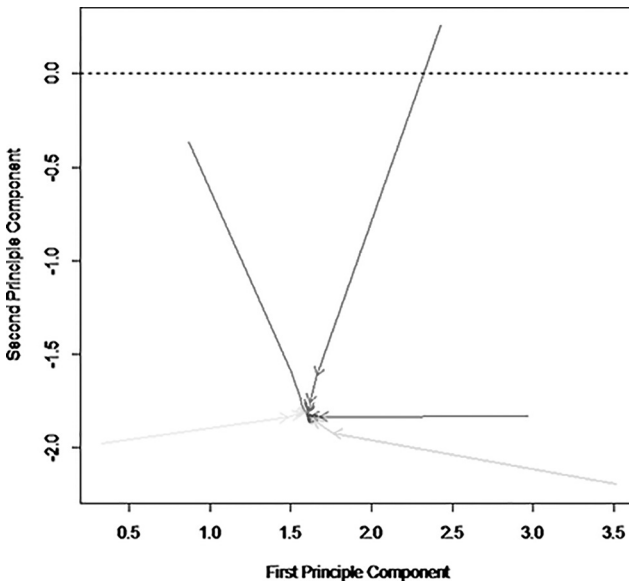


Figure A.2 Overdispersion

**Additional Robustness Checks**

Table A.2 Additional Robustness Checks Dependent Variable: Support for Terrorism

<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>w/o Income * Education</i>	<i>Unemployed</i>	<i>Unemployed and Income</i>
<b>Trust</b>	-0.127 (0.036)**	-0.124 (0.036)*	-0.124 (0.036)*
<b>Income</b>	0.005 (0.007)		0.007 (0.007)
<b>Education</b>	-0.047 (0.011)**	-0.049 (0.014)*	-0.052 (0.015)**
<b>Income * Education</b>			
<b>Unemployed</b>		0.032 (0.062)	0.034 (0.062)
<b>Unemployed * Education</b>		0.015 (0.018)	0.016 (0.018)
<b>Muslim</b>	-0.005 (0.064)	-0.015 (0.064)	-0.011 (0.064)
<b>Female</b>	-0.118 (0.032)**	-0.144 (0.033)**	-0.136 (0.034)**
<b>Age</b>	-0.044 (0.013)*	-0.043 (0.013)*	-0.043 (0.013)*
<b>Married</b>	-0.003 (0.036)	0.008 (0.037)	0.007 (0.037)
<b>Algeria</b>	0.294 (0.061)**	0.285 (0.061)**	0.283 (0.062)**
<b>Jordan</b>	0.594 (-0.065)**	0.570 (0.062)**	0.568 (0.062)**
<b>Morocco</b>	-0.055 (0.065)	-0.053 (0.063)	-0.067 (0.065)
<b>Palestine</b>	0.322 (0.059)**	0.300 (0.060)**	0.297 (0.061)**
<b>N</b>	6190	6190	6190

\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$

**Complete Case Analysis***Table A.3* Ordered Logit Regression Dependent Variable: Support for Terrorism

<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>Only Trust</i>	<i>Muslims</i>	<i>Full Model</i>
<b>Trust</b>	-0.213 (0.058)**	-0.173 (0.081)*	-0.264 (0.072)**
<b>Income</b>		0.027 (0.026)	0.013 (0.023)
<b>Education</b>		-0.055 (0.048)	-0.076 (0.403)
<b>Income * Education</b>		-0.006 (0.008)	-0.002 (0.006)
<b>Muslim</b>			-0.076 (0.114)
<b>Fundamentalism</b>		-0.029 (0.036)	
<b>Female</b>		-0.168 (0.077)*	-0.156 (0.066)*
<b>Age</b>		-0.080 (0.029)**	-0.056 (0.026)*
<b>Married</b>		-0.028 (0.084)	-0.061 (0.072)
<b>Algeria</b>	0.417 (0.083)**	0.477 (0.146)**	0.436 (0.125)**
<b>Jordan</b>	1.051 (0.080)**	1.118 (0.133)**	1.062 (0.117)**
<b>Morocco</b>	-0.038 (0.087)	-0.153 (0.133)	-0.204 (0.118)
<b>Palestine</b>	0.602 (0.076)**	0.537 (0.122)**	0.516 (0.107)**
<b>N</b>	5513	2858	3856

\*  $p < 0.05$ , \*\* $p < 0.01$ *Table A.4* Predicted Probabilities

<i>Variable</i>	<i>Strongly Disagree</i>	<i>Disagree</i>	<i>Agree</i>	<i>Strongly Agree</i>
<b>Predicted Probability (Scenario 1)</b>	0.247 (0.210, 0.287)	0.448 (0.428, 0.467)	0.205 (0.176, 0.234)	0.100 (0.080, 0.124)
<b>Predicted Probability (Scenario 2)</b>	0.299 (0.256, 0.347)	0.448 (0.429, 0.468)	0.173 (0.146, 0.201)	0.079 (0.061, 0.099)
<b>Difference</b>	0.052 (0.022, 0.082)	0.001 (-0.001, 0.010)	-0.031 (-0.048, -0.013)	-0.021 (-0.035, -0.009)

(Confidence Interval in parentheses)

# Appendix C: Ancillary Analyses for Chapter 7

## Diagnostic Tests

### *Woolridge Test for Endogeneity*

Robust score  $\chi^2(1) = 2.82977$  ( $p = 0.0925$ )

Robust regression  $F(1,96) = 2.25252$  ( $p = 0.1367$ )

**F-Statistic:** 5.9

### *Woolridge Test for Overidentification*

$\chi^2 = 0.883$ ,  $p = 0.643$



Table A.5 Two-Stage Least-Squares Regressions (First-Stage Results) Dependent Variable: Trust

<i>Independent Variable</i>	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Population Density</b>	-0.003 (0.0002)***			-0.003 (0.001)**	-0.003 (0.001)**
<b>Internet Usage</b>		190.575 (69.942)***		174.820 (67.447)**	174.820 (67.447)**
<b>Ethnic Fractionalization</b>			-3.244 (4.791)		
<b>Economic Development</b>	0.00009 (0.0002)	-0.00009 (0.0002)	-0.00003 (0.0002)	-0.00007 (0.0002)	-0.00007 (0.0002)
<b>Government Performance</b>	6.970 (2.585)***	4.999 (2.626)*	5.957 (2.666)**	5.951 (2.542)**	5.951 (2.542)**
<b>Democracy</b>	-0.582 (0.274)**	-0.526 (0.276)*	-0.489 (0.283)*	-0.611 (0.269)**	-0.611 (0.269)**
<b>Group Grievances</b>	-2.509 (0.763)**	-2.685 (0.822)***	-2.413 (0.762)***	-2.686 (0.823)***	-2.686 (0.823)***
<b>Civil War</b>	0.953 (3.737)	1.013 (4.051)	0.081 (4.132)	1.489 (3.932)	1.489 (3.932)
<b>Education</b>	-0.383 (0.119)**	-0.326 (0.124)**	-0.335 (0.125)***	-0.378 (0.117)**	-0.378 (0.117)**
<b>Unemployment</b>	-0.163 (0.128)	-0.126 (0.121)	-0.114 (0.129)	-0.159 (0.126)	-0.159 (0.126)
<b>ln(Population)</b>	1.813 (0.001)***	2.039 (0.787)**	1.787 (0.759)**	1.990 (0.792)**	1.990 (0.792)**
<b>Constant</b>	47.170 (18.204)**	38.185 (18.331)**	42.991 (18.200)**	44.615 (17.745)**	44.615 (17.745)**
<b>N</b>	108	108	107	108	108
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.38	0.38	.	0.42	0.42

\* $p < 0.1$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.01$

Table A.6 Two-Stage Least-Squares Regressions (Second-Stage Results) Dependent Variable: Domestic Terrorist Incidents

<i>Independent Variable</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>
<b>Trust</b>	-1.867 (1.681)	-3.716 (2.477)	-12.254 (19.835)	-2.829 (1.522)*	-7.463 (3.793)**
<b>Economic Development</b>	0.0007 (0.001)	0.0007 (0.002)	0.0005 (0.003)	0.0007 (0.001)	-0.0001 (0.002)
<b>Government Performance</b>	42.248 (22.468)*	53.372 (31.306)*	105.594 (131.055)	48.041 (25.537)*	63.161 (40.678)
<b>Democracy</b>	5.882 (1.633)***	4.987 (1.898)***	0.971 (9.999)	5.416 (1.636)***	2.153 (2.307)
<b>Group Grievances</b>	30.629 (12.985)**	26.024 (10.629)**	5.101 (51.623)	28.231 (11.316)**	
<b>Civil War</b>	131.717 (18.939)***	132.406 (17.840)***	136.566 (39.040)***	132.076 (18.051)***	141.226 (20.591)***
<b>Education</b>	-1.413 (1.372)	-2.017 (1.379)	-4.668 (6.906)	-1.728 (1.285)	-3.694 (1.704)**
<b>Unemployment</b>	-3.432 (1.518)**	-3.667 (1.600)**	-4.797 (3.668)	-3.554 (1.542)**	-3.894 (1.854)**
<b>ln(Population)</b>	26.866 (16.046)*	30.284 (13.976)**	46.009 (40.266)	28.646 (14.723)*	43.090 (13.939)***
<b>Constant</b>	-421.413 (177.542)**	-346.901 (220.308)	-17.308 (855.468)	-382.611 (192.070)**	-140.866 (249.508)
<b>N</b>	108	108	107	108	108
<b>R<sup>2</sup></b>	0.35	0.29	.	0.32	0.0032

\* $p < 0.1$ , \*\* $p < 0.05$ , \*\*\* $p < 0.01$

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