CHAPTER 1

Introduction

Calls for ‘social justice’, ‘dignity’ and ‘freedom’ resonated in the Arab Middle East in 2011. The winds of change that blew and swept over the region led to attempts at revolution in some countries, as in Tunisia (Chapter 2) and Egypt (Chapter 3), and reform in others, such as in Morocco (Chapter 4) and Jordan (Chapter 5), events collectively known as the ‘Arab Spring’. This book attempts to arrive at a theory of revolution, that of a Hierarchical Dissonance (HD) in Values between rulers and ruled, a term which I coined in my 1987 study of the Iranian Revolution (Alianak 1987) and which I have modified for this study. The present book also addresses the question of why some countries underwent reforms and others attempted revolutions through the Pendulum Model which I devised in my 2007 book Middle Eastern Leaders and Islam: A Precarious Equilibrium, which depicts a dynamic, interactive relationship between rulers and ruled at times of crisis when leaders used religion to stabilise their rule. I posit here that the two monarchs I study, Muhammad VI of Morocco and Abdullah II of Jordan, used religion and survived whereas the secular leaders of Tunisia and Egypt, Ben Ali and Hosni Mubarak, tended, among other errors, not to resort to the palliative of religion to equilibrate the stability of their rule, and hence did not survive.

This study hopes to contribute towards the development of a ‘fourth generation’ theory of revolution, which Jack A. Goldstone (2001) urges us to develop in the twenty-first century in order to explain the phenomenon. It also attempts to contribute to theories of reform as they apply to the Middle East.

It further theorises about the outcomes of the revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt and reforms in Morocco and Jordan, by asking whether the Arab Spring has been realised so far (up to summer 2013), and whether movements towards restoration are taking place where ‘stability’ is re-emphasised. Here the study introduces the concept of a ‘threshold’ beyond which the palliative of religion is not as effective as in the past in dealing with the hierarchical dissonance in values or priorities.

The Pendulum Model

The Pendulum Model is a dynamic, interactive model that analyses the relationship between rulers and the ruled at a time of crisis brought about
by a hierarchical dissonance in values or priorities (whether security-related, political, economic, social, or involving foreign affairs). It therefore goes beyond merely state-centred or society-centred theories in the literature of Middle Eastern studies, which emphasise either leaders or society exclusively.

In an ideal situation, the pendulum is in an imaginary equilibrium, hanging vertically as the leader’s rule reaches the point of stability in power. When the pendulum swings to the left of the equilibrium point into the area of the society, this signifies the increasing stability of the leader’s rule. However, when the hierarchies of values or priorities of the ruler and the ruled, which coincided sufficiently at the time of equilibrium, experience further dissonance causing a crisis to arise, this tends to push the pendulum past the equilibrium point into the right, into the area of the leader, which signifies a threat to the stability of the leader’s rule. The leader then tries to push back the pendulum towards equilibrium as much as possible to re-establish stability using co-optation, and/or repression, democratic experiments, and religion.

This ideal of equilibrium of stability is, according to Goldstone, ‘problematic’ and is never fully achievable or normal (2001: 171–2). According to my findings, the hierarchies of values or priorities of rulers and ruled do not usually coincide and are constantly fluctuating in situations of negotiation and renegotiation in scales between and within each value as rulers and ruled interact. Where they are sufficiently close there is an increase in the stability of the ruler. But when an intolerable gap develops between these hierarchies, the resulting dissonance leads to attempts at revolution.

**Hierarchical Dissonance in Values or Priorities hypothesis**

My Hierarchical Dissonance (HD) in Values or Priorities hypothesis posits that the process of attempting revolution occurred in the Middle East where rulers and ruled experienced an intolerable dissonance in their respective perceived values or priorities (with the rulers increasingly emphasising stability and security and the ruled increasingly emphasising equality of economic opportunities), where the ruled perceived no hope of redress given the existing governmental structures and processes (with the ruled demanding the taking of matters into their own hands through democracy to bring about prosperity and dignity and to correct perceived injustices) and saw a favourable balance in forces (with mass participation mobilised through social media supported by external media and foreign governments), and where the rulers (ageing, corrupted, with divided elites, losing military backing) had deteriorated and did not or could not undertake effective diversionary tactics and methods.

My HD hypothesis also posits that the hierarchical dissonance between the values of the ruler and the ruled decreases where the ruler is perceived to be just and where he resorts to religion, with which he imbues the diversionary
methods he undertakes, and this results in the process of transitioning towards reform.

The following is an explanation of the above diagram, which depicts the dynamic interaction between ruler and ruled in terms of the Pendulum Model and the Hierarchical Dissonance in Values hypothesis. The ruler is surrounded by supporting elites which could, or which tend to, include crony capitalists, ruling family members, prestigious religious institutions such as al-Azhar (in Egypt), ruling party leaders, intelligence and security officials, and the military (when it sides with the ruler). The ruled, on the other hand, are composed of middle- and working-class members, university-educated young people, members of professional associations, labour union workers, other civil society organisation members, opposition parties, and the masses (the street), who are mobilised by new media (the Internet, social media, YouTube, satellite TV, mobile phones). Faced with HD, the ruled resort to people power and hence pose a threat to the leader's stability by attempting to push towards reform or revolution. Faced with HD, the ruler resorts to religion (transitioning towards reform) and/or to diversionary methods, such as co-optation, repression and illiberal democracy, which, if they are not imbued with religion or are ineffective, result in attempts by the ruled to transition towards revolution. The hierarchies of values or priorities are summarised thus in the diagram: 1 stands for stability, 2 for economic values, 3 for political values and 4 for social values. Where they tend to coincide for the ruler and the ruled, there is an increase in
the stability of the ruler (1, 2, 3, 4); where there is a dissonance, the ruler’s pri-
orities are again depicted as 1 (stability), 2 (macro-economy), 3 (illiberal democ-
racy), 4 (social dimension), whereas the priorities of the ruled which change are
depicted as, first, economic justice (2), second democracy (3), third social values
(4), and last stability (1). The greater the gap between the priorities of the ruler
and the ruled, the greater the threat to the ruler’s stability.

**Definition of reform**

The concept of reform employed in this study can be defined as follows:

A reform is a process of change in political, and/or economic, social or religious,
rules and institutions arrived at through constitutional means.

**Definition of revolution**

The concept of revolution employed in this study can be defined as follows:

A revolution is a process of change in government rulers, and in the fundamental
political, and/or economic, social or religious, rules or institutions of a politi-
cal system, by unconstitutional means, which may include the use or threat of
violence.

It is necessary here to clarify the terms employed in the above definition and
to distinguish revolutions from other forms of change and violence.

First, revolution is a process of change, and an unconstitutional process
at that. Moreover, this process need not necessarily be sudden, abrupt or of
short duration, but may extend over many years (Leiden and Schmitt 1968: 4).
However, it is different from reform, since while the end products of both
processes may be the same type of politico-social and/or politico-economic
change, and while they both may run their course over many years, they differ
in that revolution is an unconstitutional process while reform is a constitutional
one (Schrecker 1966: 37 and 49).

Secondly, revolution involves the unconstitutional change of government
rulers, that is, the official holders of political power. However, not all unconsti-
tutional changes of government personnel are revolutions. Some such changes
may be termed purges and *coup d’état*. According to Edward Luttwak, ‘A coup
consists of the infiltration of a small but critical segment of the state apparatus,
which is then used to displace the government from its control of the remainder’

Therefore, thirdly, revolution involves not only unconstitutional change of
government rulers, but also one or more fundamental changes (Johnson 1966:
138–40) in the political, social, economic, and/or religious principles (rules of
the game) and organisations of the state. Thus, unlike coups, which involve just
unconstitutional changes of personnel, revolutions involve changes in principles and organisations of government as well.

Theorists, however, disagree about the nature of these changes. Hannah Arendt emphasises political freedom in her book *On Revolution*, where she writes: ‘Only where change occurs in the sense of a new beginning . . . where the liberation from oppression aims at least at the constitution of freedom can we speak of revolution’ (Arendt 1963: 28). Samuel Huntington, in *Political Order in Changing Societies* (1968: 264), and Ted Gurr in *Why Men Rebel*, emphasise socio-political change. In the words of Gurr, revolution is a ‘fundamental socio-political change accomplished through violence’ (1970: 4). Karl Marx emphasised economic changes, which themselves lead to socio-political change. This study considers the nature of the change involved in the principles and institutions of a political system to be at least political, but also possibly social, economic and/or religious. Further, in any of these sectors changes may occur in one or several fundamental aspects, as Chalmers Johnson in *Revolutionary Change* aptly points out in his typology of simple and total revolutions (1966: 139).

Fourth, although the literature on revolution posits that revolution involves violence or the threat of violence, revolutions may be non-violent, as seen in some of the Arab Spring countries. Violence may be defined as the threat or use of force. It provides us with a second characteristic by which to distinguish revolution from reform and also from demonstrations, strikes, or social change, although these may be precursors of revolution. Revolution is different from war as well, for whereas both involve violence, the latter is inter-systemic while the former is intra-systemic (Johnson 1966: 13). Moreover, violence that does not result in change of personnel and in fundamental political, social and/or economic change is not termed revolution here. By the same token, as soon as such changes occur, the violent movement is termed revolution even if it lasts for a short period of time. Further, revolutionaries may resort to non-violent mass gatherings and demonstrations, as seen in the Middle Eastern countries studied.

The above definition points to a continuum (ranging from simple to total) of revolutionary change. It also includes conservative counter-revolutions which result in a change of personnel and fundamental policies and/or institutions. In this context, the Middle Eastern countries I study, Tunisia and Egypt, are transitioning towards revolution and are vulnerable to counter-revolutions – for example, the ousting of the democratically elected Egyptian President, Mohamed Morsi, on 3 July 2013.

This leads to the need to analyse the outcome of revolutions. Has the Arab Spring been realised so far? Have the promises of the 2011 revolutionaries, based on their hierarchy of reducing inequality, of promoting democracy and economic prosperity, been realised so far, especially in Tunisia and Egypt? These may be the eventual goals of most revolutions, but in actuality their record is usually poor, according to E. Weede and E. N. Muller, who studied the
phenomenon worldwide (1997). The more immediate goals of the revolutionary leadership are more realizable, such as the expanding of its state authority, changing the rules of the game of access to power, and the restructuring of institutions and beliefs (Goldstone 2001: 169). However, even in this regard Tunisia and Egypt are still transitioning, as will be seen in the case studies in this book. Why, then, do revolutions happen?

**Some pertinent theories of revolution and reform**

The many explanations in the theoretical literature that this study sifts through, analyses and uses as referents in the HD hypothesis in order to understand specifically the transition towards revolution and reform in the Arab Spring countries covered, Tunisia, Egypt, Morocco and Jordan, may be grouped under ‘ruled-oriented’ and ‘ruler-oriented’ theories.

**‘Ruled-oriented’ theories**

Which revolutionary actors, constituting the ruled, are to be studied? Why do they revolt?

Who revolts? These theories place an emphasis on the actors who revolt. They study changes in the ruled which lead them to revolt. Some authors write in terms of masses’ and individuals’ participation in a revolution; others in terms of groups and their collective action; others in terms of classes and their leadership; and still others in terms of informal organisations.

Many of the advocates of the theory of mass society approach revolutions from the angle of atomisation of individuals owing to the breakdown of group life and their subsequent arousal and mobilisation by revolutionary leaders or ideologues, as expounded by Eric Hoffer and José Ortega y Gasset. Pertinent to this study is Eric Hoffer’s idea of the atomisation of the unemployed, put forward in his book *The True Believer: Thoughts on the Nature of Mass Movements* (Hoffer 1951). For these individuals, the social ties to groups provided by employment are severed, which causes them to experience anxieties, barrenness and meaninglessness regarding their individual existence and makes them readily believe intellectuals and doctrinaire voices (Hoffer 1951: 33, 46, 51, 72). Thus, revolutionary mass movements are created when atomised individuals are discontented, and acquire a sense of power and faith in the future (Hoffer 1951: 7–10, 89, 99, 115, 121). José Ortega y Gasset, in his book *The Revolt of the Masses*, elaborates on the role of ideologies and intellectuals in creating a ‘new state of mind’, which is individualistic and rationalistic, among the masses (1932: 111–12, 131).

Also emphasising mass mobilisations is the new literature on ‘contentious politics’, as presented by Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow (2007) and Jack Goldstone (2001). Indeed, in their definition of revolution they include formal
and informal mass mobilisation and efforts to force change through non-institutionalised actions (Goldstone 2001: 142). The writings of all the mass theorists apply to my explanation of Middle Eastern mass demonstrations preceding the oustings of Ben Ali in Tunisia and Hosni Mubarak in Egypt in 2011.

The role of individuals in joining revolutions is also applicable in my case studies, as it has been analysed by rational choice theorists. Here the work of T. Ireland and G. Tullock should be mentioned. According to Ireland, a revolutionary situation would exist where the individual calculated that the utilities of joining the revolutionaries exceeded the costs and saw himself as a ‘tipping point’—perceived, that is, that his actions would make a difference. The situation would end when the individual perceives the cost of participation to exceed the utilities he derived from further participation (Ireland 1967: 49–66). Tullock added to these cost–benefit calculations of individuals in joining the revolution the fun value of participating in the revolution, the probabilities of revolutionary success or failure, and the chances of various types of injuries (Tullock 1971: 87–100; 1974: 4–60).

However, rational choice models faced the problem of collective goods and their effect on discouraging the participation of individuals. More recent studies of rational choice have overcome the collective action problem by introducing the element of group identification, and hence have concentrated on what kinds of group structures favour protest action while concentrating on the identity, network ties and leadership of groups, which historical comparative case studies, like my present book, have dwelt upon (Goldstone 2001: 164–5). These ties are reminiscent of the role of individuals at Tahrir Square in Egypt, for example.

The role of groups and alliances between them is analysed by Samuel Huntington in his book *Political Order in Changing Societies* (1968). During modernization, political and social changes extend political consciousness to new groups. If this proceeds at such a rapid rate that it becomes impossible for the existing political institutions to assimilate them, the politically aspiring groups become inclined towards revolution. ‘Revolution’ is thus ‘the extreme case of explosion of political participation’ (Huntington 1968: 266). However, whether a revolution will be actualised depends on the alliances of these groups of intelligentsia, slum dwellers and peasants (Huntington 1968: 302–3). It is worth noting that in the Tunisian and Egyptian cases all these groups struck informal alliances through their virtual online and actual participations in the mass demonstrations that erupted. Also, the neoliberal economic policies created crony capitalists on the one hand and highly educated young individuals on the other, who aspired to increased participation and the sharing of economic benefits.

However, revolutions are not always the result of modernisation. Here, Charles Tilly, in his book *From Mobilization to Revolution* (1978), attempts to construct a theory independent of the rate of modernisation, by emphasising the collective action of groups which have been mobilised and which are involved in
The Transition Towards Revolution and Reform

a conflict with other groups and the incumbent government over resources. His approach represents the political conflict approach, which this study also covers. For Tilly, it was the lack of political power of new associational groups that led directly to political violence (rather than leading to it indirectly through psychological processes, as argued by Ted Gurr and discussed below). According to Tilly, unlike communal localised traditional groups like the peasants, these associational groups can be organised and mobilised. Tilly’s ‘mobilisation model’ posits a group as mobilised when it has broadened its control over one or more of the following resources: normative, coercive and utilitarian resources (Tilly 1978: 5). Once a group is mobilised it is ready for collective action. New associational groups usually engage in proactive collective action because they demand entry to the polity. A revolutionary situation begins when ‘a government previously under the control of a single polity becomes the objective of competing mutually exclusive claims on the part of two or more distinct polities’ (such as the pro- and anti-Morsi groups in Egypt during the summer of 2013). This ends ‘when a single sovereign polity regains control over the government’ (Tilly 1978: 191).

The role of classes (based on economic factors) in revolutions is stressed by Karl Marx. The oppressed class, which represents the new mode of production, develops a class consciousness and unity and realises that the only way to overcome this barrier is through an armed struggle (Marx and Engels 1959). However, classes are groups that are too big to unite their members sufficiently for action, a point which Vladimir Lenin recognised in his concept of the vanguard, the politically conscious element of the oppressed class, as the leader of the revolution (Lenin 1970).

In the Middle Eastern attempts at revolution in Tunisia and Egypt, both the middle and the working classes participated peacefully without any top leaders (no visible vanguard, in other words), but rather through mass mobilisation accelerated by modern media including the Internet, social media (Facebook, Twitter and YouTube), which fed satellite TV stations like Al Jazeera from Qatar. Here, informal ties prevailed.

On the basis of the 1989–91 revolutions in Eastern Europe, Goldstone, back in 2001, suggested the importance of studying informal groups in theorising about revolutions (Goldstone 2001: 153). However, he tended to over-emphasise the role of leadership in the form of one or two individuals who combine the roles of the visionaries (‘people oriented’) and pragmatic organisers (‘task oriented’) (Goldstone 2001: 157); these, although important in the post-revolutionary phase, were not prominent in the leaderless pre-revolutionary phase, which was based on mass movements attempting to bring about revolutions in the Middle Eastern countries studied here.

Why do the ruled revolt? The role of the ruled in revolutions is emphasised by ‘deprivation’ theorists and ‘injustice’ theorists. Deprivation theorists concen-
trate on changes in the aspirations and expectations of the ruled which lead to
cognitive dissonance, whereas injustice theorists concentrate on perceptions by
the ruled of ‘injustice’, rather than on perceptions merely of deprivation, which
lead them to revolt. Certainly, both theories are valid in the Middle Eastern
countries covered, and hence both are incorporated in my HD hypothesis.

Deprivation theories approach revolutions from the angle of cognitive dis-
sonance, which occurs as a result of certain directions of change, rates of change
and particular factors causing this change, whether political, ideological, eco-

nomic, social, military or religious. The resultant frustration people feel leads to
to their collective anger and hence to their revolt.

Some theorists emphasise that improvements in one or more conditions of
society increase people’s expectations of and desires for further improvements
in the same conditions or other conditions. If the latter do not match, or if they
depart from, these expectations, people get frustrated and revolt. According to
Crane Brinton, in his Anatomy of Revolution, revolutions occur when the rate of
improvement does not keep up with the rate of rise in aspirations. It is when a
society is improving economically that it aspires to more economic gain (Brinton
1965: 32). When groups in such a society come to feel that, although their
economic activity is improving, it is hindered from realising its full potential,
they feel annoyance, restraint, and hindrance and revolt (Brinton 1965: 32, 34).
Inasmuch as Brinton writes about macro-economic improvements, his study
partially explains high GDP growth in pre-revolutionary Tunisia and Egypt.
But this alone is not the whole picture.

Here, Alexis de Tocqueville hints at what later was regarded as ‘relative
deprivation’ (RD) by James Davies and Ted Gurr. For Tocqueville, aspirations
rise owing to improved conditions but conditions thereafter remain the same.
He writes that economic improvements and the lessening of oppression by the
government, which is intent upon reforming itself, lift some of the people’s
grievances or alleviate them. This has a spill-over effect on ‘those left untouched’
(Tocqueville 1856: 214). The untouched people now want redress too. And if
the needs of the ruled are not met, they may consider the situation to be intoler-
able and revolt against the regime. This is more in line with the frustrations felt
by Tunisian and Egyptian unemployed university graduates.

Instead of general economic conditions, W. Laqueur emphasised improve-
ments in education (1968). As people become more highly educated, they tend
to see more social and political problems and feel more discontented about
them, and expect to change for the better to occur. If these latter expectations
are not met by the social and political structures over the long run, people get
frustrated and revolt (Laqueur 1968: 503). This certainly applies to Tunisia,
with its high and growing rates of literacy and of university graduates.

Some writers have argued that it is not the improvement of conditions but
their deterioration that brings about revolutions. Notable here is Karl Marx.
According to Marx, the worsening of the economic conditions of the working class intensifies their discontent, and makes them despair and revolt (Marx and Engels 1959).

Other authors, such as James Davies, have pointed out that what is important is the sequence of change – namely, a prolonged period of objective economic and social improvement followed by a sudden sharp decline which creates a dissatisfied state of mind in the population. This leads to the subjective fear that ‘the great effort will be quite lost; their mood becomes revolutionary’ (Davies 1962: 5). Davies, in his article ‘Toward a theory of revolution’ (1962), calls this process the ‘J-Curve’. However, he becomes inconsistent when he compares the expectations of the people, a state of mind, to the actual rise and fall of ‘objective economic and social development’ rather than to the people’s perceptions of these changes. Moreover, he does not take into account the people’s perceptions of the governmental structures and processes. My HD hypothesis takes into account perceptions in the hierarchies of values or priorities of the ruled, and also their having lost hope of redress from existing governmental structures and processes, revealed through public opinion polls, the demands of protesters expressed at demonstrations, and the statements of the revolutionaries.

Ted Gurr, in *Why Men Rebel* (1970), considers perceptions. His major contribution lies in his ‘aspirational deprivation’ hypothesis, which includes ‘relative deprivation’, as an ‘increase in men’s value expectations without a concomitant change in value position or potential’. He considers deprivation not only in terms of welfare values (economic values, land, skills), but also interpersonal (social status, ideational coherence) and power values (political participation and security) (Gurr 1970: 26, 112–13). However, he fails to consider religious values, which have provided the motive force behind such Middle Eastern revolutions as the Iranian Revolution and the Mahdi uprising in the Sudan.

Gurr defines ‘relative deprivation’ (RD) as ‘actors’ perception of discrepancy between their value expectations and their value capabilities’. Here, the value expectations are ‘the goods and conditions of life to which people believe they are rightfully entitled’; and value capabilities ‘are the goods and conditions they think they are capable of getting and keeping’ (Gurr 1970: 24). A person’s point of reference here may be ‘his own past condition, an abstract ideal, or the standards articulated by a leader as well as a “reference group”’ (Gurr 1970: 25). RD played an important role in the attempts at revolution in Tunisia and Egypt.

But is RD that significant in explaining the start of revolutions? Some writers, for example Leonard Berkowitz (1968), Peter Lupsha (1969), Barrington Moore (1978) and Jack Goldstone (2001), have questioned the importance of using deprivation by itself. Berkowitz, a psychologist, in his *Roots of Aggression*, emphasises that for aggressive behaviour nearness to the desired goal may be more important than the extent of deprivation (Berkowitz 1968: 307–22). Certainly Egyptians viewed the success of Tunisians in ousting Ben Ali as making their
removal of Mubarak a near-possibility, and this gave them more courage to revolt.

Although Gurr mentions, among other factors, that a revolution occurs when people believe they are unjustly deprived, Lupsha and Moore give ‘injustice’ a central place in their theory of revolution. According to Lupsha:

One can get angry and aggressive because one’s values or sense of justice (a learned phenomenon) have been affronted, without any blocking to the individual’s goal directed activity or awareness of any personal ‘want–get ratio’ deprivation, or any personal feelings of anticipated frustration. (Lupsha 1969: 288)

Moore, in his book *Injustice: the Social Bases of Obedience and Revolt* (1978), seeks to answer the question of why some people can live and suffer in an oppressive environment and not revolt, whereas others exist in equal or less oppressive situations and do revolt. He sees no correlation between severity of suffering and rebellion. Therefore, he concludes that the moral order of society, rather than suffering, should be concentrated upon in studying revolutions. So long as the ruled accept the moral order of society and the inevitability of injustice, no revolution arises. The ruled, according to Moore, first perceive an unjust situation; secondly, they come to realise that this is not inevitable; thirdly, they decide to revolt and perceive that they can and ought to do so (Moore 1978: 462, 492). When the illusion of the inevitability of an unjust situation, such as inequality, is removed by the mockery of intellectuals and later by wide sections of the population, political revolution results and older forms of privilege are replaced by a new moral order (ibid.: 493–4). The people see the rulers as oppressors and plunderers who have not lived up to their obligation to take care of their subjects. The language of reciprocity, or of the mutual obligations of rulers and ruled for the benefit of the whole community, is seen as an ideological cover for exploitation. The result is a perception of injustice. Then, the ruled act on a sense of moral outrage by revolting (ibid.: 509–10). Goldstone uses perceptions of justice as one component in his study of revolutions. My study finds that it was this sense of injustice felt by the people, as depicted in their cries and calls for ‘dignity’, that was a significant factor leading to the attempts at revolution in Tunisia and Egypt.

‘Ruler-oriented’ theories
People’s perception of injustice alone is not enough to trigger revolutions; there is also the need to consider people’s perceptions of the ruler’s ineffectiveness (Goldstone 2001: 148). Unjust rulers may be tolerated if they are perceived to be effective in delivering nationalistic or economic goals, or if they are perceived to be too effective, making it difficult to challenge the regime. Hence, it is important to study not only the ruled but also the rulers. My HD hypothesis considers them both along with their interactions.
Ruler-oriented theories of revolution analyse the ineffectiveness of the rulers, their deterioration, and their inability to conduct effective diversionary tactics and methods – all of which are included in my HD hypothesis. Different authors emphasise different aspects of the role of rulers: (1) their isolation, (2) their inability to adapt to new conditions, (3) their loss of power, (4) divisions within them and alienation of some parts of them, (5) their loss of faith, (6) their inefficiency and corruption; or some combination of these factors. Moreover, the writers see the rulers as ruling classes or elites or coalitions of groups instead of as a monolithic unit.

Leiden and Schmitt recognise that the rulers should have deteriorated, but suggest that unless the insurgents are aware that the rulers have weakened they will not revolt (1968: 53–4). Also, according to Arendt, revolutions can break out at a time of loss of authority, and succeed only ‘if there exists a sufficient number of people who are prepared for its collapse, and at the same time, are willing to assume power, eager to organise and to act together for a common purpose’ (1963: 112).

How is the theorist to operationalise the concept of ‘elites’? Harold Lasswell centres his study around formal leadership. Although for him ‘elite’ is a classificatory and descriptive term covering both leadership and the strata of society from which leaders emerge, he concentrates his attention on cabinets, ‘executive committees’, which are directly involved in the decision-making process (Lasswell et al. 1952: 6, 22–6). In spite of the fact that this makes his material more manageable, it has its shortcomings, for it ignores informal leadership in the ruling class, which, as James Bill points out, is vital for an understanding of politics in developing nations (Bill 1972: 9). This is especially important in the Middle East. According to Steffen Erdle (2010), the elite in Tunisia shunned occupying formal governmental positions and preferred instead the informal behind-the-scenes power positions which prevailed in pre-revolutionary times, as will be seen in the Tunisia chapter of this book. But they suffered ultimately because these ‘crony capitalists’, who were mainly from the ruling family, did not admit individuals into their ranks except by marriage, blocking normal elite circulation of talented individuals, which resulted in a destabilising of the regime, as my case study illustrates.

How do theorists view the elite characteristics which make them vulnerable to revolutions from below? Vilfredo Pareto, in his book The Mind and Society, concentrates on the isolation of the elite and its degeneration in his explanation of revolutions. An elite’s dominion would be ‘perpetual’ if it combined intelligence with fitness to use force (Pareto 1935: 1,531). This stability could be maintained if there is an adequate circulation of individuals, where the gifted people would rise into the elite and the degenerated elements of the elite would fall into the ranks of the masses (Pareto 1935: 1,431). However, this circulation is not maintained in real life. The ‘governing class . . . brings its own ruin’
Having maintained itself in power over a long period of time by force and intelligence, it finds out that it may subsist on shrewdness and without the use of force for some time, and it gives more vent to its desires to amass wealth. Therefore it readily accepts and emphasises the entrance into its ranks of individuals with ‘instinct residues’, which promote wealth. Class circulation slows down; in time the number of individuals with group-persistence instinct residues dwindles; an imbalance between intelligence and force results (Pareto 1935: 1,432, 1,515–16, 1,555). The elite is unable to defend itself and very often resorts to humanitarian moves. Such conditions, where ‘a humanitarian aristocracy . . . is closed or stiffly exclusive’, represents ‘the maximum of insecurity’ (Pareto 1935: 1,516). Then revolutions occur. Pareto adds that an imbalance, where force is emphasised to the detriment of intelligence in the elite, would also result in revolution (Pareto 1935: 1,541, 1,564). My case studies show that the attempted revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt resulted from poor elite circulation, among other factors. Humanitarian measures undertaken at the last moment by the regimes were not considered to be serious, and excessive use of force backfired and resulted in the toppling of the leaders.

Gaetano Mosca’s formulations, in his *Ruling Class*, are basically similar to Pareto’s. He recognises the importance of intelligence and force for the elite, which for him is composed of the government and a second stratum of executives whose level of ‘morality, intelligence and activity’ determines the stability of the ‘political organism’ (Mosca 1939: 404). He recognises the need for elite circulation. Therefore, the elite undermines its political position by failing to accommodate new social types, which arise owing to changes in commerce, forced emigration, discoveries, wars or other social changes (Mosca 1939: 199, 221).

One such change, also pertinent to the Middle East, is its sustained population growth in recent times. According to Goldstone, when this is in excess of economic growth, it alters the relations between the elite of the state and the population, often leading to instability. Jobs become scarce and inflation rises. This results in the elites benefiting disproportionately vis-à-vis other groups, and when it upsets the ‘normal process of elite recruitment and social mobility’ it leads to severe damage to state effectiveness and justice as perceived by the protesters, which is a precursor to revolution (Goldstone 2001: 149). This situation was certainly true in Tunisia and Egypt, where the increasing number of highly educated university students could not find jobs much less be recruited to the ranks of the elite of ‘crony capitalists’.

Elite theory also emphasises regime breakdown and revolutions due to deep elite divisions, defections and polarisations. According to J. C. Scott, where the elites are united and head fiscally and militarily sound states, they are largely invulnerable to revolutions from people below (Scott 1985, 1990). A. Groth also agrees that no revolutions will occur unless the elite is divided, no matter how
strongly the masses support the insurgents. His explanation of revolutions is based on divisions within the elites, the struggle of groups within them, and/or the alienation of some of them. Both of his two types of revolutions, elite-affiliated and elite-isolated, require this precondition. The former occurs when parts of the status quo political elite give active support to or are at least benevolently neutral to the activities of the revolutionary movement. The latter happens when the elite is divided (Groth 1966: 7, 11, 16, 18). Under such conditions the elite is weakened, and thus is unable to withstand enormous pressure from below since it is incapable of maintaining its control over the people (ibid.: 7–8).

One such group is that of the ‘intellectuals’, who, owing to travel, or exposure to other societies, want change. These intellectuals ‘transfer’ their ‘allegiance’ or ‘desert’ the cause of existing institutions and point to their archaism (Edwards 1970: 38, 41). The repressors lose faith in themselves and revolutions follow. In this connection Edwards writes, ‘So long as the entire body of repressors believe firmly in themselves and in the righteousness of their actions, they cannot be overthrown by revolution’ (ibid.: 45, 59). Thus Edwards emphasises also the psychological state of the elite.

Brinton agrees with Edwards about the importance of the psychological faith of the ruling class, and its divisions, but he goes beyond Edwards in that he does not neglect other factors such as the inefficiency of the class, its failure to admit new social groups and its loss of military power (Brinton 1965: 39, 49, 51–3, 55, 60, 65). Here S. N. Eisenstadt and J. D. Green argue that it is not merely divisions within the elite but rather the polarisation of the elite that leads to instability. The elite form two or three coherent groupings, who exhibit sharp differences in points of view about the polity (Eisenstadt 1978, 1999; Green 1984). In the Middle Eastern attempts at revolution in Tunisia and Egypt that are studied here, the military elite deserted the rulers and hence this led to the success of these attempts; whereas in Morocco and Jordan, the military elite stayed loyal and united with the monarchs and their elite, and no revolution, but some reform, resulted instead.

Theda Skocpol, in her 1979 book *States and Social Revolutions*, adds another dimension to the study of revolutions – namely, deterioration of state structures. She spearheaded what Goldstone calls the ‘third generation’ theories, which drew attention to the ‘structural vulnerabilities of regimes as the basic causes of revolutions’ (Goldstone 2001: 139). Unlike other theorists, such as Gurr, Johnson, Tilly and Marx, who stuck to the notion that revolutions are purposive and voluntaristic, Skocpol wrote that the analyst should ‘take a nonvoluntarist, structural perspective on their causes and processes’ (Skocpol 1979: 14–15). According to her, the structures of the state break down before a revolution occurs (Skocpol 1979: 29, 285). For her the basic causes of social revolutions lie ‘in the structure and capacities of the state organisations, as these are conditioned by developments in the economy and class structure and also by develop-
ments in the international situation’ (ibid.: 32). She deals with both domestic and international structures (ibid.: 291). Domestically, she departs from Marx in suggesting the potential autonomy of the state. The state is no longer treated as an instrument of the dominant class. She explores not only class relations but also relations of the state to dominant and subordinate classes (ibid.: 31). In her case studies (France, Russia and China), she shows how the rulers may act against the class of landlords. The upper class would be against reforms and thus would put a strain on the domestic structures of the state (ibid.: 30). This could happen internationally as well where the state may also attempt policies, such as responses to international military pressures and opportunities, which conflict with the interests of the landed class (ibid.: 31).

On the basis of her case studies, Skocpol summarises her theory of revolutions thus: ‘caught in the cross-pressures between class structures and international exigencies, the autocracies and their centralised administrations and armies broke apart, opening the way for social-revolutionary transformations spearheaded by revolts from below’ (ibid.: 47). Here Skocpol herself spearheaded the ‘third generation’ theories, for, unlike Marx, who believed that revolutions would occur in the advanced capitalist industrial nations, she shows that revolutions have happened in agrarian countries (ibid.: 292). For her what was important was ‘the breakdown and reconstruction of state administrative and coercive organizations from old to new regimes’ (ibid.: 42). In my HD hypothesis I refer to the breakdown of state structures when I show that the existing governmental structures or processes were so dysfunctional that they contributed to the feelings of the revolutionaries that they could not get redress through the state structures and had instead to take matters into their own hands through attempting a democratic solution in Tunisia and Egypt, to be realised only through revolutions.

**Diversionary methods theories**

Even with the deterioration of the elite and state structures, social movements rather than revolutions will occur if the rulers resort to diversionary tactics and methods such as co-optation (reform), repression and/or democratisation experiments. These are discussed in turn.

**Reform theories**

Co-optation, concessions and reforms are considered by different theorists to be controversial as regards their effectiveness in preventing revolutions. Whereas some writers, like Tocqueville, consider reform a catalyst for revolution (Tocqueville 1856: 214), and whereas others, like H. D. Lasswell and A. Kaplan (1950) consider it a substitute, the truth of the matter lies perhaps in the positions taken by Huntington and Goldstone, that is, that some reforms act as catalysts and others as substitutes for revolution. It is important to note here the nature of
the reforms, their timing, and how they address the members and composition of the revolutionaries. Thus some policy reforms are likely to be interpreted as a weakness of the regime and as such they may lead to revolution (Huntington 1968: 367). According to M. Silver, where reforms are limited they tend to be followed by revolutions. This is because reforms are perceived to show regime weakness and give benefits to revolutionaries which could be used against the regime. Reforms decrease costs and increase rewards, thus increasing the net private benefit from supporting the revolutionaries (Silver 1974: 63–71).

The timing of the concessions and the perceived strength of the regime are emphasised by Goldstone. Where the ruler has already lost his perceived effectiveness and justice, concessions may be seen to be ‘too little, too late’ and hence increase the people’s demands for larger-scale change. Therefore, when the regime undertakes reforms from a position of weakness they will further undermine support for the ruler. If, however, reforms are undertaken from a position of strength, they may prevent revolutions, as Machiavelli advised the Prince (Goldstone 2001: 161).

Leadership reforms, insofar as they ‘may drain away the dynamic elements in the revolutionary movement and join to the Establishment’, may prevent revolution, according to Huntington (1968: 367). These are especially effective if they are well timed, that is, if they occur when the revolutionary groups are in their intermediate power levels, for in the groups’ phase of minimal power the few reforms offered to them appear too little in terms of their aspirations for total change of the system, and in their phase of maximal power the groups are so near to their goal and their intensity of discontent so acute that they will not be deterred by reform (Hoffer 1951: 28).

So far as the composition of the revolutionaries goes, those reforms are effective in preventing revolutions which alter the balance of power in the revolutionary groups. Thus reforms which strengthen the more moderate revolutionaries tend to be beneficial to the incumbents (Huntington 1968: 368). So are reforms directed towards the peasants, especially if they are land reforms. But reforms directed towards the urban intelligentsia, as in the Middle Eastern countries studied here, may act as catalysts for revolution since the needs of these latter groups are utopian and cannot be fulfilled by any government (ibid.: 371, 375–6).

In the attempts made towards revolution in Tunisia and Egypt, last-minute concessions by the rulers did not prevent the revolutions. What about co-optation in the long run, which in the past had contributed to the longevity of the rule of Ben Ali in Tunisia (23 years) and of Mubarak in Egypt (almost 30 years)? Why was co-optation no longer effective in 2011? Co-optation had with time increasingly benefited only the few, who had become more and more greedy and corrupt, which led to perceptions of relative deprivation on the part of young university graduates, who had no prospects of finding jobs without
bribes, but who were educated enough to be savvy with social media mobilisation skills and use of cellphones, and were inspired by the ‘Twitter Revolution’ in Iran and subsequently by the Tunisian uprisings. This occurred even at a time when the macro-economy was improving but corruption was rampant.

In the attempts made towards reform in Morocco and Jordan, the imbuing of pre-emptive reform measures with religion, namely the emphasis placed on the direct descent of the monarchs from the Prophet Muhammad, resulted in the kings’ survival. Reforms, however limited, initiated by the monarchs were believed in as the rulers were trusted as commanders of the faithful. Where there is trust in a ruler’s intentions to carry out their promises and where the ruler is perceived to be just, transition towards reform rather than towards revolution tends to be preferred.

**Repression theories**

When facing demands from protesters for political change, regimes have combined repression with concessions. According to Harry Eckstein, concessions which are ‘timely’ and repression which is based on very good intelligence are essential for the survival of regimes (Eckstein 1965: 153–9). The question ultimately hinges on how to choose the right combination of these two methods.

So far as repression is concerned, Lasswell and Kaplan elaborate on the role of elite force by emphasising the degree of actual control of the instruments of violence by the elite. They suggest that the greater the control, the less the probability of revolution (Lasswell and Kaplan 1950: 266–7). On the other hand, the Feierabends studied the effects of the different levels of exercise of this force and concluded, on the basis of their quantitative cross-national study, that, other factors being equal, predominantly permissive and extremely coercive regimes encounter little violence from the ruled, whereas regimes using a medium level of coerciveness encounter more violence and revolution (Feierabend and Feierabend 1966: 249–71). However, these writers do not deal with the question of why the elite slackens or tightens its control on the use of force. An added dimension to the effectiveness of the use of force by the rulers in preventing revolutions depends, according to C. Kurzman, on whether they are consistent or not in the use of force. Kurzman considers inconsistency as a factor in undermining the ruler’s position (Kurzman 1996: 153–70). The role of the military in abandoning the rulers in Tunisia and Egypt in 2011, and in supporting the monarchs in Morocco and Jordan, will be analysed in detail in my case-study chapters of this book.

According to Goldstone, the degree and context of repression need to be analysed too. Where repression is ‘not strong enough to suppress opponents, or . . . is so diffuse and erratic that innocents are persecuted, or . . . is aimed at groups that the public considers representative and justified in their protest’, it can undermine a ruler’s stability (Goldstone 2001: 161). Moreover, Goldstone adds
to these conditions the ‘perceptions of vulnerability’ of the rulers. The more the regime is perceived as losing ground, the more the protesters may bear great risks of increased regime violence and proceed with the toppling of the rulers. But when they perceive the regime as unshakable, they are reduced to silence in the face of indiscriminate repression (Goldstone 2001: 161).

Here, Pitirim A. Sorokin introduced the concept of the ‘threshold of revolution’ in his original work, *The Sociology of Revolution* (1925). For Sorokin, there is a psychological threshold at which the instinct of freedom is annihilated by severe repression. However, up to this point repression of the most important instincts, or of a large number of them, enhances the will to resist and thus may lead to revolution (Sorokin 1925: 368–9, 380). Rulers in actual pre-revolutionary situations, however, lack information about such matters, are often over-confident, and veer back and forth in their use of repression, which increases their vulnerability to being overthrown (Goldstone 2001: 161).

In the detailed case studies of Tunisia and Egypt covered in this book, it was found that repression by the rulers was counterproductive. Repression, which had been used selectively against extremist Islamists in the past to please the USA in its ‘war on terror’, was extended to the moderate dissident population at large and became more severe, to such an extent that it had elicited Western public condemnation, as evidenced by the Cairo speech on 4 June 2009 by the newly elected President of the USA, Barack Obama, condemnation subsequently repeated in his numerous other speeches prior to 2011, which had addressed the dictators as being on ‘the wrong side of history’ (Alianak 2012: 8). This raised the hopes of dissidents and tended to contribute, however indirectly, to the Arab Spring.

**Political liberalisation theories**

Another method used by the rulers studied here was their ‘political liberalisation’ attempts. These efforts, urged by the Bush and Obama administrations, were at best half-hearted and resulted in raising the expectations of the population only for these to be dashed over and over again by rigged, tampered-with and controlled elections, which led to frustration, anger, and feelings of mistrust, of injustice and of the hopelessness of redress given the existing governmental structures and processes, along with a determination to transition to democracy. These feelings were reinforced by the lack of clear succession plans for the ageing rulers of Tunisia and, especially, of Egypt. In the case of Egypt, rumours about the grooming of Gamal Mubarak, the son of Hosni Mubarak, to succeed his father were widely resented.

Indeed, the illiberal democracies that Tunisia and Egypt had introduced resulted in what the State Failure Task Force had called a ‘partial democracy’. According to its quantitative study, ‘partial democracies’, which embark on reform and concessions and which have shown some weakness, are extremely
unstable. On the other hand, democracies and autocracies were shown to be fairly stable (Goldstone 2001: 166). So by moving in the direction of illiberal democracy, the leaders of Tunisia and Egypt unwittingly brought about the downfall of their regimes.

**Methodology of the study**

This book is based on a case-study approach to testing the HD hypothesis. The cases covered are discussed in two Parts: I, The Transition towards Revolution and II, The Transition towards Reform. In Part I, the cases of the Tunisian (Chapter 2) and Egyptian (Chapter 3) revolutions are considered. In Part II, the cases of the reforming monarchies, Moroccan (Chapter 4) and Jordanian (Chapter 5), are studied. Chapter 6 concludes by presenting similarities and differences regarding the revolution and reform efforts, and attempts to depict the heuristic value of the HD hypothesis in explaining concisely the Arab Spring region-wide.

My data for arriving at the priorities or hierarchies of values of the rulers and the ruled involves analysing the chants and statements of the protesters, the speeches and actions of the rulers, and most important of all, the very reliable public opinion polls, in particular those conducted by the Pew Research Center and the Abu Dhabi Gallup Poll in 2010 and 2011 and beyond that well into the post-revolutionary era.

**Scope and purpose of the study**

This study attempts to contribute to reform theories by explaining why reforms occurred in some Arab Spring countries. In addition, instead of separate models for revolution as suggested by Goldstone, one for the rulers and one for the ruled (Goldstone 2001: 174), my HD hypothesis, as presented in this book, shows the dynamic interaction of rulers and ruled. It discusses, in each chapter, the calls for social justice versus the co-optation of ‘crony capitalists’, and the calls for populist democracy versus the illiberal democracy of the rulers (in terms of limited participation, ineffective political parties, stifled civil society). Also, the book stresses the outcomes of the revolutionary and reform processes up to the summer of 2013. I try to discern whether the Arab Spring was realised in the countries studied by giving a vivid picture of the interactions of the rulers and the ruled.

My HD hypothesis attempts to contribute to the development of what Goldstone calls the needed ‘fourth generation’ theory (Goldstone 2001: 175). It tries to meet his condition of treating stability as problematic and focuses on the conditions of regime sustainability over time. Moreover, it gives a prominent role to networks and ideology, but shows that the leadership of revolutionaries,
although provided for by the HD hypothesis, is not pertinent in the Middle Eastern revolutions studied here. Also, as Goldstone suggests should be the case, my hypothesis deals with the interplay of the multiple actors involved in revolutionary processes and outcomes. In addition, my analysis attempts to unify the case studies with the findings of rational choice models. Further case studies need to be undertaken, of course, to apply my HD hypothesis and test its heuristic value region-wide. Although there are not enough instances of revolutions or reforms in the Arab Spring countries to warrant effective statistically significant quantitative studies, perhaps in the future analysts could be challenged to attempt them anyway.