

Endgames

The 2011 Arab Spring tells the story of what happens to autocrats who prepare their militaries to thwart coups but unexpectedly face massive popular uprisings instead. When demonstrators took to the streets during that fateful year, some militaries remained loyal to the powers that be, some defected, while others splintered. The widespread consequences of this military agency ranged from facilitating transition to democracy, to reconfiguring authoritarianism, or triggering civil war. This study aims to explain the military politics of 2011, both in Egypt and Syria, and across Tunisia and Libya. Building on interviews with Arab officers, extensive fieldwork, and archival research, as well as hundreds of memoirs and political accounts, Hicham Bou Nassif shows how divergent combinations of coup-proofing tactics inform military behavior when autocratic regimes face nationwide popular protests.

Hicham Bou Nassif is Assistant Professor of Government at Claremont McKenna College. He is the author of numerous articles in academic journals including *Democratization*, the *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, *Middle East Journal*, *Political Science Quarterly*, and the *Journal of Strategic Studies*.

Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-84124-5 — Endgames
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Military Response to Protest in Arab Autocracies

Hicham Bou Nassif

Claremont McKenna College



CAMBRIDGE
UNIVERSITY PRESS

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CAMBRIDGE UNIVERSITY PRESS

University Printing House, Cambridge CB2 8BS, United Kingdom

One Liberty Plaza, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10006, USA

477 Williamstown Road, Port Melbourne, VIC 3207, Australia

314–321, 3rd Floor, Plot 3, Splendor Forum, Jasola District Centre,
New Delhi – 110025, India

79 Anson Road, #06–04/06, Singapore 079906

Cambridge University Press is part of the University of Cambridge.

It furthers the University's mission by disseminating knowledge in the pursuit of education, learning, and research at the highest international levels of excellence.

www.cambridge.org

Information on this title: www.cambridge.org/9781108841245

DOI: 10.1017/9781108893695

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First published 2021

A catalogue record for this publication is available from the British Library.

Library of Congress Cataloging-in-Publication Data

Names: Nassif, Hicham Bou, author.

Title: Endgames : military response to protest in Arab autocracies / Hicham Bou Nassif.

Description: Cambridge, United Kingdom ; New York, NY : Cambridge University Press, 2021. | Includes bibliographical references and index.

Identifiers: LCCN 2020011138 (print) | LCCN 2020011139 (ebook) |

ISBN 9781108841245 (hardback) | ISBN 9781108893695 (ebook)

Subjects: LCSH: Civil-military relations – Arab countries. | Arab countries – Military policy. | Arab countries – Armed Forces – Political activity. | Arab Spring, 2010– | Protest movements – Arab countries – History – 21st century.

Classification: LCC JQ1850.A38 C586 2021 (print) | LCC JQ1850.A38 (ebook) | DDC 322/.50956–dc23

LC record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020011138>

LC ebook record available at <https://lcn.loc.gov/2020011139>

ISBN 978-1-108-84124-5 Hardback

ISBN 978-1-108-81015-9 Paperback

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To Yola and Nabil

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The Iraqi Army was the only force capable of conspiring against me.
The only power we fear is this army . . . The army is like a pet tiger.
Saddam Hussein

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Cambridge University Press
978-1-108-84124-5 — Endgames
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Acknowledgments

This book began as a dissertation at Indiana University in 2011. William R. Thompson was my advisor at IU and he remains to this day a source of profound admiration and deep respect. As an advisor, Thompson gave me leeway to work on my own and develop my early ideas on military politics, but was immediately there for me anytime I needed him. I am indebted to him for his support since we met during my first year in graduate school in 2008. As I write these words, we are working on a new research project and I hope we will collaborate further in the future.

I am also very grateful to yet another great scholar, the late Alfred Stepan. We met when I was doing fieldwork in Cairo, in the summer of 2012. At the time, many saw the Muslim Brotherhood as the actor to be watched and studied. Stepan expressed frustration that few researchers were investigating Egyptian military politics and took me immediately under his wing when I told him that I was in Cairo to interview officers. From that moment until he passed away in 2017, Stepan read and commented upon pretty much everything I wrote, served on my doctoral committee, wrote letters of recommendation on my behalf, and invited me to present my findings at Columbia and write a chapter in the last volume he edited. May his soul rest in peace; I will never forget what I owe him.

Kevin Martin taught Middle East history at IU during my time there, and he was invariably supportive and generous with his time. I am not a native speaker of English, which isn't even my first foreign language. When I took my first steps into academic publishing in 2012, Martin patiently read and reread first drafts and improved my work in substance and in form. I am grateful for his kindness, hospitality, and the hours we spent discussing Syria.

My research in Cairo was greatly facilitated by M. K., an Egyptian academic, and M. H., a PhD student whom I met thanks to Alfred Stepan. I will not write their full names because of the nature of the political regime currently holding sway in Cairo, and because of what I have written on the political economy of corruption in the upper

echelons of the Egyptian military. But I do wish to acknowledge their help and thank them for it. M. K. asked an influential retired military general to meet me; he, in turn, invited his colleagues to do the same and I snowballed from there. M. H. shared with me his intimate understanding of Egyptian society and patiently answered my questions as I began investigating the politics of his country. My time in Cairo was made far more interesting because of his friendship.

Alissa Strunk, a PhD student at IU, introduced me to several of her friends in Tunis. They, in turn, arranged for me to meet Mukhtar Hishayshi and Boubaker Ben-Kraiem, two retired officers whom I interviewed several times and who agreed to ask their colleagues to meet me. I am grateful to the three of them. I will not name the officer who facilitated my research on Syrian military politics. May he be able to return to Syria one day, and may the bloodshed finally stop in his long-suffering country.

Carleton College gave me my first job after graduation in 2014. I wrote most of this book during my years at Carleton between 2014 and 2018. I couldn't have asked for nicer colleagues or for a more congenial environment in which to begin my academic career. For their humor, kindness, friendship, and support, I wish to thank Alfred Montero, Dev Gupta, Greg Marfleet, Laurence Cooper, Richard Keiser, Tun Myint, and Barbara Allen. Alas, the Minnesota winters proved too much for me and I searched for employment elsewhere; but the presence of this incredible group of fine scholars and fundamentally decent individuals brought warmth to my heart amid the cold and the gray.

I was teaching at Carleton when I published "Generals and Autocrats: How Coup-Proofing Predetermined Military Elite's Behavior in the Arab Spring," *Political Science Quarterly*, vol. 130, no. 2, June 2015. I have spent the last four years essentially developing the arguments I first put on paper in my dissertation, and then in this article. I thank *PSQ*'s editor and the anonymous reviewers who commented on the piece.

My colleagues in Claremont McKenna College have also been very supportive since I joined them in 2018. After I finished writing, several colleagues read the draft and gave me helpful feedback. For their encouragement, I especially wish to thank Hilary Apel, Minxin Pei, William Ascher, Joseph M. Bessette, Andrew Busch, Rodric Camp, Aseema Sinha, Jennifer Taw, Giorgi Areshidze, and Lisa Koch.

Zoltan Barany is perhaps America's foremost scholar in the field of civil-military relations. I benefitted immensely from his comments on a first draft of this book and I wish to thank him for taking the time to read the manuscript carefully. Marc Lynch read the same draft after we met at the 2018 Middle East Studies Association annual conference, in Texas.

xii Acknowledgments

His suggestions were very useful in reorganizing the manuscript along new lines. For his impeccable professionalism, warm regards are due to Daniel Brown, my editor at Cambridge University Press. I was lucky I got to work with him and I very much hope to do so again in the future. I also thank Maria Marsh and the two anonymous reviewers at the Press.

Hazem Saghie, a Lebanese political writer, read and commented on an early draft of Chapters 3 and 4. I thank him for doing so. I also thank Yezid Sayigh for his friendship and support.

I met Julie, my wife, during the last stretch of this work. Her unwavering backing proved instrumental in getting me through the exciting but stressful final miles. Julie is a historian currently finishing a dissertation on the Lebanese Civil War. She plans to transform it into a book soon and I promise to be by her side just as she was by mine since we met.

My mother, Yola, and my father, Nabil, are the shining stars of my life. No words will be enough to describe what they mean to me, and so I won't even try. I will simply say that I owe them everything I am today. This book is dedicated to them in humble acknowledgment of the incredible love they carry in their beautiful hearts.