

When Authoritarianism Survives: North Korea vs. Libya

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ABSTRACT

The North Korean regime has managed to survive for three generations of leaders without essential changes. The regime's long survivability has been explained by its intrastate factors, such as Juche ideology, unrestricted power of the leader, reliance on military, dependence of interest groups on the regime, limited liberal reforms, or the degree of country's isolation from the outside world. However, these explanations proved to be inconsistent on the face of the revolutions of the "Arab Spring", particularly in Libya. I argue that international factors are significant predictors of authoritarian regime change, rather than intrastate factors. A comparative analysis of the North Korean and Libyan cases demonstrate that authoritarian regime's survivability is effected by the two major international factors: the presence or absence of a pro-regime-change great power and the presence or absence of a pro-regime regional veto player.

Keywords: Authoritarian Regime, Regime Change, Revolution, North Korea, Libya.

Despite numerous predictions of inevitable collapse, the North Korean regime managed to survive through three generations of leaders. Often referred to as a “unique” case, its survivability has been explained by a diverse number of factors, such as Juche ideology, unrestricted power of the leader, reliance on military, dependence of interest groups on the regime, introduction of limited liberal reforms, or the degree of country’s isolation from the outside world.

These explanations prove to be inconsistent when tested against the background of the “Arab Spring”. The factors considered as sources of the North Korean regime’s survival were present in the Libyan case before it experienced the regime change in 2011. For instance, the country was ruled by a sole leader, Mu’ammarr al-Qaddafi, who possessed unrestricted power based on Jamahiriya ideology. The leader relied on military and family ties to secure their loyalty, and guarantee their dependence on the regime. Qaddafi also introduced some degree of economic freedom. Finally, the level of censorship was high. Given these similarities between the two cases, it is puzzling that the North Korean regime continues to exist while Qaddafi’s regime fell.

To solve the puzzle, this article makes two main arguments. First, North Korea should be released of the veil of a “unique case” and included into comparative studies. Second, international factors – the presence or absence of a pro-regime-change great power and a pro-regime regional veto player – determine authoritarian regime’s survivability, rather than intrastate factors.

The article presents a theory concerning the influence of international factors on political regime’s survivability based on a comparative study of the North Korean and Libyan cases. The North Korean regime has

managed to persevere due to the lack of incentive of the pro-regime-change great power, the US, together with the presence of a regional veto player, China. On the contrary, Libya experienced the regime change because it was in the interest of the particular great powers – the US and Great Britain – and the regime lacked support by a pro-regime regional veto player – Russia.

The article proceeds as follows. The following section introduces the puzzle. The second section provides overview of the existing literature on the theories of revolutions and examines its applicability to the studied cases. In the third section a theory concerning the affect of international factors on authoritarian regimes' survival is introduced. The fourth section draws on the analysis of the Libyan case. First, I investigate whether there was a great power having interest in the regime change, and whether there was a potential pro-regime regional veto player. Second, I check whether the opposition had a potential to topple the regime on its own, or the regime change was effected by great powers' intervention into the conflict. The fifth section constitutes the test to the theory based on analysis of the North Korean case, verifying whether the regime survival can be explained by international factors, such as the lack of incentive from a pro-regime-change great power together with the support of a pro-regime regional veto player. Findings are summarized in the conclusion.

I. PUZZLE

A variety of factors have been considered as sources of the North Korean regime's survival, such as Juche ideology, unrestricted power of the leader, reliance on military, dependence of interest groups on the regime, limited economic reforms, or the information's control.

First, the most popular explanation is that the leaders had successfully used a nationalist-driven Juche ideology to justify dictatorship and the country's isolation (Lee 2003). Some analysts emphasize the compatibility of the Juche ideology with fundamental Korean values. Juche ideology claims the exclusiveness of the Korean nation with its "unique style of socialism" (Shin and Chang 2004, 134). Accordingly, the regime used ideology to ensure its legitimacy in order to secure the system's survival without taking responsibility for people's welfare.

Second, other research argues that unrestricted power of the leader is another reason for an unusually long reign of the Kim's family. Suryong is recognized as the only possible leader of the continuing revolution who exercises absolute power for the success of the revolution (Jeung 2007). Hereditary succession minimizes the danger of the leader to be overthrown and reduces the threat of struggle for power that may begin after his death (Park 2009).

Another explanation emphasizes the ruler's reliance on military. Kim Jong Il tried to consolidate his power by means of securing the loyalty of the military (Oh 2010, 16). Military-first policy is considered to have not only provided loyalty of the military but also released the leadership from its responsibility to the economic crisis. The North Korean leadership tried to evade blame by redirecting the people's attention from

internal disasters to external threats (Oh 2010, 18).

Fourth, interest groups are considered accountable for the regime's survival. It is argued that the elites are backing the regime because they would not be able to keep their power and financial sources in the case of demise of Kim's family. Kim Jong Il has done everything to ensure the loyalty of the elites, including provision of luxurious apartments, cars and other privileges to his supporters, as well as persecution and retribution to the disloyal (Oh and Hassig 2000, 88).

Fifth, some degree of liberal reforms, together with a growing shadow economy, are reported as sources of the North Korean regime's survival (Haggard and Noland 2009; Lee and Yoon 2004). Limited economic freedoms while excluding political changes not only serve as a source of additional income for the elites, but also provide a way of survival for common people in a backward economy, thus minimizing people's discontent.

Finally, total censorship and information control are believed to have guaranteed the regime's survival (Zeller 2006). Information control and ideological education is a common tool used by dictators. The North was highly sensitive to exposure to the outer world (Oh 2010). The level of political and information freedom constitutes index 7, one of the highest in the world (Freedom House 2010). Moreover, the so-called "mosquito net theory" frequently appears in the North Korean press stressing the necessity to cover the country with a net to block the penetration of capitalism (*Rodong Sinmun* 09/10/09, 11/09/25). Therefore, it is argued that the regime sustained due to the high levels of informational control.

Despite the variety of existing explanations, they all suffer from the same weaknesses. First, they all regard the North Korean case having no counterparts in history. Second, they put domestic factors at the center of

their analysis, ignoring international factors.

The invalidity of these explanations has become particularly evident against the background of recent events of the “Arab Spring”. Libya was one of the countries in the region that experienced the regime change in 2011. The most striking aspect of the Libyan regime is its similarity to the North Korean case – the factors, considered by scholars as sources of the North Korean regime’s survival, were present in Qaddafi’s regime as well (See Table 1).

Like North Korea, Libya was led by a sole leader. Mu’ammar al-Qaddafi proclaimed himself the only possible theoretician and leader of the continuing revolution. He possessed unrestricted power ensured by access to the country’s enormous amount of natural resources. He also inherited a society, in which historically the majority of Libyans were not inclined to participate in politics. In addition, in Qaddafi’s Libya, as well as in other authoritarian regimes, common people were unable to develop

〈Table 1〉 Comparison table. Sources of regime survival: the North Korean and Libyan regimes.

Explanations	North Korea	Libya
Nationalist driven manipulative ideology	Juche	Jamahiriya
Unrestricted power of the leader	Kim Il Sung – eternal leader of the nation	Qaddafi – the only possible theoretician and leader of a continuing revolution
Support of the military	Military-first policy (Songun)	High loyalty from the army
Interest group’s dependence on the regime	Kinship relations	Kinship relations
Limited liberal reforms	Limited economic reforms, shadow economy	Limited economic reforms, limited private property controlled by government
Informational control	Index 7 of political and information freedom	Index 7 of political and information freedom

SOURCE: Freedom House 2010

power necessary to influence government's policy. In 1988 People's Congress adopted the resolution, under which any statement or opinion expressed by Qaddafi should have the full weight and authority of law (Anderson 1999).

The country was claimed to initiate the era of *Jamahiriya* – the era of the masses and the practice of direct democracy (Hajjar 1980). Similarly to Kim Il Sung, Qaddafi formulated his *Jamahiriya* ideas, which were compiled into his “Green Book” by 1976. Qaddafi has never referred to himself as a “ruler” of the country and always stressed that Libya was a state practicing “direct democracy”. In practice though, all significant matters were supervised by the government through complicated hierarchical system of congresses and committees (Anderson 1999).

The regime enjoyed loyalty from the army as the country was ruled by a colonel and was officially in the state of continuing revolution. Given the centralization of power and resources, strengthened with a deep kinship culture of the Muslim world, the dependence of the elites on the regime is obvious. Qaddafi ensured loyalty of major Libyan tribes through family marriages. He has appointed many of his family members and the members of his tribe, the Qaddadfa, and two allied tribes, the Warfalla and Magarha, to key positions in the government. His son Khamis and then brother-in-law Abdullah Senussi headed internal and external security apparatus (Lacher 2011). Libya's paramilitary and mercenaries, which constituted a part of the regime's military power, were largely loyal to Qaddafi (Africa Research Bulletin 2011).

At the same time, some degree of economic freedom existed with the limited introduction of private banks and businesses, as well as minimal foreign investments. Liberal reforms were introduced in 1987 when the

government announced the reintroduction of private property and private sector within the economy. However, these measures did not undermine the regime itself, since the state absorbed all economic functions depriving Libya of the administrative structure and institutional framework necessary for a true market economy to operate (Takeyh 2000).

Finally, in 2010, Libya had the same level of political and information freedom as North Korea (Freedom House 2010). The level of informational control in the two countries might not be comparable, given the lack of access to internet and cellular communication in North Korea. Nevertheless, Eva Bellin's (2012) observation of the revolutions in the Arab world has shown that the access to social media is not either necessary, nor sufficient to explain the incidence of mass protests. For instance, mass protests arose in Yemen despite the low penetration of social media, comparing to Tunisia or Egypt.

Given these striking similarities, the difference in the fates of the two regimes is puzzling. Therefore, I seek to explain why, despite these similarities, the North Korean regime continues to exist, while Libya experienced the regime change. It is my argument that we will get better understanding of factors affecting authoritarian regime change, if two crucial changes are made in the approach to the study of authoritarian regime's survivability. First, North Korea should be released from the veil of a "unique case" and included into comparative studies. Second, international factors should be taken into account. In this article, I propose a theory concerning the influence of international factors on a regime's survivability based on a comparative study of the North Korean and Libyan cases.

II. LITERATURE REVIEW

Regime change may occur through several ways, such as revolution, conquest by another state, coup d'état, or peacefully when ruling government makes changes in political institutions. I do not examine cases of conquest, since they consider disappearance of a sovereign state, rather than a regime change. I neither examine cases of peaceful regime change, because in that cases the result depends solely on leader's will. I also presume that the chance of a coup d'état is extremely low, since the leaders of North Korea and Libya managed to insure loyalty of the elites and military. Thereafter, I apply the available literature on revolutions, the most feasible way of regime change, to the chosen cases.

A wide range of theories has been produced in an attempt to explain the causes of revolution. First, poverty and economic inequality are traditionally expected to cause grievances and provide incentives for anti-government revolution (Muller 1988; Paige 1975; Russett 1964). However, this assumption does not give any valid explanation to the chosen cases. The estimated North Korean GDP in 2011 was \$40 billion, while Libyan GDP estimated \$96.7 billion in 2010, the year before the country experienced revolution. Moreover, Libya experienced 3.7% growth of GDP in 2009, while North Korea experienced 0.9% decline in 2009 and 0.5% in 2010 (Central Intelligence Agency 2013). Accordingly, the DPRK should have experienced revolution, rather than Libya.

Overall rates of state's prosperity may be deceptive as wealth may be unequally distributed among the population. Therefore, per capita income appears to be a better indicator of citizens' level of life. North Korean GDP per capita estimated 1.800 dollars in 2011. It also shows a declining

tendency compared to 1.900 dollars in 2009. On the other side, Libyan GDP per capita grew from 14.500 dollars in 2009 to 14.800 dollars in 2010 (Central Intelligence Agency 2013). Therefore, the anti-government opposition movement should have emerged in North Korea rather than in Libya.

Second, J. Fearon and D. Latin (2003) found that the higher the density of population, the higher the risk of civil war. However, the population rate of North Korea is almost 25 million people, while Libya has only 5.6 million (Freedom House 2010, 5). Accordingly, we should have observed civil war in the DPRK rather than Libya.

Other researchers consider ethnic and political grievances to bring revolution (Horowitz 1985; Melson and Wolpe 1970). However, Fearon and Latin (2003) found that the affect of ethnic and religious fractionalization is insignificant. Though the North Korean population constitutes one national group, Libya does not belong to a country with high ethnic fractionalization, as its population consists of 92% Arabs with 97% belonging to Sunni Muslims (Freedom House 2010, 5). Moreover, anti-regime fights started in the regions populated with Arabs and Berbers – the two ethnic majority groups.

Forth, P. Collier and A. Hoeffler (2004) found correlation between the level of education and revolution – if the enrollment rate for secondary schooling is 10% points higher than average, the risk of war is reduced by about 3% points, as those with low level education are more prone to join rebels. Though we do not have data on the secondary schooling enrollment rate, the available data show that both countries have a system of free education and the literacy level is high – 99% for the DPRK and 89.2% for Libya (Freedom House 2010, 5). Moreover, Libyan government

provided its citizens with an opportunity to receive educational training abroad at its expense. Thus, this explanation also does not cast light on the reason of different fates of the two regimes.

The results show that the above mentioned explanations of the causes of revolutions, including poverty and economic inequality, population density, ethnic and political grievances, or the level of education, prove to be inadequate in explaining the difference in the fates of the North Korean and Libyan regimes. Therefore, in the following sections, I provide my theory and propose an explanation of the two cases.

III. THEORY

My central argument is that survivability of authoritarian regimes cannot be fully explained by domestic factors, but rather by international factors. International factors imply: 1) the presence or absence of a pro-regime-change great power in the region, and 2) the presence or absence of a pro-regime regional veto player.

Many scholars argued that international factors should be taken into account when studying the causes of revolutions. For instance, T. Skocpol (1979) wrote that the study of revolutions should focus not only on relations among rival groups within given countries, but should examine international relations as well. C. Tilly (1993, 17) argued that whether resistance feed the revolutionary situation depends on circumstances that appear independently from the regime's policy, "such circumstances as the presence or absence of support for rebels from outside powers". Nevertheless, international factors were often left

outside the analysis concerning the causes of regime change.

I suggest that the difference in fate between the Libyan and North Korean regime may be better explained by international factors. I begin with two assumptions.

First, *full autocracies are inherently stable*. J. A. Goldstone et al. (2010) examined the onsets of political instability in countries worldwide from 1955 to 2003, and developed a model which distinguishes countries that experienced instability from those that did not. This model shows that political institutions – not economic conditions, demography, or geography – are the most important predictors of the onset of political instability. In particular, it shows that full autocracies are as stable as full democracies, and both constitute the most stable types of political regime.

These are societies that have long historical and cultural traditions of hierarchy, experience submission, endure much and expect little from their rulers. Full autocracies built in these societies, where the ruling authority exercises full control over state resources and are not opened to the external world, are the most substantial regimes. There is “no space for a semi-opposition, no space for regime moderates who might negotiate with democratic moderates” (Linz and Stepan 2011, 53). Indeed, neither North Korean nor Libyan people had a rich experience with states of any kind. Political apathy of the Libyan people was so high that it constituted a source of frustration to Qaddafi, who attempted to generate public participation in state’s politics during his rule (Anderson 1999). At the same time, North Korean people, at least since the mid 1990-s, have been too busy finding means for survival to have interest in political participation.

Second, *the access to resources is essential in order for an opposition movement to evolve into a real power that might bring a regime change.* C. Tilly (1993) asserted the opposition should have access to resources to be able to resist the existing regime. In circumstances when the government exercises full control over state's resources, opposition sentiment might transform into a revolutionary movement, but will be dispersed after the first attempt to resist the regime and, thus, fail to bring about a regime change. However, resources may come from without – external actors displeased with the existing regime and holding an interest in its replacement may provide assistance in the form of funds, weaponry, or human resources. They may also inflict sanctions on the existing regime, thereby restricting available resources and weakening its potential to suppress the opposition. Thus, while the opposition gets access to resources, the ruling government may be deprived of it, which makes regime change more feasible.

With these two assumptions in mind, I introduce two hypotheses.

H1. Pro-Regime-Change Great Power Hypothesis: Full autocracies will not experience regime change unless it is in the interest of great powers that are the major actors in the region.

If a great power holds interest in the replacement of an existing regime, it may provide economic or military assistance to the malcontent. Consequently, the opposition may receive access to resources that would otherwise be impossible. At the same time, the great power may deprive, to some extent, the regime of economic or military resources through the imposition of sanctions. This, in turn, strengthens the revolutionary movement and weakens the government, increasing chances of regime change.

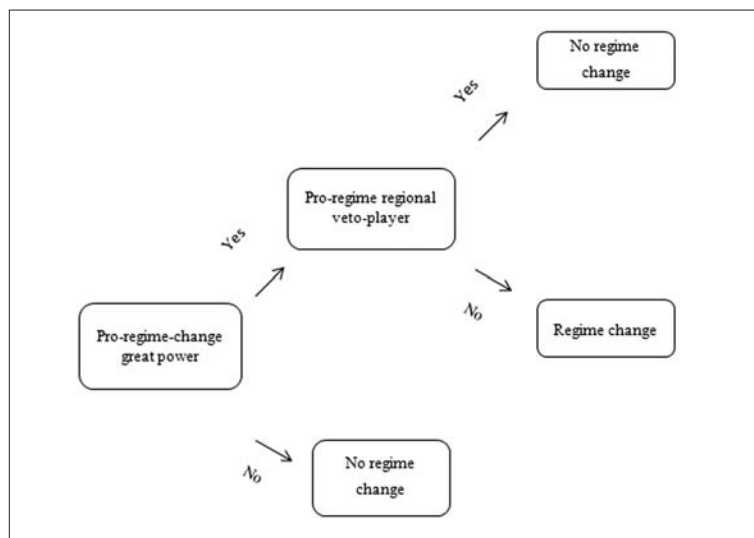
However, in the case of the presence of several great powers making predictions is more complicated. Great powers have different interests in the region and their national interests often collide. For this reason, I introduce my second hypothesis to predict regime survivability.

H2. Pro-Regime Regional Veto Player Hypothesis: The presence of a veto player in the region, which is both interested in the existing regime's survival and possesses adequate power to ensure it, is an essential factor determining regime's sustainability.

The veto player may ensure regime survival through two mechanisms. First, providing economic and military assistance to the ruling regime may increase the government's ability to prevent or suppress every revolutionary movement that could emerge. Second, the presence of a great power, which not only has national interests in the region but also has will and adequate resources to protect them, may raise the cost of intervention for other great powers. Regional veto player should not only be a world great power, but it must have enough political, economic, or military capabilities to project its power into the region to protect its interest and to raise the cost of intervention for any pro-regime change great power. If the cost of provoking regime change appears to be higher than the interests at stake, external actors will be reluctant to provide support to the opposition. Therefore, the opposition would not get necessary resources and will fail to bring a regime change.

The generalized theory is summarized in Table 2:

〈Table 1〉 Theory of the effects of external factors on the authoritarian regime survival.



IV. THE LIBYAN CASE

It is frequently noted that the revolution in Libya was not brought on by socio-economic reasons. Libya became one of the richest countries in the world in terms of GDP per capita – the highest in North Africa. Oil revenues that provided the state’s wealth were distributed among its citizens securing their loyalty to the regime. The system of free education helped to eliminate illiteracy; the rate of child’s death was reduced to 25 per 1 thousand; parents were paid \$7.000 per child; young families were paid \$60.000 to purchase a flat; electricity was free of charge; essential foods and fuel were distributed by the government; and unemployment benefits constituted \$750 per month (Podcerob 2011). As a result, the explanation of demise of the Qaddafi’s regime should be found in external factors.

1. THE PRO-REGIME-CHANGE GREAT POWERS: THE USA AND GREAT BRITAIN

The policies pursued by Qaddafi, which can be characterized as pan-Arabic, anti-West and anti-Israeli, impaired Libya's relations with a number of the world great powers traditionally involved in the region, such as the US and Britain. It led to the emergence of two pro-regime-change great powers, which were interested in replacing Qaddafi with a leader more compliant with their interests. Therefore, in 2011 they supported the opposition groups in Libya and imposed particular sanctions weakening the regime.

The major disputes between Libya and the West were Qaddafi's support of terrorist operations and his anti-Israeli policy. During Qaddafi's rule, Libya continued to support any actions directed against Arab-Israeli peace process and Israel itself, which could not but affect its relations with the US, a traditional ally of Israel. Moreover, the rapid growth of national wealth due to oil revenues provided the regime with means to pursue an aggressive foreign policy. Libya's officials were involved in several cases of terrorist acts, among which the hijacking of Pan Am Flight 110 in 1973 and a nightclub bombing in West Berlin. Retaliatory strikes by the US Air Force and Navy on a wide range of military, intelligence and security targets in Tripoli and Benghazi followed the bombing.

Qaddafi sought to transform Libya into an independent republic free from foreign economic and political influence formerly permitted during the monarchy rule. Soon after the "One September Revolution", a series of measures were introduced by the new government in this direction:

the “Libyalization” of foreign banks, the Libyan government’s request that several Western states reduce their embassy staff to less than 15 persons, which led the US to recall its ambassador in 1972 (Stottlemyre 2011). Diplomatic relations between the two states deteriorated.

In 1969, the US Wheelus Airfield and the British Torbuk and al-Adam military bases were closed down under Libya’s demand. Furthermore, on October 9, 1973 Qaddafi declared that the entire Gulf of Sidra falls under Libyan sovereignty as a territorial sea, restricting any other state to conduct naval operations (Stottlemyre 2011). This was understood in the West as causing losses to the US and UK military presence in the Mediterranean. It led to a series of military conflicts with the US and imposition of embargo on Libyan oil along with other trade restrictions.

In the 1970s, the major changes were introduced into oil production policy. Since the First Petroleum Law of 1955, government policies in the oil sector were characterized by creating favorable conditions to attract foreign investors and develop new fields and growing extraction of crude oil. The situation changed after Qaddafi came to power. Foreign investment companies were deprived of their privileges, the process of nationalization of oil industry began, starting with the assets of British Petroleum been brought under government control in 1971 (Hajjar 1980). Instead of growing extraction of oil and exporting it at low prices, the policy was redirected to saving the country’s resources. Oil production that experienced its peak in 1971 at more than 1.007.000 was drastically reduced to 540.000 in 1975 and then was settled at an average of 750.000 at the end of 1970s (Yahya 1981). Several agreements were reached to adjust the posted price, resulting in the increase of the total posted price of 40° API Libya’s crude oil from \$2.23 per barrel in 1969 to \$18.768

per barrel in 1974 (Yahya 1981). Due to nationalization of oil assets, Libya emerged as an important member of the Organization of Petroleum Exporting Countries (OPEC), and US analysts credit Libya's oil policy as responsible for OPEC's measures to raise oil prices, impose embargoes and gain control over oil production (Anderson 1999). These measures not only influenced the level of oil prices inside Libya, but also had a significant affect on world oil prices, which had a negative impact on British petroleum market, dependent on Libyan oil.

Libya's relations with the West began to improve after Qaddafi renounced all WMD programs in 2003. In 2006, the US has excluded Libya from its list of countries financing terrorism, and an agreement regarding the normalization of bilateral relations was reached. Nevertheless, real improvement was not so great as it seemed on paper. Western decision-makers did not consider Qaddafi a reliable partner, and relations between Libya and the West were still ambiguous and strained (Kasaev 2009). In 2005 Libya was accused of receiving containers of uranium hexafluoride (UF₆) from North Korea, shipped through Pakistan (Sanger and Broad 05/02/02; Linzer 05/03/20). Finally, in 2006 the US suspended the process of restoring diplomatic relations with Libya due to its refusal to pay compensation to the relatives of the victims of terrorist attack of 1988.

Moreover, policy goals pursued by Qaddafi were not free of imperialistic ideas. He sponsored independent movements in neighboring countries and used economic assistance to ensure loyalty of North African states. Qaddafi envisioned himself to be the leader of revolution that would spread around Africa and the Middle East, bringing change to the world balance of power and transforming Libya into a state that

would be on equal footing with other great powers, particularly the US. Qaddafi envisioned the creation of a United States of Africa free from Western Imperialists (St John 2008). This was demonstrated by his stance toward the Organization for African Unity (OAU), the creation of Federation of Arab Republics (FAR), etc.

2. NO PRO-REGIME REGIONAL VETO POWER

Russia possessed capability to support Qaddafi's regime in Libya. First, Russia is one of the world great powers, it is a member of G8, and a permanent member of the UN Security Council. Therefore, it could have influenced the UN Security Council resolutions' contents, or could have used the right to veto the resolution concerning Libya, and play a role of mediator to resolve the conflict. Second, Russia is a regional veto power – it possesses a power projection in the Middle East, having standing naval force in Mediterranean, naval facility in Tartus, Syria, three naval stations and bases in the Black sea, and a radar station in Azerbaijan that controls the territory of the most states on the African continent. Therefore, it has political and military capabilities to protect its interests in the region and support the regime in Libya.

Simultaneously, Moscow possessed some economic interest in supporting Qaddafi's regime. While redeeming loans Libya paid to Russia more than any other country in the history of economic cooperation between the USSR and other states (Mezyaev 2013). Its economic presence grew appreciably during the Qaddafi's rule – it supplied defense technology and weapons and was the main partner in a variety of projects of infrastructure development.

However, Russia chose not to support Qaddafi in 2011. The change in Moscow's policy from being Libya's ally to not supporting the regime may be explained with the change in government. Premier Minister Putin pursued the policy of engagement in the Middle East, particularly closer cooperation with Libya. On the opposite, the then President Medvedev took the course to rapprochement with the West at the expense of Russia's interests in the Middle East. Qaddafi's imperialistic policies and eccentric behavior earned him a lot of enemies in the West. This, together with the involvement of the Libya's administration into several terrorist attacks and the brutality with which the uprising was suppressed, led Medvedev to believe that Russia lacked legitimate base to protect the regime (President of Russia 2011). He recalled the then ambassador to Libya Chamov, who urged support to Libyan regime, and gave an order not to veto the Resolution 1973. Being convinced in necessity of the regime change in Libya, Medvedev chose free-riding, i.e. not to support Qaddafi to avoid tensions with the West and the future Libyan government, therefore preserving economic interests in new Libya, and at the same time not to support military action against the regime to avoid possible charges of imperialist intervention by the new Libyan government.

To conclude, policies pursued by Qaddafi led to the US and Britain possess an interest in the regime change in Libya. At the same time Russia, which could have played the role of a pro-regime regional veto player, lacked an incentive to support it. The next section traces the events in Libya in 2011. First, it demonstrates that the opposition was unable to stand against the regime on its own. Second, it analyzes how the intervention of the external actors effected the course of the events and brought up the regime change.

3. THE COURSE OF THE CIVIL WAR IN LIBYA

When the revolutionary movement began, the opposition proved to be unable to mobilize power required to victory. The revolution was not supported by the majority of civil population. Opposition groups were not welcomed in several Libyan cities and had to take them with fight – they managed to take Tripoli only in August, while Sirte and Beni Walid stood till the end of September-mid October. Even when the most parts of the country, including Tripoli, went under the opposition’s control, and the National Transitional Council (NTC) was recognized by international community, the pro-Qaddafi’s demonstrations were held in Tripoli, leading to armed clashes in October 14th.

Several analysts believe that it was only NATO intervention that saved the incumbents from being defeated (Podcerob 2011). External powers were present in Libya even before the first anti-government demonstrations took place and even before the UN Security Council’s resolution 1973 was passed. Eight Special Air Service (SAS) troops have been operating in Libya with the order to conduct investigations about the Libyan armed forces (Daily Mail 11/03/21). The gathered information was then used during the NATO air-raids to pint the objects to be destroyed.

Simultaneously, Hillary Clinton confirmed the plan of the Obama administration to provide \$25 million aid to Libya, and on the eve of Geneva consultations she said reporters that the US made contacts with several representatives of the Libyan opposition and were going “to offer any kind of assistance that any one wishes to have from the United States” (Voice of America 11/04/20).

In addition, series of sanctions were imposed by several states to weaken the regime and pressure Qaddafi to stand down. After Barack Obama signed an executive order to freeze all financial assets tied to Qaddafi or other members of his government held by US banks and institutions, Britain, Germany, Canada and several other states joined with a series of economic and diplomatic sanctions to put pressure on the regime (Al-Jazeera 11/02/28).

Finally, in March 2011, UN Security Council authorized a no-fly zone over Libya together with air strikes. Rebels backed by extensive NATO air raids, which destroyed most of the regime's strategic objects, captured territory over the pro-regime forces and in the late October proclaimed the country to be officially liberated.

Simultaneously, Russia supported the UN Security Council resolution 1970, and did not use its right to veto the UN Security Council resolution 1973, or to revise its content. Moreover, it denied Qaddafi military support. For instance, Medvedev gave an order to the Russian ship "Cimbris" carrying spare parts and implements for anti-aircraft missile system, which approached the port of Tripoli on February 24, to return to Russia without unloading. On August 12, Russia banned flights in its airspace for all aircrafts flying over Libyan territory, except for humanitarian needs, and joined economic sanctions (Presidential Decree 11/08/12). A ban was imposed on financial transactions for several Libyan ministers, Qaddafi's family members, Central Bank of Libya, Libyan Foreign Investment Company, the Libyan Foreign Bank, National Oil Corporation, and Libya Africa Investment Portfolio, which served as the sources of funds for the regime.

Summarizing, as a result of Qaddafi's extreme pursuit for

independence from any foreign influence and his support to terrorist organizations, he has become a ‘no one’s friend’. The US and Britain had a particular interest in the regime change in Libya, while Russia that could have played the role of a regional veto player had no strong incentive and lacked legitimate base to protect Qaddafi’s regime. As a result, the regime was weakened by economic sanctions imposed on Libya, while the opposition received economic and military assistance from NATO and other great powers. This led to Libya’s successful revolution and the regime change.

V. THE NORTH KOREAN CASE

I argue that none of the great powers that have a vested interest in the Northeast Asian region holds a desire of the regime change in DPRK strong enough to accept the costs of intervention. There are two major powers that seek for an active role in the region – China and the US.

1. THE UNITED STATES: A POTENTIAL PRO-REGIME-CHANGE GREAT POWER

The DPRK has never been of primary interest for the US, mostly preoccupied with Europe and the Middle East. Washington is not highly concerned about the North Korean regime – the Cold War is over and there is no more need to oppose the spread of Communism in the world. In contrast to Iraq, Iran and Libya, North Korea does not constitute another interest to the US independently of its nuclear weapons – it does

not produce oil or hold any importance strategically, neither is it a state associated with terrorism.

President Bush took a hard line towards North Korea; he ended the “Agreed Framework” and included it into his list of “Axis of Evil”. However, the US became less concerned with North Korea and more preoccupied with its fight against terrorism in Afghanistan and Iraq after 9/11. Moreover, the DPRK was included in the list of “Axis of Evil” along with Iran, Iraq, Syria and Libya due to reasons unrelated to the regime itself. The initial draft of the speech did not include North Korea – it was added on the advice of Condoleezza Rice to make the president appear less anti-Islamic and to avoid focusing solely on Iraq (Chinoy 2010, 69).

Despite North Korea’s provocative behavior, President Bush and US Secretary Condoleezza Rice agreed to meet with the North Korean representatives in Beijing in 2005. This demonstrated the US interest in negotiations with the DPRK and facilitated the fourth round of the Six-Party Talks. Though the Talks were constantly interrupted by several events, such as the US sanctions against Banco Delta Asia in 2005 and the following Pyongyang secession from the negotiation process, they continued throughout the remaining years of Bush’s Administration.

Sanctions did not heavily hurt the North Korean regime, and the continuance of the Six-Party talks even strengthened its position at home. This was not only a consequence of the US’ lack of interest in the collapse of the North Korean regime, but also because the stakes of policy, pursuing the regime change, are unacceptably high given the US’ relations with South Korea, and more importantly with China. Since the US policy-makers are well aware of Beijing’s involvement in North

Korea, the cost of establishing policy directed at DPRK' regime change is unacceptably high. Additionally, the US lack effective means to punish North Korea for nuclear tests without cooperation from China – it neither has the option of taking military action, nor does it possess considerable economic ties with North Korea to influence the situation through economic sanctions (Shen 2006).

2. THE PRO-REGIME REGIONAL VETO PLAYER: CHINA

China holds an interest in preserving a stable regime in North Korea for several reasons. China's reasons to back the North Korean regime include economic interest, the threat of humanitarian crisis or military instability, and strategic interest.

First, China has an economic reason, given its high level of export and import, as well as revenues from the free economic zone with the DPRK. Besides regular economic assistance, it provides the North Korean regime with the means of survival, making it politically dependent on Beijing. Since 1999 the total trade volume between the two countries has been steadily growing. Since 2000 to 2010 bilateral trade volume has increased to more than 600% over a decade; in 2010, China almost monopolized North Korea's foreign trade representing 83% of it (Yoon and Lee 2013). About three-quarters of North Korea's crude oil needs are exported from China (Haggard et al. 2012). Moreover, since 1998 North Korea has been purchasing Chinese oil at an unusually high price that exceeds sums paid by South Korea (Choo 2008). Thereafter, China would be reluctant to let any political instability in the North, as it means to lose a profitable importer.

In 2008, China accounted for 90% of the DPRK's total foreign investment (Yoon and Lee 2013). Chinese investors are allowed to invest not only into the two designated free economic zones, as their South Korean counterparts, but in most parts of North Korea (Choo 2008). China's interest in the continued development of economic ties with North Korea is also well demonstrated by its active pursuit to construct infrastructure that enhances production supply.

Second, China is concerned about possible consequences of revolution, such as humanitarian crisis or military instability. "For China, any destabilizing action runs counter to its interests of economic development" (Shen 2006, 21). Beijing is also concerned with possible escalations of military conflict that could ensue on the Korean Peninsula as a result of security dilemma. Neighboring countries might feel insecure, and all actions taken by adversaries may be translated as threatening even when directed toward the insurance of self-security.

Finally, the DPRK is believed to serve as China's strategic buffer zone in Northeast Asia. "North Korea shares the security threat posed by US military forces in South Korea and Japan" (Shen 2006, 20). This allows China to reduce its military deployment in Northeast China.

More importantly, China demonstrated sufficient intent and capabilities to ensure the North Korean regime's survival against any internal or external provocation. The most vivid example could be the negotiations that followed the North's nuclear test in 2006. China accused North Korea of performing nuclear tests in official statements, cut oil supplies, intensified inspections at the border, and had to sign the UN Resolution 1718 to save face as a responsible great power. However, Beijing insured that Pyongyang avoided deadly consequences for the regime. While, the

US, Japan, and other members of the Security Council demanded that the resolution allowed sanctions and military actions against North Korea, China limited the resolution to include only economic sanctions that would not provoke a collapse of the regime. In addition, some of the sanctions imposed by China were soon relaxed as a reward for Pyongyang's return to the negotiation table (Twomey 2008).

To conclude, the North Korean regime's survival is explained by the two external factors. First, the lack of intention of the pro-regime-change great power, the US, to pursue policies directed on the regime change in North Korea. Second, the presence of a pro-regime regional veto player, China, which not only provides economic and political support to the regime, but also raises the cost of intervention for other great powers.

VI. CONCLUSION

This article contributes to the body of research concerning the sources of authoritarian regime survival. It argues that external factors determine the potential of opposition forces to stand against the authoritarian regime, affecting the balance of power between the regime and the opposition, and therefore determining regime's survivability. The evidence was introduced in support of the theory.

The North Korean regime has demonstrated longer survivability than Qaddafi's because its persistence does not threaten the interests of particular great powers. Contrary to common belief, it is not due to the country's unique intrastate characteristics or policies that made it able to adjust to changing circumstances. None of the great powers in the region

is willing to accept the stakes of supporting the regime change in North Korea. China possesses major national interests in the survival of the North Korean regime, while the US is already preoccupied with the Middle East, and the North Korean regime is not on the list of the its primary concerns.

On the other hand, Qaddafi's regime was on the opposite side of the fence with major Western powers. Libya's regional ambitions, economic and foreign policy were of concern for the US and Britain. Simultaneously, Russia, though possessing capabilities of a regional pro-regime veto player, chose not to support the regime.

As a result, international sanctions deprived the regime of resources, weakening its ability to protect itself, while foreign support strengthened the opposition, which led to the latter's victory and the regime change in Libya. Qaddafi's main oversight was that in pursuing his ambitious goals, he not only made enemies within several great powers, but also failed to make any friends amongst them.

The explanation proposed in this article has a potential to become a generalized theory that will provide a valid explanation of the sources of authoritarian regime's survival. It may be applied to the cases of Arab Spring, where revolutionary uprisings led to regime change in some cases, such as Egypt and Libya, or to a protracted military confrontation, though without regime change, such as Syria, and failed to bring any substantial changes in others, such as Bahrain.

However, since the theory is based on the study of only two cases, there is a need to test its applicability to a broader range of cases to avoid oversimplification. For instance, it would be useful to test it on a comparative study of the Libyan and Syrian cases, which have similar

cultural characteristics, or to conduct the study of the regime change in Cuba. The latter would be useful in two ways. Cuba is a socialist state, therefore, its regime might be compared to the one in North Korea. It also gives an opportunity to study two cases within one country: an authoritarian regime change in 1953-1959, and the followed authoritarian regime that managed to persist since the 1950s revolution till nowadays. Continued study of the effects that external factors have on authoritarian regime survival will benefit the theory on revolutions and regime change.

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