

**EGYPTIAN SOCIETY IN TRANSITION:  
THE MERITS OF A DYNAMIC MODEL**

by

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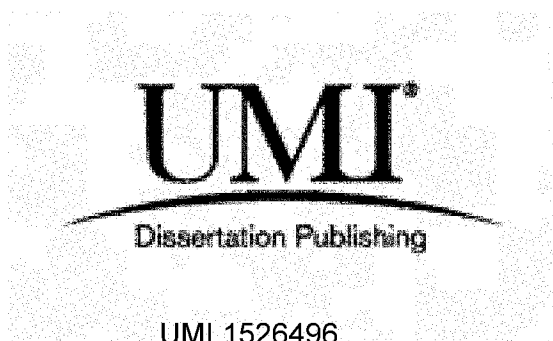
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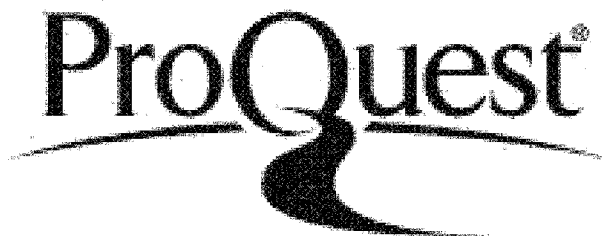


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## Abstract

### **Egypt in Transition: The Merits of a Dynamic Model**

In 2011, several Middle Eastern and North African countries rose up in defiance against their governments, an event popularly known as the Arab Spring. The Arab Spring held hopes for liberal and democratic transition in these countries. Egypt in particular was very optimistic about a potential transition to a liberal democracy. This thesis examines the period of time leading up to the deposal of Hosni Mubarak, Egypt's former president, and the three years following. This thesis will review the events and parties involved in Egypt's transition and the role these groups played. Furthermore, the Egyptian transition will be examined using Alfred Stepan and Juan Linz' model that states all transition occurs in five distinct arenas. This thesis will conclude that the optimistic view taken by many regarding Egypt's transition was premature and that Egypt has regressed to a previous governmental model.

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## Introduction

The Arab Spring was a movement which came as a great surprise to the global political community. The Middle East has been characterized for generations by politicians and academics as a region of political stagnation. The West has made significant efforts to export ideas of democracy and freedom with their incursions in Afghanistan and Iraq, however, these efforts met with mediocre results. As Ajami notes, waves of democracy have swept over other regions, from southern and eastern Europe to Latin America, from East Asia to Africa. Until recently, the Middle East "was a bleak landscape: terrible rulers, sullen populations, a terrorist fringe".<sup>1</sup> Thus when street vendor Mohamed Bouazizi lit himself on fire in Tunisia on December 17, 2010 in protest against a corrupt police force that had harassed him for years, it was astonishing enough that the Tunisian population rallied around his death and forced political change. That this event then sparked protests in surrounding Arab countries, surprised both specialists and casual observers alike. The Arab Spring was then viewed as being a potential catalyst, with consequences for both regional and global politics.

Since it began in late 2010, The Arab Spring has forced out rulers from four different countries (Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Yemen). It has further inspired uprisings in countries such as Bahrain, a brutal and horrifyingly violent civil war in Syria, and major protests in other Middle Eastern countries, such as Jordan and Iraq.<sup>2</sup> Though it remains to be seen if the lofty goals of freedom and greater liberties that were declared near the beginning of the

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<sup>1</sup> Fouad Ajami, "The Arab Spring at One." *Foreign Affairs* 91, no. 2 (March/April 2012): 56-65.

<sup>2</sup> Daniel Byman, "Regime Change in the Middle East: Problems and Prospects." *Political Science Quarterly* 127, no. 1 (2012): 25-27.

uprisings can be met, the events of the Arab Spring may be the most important international events to occur in the last decade. Combined with the understanding that the revolutions are still very young, the Arab Spring presents a rare opportunity to examine major events. That this upheaval has occurred, and is continuing to occur, in a region that has historically and justifiably been characterized by its immutability should invite academic inquiry.

This thesis concentrates on political transition in Egypt following the deposal of President Hosni Mubarak in 2011. This subject is especially relevant in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, where several Arab countries have experienced widespread revolutions in which their populations have demanded greater liberties and rights. Examining the way Egypt transitions is extremely important in determining the prospects that the region has for any political development away from authoritarian dictatorship and towards other forms of government, such as liberal democracy. Although this thesis will focus on conditions for democratic transition, this does not necessarily mean democracy is the desired or expected outcome. Instead the prospects for democracy and the claims of democratization are held as an experiential approach to facilitate the study of transition from authoritarianism. The specific question of this thesis is: what factors have affected the Egyptian transition from 2011 to 2013? Answering this question also invites a legitimate conversation about likely outcomes from the transition. In addressing these issues, it is important to identify the factors that have influenced transition, as well as the theoretical literature on transitology.

## Democracy, Democratization, and Transition

Transition literature has evolved considerably over the past decades. It originally emerged in the 1970s and 80s as a response to dissatisfaction with the contemporary democratization literature and that literature's earlier reliance on preconditions. During this time period, a large variety of preconditions were outlined by numerous scholars who believed specific conditions would lead to corresponding forms of government. Most prominent among these forms of government was democracy, which spawned several fundamental pieces of literature. In the 1950s, Seymour Lipset put forward a model of democratic transition in his article "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy" which revolved around economic preconditions.<sup>3</sup> In the 1970s, Dankwart Rustow presented a more progressive, less restrictive model for transition.<sup>4</sup> Edward Said often wrote about patronizing Western perceptions of Middle Eastern and Islamic culture, termed "Orientalism", which he then judiciously applied about the region's perceived incapability to transition to democracy.<sup>5</sup> In 1991, Samuel Huntington described the three periods of wide scale democratic transition in *The Third Wave*,<sup>6</sup> while a year later, Francis Fukuyama famously stated that liberal democracy was the apex of government in *The End of History and the Last Man*.<sup>7</sup> This literature has understandably changed through the years, as it became apparent that transitions are not simply a matter of finding the right combination of ingredients.

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<sup>3</sup> Seymour Lipset, "Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy." *The American Political Science Review* 53, no. 1 (March 1959) 69-105.

<sup>4</sup> Dankwart A. Rustow, "Transitions to Democracy: Toward a Dynamic Model." *Comparative Politics* 2, no. 3 (April 1970): 337-363.

<sup>5</sup> Edward Said, *Orientalism* (London: Pantheon Books, 1978).

<sup>6</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, "Democracy's Third Wave." *Journal of Democracy* 2, no. 2 (1991): 12-34.

<sup>7</sup> Francis Fukuyama, *End of History and the Last Man* (New York: Free Press, 1992).

Democratization and precondition theories were once considered the preeminent way of examining transitions, however, transitology as an approach to political change has also emerged, and has gained considerable legitimacy. This led to a parallel development of both transition literature and democratization literature. The two approaches often reference the same works and study many of the same cases. Notably, these cases involved South America and Southern Europe, with post-communist Eastern Europe following in the late 1980s and 1990s. Where the distinction emerged was the way each approach studied these cases. Democratization literature studied the way in which a country became a democracy, examining various criteria and conditions believed to be integral to moving towards and consolidating democracy. Conversely, transitology did not focus on the end result of the transition, but the transition itself, examining the variables that affected the direction in which a country transitioned. If a country in question appears to be transitioning to democracy, this is either incidental or desired, but not the primary focus of transitology, which emphasizes the process over the result, and the journey rather than the destination.

In 1984, Samuel Huntington wrote an article titled “Will More Countries Become Democratic” that summarized various alleged preconditions for the development of democracy and the flaws each held.<sup>8</sup> This summary and critique would quickly justify a shift towards transitology. The first of these preconditions is economic wealth and equality, an idea put forward by Seymour Martin Lipset in the late 1950s in his article “Some Social Requisites of Democracy”.<sup>9</sup> This article presumes that as countries become wealthier, the possibility they might transition towards democracy increases. Lipset states that “men have

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<sup>8</sup> Samuel P. Huntington, “Will More Countries Become Democratic?” *Political Science Quarterly* 99, no. 2 (1984): 193-218.

<sup>9</sup> Seymour Lipset, “Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Political Legitimacy.” *The American Political Science Review* 53, no. 1 (March 1959)



argued that only in a wealthy society in which relatively few citizens lived in real poverty [can] a situation exist in which the mass of the population [can] intelligently participate in politics and [can] develop the self-restraint necessary to avoid succumbing to the appeals of irresponsible demagogues".<sup>10</sup> Lipset cites a few potential reasons for why affluence is so vital, such as assumptions that higher levels of literacy, education, and mass media exposure are all conducive to democracy.<sup>11</sup> He also states that the assumption that greater income equality, as well as a large, relatively satisfied middle class would likewise help in the development of democracy.<sup>12</sup> After listing these potential causes, however, Huntington also noted that such conditions should have led certain Communist and Latin American states, at the time, to turn toward democracy, but they did not.<sup>13</sup> There are likewise more contemporary examples of countries with rapidly developing economies, such as the United Arab Emirates or Saudi Arabia, which have also not transitioned to democracy, but may actually be further entrenched in undemocratic values.

The second precondition Huntington summarizes is social structure, an argument supported by men such as Alexis de Tocqueville:

[An often-discussed precondition for democracy is a] social structure with relatively autonomous social classes, regional groups, occupational groups, and ethnic and religious groups. Such groups...provide the basis for the limitation of state power, hence for the control of the state by society, and hence for democratic political institutions as the most effective means of exercising that control.<sup>14</sup>

Tocqueville reiterates a fairly common belief that a healthy civil society can increase a country's likelihood of developing stable democracy. He states that while pluralistic civil society can be conducive to democratic transition, it is not as attractive as a civil society with

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<sup>10</sup> Ibid., 75.

<sup>11</sup> Ibid., 81.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid., 83.

<sup>13</sup> Samuel Huntington, "Will More Countries Become Democratic?" *Political Science Quarterly* 99, no. 2 (1964): 200

<sup>14</sup> Ibid., 203.

a clear majority. A democracy founded on a pluralistic civil society, Huntington argues, can be easily weakened by external forces, either military or political, and often only remains stable by becoming an oligarchy.<sup>15</sup>

A third precondition relates to the external influences that can strongly affect democratic development. This precondition is from a publication of Freedom House, which classified fifty two countries as “free” in 1984, and attributed British and American influence as the largest external forces for the success of democracy, especially in the non-Western world<sup>16</sup>. Though Huntington does clearly see that the spread of democracy can be attributed to these countries’ influence, he also notes that as this influence falters, some countries regress towards non-democratic practices, such as in East Asia and Latin America during the 1970s.<sup>17</sup> Due to this ambivalence, external influences can be catalogued as somewhat of a wildcard for transition and consolidation.

The last precondition reviewed is culture, specifically political culture. Sidney Verba defines culture as “the system of empirical beliefs, expressive symbols, and values which defines the situation in which political action takes place”.<sup>18</sup> Huntington outlines a correlation between certain cultures or religions with a higher propensity for democracy (Protestantism, specifically), as well as the opposite (Islam).<sup>19</sup> While historically, certain cultures have been more supportive of democratization, there have also been cases where culture has been more malleable in this regard. For example, Catholicism was once considered to be diametrically opposed to democratic practice, however, nowadays the church is strongly identified with

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<sup>15</sup> Ibid., 205

<sup>16</sup> Ibid., 205-206.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid., 206.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid., 207.

<sup>19</sup> Ibid., 207-8.

democratic values, specifically in the second half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, following the Second Vatican Council. This is not to say that culture cannot be a valuable force in the way a country transitions; Huntington makes it clear that certain cultural attributes can be vital to the prospects for democracy. It is still important, however, to be aware of the fact that effects of cultural attributes are still highly flexible, and while some cultures have had much more democratic success than others, this does not necessarily preclude these less successful countries from effectively transitioning to democracy. For example, countries such as India, South Korea, and Taiwan have all emerged as stable democracies, despite having cultures which may not have been seen previously as ideal for democracy.<sup>20</sup> In light of Huntington's critique, other transition literature gained prevalence. An article written by Dankwart Rustow fourteen years prior to Huntington's article in particular began to gain traction.

#### Democratization to Transitions: Moving to a More Fluid Model

In contrast to Huntington's article, Dankwart Rustow's "Transitions to Democracy: Toward a Dynamic Model" is an article which very succinctly outlines some ways of examining a country's attempted transition towards democracy. The most notable difference between Rustow's work and the arguments that Huntington highlights is Rustow's concentration on transition to democracy, not democracy itself. These arguments gained traction as precondition theory began to be discredited over a decade after "Transitions to Democracy" was published. Rustow focused on the process in which a country becomes a democracy, instead of a focus on stiff preconditions. Rustow argues that there is no specific set of criteria or prerequisites that must be in place for a democracy. Instead, he argues that

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., 208

such conditions are extremely fluid, and that certain preconditions that existed in one country's transition may instead be an after effect of the transitional process in another country. Rustow explains this as follows:

Specifically, we need not assume that the transition to democracy is a world-wide uniform process, that it always involves the same social classes, the same types of political issues, or even the same methods of solution. On the contrary, it may be well to assume...that a wide variety of social conflicts and political contents can be combined with democracy. This is, of course, in line with the general recognition that democracy is a matter primarily of procedure rather than of substance. It also implies that, as among various countries that have made the transition, there may be many roads to democracy.<sup>21</sup>

Rustow thus places importance not on specific ingredients, prerequisites, or even end result, but instead focuses on the process of political transition. This emphasis on a dynamic model follows suit with Rustow's further argument to differentiate between correlation and causality when examining various factors which are commonly found within democracy, or are considered necessary in its foundation:

[This approach] does not commit us to any old-fashioned or simple-minded view of causality, whereby every effect has but one cause and every cause but one effect...Any genetic theory of democracy would do well to assume a two-way flow of causality, or some form of circular interaction, between politics on the one hand and economic and social conditions on the other."<sup>22</sup>

For example, one might argue that greater levels of literacy increase a country's chances towards successfully transitioning into a functioning democracy. Rustow would argue, however, that the opposite may very well be the case as well, that a country's literacy rate may instead increase after the successful democratic transition. Furthermore, these same factors which supposedly help initiate a transition may be different from the factors that help foster democratic stability.

To this end, Rustow states that even a surplus of democrats is not even necessary for successful transition, and that the existence of non-democrats actually helps push a country

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<sup>21</sup> Dankwart A. Rustow, "Transitions to Democracy: Toward a Dynamic Model." *Comparative Politics* 2, no. 3 (April 1970): 345.

<sup>22</sup> Ibid., 342-344.

towards democracy. Rustow even states that conflict between democrats and non-democrats may be a necessity in a successful transition. “A dynamic model of the transition must allow for the possibility that different groups – e.g., now the citizens and now the rulers, now the forces in favor of change and now those eager to preserve the past – may furnish the crucial impulse toward democracy”.<sup>23</sup>

With this dynamic model of transition in mind, Rustow boils down his approach to seven propositions which make up his argument:

1. The factors that keep a democracy stable may not be the ones that brought it into existence: explanations of democracy must distinguish between function and genesis.
2. Correlation is not the same as causation: a genetic theory must concentrate on the latter.
3. Not all causal links run from social and economic to political factors.
4. Not all causal links run from beliefs and attitudes to actions.
5. The genesis of democracy need not be geographically uniform: there may be many roads to democracy.
6. The genesis of democracy need not be temporally uniform: different factors may become crucial during successive phases.
7. The genesis of democracy need not be socially uniform: even in the same place and time the attitudes that promote it may not be the same for politicians and the common citizens.<sup>24</sup>

Alone, these seven propositions, Rustow admits, “make the task of constructing a theory of democratic genesis well-nigh unmanageable”,<sup>25</sup> so he adds an additional three:

8. Empirical data in support of a genetic theory must cover, for any given country, a time period from just before until just after the advent of democracy.
9. To examine the logic of transformation within political systems, we may leave aside countries where a major impetus came from abroad.
10. A model or ideal type of the transition may be derived from a close examination of two or three empirical cases and tested by application to the rest.<sup>26</sup>

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<sup>23</sup> Ibid., 345.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid., 346.

<sup>25</sup> Ibid.

It should be noted that not all of Rustow's propositions are relevant to this thesis. Specifically Rustow's tenth point does not apply, as my research will revolve solely around Egypt's transition, with very little emphasis given to other countries.

Huntington and Rustow's ideas both contribute to the discussion of how transition occurs. While these articles both deal with democracy, they present these similarities in different ways. Huntington refutes the idea that specific criteria will lead to specific outcomes, arguing that explanations that were presented in past decades have been proven incorrect or at least deeply flawed, thus showing the poor predictive capacity of the precondition method. This would be integral in moving away from the more rigid theories of democratization.

Addressing these failures, scholars looked back to Rustow's work, written fourteen years prior to Huntington's article. Rustow likewise argues away from older models, but unlike Huntington, who refutes those models as being outdated, Rustow instead puts forward a new model, based around flexibility and adaptability. He does use criteria, but this criterion is loose enough to allow variability and change, depending on where and when it is applied. While both are seminal works in a discussion of transition, and represent the broad themes of the literature, an approach closer to the center of both theories will be most effective in the examination of this topic. This middle ground can be seen in the work of Alfred Stepan and Juan Linz whose work represents another progression in the way transition is studied.

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<sup>26</sup> Ibid.

### Transitology: Linz and Stepan

This thesis will primarily concentrate on the work of Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, who introduce a theory which outlines several arenas which are necessary in a democratic transition.<sup>27</sup> These arenas tie in heavily with Rustow's article and Huntington's summary because Stepan and Linz' focus is not on the end point, but on the transition, the conditions for which are highly flexible. Linz and Stepan also state that the type of regime a country holds prior to a political transition directly affects what kind of regime succeeds it. Emphasizing the previous regime is particularly relevant when looking at Egypt, considering how politically and religiously different Mubarak's regime was from the one which succeeded it. This ideological divergence is important because Mubarak's government struggled constantly to repress Islamic fundamentalism within Egypt, but despite his efforts, following the Arab Spring, the fundamental Islamic movement became the strongest political force in Egypt. I believe this sharp shift in Egyptian politics will play an integral role in analyzing political transition in Egypt.

According to Linz and Stepan there are five arenas within which the drama of political transition is played out and can be studied; all five are also strong indicators of a successful transition: civil society; political society; rule of law; state apparatus and bureaucracy; and economic society. It is far too early to be certain of the futures of the countries involved in the Arab Spring, however, using Linz and Stepan's approach to the study of transition will be useful in examining the challenges of political change. Though these arenas are meant to determine whether a country has transitioned away from authoritarianism, they can also give insight if a country has not. For example, if a country can

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<sup>27</sup> Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1996), 7.

only meet the requirements of some or none of the arenas, it may mean that the country is not showing signs of transitioning away from authoritarianism but merely towards a different non-democratic regime.

The first of these arenas is civil society. According to Linz and Stepan, civil society is the “arena of the polity where self-organizing groups, movements, and individuals, relatively autonomous from the state, attempt to articulate values, create associations and solidarities, and advance their interests”.<sup>28</sup> In addition, civil society can include various social movements, such as the pro-democratic movements, and/or the pro-religious movements which rose to prominence (during the Arab Spring), as well as ordinary, unaligned citizens who may take part in various protests. The role of these unaffiliated protesters can be particularly important, and may have broad, overarching effects on the role civil society plays within a political transition. For example, Google Executive Wael Ghonim played a strong role in rallying the Egyptian people against the Mubarak regime during the Egyptian revolt, though he held no political office. Civil society is also not limited to protests and demonstrations, which are more indicative of the early stages of civil society’s development. Long term, a developed civil society involves avenues of discussion and patterns of compromise and cooperation to move forward and progress, as well as meeting mutual goals and values.

Civil society is integral when examining Egypt, as the nature of the revolution required a civil society which was strong enough to participate in bringing down an extremely well-entrenched regime. It is also important to look at the role of civil society

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<sup>28</sup> Ibid.



following Mubarak's ouster, as well as the relationship that is cultivated (or not) between the new government and civil society. Depending on the strength of civil society, this relationship can oppose certain political transitions, such as regimes spearheaded by the military.

The second arena identified by Linz and Stepan is political society, "an arena in which the polity specifically arranges itself to contest the legitimate right to exercise control over public power and the state apparatus".<sup>29</sup> This involves "serious thought and action concerning the development of a normatively positive appreciation of those core institutions of a democratic political society – political parties, elections, electoral rules, political leadership, interparty alliances, and legislatures – by which society constitutes itself politically to select and monitor democratic government".<sup>30</sup>

Linz and Stepan emphasize that political society, while distinct from civil society, is also complementary to it. According to Linz and Stepan, civil society is useful in bringing about regime change, but afterwards, should be downplayed to make way for political restructuring. "At best, civil society can destroy a nondemocratic regime. However, a full democratic transition, and especially democratic consolidation, must involve political society".<sup>31</sup> While civil society can push forward ideals, and bring about change, political society is afterwards required to step in and create the institutions required to successfully transition away from the previous regime. This does not mean that political society should operate independently from civil society. Stepan and Linz state that such a hostile relationship is detrimental to a successful political transition, and therefore, argue that civil

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<sup>29</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>30</sup> Ibid.

<sup>31</sup> Ibid.

and political societies should work in tandem. A robust civil society should affect governmental change by pressuring and guiding the advances of a political society, but then allowing political society to properly adjudicate the variety of differences and opinions that then arise amongst democrats.<sup>32</sup> In regards to Egypt, the health of political society is vital when examining the legitimacy of institutions such as its elections, constitution, and simply its national unity.

The third arena put forward by Linz and Stepan is the rule of law. Civil and political society both require a certain amount of autonomy to operate effectively, and this is achieved by having a strong rule of law, where all actors are held equal and accountable under the law. Linz and Stepan, further explain this as follows:

[Rule of law embodies a]... spirit of constitutionalism [which] requires more than rule by majoritarianism. It entails a relatively strong consensus over the constitution and especially a commitment to “self-binding” procedures of governance that require exceptional majorities to change. It also requires a clear hierarchy of laws, interpreted by an independent judicial system and supported by a strong legal culture in civil society.<sup>33</sup>

The rule of law provides a solid guidepost for the direction a political transition is heading, and boundaries to gauge the political commitments of prominent actors in the way they seek to establish the institutions necessary to a working rule of law.

The fourth arena is a functioning state apparatus and bureaucracy. According to Linz and Stepan:

To protect the rights of its citizens and to deliver the other basic services that citizens demand, a democratic government needs to be able to exercise effectively its claim to the monopoly of the legitimate use of force in the territory. Even if the state had no other functions than these, it would have to tax compulsorily in order to pay for police, judges, and basic services...[and] needs the effective capacity to command, regulate, and extract.<sup>34</sup>

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<sup>32</sup>Ibid., 10

<sup>33</sup>Ibid.

<sup>34</sup> Ibid., 11.

A functioning state apparatus and bureaucracy allows citizens of a state to take advantage of the rights and entitlements provided by the state. A concrete bureaucracy also makes it more difficult (though not impossible) for problems such as corruption or nepotism to re-emerge, as the bureaucracy provides methods to repress or prevent this entirely.<sup>35</sup> This legitimacy of the state apparatus would be very useful in determining Egypt's progress towards democracy or other regime types.

Though this arena is important in the discussion of transition, there simply has not been enough time to properly assess the state as well as its bureaucracy, beyond the simple observation that both of these areas are severely underdeveloped. There are still parts of the structure held over from the Mubarak era, but much of this state infrastructure either suffered from enormous corruption, grievous ineptitude, poor public perception, or a combination of all three. This arena ultimately requires more time and effort, as well as stable leadership, to be able to make more than cursory observations about its current state, therefore this thesis will not examine state apparatus and bureaucracy in meaningful detail.

The fifth and final arena is an economic society. An economic society is a set of norms, institutions, and regulations which facilitates the relationship between the state and the market. According to Linz and Stepan, an economic society is based on two claims which they state are "theoretically and empirically sound".<sup>36</sup> These are: "first, there has never been and there cannot be a non-wartime consolidated democracy in a command economy. Second,

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<sup>35</sup> Ibid.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

there has never been...a modern consolidated democracy in a pure market economy"<sup>37</sup> (particularly because a pure market economy exists in theory only).

In the case of Egypt, the economic society will likely prove particularly important in the future, largely due to the potential application of *shari'a* law. Islam itself has a distinct economic system, and whether or not this system could work together in tandem with democracy is certainly a question worth answering. The application of *shari'a* to the economy, let alone how *shari'a* would be applied, is, however, a long-term enquiry. Like state bureaucracy, the confines of my timeline will not give me a definitive answer to these questions, and therefore, economic society will not be emphasized.

Linz and Stepan's model also relies pre-eminently on the case study methodology. By increasing the number of cases, as well as broader application, this model can be further tested. Arend Lijphart showcases several different ways of approaching case studies. Lijphart outlines six different categories of case studies: atheoretical; interpretative; hypothesis-generating; theory-confirming; theory-infirming; and deviant case studies.<sup>38</sup> This thesis will concentrate on the second of the six: interpretative. According to Lijphart, the interpretative case study uses established theoretical propositions, with the aim of "throwing light on the case rather than of improving the generalization in any way".<sup>39</sup> Despite this, due to the nature of the Egyptian transition, both its relative youth and as well as the general stagnation of other regional governments, it is also possible that this thesis could also have certain theory-confirming or infirming implications for transitional literature as it applies to the Middle East.

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<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

<sup>38</sup> Arend Lijphart, Comparative Politics and the Comparative Method." *The American Political Science Review* 65, no. 3 (1971):691.

<sup>39</sup> Ibid., 692.

The strengths and weaknesses of the case study method, and therefore thick description, should also be mentioned here. Thick description, according to Clifford Geertz, is an explanation of phenomena or events which involves context, details, conceptual structures and meaning.<sup>40</sup> The opposite of this, “thin description” is a simpler, factual account without any meaningful interpretation or context.<sup>41</sup> In this way, thick description allows a researcher to examine a subject in a much more meaningful and explanative way. According to Arend Lijphart, “the great advantage of the case study is that by focusing on a single case, that case can be intensively examined even when the research resources at the investigator’s disposal are relatively limited”.<sup>42</sup> Lijphart recognizes that the weakness of a single case study is that its results cannot be “the basis for a valid generalization nor the ground for disproving an established generalization”.<sup>43</sup> He allows, however, that a case study can either strengthen or weaken established hypotheses. Given that there is a great deal of academic debate regarding democracy in Arab or Islamic nations (much of which revolves around the idea that it is highly unlikely to occur), and combined with the consequences of the Arab Spring, the case study approach will be very valuable in hypothesizing about the region’s future.

The study of Egypt in transition, falls somewhere between these two categories (interpretative and theory confirming/infirming). Due to the fact that no Arabic country has been considered a successful democracy, scrutinizing the Egyptian transition could lead to new ideas or themes as to why this might be. If no such revelation occurs, then as Lijphart states, such analysis could lead to a sharper understanding of existing theories, such as

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<sup>40</sup> Clifford Geertz, *The Interpretation of Cultures* (BasicBooks, 1973), 3-30.

<sup>41</sup> Ibid.

<sup>42</sup> Ibid., 691.

<sup>43</sup> Ibid.

whether or not the region can transition away from authoritarianism, a form of government which permeates the region.

Though I am confident in the ideas put forward by these authors, it is still important to be aware of the critiques of theories of “transitology.” The most obvious criticism is that Stepan and Linz’ own research does not include specific examples taken from the Middle East or Northern Africa, instead concentrating on South America, Southern Europe, and post-Communist Europe. A lack of qualitative research specific to Islamic or Arabic countries may be interpreted as a reason why the model is not applicable to the region. A similar contestation, however, was made about the applicability of transitology to Eastern Europe. The argument was, simply put, that there were too many differences between the cultures and political infrastructure of South America and Southern Europe on one hand, and Eastern Europe on the other. Such differences, it was argued, would make application of this model untenable.

Valerie Bunce described this comparison<sup>44</sup> as not “apples and orange,” but “apples and kangaroos,” due to her belief that there are simply too many variables between regions and countries.<sup>45</sup> Bunce argues that there are strong reasons to assume there are large enough differences between regions to invalidate comparison, such as the number of variables. She further argues that such methodology can incorrectly force countries into categories that do not necessarily represent them, based on the biases and determinations of the researcher.<sup>46</sup> Schmitter and Karl refute this point, however, stating that a comparison is first required to determine whether or not two separate cases or regions are truly so alien to one another to

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<sup>44</sup> The comparison Bunce refers to is in regards to culture, institutions, regional, and international context.

<sup>45</sup> Valerie Bunce, “Should Transitologists Be Grounded?” *Slavic Review* 54, no. 1 (1995): 112.

<sup>46</sup> Valerie Bunce, “Paper Curtains and Paper Tigers” *Slavic Review* 54, no. 4 (1995): 980.

disqualify them from comparison. Eliminating specific cases beforehand based on assumption ultimately harms the development of political theory, as it “discourages area specialists from using data from ‘their’ region or country” in a more overarching analysis.<sup>47</sup> “The particularity of any one region's cultural, historical or institutional matrix - if it is relevant to understanding the outcome of regime change - should emerge from systematic comparison, rather than be used as an excuse for not applying it”.<sup>48</sup>

To avoid the problems presented by Bunce, Schmitter and Karl outline two pitfalls which are particularly important to avoid. The first is the assumption that something happened because it *had* to happen, or retrospective determinism.<sup>49</sup> This is an important fallacy to avoid in the case of fallen despots, as it is easy to view various criteria as inevitably causing a regime change. This also ties in heavily with the assumption that perceptions and driving factors of the past are the same as the present (presentism).<sup>50</sup> This means it is vital to provide historical context to events that have occurred over time. The second point that Schmitter and Karl present is that sometimes transitology can minimalize cultural context, due to a rigid, impersonal methodology. These two authors state that area specialists (though they write specifically about Soviet scholars) would “bar all practicing transitologists from reducing their countries (now more numerous, diverse, and autonomous in their behavior) to mere pinpoints on a scatterplot or frequencies in a cross-tabulation”.<sup>51</sup>

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<sup>47</sup> Terry Lynn Karl and Philippe Schmitter, “From an Iron Curtain to a Paper Curtain: Grounding Transitologists or Students of Postcommunism?” *Slavic Review* 54, no. 4 (1995): 968.

<sup>48</sup> Terry Lynn Karl and Philippe Schmitter, “The Conceptual Travels of Transitological and Consolidologists: How Far to the East Should They Attempt to Go?” *Slavic Review* 53, no. 1 (1994): 178.

<sup>49</sup> *Ibid.*, 176

<sup>50</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>51</sup> *Ibid.*, 177

To support Karl and Schmitter's conclusions, Stepan and Linz' model has been effectively adapted to Latin American, Eastern, and Southern European countries. Each of these regions has enough cultural difference among them that one might assume that, by Bunce' definition, there would also be problems. If this model can be successfully used in these aforementioned regions, the model may also be further refined and offer insight in the Middle East, something which has not yet been done. Application to the Middle East would only further measure the model's capability. Furthermore, Linz and Stepan place particular emphasis on the previous regime of a country, as opposed to ideology or religious factors. This allows Linz and Stepan's transition criteria to be far more flexible and easily used when discussing Egypt, as religion and ideology are only now, with Mubarak's fall, being given a more direct opportunity to affect the political system. Finally, Linz and Stepan's work is also relevant to the discussion of Egypt as their research was done exclusively on countries where regimes did not resort to overwhelming force to stop the revolution, which was a notable characteristic of Egypt's initial uprising.

### Egypt in Transition

Egypt is central to any discussion of both the Arab Spring and transitology for at least five reasons. The first reason is that Egypt has had a close (even if not completely amicable) relationship with Western democracies who provide Egypt with annual foreign aid, most prominently the United States. This gives the international community a measure of influence and interest in Egypt, which may or may not influence Egypt's political transition. The second reason is the economy. Egypt is not an economic powerhouse of the Middle East, and has one of the lowest GDP per capita in the region. Due to its relationship with Western



democracies, however, Egypt may be able to access a great deal of knowledge to modernize their economy, as well as engage many potential trading partners in the West. Third, Egypt is also the cultural focal point of the region, both historically and religiously, a point underlined by the fact that the country enjoys one of the few successful tourism sectors in the Middle East, and its scholars have great influence throughout the Middle East. Fourth, the country has the largest population in the region, at approximately ninety million, including the Middle East's largest concentration of Coptic Christians, numbering approximately ten million, a great many of whom quickly mobilized in protest during the Arab Spring. Despite difficulties between Muslims and Christians, Egypt has a foundation for pluralistic politics. These factors have given Egypt a history of financial weakness and cultural strength which are important considerations when examining political transition.

Lastly is the prevalence of powerful fundamental Islamic groups within Egypt, and the large role that such groups have played both during and following the fall of former Egyptian president, Hosni Mubarak. Most prominent among these groups is the Muslim Brotherhood, an extremely large and influential Islamic association in the Arab world. The Brotherhood has often advocated goals that center on the implementation of *shari'a* law, which is essentially the use of the Qur'an and Islamic teachings to guide all spheres of political and societal life. The Brotherhood's influence has created in Egypt a debate on the role of Islam in the post-Mubarak era, a debate which will be integral in understanding Egypt's future. Prior to the revolution, the Brotherhood was restricted in varying degrees. This included being banned outright in the 1950s, with its members imprisoned and tortured, to being outlawed as a political party within the last decade. During the Egyptian revolution, the Muslim Brotherhood was extremely vocal in its support of the protestors, which gained

the Brotherhood greater popularity. This support led them to form the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP), and eventually succeed in winning the largest number of seats during the parliamentary elections. Later in the Egyptian presidential election of 2012, their candidate Mohammad Morsi was elected as president. Additionally, in the parliamentary elections of late 2011 and early 2012, the party that came in second was the ultra-conservative Salafi Al-Nour party, a hard line Islamic fundamentalist group. Though there have been several problems with the Egyptian parliament, most notably its dissolution by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), this does not erase the implications of both the Brotherhood and Al-Nour party's success.

The reason why the prevalence of these two groups is so important is twofold. First, the goals established by the protesters during Mubarak's ouster, which revolved around creating greater liberties for the Egyptian people, such as those found within liberal democracies. Given the successes of the Freedom and Justice Party and the Al-Nour party, two groups which are consistently condemned for their alleged extremist beliefs, these liberal goals may be compromised. The popularity of these groups may also affect the role of religion in political transition and the prospects for liberal democracy.

Secondly, why these groups are important ties into the events of summer 2013, when Muhammad Morsi was deposed as Egyptian President. Though he had many opponents, there is no denying that Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood had, and still has, a very strong support base. Morsi's deposal was a highly polarizing event in Egyptian politics, and showcases a strong divide within the Egyptian population along religious lines. Though I will not be actively concentrating on the effects of religion specifically within my thesis, it is impossible to ignore the presence of religion within any discussion of Egyptian politics.

These circumstances certainly do not appear to be ideal for any meaningful transition away from authoritarianism, though a transition to a different authoritarian regime seems possible. Dankwart Rustow stated that transitions are extremely flexible, and that many different combinations of events and stimuli can eventually lead to different outcomes. Determining how Egypt's circumstances affect its transition will be the primary goal of this thesis.

### Methodology

To recap, this thesis will discuss the political transition in Egypt since the ousting of Hosni Mubarak in 2011. This thesis will also include some tentative conclusions about the transition, as well as some speculation on where the transition is headed. Primarily, I relied on the work of Linz and Stepan, specifically the five arenas where the events of political transition occur. This section will briefly outline the methodology that was used to reach these conclusions.

To restate the question at hand: what factors played a part in the post-Mubarak political transition? As previously mentioned, the goal will not be to establish that Egypt is transitioning towards one specific form of government or ideology. More broadly, this thesis will examine the transition itself, including an analysis of the events that occur and the various actors involved. Using this analysis, I will discuss what the main characteristics of the transition were, as well as the potential outcomes of the transition, and reach some tentative conclusions about the future of Egypt.

The methodology I will be using to examine Egypt's political transition will revolve around a few different areas. The thesis itself will be organized around three of the five arenas put forward by Linz and Stepan. Within the context of each arena, five specific groups will be analyzed. These groups will be viewed in the setting of five major events that occur in the timeline of January 2011, when Hosni Mubarak was deposed, to July 2013, when Mohammad Morsi was deposed. Much of the context of these groups and events will be pulled from four primary media sources, with these sources being either regional or international.

The foundation of my analysis will draw focus on the five arenas identified by Linz and Stepan. Of the five arenas, I will concentrate primarily on three arenas: civil society, political society, and rule of law. State apparatus and economic society will receive lesser emphasis. The reason why the last two will not receive as much focus is because they require a longer term approach: the development of the state apparatus as well as economic development, for example, are not a short term accomplishments and therefore require a much longer timeline. In contrast, the manifestations of civil and political society can be assessed more directly. While using a limited approach will lead to more tentative conclusions instead of definite ones, it will also be far more realistic. Egypt's transition has an enormous number of factors, but by concentrating on Linz and Stepan's structure, I can narrow these down significantly while still operating within a methodology which is credible and experienced, and which has clear guidelines.

Keeping in mind the arenas put forward by Linz and Stepan, I looked at five groups across three fields (as well as their objectives, platforms, and actions) that have played pivotal roles in Egypt, both in the time preceding and following the revolution. Of these five

groups, not all were given the same amount of attention, depending on their influence in Egypt's transition. As I mentioned earlier, one cannot examine the current Egyptian political scene without placing particular emphasis on The Muslim Brotherhood, as their parliamentary and presidential victory cemented them as the strongest political movement in Egypt following the Arab Spring. This also speaks volumes to their political clout before the revolution, when they were outlawed by former president Mubarak. The examination of the Brotherhood will also include the now ousted Egyptian President and former Chairman of the Muslim Brotherhood, Mohammad Morsi.

The second group is the extremely fundamental Salafis, a group which on many occasions has petitioned for implementation of *shari'a*, must also be examined, not in small part due to their contentious relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood. At a glance, one would assume that the two groups would be able to easily form a political alliance; however, the Muslim Brotherhood on several occasions has publically stated its complete lack of willingness to make any such compact.

The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) will be the third group I will examine, as they held a great deal of power during and after the revolution, and have been one of the strongest secular forces in the country. Their goals have also been unclear from the start of the revolution, and talks of a military rule have not been uncommon, especially given the uneven amount of power they hold. Considering their role in the 2013 deposal of Mohammed Morsi, they cannot be ignored.

Each of these first three groups has a very distinct outlook and each holds significant influence in regards to Egypt's political transition. Since the Revolution, the Muslim

Brotherhood worked hard to distance itself from its fundamental roots, trying to characterize itself as inclusive to all Egyptians, instead of simply pro-Islamic, though their words and actions were not always been consistent in this regard. The Salafis, conversely, have been straightforward in pushing the merits of fundamental Islam, and a return to *shari'a*. The SCAF perhaps had the most difficulty following the revolt, as they have had to juggle fundamental and moderate Islam, liberal groups, as well as the demands of Egypt's large Christian base, while still remaining relatively secular.

The last two groups have traditionally held very little power in Egypt. The first of these are the Coptic Christians, who have faced a great deal of oppression and have continually sought to play a role in Egyptian politics. Given their prominent role in the Egyptian revolt, many Copts had high hopes for their future within Egypt. Furthermore, considering their history, the way their status develops post-revolution can be used as a barometer for the way the transition progresses.

Lastly, will be the Egyptian liberal movement. The movement is comprised of various liberal groups who wished to make post-revolution Egypt into a functioning, liberal democracy. This movement has been plagued with problems, however, such as disorganization and constant shifts in leadership. For example, Mohammad ElBaradei, perhaps the most popular and arguably qualified choice for a liberal presidential candidate, dropped out of the presidential race months before the election, and struggled as the leader of the opposition thereafter. Though these groups have not been particularly influential (though with the downfall of President Morsi, some might argue that point), it is this lack of influence which makes them vital to the discussion of transition in Egypt. Their limited roles are critical to an understanding of civil and political society.

The timeline I followed will be from start of the revolution in 2011 January to the deposal of Mohammad Morsi in the summer of 2013. Within this timeline, I will primarily concentrate on five specific events, each being emphasized differently depending on which arena is being discussed. First, Mubarak's ouster during the Arab Spring in early 2011; second, the constitutional amendments and parliamentary elections in late 2011; third, the presidential election in 2012; fourth, the draft constitution put forward in late 2012; and fifth, the deposal of Mohamed Morsi in the summer of 2013. While the bulk of my work will center on this time period, I believe it is also important to provide proper historical context. To this end, I will also examine recent Egyptian history, starting at 1952, when Egypt fought yet another revolution, which was also against a corrupt and bloated government. From this history, I can examine similarities between past Egypt leaders and contemporary ones.

Lastly, due to the very recent nature of the events in Egypt, in addition to scholarly work, I will also draw on media sources throughout my research. These media sources will be from a wide spectrum of perspectives from both within Egypt and the international community. Specifically, I will be using the New York Times, the BBC, Al-Ahram<sup>52</sup> (an Egyptian newspaper), and the Middle East Media Research Institute (MEMRI). The New York Times will provide a distinctly Western or American perspective to the revolution, while the BBC will be a comparatively objective source, though still being distinctly Western. Al-Ahram is a Cairo based newspaper and will be used to gain an Egyptian perspective. Finally, MEMRI is an independent source of translated media from the Middle East, and will be used to fill in gaps that the other sources may leave. I will follow each of these sources from the

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<sup>52</sup> The UNBC library coverage of Al-Ahram is incomplete by several months, so I will use Al Jazeera news to supplement it.

start of my timeline, January 2011, until the deposal of Mohammad Morsi in the summer of 2013, concentrating on stories that deal with the revolution and each of the groups mentioned above. Furthermore, during my analysis, it is imperative to identify criteria that implicate that transition is occurring, specifically, criteria that relates to civil and political society, the rule of law, as well as economic and institutional development.

In conclusion, my thesis questions how events in Egypt from early 2011, progressed to the 2012 presidential elections, and which led to the deposal of Egypt's first democratically elected president both reflect and have affected the country's political transition. It is not my purpose to determine whether or not Egypt is moving to a specific form of government, such as democracy, but to examine the process of transition, and make some theoretically informed conclusions about said transition. Based on this, I will use my analysis to make cautious predictions on some of the more likely outcomes.



## Chapter One:

### The Egyptian Revolution of 1952

Understanding the situation in Egypt following the Arab Spring requires looking back at the events and circumstances that have shaped Egyptian state and society. Many times in the sixty years that preceded Mubarak's ouster there were events that closely mirrored contemporary Egypt, the most obvious being the leadership style of those in power. Prior to Mubarak, two men presided over Egypt during this time and each concentrated heavily on consolidating their power by emphasizing security and monistic politics, often culminating in oppression and the use of fear to compensate for a lack of political legitimacy. The first half of this chapter will focus on these two leaders: Nasser and Sadat, followed by a discussion of Mubarak. In this context, it is far easier to understand why modern day Egypt is so heavily divided.

On July 23<sup>rd</sup> of 1952, the Egyptian military openly mutinied against the highly unpopular King Farouk I of Egypt. Farouk enjoyed the backing of the British, but was infamous for his opulent lifestyle and the corrupt government. Farouk's weakness was also blamed for Egypt's loss in the 1948 war with Israel. The coup itself was, nominally, led by General Mohamed Naguib of the Free Officers, who listed a summary of Farouk's offenses:

In view of what the country has suffered in the recent past, the complete vacuity prevailing in all corners as a result of your bad behavior, [Farouk's] toying with the constitution, and...disdain for the wants of the people, no one rests assured of life, livelihood, and honor. Egypt's reputation among the peoples of the world has been debased as a result of [Farouk's] excesses in these areas to the extent that traitors and bribe-takers find protection beneath [Farouk's] shadow in addition to security, excessive wealth, and many extravagances at the expense of the hungry and impoverished people. [Farouk] manifested this during and after the Palestine War [in 1948] in the corrupt arms scandals and... open interference in the courts to try to falsify the facts of the case, thus shaking faith in justice.<sup>53</sup>

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<sup>53</sup> Amil Khan. *Long Struggle: The Muslim Worlds Western Problem*. (Washington: John Hunt Publishing, 2010). 58-59.

Naguib, however, was primarily a figurehead for the forces behind him. Naguib was in this high position, to give the Free Officers legitimacy. Chief among these forces was a thirty four year old colonel Gamal Abdul-Nasser.

The coup was met with little resistance from the British occupation of Egypt. The Free Officers, the faction that led the coup, seized key points around Cairo, and after their successes supported the creation of another civilian run government, which was approved by King Farouk once he realized that he had no other option than to accept the proposal. This new government would go on to vote Farouk into exile, and Prince Ahmed Fouad, just six months old at the time, inherited the throne. Up until this point, Farouk remained certain that the British would inevitably intervene to save his throne. Due to the moderate approach taken by the usurpers, however, this intervention did not occur and Farouk left Egypt on the 26<sup>th</sup> of July 1952.

Following Farouk's departure, the newly created Military High Committee, established by the Free Officers, announced that elections would be delayed for six months to allow the country to "undergo a period of purification", wherein political parties were advised to purge themselves of corrupt elements held over from Farouk's reign.<sup>54</sup> These actions, however, were primarily undertaken to delay elections, allowing the military to further consolidate their power. The interim government was soon thereafter dissolved, and the illusion of civilian rule was cast aside to usher in a more obvious, junta-led Egypt. This

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<sup>54</sup> Michael T. Thornhill, "Britain, The United States And The Rise Of An Egyptian Leader: The Politics And Diplomacy Of Nasser's Consolidation Of Power, 1952-4," *English Historical Review* 119, no. 483 (September 2004): 898.

dissolution was due to resistance to junta backed land reforms, reforms meant to weaken the Egyptian pasha elite, while ingratiating the Military High Committee to the peasantry.<sup>55</sup>

By the beginning of 1953, Naguib was enshrined as “Leader of the Revolution,” and served as prime minister for the next three years.<sup>56</sup> To further consolidate power, the Military High Committee renamed themselves as the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC), as a more obvious showing of the military’s influence in Egyptian politics, as well as a way to even further ingratiate themselves to the general population. Furthermore, Nasser was appointed the secretary general of a movement called the “Liberation Rally” by the RCC, the purpose of which was to further develop the junta’s popularity.<sup>57</sup> This appointment would bring Nasser to the forefront of Egyptian politics.

Following these actions, the next requirement for consolidation was the removal of British influences entirely from Egypt. To further this end, the Egyptian junta declared itself, on June 18<sup>th</sup> of 1953 to be a republic, with Naguib assuming the role of President, and Nasser becoming the deputy prime minister. Nasser’s new position re-established the assumptions that he was the true power behind the regime.<sup>58</sup> Due to Britain’s intransigence on this particular issue, the RCC relied heavily on the support of the Society of Muslim Brothers, more commonly known as the Muslim Brotherhood.

The Brotherhood, established in Egypt in 1928 by Hassan Al-Banna, was a fairly new organization that espoused the now familiar message of a return to stricter standards of Islam

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<sup>55</sup> Ibid. 900

<sup>56</sup> Ibid., 904.

<sup>57</sup> Ibid.

<sup>58</sup> Ibid., 909.

and *shari'a*.<sup>59</sup> In the proceeding decades, the Brotherhood had risen far enough in stature and influence that they were seen as a credible threat, and Al-Banna was assassinated in 1949.<sup>60</sup> The government increased the severity of the crackdowns against the Muslim Brotherhood, but at this point “the Brothers had spread across the country, and then throughout the Arab world, planting the seeds of the coming Islamic insurgence”.<sup>61</sup> Shortly after Al-Banna’s assassination, the Brotherhood was joined by infamous Islamic scholar Sayyid Qutb, who would eventually provide the fundamental and extremist philosophy which would come to characterize the Brotherhood, as well as other Islamist groups.

The government turned to the Brotherhood because, at the time, the organization had the capabilities to wage guerilla warfare in the Canal Zone. The Brotherhood had played a role during the initial July coup, and expecting a more prominent role in the subsequent military rule, hoped that their part in the guerrilla struggle would realize these goals. This tenuous agreement between the Egyptian government and the Brotherhood would be the first real interaction between the military and the Brotherhood, and would set off decades of open conflict and duplicity between military-led Egypt and the Muslim Brotherhood.

In what would ultimately become a recurring trend amongst Egyptian leaders, after the military consolidated power, it began its suppression of the Muslim Brotherhood. This suppression of the Brotherhood would lead to further violence in the Canal Zone, which in turn led to Naguib gaining popularity and power.<sup>62</sup> These events were brief, however, as

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<sup>59</sup> Rupe Simms, “‘Islam is our Politics’: a Gramscian Analysis of the Muslim Brotherhood (1928-1953),” *Social Compass* 49, no 4 (Dec 2002): 570.

<sup>60</sup> Ibid.

<sup>61</sup> Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11* (New York: Vintage Books, 2007), 19.

<sup>62</sup> Michael T. Thornhill, “Britain, The United States And The Rise Of An Egyptian Leader: The Politics And Diplomacy Of Nasser’s Consolidation Of Power, 1952-4,” *English Historical Review* 119, no. 483 (September 2004): 914.

Nasser changed the situation rather quickly. Nasser began a media campaign promoting the idea that an inevitable breakdown of order was coming, the cause of which were party elections (which would produce a victory for the Wafd party, the preeminent party under Farouk's rule) and Naguib.<sup>63</sup> Nasser even organized "spontaneous" labor strikes which demanded that political parties remain illegal until British forces left Egypt.<sup>64</sup> Nasser also assured the Muslim Brotherhood of their status as a political party, as well as promising the legalization of all political parties for forthcoming elections. Nasser did this to show that political parties were detrimental to Egypt, and again, cast the blame of such implementations at his political enemies.<sup>65</sup>

These political developments and maneuverings led to the British agreeing on full evacuation of all forces from Egypt in the summer of 1954. Due to their exclusion during the negotiations, the details of the evacuation were heavily opposed by certain groups, notably the Muslim Brotherhood. At the end of October in the same year, the Brotherhood made an unsuccessful attempt on Nasser's life, which would further prove to consolidate his power and popularity. In a speech he gave on the day as the attack, Nasser stated, "remember that, if anything should happen to me, the Revolution will go on, for each of you is a Gamal Abdul Nasser".<sup>66</sup> The speech rallied the Egyptian people around Nasser, and the next day, demonstrators burned down the Muslim Brotherhood headquarters.<sup>67</sup> Nasser further maneuvered his renewed popularity after his failed assassination into Naguib's removal from

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<sup>63</sup> Michael T. Thornhill, "Britain, The United States And The Rise Of An Egyptian Leader: The Politics And Diplomacy Of Nasser's Consolidation Of Power, 1952-4," *English Historical Review* 119, no. 483 (September 2004): 915.

<sup>64</sup> Ibid.

<sup>65</sup> Ibid.

<sup>66</sup> Ibid., 920

<sup>67</sup> Ibid.

office. Naguib had been frustrated with his position as figurehead, and had been making a play for greater independence, so his removal was a large victory for Nasser.

Nasser also orchestrated a severe crack down on the Muslim Brotherhood. This led to thousands of Muslim Brotherhood members being arrested, imprisoned, and tortured, removing one of the greatest opponents to Nasser's reign, who then assumed the office of president in June of 1964. This suppression of the Brotherhood was not finished so quickly, however, and in 1965, in response to another plot against the regime led by Sayyid Qutb, the police began a series of arrests, with estimates of 18,000 Islamists arrested near the start of the incident, and with another 27,000 arrested shortly thereafter.<sup>68</sup> Qutb was arrested and executed on August 29<sup>th</sup>, 1966, and would be known as a martyr by his followers.<sup>69</sup> The severity of this crackdown would come to represent the violent relationship between the Egyptian state and the Muslim Brotherhood for decades to come. The brutality of the crackdown would also lay the foundation for more fundamental and extreme forms of Islam, which would affect both Egypt and the world. Lawrence Wright stated:

One line of thinking proposes that America's tragedy on September 11 was born in the prisons of Egypt. Human-rights advocates in Cairo argue that torture created an appetite for revenge, first in Sayyid Qutb and later in his acolytes...The main target of the prisoners' wrath was the secular Egyptian government but a power current of anger was also directed toward the West, which they saw as an enabling force behind the repressive regime. They held the West responsible for corrupting and humiliating Islamic society.<sup>70</sup>

This contempt for the West would prove to be a particularly enduring characteristic of Egyptian society. The crackdown also led to a state of great paranoia within the Egyptian

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<sup>68</sup> Curtis Ryan, "Political Strategies and Regime Survival in Egypt," *Journal of Third World Studies* 18, no. 2 (September 2001): 33.

<sup>69</sup> Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11* (New York: Vintage Books, 2007), 36-7.

<sup>70</sup> *Ibid.*, 61.

leadership which culminated in more torture, phone-tapping, and arbitrary arrests, actions that would persist through the reign of the next two Presidents and into the modern age.

The relevance of the 1952 revolution is in its similarities to contemporary events. The military involvement with the deposal of leader, the manipulations of society, and the machinations which led to the downfall of the Muslim Brotherhood parallel the developments and events of the Arab Spring. The relationships between the Egyptian military and society, as well as with the Muslim Brotherhood, are two of the most important dynamics of the past several decades in Egypt. The evolution of these relationships would come to play a vital role in the events of the Arab Spring.

#### From Nasser to Sadat to Mubarak

Nasser found legitimacy through in two ways: first, the pragmatic issue of land reform and redistribution, and second, his opposition to Western influence. Land reform was an issue the post-revolutionary regime had pushed for, as approximately six percent of Egyptians at the time owned sixty five percent of the land.<sup>71</sup> One contemporary described the necessity for the redistribution of land as follows: “no one who knows Egypt would doubt that land reform was needed for reasons of humanity. The majority of Egypt’s fellahin (peasants) are a wretched proletariat...without some redistribution of ownership to raise rural incomes, other measures for raising village standards remain palliatives”.<sup>72</sup> Allowing these poorer Egyptians more opportunities for land ownership endeared Nasser to the Egyptian people and provided a sharp contrast to the decadent, selfish reign of Farouk.

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<sup>71</sup> Doreen Warriner, “Land Reform in Egypt and its Repercussions,” *International Affairs (Royal Institute of International Affairs 1944- 29*, no. 1 (Jan 1953): 1.

<sup>72</sup> Ibid.

Nasser further concretized his legitimacy when he went on to vehemently oppose any Western influence not only in Egypt, but within any Arab country. Nasser believed strongly that the greatest threat to Egyptian stability was both the West and Israel, and sought independence from both.<sup>73</sup> To do so, he created a vast intelligence network aimed specifically at defending against foreign agents, domestic unrest, and any signs of another coup, similar to the one that he himself had orchestrated.<sup>74</sup> He also made use of the largest Arab radio station, "Voice of the Arabs," to broadcast a largely successful campaign of propaganda to limit Western influence in the region, and in turn helped promote a cult of personality centred on himself.<sup>75</sup>

In this way, Nasser effectively created within the Egyptian mindset the idea of the "other," the outsider whose sole purpose was to create disharmony and sabotage the state, a lightning rod to blame for any discontent within the state. This convenient scapegoat allowed him vast influence over societal dialogue. He was so successful in this sense that the West was only able to find a single ally in the region, Iraq. Other countries, such as Lebanon and Syria, instead fell under the sway of Nasser's quasi, Arabic unity.<sup>76</sup> The legitimacy derived from land reforms and Arab nationalism allowed Nasser to rule with a freer hand, allowing him to create the burgeoning security state which would characterize Egypt for decades.

These events would prove to be the end point of both his career and his life; three years after the Six Day War in 1967, where the Arab forces of Egypt, Syria, and Jordan suffered humiliating defeat at the hands of Israel, Nasser tried to resign. Despite this loss, the

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<sup>73</sup> Scott Baumann, "Nasser, Suez, and Arab Nationalism," *History Review*, no. 66 (March 2010).

<sup>74</sup> Jason Brownlee, "Peace Before Freedom: Diplomacy and Repression in Sadat's Egypt," *Political Science Quarterly* 126, no. 4 (2011/2012): 646.

<sup>75</sup> Scott Baumann, "Nasser, Suez, and Arab Nationalism," *History Review*, no. 66 (March 2010).

<sup>76</sup> Ibid



Egyptian public demanded that he stay, but on September 28, 1970, Nasser died from a heart attack.<sup>77</sup> Regardless of his failure during the Six Day War, a failure that likely would have politically crippled a weaker leader, Nasser remained extremely popular. Even in death, his ideas about Egyptian and Arabic nationalism would survive for decades, even into the contemporary thinking of the region.<sup>78</sup>

Following Nasser's death, Vice President Anwar Sadat took over the role of President, but did not follow with Nasser's ideals. In the 1970s, in response to a substantial increase in Marxist and Nasserist ideals, Sadat released most members of the Muslim Brotherhood, who had been heavily persecuted and were imprisoned during the time of his predecessor. This action may have been seen as an attempt to increase pluralism within Egypt, however, it was more a ploy to hinder the resurgence of leftist elements. Sadat would later confront these actors more directly, banning all Marxist and Nasserist organizations, therefore leaving the Muslim Brotherhood, among other Islamist groups, as the chief voice of opposition in Egypt.<sup>79</sup> The Brotherhood would quickly fill the vacancies left by those abolished groups, especially within student institutions and associations.<sup>80</sup>

The ease of Sadat's abilities to manipulate societal trends using ideology and religion was indicative of a long running trend in Egypt. It led to a society in which the Egyptian citizens did not play any meaningful role in the political development of Egypt. Under Sadat, Egypt remained as much under the thumb of the new government as they did under King Farouk and Nasser. Any deviation from this control was met with repression. In 1977, in

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<sup>77</sup> Ibid.

<sup>78</sup> Curtis Ryan, "Political Strategies and Regime Survival in Egypt," *Journal of Third World Studies* 18, no. 2 (September 2001): 36.

<sup>79</sup> Ibid., 31.

<sup>80</sup> Ibid.

response to a wave of rioting and protest caused by the implementation of an IMF austerity program, Sadat would call in the army to forcefully subdue the protesters.<sup>81</sup> Military intervention of this kind had not previously occurred since the days before Nasser had consolidated the post-revolution government.<sup>82</sup> Furthermore, in 1977, the failures of Sadat's economic program, *Infitah*, came to a head, as massive protests, known as "The Bread Riots" began.<sup>83</sup> To combat this threat, Sadat criminalized all forms of protest, on threat of life in prison with hard labor, and instituted policies which only allowed government sanctioned parties to participate in elections, essentially eliminating competitive elections.<sup>84</sup>

Sadat also entered into a controversial peace treaty with Israel in 1978 in which he played from a position of weakness. Many of the key demands made of Israel, specifically ones made on behalf of the Palestinians, were all but ignored, such as Israeli withdrawal from the West Bank and Palestinian self-rule.<sup>85</sup> Sadat quickly called for a public referendum on the treaty, which passed with a preposterous 99.95 percent approval, ratified the peace agreement, and called for a new round of elections.<sup>86</sup> The referendum was an almost farcical display of corruption, as visible ballot rigging was recorded and shown by foreign news studios.<sup>87</sup>

The approval of this peace treaty was the tipping point for the Sadat regime, as public opinion turned sharply against him. Fueled by past Nasserist ideals, Israel was considered by many to be a grave threat to both Egypt and the rest of the Arabic world. The peace treaty

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<sup>81</sup> Jason Brownlee, "Peace Before Freedom: Diplomacy and Repression in Sadat's Egypt," *Political Science Quarterly* 126, no. 4 (2011/2012): 651.

<sup>82</sup> Ibid.

<sup>83</sup> Ibid.

<sup>84</sup> Ibid., 652.

<sup>85</sup> Ibid., 655.

<sup>86</sup> Ibid., 661

<sup>87</sup> Ibid.

was seen by many Arabs as facilitating or ignoring Israeli aggression against other Arabic countries that had no such treaty, a point supposedly proven correct with Israeli intervention in Lebanon in 1978.<sup>88</sup> Specifically, Islamists took extreme issue with the peace treaty, specifically the Islamist extremist group Egyptian Islamic Jihad.

As Sadat's critics grew louder, he in turn began more severe domestic measures against his opposition, while attempting to gain popularity through various means. These gestures, however, were largely for show, and changed very little. For example, in 1980, Sadat would lift Nasser's state of emergency, but "arbitrary arrests and 24-hour surveillance of the treaty's critics continued".<sup>89</sup> Given that Sadat's pursuit of a peace treaty with Israel was an attempt to secure his position, it is ironic that it actually was the cause of his downfall. Albert Wolf states: "autocracies often use foreign antagonisms as a means to legitimate their rule. When longstanding conflicts are resolved, domestic challengers are provided with a focal point for organizing against the regime and presenting themselves as a patriotic alternative to the incumbent".<sup>90</sup> These factors would all contribute to the "Autumn of Fury," a series of intense protests occurring in 1981, culminating in Sadat's assassination by the extremists, Egyptian Islamic Jihad.<sup>91</sup> Sadat's mistake of presumed invincibility was a mistake that Nasser did not make, and which Sadat's successor, Hosni Mubarak, would also learn from. Nasser consolidated his rule by making certain the enemies of Egypt were always beyond its borders. Mubarak did this as well, but took it further by keeping his domestic opponents brutally reined in as well.

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<sup>88</sup> Albert B. Wolf, "Peacemaking and Political Survival in Sadat's Egypt," *Middle East Policy* 21, no. 4 (2014): 133.

<sup>89</sup> *Ibid.*, 134.

<sup>90</sup> *Ibid.*, 136.

<sup>91</sup> *Ibid.*, 132.

### Thirty Years to Revolt: Egypt Under Mubarak 1981-2011

Lacking both the charisma and nationalist credentials of either of his two predecessors, Mubarak's hold on the presidency of Egypt was tenuous at best. "Mubarak's accession would bring an abrupt end to Egypt's [regional] pre-eminence...cautious and unimaginative, the former air force commander [had] never in his [presidency] come close to filling the shoes of his predecessors".<sup>92</sup> Instead of change or innovation, Mubarak increased suppression, beginning by instituting a national state of emergency, which would last for the vast majority of the three decades that he was in power. The state of emergency was used consistently as justification for severe repression against any who were even alleged Islamic militants.<sup>93</sup>

This repression, which included assaults on mosques that were believed to be home to Islamist militants, resulted very often in battles between these supposed militants and the state. It became common practice to forego any legal due process for those who were arrested. This in turn led to escalation on both sides, as militants continued campaigns of increasingly violent terrorism against the state, with the regime answering in kind. This struggle was used as justification for limiting more and more civil liberties.<sup>94</sup> Mubarak's costly military campaign against the Islamists (the annual death toll of which, in 1993, peaked at more than 1,000) would come to characterize his presidency, and would also lead to the pretext of repressing nonviolent political opponents and movements as well.<sup>95</sup> Once again, the Muslim Brotherhood, who was still outlawed in the 1990s, but who organized

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<sup>92</sup> David Ottaway, "The Arab Tomorrow," *Wilson Quarterly* 34, no. 1 (2010).

<sup>93</sup> Curtis Ryan, "Political Strategies and Regime Survival in Egypt," *Journal of Third World Studies* 18, no. 2 (September 2001):35

<sup>94</sup> Ibid.

<sup>95</sup> Jason Brownlee, "The Decline of Pluralism in Mubarak's Egypt," *Journal of Democracy* 13, no. 4 (October 2002): 7.

without official party status, bore the brunt of Mubarak's repression. The government took over the management of any syndicates in which the Brotherhood found any successes, such as in leadership elections in the doctors', engineers', pharmacists', and lawyers' syndicates in the early-to-mid 90s.<sup>96</sup> The regime also sent dozens of Brotherhood members to prison by military trial, and detained additional thousands without formal charge.<sup>97</sup> Events such as these continued to occur in the 2000s, despite a formal surrender by Islamists (particularly Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya<sup>98</sup> in 1998), and a lack of domestic attacks by militant Islamists.<sup>99</sup> Though Egypt was heavily characterized by its Islamic identity, the Mubarak regime never made any effort at reconciling the religious tension throughout the country.

Unfortunately for Mubarak, his reliance on suppression and limitation for three decades would lead to ever increasing unrest among the Egyptian populace. Given that his term of office began with the death of his predecessor, it is understandable why Mubarak relied on an almost fanatical dedication to the security of his regime, but this dedication overshadowed more pressing matters, such as economic or political reform, as well as civil liberties and rights.

Excessive reliance on the types of survival strategies [which were used in Egypt] bodes ill for the development prospects of many countries...a leader such as Nasser or Sadat may have a great vision, agenda, or ideological view aimed at change and development of the nation, yet the focus on government survival can easily become an obsession, tempering even the most ambitious plans for a better future. Political concentration on the short term and the immediate future all too easily loses sight of lasting development, with the result that executives may survive but the ultimate losers continue to be the people.<sup>100</sup>

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<sup>96</sup> Ibid.

<sup>97</sup> Ibid.

<sup>98</sup> More commonly known in the West as "the Islamic group," Al-Gama'a al-Islamiyya was an Islamist militant group whose acts of terrorism included the 1997 Luxor massacre which claimed the lives of 71 people, predominantly foreign tourists.

<sup>99</sup> Ibid., 7-8.

<sup>100</sup> Curtis Ryan, "Political Strategies and Regime Survival in Egypt," *Journal of Third World Studies* 18, no. 2 (September 2001): 42.

Ultimately, it was no single factor that would eventually lead to the end of Mubarak's three decade long rule. His government was largely unconcerned with the desires or hardships of the average citizen, and was instead dedicated to the interests of the decadent, ruling elite. Human rights and societal progress were prioritized beneath the stability and security the regime enjoyed from the status quo.

By the end of 2010, people were pushed to the brink by the sharply rising prices of basic foods, escalating, unemployment, crackdowns on the media and university, outrageous rigging of the parliamentary elections, an ever-lengthening list of corrupt actions by the elite, and fear that 82-year-old Mubarak might run for election again in September 2011 or, even worse, hand power over to his hated son.<sup>101</sup>

Even with so much motivation behind them, Egyptians still did not believe that the status quo could be changed. Only after a fruit vendor in Tunisia immolated himself in front of a police station, and an unprecedented wave of protest and outrage spread across the Arab world, would Egyptians take to Tahrir Square to protest the rule of Mubarak, eventually leading to the end of his regime. Before this, Egypt also had its own fruit vendor: a young man named Khaled Said.

#### "We are all Khaled Said"

On June 6 2010, police arrested twenty eight year old Khaled Said in a cybercafé, pulling him into the street. As they dragged him, handcuffed behind his back, witnesses say that the two officers slammed his head against a marble table, and once they had him outside, they began to viciously beat him to death. Said was arrested because he supposedly had

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<sup>101</sup> Ann Lesch, "Egypt's Spring: Causes of the Revolution," *Middle East Policy* 18, no. 3 (Fall 2011): 46.

obtained a video of corrupt police officers splitting the earnings of a drug bust amongst themselves.<sup>102</sup>

Despite the attempts to cover up the killing of Said, pictures of his face post-mortem were taken by his family after they visited his body in the morgue. These pictures were released to the internet, showing Said's face as a twisted, disfigured mask, almost unrecognizable after the beating that had led to his death.<sup>103</sup> The pictures spread, and outrage was quick to homogenize the already fomenting outrage against the Mubarak regime, for which Khaled Said's death would serve as the catalyst.

A Facebook page entitled "We are all Khaled Said" was created by Google marketing executive Wael Ghonim. The page quickly grew in popularity, with Khaled Said's murder becoming an example of the arbitrary strength of the regime; as the title of the page implied, anyone could become victim to the corrupt officials and police forces of Egypt.<sup>104</sup> Though not the root cause of Mubarak's ouster, this message was simple and relatable. The page would also prove vital for organization, as it became a gathering point for protesters who used the page to shape the forthcoming protests in Tahrir Square and elsewhere.<sup>105</sup>

### The Arab Spring in Egypt: January 25 2011

January 25<sup>th</sup> in Egypt is National Police Day, a holiday put into place by Hosni Mubarak only two years prior to the protests that would end his rule. Choosing this day as the

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<sup>102</sup> "Khaled Said: The face that launched a revolution," *Al-Ahram Online*, June 6 2012.  
<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/0/43995/Egypt/0/Khaled-Said-The-face-that-launched-a-revolution.aspx>.

<sup>103</sup> Ibid.

<sup>104</sup> Ibid.

<sup>105</sup> Ibid.

start of protests against the Mubarak regime had great significance, as the police were consistently a symbol of suppressed civil rights in Egypt. That Mubarak chose to create a holiday honoring the police is an apt example of how disconnected he was from the Egyptian people. "Activists said they wanted to use this particular day to highlight the irony of celebrating Egypt's police at a time when police brutality is making headlines", an allusion to the savage killing of Khaled Said by police several months earlier.<sup>106</sup> The demands of the protests were not complex. The protesters wanted to immediately removal of Hosni Mubarak from office, and greater freedoms, rights, and inclusivity.

The protests themselves were entirely unsurprising to the regime. To make certain that the greatest number of people were aware of the protests, information was openly distributed throughout Egypt, primarily through social media such as Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, and even Wikipedia, which was being updated by the minute.<sup>107</sup> All of this was done not only for convenience, but for safety and efficiency. These social media channels were safe because communications over social media was anonymous, and therefore protestors could avoid being identified by Egyptian security forces. These challenges were likewise efficient because communication through social media was fast and easy. Under the state of emergency, Egyptians were limited in their political associations, in their ability to demonstrate, and they were prohibited from any non-governmental political activity. Due to these problems, the internet, specifically social media sites, became integral in anonymously organizing the demonstrations of early 2011.

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<sup>106</sup> Rageh Rawya, "Three dead in Egypt protests," *Al Jazeera* January 25, 2011.  
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/01/20111251711053608.html>.

<sup>107</sup> Llewellyn H. Rockwell, "A people's uprising against empire," *Al-Jazeera*, February 6, 2011.  
<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2011/02/20112312504969243.html>



In response to the increased online activity, the government created task forces that explicitly monitored the internet in search for anti-regime activists.<sup>108</sup> During the protests themselves, the Mubarak regime shut down all internet and phone communications within Egypt, in an unsuccessful attempt to staunch the flow of information, both to restrict the protester's ability to organize and to limit the amount of information sent to the international community.<sup>109</sup> These attempts were only partially successful. Protesters still continued to organize themselves effectively, using what few online resources (made possible by "hacktivist" elements within the protests) which were still accessible, as well as more simple "on the ground" networking.<sup>110</sup> Furthermore, media outlets faced obstacles as their journalists came under attack. This violence clearly affected the way the international community viewed the event. Many journalists, including foreigners, were reported to have been beaten or detained by security forces, and some had their equipment destroyed.<sup>111</sup>

More directly, demonstrators faced off against riot police, who employed tear gas and water cannons. Protesters also faced roaming bands of pro-Mubarak "thugs", many of whom were believed to be undercover policemen.<sup>112</sup> There were even instances of pro-Mubarak forces making charges against the demonstrators while riding horses and camels, using long knives, whips, and petrol bombs.<sup>113</sup> Evan Hill, an American reporter and photographer, was

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<sup>108</sup> Anne Alexander, "Internet role in Egypt's protests," *BBC News*, February 9, 2011.  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12400319>

<sup>109</sup> Rageh Rawya, "Three dead in Egypt protests," *Al Jazeera* January 25, 2011.  
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/01/20111251711053608.html>.

<sup>110</sup> Anne Alexander, "Internet role in Egypt's protests," *BBC News*, February 9, 2011.  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12400319>

<sup>111</sup> Jim Muir, "Egypt unrest: Anti-Mubarak protesters fight back," *BBC News*, February 3, 2011.  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12357891>

<sup>112</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>113</sup> BBC Liveblog, "Egypt unrest: Day 10 as it happened," *BBC News*, February 4, 2011.  
<http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12357891>

on the ground during some of the worst of the violence that occurred during the first few days of February 2011. He described some of what he saw as follows:

The anti-government protesters in Tahrir had arranged a field of debris 40m in front of their barricade to impede the approach of any pro-Mubarak thugs. The square was peaceful, but eerily empty; just 24 hours earlier, hundreds of thousands of anti-government protesters had staged what might have been the largest political demonstration in Cairo's history...The jubilation that had turned the square into a giant campground just a day before was gone; people now feared being overrun and killed by the surrounding pro-government mob – many of them reportedly hired thugs.<sup>114</sup>

The beginning of February was marked with thousands of injuries, and several deaths. Mubarak also ordered the army to intervene with live ammunition, though the army refused this order. Despite this restraint, there were still several cases of gunfire being directed at the protestors in the days that followed, leaving several more dead.<sup>115</sup>

In the days that followed, there was still violence, but it was quickly substituted with concessions. Beyond Mubarak's earlier pledges not to run in the September elections, and thus allow a "peaceful transition," many within the leadership of Mubarak's National Democratic Party (NDP) resigned, including Mubarak's son, Gamal.<sup>116</sup> The government approved a fifteen percent rise in salaries and pensions, as well as a number of both legislative and constitutional reforms.<sup>117</sup> These reforms would be undertaken by committees which, at the time, were not yet formed. Mubarak also released a number of political prisoners, including members of the Muslim Brotherhood.<sup>118</sup> These attempts at consolation were without any real effect on the protesters, who remained resolute in their desire to see Mubarak step down as President. Three speeches were made by Mubarak in which he tried and failed to reassure the Egyptian people that the continuation of his presidency was in their

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<sup>114</sup> Evan Hill, "The battle for Tahrir Square. *Al Jazeera*," February 3, 2011, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/02/201123175837480777.html>.

<sup>115</sup> Al Jazeera, "Timeline: Egypt's revolution," *Al Jazeera*, February 14, 2011. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/01/201112515334871490.html>.

<sup>116</sup> Ibid.

<sup>117</sup> Ibid.

<sup>118</sup> Ibid.

best interest. On February 12, 2011, Omar Suleiman announced that “President Hosni Mubarak [had] decided to step down from the office of president of the republic and [had] charged the high council of the armed forces to administer the affairs of the country,” to the great jubilation of the demonstrators.<sup>119</sup> Following Mubarak’s resignation, the SCAF assumed control of the country’s leadership. They suspended the constitution and dissolved the parliament, stating that they would voluntarily concede their powers once presidential and parliamentary elections were held.

### Egypt 2011: After Mubarak

The euphoria hardly had time to settle before the anti-Mubarak masses took action, though this was quite short-lived. The protesters raided government security offices, hoping to dismantle Mubarak’s massive, security apparatus. Many new political parties across the ideological spectrum were formed. Perhaps the most significant development was the creation of the Freedom and Justice Party by the Muslim Brotherhood, allowing the Brotherhood to formally enter the political arena. The FJP even vowed to limit their ambition, promising not to field a presidential candidate, assuaging liberal concerns that the Islamist group would doggedly seek power.<sup>120</sup> There was optimism that the civil liberties, such as greater gender and religious equality, would finally be applied. Less than two months after Mubarak’s deposal, however, any of the tentative alliances that had arisen among between the disparate groups began to crumble.

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<sup>119</sup> Egypt crisis: President Hosni Mubarak resigns as leader,” *BBC News*, Feb. 12, 2011. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12433045>.

<sup>120</sup> “Muslim Brotherhood will not nominate a presidential candidate: spokesman,” *Al-Ahram Online*, Dec. 25 2011. <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/30185/Egypt/Politics-/Muslim-Brotherhood-will-not-nominate-a-presidentia.aspx>.

The first truly divisive issue in the post-Mubarak period was a referendum which took place on March 19<sup>th</sup>, 2011. The referendum was to approve a set of nine amendments to the constitution, primarily meant to limit the powers of the President, abolish the ability of authorities to circumvent the judiciary with military trials (that were used to supposedly “counter the dangers of terror,”) as well as provide full judicial oversight to all forthcoming elections.<sup>121</sup> Though the changes were all essentially common demands from the Egyptian opposition during Mubarak’s reign, the constitutional amendments were still met with resistance from youth and liberal movements. Nobel Peace Prize winner and prominent member of the Egyptian liberal movement, Mohammed ElBaradei, is quoted as saying that “most of the people who triggered the revolution are going to say no.”<sup>122</sup> Instead, these liberal groups moved for the creation of an entirely new constitution, instead of simply building upon the old. A new constitution would allow Egypt to move away from the legacies of its previous rulers and towards a more progressive, inclusive future.

The reasoning behind this resistance was that a “yes” vote would accelerate the return of a civilian government. It would also relegate the army once more to its true role, while keeping the military away from governance.<sup>123</sup> While this may seem like an attractive reason to vote in favor of the amendments, the groups that would most heavily benefit from more immediate elections were groups already heavily entrenched within Egypt’s political culture, such as the Muslim Brotherhood. If the amendments were accepted, parliamentary elections would follow within two months. Many groups that were founded during and after the

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<sup>121</sup> Gregg Carlstrom, “Egypt’s proposed constitutional amendments,” *Al-Jazeera*, March 15, 2011.  
<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/spotlight/anger-in-egypt/2011/03/20113156309594476.html>

<sup>122</sup> “Egypt approves constitutional changes,” *Al Jazeera*, March 20, 2011.  
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/03/2011320164119973176.html>

<sup>123</sup> Ahmad Rahim, “Egyptian politicians worried by Islamist support for constitutional amendments,” *BBC Monitoring Middle East*, March 17, 2011.

revolution would have great difficulty in consolidating and organizing in this period of time, a task made even greater given that their chief opponent would be an Islamist group with several decades of experience. The constitutional amendments also led to concerns about whether the presidential powers had been limited enough, or if there was still room for abuse.<sup>124</sup> With the Brotherhood pushing so strongly for the amendments, many feared that the Brotherhood would seek to push forward an Islamist agenda, rather than the liberal agenda that the protesters fought for in Tahrir Square.

The constitutional amendments were approved, with the “yes” vote winning convincingly with approximately 77 percent of the vote.<sup>125</sup> With eighteen million Egyptian voters constituting a 41 percent turnout, the referendum enjoyed a higher voter turnout than many past elections, including the previous year’s parliamentary elections which, according to different sources, had as high as a twenty five percent turnout and as low as ten.<sup>126</sup> This loss was the first major blow to liberal groups who believed that the revolution had shown Egypt to be moving towards a path of liberal democracy. The approval of the amendments would also expedite the process of parliamentary elections, which would be held at the end of November 2011, allowing only a few months for liberals to organize themselves.

The months following the March referendum were likewise filled with unrest. Anger was primarily aimed at the SCAF who had taken over leadership until elections could be held. The SCAF was facing criticism “for failing to implement the goals of the revolution,

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<sup>124</sup> Ibid.

<sup>125</sup> “Egypt approves constitutional changes,” *Al Jazeera*, March 20, 2011.  
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/03/2011320164119973176.html>.

<sup>126</sup> Ibid.

and [was] accused of being an extension of the previous regime".<sup>127</sup> On July 8 2011, mass protests, dubbed the "Second Revolution", rallied against the SCAF, and which marked a complete reversal of the exalted position of the SCAF following their refusal to support Mubarak.<sup>128</sup> Previously, the SCAF were seen as integral to Mubarak's ouster. The failure to establish any meaningful progress towards the goals of protesters, however, found the SCAF labeled as opportunists still aligned with the spirit of the Mubarak regime, if not the man.<sup>129</sup> This reversal of public opinion led to prolonged clashes between protesters and the military, including the infamous Maspero demonstrations where an estimated 24 people were killed by security forces, with an additional 300 being injured.<sup>130</sup> With so much emphasis being placed on anti-SCAF protest, campaigning for the parliamentary elections was far less prevalent. This lackluster campaigning would affect the newly formed, disorganized liberal groups much more than the Islamists, who enjoyed years of consolidation.

At the end of 2011, parliamentary elections were scheduled. The parliamentary elections, held from November 28 to January 11 2012, went much the same way as the constitutional referendum. The two major Islamist parties were exceedingly successful throughout each phase of the elections. The Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) won approximately 45 percent of the 498 seats, while the ultra-conservative Salafist party, Al-Nour, won approximate 25 percent.<sup>131</sup> Conversely, the two liberal front runner parties, the New Wafd and Egyptian Block, won a combined total of only about 15

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<sup>127</sup> N. Shamni, "In Egypt, Criticism of SCAF Intensifies," *MEMRI*. Oct. 11, 2011. <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/5715.htm>.

<sup>128</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>129</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>130</sup> Andre Aciman, "After Egypt's Revolution, Christians Are Living in Fear...", *New York Times*, Nov. 21, 2011. [www.lexisnexus.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexus.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

<sup>131</sup> BBC News, "Egypt's Islamist parties win elections to parliament," *BBC News*, January 21, 2012. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-16665748>.

percent, with the remaining seats being scattered amongst smaller parties, independents, and ten seats being appointed by the military council.<sup>132</sup>

The Islamists' victory was a combination of their own successes, as well as the failures of the liberal opposition. The Islamist message was one of religion, history, and tradition. Egyptian Islamic was at the core of the Islamist platform, and was easily digested by the Egyptian voter.<sup>133</sup> The Islamist bloc also succeeded due to the crowded political landscape filled with new ideology, countless newly formed liberal political parties, and a general lack of liberal leadership and cohesion.

This Islamist victory colored the political landscape leading up to the Presidential elections in June 2012, but also expressed a desire to move away from military rule and back to a civilian government. This dissatisfaction with the military government was largely due to several poorly managed incidents that had occurred. Chief among these were the Maspero demonstrations of October 2012, a peaceful protest against the SCAF. The military police staged an unprovoked attack against the protesters, and at least 24 were killed, with more than 200 injured.<sup>134</sup> The Maspero demonstrations became a stark example of the military leadership's inability to keep the peace without resorting to violence. The second incident was a soccer riot which occurred in Port Said, where more than seventy people were killed.<sup>135</sup> The blame was largely placed on the ineffective government not providing sufficient security for the event, thus allowing the violence to quickly escalate out of hand. Protests were also

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<sup>132</sup> Ibid.

<sup>133</sup> Evan Hill, "Explainer: Egypt's crowded political arena," *Al Jazeera*, Nov. 17, 2011.  
<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/spotlight/egypt/2011/11/2011111510295463645.html>.

<sup>134</sup> "Cairo clashes leave 24 dead after Coptic church protest," *BBC News*, Oct 9, 2011.  
<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-15235212>.

<sup>135</sup> Adel Abdel Ghafar, "Football and politics in Egypt: An explosive mix," *Al Jazeera*, April 17, 2012  
<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/04/201247144949904754.html>.

held, again blaming the SCAF for their failure of management, and these protests were also dealt with harshly, as the police deployed tear gas on the protesters.<sup>136</sup> This was the political atmosphere going into the 2012 presidential elections. There were growing concerns about whether the military would willfully step down, the role Islamists would play in the forthcoming government, and whether or not the new government could provide the security which Egyptians felt was severely lacking.

For weeks prior to the election, the media circled around liberal frontrunners Amr Moussa and Moneim Abul-Fotouh.<sup>137</sup> The media's belief in these two politicians would prove them to be a vocal minority, focused around Egypt's largest cities. Ignored by the media were the Egyptians who live in rural areas and lacked the resources to understand the new concept of liberalism.<sup>138</sup> This unseen section of Egyptian society would be responsible for the victory of the Muslim Brotherhood in the election, with a former member of the Mubarak regime placing second.

The failure of any liberal candidates to create meaningful competition against a prominent Islamist candidate and a member of the old guard was a significant loss. Mohammed Morsi, leader of the FJP, won a narrow victory in the second round of voting against Ahmed Shafiq, former prime minister under Mubarak. Morsi was sworn in as President on Egypt on June 30 2012. He named his cabinet in early August, and promised to be an inclusive President who would work for the best interests of all Egyptians, regardless of gender, religion, or affiliation.

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<sup>136</sup> Ibid.

<sup>137</sup> Abul-Fotouh dips, Moussa holds steady in Ahram presidential poll." *Al-Ahram Online*, May 14, 2012 <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/36/122/41592/Presidential-elections-/Presidential-elections-news/AbulFotouh-dips,-Moussa-holds-steady-in-Ahram-pres.aspx>

<sup>138</sup> Sarah Mousa, "Democracy versus Tahrir," *Al Jazeera*, June 23, 2012. <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/06/2012622122653356816.html>.



In November 2012, Morsi proposed a draft constitution. The draft ended many of the arbitrary powers held by the Egyptian President in the past. The draft constitution would strengthen parliament and also contained provisions against detention without trial and torture. The draft was an attempt to address several of the key problems that Egypt had suffered through. The lack of substantial liberal participation was, however, extremely apparent. Rights of freedom of religion and speech were not expressed clearly, and there was no explicit mention of increasing gender equality. Furthermore, the draft constitution clearly stated that Islamic law would continue be the foundation of the justice system (a holdover from the previous constitution), as opposed to a more secular approach that many assumed would follow the revolution. The military would also hold on to much of the power that it had under Mubarak, and the military budget would be exempt from parliamentary oversight.<sup>139</sup> The draft constitution was supported by Islamist groups such as the FJP and Al-Nour party, while liberal groups, such as women's rights activists, youth movements, and Coptic Christians, were strongly opposed. Rallies both against and for the draft constitution followed. On December 23, a constitutional referendum was held, and the constitution was approved, winning with a majority of approximately 64 percent.<sup>140</sup>

The next six months were characterized by protests, sectarian violence, and general unrest within Egypt. Morsi became more and more recalcitrant towards his critics, depending more heavily on his large base of Islamist support. Confidence in Morsi's ability to pull Egypt out of instability and economic troubles declined steadily, and state security continued to worsen. On June 30 2013, a massive planned protest occurred, with estimates of over ten

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<sup>139</sup> Sharif Tarek, "Inside Egypt's draft constitution: Debates over military powers continue," *Al-Ahram Online*, Dec. 12, 2013. <http://english.ahram.org.eg/News/88582.aspx>.

<sup>140</sup> "Egypt approves disputed draft constitution," *Al Jazeera*, Dec. 25, 2012. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/12/201212251825337958.html>.

million demonstrators .The military stepped in on July 1 to give Morsi an ultimatum: meet the demands of the people (resignation), or the military would step in to restore order within forty eight hours. Despite some attempts to reconcile the situation, on July 3 2013, General Abdul Fatah el-Sisi, head of the SCAF, announced that the military had removed President Mohammed Morsi from power, the suspension of the recently approved constitution, and that Presidential elections would soon follow.

### Commonalities of 1952 and 2013

For all the differences between pre and post-Arab Spring Egypt, many of the same, large issues stay consistent. First, there was frustration. The reason why the Free Officers deposed King Farouk in the first place was to escape the stagnating influence of a corrupt ruler more concerned with foreign affairs (namely the British) than he was with domestic issues. This is a similar situation Egypt found itself in under Mubarak's presidency: a president who had largely removed himself from the concerns of most Egyptians, and convinced himself of his absolute security. Second is the role of Islam. Since 1952, no Egyptian president has successfully reconciled the question of Islam and its role in governance beyond one simple idea: "Egypt is Islamic". Among other issues, this confusion was the cause of Sadat's assassination as well as Mubarak's deeply paranoid domestic policy. Following Mubarak's ouster, liberals underestimated Islam's popularity, and were served several electoral losses. And following Morsi's deposal, General el-Sisi, rather than attempt to resolve issues with Morsi's Islamic supporters, instead chose violent repression.

Third is the idea of security before progress. Nasser held onto power by prioritizing measures that supposedly enhanced security, such as denying Western and Israeli influence, but he also pushed forward important issues such as land reform which won him popularity with Egyptian society. Sadat, conversely, lost his power and his life because he attempted the opposite. Sadat also emphasized a security state, but he alienated himself with unpopular decisions, such as establishing closer ties to Israel, or with unsuccessful economic reform. Mubarak largely did the same, though he was more successful in his security measures. Morsi slightly deviated from his predecessors. He attempted to bring progress to Egypt while consolidating his presidency, but fumbled both dramatically. This point is vital to explaining why certain events occurred following Mubarak's ouster, specifically Morsi's deposal, and why military strongman el-Sisi's so quickly rose to prominence. These three commonalities between past and present Egypt are integral to understanding why the events of 2011-2013 progressed the way they did.

## Chapter Two

### Civil Society

Before examining the role, health, and attitudes of civil society, it is important to define the term civil society. As earlier defined by Linz and Stepan, civil society involves the various groups, movements, and associations who are independent from the state, and who seek to “articulate values, create associations and solidarities, and advance their interests”.<sup>141</sup> These groups can include social movements such as religious organizations and women’s rights groups, as well as civic associations, such as journalists, student associations, and trade unions.<sup>142</sup> The media can also fall into the category of actors in civil society. Beyond these various groups and associations is another part of society which plays a vital role: ordinary citizens who are not necessarily part of any organization. Linz and Stepan write:

Such citizens are often of critical importance in shifting the regime/opposition balance because they turn up in the streets in protest marches, heckle the police and the authorities, express their opposition first to specific measures, support broader demands, and ultimately challenge the regime. Normally they are initially small in numbers and later more numerous and can, in some cases, overwhelm the representatives of the regime, forcing them to consider a growing liberalization and ultimately a regime change.<sup>143</sup>

Linz and Stepan clarify, their argument by stating that no matter how “important, numerous, and heroic such relatively unorganized groups may be, they would not be able to overthrow the regime *and* establish a democratic regime if there were not [further processes beyond civil society]”.<sup>144</sup> This point is of particular importance when considering the Mubarak ouster and subsequent attempted transition.

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<sup>141</sup> Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1996), 7.

<sup>142</sup> Ibid.

<sup>143</sup> Ibid., 8.

<sup>144</sup> Ibid.

There is also a stark difference between groups or associations and political parties. For example, the Muslim Brotherhood is a religious organization that operates intimately within Egyptian society, and is therefore a part of civil society. Meanwhile, the FJP is a political party that stemmed from the Brotherhood, works within the sphere of governance and other political matters, and is therefore part of political society (the next chapter). There can be some confusion in the terminology, but typically, organizations that stem from and organize within society are categorized within civil society. These groups from civil society can also influence politics and government, but they do so indirectly. Meanwhile, political parties and associations have more direct, straightforward avenues to affect government and legislation, and are therefore part of political society. These civil associations and their various issues will be the focus of this chapter, while issues of political associations will be dealt with in the next chapter.

Civil society is integral in political transition for several reasons: first, the agents of change most often stem from civil society, usually in the form of some sort of movement opposed to the workings of the government and the status quo; second, civil society puts forward the ideals and values for this change, or in other words, the direction that a state will, ideally, move toward following a successful regime change. The way that the factions within civil society interact with one another shapes the way a transition progresses, though there is no concrete set of guidelines for the effects of civil society on transition (e.g. a united civil society does not necessarily lead to a liberal democracy; an unhealthy civil society does not necessarily lead to a communist totalitarian state, etc.), the way a civil society behaves during a period of transition can still be used to make reasonable assumptions about the end result. With this in mind, I will examine civil society's role during the Egyptian revolution, the

parliamentary and presidential elections, and finally, the eventual downfall of the first post-Mubarak president, Mohammad Morsi.

### Civil Society: The Arab Spring of January 2011

During the revolution, civil society was integral in the deposal of Hosni Mubarak; it appeared to be vibrant, unified, and capable of positive transition. There are several key events that should be taken from the seventeen days between the start of protests on January 25 2011, and the resignation of a highly entrenched despot who had three decades to consolidate his power. Two of these occurrences in particular showcase the strength of civil society during the revolution. The first event is the organization of the protesters, who numbered in the hundreds of thousands, and still managed to work as a fairly cohesive whole. The success of the revolt was in no small part due to this organization. Using various internet resources, predominantly social media, the protesters were able to behave with relative unity, no small achievement considering the sheer number of protesters. Organization by way of social media may arguably be the largest catalyst for the 2011 Revolution, as online communication via Facebook, Twitter, and other social media outlets proved to be an obstacle that the Mubarak regime could not restrict.

Conventional means of authoritarian control could not, nor cannot, halt the impact of these revolutions. They have given people access to information that their governments tried to conceal from them. They have furnished unprecedented means to establish contact, to remain in communication, and to organise and mobilise. They have broken the monopoly of dictatorial governments on communications and the media, creating what we might term a media democracy in advance of the emergence of political democracy, serving as a means for opposition forces to spread calls to rally and demand change. The impact of this quantum leap forward in media, communications and information technology not only shook the foundations of the conventional structures of totalitarian societies.<sup>145</sup>

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<sup>145</sup> Mustafa Barghouti, "Lessons from the Egyptian revolution," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, March 3-9, 2011, <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2011/1037/op181.htm>>

It should be noted, however, that the foundation for the protests themselves were established in the years prior to the revolution, primarily by groups who were “offline”.<sup>146</sup> With the recent influx of internet users in Egypt, as well as the growth of mobile phone usage which is estimated at approximately eighty percent of the population, prodigious use of social media allowed the protesters to organize much more safely and in a way that would maximize participation.<sup>147</sup> With the assistance of social media, the demonstrators were extremely well organized, especially given the staggering number of protesters who had gathered. On January 31, Al Jazeera live-blogged that the demonstrations had reached 250,000 in Tahrir Square alone.<sup>148</sup> This in itself is quite an impressive feat, considering that Egyptian society had been repressed by decades of abusive state control.

The second event is the convergence of various political and religious groups who in the past had been at odds. This convergence allowed the protesters to present a united front against the Mubarak regime, as well as put forward a message that was generally accepted amongst protesters, regardless of location: Mubarak must go. This shared goal remained steady throughout the protests. Even with the regime’s attempts at placating the protesters with concessions, the myriad groups remained steadfast. This common objective kept the protesters together as one, instead of seeking individual goals for individual groups. Egyptian protesters also stayed together due to the efforts of the men and women who organized the protests over Facebook and other social media feeds. Google executive Wael Ghonim

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<sup>146</sup> Anne Alexander, “Internet role in Egypt’s protests,” *BBC News*, Feb. 9 2011. Web. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12400319>.

<sup>147</sup> Ibid.

<sup>148</sup> Al Jazeera, “Timeline: Egypt’s revolution,” *Al Jazeera*, Feb. 14, 2011. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/01/201112515334871490.html>

received particular distinction in this regard, as he created the “We are all Khaled Said” Facebook group which proved to be foundational for the movement.<sup>149</sup>

This common objective also fostered a coming together of a great many different groups and ideologies, an indication of perhaps a budding civil society within Egypt at the time of the protest. Groups that held differing agendas were able to come together in relative harmony. Those who had suffered inordinately, even by the harsh standards of the Mubarak regime, such as the Coptic Christians, Muslim Brotherhood, and liberal groups, were very optimistic about how the future would unfold. There were several notable events which characterized this common front, such as “on the ‘Friday of Departure’ (February 4), [when] the Copts secured the approaches to [Tahrir Square] while the [Muslim] demonstrators performed the Friday prayer” and vice versa.<sup>150</sup> Even the possibility of a future where the Muslim Brotherhood, traditionally considered to be bogeymen who would implement fundamental *shari’a* law, would hold positions of power was not as feared as it once was. This lack of apprehension towards the Brotherhood was perhaps due to an increased confidence in the liberal ideals that provided the foundation of the revolt, the belief that the Brotherhood was widely considered popular only amongst a politically apathetic public, and the repressive political machinations of the Mubarak regime. *BBC* correspondent Ahmad Rahim summarizes this as follows:

Freedom will mean participation. In light of the repression and dictatorship, the citizens do not participate in elections at a time when the MB (Muslim Brotherhood) Group members are politicized. Therefore, they participate in force and achieve political rise. But if freedom is achieved and the

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<sup>149</sup> “Khaled Said: The face that launched a revolution,” *Al-Ahram Online*, June 6 2012. <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/0/43995/Egypt/0/Khaled-Said-The-face-that-launched-a-revolution.aspx>.

<sup>150</sup> Ahmad Rahim, “Egypt’s Copts on role in protests, stance on Muslim Brotherhood,” *BBC Monitoring Middle East - Political* Supplied by *BBC Worldwide Monitoring*, Feb. 7, 2011. [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).



revolution manages to impose a genuine democratic regime, everyone will participate, including the MB Group, parties, Copts, and ordinary citizens. Thus, the MB group will not dominate.<sup>151</sup>

Liberals also gained a great deal of momentum and they were buoyed by the prevalence of youth in the revolution who sought meaningful change. Several prominent candidates were put forward who seemed poised to bring strong leadership to the liberal platform, potentially allowing them to make Egypt's previous sham democracy more legitimate. Chief among these were Mohamed Mustafa ElBaradei, a Nobel Peace laureate, vocal supporter of Egyptian reform, and potential candidate for the Egyptian presidency. There was even talk of ElBaradei leading a coalition which included not only the disparate liberals, but also the Muslim Brotherhood. These rumors, however, were eventually overturned by the Brotherhood in a statement which outlined their own agenda: "the people have not appointed Mohamed ElBaradei to become a spokesman of them...The Muslim Brotherhood is much stronger than Mohamed ElBaradei as a person".<sup>152</sup> Wael Ghonim was also considered a strong contender for a leadership position, given his role in the organization of the protests, claims which were further strengthened after he was arrested and detained for twelve days.<sup>153</sup>

These two points led to the successful ouster of Hosni Mubarak, who had held the office of president for thirty years. As evidenced both by the uprising and subsequent bloody civil war in Libya, as well as the ongoing conflict in Syria which has escalated to the usage of chemical weapons, the deposal of Hosni Mubarak with a comparatively small amount of

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<sup>151</sup> Ahmad Rahim, "Egyptian politicians worried by Islamist support for constitutional amendments," *BBC Monitoring Middle East - Political Supplied by BBC Worldwide Monitoring*, March 17, 2011. [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

<sup>152</sup> "Egypt protesters step up pressure on Hosni Mubarak," *BBC News*, Jan. 31, 2011. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12320959>

<sup>153</sup> L. Azuri, "The Popular Uprising in Egypt in Search of a Leadership," *MEMRI*. Feb. 23, 2011. [http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/5028.htm#\\_ednref22](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/5028.htm#_ednref22).

bloodshed is an absolutely staggering victory. This is not to say that there was no violence; protesters still engaged the riot police with rocks, Molotov cocktails, and a variety of other improvised weapons, but this violence was not a predominating characteristic of the protests. Significantly, very few protesters used guns, and when they did the incidences took place outside of the largest protest in Tahrir Square, typically occurring in the Sinai. Conversely, pro-Mubarak forces used firearms much more often though these incidents of violence did not goad the protesters to behave similarly. For example, when Mohamed ElBaradei arrived in Cairo, and he was met with police violence in the form of batons and water cannons, reportedly the protesters chanted “peacefully, peacefully,” even as they were hammered by riot shields.<sup>154</sup>

This relative pacifism was due to a combination of both the organization and tenuous unity held amongst the protesters. The rallies were organized around the simple idea of peaceful protest, including marches and the sit-in at Tahrir Square, which would last the duration of the revolution. This made it much more difficult for the Mubarak regime to escalate the force that was being used. Without a comparable violent reaction from the protesters, it was simply too difficult to justify.

In the two weeks from the beginning of the revolution to the resignation of Mubarak in mid-February, Egyptian civil society might be considered to be growing, as expressed by the rising up of its people. A healthy and strong civil society can play an integral role in the progression of the state. Even Egypt’s historically divisive religious identity can see gains through an active civil society. In Turkey, “religiously oriented groups have formed

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<sup>154</sup> David D. Kirkpatrick, "A Nobel Prize Winner Has an Unfamiliar Role in Protests," *New York Times*, Jan. 28, 2011. <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/29/world/middleeast/29elbaradei.html>.

organizations around human rights, education, and economic issues. They thus use these organizations to further a religious agenda and affect public policy.”<sup>155</sup> Thus, the engagement of civil society can create positive development during a transition. The opposite, however, is also true. Sheri Berman argued that in a state with weak national institutions, a strong civil society may actually create greater societal divides, and weaken developmental processes.<sup>156</sup> Once the protesters were successful, these complexities began to reveal themselves. As the roles of governance and power became available, the various groups of civil society began to fracture apart and act more individually instead of collectively, hoping to fill these newly vacated seats of power.

#### Amendments and Elections: March 2011 to July 2012

Though Egyptian civil society during the days of revolution in early 2011 suggested a civil society on the rise, problems began to emerge quickly after Hosni Mubarak was deposed, and there was no longer a singular target for the combined anger of the various separate groups that made up the revolutionaries. Unity lasted only for a short period of time, long enough only to accomplish a handful of goals. For example, the dismantling of the security apparatus, as in March 2011 when protesters assaulted state security buildings, searching for documentation proving human rights violations, and incriminating former Mubarak supporters (though much of this evidence was shredded or destroyed).<sup>157</sup> To further support this cooperation between the Brotherhood and its revolutionary allies, shortly after

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<sup>155</sup> Ani Sarkissian, and Ş. İlğü Özler, "Democratization and the politicization of religious civil society in Turkey." *Democratization* 20, no. 6 (2014): 1014-1035.

<sup>156</sup> Sheri Berman, "Civil society and the collapse of the Weimar Republic." *World Politics* 49, issue 3 (1997): 401-429.

<sup>157</sup> Al Jazeera, "Egyptians raid state police offices," *Al-Jazeera*, March 5, 2011.  
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/03/201135211558958675.html>

Mubarak's ouster, the Brotherhood announced that it would not field a presidential candidate, nor seek a majority in parliament.<sup>158</sup> Ironically, Mohammed Morsi, the man who eventually become the FJP's presidential candidate even supported this by saying "The Muslim Brotherhood are not seeking power...We want to participate, not to dominate. We will not have a presidential candidate".<sup>159</sup>

The lack of a common and persisting enemy, however, disrupted the coordination of the protesters. The sudden void caused by Mubarak's ouster meant that powers and positions which had remained stationary for decades were suddenly available to be taken. In the months that followed, this power vacuum pushed these groups into fierce competition with one another, and a great many of the pluralistic goals that emerged during the Arab Spring were forgotten in favor of a more selfish, short-sighted, free-for-all approach.

This selfishness became particularly apparent during the debate concerning the constitutional amendments of March 2011, which separated civil society along religious lines. Islamists argued in favor of the amendments, and the more newly formed liberal, youth, and secular groups argued against the amendments. The amendments, if passed, would hasten elections, which would allow the already well organized Islamist groups an advantage over the newly established groups created following Mubarak's ouster. Strictly speaking, both arguments held weight; faster elections would bring back civilian government, while a delay would allow more time to organize and improve the competitiveness of the newer groups.

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<sup>158</sup> Whewell, Tim. "Competing Muslim Brotherhood visions for Egypt." *BBC News*, March 3, 2011. <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/programmes/newsnight/9412967.stm>.

<sup>159</sup> "Muslim Brotherhood: "We are not seeking power," *CNN News*, Feb. 10, 2011. <http://www.cnn.com/2011/WORLD/africa/02/09/egypt.muslim.brotherhood/>.

The amendments would quickly become a highly polarizing debate within Egyptian society, due to a religious emphasis. Despite the merits of either argument, Islamists, specifically the Muslim Brotherhood, urged voters to vote in favor of these amendments based on a “religious duty.” A *fatwa*<sup>160</sup> supporting the amendments was even advertised in the prominent Egyptian newspaper, *Al-Ahram*, which led to accusations from the youth movements of self-interest instead of achieving revolutionary goals.<sup>161</sup> “The Brotherhood is polarizing Egyptians on the basis of religion. It is undermining the national unity that the revolution has nurtured”.<sup>162</sup> The emphasis on religion would prove to be the sign of broken faith between the liberals and Islamists. This division would prove to characterize the Egyptian landscape for the foreseeable future. Furthermore, the ideological slant of this division would come to overshadow other concerns, primarily economic, security, and development. The arguments about transitioning back to civilian rule quickly faded. Instead, debate centered on the Islamist agenda, and whether, if elected, the Islamists would embrace the liberal ideals of the Arab Spring, or if *shari’a* would be more rigidly applied, thus subjecting all Egyptians, regardless of religious background, to the standards set by fundamental Islam.

These accusations were further supported by the Brotherhood’s unchanged party platform, which centralized *shari’a* as the basis of Egyptian governance. This same platform,

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<sup>160</sup> A *fatwa* is an interpretation of legal judgment based on the opinions of a *mufti*, or Islamic scholar, on issues regarding Islamic law, and must be fundamentally based on some form of religious evidence. A *fatwa* is not legally binding, nor is it the final word on a particular issue, but it is typically a respected interpretation of *shari’a*, given by one who is considered to be well versed in such ideas. It is, however, a clear expression of the Islamic faith, and therefore, subject to any connotations held therein.

<sup>161</sup> Ahmad Rahim, “Egyptian politicians worried by Islamist support for constitutional amendments,” *BBC Monitoring Middle East - Political Supplied by BBC Worldwide Monitoring*, March 17, 2011. [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

<sup>162</sup> Alaa Al-Aswany, “Egyptian Author Alaa Al-Aswany Criticizes the Military for Undermining the Achievements of the Revolution in Egypt,” *MEMRI*, April 5, 2011. <http://www.memri.org/report/en/print5176.htm>.

however, stated that the Brotherhood supported not only religious freedom for non-Muslims, but also the “the right to follow their own religious laws in matters of faith, worship, and personal status whenever these laws differ from those of the *shari’a*.”<sup>163</sup> The Brotherhood platform also states that in all other spheres of life, all Egyptians must be judged on “Muslim principles of justice and equality,” and stating plainly that Egypt should be, first and foremost, an Islamic state, leaving little room for misinterpretation.<sup>164</sup>

This conflict would be vitally important, as society divided between the powerful Islamist groups, (chief among them, the Muslim Brotherhood and Salafis) and a vast number of disorganized liberal and youth oriented political factions. These factions were formed directly after Mubarak was deposed. They were barely a month old and they lacked strong, coherent leadership and organization (which will be examined more closely in the next chapter). Getting the liberal message out amongst a population so heavily inundated with the Islamist message was exceeding difficult.

The amendments were eventually passed by referendum, and the following months were characterized by liberal discontent against the Islamists, and general discontent against the ruling SCAF. For a time, how close specific groups were to the SCAF quickly became the barometer for how strongly a particular group kept up with revolutionary ideals and how well these groups understood Egyptian society. After months of dissatisfaction, in July 2011, protesters returned by the hundreds of thousands to Tahrir Square, as well as Suez and Alexandria, to again demand changes. The act was called “The Second Egyptian Revolution

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<sup>163</sup> L. Azuri, “Egypt’s Islamic Camp, Once Suppressed by Regime, Now Taking Part in Shaping New Egypt – Part II: Muslim Brotherhood Prepares for Parliamentary, Presidential Elections,” *MEMRI*, Oct. 25, 2011. [http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/5745.htm#\\_ednref7](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/5745.htm#_ednref7).

<sup>164</sup> *Ibid*.

of Rage,” according to a Facebook page.<sup>165</sup> Chief among these demands was the removal of the SCAF from its leadership position, and the resignation of Field Marshall and leader of the SCAF, Mohamed Hussein Tantawi.

The Muslim Brotherhood quickly drew fire, as the issue of some sort of secret alliance with the Military was brought again to the forefront. They were accused by liberal forces of having an alliance with the SCAF, as the SCAF involved the Brotherhood in certain political movements, while excluding the liberal factions.<sup>166</sup> This accusation was strengthened further by the Brotherhood’s announcement that they would not take part in the protests.<sup>167</sup> The Brotherhood would change its mind, but only after the protest organizers agreed to drop the demand to draft a new constitution (which would render the constitutional amendments which had been voted in earlier 2011 void) prior to elections. Even then, the Brotherhood did not support continued sit-in strikes in these various locations, and furthermore, the Brotherhood did not sign the document outlining the protester’s demands.<sup>168</sup> Shortly thereafter, the Brotherhood more openly supported the SCAF, with the Brotherhood’s Supreme Guide Muhammad Badi calling on Egyptians to unite with the military, “and to appreciate [the military’s] role in preserving the revolution rather than criticizing it”, and all but officially confirming in the eyes of the Brotherhood’s critics that some kind of deal was brokered between the military and the Brotherhood.<sup>169</sup>

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<sup>165</sup> Disappointed with Revolution's Gains, Egyptians Renew Protests." *MEMRI*. July 3, 2011. [http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/5429.htm#\\_edn1](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/5429.htm#_edn1).

<sup>166</sup> "The Egyptian Protests: A Second Revolution - Now against the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces," *MEMRI*, July 15, 2011. [http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/5471.htm#\\_edn1](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/5471.htm#_edn1).

<sup>167</sup> "Disappointed with Revolution's Gains, Egyptians Renew Protests." *MEMRI*. July 3, 2011. [http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/5429.htm#\\_edn1](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/5429.htm#_edn1).

<sup>168</sup> "The Egyptian Protests: A Second Revolution - Now against the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces," *MEMRI*, July 15, 2011. [http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/5471.htm#\\_edn1](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/5471.htm#_edn1).

<sup>169</sup> Ibid.

In this way, many of its detractors saw this pro-military perspective as a way for the Brotherhood to play both sides of the conflict (SCAF and the protestors) to its advantage. “In light of the increasing tensions between the protestors and the SCAF, the Brotherhood [was] trying to maneuver between the two sides: its officials...voicing support for those protestors whose demands match the Brotherhood's policies, while expressing their faith in the SCAF's capacity to meet these demands, and these demands alone”.<sup>170</sup> Therefore, this reluctant union was characteristic of Egyptian civil society at the time. Even with the SCAF performing vicious abuses of power (e.g., the Maspero incident), both liberals and Islamists were hesitant to work together: liberals feared that cooperation would lead to the appearance of concession, and that it would give the Islamists more power, perhaps even legitimacy; Islamists concerned themselves with appeasing both sides of the debate (at least temporarily), which left detractors skeptical of the Islamists' intentions. Instead of a united front, such as the one put forward against Mubarak, mutual distrust allowed the SCAF an inordinate amount of power and influence. These attitudes persisted into the end of 2011, and the parliamentary elections held in November.

The parliamentary elections resulted in a clear victory for Islamist parties and a decisive loss for the liberal, secularist, and youth groups who composed the bulk of the protestors who brought down Mubarak a year earlier. The year's focus was already very much on religion, and the parliamentary elections, which took place at the very end of 2011 and into 2012, would do little to change this. The elections themselves were monitored by the judiciary, foreign observers (distinct from foreign monitors),<sup>171</sup> and concerned citizens who,

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<sup>170</sup> Ibid.

<sup>171</sup> “Egypt not to allow foreign poll monitors,” *Al Jazeera*, July 21, 2011.  
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/07/2011720222415556480.html>



using social media outlets such as Facebook and Twitter, also turned to citizen monitoring. With so much oversight, official and independent, these elections were characterized by comparably little corruption. Regardless of the apparent success of this democratic endeavour, animosity remained.

Liberals and secularists quickly rose to attack the Islamist victory in the parliamentary elections as not being representative of the revolution. Fahmy Howeidy, a prominent Islamic political scientist described the mood of secularists and liberals as being like a “funeral... [a] state of grieving”.<sup>172</sup>

The Islamists have been portrayed in the media “as coming to power over the bodies of the Tahrir martyrs,” or chosen by “Egypt’s 40 per cent of ignorant, impoverished and frustrated people” who are now “hijacking the revolution. One liberal activist was quoted...as having vowed to “confront the Islamists’ grip on the country, even if this means engaging in conflict with them”.<sup>173</sup>

The concentration on “Islamist vs. Liberal” has also concerned various unaligned observers, worried that “this scenario...in post-revolutionary Egypt [had] diverted the attention of the elite from attending to the more urgent demands of the revolution”, including issues such as the economy, social justice, poverty, and hunger.<sup>174</sup> Instead of focusing on these issues, the Islamists dedicated their efforts towards assuring Egyptian society and foreign observers of the purity of their intentions. Meanwhile liberal groups desperately tried to discredit them.

At the time, there was reason to believe that the Muslim Brotherhood, and the FJP that represented it, might move away from ambitions of an Islamic state run by the *shari’a* that most people fear. The Brotherhood emphasized that it was a party “open to all Egyptian citizens regardless of religion, gender, age, profession, or social status” and that while it supported *shari’a*, it did so in a way that advocates “the real meaning of the principles of the

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<sup>172</sup> “Islamism at the crossroads,” *Al-Ahram Weekly*, Feb. 18, 2012, [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

<sup>173</sup> Ibid.

<sup>174</sup> Ibid.

Islamic *shari'a*, its moral standards and its values, which are shared by the other monotheistic faiths, as a way of life for the individual and for society”, strongly implying a pluralistic approach.<sup>175</sup> The ideas behind *shari'a* have a long history in Egypt, and that is very significant. Even if the Brotherhood’s public message is one where *shari'a* does not resemble what it historically may have been (often a tool of repression against specific demographics of society), the idea of *shari'a* remains strong, and deeply rooted in Egyptian (and Arabic) culture. Conversely, concepts of “liberalism” and “secularism” simply do not. John Owen of the New York Times describes this situation:

Political Islam...is thriving largely because it is tapping into ideological roots that were laid down long before the revolts began. Invented in the 1920s by the Muslim Brotherhood, kept alive by their many affiliates and offshoots, boosted by the failures of Nasserism and Baathism, allegedly bankrolled by Saudi and Qatari money, and inspired by the defiant example of revolution Iran, Islamism has for years provided a coherent narrative about what ails Muslim societies and where the cure lies. Far from rendering Islamism unnecessary, as some experts forecast, the Arab Spring has increased its credibility.<sup>176</sup>

This credibility, which the Brotherhood may have initially underestimated in early 2011 when they declared they would not elect a presidential candidate, is the reason why the Islamist movement in Egypt so sharply turned away from a cooperative agenda, and towards a more self-interested one. This is one of the likely reasons why the Brotherhood reneged on their promise to not field a presidential candidate in the forthcoming elections, why Mohamed ElBaradei, considered by many to be the most prolific liberal presidential candidate, dropped from the race (though he vaguely cited corruption as his reason), and why during the elections there was no real liberal front runner. Instead, the two front runners in the first round of elections were Mohammad Morsi, representing the Brotherhood’s Freedom

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<sup>175</sup> L. Azuri, "Egypt's Islamic Camp, Once Suppressed by Regime, Now Taking Part in Shaping New Egypt – Part II: Muslim Brotherhood Prepares for Parliamentary, Presidential Elections," *MEMRI*, Oct. 25, 2011. [http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/5745.htm#\\_ednref7](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/5745.htm#_ednref7).

<sup>176</sup> John M. Owen, "Why Islamism is Winning," *New York Times*. Jan. 7, 2012. <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/07/opinion/why-islamism-is-winning.html>.

and Justice party, and Ahmed Shafiq, the prime minister serving under Mubarak at the time of his deposal, with Morsi going on to win the election, officially declared president on June 24 2012. The lack of success by the “leaders of the revolution” during the presidential elections represents the overwhelming trend in Egyptian civil society: tradition and experience before unfamiliar, though potentially effective, new ideas. This division would only grow further over the next year, and eventually lead to continued violence in 2013.

#### The Draft Constitution: November 2012

There was still a great deal of tension between the victorious Islamist movement, and the defeated liberal groups, despite the relatively smooth presidential elections (there were claims of corruption, but in no way comparable to the fraud perpetrated by the preceding regime). Morsi’s promises of an inclusive Egypt were met with extreme skepticism, and the months following would do little to help. Following his successful election, Morsi quickly moved to make assurances that Egypt would be “a civil, democratic, constitutional, and modern state...where the President is the servant of his people”.<sup>177</sup> The first major event of his presidency, however, proved this optimistic statement wrong.

Near the end of 2012, Morsi and his government put forward a highly contested draft constitution. The draft constitution created further tensions between the Islamist ruling party and the liberal opposition by pushing contested issues: a commitment to political Islam, the complete omission of women’s issues, and only a small emphasis on religious freedoms. The draft went completely against Morsi’s promises of being an inclusive, pluralistic president.

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<sup>177</sup> "Egyptian President-elect Morsi vows civil state," *BBC Monitoring Middle East - Political Supplied by BBC Worldwide Monitoring*, June 30, 2012. [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic)

Instead, the draft became a symbol of Morsi's perceived duplicity, of his pandering to one specific demographic namely the Islamic supporters who had lifted him to power. This pandering was in addition to the rushed nature of the draft, which was created following "marathon meetings of the Constituent Assembly...[and] despite widespread public opposition to the composition of the assembly...and despite the fact that some 40% of the assembly's members - representatives of the liberal factions – had withdrawn from it".<sup>178</sup>

Outrage against the draft was immediate, as thousands of demonstrators took to the streets in protest. Further thousands of pro-Morsi Egyptians staged counter-protests in favor of the draft constitution, and this turmoil allowed Morsi to hasten through the process of approving the constitution, announcing a referendum on the draft to be held.<sup>179</sup> As before, with the parliamentary and presidential elections, a referendum allowed the Egyptian people to decide whether or not to accept the constitution. The anti-Morsi protesters rightfully stated that the draft constitution primarily reflected the desires of the Muslim Brotherhood (though perhaps not as strongly as they could have). The referendum, however, provided a seemingly legitimate way to circumvent these claims: if Egypt did not want a constitution heavily influenced by Islamist politicians, then a constitutional referendum would be a simple way of indicating this. Nothing was set in stone until after the votes were counted.

The approaching referendum on Morsi's draft constitution quickly exacerbated the problems that Egypt society already faced, causing protests which turned violent. On December 5, anti-Morsi protesters were attacked by Morsi supporters, leaving ten people

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<sup>178</sup>L. Lavi, "An Examination Of Egypt's Draft Constitution Part I: Religion And State – The Most Islamic Constitution In Egypt's History," *MEMRI*, Dec. 3, 2012.

[http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6846.htm#\\_edn9](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6846.htm#_edn9).

<sup>179</sup> Ibid.

dead.<sup>180</sup> This is particularly significant because the violence was based on ideological difference, and the catalyst was the action of the president, a man who only months before assured Egyptians that he would represent all of them, and that he would be a “servant of his people”.<sup>181</sup> Instead, Morsi’s draft constitution further split society between his supporters and his opposition, a situation which would severely hamper any positive transition.

The referendum went ahead, and the draft constitution was put into effect with a reported 63.8% of voters voting in favor of the constitution (though the turnout was reportedly a dismal 32.9), despite weeks of protest against the draft constitution.<sup>182</sup> Unsurprisingly, this did not cool relationships between the two dominant societal groups, and leading up to the anniversary of the January 25 revolution, tensions flared significantly. Opposition-aligned media outlets published articles condemning the Brotherhood General Guide, Muhammad Badi. There were calls to send him to jail, or, more dramatically, to hell.<sup>183</sup> In response, Badi praised the idea of martyrdom and self-sacrifice. This was a thinly veiled move that was generally considered to be a call to arms of Morsi supporters to confront the opposition groups who were organizing rallies to coincide with the revolution’s anniversary. Various revolutionary youth groups openly called for violence on their Facebook pages, some showing diagrams on how to make weapons, such as Molotov cocktails, despite the assurances from the National Salvation Front (the umbrella organization that chiefly represented the opposition and liberal forces) that such

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<sup>180</sup> "Egypt probes alleged incitement to oust Morsi," *Al Jazeera*, Dec. 28, 2012, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/12/2012122842320389703.html>.

<sup>181</sup> "Egyptian President-elect Morsi vows civil state," *BBC Monitoring Middle East - Political Supplied by BBC Worldwide Monitoring*, June 30, 2012. [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

<sup>182</sup> BBC News, "Egyptian voters back new constitution in referendum," Dec. 25, 2012. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-20842487>

<sup>183</sup> N. Shamni and H. Varulkar, "Egypt Prepares For Second Anniversary Of January 25 Revolution Amid Unprecedented Tension Between Muslim Brotherhood And Opposition Camp." *MEMRI*. Jan. 24, 2013. [http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6951.htm#\\_edn9](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6951.htm#_edn9).

demonstrations would be non-violent and peaceful.<sup>184</sup> Unsurprisingly, the anniversary turned violent, at least seven people were killed on the 25<sup>th</sup>, and hundreds more wounded.<sup>185</sup> This turmoil between Islamist and liberal not only affected these groups, but also smaller, less influential groups. Specifically, Egypt's Coptic Christians.

### Civil Society and the Coptic Christians

Shortly after Mubarak's ouster, one of the groups who suffered the most oppression, both social and political, were the Coptic Christians. Christianity was introduced in Egypt shortly after the religion was founded. A few hundred years after the church was established in Egypt, the country was invaded and taken over by the Arabs, who Islamized Egypt over the following centuries. The Copts were eventually outnumbered and overshadowed by their conquerors.

In contemporary times, the Copts have faced problems not only with the ruling SCAF, but also increasingly with popular Islamists. This oppression undermined the perceived strength that the Copts had within Egyptian civil society during the revolution. Despite opposing claims, Islamists were steadfast on their platform that their election successes would not be detrimental to opposing movements. "[The Islamists] said these apprehensions [about the way Islamists would operate in government] are a continuation of the former regime's policy of frightening people of the Islamists to ensure the continuation of

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<sup>184</sup> Ibid.

<sup>185</sup> Al Jazeera, "Deadly clashes as Egyptians mark uprising," *Al Jazeera*, Jan. 26, 2013. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2013/01/201312571638570662.html>

the regime”, scaring the people into complacency<sup>186</sup> Violence between Islamists and non-Islamists increased, specifically against the historically oppressed Coptic Christian population, despite assurances to the contrary. These are some of the incidents which occurred in the spring of 2011 alone:

In early March, clashes broke out in the village of Sol over the demolition of a church...On March 23, in...Qena, Salafists attacked and cut off the ear of a Copt suspected of having relations with a Muslim women...Qena also saw mass demonstrations by Muslims over the appointment of a Coptic province governor, ultimately leading the authorities to suspend his appointment...Violence also erupted on May 19 in...Cairo, when Muslims demonstrated against the government's decision to reopen the Church of the Virgin...on May 7... a fight broke out outside the Mary Mina Church...of Cairo...leaving 12 Copts and Muslims dead and hundreds of others wounded. Violence was sparked off when hundreds of Muslims gathered outside the church, demanding the release of...a young Coptic woman who, according to her Muslim husband, was being held there against her will after having converted from Christianity to Islam.<sup>187</sup>

The specific details of this last story, like other similar cases, could not be confirmed, and was indicative of the trend of sectarian hostility aimed at the Copts. A newspaper headline that followed the next day read, “Copts kidnap Raghada!” with a quote from the girl: “‘They tied me up with ropes, beat me with shoes, shaved my hair,’ Raghada Salem Abdel Fattah, declared, ‘and forced me to read Christian psalms!’”<sup>188</sup>

This sensationalized quote is meant to misdirect the reader away from the cultural reality in Egypt, where a person is unable to freely choose their own religion. One columnist said, in regards to a story almost exactly the same as the one above, that it was a case of a woman being persecuted because of “the outmoded social tradition that dominates [Egyptian] society as a whole and the [Egyptian] woman in particular...Unfortunately we still live in a

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<sup>186</sup> "Egyptian Islamists say liberals' "apprehensions" about them unjustified," *BBC Monitoring Middle East - Political Supplied by BBC Worldwide Monitoring*, March 29, 2011. [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

<sup>187</sup> L. Azuri and N. Shamni, "In Egypt, Muslims' Attacks on Copts Increase," *MEMRI*, June 2, 2011, [http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/5338.htm#\\_edn7](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/5338.htm#_edn7).

<sup>188</sup> David D. Kirkpatrick, "Egypt's Christians Fear Violence as Changes Embolden Islamists," *New York Times*, May 31, 2011. [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

backward society in which a woman's, and even a man's freedom is strictly limited".<sup>189</sup> Hilmi Mahmoud Al-Qa'oud wrote that the stories also broached this cultural aspect, but places the blame solely at the feet of the Coptic Christian Church, instead of Egyptian society as a whole. Al-Qa'oud states:

The church-state, which perpetrates intellectual terrorism and sectarian insurrection, and which was an ally of the previous regime, has striven for two important things. The first is to segregate the [Coptic] sect from the Islamic society which is its natural environment, while the Church [continues to] enjoy the privileges the previous regime showered upon it... The second is to [tear] the Muslims [away] from Islam by [spreading] fear of extremism, fundamentalism, terrorism, and Salafism. [The Church's] opposition to the Islamic *shari'a* and the second clause of the constitution [according to which Islam is Egypt's official state religion and the *shari'a* is the primary basis for legislation] was one of the conspicuous signs that [the Church] was challenging the overwhelming Muslim majority...In the era of the revolution, it is essential that the church-state be toppled, in order to [ensure] that a single state, called Egypt, will remain on the banks of the Nile. [The accusations that] the Salafists and the Islamic movements [instigated the sectarian strife] are cheap lies...<sup>190</sup>

This tension and violence rose to an apex on October 9 2011, in the Maspero area of Cairo, when a protest that included Copts and liberal Muslims was attacked by conservative Muslims. The violence was intercepted by Egyptian security forces, but instead of breaking up the two groups, the security forces rammed their armored vehicles, apparently on purpose, into the Coptic crowd.<sup>191</sup> These security forces also fired indiscriminately, killing 24 people, and injuring another 300.<sup>192</sup> This incident was the worst instance of sectarian violence to occur in Egypt in sixty years.

Conflict between the Muslim majority and the Christian minority was certainly nothing new. Even Mubarak, who actively repressed extremist Islamists, still allowed the Copts to be oppressed by Muslims. The concern that the Coptic Christian population had was "with Mr. Mubarak gone...an elected Muslim majority is likely to prove far less tolerant than

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<sup>189</sup> Hilmi Mahmoud Al-Qa'oud quoted in L. Azuri and N. Shamni, "In Egypt, Muslims' Attacks on Copts Increase," *MEMRI*, June 2, 2011, [http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/5338.htm#\\_edn7](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/5338.htm#_edn7).

<sup>190</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>191</sup> Andre Aciman, "After Egypt's Revolution, Christians Are Living in Fear...", *New York Times*, Nov. 21, 2011. [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

<sup>192</sup> *Ibid.*



a military dictatorship".<sup>193</sup> Many Copts have already opted out of this potentially destructive situation; more than 100,000 Copts are estimated to have emigrated from Egypt from between 2011 and 2013.<sup>194</sup>

After the Maspero incident, the interim Prime Minister, Essam Sharaf, blamed the flagrant killing of civilians not on religious or sectarian tensions, but on "hidden hands" within Egypt, attempting to create discord amongst the population. Andre Aciman, an Egyptian Jew, describes the misdirection used by the state as endemic to Egyptian civil society, created by decades of paranoia under its past three regimes:

Sadly, the phrase "hidden hands" remains a part of Egypt's political rhetoric more than 50 years later -- an invitation for every Egyptian to write in the name of his or her favorite bugaboo. Rather than see things for what they are, Egyptians, from their leaders on down, have always preferred the blame game -- and with good reason. Blaming some insidious clandestine villain for anything invariably works in a country where hearsay passes for truth and paranoia for knowledge. Sometimes those hidden hands are called Langley, or the West, or, all else failing, of course, the Mossad. Sometimes "hidden hands" stands for any number of foreign or local conspiracies carried out by corrupt or disgruntled apparatchiks of one stripe or another who are forever eager to tarnish and discredit the public trust. The problem with Egypt is that there is no public trust. There is no trust, period. False rumor, which is the opiate of the Egyptian masses and the bread and butter of political discourse in the Arab world, trumps clarity, reason and the will to tolerate a different opinion, let alone a different religion or the spirit of open discourse.<sup>195</sup>

Though Aciman is specifically speaking to issues of sectarian violence and religious differences in the above quote, it is indicative of problems experienced by the greater part of Egyptian society. Aciman's critique can easily encompass the relatively alien views of the newly formed liberal and youth groups, as well as women and the political groups that represent them. It is simpler to blame incidents of sectarian violence on elements beyond government control, than to seek out and solve these difficult problems which have had decades to entrench themselves. Even after calls to investigate the violence in Maspero, the

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<sup>193</sup> Ibid.

<sup>194</sup> Michael Adel, "The Copts Flee Egypt," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, May 2, 2013.  
<http://weekly.ahram.org/News/2402/24/The-Copts-flee-Egypt.aspx>.

<sup>195</sup> Andre Aciman, "After Egypt's Revolution, Christians Are Living in Fear...," *New York Times*, Nov. 21, 2011.  
[www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

media responded with calls to support the army instead. According to these media sources, it was the army that was being targeted by conspiracies meant to discredit or destroy it.<sup>196</sup>

This response from the media is a strong indicator of the status of Egyptian civil society at the time. The role of the media is typically to provide information about various events, without the benefit of coloring them according to specific opinions or views. Sensationalist, accusatory, and clearly biased, these Egyptian media sources instead only served to further entrench and pander to specific popular views within Egyptian society. In this case, those views revolve around the inferiority of the Coptic Christian population.

With no one taking responsibilities for events such as Maspero, sectarian violence directed at the Copts continued steadily into 2012 and 2013, even following Morsi's successful election and subsequent vow to provide security for all Egyptians. A month after his election, police were forced to intervene against a Muslim mob who sought to set fire to a Coptic church, and though the police successfully repelled the attack, there was still arson and looting of other Christian owned properties.<sup>197</sup> The tension was supposedly caused by a Christian drycleaner who was accused of singeing a Muslim client's shirt while ironing it, and this incident culminated in the exodus of all Christians from the town of Dahshur.<sup>198</sup> Another incident in Rafah in September involved Christians fleeing their homes, and in the same month a Christian teacher had his six year jail term for blasphemy against Islam upheld, while another trial for a similar charge began.<sup>199</sup>

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<sup>196</sup> "Analysis of post-revolution Egypt: Copts, Muslim Brotherhood, polls," *BBC Monitoring Middle East - Political Supplied by BBC Worldwide Monitoring*, Nov. 3, 2011. [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

<sup>197</sup> BBC News, "Coptic-Muslim clashes erupt in Egypt," *BBC News*, Aug. 1, 2012. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-19089474>

<sup>198</sup> Ibid.

<sup>199</sup> Al Jazeera, "Coptic Christian families flee Egyptian Sinai," *Al-Jazeera*, Sept. 28, 2012. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/09/201292820814460621.html>

Barely more than two months before Morsi was deposed, he was criticized by Pope Tawadros II of the Coptic Church for his “negligence and poor assessment of events”. Morsi, however, was not the only one responsible for the continued harassment and violence directed at the Copts. The sheer volume of these events shows the indifference, even hatred, which large portions the Egyptian Muslims have for the Copts. Any negative incident which occurs between Muslims and Christians, regardless of what other factors may be at play, ultimately devolves to a matter of religion. Worse yet, government and law enforcement, by all appearances, seem to be affected by this same sectarian attitude, and either blind themselves to the inequality of Egyptian civil society, or encourage it. All of this leads to a society which not only suffers from deep hostilities, but has a large proportion which actually supports the perpetuation of these hostilities.

#### Revolution or Coup: January to June 2013

Protests would escalate steadily for the first six months of 2013, most often characterized by violence and often deaths. In January 2013, 48 people were killed in violent clashes. Unfortunately, the clashes that led to those deaths occurred because of the death sentences of another 21 people. Ironically, these 21 people were tried over their involvement in the deaths of *another* 70 people killed during riots caused by a football match a year earlier.<sup>200</sup> Furthermore, security forces began utilizing brutal tactics reminiscent of the Mubarak era. Most infamously, a video emerged of a protester being dragged naked, beaten by several members of the riot police, pulled into a truck, and then later coerced by the

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<sup>200</sup> "January death toll in Egypt's Port Said reaches 48," *Al Ahram Online*, March 16, 2013.  
<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/67005/Egypt/Politics-/January-death-toll-in-Egypt-Port-Said-reaches-.aspx>.

security apparatus to shift blame away from the Morsi regime and onto the protesters.<sup>201</sup> A growing insurgency in the Sinai had developed since Mubarak was pulled from office, and which Morsi had not yet been able to quell. This insurgency included an attack (which the Egyptian government blamed on foreign fighters and a previously unknown extremist group) that left sixteen Egyptian guards dead near the Israeli border.<sup>202</sup> Furthermore, sectarian violence increased not only against the Coptic Christian population, but also the Shia Muslim minority. In one horrifying incident, a group of Salafis surrounded a house with four Shias within, demanded they exit the house before they began lobbing Molotov cocktails, beating them to death, and dragging their bodies through the street.<sup>203</sup>

Morsi's inability or unwillingness to effectively breach issues of religion within his government, provide meaningful security and stability, and staunch sectarian violence reached a boiling point only one year after his election. Massive protests from his detractors who demanded his resignation erupted at the end of June. On July 3, after days of massive renewed protests by Morsi's opposition, and despite simultaneous counter-protests by Morsi supporters, the Egyptian armed forces stepped in to resolve the crisis of leadership, and removed Morsi from office.

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<sup>201</sup> Nada Hussein Rashwan, "Victim of police torture changes testimony, accuses officers." *Ahram Online*, Feb. 4, 2013. <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/63977/Egypt/Politics-/Victim-of-police-torture-changes-testimony,-accuse.aspx>.

<sup>202</sup> "Egypt vows strong response to Sinai attack," *Al Jazeera*, August 6, 2012. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/08/20128523429347102.html>.

<sup>203</sup> "Egypt mob attack kills four Shia Muslims near Cairo," *BBC News*, 24 June, 2013. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-23026865>

### A Second Dethronement: July 2013

There are many dominant themes that occur within civil society in the two and half years following the deposal of Hosni Mubarak and the unsuccessful presidency of Mohammed Morsi. The most prominent of these is the rapid decline of cooperation between groups who initially came together in opposition of the Mubarak regime. As mentioned earlier, one of the most important roles that society plays in regime change is putting forward the ideals and values that will characterize the succeeding regime. In this sense, civil society had no shortage of ideals, however, where it failed was its inability to find compromise between the various groups that emerged in the aftermath of the Arab Spring. The two largest factions, the Muslim Brotherhood and the myriad smaller liberal and youth groups who led the revolution, failed utterly to build on the cooperation that characterized the initial demonstrations, and therefore both sides were responsible for this failure.

The Muslim Brotherhood initially made attempts to assure skeptical opposition parties that they were not the same Brotherhood typically associated with fundamentalism or extremism. For a brief period of time, this seemed to be the case, but these pragmatic goals were cast aside in favor of more idealistic choices. For example, the Brotherhood used its political power, grown strong over many decades, to influence Egyptian voters to vote in favor of Brotherhood approved candidates and measures, such as in the Parliamentary elections in 2011, which in turn alienated liberal groups. Attaching religion to politics was a simple way of consolidating power. With Islam as its foundation, the majority of Egyptians, many of whom were unfamiliar with liberal ideals, were simply more comfortable with the Muslim Brotherhood, and exercised this in their decision to vote in its favour. This in turn created alienation and animosity within non-Islamists groups throughout Egypt.

Conversely, the youth groups and liberals possessed significantly less influence than they expected. Regardless of what the ideals of the revolution were, ultimately Egypt is a country which identifies heavily with an Islamic identity. Instead of trying to integrate this religious identity into their platforms, perhaps using a form of progressive Islam to further liberal goals and solutions, these groups concentrated instead on demonizing the popular Islamist movements and seeking a more secular government without addressing the issues that secularism would have in such a religious society.

The greatest failure, however, was the way this social conflict affected Egypt as a whole. With society so divided by religion and ideology, more pressing matters were forgotten, specifically, economic interests, as well as security and stability. As these facets of Egypt continued to deteriorate, the differences between the two major factions of civil society were exacerbated, as either side ramped up pressures against their opposition, seeking to lay the blame of these difficulties on the other. With either side deadlocked in an unproductive, self-destructive conflict, the faction which found itself with the lion's share of power was the military. With the first democratically elected president in Egypt considered a failure by many, Egyptians turned towards a tried and tested alternative: the strong horse of the military.

These events all lead to a great deal of speculation on who is to blame for these myriad of failures. On one hand, Morsi was democratically elected in fair elections, in which there was relatively little vote rigging or corruption, a far cry from the elections held during the Mubarak regime. His draft constitution was not simply forced through by way of presidential decree, but was voted on in a referendum by eligible Egyptian voters, and was passed by a significant margin. This shows that a majority of voting Egyptians were in favor

of the platform that Morsi ran on, and despite this, opposition groups still fought tooth and nail to see him deposed from office.

Significantly, however, the voter turnout was extremely low, estimated at only 31 percent.<sup>204</sup> As the draft constitution was accepted by approximately a 64 percent approval rate, this means that only about one fifth of Egypt's voting population actually approved of the draft constitution. This low voter turnout is indicative of the central problem of the Egyptian transition: the lack of compromise and pact building between competing groups in Egypt. There was no effort to bridge gaps between Islamists, liberals, or those in between who were only concerned with the renewed stabilization of Egypt. After decades of meaningless elections which never had different results, there was little done to brush away the general apathy of Egyptian society. The lack of faith in the both Morsi regime and its opposition to correct the underlying problems facing Egypt may be the reason why so many Egyptians turned out to neither accept nor to reject the draft constitution. The draft constitution, heavily favoring the values and beliefs of one certain demographic while ignoring all others, was a powerful example of this division.

Morsi's actions, though pleasing to his supporters, were extremely problematic for any who fell beyond the area of his sizable power base, especially given his assurances that he was leading Egypt towards a functioning democracy. This left liberals, women, Copts, secularists, and progressive Muslims highly underrepresented (if at all) in Morsi's government. The way in which various "sides" behave during a transition is indicative of the direction that transition is moving. Guillermo O'Donnell describes this as "the democratic

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<sup>204</sup> Kareem Fahim, "First Round of Voting Spurs Dispute in Egypt." *New York Times*, 16 Dec 2012. [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/17/world/middleeast/egypt-constitution-vote-results.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/17/world/middleeast/egypt-constitution-vote-results.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0).

wager". The democratic wager is the idea that all citizens have the right to participate within the democratic system, and in turn, must accept that other citizens may also participate, regardless of whether or not one might consider said citizen to be "inappropriate".<sup>205</sup> This essentially means that citizens should respect and be respected for decisions made within the democratic arena, including voting, running for office, winning elections, etc. In return, the state must uphold certain universal freedoms, including expression, association, and political participatory rights.<sup>206</sup>

If Morsi's government was only concerned with the interests of a specific demographic, then the only difference between the Morsi government and the Mubarak government is the recipient of these benefits. Under Mubarak, it was loyal NDP supporters; under Morsi, it was the Brotherhood, Islamists, and their supporters. Again, using O'Donnell's work as an example, this favoritism would compromise the democratic wager. It is neither unreasonable nor unexpected that demonstrations would occur against these practices. Mubarak was ousted in 2011 to address the general lack of power so many of these societal demographics suffered from.

Therein lays the real crux of this issue, that both major sides of civil society, the Islamists and liberals, played a role in the Morsi government's failure. The Islamists believed that ignoring the pleas of opposition groups was perfectly acceptable; after all, it was their candidate who had won. Most Egyptians have only ever known a country where the ruling party is able to do as it pleases. From a Brotherhood perspective, it is unsurprising that after

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<sup>205</sup> Guillermo O'Donnell, Jorge Vargas Cullel, and Osvaldo Miguel *The Quality of Democracy: Theory and Applications* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 2004), 16-17.

<sup>206</sup> *Ibid.*, 17



“one of theirs” gained power he would behave much the same, and be justified in doing so, especially given the assumed legitimacy of the relatively transparent elections.

On the other hand, there was still the matter of the role of religion in the government, specifically the role and breadth of *shari'a*. From the outset, *shari'a* appeared to be an irreconcilable difference between the two sides. Pro-Morsi supporters voted for him largely because of what Morsi represented: tradition, history, and religion. Morsi's opposition rejected him for the exact same reasons. This no-win, zero-sum situation was what Morsi had inherited, and with society so sharply divided and focused on the issue of religion, there was no way for him to succeed. Given the divisive nature of the situation, it is unlikely that anyone could have reconciled the situation. Morsi may have exacerbated the societal problems with his clumsy leadership, but it is unclear if there was anyone who could have solved Egypt's religious quagmire.

Civil society in Egypt ultimately failed to engender the trust and unity that was such a distinguishing theme during the revolt in 2011. Instead of building on initial promises, lines were drawn and sides were picked, and over the course of the next two and half years, society fractured more and more. Now, the situation is largely what it was under Mubarak, with Islamists again being harshly oppressed, the Muslim Brotherhood banned, and the groups who once marched in Tahrir square cheering in support of such actions.

### Chapter Three:

#### Political Society

Linz and Stepan describe political society as the arena in which the political apparatus and its various institutions arrange themselves to legitimately exercise control over the public and the state. Specifically, the core institutions of political society are “political parties, elections, electoral rules, political leadership, interparty alliances, and legislatures – by which society constitutes itself politically to select and monitor democratic government”.<sup>207</sup> According to Linz and Stepan, while political society and civil society are distinct, ideally, they should still be complementary; civil society should actively play a role in the way that political society operates.<sup>208</sup> As stated earlier, groups that are categorized as being part of political society are ones that have the ability or potential to directly affect the various spheres of government. There is some overlap between political and civil society, but this chapter will concentrate on political associations during the events of 2011-2013.

One of the biggest missteps a transitioning country makes is the belief that once a transition has begun (in other words, the preceding regime has been removed), civil society should take a back seat to allow the development of political society.<sup>209</sup> Linz and Stepan argue that an active civil society is a necessity in any successful transition, especially when moving away from an authoritarian regime. This is not to say that civil and political society should work in perfect harmony: differences between various groups are important, if not necessary. Regardless, “many civil society leaders view with moral antipathy ‘internal conflict’ and ‘division’ within the democratic forces. Institutional routinization,

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<sup>207</sup> Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1996), 8.

<sup>208</sup> *Ibid.*, 8-9.

<sup>209</sup> *Ibid.*, 9.

intermediaries, and compromise within politics are often spoken of pejoratively”.<sup>210</sup> All of these processes are vital to the process of consolidation. Linz and Stepan describe this as follows:

Democratic consolidation requires parties, one of whose primary tasks is precisely to aggregate and represent *differences* between democrats. Consolidation requires habituation to the norms and procedures of democratic *conflict* regulation be developed. A high degree of *institutional routinization* is a key part of such a process. *Intermediation* between the state and civil society and the structuring of *compromise* are likely legitimate and necessary tasks of political society. In short, political society, informed, pressured, and periodically renewed by civil society, must somehow achieve a workable agreement on the myriad ways in which democratic power will be crafted and exercised.<sup>211</sup>

Essentially, what Linz and Stepan are writing here is that conflict between civil and political society is not inherently destructive or destabilizing. Rather, these conflicts are vital in consolidating democracy, so long as they are properly arbitrated by governmental procedures and routines which allow said conflicts to be resolved amicably. These ideas articulated by Linz and Stepan are of great importance when examining Egyptian political society, as this lack of regulation quickly became the defining conflict in the two and half years following the success of the revolution.

#### Political Society: The Arab Spring of January 2011

Political society was weak prior to the initial uprising in 2011 to depose Hosni Mubarak. Political groups were strictly regulated by the Mubarak regime, and only the most sycophantic groups found any real success during elections. Despite the immature state of political society at the time, it is worth examining some of the trends that could be seen at this time, and how these trends were received by the political actors who took part in the revolution, even though many of these trends were eventually cast aside in the months that

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<sup>210</sup> Ibid., 10.

<sup>211</sup> Ibid.

followed. The most prominent of these trends was the overuse of the term, and its multitude of variations, “the goals of the revolution.” The phrase reflected every ideological objective of every group, including liberals, secularists, Islamists, fundamentalists, Copts, and so on. These goals included a multitude of expectations, some realistic, others not. A list of some of these:

...banning military trial of civilians; raising the minimum wage; bringing Mubarak, his sons, and the senior officials of his regime to justice; banning former National Democratic Party (NDP) members from political activity for five years; releasing all political prisoners; purging the state institutions – the police, the legal system, the media, the universities, and the banks – of members of the former regime; electing new municipal councils; and stopping the exportation of natural gas to Israel.<sup>212</sup>

These demands are a small sampling of the goals, as many groups had different ideas of the objective of the uprising stood. What was important was that each group in Egypt’s newly formed political landscape claimed to be working towards these “goals,” while claiming that opposing groups were actively moving against these goals. In a similar vein to civil society, this conflict would be indicative of the chaos in Egyptian politics.

The formation of political parties was an extremely important event after Mubarak’s deposal. For decades, few political parties had been founded. Under Mubarak, new parties required state approval from the Political Parties Committee, a committee created and run by regime interests. Even those few parties which emerged were typically ones which fell in line with the aims of the regime. With Mubarak’s deposal, such limitations were gone, and dozens of registered and unregistered parties quickly flooded the Egyptian political scene. Liberal movements formed many of these parties, the largest of which was the Coalition of the Youth of the Revolution (sometimes referred to as the Revolutionary Youth Movement), which was comprised of several popular movements (including the April 6 Movement, the

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<sup>212</sup> “Disappointed with Revolution’s Gains, Egyptians Renew Protests,” *MEMRI*, July 3, 2011. [http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/5429.htm#\\_edn4](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/5429.htm#_edn4).

socialist Al-Tagdid movement, the Muslim Brotherhood Youth, Youth for Justice and Freedom, the Free Front for Peaceful Change, and the Democratic Front Party).<sup>213</sup> Islamist groups also formed many new political parties, although they primarily relied on already entrenched organizations to promote their viewpoint, most prominently the Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafis. In addition to the liberals and Islamists, there was also a third side: the old guard, members of the Mubarak regime who were not so shamed or reviled that they would not run for office, though their activities were not as public as youth and Islamist groups. Notably, the Coptic Christians did not field a political party, instead hoping to find places amongst other parties. Of these three groups, the Islamists and the old guard were highly experienced, with decades of practice, while the Revolutionary Youth Movement was untested. This uneven experiential divergence would heavily influence the way each group performed in challenges ahead.

#### Constitutional Amendments: March 2011

The first major political event following Mubarak's deposal was the passing of constitutional amendments which aimed to speed up the return of civilian rule. It was also the first time that liberal groups showcased their relative inexperience and naiveté with politics. The liberals assumed that due to their successes in Tahrir Square earlier that year, the Egyptian political process would revolve around their goals and values, completely disregarding other non-Mubarak forces.

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<sup>213</sup>L. Azuri, "The Popular Uprising in Egypt in Search of a Leadership," *MEMRI*, February 23, 2011. [http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/5028.htm#\\_ednref22](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/5028.htm#_ednref22).

The results of that referendum came as a huge shock to liberal and secularist forces. They had imagined that, since the revolutionary youth were from the secularist ranks and since even the Muslim Brotherhood youth...were liberal for the most part, the Egyptian political mood had changed. Then...they opened their eyes to find the Muslim Brothers and the Salafis had thrown themselves into the electoral battle in full vigour, not only wielding the religious card...but also flexing their superior organisational and financial muscle and, frankly, playing the political game as it should be played, which is to say among the people.<sup>214</sup>

In response to their losses, these liberal groups turned to the tactics used before and during the revolution, primarily demonstrations and internet activism. While these tactics were exceedingly useful in deposing a dictator, with Mubarak gone, they were ineffective in currying favor amongst the Egyptian population, a large proportion of whom were not even capable of accessing these media streams, and therefore the values pushed by the revolutionary youth. Due to poverty or because they lived in the more remote areas of Egypt, these poorer Egyptians lived where technology and therefore “the secular values that drove the revolution [had] not reached”.<sup>215</sup> This overreliance on modern forms of communication was a common misunderstanding that the liberals did not address. Even more primitive attempts at connecting with those Egyptians who lacked access to technology were disappointing and out of touch. While Islamist parties “were campaigning by providing social services – handing out meat and discount medicine – to impoverished communities, [liberal politicians] were giving stump speeches at town-hall-style meetings”.<sup>216</sup> While the Islamists had spent decades organizing their support base and keeping connected to Egyptian society, “liberal, secular, and nationalist intellectuals were busy arguing among themselves and penning op-eds for their party newspapers”.<sup>217</sup> The effects of this disorganization would

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<sup>214</sup> Abdel-Moneim, Said, "Why Liberals Failed," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, April 5, 2012.  
[www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

<sup>215</sup> Neil MacFarquhar, "Egyptian Voters Approve Constitutional Changes," *The New York Times*, March 20, 2011. <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/21/world/middleeast/21egypt.html?pagewanted=all>.

<sup>216</sup> Sarah Topol, "Egypt's Liberals Adrift," *New York Times*, Dec. 13, 2011. [http://latitude.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/12/13/egypts-liberals-adrift/?\\_php=true&\\_type=blogs&\\_r=0](http://latitude.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/12/13/egypts-liberals-adrift/?_php=true&_type=blogs&_r=0)

<sup>217</sup> Ibid.

quickly intensify in the months to come. The liberals were campaigning for a Western-style election when, by all accounts, that was clearly not the case in Egypt.

Comparatively, the Islamist political machines worked with incredible efficiency, especially the Brotherhood. The Brotherhood had an advantage in Egypt which its opposition did not have: history. Their platform revolved around Islam, a message that had been ingrained into society over the course of centuries, and was easy to interpret, especially compared to the new and alien ideas of liberalism. Concepts like secularism and gender rights were vague and unfamiliar when contrasted with the concrete, fundamental ideas of religion and faith.

In addition to its easily understood message, the Islamist bloc was also leagues ahead of their liberal competition from a strictly practical perspective. Their aforementioned organizational capabilities allowed them to rally their forces. Instead of idealism, these groups used more relatable, religious ideas, though they were not always scrupulous. Some reports stated that “religious organizations had spread false rumors, suggesting that voting against the referendum would threaten Article 2 of the Constitution, which cites Islamic law as the main basis for Egyptian law”.<sup>218</sup> As one liberal stated, ruefully, the Islamist bloc made the choice extremely simple: “if you vote [against the amendments] you are a follower of America and [ElBaradei], and if you vote [in favor of the amendments] you are a follower of God...The idea is that Muslims will vote yes and Copts and atheists will vote no”.<sup>219</sup> Furthermore, though it was never officially stated by the Brotherhood, it was widely believed that some kind of deal was struck between the Brotherhood and the military, allowing the

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<sup>218</sup> Neil MacFarquhar, "Egyptian Voters Approve Constitutional Changes," *New York Times*, March 20, 2011. <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/21/world/middleeast/21egypt.html?pagewanted=all>

<sup>219</sup> Neil MacFarquhar, "Ahead of Vote, Egypt's Parties and Skepticism are Growing," *New York Times*, Nov. 10, 2011. [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

Brotherhood greater mobility within Egypt, while helping the military create stability by keeping protest numbers down.<sup>220</sup>

### Leading into the Parliamentary Elections of November 2011 to January 2012

Parliamentary elections were scheduled to be held at the end of 2011. In the months that led up to the elections, the same problems that persisted for the liberal factions would in turn be extremely useful for the Islamist bloc. According to one journalist, “the biggest failing of the liberal forces [was] that they [were] divided across dozens of parties”.<sup>221</sup> The liberals also suffered from the inability of these various groups to find common vision, goals, or leadership. These problems are evidenced prominently by the Egyptian Bloc, a group formed in 2011 as “a vehicle for liberal and leftist parties to band together.”<sup>222</sup> The Egyptian Bloc started with promise, but quickly began bleeding members. Smaller factions felt they had little voice in the bloc, too many conflicting ideas could not be reconciled, and accusations that the Bloc was harboring former members of the Mubarak regime were some of the reasons for the Bloc’s dwindling membership.<sup>223</sup> Leading into the parliamentary elections, the Egyptian Bloc was comprised of only three parties, the Free Egyptians, the Social Democrats, and the “nearly irrelevant” *Tagammu* party, down from the initial fifteen which had joined when the Bloc was created only months earlier.<sup>224</sup> The second liberal bloc was the Revolution Continues Alliance, represented by many of the parties that broke away

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<sup>220</sup> Michael Slackman, “Islamist Group Is Rising Force in a New Egypt,” *New York Times*, March 24, 2011. [http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/25/world/middleeast/25egypt.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/03/25/world/middleeast/25egypt.html?pagewanted=all&_r=0)

<sup>221</sup> Joshua A. Tucker, “How do the elections in Egypt compare to post-communist elections in the former Soviet Union,” *Al Jazeera*, Dec. 7, 2011. <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2011/12/2011127111524244220.html>.

<sup>222</sup> Evan Hill, “Explainer: Egypt’s crowded political arena,” *Al Jazeera*, Nov. 17, 2011. <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/spotlight/egypt/2011/11/2011111510295463645.html>.

<sup>223</sup> Ibid.

<sup>224</sup> Ibid.



from the Egyptian Bloc. This Alliance was characterized by groups that were unwilling to compromise their political platforms, meaning the Alliance was unified only in the thinnest sense, its disparate members lacking any meaningful organization or funding.<sup>225</sup> An example of this disorganization is the fact that the Alliance only announced its electoral platform the day before candidate registration closed in October. Even near the end of November, some of its parties had not yet posted their candidates.<sup>226</sup> Liberalism is extremely young and foreign within Egypt already, so complicating the dilemma of explaining these ideas with a large multitude of platforms and parties makes liberalism that much more impenetrable to Egyptian society.

The parliamentary elections were thus rife with a simple lack of understanding of the liberal platform, caused by the large multitude of parties and lackluster organization of these groups. The liberal campaign was also bereft of specific solutions to specific problems. Instead, liberal groups spoke more of ideals and values, trying to best represent themselves as the standard bearers of the revolution. As tangible issues like security, unemployment, and stability rose in prominence, an ambiguous liberal platform became difficult to support for the average Egyptian. For example, a speech made by Basem Kamel, a fairly prominent liberal politician, was criticized as being “more earnest than electric,” and with potential voters wishing that he had “offered specific prescriptions for solving [Egypt’s] complicated social and economic problems”.<sup>227</sup>

Comparatively, the Islamists still had the majority of the Islamic vote concentrated in the Brotherhood’s FJP. According to the New York Times, “despite the splintering of the

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<sup>225</sup> Ibid.

<sup>226</sup> Ibid.

<sup>227</sup> Neil MacFarquhar, "Ahead of Vote, Egypt's Parties and Skepticism are Growing," *New York Times*, Nov.10, 2011. [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

Islamist parties into factions, analysts [estimated] that the Muslim Brotherhood still [commanded] a hefty 70 percent or so of the Islamist vote”.<sup>228</sup> Years of abuses at the hands of the Nasser, Sadat, and Mubarak had strongly consolidated the Islamist bloc. This consolidation was previously expressed through violence and extremism.<sup>229</sup> With Mubarak’s removal, however, these associations could now be used to enter the political arena and obtain power legitimately. The Islamists also stayed on message, concentrating on Egypt’s specific problems. When the liberals faced with the reality of their limited popularity “they turned the finger of blame against the [SCAF] and began to sound the cry for the fall of the generals, who, in turn, had no option but to press ahead with the roadmap for the parliamentary and presidential elections”.<sup>230</sup> These attacks by the liberal bloc would actually backfire, and would prove to be extremely useful to the Islamist political base:

Not only did [the Islamists] have the advantages of organisational and financial superiority, the revolutionary youth and secularists were fighting other battles. Instead of fighting the electoral battle, [the revolutionary youth] fought to prove that [the SCAF] lied and that the Islamists were in cahoots with [the SCAF]. Then [the revolutionary youth] tried to forge for themselves a revolutionary legitimacy distinct from the political legitimacy that derives from the electoral process. Eventually, [the liberals] gave up fighting windmills and entered the electoral fray, only to lose by the same percentage as they lost the [constitutional] referendum and other polls.<sup>231</sup>

The battle waged by the liberals was for the “goals of the revolution,” composed of goals such as the “democracy and freedom, a civil state and equality between all citizens, the empowerment of women to participate in all fields, an independent judiciary, and a separation between legislative and executive bodies”.<sup>232</sup> What was uncertain was how these

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<sup>228</sup> Ibid.

<sup>229</sup> Lawrence Wright, *The Looming Tower: Al-Qaeda and the Road to 9/11* (New York: Vintage Books, 2007), 61.

<sup>230</sup> Abdel-Moneim, Said, "Why Liberals Failed," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, April 5, 2012.  
[www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

<sup>231</sup> Ibid.

<sup>232</sup> Mohamed Abdel-Baky, "Liberal uncertainty," *Al-Ahram Weekly Online*, May 5-11, 2011.  
<http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2011/1046/eg7.htm>

goals would be achieved, and it was clear that the liberals did not have a clear answer.<sup>233</sup> Meanwhile, the FJP used more easily relatable and achievable campaigning strategies. These strategies revolved around the preservation of religion within the state, tradition, and security as well as continuation of free social services, such as state sponsored subsidies, and a large state presence in certain industries.<sup>234</sup> Ultimately, the liberal goals of equality and social justice were unsuccessful in converting the majority of Egyptian voters to the liberal, secular bloc, as these voters preferred the clear, relatable goals of the Islamists.

While this debate continued in 2011, the leadership of Egypt fell to the military. Once heralded as the saviors of Egypt, the military quickly began to mismanage the state, and decaying public opinion starting as early as April.<sup>235</sup> In fact, a general sense of animosity towards the military was one of the few things that Islamist and liberal groups could agree upon. This change in military behaviour occurred steadily in the months following Mubarak's ouster, manifesting in violent reactions to various protests, as well as the staunching of freedom of speech. The SCAF also drew criticism for not promoting independence between branches of government, as well as not purging the judiciary of corrupt former members of the Mubarak regime.<sup>236</sup> Perhaps most horrible were "virginity tests" performed on female activists after Tahrir square had been cleared, and many activists had been detained. Prominent Egyptian feminist Mona Eltahawy described these actions as,

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<sup>233</sup> Ibid.

<sup>234</sup> Evan Hill, "Explainer: Egypt's crowded political arena," *Al Jazeera*, Nov. 17, 2011.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/spotlight/egypt/2011/11/2011111510295463645.html>.

<sup>235</sup> Neil MacFarquhar, "Protesters Scold Egypt's Military Council," *New York Times*, April 1, 2011.

[http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/02/world/middleeast/02egypt.html?\\_r=2&](http://www.nytimes.com/2011/04/02/world/middleeast/02egypt.html?_r=2&).

<sup>236</sup> "The Egyptian Protests: A Second Revolution - Now against the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces," *MEMRI*, July 15, 2011. [http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/5471.htm#\\_edn1](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/5471.htm#_edn1).

“rape in disguise”.<sup>237</sup> In the face of such outrages, many groups, both liberal and Islamist, began to accuse the SCAF of adopting a similar strategy to the Mubarak regime.<sup>238</sup> Strangely, however, there was little mention, if any, of the fact that Mubarak, Sadat, and Nasser all hailed from the same upper military echelon that presided over Egypt in 2011. Indeed there was no connection between the authoritarian government which was torn down only months earlier, and the military who took control.

In the meantime, the Brotherhood held to a tenuous alliance with the military. This precarious union lasted until the end of 2011, when the alliance became untenable. Increasing brutality against protestors, as well as general mismanagement and incompetence in leading Egypt towards safety, stability, and economic growth reflected poorly on the SCAF as well as its allies. This led to another temporary, if shaky, truce between liberal and Islamist groups (specifically the Muslim Brotherhood), as their attention became focused on SCAF sponsored violence. Specifically, in response to mass protests against military rule in December 2011, the military responded with “batons, water cannons, and tear gas,” injuring hundreds, and killing twelve by the fifth day of these protests.<sup>239</sup> One picture in particular galvanized the opposition, a picture of “a group of soldiers pulling the *abaya*<sup>240</sup> off a prone woman to reveal her blue bra as another soldier raises a boot to kick her. The picture, circulated around the world, [became] a rallying point of activists opposed to military rule,

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<sup>237</sup> Mona Eltahawy, “Why Do They Hate Us?” *Foreign Policy*, April 23, 2012.

[http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/04/23/why\\_do\\_they\\_hate\\_us](http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/04/23/why_do_they_hate_us).

<sup>238</sup> “The Egyptian Protests: A Second Revolution - Now against the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces,” *MEMRI*, July 15, 2011. [http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/5471.htm#\\_edn1](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/5471.htm#_edn1).

<sup>239</sup> “Egyptian army continues crackdown on protests,” *Al Jazeera*, Dec. 20, 2011.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/12/20111219114141785291.html>

<sup>240</sup> An *abaya* is a robe-like dress worn by some women, predominantly in the Islamic world.

though cameras captured soldiers pulling the clothes off other women”.<sup>241</sup> Skepticism grew around the assurances of the military that they would step down from power, and would instead resort to repressive and violent measures if necessary.

These events led into the parliamentary elections of November 2011-January 2012. The elections themselves were an overwhelming victory for the Brotherhood’s FJP, and the Salafist Al-Nour party.

**Table 1. Egyptian Parliamentary Election Results**

Freedom and Justice Party	235 seats (47.2%)
Nour Party	121 seats (24.3%)
New Wafd Party	38 seats (7.6%)
Egyptian Bloc	34 seats (6.8%)
Other (Al-Wasat, Reform and Development, Revolution Continues, Other Parties, Independents)	52 seats (5.2%)

Source: “Egypt’s Islamist parties win elections to parliament,” *BBC News*, Jan. 21, 2012. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-16665748>.

The trend of Islamic domination would continue into 2012, as the presidential elections drew nearer.

<sup>241</sup>David D. Kirkpatrick, "As Violence Continues, Egyptian General Blames Protesters," *New York Times*, Dec. 20, 2011. [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

## Presidential Campaigns and Elections: 2012

Faced with the overwhelming successes of the Islamists, the youth movement which made up much of the liberal movement voiced their displeasure not by revitalizing their political campaigns, but by resorting again to protest against the SCAF, demanding a swifter transition to civilian rule. This course of action was more idealistic than realistic. The general opinion put forward by observers is that the liberal bloc did not know anything else, and so clung to their original plans. Dr. Muhammad Al-Sa'id Dawir, a member of the left-wing Tagammu party, explained this weakness as follows:

The Egyptian left failed to propose or propagate a real plan for building [the country]. Although [the liberals] were willing to sacrifice and fight for their ideas, they lacked the necessary abilities... to take up public action or offer services based on the socialist approach. They [were] an aloof cadre that look[ed] at the world from behind the pages of a book, and form[ed] personal ties chiefly with members of its own school. We created for ourselves a world detached from the [real] world. Many of us settled for the power of the idea and for general programs. We severed the very hands that should have been outstretched to the masses...<sup>242</sup>

This delusion would explain how the liberals convinced themselves of their own successes. The liberal movement mistakenly confused their popularity amongst their own circles and parties with a more universal popularity amongst the general Egyptian populace.

During this time, there still was no unifying figure or movement within the liberal camp to cement the liberal movement in reality. Mohamed ElBaradei, a popular face of liberal and secular change, announced that he would pull out of the forthcoming presidential race. As the most prominent member of the liberal cause, his actions were a blow to the liberal movement. ElBaradei's prominence, however, also showcases the problem that the liberals faced. Though he cited a lack of democratic legitimacy in the electoral process as his reason of dropping out, his decision also had to do with "the long odds he faced. Polls

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<sup>242</sup> L. Lavi, "People's Assembly Elections in Egypt Yield Victory for Muslim Brotherhood, Salafis; Downfall for Liberals, Left, and Revolutionary Youth," *MEMRI*, Feb. 3, 2012. <http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6052.htm>.

showed that many Egyptians harbored doubts about him. The years he spent in Western capitals as an international diplomat raised questions about his authenticity as an Egyptian".<sup>243</sup>

This alienation was in no small part due to a lack of understanding of what ElBaradei represented and the detachment he had from Egyptian society. ElBaradei's supporters might claim that he represented liberalism and secularization, but the truth is that the majority of Egyptians were disconnected from social media and technology and had no understanding of how such liberal ideas would be beneficial. Egypt had lived under the yoke of dictators for decades, and these dictators morphed ideas such as liberalism and democracy to best suit their needs. Mubarak's lopsided elections and bogus claims of democratic freedoms were the only experience that many Egyptians had with democracy and liberalism, and this false definition would be ingrained into Egyptian political culture. Even ElBaradei did little to clarify how liberal successes would positively affect Egypt. In an interview prior to his decision to drop out of the presidential race, ElBaradei did not explain the advantages of liberalism nor democracy. For example, his response regarding the leadership qualities of the Muslim Brotherhood and SCAF:

At the base of the revolt which led to the downfall of [Mubarak]...there was a demand for freedom, and justice, which has been undermined and trampled on in the last few months...Slogans, or statements designed to be reassuring, are not enough to govern. The real test for those who are putting themselves forward as candidates to govern is to show that they are able to do so. That they are up to the job. As far as I am concerned, change for me means democracy, freedom, social justice, and respect for minorities. Non-negotiable principles.<sup>244</sup>

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<sup>243</sup> David. D. Kirkpatrick, "Nobel Laureate Drops Bid for Presidency of Egypt," *New York Times*, Jan. 14, 2012. [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/15/world/middleeast/mohamed-elbaradei-pulls-out-of-egypts-presidential-race.html?\\_r=3&hp&".](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/15/world/middleeast/mohamed-elbaradei-pulls-out-of-egypts-presidential-race.html?_r=3&hp&)

<sup>244</sup>"Egypt's presidential candidate issues challenge to military, Islamist parties," *BBC Monitoring Middle East - Political Supplied by BBC Worldwide Monitoring*, Dec. 19, 2011. [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

While rhetoric of this kind sounds impressive to those who already understand it, it makes very little progress in appealing to those who have no prior experience with ideas such as social justice or democracy.

In this way, ElBaradei represented the two greatest shortcomings that the plethora of liberals faced: first, the lack of singular, unifying, and accessible leadership; and second, a significant social disconnect from Egypt's poorer citizens. ElBaradei's return to Egypt at the beginning of the revolution was cause for a great deal of excitement, and he served briefly as a representative for the movement,<sup>245</sup> but even then there was notable scepticism. Gamal Eld, director of the Arabic Network for Human rights Information, a human rights group operating in Egypt, described ElBaradei's return with open doubt: "whoever wants to be a leader of a democratic movement should be working among them. He cannot lead a real battle against corruption and authoritarianism by remote control or Twitter. People don't forget who stood next to them and who deserted them when they were calling for democracy and fighting corruption".<sup>246</sup> ElBaradei had even returned shortly before in 2009 to settle down in Egypt, and work for its democratic benefit, but quickly disappointed his supporters by constantly travelling out of Egypt, and failing to unify the opposition.<sup>247</sup>

ElBaradei exacerbated this problem when discussing the social rift between Egyptians. In an interview, he promotes the "us versus them" mentality which was so prominent within Egypt:

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<sup>245</sup>David D. Kirkpatrick and Anthony Shadid, "Opposition Rallies to ElBaradei as Military Reinforces in Cairo," *New York Times*, Jan. 30, 2011. <http://www.nytimes.com/2011/01/31/world/middleeast/31-egypt.html?pagewanted=all>

<sup>246</sup>Alaa Bayoumi, "ElBaradei's Last Stand," *Al Jazeera*, Jan. 27, 2011. <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2011/01/2011127123331526535.html>

<sup>247</sup>Ibid.



Right now, we have the educated middle class on one camp and the so-called Islamists and the majority of the illiterate part of the country on the other side. That's not the way we expected after the uprising. We needed a charter that unified the people, that starts talking not about controversial issues, like the role of Sharia law, how you restrict freedom of expression, freedom of religion, freedom of worship, but talk about science and technology, education, health care.<sup>248</sup>

Even if this social situation described by ElBaradei is accurate, ElBaradei's rhetoric gives lofty, patronizing impressions of the liberal side, and only serves to further exacerbate the separation between liberals and the many Egyptians who are unfamiliar with their platform.

Despite his shortcomings, ElBaradei was still an extremely well-known figure with decades of experience working within democratic institutions with, if nothing else, the potential to rally the many disorganized liberal parties into an effective whole. This would not be the case, however, as when ElBaradei was faced with the popularity of Islamist political movements, he instead chose to drop out of the presidential election.

While liberals campaigned ineffectively, Islamist political parties put forward concrete platforms for change. Since Mubarak's ouster, economic problems had arisen with alarming consistency. Unemployment reached its highest level in a decade at approximately 12 percent; tourism, which employs, directly or indirectly, one in seven Egyptians, had fallen by eighty percent from 2011; and vital gas exports to Israel and Jordan had been interrupted by increasing insecurity in the Sinai.<sup>249</sup> Leading into the elections, the FJP had a concrete, though overambitious, economic plan. Meanwhile, it was extremely difficult to find information about an economic or security plans from the liberals. This was due to the dozens of prospective liberal parties in play, many of whom were more concerned about issues of social injustice and religion. There was no unified political message being forward,

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<sup>248</sup> "ElBaradei: Egypt's Draft Constitution Will 'Institutionalize Instability'," *PBS Newshour*, Dec. 24 2012. [http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/world-july-dec12-egypt2\\_12-24/](http://www.pbs.org/newshour/bb/world-july-dec12-egypt2_12-24/).

<sup>249</sup> Robert Springborg, "The Political Economy of the Arab Spring." *Mediterranean Politics* 16, no. 3 (Nov. 2011): 428.

and Egypt's political landscape was inundated with numerous conflicting solutions to the country's growing problems.

The presidential campaign itself misrepresented Egypt's political realities as well. The major media outlets focused on Amr Moussa, a secularist running on a campaign of inclusion, and Aboul Fotouh, a former Brotherhood member who now espoused a more liberal message and was even endorsed by the extremist Salafis.<sup>250</sup> These two candidates engaged in a televised, four hour long debate less than two weeks prior to the election. What is significant is that neither the FJP's candidate, Mohammed Morsi, nor former prime minister under Mubarak, Ahmed Shafiq, were invited to participate, despite the successes they would have in the forthcoming election. Morsi was actually not invited because he was falling behind in opinion polls, and deemed unpopular enough to be ignored.<sup>251</sup> In fact, Morsi and Shafiq were considered dark horses throughout the campaign.

This underestimation was again showed in the variety of opinion polls undertaken by the media in central, urban areas. For example, in a series of eight separate polls, polling thousands of Egyptian citizens, and undertaken by Egyptian newspaper Al-Ahram, the future Egyptian president, Mohammed Morsi never once topped the polls.<sup>252</sup> Furthermore, the FJP only once received a higher than ten percent in these polls, losing out by wide margins to

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<sup>250</sup> David D. Kirkpatrick, Mayy El Sheikh, and Kareem Fahim, "Egyptian Presidential Campaign Focuses on Islam's Role in Public Life." *New York Times*, May 12, 2012. [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

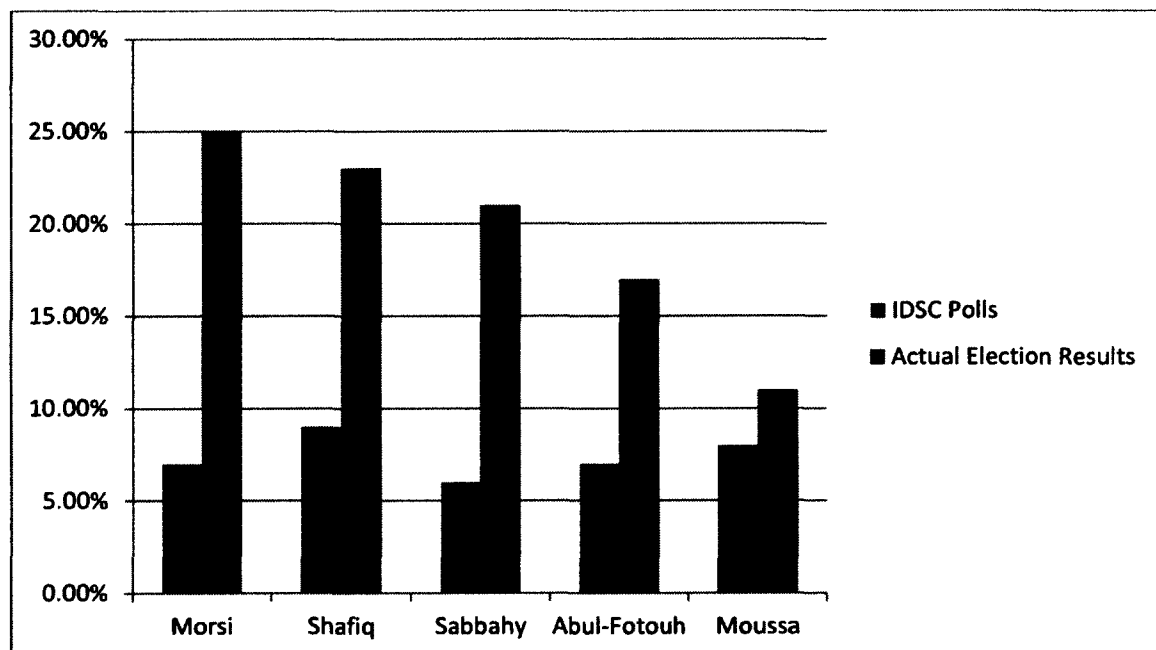
<sup>251</sup> Ibid.

<sup>252</sup> "Abul-Fotouh dips, Moussa holds steady in Ahram presidential poll." *Al-Ahram Online*, May 14, 2012. <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/36/122/41592/Presidential-elections-/Presidential-elections-news/AbulFotouh-dips,-Moussa-holds-steady-in-Ahram-pres.aspx>

Amr Moussa, Moneim Abul-Fotouh, and Ahmed Shafiq, the three of whom were considered to be the frontrunners in the election.<sup>253</sup>

The first of these polls was undertaken by the Egyptian government's Information and Decision Support Center (IDSC), which carried out four opinion polls, its last poll published less than two weeks prior to the election. Below are the results of the polls compared with the actual election results:

**Figure 1. IDSC poll versus actual election results**



Source: Ahmed Feteiha, "Egypt election results show opinion poll failures," *Al-Ahram Online*, June 5, 2012. <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/36/122/43804/Presidential-elections-/Presidential-elections-news/Egypt-election-results-show-opinion-poll-failures.aspx>.

Admittedly, they were correct about Shafiq finishing comparatively well, however, they deeply underestimated his overall success, as well as Morsi and Sabbahy. Furthermore, the

<sup>253</sup> Ahmed Feteiha, "Egypt election results show opinion poll failures," *Al-Ahram Online*, June 5, 2012. <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/36/122/43804/Presidential-elections-/Presidential-elections-news/Egypt-election-results-show-opinion-poll-failures.aspx>.

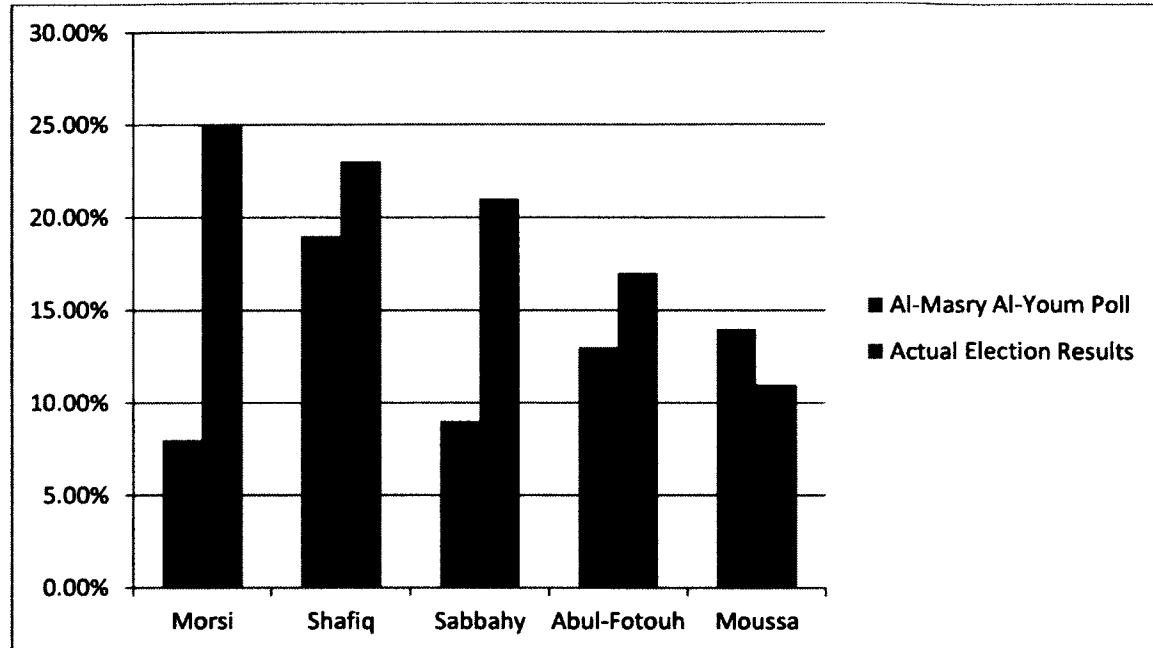
poll predicted an 84 percent turnout, though the actual turnout was a little more than half of that, at 46 percent.<sup>254</sup>

The next poll, carried out by the Basira Centre for Public Opinion Studies, was published by Al-Masry Al-Youm Newspaper on May 19, 2011, less than a week before the election. This poll was slightly more accurate on Shafiq's popularity, but suffered the similar shortcomings as the IDSC's with all other candidates:

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<sup>254</sup> Ibid.

**Figure 2. Al-Masry Al-Youm poll versus actual election results**



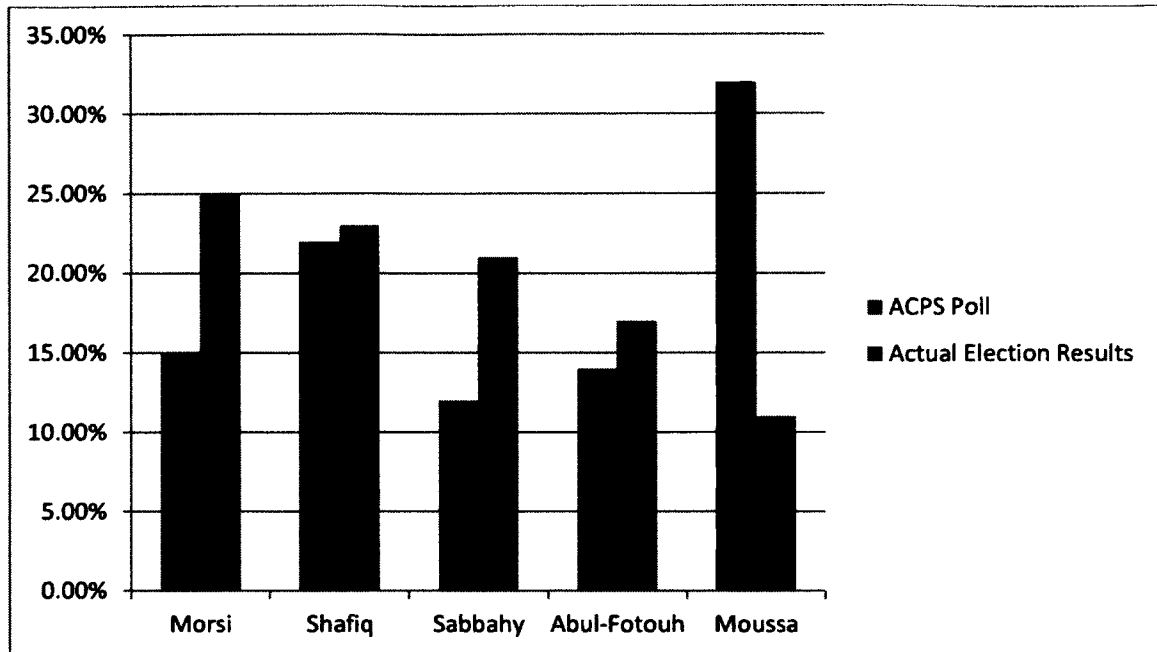
*Source:* Ahmed Feteiha, "Egypt election results show opinion poll failures," Al-Ahram Online, June 5, 2012. <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/36/122/43804/Presidential-elections-/Presidential-elections-news/Egypt-election-results-show-opinion-poll-failures.aspx>.

The Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies (ACPS) had a similar failure as the Basira Centre, as they grossly overestimated Moussa's popularity, while underestimating Morsi and Sabbahy.<sup>255</sup>

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<sup>255</sup> Ibid.

**Figure 3. ACPS Poll versus actual election results**



*Source:* Ahmed Feteiha, "Egypt election results show opinion poll failures," Al-Ahram Online, June 5, 2012. <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/36/122/43804/Presidential-elections-/Presidential-elections-news/Egypt-election-results-show-opinion-poll-failures.aspx>.

This variety of polls, which consistently showed Morsi losing by considerable margins, proved to be inaccurate, as Morsi would narrowly win both rounds of the presidential election, and be sworn in as the first president of the post-Mubarak era. Each of these polls also stated that approximately a third of voters were undecided, which could account for the enormous influx of votes for Morsi.<sup>256</sup> More likely, however, it was the organizational capacity of the FJP to get their supporters in the voting booths. Meanwhile, the various liberal groups, disorganized and without central leadership, could not do the same for their followers. Adding insult to injury, the chief competition to Morsi's campaign was not even a liberal, it was a former member of the Mubarak regime, Ahmed Shafiq, who was not considered a particularly popular candidate due to his past affiliations with the Mubarak regime. Of the liberal candidates, the most successful one was the Nasserist Dignity Party,

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<sup>256</sup> Ibid.

led by Hamdeen Sabbahy. Sabbahy, whose ideology only remotely resembled the original liberal goals desired during the Arab Spring, garnered approximately twenty percent of the popular vote.

The FJP's successes during the elections were met with outrage from liberal groups, some calling for boycott for the second round of elections. ElBaradei called for a provision which limited the first term to one year, to allow a new constitution to be drafted.<sup>257</sup> This, however, may be interpreted as the angry rhetoric of the losing side, and it bears considering if ElBaradei would make a similar suggestion if a liberal candidate was positioned to win. Ultimately, one of the goals of liberalism is the ability to vote for a candidate that you wish to see elected, and for that candidate to be able to serve the duration of his or her term. Conversely, if your candidate loses, there is an expectation that the results will be respected by all parties. As O'Donnell put it, this is the democratic wager.<sup>258</sup> Based on the results of the presidential election, it is clear that a sizable amount of Egyptians preferred a candidate which they had history with, either religiously (the FJP), or politically (Shafiq, former member of the Mubarak regime).

With this in mind, a great deal of the anger turned towards the FJP and the Muslim Brotherhood may be attributed to the fact that they turned out to be far more successful than expected. One voter who voted against the FJP stated that "[the Brotherhood] still want to dominate; this is very obvious from their position on the assembly for drafting the constitution where they want to have a very large share of seats, no matter how unpopular

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<sup>257</sup> "Decision Time," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, June 15, 2012. [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

<sup>258</sup> Guillermo O'Donnell, Jorge Vargas Cullel, and Osvaldo Miguel *The Quality of Democracy: Theory and Applications* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame, 2004), 16-17.

this is".<sup>259</sup> This hostility towards the Brotherhood, however, was found chiefly amongst the vocal liberal factions within Egypt. The Brotherhood's deep well of support was found beyond the liberal bloc. This popularity led them to renege on claims that they would be seeking fewer seats in parliament and not fielding a presidential candidate. Considering how well the Brotherhood performed, reneging on these promises was a logical step. Clearly many Egyptians thought the Brotherhood were the best choice to lead the country.

Morsi himself was also a rather unknown candidate, which may have actually been one of the reasons his presidential bid was successful. As chairman of the Freedom and Justice Party, Morsi was considered a safe, if underwhelming, candidate.<sup>260</sup> He had played a role in Egyptian politics in the past, but was not considered a major player before the elections. In fact, he was only chosen as the FJP's candidate because their first choice, Khairat El-Shater was disqualified from running.<sup>261</sup> As shown in the above polls, he was essentially written off by mass media as a fourth or fifth place candidate for the presidency, in favor of more well known, or at least more visible, candidates such as Amr Moussa or even Ahmed Shafiq. From a western perspective "even after the two-month presidential campaign, Mr. Morsi [remained] an unfamiliar figure to most Egyptians".<sup>262</sup> His victory seemed dependant on two key factors, which were rarely discussed in the news.

The first of these factors is Ahmed Shafiq, Morsi's chief opposition in the election, former member of the Mubarak regime, and, technically, Mubarak's successor for a brief

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<sup>259</sup>"Countdown to the unknown," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, June 15, 2012. [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

<sup>260</sup> "Profile: Egypt's Mohammed Morsi," *BBC News*, Dec. 18, 2013. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-18371427>.

<sup>261</sup> Ibid.

<sup>262</sup> David D. Kirkpatrick, "Named Egypt's Winner, Islamist Makes History," *New York Times*, June 24, 2012. <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/25/world/middleeast/mohamed-morsi-of-muslim-brotherhood-declared-as-egypt-president.html?pagewanted=all>.



period of time following Mubarak's downfall. Shafiq was representative of the old regime. In this context, to his supporters he was a known value, representing decades of relative stability. Conversely, to his detractors, primarily composed of the youth movement that pulled Mubarak down from power, he represented a regression to a pre-revolution Egypt. It is certainly reasonable to assume that many Egyptians voted for Morsi not because they believed he was the best choice for president, but because they believed that he was still better than a remnant of the Mubarak era. With the second round of elections devoid of any liberal influence, choices were certainly limited.

The second factor is that Morsi did not require the support of the vocal minority to win because he enjoyed a support base which was less evident to the main stream media. Morsi (as well as Shafiq) both had sufficient amounts of support from less vocal Egyptians who lived outside of the large Egyptian cities, in the more rural areas which did not garner nearly as much coverage from the media, and where liberal ideas were at best alien concepts. For Morsi, these were members of the Muslim Brotherhood, or many otherwise religious Egyptians who had similar beliefs to Brotherhood members. It is this section of people whom the liberals claim supposedly stole the election away from them. As one liberal explained:

Egypt has a 35-40 percent rate of illiteracy. It is this percentage that the Brotherhood manipulated, in the name of religion, to achieve a majority in the failed parliament that has been ruled unconstitutional. It will be this ill-informed, uneducated and indifferent section of the population that the Muslim Brotherhood will lobby intensively to vote.<sup>263</sup>

While news stories covered the liberal surge in Cairo or Alexandria, the more remote areas of Egypt held onto heavily entrenched beliefs. Egypt's rural population amounts to about 57 percent of the country, and a great deal of this demographic was responsible for the successes

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<sup>263</sup> Ayman El-Amir, "Constitution in the balance," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, Oct. 10, 2012. <http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/2012/1117/op8.htm>.

of Morsi and Shafiq during the election.<sup>264</sup> It was these regions that liberals either blamed primarily for their continuing failures, or simply ignored entirely. In these regions, there were people who spent their entire lives knowing either the NDP (Mubarak's political party) or the Brotherhood. Shafiq himself made several visits to these rural regions, actively campaigning in areas where he understood that history created support, while avoiding the larger towns and cities, "where residents suggest that he would have been met unwelcomingly by educated youth".<sup>265</sup>

This sharp divide in priorities would create a great deal of tension following the election. Liberal frustration at neither being able to build on the momentum of the revolution grew. In the year that followed, however, the tensions of this victory would rise significantly, and a great deal of this strain would be fueled by the very actions that, from the beginning, many feared the FJP would take.

#### Presidential Powers and the Draft Constitution: 2012

The start of Morsi's rule was promising. He assured his large support base that he would live up to their expectations, while appeasing his opposition. Morsi vowed to guarantee Egypt's transition to a "civil, democratic, constitutional, and modern state".<sup>266</sup> He followed this up with a variety of bold claims, which, if acted upon, would have been extremely promising. These included reinforcing the rule of law, stating that "Muslims and Christians are equal before the law," as well as declaring that parliamentary elections would

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<sup>264</sup>Sarah Mousa, "Democracy versus Tahrir," *Al Jazeera*, June 23, 2012.  
<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/06/2012622122653356816.html>.

<sup>265</sup> Ibid.

<sup>266</sup>"Egyptian President-elect Mursi vows civil state," *BBC Monitoring Middle East - Political Supplied by BBC Worldwide Monitoring*, June 30, 2012. [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

occur after a new constitution was drafted.<sup>267</sup> He also promised that the “prime minister and an advisory council would come from outside the Brotherhood as part of a unity government based on a rebuilt alliance with liberals and other secular activists”.<sup>268</sup>

It did not take long, however, for legitimate criticism to target the Morsi regime. This was partly his own doing, as during his campaign, he had made a multitude of promises to be carried out during his first one hundred days in office, including improvements in the areas of security, economic reform, infrastructure, sanitation, and so on. Morsi fell short in each department.<sup>269</sup> In fact, much of what transpired over the next year would come to directly contradict the claims he made about the direction his leadership would take Egypt.

First, Morsi made widespread changes to the media. These included: appointing Saleh 'Abd Al-Maqoud, a loyal Brotherhood member, as information minister; having the upper house of parliament (otherwise known as the Shura Council) replace approximately fifty chief editors and board directors of state-owned newspapers; seizing copies of the independent daily newspaper *Al-Dustour* after they criticized the Morsi government; and filing lawsuits against journalists who allegedly published false information against the Brotherhood.<sup>270</sup> Much of this was done under auspices of increasing journalistic ethics, providing a voice for Egypt's remerging Islamic character, or simply purging the media of

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<sup>267</sup>“Egyptian president hails EU role in supporting democratic transition,” *BBC Monitoring Middle East - Political Supplied by BBC Worldwide Monitoring*, June 30, 2012. [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

<sup>268</sup> David D. Kirkpatrick, “Named Egypt's Winner, Islamist Makes History.” *New York Times*, June 24, 2012. <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/25/world/middleeast/mohamed-morsi-of-muslim-brotherhood-declared-as-egypts-president.html?pagewanted=all>.

<sup>269</sup> “Egyptian President-elect Mursi vows civil state,” *BBC Monitoring Middle East - Political Supplied by BBC Worldwide Monitoring*, June 30, 2012. [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

<sup>270</sup> L. Lavi, “Muslim Brotherhood Efforts To Take Over Egyptian Media,” *MEMRI*, April 30, 2013. [http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/7157.htm#\\_edn3](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/7157.htm#_edn3).

members of the old regime.<sup>271</sup> None of these reasons were compelling enough to convince Morsi's detractors.

Furthermore, Morsi made attempts to fill the Supreme Constitutional Court (SCC) with Brotherhood loyalists to avoid any resistance from the SCC. As the highest judicial power in Egypt, the SCC was supposed to be independent.<sup>272</sup> Morsi had also forced head of SCAF, Mohamed Hussein Tantawi, and army chief of staff, Sami Anan, into retirement (though he did so "softly," by naming them advisors to the president instead).<sup>273</sup> Morsi then cancelled constitutional amendments issued by the military which placed limits on Morsi's presidential powers.<sup>274</sup>

Morsi also increased his powers in the form of a constitutional declaration on November 22 2012, which effectively "stripped the Egyptian judicial system of the power to appeal his decisions, thus giving constitutional validity to his status as ultimate arbiter in the country – far exceeding his powers as head of the executive authority."<sup>275</sup> Morsi would use this declaration to speed up the creation of a draft constitution and the referendum for December, using his new powers to circumvent any legal interference. The declaration stated that any decisions made by him could not be appealed by the judiciary until a new constitution was in place, thus making it impossible for any opposing factions, liberal and

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<sup>271</sup> Ibid.

<sup>272</sup> David D. Kirkpatrick and Mayy El Sheikh, "Citing Deadlock, Egypt's Leader Seizes New Power and Plans Mubarak Retrial," *New York Times*, Nov. 22, 2012.

<http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/23/world/middleeast/egypts-president-morsi-gives-himself-new-powers.html>.

<sup>273</sup> Kareem Fahim, "In Upheaval for Egypt, Morsi Forces Out Military Chiefs," *The New York Times*, August 12, 2012. <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/13/world/middleeast/egyptian-leader-ousts-military-chiefs.html?pagewanted=all>.

<sup>274</sup> Ibid.

<sup>275</sup> N. Shamni, "Egypt Under Muslim Brotherhood Rule: The Constitutional Declaration – Dictatorship In The Name Of The Revolution." *MEMRI*. Dec. 7, 2012.

[http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6862.htm#\\_edn1](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6862.htm#_edn1).

secular in particular, to affect the draft constitution that he desired, which he put forward shortly thereafter.

Morsi's draft constitution proved extremely problematic to liberals, secularists, and Copts. It perpetuated the clause that defined Islamic law as foundational to legislation, while neglecting any mention of how alternative belief systems, namely Coptic Christianity, would operate under the constitution. It also remained devoid of any mention of increasing women's rights, but instead described at length military powers comparable to what they were under Mubarak. In response, the liberals attempted to create an alliance called the National Salvation Front united loosely by the desire to oppose Morsi's constitutional draft. One of the coalition's most prominent members, and former presidential candidate, Hamdeen Sabbahy stated that if the constitution was passed "Egypt [would] continue in this really charged state. It is certain this constitution is driving us to more political polarisation".<sup>276</sup>

Morsi scheduled a referendum on the draft constitution to begin on December 15<sup>th</sup>, 2012. President Morsi defended his actions in a nationally televised speech:

The nation is ready for the referendum on time. If the people agree, then they will start building institutions upon this foundation. If it is rejected, I will use my authority and duty to create a new constitutional assembly based on an agreement or on direct elections for a new assembly. I will never allow anyone to kill or destroy a public foundation. I will not allow those calling for the overthrow of the people's legitimate government, the free design that Egyptians have taken."<sup>277</sup>

This statement showcases a surprising amount of naivety, lack of self-awareness, and perhaps even willful ignorance from not only a well-educated man, but the president of a prominent country. Despite the seemingly obvious repercussions his actions would have on the unity of Egyptian civil society, Morsi did not seem willing to understand how his actions were met

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<sup>276</sup> "Rival rallies held in Egypt over constitution," *Al Jazeera*, Dec. 11, 2012.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/12/20121210235329634676.html>.

<sup>277</sup> "Will the constitution divide or unite Egypt," *Al Jazeera*, Dec. 15, 2012.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/insidestory/2012/12/201212159381583365.html>.

with so much derision and anger. Unfortunately, like Mubarak before him, this substantial disconnect from such a sizeable portion of Egyptian society caused factions which had been mired in discord over the past two years to find common ground and unite against Morsi.

It is entirely possible that Morsi's stance was born of a lack of ability. Mubarak's downfall was no small feat, and in his departure, Egypt was hardly in any position to have an easy or simple transition towards any other form of government or ideology. The task at hand involved rebuilding a country which had suffered decades of harsh oppression, and it is entirely possible that even Morsi's presidential opponents would not have been up to the task. The fact remains, however, that it was Morsi who was voted in as President, and it was Morsi who failed not only to hold Egyptian society in some semblance of union, but actually played an integral role in breaking it apart. Pushing the draft constitution forward, and eventually implementing it, was considered perhaps the greatest example of this lack of understanding. The draft would come to represent the new regime's inability to recognize and mend Egypt's fractured society, as well as its failure of leadership, two themes which would become even more pronounced over the next six months.

#### Political Society and the Coptic Christians

Throughout all of this difficulty, the Coptic Christian population was largely a non-factor, despite their wishes to the contrary. Following the successful revolution, there was a great deal of expectation regarding the forthcoming role of the Coptic Christian populace in Egypt. Severely underrepresented during the eras of Nasser, Sadat, and Mubarak, the Copts believed the liberal emphasis of the revolution would allow them opportunities to play a

greater role in the forthcoming government. While in the past the Copts were not actively persecuted by the government, neither were they particularly well defended against harassment from elements within the Muslim majority. For example, since Nasser's era, there was an unspoken policy stating that only Muslims could occupy senior state positions, "with the exception of a few "public Copts" as a token. There [was] no Coptic college dean, university rector, or provincial governor".<sup>278</sup> Copts also required specific permits from the head of state to build churches, which were given out with less and less frequency following Nasser's coup.<sup>279</sup> The Copts hoped to reverse their situation with Mubarak's removal.

Despite the role they played during the revolution, and assurances made by the Muslim majority, the Coptic Christians were soon relegated to a very minor position in the wake of Mubarak's downfall. In addition to the violence mentioned in the previous chapter, after Morsi was elected President, and the time came to select a new Egyptian cabinet, only a single Copt<sup>280</sup> was selected by Morsi and his prime minister, Hesham Qandil.<sup>281</sup> Qandil justified this exclusion by stating that he made his decisions without regard to "party affiliation, sect, religion, or gender," that "all [he saw was] Egyptians," though he eventually chose two women, one of whom was also the single Copt.<sup>282</sup>

Such sentiments of complete equality are certainly idealistic. There is even a strong belief within the Coptic community which does not seek to distinguish the Copts from other Egyptians, but instead to "so fully and harmoniously [integrate the Copts] into Egyptian

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<sup>278</sup> David Zeidan, "The Copts--Equal, Protected or Persecuted? The Impact of Islamization on Muslim-Christian Relations in Modern." *Islam & Christian-Muslim Relations* 10, no 1. (1999): 58.

<sup>279</sup> Ibid.

<sup>280</sup> D. Parvaz, "Egypt's feminists prepare for a long battle," *Al Jazeera*, Feb. 7, 2012. <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2012/01/2012117113758961894.html>.

<sup>281</sup> Kareem Fahim, "New Egyptian Cabinet Includes Many Holdovers," *New York Times*, Aug. 2012. [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/03/world/middleeast/new-egyptian-cabinet.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/08/03/world/middleeast/new-egyptian-cabinet.html?_r=0).

<sup>282</sup> Ibid.

society as to be indistinguishable from Muslims".<sup>283</sup> Mona Makram-Ebeid, a prominent Coptic politician, even made it clear that her agenda was not in favor of pushing for a Coptic political wing. According to Makram-Ebeid:

Dignity, justice, freedom and human rights were the issues... She didn't particularly define herself as a Coptic politician, nor even as a feminist. Yes, women's issues were of concern to her, but first and foremost she was an Egyptian politician. She was sceptical of the inward-looking attitude of many Coptic Christians - politicians and laypersons. She was troubled by the Copts' incomplete absorption into the Egyptian political establishment and refused to play the token Copt or woman.<sup>284</sup>

Assuming, however, that Egyptian society has progressed far enough to enjoy such religious equanimity completely ignores decades of sectarian strife. Instead, Qandil's words revealed the idea that Copts should not expect the government to address the deep, historical inequalities between Copt and Muslim, a remarkably tone deaf way of handling decades of sectarian strife. This dismissal of societal inequalities essentially asks the oppressed group to allow itself to be marginalized. Anne Phillips makes this point when she says "when an oppressed group is called upon to put its own partial needs aside, it is being asked to legitimate its own oppression".<sup>285</sup> By ignoring this fundamental characteristic of Egyptian society, the newly formed Egyptian government set itself up to fail in even the appearance of endeavoring towards an inclusive and liberal government, such as the one they had been pledging to build.

It should also be noted that Qandil's sentiment is hardly isolated. Morsi, prior to his election, described the Copts' situation as "fake problems that had been produced by the

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<sup>283</sup> Yvonne Haddad, "Good Copt, Bad Copt: Competing Narratives on Coptic Identity in Egypt and the United States." *Studies in World Christianity* 19, no 3. (2013): 215.

<sup>284</sup> "Copts step out of Church's shadow," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, May 19, 2012.  
[www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

<sup>285</sup> Anne Phillips, *Democracy and Difference* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State UP, 1993), 94.



former regime", meant to distract from real issues.<sup>286</sup> His runner-up in the election, Ahmed Shafiq also stated that "Christians should be excused for their worries after the Islamic current dominated parliament. I say to them: wait, things might be better. Egyptian people will never allow for any offence against Copts".<sup>287</sup> This is an idealistic sentiment, but not indicative of societal realities.

This isolation of the Copts became more pronounced when, shortly after his election, Morsi introduced his draft constitution. Islamists within the government stating that "the principles of Islamic law' should continue to be the guiding principle for Egyptian law...[and] that the al-Azhar institution, the leading authority in Sunni Islam, should be consulted on any matters related to Islamic law".<sup>288</sup> No mention was made of how emphasizing Islam as the centre of governance would affect the Copts.

The draft was approved and passed in December 2012, but was ultimately replaced by a new constitution put forward after Morsi was deposed as President. Even though it did not last long, Morsi's draft constitution is still integral in discussing the role, or lack thereof, that the Coptic population played within Egyptian politics. Though the draft constitution did not explicitly state that *shari'a* would be the only source of law within Egypt, neither did it state any alternative. Given the lack of input from the Coptic population, as well as liberals, reformists, and women, the draft constitution was very problematic for any demographics beyond male Islamists. The acceptance of this exclusion also has ramifications for Egypt's prospects of moving away from an authoritarian government.

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<sup>286</sup> "Egyptian talk show discusses presidential candidates' vision on Coptic issue," *BBC Monitoring Middle East – Political Supplied by BBC Worldwide Monitoring*, May 13, 2012. [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

<sup>287</sup> Ibid.

<sup>288</sup> Jon Leyne, "Egypt Divisions Likely to Deepen over Draft Constitution," *BBC News*, Nov. 30, 2012. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-20553766>.

Guillermo O'Donnell states that, "under democracy, the state institutions have the duty (correlative to the rights of political and civil leadership) of treating everyone with the full fairness, consideration, and respect due to an agent".<sup>289</sup> With this idea in mind, there are two main problems for the Copts that Morsi's draft constitution presented. The first is that the Morsi government had no issue with completing the draft constitution without the involvement or even consideration of the Coptic population. This shows that Coptic Christian participation in the government, despite claims to the contrary, was not important to the Morsi government. This particular point, however, might be characteristic only of the Morsi regime; there is no accounting for how Morsi's successor will behave in relation to Coptic considerations and political aspirations. The fact remains, however, that historically, the Copts have been a forgotten entity during the decades Mubarak's tenure. The second problem, however, is more deeply seeded, and far more difficult to change. This problem is that the draft was voted in with 63 percent approval. Therefore, a majority of voting Egyptians are fine, or at least indifferent, with the continued marginalization of the Coptic Christians, both in their involvement in government, as well as their rights in society. This point is certainly undermined by the low voter turnout of approximate 33%, however, such numbers are not inconsistent with Egyptian turnouts in the past.<sup>290</sup> The results of the referendum may also have a profound effect on the behaviour of prospective political candidates, who, seeking a pragmatic approach to elections, will attempt to curry the favor of this majority.

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<sup>289</sup> Guillermo O'Donnell, Jorge Vargas Cullell, and Oswaldo Miguel Iazzetta, *The Quality of Democracy: Theory and Applications* (Notre Dame, IN: University of Notre Dame, 2004), 35.

<sup>290</sup> The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance, "Voter turnout data for Egypt," *The International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance*. Oct. 5, 2011. <http://www.idea.int/vt/countryview.cfm?CountryCode=EG>.

If Islamic principles play a role within the Egyptian government non-Muslims would lack the same capabilities within both government and society because they would not have similar representation. Regardless of how a Coptic Christian may vote, if an Islamic body can influence, or even be allowed to make the final decision about a particular issue, then the Coptic position within political society will remain deeply unequal compared to that of the Muslim. Furthermore, depending on how fundamental the Islamic governing body acts, this inequality may bleed outwards towards other demographics, such as women, who already have a poor standing within Egypt.

Linz and Stepan's definition of a healthy political society includes the involvement of civil society. The exclusion of the Coptic Christian population, which makes up approximately ten percent of the overall Egyptian population, is a problematic sign for the post-Mubarak transition, especially given the Islamic majority's complacency in the matter. Anne Phillips describes this failure succinctly:

It is indeed dangerous to pretend that who or what we are is irrelevant, to ask people to submerge their group differences in an abstract citizenship, to say that politics is only a matter of ideas. Such complacency leaves democracy too much at the mercy of existing power relations, which will just reproduce existing patterns of power. More specifically, the composition of political representatives does matter, and we need the kind of institutional changes that will guarantee proportionality – at least by ethnicity and gender...We exist not just as abstract citizens, but also as members of variously privileged or disadvantaged groups. Political organization based around the dominant cleavages – whether these are gender or class or ethnicity or religion – is rightly viewed as one possible means of redressing the balance.<sup>291</sup>

This exclusion may be the single greatest obstacle that Egypt faces if it hopes to establish a legitimate democracy.

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<sup>291</sup> Anne Phillips, *Democracy and Difference* (University Park, PA: Pennsylvania State UP, 1993), 100-101.

### Unrest, Instability, and Military Intervention

In 2013, protests persisted almost unceasingly. Clashes between police and protesters were common, often culminating in several deaths amongst the protesters. During this time, the Morsi government seemed unable or unwilling to make any decisions to counteract the growing tide of discontent amongst the Egyptian people. Morsi supporters instead turned the blame against the opposition, accusing it of “corruption, betraying the homeland, and serving its own partisan interests, and of using violence to destroy Egypt and instigate chaos. They described the opposition leaders as *fuloul*<sup>292</sup> ...and extremist secularists who hate Islam”.<sup>293</sup> Gone was any pretense of dialogue between the two groups, replaced by the rampant finger pointing that characterized the Mubarak regime in the last days of his presidency.

Morsi turned his attentions to matters which were, at best, questionable, instead of the pressing issues of security or economic concerns,. On March 30<sup>th</sup>, an arrest warrant was issued for Bassem Youssef, a political satirist, for “insulting Islam and [Morsi]”, an attempt to silence opposition.<sup>294</sup> This was even followed up with another arrest warrant, this time for popular Western satirist Jon Stewart, who attacked Morsi for his media restrictions as well as arresting Youssef.

With Morsi’s attention set on consolidating his power, any hopes of dialogue between the ruling government and its opposition quickly vanished. In its place, the opposition ramped up its protests against the Morsi government, leading to a kind of stalemate between the two powers, one which led to a state of torpor in Egypt’s political transition. In the

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<sup>292</sup> Remnants of the Mubarak regime.

<sup>293</sup> N. Shamni and H. Varulkar, "Egypt Prepares For Second Anniversary Of January 25 Revolution Amid Unprecedented Tension Between Muslim Brotherhood And Opposition Camp," *MEMRI*, Jan. 24, 2013. [http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6951.htm#\\_edn6](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6951.htm#_edn6).

<sup>294</sup> "Egypt satirist Bassem Youssef faces arrest warrant." *BBC News*, March 30, 2013. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-21980343>.

absence of any real political discourse between political society and civil society, a different dialogue emerged, between the Morsi government and the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces.

There were already some problems between the regime and the SCAF after Morsi forced Mohamed Hussein Tantawi, former head of the armed forces and defense minister, to retire shortly after the presidential election. Now rumors began to circulate that there were plans to “replace the top echelon of the military with one loyal to the MB. These fears emerged following statements by MB officials that were interpreted as criticism of the current military leadership”.<sup>295</sup>

Not even a year earlier, Egyptian civil society was in uproar over even the possibility of the military playing a continued role in government. Lavi describes this attitude as follows:

The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) ruled Egypt for 18 months, starting with the ouster of Hosni Mubarak in January 2011 and ending with President Muhammad Morsi's victory in the June 2012 election. During its rule, the SCAF was widely criticized publicly; mass protests were held and there were calls for its removal. In mid-August 2012, Morsi, to establish his status, removed the military's top echelon; this move was not strongly opposed, and even led to speculation that there was an alliance between the new leadership of the military and the Muslim Brotherhood (MB).<sup>296</sup>

In 2013, however, with discontent steadily fomenting, public opinion began to turn, and the military was again embraced as a potential agent of change. The rumors of Morsi's regime changing the military hierarchy to one more suitable for the regime's goals quickly sparked more protests, this time in support of the military.

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<sup>295</sup> L. Lavi, "In Egypt, Tension Between Mursi Regime And Military, And Calls To Restore Armed Forces To Power." *MEMRI*. April 30, 2013. [http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/7157.htm#\\_edn3](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/7157.htm#_edn3).

<sup>296</sup> Ibid.

Defense Minister and Supreme Commander of the Egyptian Armed Forces Abdel Al-Fatah El-Sisi quickly began to rise in popularity amongst large swathes of the Egyptian people. This popularity was spurred on by the Morsi government's specific desire to see him replaced by a pro-regime ally. There were calls from liberals as well as disillusioned Brotherhood supporters for El-Sisi to be appointed as president, replacing Morsi.<sup>297</sup> Many of these calls ignored the electoral process altogether, though high ranking liberals, including the National Salvation Front, did not.<sup>298</sup> These liberals instead called for only security intervention, not political.<sup>299</sup> Ultimately, this intervention did occur, as the military deposed Egypt's first elected post-revolution president.

It seemed that the military had returned to its previous role – defending national security, and distancing itself from political affairs – and thus regaining the public's trust and its image as the people's military. In the process of regaining this trust, however, the military also became the most viable option for the Egyptian leadership. This created a potential repetition of the pre-revolution Egyptian government, where the country was led for almost sixty years by military men. It is impossible to know for certain that a military bred president would cause Egypt to regress to Mubarak-era politics. There is, however, reason to be doubtful of the liberal aspirations of the now Egyptian president, Abdel Al-Fatah El-Sisi. These reasons include his immediate crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood in the days of Morsi's deposal. The subjugation of Islamists, specifically the Brotherhood, as well as the potential marginalization of the Coptic Christians, and potentially even liberal groups

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<sup>297</sup> Ibid.

<sup>298</sup> Ibid.

<sup>299</sup> Ibid.

(perhaps the largest unknown for a military-led government) creates some very real doubts about the kind of the political society that is forming in Egypt.

### A Return to Military Leadership

Like civil society, the failings of political society revolved around the inability for the dominant powers to reconcile their differences and work towards positive change. While this solution seems like it should have been simple, the truth is that successfully transitioning from one form of government to another is no simple task. This is complicated further due to the regional culture. North Africa and the Middle East is a region where a governmental transition is an overwhelming rarity. Given also that Egypt's political culture has largely been built around decades of authoritarian rule, certain tendencies were bound to roll over into the post-Mubarak political sphere.

It is entirely possible that Mubarak's former regime did in fact play a significant role in the way the Morsi government behaved while in office. Morsi created an environment of political exclusion, ignoring all other avenues of discourse in favor of unilateral, partisan decision making, the same methods utilized by the Mubarak regime, and those of Sadat and Nasser before him. It is not entirely surprising that after decades of absolute, concentrated power, a newly formed government, even with liberal aspirations as the basis of change, would still behave the same as its predecessor. After decades of often violent and brutal suppression it is reasonable to assume that the Muslim Brotherhood, gaining a position of power, would seek to use their power to redress their position in a less than even and democratic manner. It is furthermore impossible to know if the liberal opposition would have

behaved differently. Ultimately, what is noteworthy is that the rifts within the Egyptian political landscape remained unbridged, and the end result was a lopsided political society characterized by heavy polarization. Whether or not these problems are irreconcilable is something that future Egyptian leaders will have to address.



## Chapter Four

### Rule of Law

The third of Stepan and Linz's arenas is the rule of law. According to Linz and Stepan, the rule of law revolves around a "spirit of constitutionalism [which] requires more than rule by majoritarianism".<sup>300</sup> This definition is specifically used to describe the rule of law in a consolidated democracy, however, it can still be used when examining political transition more broadly. The interim government that took power following Mubarak's deposal, nor the Morsi government which was elected in 2012, had the opportunity to create a new "hierarchy of laws" to replace or even revise Mubarak's old ones. Therefore, this chapter will concentrate primarily on the failure to successfully re-establish a working legal system by examining Morsi's draft constitution, put forward in 2012; Morsi's deposal in the summer of 2013; and the judiciary's status and role following Mubarak's deposal

### Rule of Law: The Arab Spring of January 2011

Mubarak's ouster was not so much an example of the rule of law, as much as it was the result of a lack thereof. As mentioned in previous chapters, Hosni Mubarak ruled Egypt with an almost childlike assumption of invincibility. For thirty years, Mubarak found legitimacy through rigged elections that were comically one-sided.<sup>301</sup> His reign was characterized primarily by his singular obsession of maintaining power. Mubarak accomplished this by brutally suppressing any emerging opposition. In order to perpetuate his

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<sup>300</sup> Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1996), 7.

<sup>301</sup> Michael Bowen, "Analysis: Egypt's unfinished revolution," *BBC News*, Feb. 8, 2011. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-12396728>.

survival, he ignored the troubles of the average Egyptian, in lieu of appeasing the wealthy Egyptian elite which composed the majority of his support base.<sup>302</sup>

Stepan and Linz' definition is readily problematic when compared with Mubarak's political platform, specifically Linz and Stepan's point about the "spirit of constitutionalism" defined by plurality and bipartisanship. As Linz and Stepan describe this idea, "the spirit of constitutionalism" revolves around cohesion between various demographics or interest groups, allowing for greater or equal rights for minority populations, and avoiding a tyranny of the majority (in the case of Mubarak's Egypt, the wealthy, powerful elites.) This spirit of constitutionalism achieves this plurality primarily by creating an inclusive constitution which holds the rights of all groups as paramount. Encouraging negotiation and compromise, rather than assuming the political arena winner-take-all. Mubarak, of course, did not affect any of these changes, and in 2011, the Egyptian people pulled him from power.

#### Amendments and Elections: 2011

Though not the most significant event in regards to the law, the referendum on the constitutional amendments in 2011 became the first major conflict between the two prevailing factions, and would be repeated in the coming months. If the amendments were voted in, they would be beneficial to the highly organized Islamist bloc within Egypt, as the amendments would speed up elections, giving the Islamists a substantial advantage over the less organized liberals. If the amendments were voted against, they would delay elections, providing the liberals with much needed time to prepare. Ultimately, the constitutional

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<sup>302</sup> Curtis Ryan, "Political Strategies and Regime Survival in Egypt," *Journal of Third World Studies* 18, no. 2 (September 2001): 42.

amendments were voted in, but the argument that followed from the liberal side was whether they should have been approved. From the Islamist bloc the question was whether this success gave them more room to maneuver as they pleased. These perspectives created tension in both civil and political society, which only grew during the presidential election.

These contentious attitudes run contrary to the pluralistic guidelines set forth by Stepan and Linz, and encouraged during Mubarak's ouster, but would persist nonetheless. Following the Muslim Brotherhood's successes in the parliamentary elections, the liberals were vocal in their disapproval of the new president. Many liberals called for a boycott of the second round of voting, after it became clear the frontrunners were an Islamist, and a former member of the Mubarak regime.<sup>303</sup> ElBaradei even asked that the first term in office be limited to one year.<sup>304</sup> Despite these protests, Morsi was voted into office, with no limits placed on his tenure.

The bitter attitude adopted by the liberals during the presidential elections shows a recurring trend. Morsi was voted in democratically in fair and free elections. Certainly, losing an election, especially such a monumental and historic one such as Egypt's first elections following Mubarak's deposal, can be frustrating, however, legal rights of office cannot simply be changed at a whim within a state with a functioning rule of law. As Stepan and Linz stated, rule of law requires a "commitment to 'self-binding' procedures of governance that require exceptional majorities to change".<sup>305</sup> A spasm of anger and frustration at losing an election should not be enough to justify a drastic change in electoral process.

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<sup>303</sup> "Decision Time," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, June 15, 2012. [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

<sup>304</sup> Ibid.

<sup>305</sup> Juan Linz and Alfred Stepan, *Problems of Democratic Transition and Consolidation: Southern Europe, South America, and Post-Communist Europe* (Baltimore: The John Hopkins University Press, 1996), 10.

The speed with which the liberals moved to try and limit Morsi's first term illuminates two very troubling points about the liberals concerning the rule of law. The first is that by encouraging a circumvention of the law in order to facilitate a more favorable situation for themselves, they undermine the law and their own liberal aspirations. The law does not exist only when it is convenient, and it must be universally applied within a functional, liberal democracy. Linz and Stepan state: "All significant actors – especially the democratic government and the state – must respect and uphold the rule of law...it also requires an independent judicial system...supported by a strong legal culture in civil society".<sup>306</sup>

The reticence of the liberals to play a role in the political landscape of Egypt, and instead immediately begin to circumvent the legal system shows a deep misunderstanding of the law, as defined within a working democracy. This attitude also directly contradicts the spirit of constitutionalism that Linz and Stepan encourage. The second point is that by attempting to change the rules without an exceptional majority for support, and in contradiction with the very basic tenets of the rule of law, shows that the liberals were not truly democrats. The democratic process requires the legitimate possibility that an election may be lost, as well as the expectation that the losing side will adhere to the result. Again, this uncertainty is O'Donnell's democratic wager. Morsi's spectacular failure in his presidency is not the salient issue insofar as the rule of law is concerned; rather it is the liberals' inability to even attempt to work with him to find compromise in an already volatile situation.

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<sup>306</sup> Ibid., 10.

Admittedly, the liberals' resistance was born from fear that the Islamists would quickly dismantle the country's liberal democratic ambitions. Liberals worried that the very same liberal institutions, established for the purposes of creating a democratic system, would instead be used to dismantle democracy. The fear was that *shari'a* would be the focal point of political transition. The "spirit of constitutionalism" characterized by plurality and bipartisanship was likewise ignored by the Islamists, in favor of a creating a potentially one-sided state of affairs similar to Mubarak's previous dictatorship, though differing ideologically. To combat this possibility, the liberals used tactics which contradicted many of the ideas that they espoused. Their choice to boycott the various elections was considered a tactic of de-legitimization, showing that not all sides would be properly represented.

Likewise, the Islamists, despite their constant reassurance, were also not truly democrats, but for different reasons. Instead of violating the letter of the law, the Islamists violated its spirit. While they did work within the boundaries created within the legal system, they did so in a way that alienated and weakened their opposition. As the end of 2012 neared, however, and Morsi began preparing his draft constitution, many of these fears became far more justified, as Morsi began to abuse his powers.

#### The Draft Constitution: November 2012

Before the presidential election, neither the liberals nor the Islamists performed any truly egregious violation of the law. These actions were seen in the harsh oppression of the interim military government, but not in the two main political factions. There was much rhetoric which ran contrary to the rule of the law, but at the point that Morsi was elected,

very little had actually been done. The draft constitution created by Morsi's government was put forward at the end of 2012, and was immediately met with outrage from opponents of the Islamists, namely the liberals, due to its emphasis on Islam as the fundamental basis for Egyptian policy and politics, as well as the omission of minority and gender rights. Morsi had already faced heavy criticism from the judiciary for assuming powers which effectively barred the courts from opposing his decisions.<sup>307</sup> Morsi would annul the decree shortly thereafter, but before he did so, he pushed through a referendum on the contested draft constitution. Morsi's opponents, primarily liberals, felt that this draft constitution was self-serving, and ignored many of the original goals of the 2011 revolution.

The draft constitution also highlights, much to the chagrin of Egyptian liberals that the central political conflict was not between Islamists and liberals, *shari'a* and secularism. Instead, there seemed to be no question or argument from the Islamists about whether or not *shari'a* would be applied, only discussion on *how* fundamental its application would be. As one source from the committee who deliberated over the draft constitution put it, the question was simply "how much *shari'a* should we have?"<sup>308</sup> *Shari'a* has been a part of Egypt's constitution for decades, however, now the debate centered on whether it should still be included and just how widespread its inclusion should be.<sup>309</sup> Meanwhile, while debate around *shari'a* is so hotly contested, issues such as the role of the judiciary and the balance of powers are almost completely ignored."<sup>310</sup> To highlight this prioritization, thousands of ultraconservative Salafis demonstrated in favor of a more fundamental constitution, pushing

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<sup>307</sup> "Egypt judges condemn Morsi's new powers," *Al Jazeera*, Nov. 24, 2012.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/11/2012112415251208318.html>.

<sup>308</sup> Gregg Carlstrom, "Political Clash Over Egypt's Constitution," *Al Jazeera*, Oct. 20, 2012.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2012/10/20121019620186523.html>

<sup>309</sup> Ibid.

<sup>310</sup> Ibid.

for archaic measures to be added to the draft constitution, including the protection of female genital mutilation and the marriage of girls as young as nine years old.<sup>311</sup>

Given the fractured state of civil and political society, the draft constitution created many problems for all factions, all of whom were extremely reluctant to work with one another. Morsi sought to create a draft constitution that relied on *shari'a*, but not so severely that any moderates would assume he was attempting to create an Islamist state.<sup>312</sup> Meanwhile, more fundamental Islamists, such as the Salafis, believed that Morsi's constitution was not heavy handed enough.<sup>313</sup> The liberal faction, including the Coptic Christians and women's rights activists, wanted the omission entirely of any religious emphasis in favor of secular gains and more specific protection of religion and gender rights.<sup>314</sup> To this faction, the inclusion of *shari'a* simply exchanged one totalitarian regime for a different type. Lastly, there was the military that feared Morsi's constitution was a step towards reducing their power, or even replacing them with pro-Islamic elements. With none of these factions willing to compromise, the constitution was treated as a zero-sum game, with each side vying to have their own priorities to trump all others.

Looking at the draft constitution itself, there are several articles that are highly contested. Article 2 of the draft was, perhaps, the most contentious in the entire draft. Article 2 reads: "Islam is the religion of the state and Arabic is its official language. The principles of Islamic Sharia are the principle source of legislation." The article was completely

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<sup>311</sup> "Egypt's ultraconservatives demand Islamic Law," *Al Jazeera*, Nov. 9, 2012. <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2012/11/201211916932346480.html>

<sup>312</sup> David D. Kirkpatrick, "A Vague Role for Religion in Egyptian Draft Constitution," *New York Times*, Nov. 9, 2012. [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/10/world/middleeast/draft-egyptian-constitution-adopts-a-role-for-religion.html?\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/10/world/middleeast/draft-egyptian-constitution-adopts-a-role-for-religion.html?_r=0)

<sup>313</sup> Ibid.

<sup>314</sup> Ibid.

unchanged from its initial inclusion in the 1971 constitution.<sup>315</sup> This lack of progress was the main reason why article 2 was so problematic for the liberals, as it completely negated one of their central wishes: change. Inclusion of *shari'a* indicated that the draft was not progressive. Muslims were given favor, while the sizable Coptic Christian population, as well as smaller groups, such as the Baha'i were ignored. The article itself was actually unclear on what the limits would be for the role of *shari'a*. It is entirely possible that *shari'a* would only be used lightly, or even in conjunction with more inclusive policies. The opposite, however, may have been true as well, that Islam and *shari'a* could have become the primary inspiration for legislation. Liberals feared this would ultimately be the case, once power had been further consolidated:

Through the proposed draft constitution, the [Muslim Brotherhood] hopes to send a message – both within Egypt and internationally – that Egypt under its helm is not bowing to Islamic radicalism. At the same time, it is trying to leave the formulations of articles pertaining to religious status vague and convoluted, giving room for maneuvering and making it possible to grant the constitution a more radical interpretation at a later date.<sup>316</sup>

This uncertainty creates the possibility that the rule of law could be used against itself to establish an illiberal legal system.

Even within the assembly, there was a general consensus that opposing article 2 was a lost cause, and that at least preserving the ambiguous language was a victory.<sup>317</sup> Outside of the assembly, in the Egyptian media and intelligentsia were more enthusiastic to call out the problems of article 2. Abd Al-Mu'ti Higazi specifically pointed out the contradiction of

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<sup>315</sup> The New Constitution of the Arab Republic of Egypt, 2012, art. 2. <http://constitutionaltransitions.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Egypt-Constitution-26-December-2012.pdf>.

<sup>316</sup> L. Lavi, "An Examination Of Egypt's Draft Constitution Part I: Religion And State – The Most Islamic Constitution In Egypt's History," *MEMRI*, December 3, 2012. [http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6846.htm#\\_edn9](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6846.htm#_edn9).

<sup>317</sup> L. Lavi, "An Examination Of Egypt's Draft Constitution Part II: The Egyptian Public Debate Over Religion And State." December 5, 2012. [http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6851.htm#\\_ednref14](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6851.htm#_ednref14).



identifying Egypt as a democratic country (according to article 1),<sup>318</sup> but then promoting such an inherently undemocratic article: “When [Islamic factions] say that the *shari’a* is the main source for legislation, they are bringing together two parallel threads that could never meet, for the *shari’a* pertains to Muslims alone, whereas legislation is the basic right of all Egyptians, since the people [are] the source of all authorities”.<sup>319</sup> Muhammad Mounir Mugahid was less ideological in his criticism, and bluntly stated that Article 2 “provides constitutional sanction for discriminating between citizens on a religious basis”.<sup>320</sup> The fact remains that the argument, according to Islamists in the assembly was never about whether or not to include *shari’a*, but instead how it should be included, and the extent of its influence.

Beyond article 2, article 219 was introduced, which read: “principles of Islamic *shari’a* include general evidence, foundational rules, rules of jurisprudence, and credible sources accepted in Sunni doctrines and by the larger community”.<sup>321</sup> The purpose of this addition was to ensure that a shallow reading of article 2 could not occur. Article 219 assures that terms of article 2, specifically the points regarding *shari’a*, could not be limited, allowing a potentially broader implementation of *shari’a*. Article 219’s addition was even more problematic because of its identification of Sunni juridical schools which meant theoretically that a larger portion of the Egyptian populace could be discriminated against, specifically “all who are not Sunni Muslims, including Shi’ites”.<sup>322</sup> Certain radical Islamist groups, including the fairly popular Salafis made little effort to hide their intentions to enact

<sup>318</sup> The New Constitution of the Arab Republic of Egypt, 2012, art. 2. <http://constitutionaltransitions.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Egypt-Constitution-26-December-2012.pdf>.

<sup>319</sup> L. Lavi, "An Examination Of Egypt's Draft Constitution Part II: The Egyptian Public Debate Over Religion And State," December 5, 2012. [http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6851.htm#\\_ednref14](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6851.htm#_ednref14).

<sup>320</sup> Ibid.

<sup>321</sup> The New Constitution of the Arab Republic of Egypt, 2012, art. 219. <http://constitutionaltransitions.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Egypt-Constitution-26-December-2012.pdf>.

<sup>322</sup> L. Lavi, "An Examination Of Egypt's Draft Constitution Part I: Religion And State – The Most Islamic Constitution In Egypt's History," *MEMRI*, Dec. 3, 2012. [http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6846.htm#\\_edn9](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6846.htm#_edn9).

greater *shari'a* in this method were they ever in a position of power. For example, one of the most extreme of these legal changes was the Salafist proposal "calling for a reduction in the minimum marriage age for women to nine years if the girl has reached puberty".<sup>323</sup> Other archaic practices, such as the cutting off of hands for theft, could easily follow. Though it did not say so directly, article 219 had the potential to allow codification of *shari'a* into Egypt's legal system.

The uncertainty of article 2 transfers to article 3 as well, which read: "the principles of Christian and Jewish laws are the main source of legislation for followers of Christianity and Judaism in matters pertaining to personal status, religious affairs and nomination of spiritual leaders."<sup>324</sup> Initially, this article seemed like progress for the minority populations, but there were still problems apparent even here. First, was the omission of any non-Christian, non-Judaic religions, such as Baha'ism. It is unclear how polytheistic religions would fare, as there was no mention of them whatsoever in the draft constitution. Second was the perceived potential for abuse based on the vagueness of both article 3 and its preceding article. Article 3 allowed certain personal religious freedoms, but did not stipulate the extent to which these freedoms could be stretched. It is unclear, for example, if article 3 would protect a Copt from being discriminated against by a Muslim employer.

There was also concern, when taking into account the constitution's Islamic character, that article 3 may be an attempt to judge all non-Muslims by Islamic standards. To put it another way, making an unequal distinction between Muslims and non-Muslims leaves open

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<sup>323</sup> Ahmad Naguib Roushdy, "The codification of Sharia," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, March 5, 2013. [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

<sup>324</sup> The New Constitution of the Arab Republic of Egypt, 2012, art. 3. <http://constitutionaltransitions.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Egypt-Constitution-26-December-2012.pdf>.

the possibility that the freedoms of the minority (in this case, non-Muslims) would be open to the interpretations of the majority (Muslims), because all such conversations about rights and freedoms can be filtered through the beliefs of the majority. Egyptian liberal and political analyst Tarek Heggy described this concern as follow:

Out of the womb of faith in pluralism issues faith in otherness (the acceptance of the other). And out of the womb of either comes "relativism". By this I mean that in the culture and climate of a more progressive society the concept of the relative nature of opinions, rulings, theories and interpretations is widely shared. The Islamist may say, in his own words, that he believes in relativism, yet a discussion with him on the subject of women, non-Muslims, the theory of evolution or opposing viewpoints will always go to prove that the Islamist cannot welcome relativism. For by his nature he must extend the "absolute" beyond the realm of the private and personal onto the realm of public affairs. Consequently he alone -- as opposed to anyone else on the face of the planet today -- is the one who, in his ideology, possesses "permanent solutions" that may not be changed to face up to problems which by their very nature are changeable. If you were to say to him that these solutions are the product of specific times and places he will become angry and simply reject this logic.<sup>325</sup>

Without specific guarantees, there was legitimate concern that article 3 did not go far enough to protect religious minorities from the Islamic majority who had openly oppressed them for decades.

The third concern was the even greater emphasis placed on religion. Egypt is strongly defined by religion and article 3 was meant to provide assurances that non-Muslims (at least Copts and Jews) would be able to have some increased rights. Liberals in particular worried that defining the Egyptian constitution so heavily in terms of religion would eventually undermine any attempts to create a secular civil code, and potentially further isolate non-Muslims from the Muslim majority. Instead of having specific, constitutionally sponsored protection of their religious rights, many Copts simply wanted equality as citizens and in the eyes of the law.<sup>326</sup> Article 3 could even be interpreted as "special allowances" for the non-

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<sup>325</sup> Tarek Heggy, "Political Islam versus modernity," *Al-Ahram*, Sept. 8, 2012. [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

<sup>326</sup> L. Lavi, "An Examination Of Egypt's Draft Constitution Part II: The Egyptian Public Debate Over Religion And State." Dec. 5, 2012. [http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6851.htm#\\_ednref14](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6851.htm#_ednref14).

Muslims, creating resentment among the Muslim minority due to irrational fears that perhaps these religious minorities might have advantages that Muslims do not.

These three articles adequately demonstrate how deeply Morsi's draft constitution created rifts in Egyptian society. These articles promoted exclusivity within government and created different standards for different minority groups based on religion. Instead, the draft constitution should have focused on issues that would have promoted stability and at least attempted to bridge the ever-increasing gap between factions. Even then, there was enough uncertainty and vagueness in these articles that one could at least entertain a hope of plurality. Article 4, however, complicates this issue. It reads:

Al-Azhar is an encompassing independent Islamic institution, with exclusive competence over its own affairs. It is responsible for preaching Islam, theology and the Arabic language in Egypt and throughout the world. Al-Azhar's Council of Senior Scholars is to be consulted in matters relating to Islamic Shari'a. The state ensures sufficient funds for Al-Azhar to achieve its objectives. Al-Azhar's Grand Sheikh is independent and cannot be dismissed. The method of appointing the Grand Sheikh from among members of the Council of Senior Scholars is to be determined by law. The foregoing is regulated by law.<sup>327</sup>

The worry that this article created was simple and consistent with previous concerns: "many [feared] this clause [would] politicise the Sunni world's most celebrated theological college, and would give an unelected body a sort of veto power over legislation".<sup>328</sup>

On one hand, Al-Azhar is a relatively moderate voice within Islam. Article 4, which gave Al-Azhar a voice in all matters relating to *shari'a* (which according to article 2 would be the principle source of legislation) allowed Morsi and the Muslim Brotherhood to put a check on any extreme application of *shari'a*; Al-Azhar would be unlikely to approve any actions that were too fundamental, as they had in recent history tried to remain relatively

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<sup>327</sup> The New Constitution of the Arab Republic of Egypt, 2012, art. 4. <http://constitutionaltransitions.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Egypt-Constitution-26-December-2012.pdf>.

<sup>328</sup> Gregg Carlstrom, "Political clash over Egypt's constitution," *Al Jazeera*, Oct. 20, 2012. <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2012/10/20121019620186523.html>.

neutral “Al-Azhar is trying to maintain the delicate status quo, in place in recent decades, which provides for partial implementation of the *shari'a*, whereas the Salafis are trying to gain constitutional endorsement of the full implementation of the *shari'a*, a move that would lead to the Islamization of Egypt”.<sup>329</sup> As long as the Al-Azhar institute remained moderate, it would create a constitutionally approved barrier between the extreme fundamentalist goals that the Salafis and more fundamental elements of the Brotherhood were working towards.<sup>330</sup>

On the other hand, as mentioned earlier, article 4 again showed that the main conflict in Egypt at the time was not whether Islam would play a role in Egyptian politics, but instead it became a matter of how large a role Islam would play. As mentioned in the previous chapter, this assumed inclusion of Islam within the constitution would create a state where there is a clear difference between Muslims and non-Muslims. Regardless of how moderate the Al-Azhar Institute is, it is still an Islamic body meant to make decisions based on Islamic doctrine. Any non-Muslims, such as the Coptic Christians, would therefore be forced to comply not with an objective constitution, but one specifically made to prioritize the beliefs and principles of Muslims. This uneven application means that all non-Muslims in Egypt, under Morsi’s draft constitution, may have had to live their lives not in accordance with their own beliefs, but rather in accordance with beliefs that may not be their own. Nada Hussein Rashwan states that “submitting laws to Al-Azhar is in itself an encroachment on legislative authority. Laws apply to everyone equally and should not be under the jurisdiction of people

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<sup>329</sup> L. Lavi, "An Examination Of Egypt's Draft Constitution Part I: Religion And State – The Most Islamic Constitution In Egypt's History," *MEMRI*, Dec. 3, 2012.  
[http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6846.htm#\\_edn9](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6846.htm#_edn9).

<sup>330</sup> L. Lavi, "An Examination Of Egypt's Draft Constitution Part I: Religion And State – The Most Islamic Constitution In Egypt's History," *MEMRI*, Dec. 3, 2012.

who act upon a certain conviction, which means they are not impartial.”<sup>331</sup> Furthermore, while the contemporary Al-Azhar institute is a relatively moderate voice for Islam, there is no saying what the future might hold. If radical Islamists were able to find their way into positions of power within Al-Azhar, a situation might arise where an exceedingly fundamentalist organization would have influence over all legislation, regardless of election results. At the time of the draft constitution, “the Muslim Brotherhood and...Islamist intellectuals [did] represent a challenge to al-Azhar’s religious authority,” due to al-Azhar’s more measured approach to Islam.<sup>332</sup>

This point again arose in Article 6, which stated that the “political democratic system is based on the principles of democracy and consultation (also known as *shura*).”<sup>333 334</sup> This clause was purposefully written as the general principles of *shura* are actually inherently democratic, but their use also distinguishes Egyptian democracy from Western democracy.<sup>335</sup> While *shura* does relate to democratic principles of bipartisanship and discussion, it is still distinctly Islamic. *Shura* makes it clear that the Egyptian government is subject to Islamic tradition, and therefore, anything illegal under the tenets of Islam is not permitted.<sup>336</sup> Simply put, article 6 would allow a constitutionally sponsored tyranny of the majority, while operating under a façade of democratic acceptance. Ironically, article 6 goes on to state that

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<sup>331</sup>Nada Hussein Rashwan, “How Islamist is Egypt’s would-be constitution?” *Al-Ahram Online*, Dec. 14, 2012. <http://english.ahram.org.eg/News/60471.aspx>.

<sup>332</sup>Rachel M. Scott, “What Might the Muslim Brotherhood Do with al-Azharr? Religious Authority in Egypt,” *Welt Des Islams* 52, no. 2 (June. 2012): 143.

<sup>333</sup> Consultation is the direct translation for the Islamic term, *shura*, and is an Islamic principle which states that rules must consult with formally appointed, authoritative advisors. It is a concept which encourages decisions to be made with the direct involvement of those that said decisions would affect.

<sup>334</sup> The New Constitution of the Arab Republic of Egypt, 2012, art. 6. <http://constitutionaltransitions.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Egypt-Constitution-26-December-2012.pdf>.

<sup>335</sup> L. Lavi, “An Examination Of Egypt’s Draft Constitution Part I: Religion And State – The Most Islamic Constitution In Egypt’s History,” *MEMRI*, Dec. 3, 2012.

[http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6846.htm#\\_edn9](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6846.htm#_edn9).

<sup>336</sup> Ibid.

equal citizenship, assuring “political and multi-party pluralism, the peaceful transfer of power, the separation and balance of powers, the rule of law, and respect for human rights and freedoms...as provided in the constitution”.<sup>337</sup> Like Article 4 before it, however, the inclusion of *shura* over a broader democratic process still forces non-Muslims to conform to Muslim beliefs.

The articles discussed here again directly contradicted the “spirit of constitutionalism” that is vital when building a democracy by ignoring diversity and plurality. Morsi’s draft constitution made clear its priority: Islam. While the draft constitution guaranteed freedom of belief for groups such as the Copts, the actual government was still rooted in Islam. Regardless of how accepting of other religions it might be, by using one specific religion over any others inherently precludes these latter religions from enjoying true equality, as ultimately their own beliefs and principles are subordinate to the majority religion. This preferential treatment of one demographic also disregards an independent judiciary, as a religious council having any say whatsoever, no matter how small, ultimately creates bias for and against specific groups.

This distinction between religions essentially negates vital attributes of the rule of law. Instead of having a fair and even legal landscape, there would be a clear demographic that would seem to be benefitting from the constitution at the expense of other groups. Without specific measures to protect these minority groups, this inequality is stretched further. This draft, hastily written and approved, was a self-serving gesture that aimed to further concretize Morsi’s support base which he assumed was both unassailable and reflected the majority of Egyptians.

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<sup>337</sup> The New Constitution of the Arab Republic of Egypt, 2012, art. 6. <http://constitutionaltransitions.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/05/Egypt-Constitution-26-December-2012.pdf>.

### Morsi's Deposal: July 2013

The second event which contradicts a spirit of constitutionalism was Morsi's deposal. His reign as president was at best controversial, and in the relatively short period of a year he not only failed to close the rift between various competing groups, but actually made them worse. He was also unsuccessful in making any significant headway in important issues such as security and the economy, leaving many disillusioned by his previous claims to further Egyptian prosperity under his reign. Even after these failings, when protests broke out it was not a clear majority of Egyptians who wanted to see Morsi deposed. Unlike Mubarak's ouster, there was a large, comparable group of counter protests in Morsi's favor, making it clear that, to use Linz and Stepan's theory, there was no "exceptional majority [seeking] change." Morsi was elected as Egyptian president, and enjoyed a substantial support base, and so military intervention to see him deposed, something that even Mubarak, a dictator of thirty years, was able to escape, creates a difficult situation for Egypt's already struggling rule of law.

The biggest problem was not Morsi's deposal, but the consequences and aftermath of his removal from office. Comparatively, Mubarak's deposal was relatively clean: he was taken from office with relatively little violence. Morsi's deposal, conversely, affected not only him, but also began the subjugation and vilification of The Muslim Brotherhood. It is no secret that many Brotherhood members are against the liberal goal of plurality that is essential in Linz and Stepan's definition of rule of law. If, however, these Brotherhood members are forcibly removed or disallowed from participating within government, the rule of law is still unevenly applied. The worst example of this attack on the Brotherhood was at the Rabaa Mosque, where the military had killed hundreds, if not thousands, of Muslim



Brotherhood members by the end of August 2013, with the Brotherhood claiming death tolls of over 2000 in a brutal massacre.<sup>338</sup>

Morsi's deposal was seen by many liberals as a victory against the conservative, Islamist front, that somehow this military intervention against their Islamist opponents was a victory for the 2011 revolution, a victory for liberalism and democracy. While a few liberals were apprehensive about the military initiative, most supported it enthusiastically. Among these supporters included the National Salvation Front, many within the Egyptian media, and even ElBaradei, who stated that "the military has a national duty to intervene".<sup>339</sup> When the military finally toppled Morsi, the liberals believed themselves victorious.

While Morsi's deposal was certainly a loss for the Islamists, it was not, however, a win for the liberals. In the simplest terms, what happened in Egypt in July 2013 was a military coup against a democratically elected president, though some would contest this assertion. Specifically, many Egyptian liberals were vocal that this deposal was absolutely legitimate: "Many on the left are still locked in a battle of semantics, trying to persuade the world — and perhaps one another — that the overthrow of Mr. Morsi was not a 'coup' but a 'revolution.' The army merely carried out the popular will, they insist".<sup>340</sup> Instead of outrage at killings, such as the one at Rabaa, the attitude was one of celebration and uniform condemnation of the Brotherhood. One Egyptian, when describing the aftermath of the coup, stated: "The very shocking thing for me was...those who were pro-military — they were very OK with ... the death toll. It's acceptable for them because for a lot of people, especially

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<sup>338</sup> James Reynolds, "Egypt declares national emergency," *BBC News*, Aug. 14, 2013. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-23700663>.

<sup>339</sup> "Chronicle Of An Inevitable Intervention: The Egyptian Military Moves In To Direct Egypt's Political Process." *MEMRI*. July 3, 2013. [http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/7273.htm#\\_edn30](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/7273.htm#_edn30).

<sup>340</sup> David D. Kirkpatrick, "Egyptian Liberals Embrace the Military, Brooking No Dissent," *New York Times*, July 15, 2013. <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/16/world/middleeast/egypt-morsi.html?pagewanted=all>.

on the pro-military side, they're considering everyone who is Brotherhood a traitor or a terrorist".<sup>341</sup> Liberal columnist, Khaled Montaser even called the Islamists worse than "criminals and psychopaths...their treason, terrorism, and conspiracies are an indelible tattoo".<sup>342</sup>

Furthermore, arguments against these generalizations were met with extreme hostility. Amr Hamzawy, a political scientist and former member of the dissolved Parliament, quickly denounced the military crackdown on the various Islamist organizations. Hamzawy attacked the liberal rhetoric that followed Morsi's ouster as "rhetoric of gloating, hatred, retribution, and revenge," calling the celebratory mood within the liberal camps following the killings of Islamists as "fascism under the false pretense of democracy and liberalism".<sup>343</sup> Many liberals attacked Hamzawy for being a Brotherhood sympathizer.<sup>344</sup> Even ElBaradei, once the darling of the liberal movement, was denounced after he resigned in protest as interim prime minister following the Rabaa massacre.<sup>345</sup> The National Salvation Front implied that he may have been secretly a Brotherhood supporter, and Ahmed Shafiq, Mubarak's first and last prime minister and former presidential candidate, stated that "ElBaradei was 'on a mission to divide Egypt'".<sup>346</sup>

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<sup>341</sup> Evan Hill, "Many Egyptian liberals back military's crackdown." *Al Jazeera*, Aug. 23, 2013. <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2013/8/23/once-a-vanguard-ofrebellioncairomiddleclassembracesarmyckackdown.html>.

<sup>342</sup> David D. Kirkpatrick, "Egyptian Liberals Embrace the Military, Brooking No Dissent," *New York Times*, July 15, 2013. <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/16/world/middleeast/egypt-morsi.html?pagewanted=all>.

<sup>343</sup> Ibid.

<sup>344</sup> Ibid.

<sup>345</sup> James Reynolds, "Egypt declares national emergency," *BBC News*, Aug. 14, 2013. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-23700663>.

<sup>346</sup> Evan Hill, "Many Egyptian liberals back military's crackdown." *Al Jazeera*, Aug. 23, 2013. <http://america.aljazeera.com/articles/2013/8/23/once-a-vanguard-ofrebellioncairomiddleclassembracesarmyckackdown.html>.

The decisions made by the Morsi government, and the response taken by the liberals and military both portray the rule of law as weak. One of the most vital aspects of a working rule of law, the spirit of constitutionalism, had been completely ignored. Instead of the plurality and compromise required to create an even-handed rule of law within a consolidated democracy, the events that led to Morsi's deposal instead revolved around rapidly expanding polarization and distrust. Without any kind of cooperation, a political environment was created where neither side believed it could succeed in any real capacity if they gave any ground to their adversary. When Morsi won the 2012 presidential election, it was considered a grievous blow to the liberal ambitions for Egypt. When Morsi was deposed a year later, the popular Muslim Brotherhood were branded as terrorists and traitors. With such a poisonous political environment, the likelihood of establishing a fairly applied rule of law was essentially impossible.

Strangely enough, the acceptance of military intervention for Morsi's deposal was widely approved, as it was supposedly for the purpose of bringing Egypt back towards democracy. Examining Morsi's year as president of Egypt shows a profile of inefficiency and ineffectiveness. Regardless of his inability to live up to the impossible standards set for him, what Morsi still had in his favor was that he was democratically elected in fair and free elections. The precedent set in 2013, where a military coup is a suitable response to an unpopular leader, is problematic for any Egyptian leader who does not rule with force, either implied or literal. This coup opens up the possibility for all future leaders to be vulnerable to the whims of the mob or military interests, instead of a concrete legal code.

### Islam, *Shari'a*, and the Rule of Law

These articles, along with the contentions about the draft constitution itself, also bring to the forefront a key conflict left unresolved: Islam and its role on the rule of law. With Egypt's identity so closely tied to Islam, the religion has always been strongly tied to politics. The Muslim Brotherhood was severely repressed under Nasser. Sadat made a brief attempt at reconciliation with Islamic groups. His attempts, however, were clumsy and ineffective, and would lead to his eventual assassination. Mubarak's relationship with these same Islamist forces would often culminate in brutal arrests and torture.

The conclusions this leads to is that, historically, Islam has been an extremely divisive force within Egypt, often causing vast rifts between various actors. This is either because of the ineptitude of the country's rulers to properly broker any kind of harmony in politics and religion, or because of the nature of Islam itself. This question of whether the Egyptian leadership or Islam itself is to blame for this quagmire is exceedingly difficult to answer due to Islam's strong, perhaps inseparable, connection to Arab culture. This uncertainly makes it more difficult to establish if the problems caused by Islam are a problem within the religion itself, or if these problems arise due to the influences of the culture that grew around Islam. Ironically, there exists within the Qur'an and the teachings of the Prophet a strong, underlying idea of unity being dominant above all else. Gudrun Kramer describes this as such: "pushed to its logical conclusion, the emphasis on unity can imply the refusal of all divergence of opinions, of all criticism or opposition to the dominant doctrines and practices,

which are denounced as *fitna*, or menace to and crime against the all-important value of Muslim unity.”<sup>347</sup>

On the surface, Islamic unity may appear to be hostile to plurality that Egypt’s uncooperative factions needed so desperately, however, another interpretation may lead to the opposite conclusion. This argument is based on parts of the Qur’an<sup>348</sup> which point out that while Islam is infallible, mankind is not, and is therefore not “capable of reading the [messages of the Qur’an] correctly and of finding truth with infallible certainty.”<sup>349</sup>

The notion of mankind’s fallibility also directly relates more specifically to *shari’a*. Several Islamic scholars have pointed out that while “*shari’a* was in fact constructed by Muslim jurists...although derived from the Qur’an and Sunna, *shari’a* is not divine because it is the product of *human interpretation* of those sources.”<sup>350</sup> These two perspectives, while encouraging, are also very progressive, and therefore, rarely evident in the platforms of fundamental Islamists, especially those in Egypt. More commonly, when *shari’a* is discussed, specifically in regards to human rights, the results are less optimistic. Few fundamental Muslims are willing to accept this interpretation which places the certainty of *shari’a* on shaky ground, as there is comfort in the supposed divine authority of *shari’a*. Ann E. Mayer stated, rather bluntly, that: “[fundamentalists] uphold the primacy of Revelation over reason”.<sup>351</sup> This statement highlights the conflict within Islam between tradition and progress. While these points are certainly generalizations, there are still many amongst the

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<sup>347</sup> Gudrun Kramer, “Islam and Pluralism,” in *Political Liberalization and Democratization in the Arab World: Theoretical Perspectives*, ed. John D. Kelly et al. (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Pub, 1995), 114.

<sup>348</sup> This thesis is based on Sura 49:13 of the Qur’an: “O mankind, indeed We have created you from male and female and made you peoples and tribes that you may know one another. Indeed, the most noble of you in the sight of Allah is the most righteous of you. Indeed, Allah is Knowing and Acquainted”.

<sup>349</sup> Ibid.

<sup>350</sup> Bassam Tibi, “Islamic Law/Shari’a, Human Rights, Universal Morality and International Relations,” *Human Rights Quarterly* 16, no. 2. (May 1994): 279.

<sup>351</sup> Ibid.

more traditional Islamic community who hold strongly to the absolute authority of all aspects of Islam, which creates the difficulty outlined here.

One thing that is certain is that *shari'a* is unlikely to be removed from Egyptian politics anytime in the near future. Sadat and Mubarak ran largely secular regimes that were hostile to Islamist groups, but even still, the Egyptian constitution adopted in 1971 explicitly named Islam the state religion, and *shari'a* the country's principle source of legislation.<sup>352</sup> Despite this, *shari'a*, or more specifically fear or adoration of *shari'a* (depending on which group one looks at) came to be a focal point for the mounting hostility between Egypt's liberals and Islamists. Liberals would not tolerate *shari'a*, and Islamists would not tolerate its removal. Rationally, the only solution was compromise, but both sides were unable or unwilling to look beyond their own concerns. *Shari'a* was either a fundamental part of the national identity of Egypt, or a disastrous inclusion which would halt Egypt's progression.

Even with such a polarized landscape, this does not mean that Islam, or even *shari'a*, is inherently incompatible with liberalism, or democracy, or a working rule of law. The divergence of opinion regarding the meaning of *shari'a* in itself implies that it is the responsibility of lawmakers to properly establish the boundaries for Islam and the law. In the case of Egypt, the bigger concern is the inability to communicate, compromise, and cooperate towards some sort of middle ground, which could very well include Islam. *Shari'a* was only the point of intransigence in this standoff, perhaps the fundamental topic of contention. In clinging to their beliefs, both sides would grind the country to a halt.

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<sup>352</sup> "Constitution of Egypt," *Constitution Society*. Sept. 11, 1971. <http://www.constitution.org/cons/egypt/const-en.html>.

Shortly before the referendum on the draft constitution took place, Morsi even made several half-hearted proposals supposedly in the name of compromise, outlining talks to add amendments after the draft constitution was passed.<sup>353</sup> These proposals did not address the key demands of the liberals (postponing or canceling the referendum in favor of a rewrite) and Morsi suggested that he might even impose martial law to ensure the referendum went smoothly.<sup>354</sup> For their part, the liberals had already publicly stated their refusal to compromise even before Morsi had made his proposals.<sup>355</sup>

Aside from the specific points discussed above, the constitution was largely unchanged from its previous incarnation under Mubarak. Considering the desire for positive, liberal change which drove Mubarak's ouster in the first place, this stagnation was particularly distasteful to Morsi's opposition. Ziyad Bahaa Al-Din, an Egyptian legal expert and member of the Egyptian Democratic Party rejected the constitution for this lack of progress in particular, stating that in addition to the religious inequalities, "the constitution, which [the revolutionaries] hoped would bring about clear achievements for the Egyptian people in terms of economic and social rights and human development, includes the usual flowery phrases without imposing specific standards or goals upon the state, and therefore offers [nothing] new".<sup>356</sup>

Morsi's draft constitution was indicative of the political and social environment within Egypt at the time. All sides vying for power saw the scenario as a zero-sum: any

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<sup>353</sup> David. D. Kirkpatrick, "Morsi Extends Compromise to Egyptian Opposition," *New York Times*, Dec. 8, 2012. <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/12/09/world/middleeast/egypt-protests.html>.

<sup>354</sup> Ibid.

<sup>355</sup> Ibid.

<sup>356</sup> L. Lavi, "An Examination Of Egypt's Draft Constitution Part III: Presidential Powers, Status Of Military And Judiciary, Civil Freedoms." *MEMRI*. Dec. 11, 2012. [http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6868.htm#\\_edn1](http://www.memri.org/report/en/0/0/0/0/0/6868.htm#_edn1).

compromise made would be a loss of power for themselves and a gain for their opponents. There was no trust amongst the different factions, and thus, every political move was made with consideration only for their respective support base, leaving many Egyptians without support. This draft constitution was strongly characteristic of the hostile political environment within Egypt, even if it was overturned following Morsi's deposal. It is unclear, however, how any government will approach the constitution, given the popularity and acceptance of the clearly lopsided draft that was voted in under Morsi.

### The Egyptian Judiciary

Any conversation about the rule of law requires an overview of the state of the judiciary. In Egypt, the status of the judiciary prior to the revolution had been a contentious one. On the one hand, most members of the judiciary were appointed not through Egypt's executive branch, but through the Supreme Judicial Council, a group made up of senior judges.<sup>357</sup> Since a state of emergency had been in effect since 1981, there existed other special courts which tried civilians of any charges relating to national security, such as terrorism, whose judges were appointed directly by the president, and whose verdicts could not be appealed.<sup>358</sup> It is worth noting that the former branch of the judiciary, which managed to maintain some form of independence, was often critical of the ruling Mubarak regime, and even openly critiqued the regime's methods, described as "integrated dissidents" by some,

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<sup>357</sup> Meryl Chertoff and Michael Green, "Revitalizing the Rule of Law," *Harvard International Review* 2, no. 34 (2012): 61.

<sup>358</sup> *Ibid.*



due to their overarching conflict with the executive branch following the second world war.<sup>359</sup>

Though there were judges who were critical of the state, the Mubarak regime made it very difficult for these judges to operate. In 1969, Nasser issued several presidential decrees which severely limited the powers of the independent judiciary, making it subservient to the executive, an act which would be known as the “judges’ massacre.”<sup>360</sup> Some powers were restored to these judges under Sadat in the 1980s, but even this restoration was more of an attempt to create the image of a legitimate judiciary in Egypt, rather than actually creating an independent, functional judiciary. All of these measures were undertaken because of the rapidly growing security state. The state required the ability to take extraordinary measures against any factions deemed subversive to the regime, most often Islamists.

The relationship between the judiciary and the executive branch was historically tension filled. This tension persisted into Morsi’s presidency. Ahmed el-Zend, president of the association of Egyptian judges, put forward an agenda prior to the 2012 presidential elections that stated “[the judges’ were abandoning their neutrality toward the coming presidential runoff in an effort to guard against an Islamist monopoly of power”.<sup>361</sup> Only two days before Egypt’s run-off election, Egypt’s Supreme Constitutional Court (SCC), filled with judges appointed by Mubarak before his deposal, dissolved the newly elected Egyptian parliament, calling the parliamentary vote unconstitutional.<sup>362</sup> In a separate ruling, the SCC

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<sup>359</sup> Sarah Wolff, "Constraints on the promotion of the rule of law in Egypt: insights from the 2005 judges' revolt." *Democratization* 16, no. 1 (Feb 2009): 102.

<sup>360</sup> *Ibid.*, 103

<sup>361</sup> David D. Kirkpatrick, "Egyptian judge speaks Against Islamist Victory Before Presidential Runoff," *New York Times*, June 8, 2012. [www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic](http://www.lexisnexis.com/hottopics/lnacademic).

<sup>362</sup> David D. Kirkpatrick, "Blow to Transition as Court Dissolves Egypt's Parliament," *New York Times*, June 14, 2012. [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/15/world/middleeast/new-political-showdown-in-egypt-as-court-invalidates-parliament.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=1&](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/15/world/middleeast/new-political-showdown-in-egypt-as-court-invalidates-parliament.html?pagewanted=all&_r=1&).

also decided that Ahmed Shafiq, former Prime Minister under Mubarak, could also continue to run for president in the run-off, an act deemed illegal due to the Political Exclusion Law which banned officials of Mubarak's fallen regime from running for office.<sup>363</sup> The ruling mirrored events from the last several decades in which secular elites severely repressed Islamist groups who were poised for success. In this case, it was the heavily Islamist parliament who were repressed, as well as the Brotherhood's FJP who were poised for success in the presidential elections.

Both Islamists and liberals were unified in outrage against the dissolving of the parliament, as it left the country with neither a parliament nor a constitution. With the presidency about to be decided, the lack of parliament and constitution left a great deal of power in the hands of the would-be president.<sup>364</sup> ElBaradei stated that without a parliament or a constitution, the election of a president was like "electing an 'emperor' with more power than the deposed dictator. A travesty".<sup>365</sup> Mirroring ElBaradei's sentiment, the Brotherhood stated that the dissolution of parliament "confirms that the former regime hasn't surrendered yet and won't give up easily".<sup>366</sup>

Morsi would still go on to win the presidency, however, the judiciary's shot across the bow of his presidency would perpetuate tension and misgivings between his office and the judiciary for his year in office. Shortly after the election, he attempted to reinstate the dissolved parliament, an action deemed illegal by the judiciary. In October 2012, Morsi

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<sup>363</sup> "Egypt supreme court calls for parliament to be dissolved," *BBC News*, June 14, 2012. <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-18439530>.

<sup>364</sup> *Ibid.*

<sup>365</sup> David D. Kirkpatrick, "Blow to Transition as Court Dissolves Egypt's Parliament," *New York Times*, June 14, 2012. [http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/15/world/middleeast/new-political-showdown-in-egypt-as-court-invalidates-parliament.html?pagewanted=all&\\_r=1&\\_](http://www.nytimes.com/2012/06/15/world/middleeast/new-political-showdown-in-egypt-as-court-invalidates-parliament.html?pagewanted=all&_r=1&_)

<sup>366</sup> *Ibid.*

attempted to dismiss Mubarak-era Prosecutor General Abdel-Meguid from his post. Meguid's dismissal was due to his increasing unpopularity for failing to successfully prosecute police officers on trial for killing protesters during the 2011 revolution. Morsi did not have the legal power to dismiss Meguid, however, and was ultimately unsuccessful.<sup>367</sup> This attempted dismissal was shortly followed up by Morsi's presidential decree absolving his decisions from judiciary oversight, which he used to push forward the referendum on his draft constitution. This decree resulted in widespread strikes amongst the judiciary including the Court of Cassation, Egypt's highest court, and appeals courts in Egypt's largest cities.<sup>368</sup> In response, many of Morsi's supporters protested against the SCC, and over the next several months, attacks on the judiciary increased steadily. The attempts made by Morsi and his supporters to interfere with the independence of the judiciary continued through Morsi's tenure and characterized the difficulties of establishing a working rule of law. The Arab Center for the Independence of the Judiciary and the Legal Profession (ACIJP) published its annual report on the health of the judiciary in Egypt stating that "[a]ggression on justice represents threats to the collapse of the state of law in Egypt".<sup>369</sup> Morsi eventually backpedalled on the decree after facing enormous backlash.

In 2013, Morsi attempted again to purge the judiciary of his detractors. This time he took a more indirect route, attempting to lower the retirement age for judges, threatening

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<sup>367</sup>"Morsi dismisses Mubarak-era prosecutor general Abdel-Meguid Mahmoud," *Ahram Online*, Oct. 11, 2012. <http://english.ahram.org.eg/News/55393.aspx>.

<sup>368</sup> David D. Kirkpatrick, "Panel Drafting Egypt's Constitution Vows Quick Finish," *New York Times*, November 28, 2012. <http://www.nytimes.com/2012/11/29/world/middleeast/wrangling-in-egypt-as-constitution-deadline-looms.html>

<sup>369</sup> The Arab Center for the Independence of the Judiciary and the Legal Profession. *Summary of the annual report of 2012 "An Attack on Justice in Egypt,"* The Arab Center for the Independence of the Judiciary and the Legal Profession, The Arab Center for the Independence of the Judiciary and the Legal Profession, 2012. <http://www.acijlp.org/main/en/art.php?id=9&art=130#.VCSQiVf7ScE>

thousands of posts across Egypt.<sup>370</sup> This plan was done under the auspices of purging the judiciary of Mubarak loyalists, though skeptics claimed it was an attempt to fill the institutions with supporters of Morsi's own regime.<sup>371</sup>

Tension continued to build, but never had a chance to boil over, as Morsi was deposed shortly thereafter. Though Morsi had several run-ins throughout his interactions with the judiciary, it is worth noting that the Egyptian judiciary was also quite unscrupulous as well in its actions. Without Morsi as a polarizing, Islamist element, several events occurred in 2013 which underlined the problematic and biased behaviour of the judiciary. Two events in particular characterize this bias, the first of which was the sentencing to death of 683 alleged members of the Muslim Brotherhood, including the Brotherhood's supreme guide, Mohammad Badi. The lawyer who represented 25 of the defendants stated that "the verdict was handed down in a court session lasting less than five minutes...[and] the judge refused to listen to any arguments from the defence".<sup>372</sup> The judge presiding over the case, Saeed Youssef had only a month earlier condemned another 528 defendants to death, though the ruling reversed for 492 of the defendants, with most being resentenced to life in prison.<sup>373</sup>

The second event was the conviction of three Al-Jazeera reporters, Peter Greste, Baher Mohamed, and Mohamed Fahmy who were accused of supporting the Muslim Brotherhood. According to human rights group, Amnesty, the trial was a "vindictive farce" and was simply a part of the ongoing conflict between Egypt and Qatar, which supports the

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<sup>370</sup> "Egypt Judiciary crisis: Morsi hints at compromise," *BBC News*, April 28, 2013.  
<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-22333744>.

<sup>371</sup> Ibid.

<sup>372</sup> "Egyptian court sentences 683 people to death," *Al Jazeera*, April 29, 2014  
<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/04/egyptian-court-sentences-683-people-death-201442875510336199.html>

<sup>373</sup> Ibid.

Muslim Brotherhood, and where Al-Jazeera is based.<sup>374</sup> For example, some of the pieces of “evidence” presented included a report made while none of the three were in Egypt, a video of recording artist Gotye, and recordings that were unrelated to Egypt or Egyptian issues.<sup>375</sup>

The trial elicited outrage from the international community, including the US, Australia (from where Greste hails), and the UN. US Secretary of State John Kerry called the sentence “chilling and draconian,” though the Egyptian judiciary defended its actions.<sup>376</sup> At the United Nations, Egypt’s deputy UN Ambassador, Osama Abdelkhalek Mahmoud, stated that “the Egyptian judicial system is very well-known for providing full guarantees for the defendant...I have full confidence that the due procedures will be followed and justice will be done in such cases and in all other cases.”<sup>377</sup> Despite this reassurance, at the time of the trial, fourteen journalists were jailed in Egypt, meaning that Egypt had jailed more journalists than any other country in the Arab world, including Syria.<sup>378</sup>

Morsi’s attempts to subvert the judiciary as well as the two cases outlined above showcase deep, underlying problems within Egypt’s legal system. Morsi’s actions perpetuate attitudes from the Mubarak era, where the executive branch could put itself above the rule of law using weak justification and popular support. Alternatively, the judiciary, raised in an environment where fair and equal application of the law was non-existent, likewise used the

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<sup>374</sup> “Egypt trial: Journalists protest over al-Jazeera trio,” *BBC News*, June 24, 2014.

<http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-27988754>.

<sup>375</sup> “Outrage as Egypt jails Al Jazeera staff,” *Al Jazeera*, June 24, 2014.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/06/outrage-as-egypt-jails-al-jazeera-staff-2014623234322236195.html>.

<sup>376</sup> Ibid.

<sup>377</sup> “Egypt defends judicial system,” *Al Jazeera*, June 26, 2014.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/06/egypt-defends-judicial-system-2014625223851510246.html>.

<sup>378</sup> Ibid.

legal system to consolidate its own power. With the rule of law being so unevenly applied, the difficulties following the 2011 revolution is entirely unsurprising.

### Egyptian Law after Mubarak

What can be gleaned from the two and a half years following Mubarak's removal from office is that the rule of law is at best a misunderstood concept in Egyptian society and government. Adding to this complexity is *shari'a*, which creates a seemingly unanswerable question by the stubborn factions of Egypt. In many cases, this leaves a working rule of law largely ignored or altered in favor of more dramatic and arbitrary behaviour from all sides in Egypt. The Islamists used the law to legitimize (or at least give the appearance of legitimacy) their illiberal and undemocratic behaviour. They were able to use the letter of the law, as opposed to the spirit of the law, to push forward lopsided legislation which only benefitted the Islamist support base. The liberals on the other hand simply ignored all legal avenues in favor of civil disobedience, and later, military intervention. Civil disobedience certainly does have a place within a consolidated democracy, however, it cannot be the only answer to each and every problem. By choosing protest instead of the democratic processes that they claimed they wanted, the liberals weakened their own position, though many of them would argue that protest was the only avenue available to them. Furthermore, by pleading to the military for assistance against the successful Islamists, they further weakened their own platform in regards to the liberal capacity of creating stability, security, and economic growth, a particularly unfortunate consequence considering how misunderstood the concepts of liberalism and democracy are in the region. Finally, the judiciary itself behaved with apathy towards the law, abusing it at several junctions where it would be in their best interest.

The behaviour of the judiciary leads to a situation in which Egypt is without a functioning rule of law, as defined by the standards of a consolidated democracy, which in 2011 was a chief goal of the revolutionaries. Instead, the military has benefited in particular from this quagmire, appearing to be the only faction within Egypt capable of settling the country's numerous accounts. This is not to say that Egypt is now a lawless state without a legal foundation or a government founded on certain principles within a legal framework. There is, however, a distinction to be made between an impartial rule of law, applied to all citizens fairly and equally without consideration to ideology, religion, or gender, as opposed to a rule of law applied differently based on these aforementioned attributes, and enforced by a governing body put into power illiberally.

## Chapter Five

### Egypt in Transition or Stagnation?

Successful consolidation of Linz and Stepan's five arenas is a strong way to predict a country's transitional path. Following the Egyptian revolution, the five arenas have largely failed to develop as per Linz and Stepan's definitions. The original goal of the 2011 revolution, a transition to liberal democracy or at least away from authoritarianism, has become unlikely in the foreseeable future. Civil society initially appeared to be developing towards being strong and healthy, but quickly deteriorated as time passed. The problems that arose ultimately came from a breakdown in communication between the various factions within civil society and which led to seemingly irreconcilable differences. The liberals and Islamists became more and more entrenched in their own views and stubbornly unwilling to compromise. With so much emphasis placed on battling the opposition and claiming victories in a supposedly zero-sum game, neither side concentrated on the difficult task of changing a country which had experienced decades of political stagnation. Further complicating this situation was the complete dismissal of the large Coptic Christian population who played little to no role following the revolution, but still suffered from sectarian attacks from the Muslim majority.

Civil society, when populated by diverse groups with different ideologies, is supposed to harmonize together to exercise influence over politics. This is not to say there should be no contention between various interest groups, however, this contention should not become civil society's defining characteristic. In Egypt, civil society was not able to preserve the unity that it briefly enjoyed during the Arab Spring. Instead, Egypt became divided along ideological and religious lines, a distinction which would quickly escalate from competition to violent



hostilities. It also meant that Egyptian civil society was unable to productively influence political development, forcing the political discourse to ignore issues such as security, stability, and the economy, in favour of placating specific interest groups within civil society.

Furthermore, the division in civil society affected the other four arenas, particularly political society. Given that democracy was the supposed goal of the Arab Spring, partisanship was problematic. Democracy does not require perfect agreement for it to be consolidated. Such contention is actually characteristic of a healthy democracy, as it allows a plurality of opinions to take shape, and for divergent groups to find compromise which allows a mutually beneficial outcome. Following Mubarak's deposal, however, such compromise quickly dissipated, which led only to increasing hostility. The lack of compromise affected the transition greatly, moving it away from its planned course.

The ideological or religious division that came to characterize civil society was further escalated in political society, as were the ramifications of such disunity. With the allowance of new political parties to be formed for the first time in decades, the fractures in civil society were multiplied as factions further split as dozens of new parties were formed. Instead of having only two groups in opposition, liberals and Islamists, lines were drawn within each side. Liberals in particular suffered from this surge in numbers, as new political parties were formed rapidly and without a unifying vision. Egyptians who already had little experience with liberal goals and principles were further overwhelmed by the legion of new parties. Islamists fared better, due to long histories of organization, but lines were already drawn based on how fundamental each political party claimed to be. This divide affected not only Islamist parties, but also affected how outsiders perceived the Islamist's political aspirations. Paranoia and skepticism became commonplace. The Islamists had fewer, more

organized groups, as well as vast quantities of support, but regardless of any inroads or promises they made, truthful or not, the only word on the lips of the opposition was *shari'a*.

With the emphasis placed on ideology, political society was unable to concentrate on the vital task of handling the problems caused by any revolution. Infrastructure, employment, and security were forgotten as political parties bickered about more transient issues, such as the role of religion and social justice, both issues which would take years, if not decades or even centuries, to properly establish. The result was a schizophrenic political environment waiting to collapse. There were too many ideas, few of which were properly fleshed out, many of which were quickly forgotten, and most of which ignored the immediate problems facing Egypt.

While Morsi was blamed for this mismanagement, he cannot be blamed entirely. Though he appeared rather incompetent throughout his brief tenure, Morsi really had inherited an impossible situation: he succeeded a heavily entrenched dictator; he was expected to fix the ongoing problems from that regime, which were previously swept beneath Mubarak's authoritarian rug; he had to somehow manage to realize the liberal goals of the revolution; and he had to stay true to his more fundamental support base, who were responsible for putting him into office in the first place. Without a totalitarian sledgehammer to solve the lingering problems left by Mubarak, it is unlikely that any other candidate could have fared better.

Though the Egyptian political landscape centered primarily around greater, legally ensured rights, Linz and Stepan's third arena, the rule of law, would fall flat as well. Historically, Egypt has never enjoyed a fair and even application of law amongst its

population. Over the past several decades, specific demographics, usually the government and government supporters have been held above certain legal standards, while the ordinary Egyptian citizen, especially minorities and women, have had to suffer through inequalities based on race, religion, or gender. With the success of the revolution, there was much excitement about the idea of correcting these injustices, as liberal ideas were spoken of as inevitabilities. In the following months, however, it became clear that a justice system without prejudice would become unlikely for the same reasons that civil society and political society were unable to resolve their differences.

The immensely popular Islamist bloc ran on transparent campaign platforms that emphasized certain traditional Islamic values, which immediately alienated anyone who did not conform to such values. Alternatively, the liberals did campaign for greater human rights throughout Egypt, but they did so while making it clear that Islamist values were not welcome. Therefore, even though the liberals espoused liberal values, their attempts to exclude Islamists from contributing and benefitting from governance and a reconstructed legal system made their platform no different from the Islamists.

The failures in these three arenas caused similar failure in the last two arenas as well (state apparatus and bureaucracy, and economic society), which in turn has caused a sizable obstacle for democratic transition: the military. With the failure of civil and political society to effectively harmonize and fulfill specific goals, the result is many Egyptians turning towards the military to solve the dilemma, and in the process, deposing the democratically elected president. The entire process closely mirrors the 1952 coup against King Farouk which eventually led to Nasser obtaining the presidency. Both coups had charismatic military leaders (Nasser in 1952, el-Sisi in 2013) who rose to prominence by spring boarding

themselves off of the failures of their predecessors. Furthermore, the insertion of these leaders was met with little resistance by the Egyptian population. This strong leadership above all else allowed Egypt to successfully transition away from the depredations of the corrupt King Farouk.

These events ultimately amount to a failure of meaningful transition in Egypt, at least for the time being. The burden lies on the potential democrats to properly rally support and to organize so that during elections they can be as well-prepared as possible. This preparation and organization is, of course, no easy task. Depending on el-Sisi's success, the Egyptian population, including the liberals themselves, may find it simpler to continue on with him (and by proxy, the military) in charge. Given the difficulties that arose during the first few years after Mubarak, it would be very easy to embrace anyone who could bring stability, even if not necessarily democracy.

The absolute exclusion of the Muslim Brotherhood also needs to be addressed. Declared a terrorist group and effectively relegated to the same status they suffered prior to the revolution, the Brotherhood's current situation may strongly influence Egypt's transition. The rule of law cannot be disproportionately applied based on ideology or religion; it must be uniform in its application, not selective and arbitrary otherwise, the law is simply another arm of a totalitarian regime. Ironically, this makes the Egyptian liberal platform more severe in structure to that of Morsi's own, as the liberals have embraced el-Sisi's brutal exclusionary tactics. Before the Brotherhood was voted into power, there were multiple concerns that they would use their popularity to win the presidency, and then use it to push forward their own principles, while ignoring democratic ones. With the complete elimination of the

Brotherhood in contemporary Egyptian politics, the liberals are actually guilty of the same offense of which they were terrified of barely a year earlier.

The behaviour of the liberals presents another complication in Egypt's transition, as Morsi's opposition may claim to be liberal, but they certainly are not democratic. The liberal bloc has been adamant in its liberalization of Egypt, pushing for increased minority and gender rights, greater liberties, and a democratically elected government representative of all Egyptians – as long as these Egyptians are not also Islamists. Again, there is no question that Morsi's showing as president was unimpressive, however, this should not have been enough to warrant military intervention. The enthusiasm with which Morsi's opponents embraced the recently-hated military to depose a democratically elected President shows that democratic processes are still not fully understood, or they are simply ignored. While Morsi's elections did not give him unassailable legitimacy, neither does reliance on a military coup. As mentioned earlier, the relationship between civil society and political society must be a symbiotic one, where civil society informs political society, as well as the rule of law, without controlling it, and vice versa. Morsi's deposition signifies a disruption of this relationship, because the chief mechanisms for democratic political change, elections, were ignored. "The genius of democracy...is that it wants voters to change their minds when leaders fail and to replace them not in spasms of fury but regularly and for the best reason: that others can better deliver what the people want".<sup>379</sup>

Even with Morsi's deposition, it should be clear that the liberals have still not come out on top, though they have celebrated as if they have. In fact, it was the liberal's own multiple failures that allowed Morsi to be elected in the first place, and then subsequently do as he

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<sup>379</sup> Sanerm Shehata, "In Egypt, Democrats vs. Liberals." *New York Times*, July 2, 2013.  
<http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/03/opinion/in-egypt-democrats-vs-liberals.html>.

pleased. The Islamists were similarly inexperienced as the liberals in matters of governance, however, their organizational capabilities were able to compensate. The liberal movement in Egypt mistakenly relied upon its own momentum of toppling a three decade old dictator, convincing themselves that the hard part was over. For the liberals, the two and a half years following Mubarak's downfall were rife with overestimated popularity, indulgence in idealism instead of pragmatism, confusion over its own platform, and crippling disorganization and disunity. Liberal popularity within urban areas with dense populations was mistaken for universal popularity throughout Egypt. Large tracts of the country were ignored by the liberals, and then left to the influence of the older, better organized Islamist and old guard loyalists. Even after they were handily defeated in the presidential elections, the liberals did not change tactics. Instead of throwing themselves into hard task of organization and campaigning that would allow them a better showing in forthcoming elections (a goal made easier by Morsi's own mishandling of the presidency), the liberals instead embraced tactics which did not prove to be as effective against the Islamists. "If the millions in the streets want the Brotherhood out of power, they must learn to organize and campaign effectively, and vote them out. That would be the best way to establish liberal democracy in Egypt. Removing Mr. Morsi through a military coup supported by the secular and liberal opposition could well be the worst"<sup>380</sup>. Faced with their own inadequacy within the political arena, they turned desperately to the same military they had protested against not so long ago.

As the Brotherhood went down, it became clear who the real winners were, and it was neither the liberals nor the 2011 revolutionaries. When General Abdul-Fattah el-Sisi

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<sup>380</sup> Ibid.

announced that Morsi had been deposed, “flanked by Egypt’s top Muslim and Christian clerics as well as a spectrum of political leaders including Mohamed ElBaradei...and Galal Morra, a prominent...Salafi” it was clear that the military found the greatest success<sup>381</sup>. The military’s own mishandling of power in 2011-12 was forgotten as they became the only viable option within Egypt, an admission which delegitimized any prospects the liberals had.

Also forgotten was the fact that the hated “pharaoh,” Hosni Mubarak, hailed from the same military apparatus that was now being praised as the only solution to Egypt’s weakened security, economic decline, and sectarian violence. General el-Sisi was being pushed towards the presidency by the vocal majority as the singular candidate for the post, with this same vocal majority speaking of him in the same tones that echoed Mubarak’s own former cult of personality. After a momentous revolution, and a two and half year hiccup, it would appear that Egypt would once again have a president pulled from the ranks of the military.

#### Egypt’s Future and Egypt’s Past

There are a few contentious conclusions that can be made based on the results of Egypt’s political transition; the greatest of these revolve around expectations. In 2011, after Mubarak was pulled down, the rather naive expectation was a quick transition to democracy, similar to a Western model, but still distinctly Egyptian. Greater liberties, rights, and the positive results of these freedoms were expected from the revolutionary youth, and they were expected in short order. These were only further tempered by Western expectations which heralded the Arab Spring as the turning of a new page for the Middle East and Northern

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<sup>381</sup> David D. Kirkpatrick, “Army Ousts Egypt’s President; Morsi Is Taken Into Military Custody,” *New York Times*, July 3, 2013. <http://www.nytimes.com/2013/07/04/world/middleeast/egypt.html?pagewanted=all>.

Africa. This enthusiasm was infectious, and quickly spread throughout Egypt, converting even the skeptical.

The problem with these expectations was that they were unrealistic. Many scholars, including those cited here, agree that democracy can arise from any number of different stimuli and criteria. The consolidation of democracy, however, is a lengthy process. Countries in Africa, South America, and Eastern Europe who transitioned years, if not decades ago still face obstacles within their democracies. The amount of support given the coup of 2013 shows an Egypt that is unwilling or unable to put the effort required of it to transition to democracy, foregoing what future benefits democracy might create in favor of the short-term advantages provided by a more authoritarian government.

Again, democracy can arise from any number of different avenues. To restate Dankwart Rustow's statement about the fluidity of transition:

[This approach] does not commit us to any old-fashioned or simple-minded view of causality, whereby every effect has but one cause and every cause but one effect...Any genetic theory of democracy would do well to assume a two-way flow of causality, or some form of circular interaction, between politics on the one hand and economic and social conditions on the other."<sup>382</sup>

With this rational, even the events of 2011-2013 could, theoretically still lead to a healthy, consolidated democracy, but this is highly unlikely. Morsi's deposal sets a dangerous precedent where military intervention can be used to circumvent the democratic process. The Muslim Brotherhood is facing a similar, if not worse, repression than the one it suffered under Mubarak. The Coptic Christians are still largely ignored and unengaged by the governing bodies of Egypt; the liberal movement has convinced itself of victory, though in reality it has failed. El-Sisi achieved his presidency by way of democratic election, lending his new position legitimacy. This victory, however, was a Mubarak-esque landslide, where

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<sup>382</sup> Ibid., 342-344.



El-Sisi faced off against only one other candidate, and won a staggering 96.91 percent of the vote.<sup>383</sup> The Muslim Brotherhood, who represented a very large demographic, were of course unable to field any candidates, as they were branded as terrorists and traitors, thus negating a large portion of Egyptians without a viable candidate. With the events of the 2013 deposal of Mohammed Morsi, Egypt has found itself in a situation closely resembling the time prior to the Arab Spring.

The Egyptian transition is currently characterized by relapse. El-Sisi is already consolidating his rule through questionable methods. Civil society is not acting in any way conducive enough to affect the el-Sisi regime. The Muslim Brotherhood, arguably the only group with the organizational capability to oppose the new regime, has been severely oppressed, a move celebrated by in the remainder of civil society. Political society, controlled by el-Sisi, enjoys relative autonomy from external influence, particularly civil society. Actions taken by the new regime are all but legitimized by words of reassurance and placation towards civil society. The judiciary, once under siege by the Morsi regime, in turn perpetuates these habits, coopting pragmatically the rule of law to further consolidate the el-Sisi regime by acting in its interest, while maintaining a façade of neutrality and independence.

El-Sisi being elected president highlights a trend in Egyptian society: a tendency to look backwards rather than forward for solutions. This is the same trend which created extreme difficulty for liberals when matched against the Islamists after Mubarak's deposal, and which allowed those Islamists such easy victories in the parliamentary and presidential

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<sup>383</sup> "El-Sisi wins Egypt's presidential race with 96.91%," *Al-Ahram Online*, June 3, 2014. <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/102841/Egypt/Politics-/BREAKING-PEC-officially-announces-AbdelFattah-ElSi.aspx>.

elections. It is this trend which explains why only two years after deposing a ruler who hailed from the military, Egyptians cheered as another military-bred ruler took the reins. It is the same trend in the region of the Middle East and North Africa which is so pervasive it allows tyrants and dictators to rule without real opposition for decades. This trend is at best reliance on conservative and safe political thought, and at worst, political stagnation.

These problems in turn bring up the matter of religion, specifically, *shari'a*. While not the central point of this thesis, religion played an enormous role in the events following Mubarak's ouster, though not directly. Looking back at the complete lack of cooperation between liberals and Islamists, there is a common thread of *shari'a* apparent in most arguments. In many ways, the fear alone of *shari'a* created a thick atmosphere of distrust. Liberals were terrified that that Islamist success would lead to a state run on a religious foundation, rather than liberal ideals. Islamists feared that liberals would not respect Islam enough, and would steer Egypt away from its Islamic identity. The military, fearing the effects religion would have on its newly regained power, "solved" the religious question with extreme violence and repression, mirroring the former presidents, Mubarak, Sadat, and Nasser. What is clear about religion in Egypt is that it is responsible for much of the polarization which drove apart the various factions of the Egyptian civil and political landscape.

Egypt is therefore a reaffirmation of why, generally, Middle Eastern and Northern African countries have so much difficulty transitioning away from totalitarian regimes and towards democratic governments. The extreme reliance on tradition is legitimized when difficulty is found during transition. Islam provides a clear and infallible roadmap which supposedly leads to prosperity, and which requires no debate. An authoritarian government

can create an entrenched regime which can act freely based on the promise of future affluence. This traditional mindscape is further aggravated by an insular, disconnected society and state-sponsored propaganda. In the case of Egypt, the multitude of hardships that arose from the attempted liberal, democratic transition only served to glorify and sanitize the relative stability that Egypt had under the rule of a military dictator. It also heavily entrenches the large plurality of peoples along political lines, as the lines of discourse do not yet exist to manage the multitude of perspectives. These several factors create a hostile environment for transitioning away from authoritarian governments.

The inability for Egyptian society to seemingly resolve any of the problems it faced after Mubarak's ouster provides a blunt outlook for Egypt's transition. Rustow states:

...new issues will always emerge and new conflicts threaten the newly won agreements. The characteristic procedures of democracy include...a host of devices, in short, for expressing conflict and thereby resolving it. The essence of democracy is the habit of dissension and conciliation over ever-changing issues and amidst ever-changing alignments. Totalitarian rulers must enforce unanimity on fundamentals and on procedures before they can get down to other business. By contrast, democracy is that form of government that derives its just powers from the dissent of up to one half of the governed.<sup>384</sup>

The points Rustow outlines here parallel the failures that Egypt's transitional governments made after the Arab Spring, as well as the areas that need extreme alterations. Progress requires introspection, dedication, and flexibility, qualities that the various factions in Egypt did not employ during the country's transition.

None of these obstacles are insurmountable, as Rustow might argue. He even implies that the process is neither brief, nor simple: "there must be a conscious adoption of democratic rules, but they must not be so much believed in as applied, first perhaps from necessity and gradually from habit. The very operation of these rules will enlarge area of

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<sup>384</sup> Dankwart A. Rustow, "Transitions to Democracy: Toward a Dynamic Model." *Comparative Politics* 2, no. 3 (April 1970): 363.

consensus step-by-step as democracy moves down its crowded agenda”.<sup>385</sup> But this cannot be done through disrespect, repression, and violence. Egypt must find “the tenuous middle ground between imposed uniformity (such as would lead to some sort of tyranny) and implacable hostility (of a kind that would disrupt the community in civil war or secession)”.<sup>386</sup> Though the 2011 Arab Spring failed to bring about the change that many Egyptians and global observers thought would rationally follow, it may have still created at least a foundation upon which future change could occur. As Huntington, Rustow, Linz, and Stepan have emphasized, there is no set way to assure a successful democratic transition, and el-Sisi’s “Mubarak-lite” approach to democratization may not have the long-lasting appeal to survive for a long period of time. What is clear, however, is that Egypt requires greater emphasis on communication and bipartisanship in the future if it wishes to accomplish the goals set out by the protesters in Tahrir Square in 2011.

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<sup>385</sup> Ibid.

<sup>386</sup> Ibid.

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