



Egypt and Democracy Prospects against Facts after Mubarak

Masoud Rezaei*

Ph.D, International Relation

Received: 10 Oct 2012 ; Accepted: 10 Jan 2013

Abstract: The principal objective of this paper is to describe and analyze the process of democratization in the Egypt after Mubarak regime. The article continues to give an overview over the current situation inside Egypt after the revolution and collects some evidence for a changed relationship between democracy and stability inside the country. The Egyptian revolution created a situation of transition, which is by definition a period of instability and limited prediction. This is a crucial issue because the direction and orientation of a deep societal democratization process are still unclear.

Keywords: Egypt, Democracy, Revolution, April youth movement, Mubarak regime

Introduction

There are many analyses about promoting reform and democratization in Egypt. Yet, the steps that have been taken so far have been limited, and have resulted in little more than cosmetic changes. It has not helped that most analyses on the prospects for political reform in Egypt are stymied by fears that the only alternative to the post authoritarian regime is an Islamist one. Nevertheless, is it true that Egypt is inherently caught between authoritarianism and Islamism?

In this regard, Max Weber believes that the Egypt's political system and social structures, like many in the Arab world, have widely been described as authoritarian or neo-patrimonial. (Bauer, 2011: 3) Egypt's

transition to democracy has been undermined by the legacy of almost 60 years of consecutive rule by men from the military.

Now what is democracy? Thus far, the definition of democracy in Egypt is simply "not the current regime." Indeed as according to experts, the Cairo protest was revolutionary because for the first time, the people are taking responsibility of their government and embracing notions of a need to do something about it. Democracy is thought to encompass "individual freedom and identity, diversity, political and economic competition, popular sovereignty, and political accountability" (Tessler 2007: 109). Within the revolution, Egypt's focus was on change in society and politics. In particular, Egypt

* Email: rezaei@cmess.ir

wanted an end to Mubarak's thirty-year rule, and wanted to get rid of its current constitution. As the Middle

East's "population and intellectual leader," Egypt is in a unique position to demonstrate successful democratization in the Arab world (Roskin and Coyle, 2008: 292).

Now that Mubarak is overthrown, the world seeks to examine how Egypt's expectations align with that of their reality, even though Egypt's expectations are more so vaguely defined than they are clearly defined once culture is taken into account. Now as Egypt's military currently governs the country, the world seeks to examine how the debate behind Egypt's ability to democratize will play out. The country is at a very critical point where praetorianism (or more accurately, anarchy) and democratization are battling it out. At this critical point, the country can easily slip back into authoritarianism.

Moreover, regarding Egypt's fragile political state, Egypt's political history can further exacerbate this slip back into authoritarianism, which is not in favor of successful democratization. Egypt's political history poses the greatest impediment to Egypt pursuing a democratic form of governance because of its numerous cycles of authoritarian rule.

Democratization may prove a challenging development for Egypt because they have democratic rule to refer to in their history. In the eyes of its political history and current actions taken, military rule is not viewed positively toward shaping democracy given that Egypt has had military dictatorships in the past. This strong predominance of authoritarianism in Egypt's history and culture could explain the misconnection

between where Egypt wants to be versus where they currently are now in democratizing.

Historical Context in a Glance

Egypt since its independence on February 1922 has struggled for real democracy. The constitution of 1923 established a democratic parliamentary system similar to that of many contemporary European nations. (Youssef, 1983: 27-34 and Hilal, 1977: 12-65 :) It stated that the people were the source of all powers. It also included a number of important democratic principles such as separation of powers, ministerial responsibility, and freedom of the press as well as a wide range of civil and individual liberties. However, this democratic experience ended with the advent of the military on July 1952. Unfortunately, the period 1923-1952 was characterized by constant political instability. The Wafd Party, which was the unchallenged majority party during this period, was not able to remain in power for more than eight years. Thus, minority parties ruled over the rest of the period (Murray, 1973: 3-36). Overall, we may argue that the liberal experience failed to solve the socio-economic problems of the country in addition to its failure in obtaining complete independence from Britain.

After the collapse of the monarchy in 1952, the free officers decided not to share power and instead established an authoritarian regime. On January 16, 1953, they promulgated a law banning all political parties.

During the period 1962-1976, the Arab Socialist Union (ASU) was the sole, legitimate political party. The regime monopolized all political activities and suppressed all forms of opposition, secular and religious. Some scholars argued that the crucial factors of the legitimacy and survival of the

regime came from Nasser's charismatic appeal. However, Nasserism failed to institutionalize itself as an ideology that could ensure its long-term durability and mobilize the social forces that had benefited from its founder's policies.

It was clear that Nasser's regime, by the late 1960s, faced a number of crises, chief among which was a participation crisis.

Following Nasser's death in 1970, his successor, President Anwar Sadat tried to legitimize his rule using three slogans: The rule by law; government by institutions; and; political freedom. Sadat himself spearheaded the critique of the ruling ASU by issuing the October 1974 Manifesto which outlined the Sadat regime's plans to liberalize the Egyptian polity, as a major departure from the Nasser regime. Therefore, with the official adoption of a policy of economic and political liberalization, Egypt witnessed the dawning of a new political climate. The issue of democracy became a public concern, which the system could not afford to ignore any longer.

Upon ascending to the presidency after Sadat's assassination in 1981, Mubarak took some steps designed to turn the wheels of governance from authoritarianism to democratization. One major measure was his decision to release political prisoners. Another measure was the call for national reconciliation, especially among Egypt's polarized political factions. Significantly, Mubarak re-inaugurated the process of political liberalization. In doing so, he won a considerable goodwill from all Egyptians. However, Mubarak first test was his handling of the 1984 parliamentary elections (Hilal, 1986).

The elections were conducted for the first time in Egyptian history according to the proportional representation electoral system. In early 2005, the Mubarak regime had an-

other opportunity to reverse the tide of authoritarianism and set Egypt on the path to democratization. However, this evolution is also not effective. After the Tahrir Revolution in 2011, Egypt's transition to democracy has been undermined by the legacy of almost 60 years of consecutive rule by men from the military. Since the fall of Mubarak, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) has attempted to direct the process of democratization but has frequently responded to challenges through tactics reminiscent of the old regime (Azzam, 2012: 2).

The April youth movement and Downfall of Mubarak Regime

The April 6 Movement is a small group of secular Egyptian students who organized and led the revolution in Egypt overthrowing Mubarak in a matter of 18 days (Egypt's Facebook Faceoff, PBS, February 22, 2011). The group was initially formed in 2008 to stand by a textile workers' strike against low wages and increased food prices (Egypt's Facebook Faceoff, PBS, and February 22, 2011).

As indicated on April 6 Movement's group page on Facebook, the group describes themselves as the following: We are a group of Egyptian Youth from different backgrounds, age and trends gathered since the renewal of hope in 6 April 2008 in the probability of mass action in Egypt which allowed all kind of youth from different backgrounds, society classes all over Egypt to emerge from the crisis and reach for the democratic future that overcomes the case of occlusion of political and economic prospects that the society is suffering from these days.

Most of us did not come from a political background, nor participated in political or public events before 6 April 2008 but we were able to control and determine our direction through a whole year of practice seeking

democracy in our country - Egypt.

April 6 primarily used social media to reach their targeted population for mobilization: young, educated but unemployed people (Egypt's Facebook Faceoff, PBS, and February 22, 2011). April 6 gained 78,000 members in a very short amount of time on Facebook, and 6,000 protestors were arrested on the day of the protest (Egypt's Facebook Faceoff, PBS, February 22, 2011). April 6 studied the revolution in Tunisia and the non-violent Serbia and Ukrainian student protests (Egypt's Facebook Faceoff, PBS, February 22, 2011).

In Egypt, approximately 60 percent of the population is under age the age of 30, many of whom are educated yet unemployed (Alterman 2012: 9). This clearly aligns with Huntington's (2006, 48) observation that "the higher the level of education of the unemployed, alienated, or otherwise dissatisfied person, the more extreme the resulting destabilizing behavior." Kimenyi (2011: 1) agrees with Huntington using sociologist Seymour Martin Lipset who said, "The demand for democracy is a result of broader processes of modernization and development. In the long run, it is very difficult for societies that have attained high living standards to tolerate living under autocratic regimes." Kimenyi (2011: 1) also points out that once a significant percentage of the population has access to education, it becomes more difficult for elites "to continue to justify the exclusion of resources and privileges to the general population."

Furthermore, Kimenyi (2011: 1) greatly observes that indeed, the Egyptian revolution was led by young college graduates forming the country's middle class "that are no longer willing to live under semi-feudal

autocrats." However, the high rate of unemployment makes reading "emerging middle class" rather difficult; and yet it is plausible that this unemployment could also be because the significantly inequitable income distribution that is present in Egypt. In Egypt, approximately 40.5 percent of the population is poor (Nawar, 2007: 33). Also, these recent college graduates or "emerging middle class" have access to technology and digital information, whereas the mass does not. Currently in the Middle East, including Egypt, there are only the elite and then there are the masses, neither of whom would suggest a revolution.

April 6 selected January 25, 2011 as the official protesting day because that day in Egypt is Police Day, and that day followed briefly after Tunisia overthrew their president. April 6's demands during the protests were as follows: Mubarak must immediately resign.

The national assembly and senate must be dissolved. A "national salvation group" must be established that includes all public and political personalities, intellectuals, constitutional and legal experts, and representatives of youth groups who called for the demonstrations on Jan. 25 and 28. This group would form a transitional coalition government for a transitional period. The group would also form a transitional presidential council until the next presidential elections. A new constitution must be written to guarantee the principles of freedom and social justice. Those responsible for killing of hundreds of 'martyrs' in Tahrir Square must be prosecuted. Detainees must be released immediately (Egypt's Facebook Faceoff, PBS, and February 22: 2011).

Interestingly during the protest, everything stopped for prayer and then the protest resumed. This indicated great respect for culture, even though the organizers themselves were secularists. As Benson and Snow (2000: 621-622) point out, the more relatable the movements' framings are to the daily experiences and cultures of targeted populations, "the greater their salience, and the greater the probability and prospect of mobilization." With that in mind, it is also important to point out that numerous groups, including the Muslim Brotherhood, participated and helped lead the protests at Tahrir Square. Political diversity, an element of democracy that Tessler mentioned, has merged in the fight to overthrow Mubarak.

During the 18 days of protest, Mubarak sent the military to contain protestors. Certainly in accordance to Brinton's anatomy of a revolution, the military ultimately sided with the people and helped to overthrow Mubarak. Yet in Egypt, the army tends to side with the people – or the people tend to trust and count on the military.

Haass (2011) states that Egypt's revolution occurred because of three decades of Mubarak's rule, planned hereditary of presidency, corruptions, and economic reforms not helping the majority of Egyptians. Haass (2011) also notes that while some protestors in Egypt want complete democracy, the majority of Egyptians simply want a less corrupt government, greater ability to participate in politics, and a better economy than that of the overthrown regime.

Historically, Muslims concurred with equality with three exceptions: slaves, women, and non-believers (Lewis, 2011). For democratizing, "relevant orientations include both generalized support for democratic political forms and the embrace of specific democratic values, such as respect for politi-

cal competition and tolerance of diverse political ideas" (Tessler, 2007: 107).

Given Muslims' notable prejudices toward other religions throughout time even to this present day and predominance of authoritarianism in the Middle East, such "respect for political competition" and "tolerance of diverse political ideas" is rather questionable. Indeed, Christians and their various denominations and sects are granted protection status known as "dhimmi" in Arab countries, yet these non-Muslims are still discriminated against. "Further historical precedence for this unequal treatment is this role of dhimmi in Islamic empires: a non-Muslim could live in peace if he accepted a second-class status, did not participate in certain occupations, did not build a house larger than a Muslim neighbor's, did not join the military, but did pay a higher tax" (Roskin and Coyle 2008: 13). In theory, while religion and politics remain rather separate in Western countries, Islam and politics are completely intertwined in Middle East countries. This lack of separation between church and state may suggest some degree of intolerance toward religions that the state is not intertwined with. Islam encompasses all aspects of life—business, political, and personal (Tessler, 2007).

When the Middle East speaks of good and bad government, they speak of justice versus injustice as opposed to freedom versus restrictions (Lewis, 2011). Islamic tradition states that a just ruler has rightly obtained power and is required to righteously exercise that power (Lewis, 2011). It appears to be that to justly obtain power, the people may have to concur that the ruler is the rightful one, but Allah (or his Prophet) must approve of this ruler. Islamic tradition also stresses obedience for Muslims should "obey God, obey the Prophet, obey those who hold au-

thority over you” except “in sin;” then subjects have the responsibility to revolutionize and defy (Lewis, 2011). Some experts believe that it is not possible for Egypt, along with other countries to democratize, because in Islam, Muslims stress that Allah is the ultimate authority.

Egypt spoke of freedom or liberty within the realm of slavery and legalities as opposed realm of government and politics. In the Middle East, good versus bad government is more closely aligned with justice and injustice as opposed to liberties or freedom (Lewis, 2011). There were two points made concerning proper conduct of the government in relation to the ruler:

1) Consultation, where the ruler adheres to “consultants” such as advisors, cabinet members, and any other sort of governmental body and vice-versa; and

2) Consent and contract, where both rulers and subjects are accountable toward each other (Lewis, 2011).

One could think of these two points as a sort of checks and balances, since the “consultants” could very easily get rid of a ruler and subjects can ultimately overthrow a ruler. However, it is thought that modernization would lead to ending Islamic checks and balances because unlike in many Western governments, Islamic societies had many levels in-between restricting the ruler’s powers. Modernization typically gets rid of traditions (Roskin and Coyle, 2008).

Very importantly, Egypt has had millenniums of non-democratic rule. Their ancient era consisted of monarchies, military dictatorships, conqueror rule (including that of the Ottomans) and colonial rule (France and Britain) through various conquerors as well as original settlers until 1952, when Abdul

Nasser became the country’s leader (Roskin and Coyle, 2008). Hence, Egypt really does not have its political history to look to as a source for forming their democracy. Even under the rule of Nasser, “there was no democracy; elections were fake” (Roskin and Coyle 2008: 88). Then came the presidency of Anwar Sadat, and Hosni Mubarak after the assassination of Sadat. While, since 1952, presidents came to power by democratic means or processes, their rule and leadership have been authoritarianist.

Recently, right before the Egyptian revolution, many members of Muslim Brotherhood claimed to be “independent” to gain seats in Parliament, especially because the Brotherhood in itself is “still technically illegal for advocating Islamic rule The Brotherhood ran in only a third of the contests to avoid alarming the regime” (Roskin and Coyle 2008: 294). Muslim Brotherhood’s participation in politics, even if it meant to run as “independents,” signaled that Egypt is fed up with corrupted, authoritarian regimes. Optimistically, this could indicate that Egypt might successfully democratize.

What Egyptian Want to Achieve?

As indicated above, the biggest challenge for democracy in the Middle East is history, for the predominance of authoritarianism would make democratizing a rather difficult, if not lengthy, process.

As Tessler (2007: 108) quoted, “democracy is not attained simply by making institutional changes through elite-level maneuvering. Its survival depends also on the values and beliefs of ordinary citizens.”

According to Brown (2011: 129), “the opposition would like to see a whittling down of the powers of the presidency; firm institu-

tional guarantees of judicial independence, largely in form of a more autonomous and powerful judicial council; judicial monitoring of elections; an end to exceptional courts and Egypt's state of emergency; more robust instruments for protecting rights and freedoms; and a truly pluralist party system." Brown suggests that while Egyptians may not exactly opt for an American-type of "checks and balances," they tend to discuss a more literal "separation of powers."

Among the April 6 demands were that "a new constitution be written to guarantee the principles of freedom and social justice;" that "a 'national salvation group' must be established that includes all public and political personalities, intellectuals, constitutional and legal experts, and representatives of youth groups who called for the demonstrations on Jan. 25 and 28;" and that "those responsible for killing of hundreds of 'martyrs' in Tahrir Square must be prosecuted." April 6 is calling for equalities, political participations, and accountability. As stressed above, Egypt's idea of freedom differs than that of the United States'. Given that justice and injustice is referred to in terms of good government versus bad government in the Middle East, perhaps social justice indicates that the government treats all subject well and applies laws equally to all, regardless of a subject's social characteristics or identity.

Muslim Brotherhood, judiciary, and business sectors are expected to steer Egypt's course over time (Cook, 2011: 28). During the eighties and nineties, the judiciary used their independence to "enforce some of the rights and freedoms embedded in the Egyptian constitution by 2005, parliament had one-fifth of its seats controlled by the Muslim Brotherhood" (Brown, 2011: 127).

Various sources suggest that judiciary could play a very significant role in resurfac-

ing liberal and democratic aspects of constitutions (Brown, 2011). As previously mentioned, younger leaders' values include accountability, transparency, tolerance, and rule of laws as part of establish a new government of sorts in Egypt (Cook, 2011). However, it is unknown precisely how liberal and prodemocratic the Muslim Brotherhood really is, if they sincerely are at all (Cook, 2011).

The New Egypt Situation

Currently, Egypt is in a praetorian state, ruled by a military council of 18 members. According to the New York Times, "the military "quickly suspended unpopular provisions of the constitution, even while cracking down on continuing demonstrations." (New York Times, October 17, 2011) The military stated that they would step down once parliamentary and presidential elections are held at some point this fall, yet the people question the extent of the military's loyalty to the revolution. However, the military recently changed its mind and "planned to retain full control of the Egyptian government even after the election of a new Parliament begins in November". The military promised elections in September, but then postponed them until after Parliament elections, and after ratifying a new constitution (NYT, *ibid*).

The rights of women and Christians remain a serious issue in light of modernization (Cook, 2011). Most recently, the burning of a church in Egypt led to ultimate clashes against military rule, Muslims and Coptic Christians. "Christians had joined the pro-democracy protests in large numbers, hoping for protections of a pluralistic, democratic state, but a surge in power of Islamists has raised fears of how much tolerance majority rule will allow" (Kirkpatrick, October 9, 2011). A woman was quoted saying that "the military...was 'trying to start a civil war'"

(Kirkpatrick, 2011). A Christian man was quoted saying “...this is the issue of the freedom that we demanded and can’t find” (Kirkpatrick, *ibid*). Certainly, as Huntington (2006: 62) stated would happen, the military won; the protest resulted in deaths of 24 Coptic Christians, and hundreds more people were injured. Note that historically, Muslims has valued equality, but not toward non-believers.

If the radicals, or in the Middle East’s case, Islamists are expected to rise next to rule and govern, then this entrenchment of history plus the radicals’ beliefs could contradict the strive toward democracy as envisioned in the West and in Egypt’s Christians.

Prior to the incident trials against Mubarak were held through-out August and September. However, Field Marshal Tantawi “testified in a closed hearing that disappointed prosecutors who had hope he would help determine whether the ousted Egyptian leader conspired to order the killing of unarmed demonstrators in his final days of power in February” (NYT, 2011). It is generally believed that testimonies of key military leaders still loyal to Mubarak would ultimately let the former president get away with his most serious crimes. However, the fact that the former president is even standing trial is astonishing to fellow Arab countries.

Also in September, the military council essentially reinstated the “state of emergency” to allow investigations into judicial matters to break up further protests. This is especially in light of the significant role that the judiciary typically plays in liberalizing (or one could say democratizing) Egypt. This reinstatement ran contrary to the military government’s word to get rid of the law, which was paramount to Mubarak’s rule.

During Mubarak’s time issuing a “state of emergency” permitted “arresting people without charge, detaining prisoners indefinitely, limiting freedom of expression and assembly, and maintaining a special security court” (NYT, 2011). This “state of emergency” certainly lies opposite of democracy – at least in light of the United States – where invasions of privacy and prohibiting free expressions and assembly run counter to democratic ideology. If anything, this reinstatement is a step backwards for Egypt in their pursuits toward a more democratic country.

However, on October 26, 2011, two policemen were convicted of killing Khalid Said, the young man thought to spark Egypt’s revolution and who serves as its symbol (The Associated Press, 2011). One article reports that the verdict was reached after evidence suggesting that the police officers indeed beat Said to death was presented (The Associated Press 2011). “However with the light sentence, the lawyer Hafiz Abu-Saada said the court convicted the two of manslaughter, rejecting the more serious charge of murder or torture, as defined in international accords in which Egypt is a signatory” (The Associated Press 2011). Yet the people are taking this verdict as a sign of some justice present within government, and believe that the verdict has still done right by Said (The Associated Press, 2011).

Considering the freedom of expression and assembly and the advocacy for a person done wrong, a very important element in democratic societies includes civil societies. Civil societies have various organizations (professional, non-profits, etc.), labor unions, clubs, associations, public entities such as libraries, churches, etc. However, Egypt currently has no civil society; the only place that

any sort of discussion, organization, or expressions could take place is at a mosque (Roskin and Coyle, 2008: 280). This could very well explain why observers currently see “organized Islam filling the vacuum” in absence of an authoritarian regime in Egypt (Roskin and Coyle 2008: 285). Lack of civil societies hinders the ability for a country to transition into “building the new democracy” (Kinsman, 2011: 41) because there are no apolitical avenues in which political activities, formulations of political thought, and political participation are taking place. Civil society, with its vast diversity of services and beliefs, serves as an intermediary for democracy, especially for societies attempting to transition from authoritarianism.

In addition, there are no precedents or official procedures in place for how to formulate a new constitution (Brown, 2011), especially if Egyptians desire public input. It seems that developing and ratifying a new constitution in Egypt may take at least a couple of years, if not longer. Just as Huntington (2006: 78) expressed, Egypt is currently experiencing rapid social movement accompanied by groups making slow changes.

Discussion about a Democratic Egypt

Generally, thought-of hindrances to establishing a democracy in Egypt as well as the Middle East as a whole include, but are not limited to deep roots of authoritarianism, lack of a civil society, and lack of Islamic political thought of what “citizenship” is or means (Lewis, 2011). In the PBS documentary, Egypt’s Facebook Faceoff (aired February 22, 2011), no person examined discussed or mention what democracy meant while the term rolled out their mouths.

With that in mind, another potential barrier to democracy includes culturally influenced orientation and perspective in relation

to individualism versus group associations. Westerners tend to stress individual elements such as occupation when introducing them, while Middle Easterners tend to stress group identities such as family, religion, and ethnicity or nationality (Roskin and Coyle, 2008: 233). Democracy tends to stress individualism, and freedoms and liberties for individuals to be unique, or be “their own person.” However, April 6 appears to demonstrate the possibility to integrate group identities while stressing characteristics found in the democracy, which they fight for: individuality and diversity. Note that in introducing themselves on websites and social networking sites (Facebook), the first thing they say is “we are a group of Egyptian Youth” but then they point out a couple of times that they come from diverse “backgrounds, age and trends and society classes.”

Roskin and Coyle mentioned that “at a certain point during the modernization process, demands for democratization rise.” Usually poorer countries (whose GDP per capita is less than \$5,000) failed to democratize, while better off countries (whose GDP per capita is more than \$6,000) successfully democratized (Roskin and Coyle 2008: 279). The CIA World Facebook estimated GDP per capita for Egypt as of 2010 is \$6,200 (in purchase parity power, or PPP). Attempts at democracy in poor lands tend to fail as populist demagogues or military officers turn themselves into authoritarian leaders (Roskin and Coyle 2008: 279). Based on income alone, modernization theory suggests that Egypt should successfully democratize, but its current praetorianism combined with the people’s typically extraordinary trust in the military could lead this attempt at democratization to fail, or military officers would have “turned themselves into authoritarian leaders.” The military has already reinstated

“state of emergency,” and has postponed their said periods of temporary rule.

I hope that effects of income and education levels in Egypt would override this potential failure. Lastly, an important barrier to democracy is the comprehension of this political ideology, particularly when it comes to one of its factors: elections. Much of the media highlights the Middle East’s emphasis on elections, and this view that elections are key to democracy.

Democracy is much more than elections; as discussed above, another very important element of democracy includes civil societies, and well as embracing “individual freedom and identity, diversity, political and economic competition, popular sovereignty, and political accountability” (Tessler, 2007: 109). An election in itself can, and in many instances has, elected a dictator in power. Elections are not always fair, and as shown in Egypt’s political history, said elections are often fixed.

Lewis (2011) suggests that items that could help with establishing a democracy in the Middle East as well as Egypt include the following: consensual, contractual and limited government; traditional refusal of despotism; permitting consultation; and usage of modern communications and its technology. It appears to be that the usage of modern communications and its technology are well underway in Egypt, as April 6 used Facebook to mobilize protestors and Egypt’s local news sources are openly discussing doubts of military rule and sincere intentions.

Lewis (2011) also suggests that grave threats to establishing a democracy in Egypt include tyrannies and Islamic fundamentalists, particularly the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt.

Brinton states that in revolutions, moderates actually organize the revolution, and

then they are thrown out and radicals succeed them. In the case of the Middle East, these “moderates” are secular and these “radicals” are Muslim fundamentalists/Islamists. He observes that extremists do not rule during typical times because of their inability to compromise. (1965: 41)

Currently, it is debatable if the Muslim Brotherhood is radical or extremist, but in Egypt their party has held seats in parliament but has not been in top power. Also, like a typical extremist group, Muslim Brotherhood has experienced moments of suppression (Wickham, 2011). Yet, Muslim Brotherhood seems to be compromising democracy with Islamism.

Today, the timing and Egypt’s current situation has created a great opportunity for Muslim Brotherhood to be voted in into government. If the majority really had their way, chances are that the Brotherhood would have occupied the majority of seats in Parliament, and would be the ultimate executive power in Egypt (Roskin and Coyle, 2008: 293). “It’s naive but effective slogan ‘Islam in the Solution’ promised to solve all problems, from hunger and economic development to getting rid of the Americans and the Israelis. The Brotherhood is well organized and helps the poor with food, medical care, and community problems the regime neglects. Many Egyptians see the Muslim Brotherhood as the only hope for change”. (Roskin and Coyle 2008: 294) Brinton notes that government tries to collect more money, which in cases of dictatorship may include increased food prices. As shown, the Brotherhood combats this food insecurity, along with providing many otherservices that the regime failed to provide.(1965: 54)

It is expected that they will at least run on the platform that they serve “the people.” However, many sources reveal that the Muslim Brotherhood is announcing mixed stances on democracy and pluralism. At times, the Muslim Brotherhood’s leaders’ statements are even contradictory to each other. Factions within the Muslim Brotherhood make it difficult to take any one particular stance, especially when two of those factions involve the following:

1) Willingness to work with secularists so long as it does not interfere with Islam, and

2) Internally changing the group, even though such changes would be deemed too far from Islamic conservatism (Wickham, 2011: 19). However, they always go back to their basic stance that the country should be ruled in accordance to Shari’a law. Yet, as Lewis (2011) states, no one will know how liberal Muslim Brotherhood sincerely is (or is not) until they actually rule. For Muslim Brotherhood, indeed the ultimate question is if “supporting a transition to democracy as an end in itself or as a first step toward the ultimate establishment of a political system based not on the preferences of the Egyptian people but the will of God as they understand it” (Wickham 2011: 205).

Conclusion

Historically, Egypt has been an authoritarian state. The roots of authoritarianism can be traced to the pharaonic tradition. Each modern regime - from the monarch to the current one, has maintained the authoritarian core of the pharaonic tradition. Huntington (2006: 29) stated that invasion of foreign ideas spark revolutions. Especially if those foreign ideas are dramatically different from that domestically, the revolution is sparked only to be left with how to reconcile traditions starkly different from modernity. Such culturally ideo-

logical differences lead Egypt’s expectations of democratization to optimistically exceed that of reality. Yet, as “the Arab brains are in Cairo,” Egypt is key to figuring how to intertwine democracy with Islamic culture.

However, revolutionary and modernization theory suggest that intellectual, educated, middle-income Egypt should be able to successfully democratize, under presumptions that the Muslim Brotherhood would adhere to their sayings that they will embrace diversity more. This is very important if Egypt is to democratize, given that the majority would vote for Muslim Brotherhood, and Egyptians view them as the hopeful way of change.

Public Broadcasting Service’s (PBS) (2011) Frontline article on the April 6 Movement ends with the following perfect demonstrations of Brinton’s (1968: 75) observation—as moderates settle in, radicals take on the revolution and proclaim that the war has not yet been won, and demands of the people are not yet satisfied:

In a Feb. 14, 2011 interview with NPR, April 6 founder Ahmed Maher talked about his message to followers about continuing the protest: “Those who are demonstrating have their own issues. We made the decision not to demonstrate while we wait for a response to our demands for reform. We can always go back to the street.”

Yet activist Hossam el-Hamalawy sees the fight as far from over: “Activists can take some rest from the protest and go back to their well-paying jobs for six months, waiting for the military to give us salvation. However, the worker cannot go back to his factory and still get paid 250 pounds. The mission is not accomplished.”

Note that the moderates are taking great credit for this successful overthrow, and that they are now taking the backseat. Essentially, they are handing the revolutionary reins to

the more radical protestors. The quotation above also very well demonstrates that as of today, Egypt really is not where they do want to be, and its political history significantly widens this expectation of the democratizing process versus where the democratizing process actually stands.

The greatest issue within the revolution to bring democracy to Egypt is the millennia of authoritarianism the country has had. In view of political history, the military's current governance in Egypt is concerning because Egypt has had military dictatorships in the past especially considering some measures that the military has taken that are at odds with democracy such reinstating "state of emergency," and postponing their said periods of temporary rule.

The inability for history to repeat itself greatly rest on other factors thought to assist democratizing such a country's income and education level, usage of modern communications and technology, tolerance toward diversity, presence of a civil society, and having a clear perspective or definition of "democracy" and "citizenship" to look up to. Without a formal understanding of "democracy" or presence of a nonpartisan, apolitical civil society, reality will continue to lag behind expectations.

Therefore the authors argue that there are distinct opportunities for democratization in the Egypt, but recognize that this country needs sufficient space and time to develop its own reform agenda and democratization strategy and to craft its own democratic institution according to its particular cultural, political and historical circumstances.

Finally, for successful engagement in support of democratization, international actors need to develop credibility by establish-

ing collaboration based on genuine dialogue and long-term commitment.

References

- Alterman, Jon B. 2012. "Egypt in Transition: Insights and Options for U.S. Policy." *Center for Strategic and International Studies*. January.
- Azzam, Maha. 2012. Egypt's Military Council and the Transition to Democracy, *Middle East and North Africa program*, No May. http://www.chathamhouse.org/sites/default/files/public/Research/Middle%20East/bp0512_azzam.pdf
- Bauer, Patricia. 2011. *Egypt after the Revolution of 2011 – still a Matter of Democracy versus Stability?* http://www.adelinotorres.com/medioriente/CarnegieEndowment_Promoting_Democracy_in_Egypt.1.pdf
- Benson, Robert D., and David A. Snow. 2000. "Framing Processes and Social Movements: An Overview and Assessment." *Annual Review of Sociology*, 26: 611-639.
- Brinton, Crane. 1965. *The Anatomy of Revolution*. New York: Vintage Books.
- Brown, Nathan J. 2011. "Egypt's Constitutional Ghosts: Deciding the Terms of Cairo's Democratic Transition." In *The New Arab Revolt: What Happened, What It Means, and What Comes Next*, 125-132. New York: Council on Foreign Relations: *Foreign Affairs*.
- Cook, Steven A. (2011). "Adrift on the Nile: The Limits of Opposition in Egypt." In *The New Arab Revolt: What Happened, What it means, and What Comes Next*, 57-67. New York: Council on Foreign Relations: *Foreign Affairs*.

- "Egypt News Revolution and Aftermath." *The New York Times*. October 17, 2011
<http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/egypt/index.html>
- Haass, Richard N. (2011). "Reflections on the Revolution in Egypt." In *The New Arab Revolt: What Happened, What It Means, and What Comes Next*, 115-118. New York: Council on Foreign Relations: *Foreign Affairs*.
- Hilal AE.(1977). *Government and Politics in Egypt: the Parliamentary Period, 1923-1952*, Cairo: Maktabat Nahdat AI-shark.
- Hilal AE. (1986). "Parliamentary Elections in Egypt: From Saad Zaghlol to Hosni Mubarak," in Hilal, Ali E. (ed.), *the Democratic Evolution in Egypt: Issues and Discussions*, Cairo: Maktabat Nahdat AI-shark.
- Huntington, Samuel. 2006. *Political Order in Changing Societies*. New Haven: Yale University Press.
- Kimenyi, Mwangi S.(2011). "The Arab Democracy Paradox." *The Brookings Institution*. March 16.
http://www.brookings.edu/opinions/2011/0304_arab_democracy
- Kinsman, Jeremy.(2011). "Democracy Rising: Tunisia and Egypt, when Idealists got it Right". *Policy Options*, No April.
- Kirkpatrick, David D.(2011). "Church Protests in Cairo Turn Deadly." *The New York Times*, October 9
- Lewis, Bernard. (2011). "Freedom and Justice in the Modern Middle East." In *The New Arab Revolt: What Happened, What It Means, and What Comes Next*, 38-56. New York: Council on Foreign Relations: *Foreign Affairs*,
- Murray MA.(1973) *The Splendor that was Egypt*, London: Book Club Associates.
- Nawar, Abdel-Hameed. 2007. "*From Marina to Kom-Ombo: A Note on Poverty in Egypt*." Manuscript. Cairo University, August.
- Roskin, Michael G., and James J. Coyle. 2008. *Politics of the Middle East: Cultures and Conflicts*. Upper Saddle River, NJ: Pearson Prentice Hall.
- Tessler, Mark.(2007). "*Do Islamic Orientations Influence Attitudes toward Democracy in the Arab World? Evidence from World Values Survey in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, and Algeria*." In *Values and Perceptions of the Islamic and Middle Eastern Publics*, by ed. Mansoor Moaddel, 105-125. New York: Palgrave MacMillan.*The Associated Press*.
- (2011). "Police Sentenced to Death That Fueled Egypt Uprising." October 26.
<http://www.npr.org/2011/10/26/141734259/policesentenced-in-death>
- Wickham, Carrie Rosefsky.(2011)."The Muslim Brotherhood and Democratic Transition in Egypt." *Middle East Law and Governance* No 33.
- Youssef H. 1983. "The Democratic Experience in Egypt," in Ali E. Hilal, (ed.), *Democracy in Egypt: Problems and Prospects, Cairo Papers Soc. Sci.*, 1(2)