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THE EGYPTIAN MILITARY IN POST-MUBARAK POLITICS:
THE PROTECTOR OR PROSECUTOR OF THE REVOLUTION

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Introduction

This study argues that the Egyptian Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) will succeed in enforcing a system of limited political participation for revolutionaries in which it retains the advantage. The Egyptian military, as a whole, will maintain its autonomy despite an ostensible transfer of power to a civilian-led government. The military will utilize repressive tactics, including violence, co-optation, and media manipulation, to maintain a status quo hallmarked by its economic entrenchment and its autonomy from civilian oversight. Historically, the military adapted to political challenges by applying these tactics to establish its hold on power. In light of new authority contained in Parliament and street demonstrations, the military will continue to adapt to challenges posed by these groups. However, this adaptation will ultimately result in the military's success, which is defined by its retention of key aspects of power.

There are possible scenarios that could invalidate this argument; for example, if the new constitution subjects the military to increased civilian oversight. Another example would involve a second wave of protests, more intense than those on January 25, 2011, that garner an excessively violent military response and lead to an internal conflict and the ultimate collapse of the military's rule. Also, the military would be threatened by the emergence of a charismatic opposition leader. Finally, the possibility of the cancellation of elections in disregard for any pretense of democracy, and the indefinite postponement of presidential elections, would also undermine this study's argument that indirect rule ultimately serves the military's interests.

However, these events are unlikely to occur for the following reasons. First, the military's self-perception does not leave room for the possibility of full civilian control. Second, although Parliament should be a legal outlet to check the military, it has yet to actualize this ability. Third, the street has become too divided to be the regime-toppling force that it was during the January 2011 uprising. Fourth, while the military has occasionally employed violence over the past year, its response has not reached the level of violence that the Syrian military has under Bashar al-Assad. This is because the Egyptian military has found an "acceptable" threshold for violence, and is careful not to cross that line. Finally, the military has leveraged the narrative that it is the sole source of stability to justify holding onto power. This strategy has been in use for decades, making a sudden change in tactics highly unlikely.

This study seeks to explore the effects of the January 25th uprising on the Egyptian military's calculations with regard to political participation in post-Mubarak Egypt. The uprising created an environment in which many political factions could express their demands. However, this dramatic movement has left many Egyptians wanting more. The interplay between civilians, the military, and the formal political establishment contained in the People's Assembly has only become more complex since former president Hosni Mubarak stepped down on February 11th, 2011.

The Egyptian military, particularly the elite elements contained in the SCAF, will be successful in its attempts to create a new structure of governance in Egypt that leaves it in a powerful position with its interests intact. These interests include autonomy due to a lack of civilian oversight, continued control of economic assets, and an ability to rule

but not govern. The Egyptian military will preserve these interests despite a newly-empowered Muslim Brotherhood (MB) and persistent revolutionary fervor.

Until presidential elections are held mid-2012, the SCAF is acting as the caretaker government. Meanwhile, the Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) secured a swift victory with over 40% of the seats in the People's Assembly.¹

Nonetheless, there are still active protests whose participants see the street as a successful mechanism by which to demand reforms. Because their demands are short-sighted, they do not attract long-term reforms. This competition between powers and pressures has reshaped the political map, and forced the Egyptian military to use repressive tools in order to check any potential challenges to its interests.

The SCAF, charged with security, has responded to continued demonstrations in the interest of stability and preserving its power. Its response has been repressive, and at times violent. Despite earlier claims by the SCAF that it would "guard the revolution" and the "legitimate demands of the people," it has resorted to unleashing its monopoly on the use of force to maintain its interests. Egypt's military has traditionally underwritten the security of the former Mubarak regime; however, now that the military *is* the regime, it is acting to maintain its own interests through a "façade of democracy" while actually preserving "key aspects of political control."² While the SCAF clearly gained the most from this new political arena, the Muslim Brotherhood and revolutionaries have also had some limited gains.

¹ "Results of Egypt's People's Assembly Election," Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, <http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2012/01/25/results-of-egypt%E2%80%99s-people%E2%80%99s-assembly-elections>, accessed 11 February 2012.

² Steven A. Cook. *Ruling but Not Governing*. The Johns Hopkins University Press. (Baltimore, 2007). Pp. ix.

In the absence of the Mubarak regime's dominance, the MB has gained legal political power leading to a Parliamentary majority. Further, because Islamist group traditionally provided social services where the regime failed to do so, they were poised to immediately benefit in the uncertainty of the post-Mubarak political environment.³ Meanwhile, business elites seek a return to stability in order to maintain their interests. Those elites that have vested interests in preserving stability have realized that their material and political assets are better served by military-enforced consistency than the uncertainties of democratic growing pains.⁴

Revolutionary youth remain intent on achieving their demands with a renewed sense of unity and vigor.⁵ However, they have been unable to gear their activities toward effective campaigning in lieu of protesting. This has left them with limited capabilities and varying agendas, rendering them fragmented. Despite the invigoration of the street, Mubarak's step-down has revealed the factionalism that characterizes the Egyptian political scene. In light of apparent disorganization amongst the revolutionaries, the socially powerful have become more willing to work with the military than they are with street elements, who intend to create a new political environment.⁶ Given that the military and social elites both value constancy, it seems that the street has lost the political power and support it all too briefly possessed.

³ Reuel Marc Gerecht. *The Wave: Man, God, and the Ballot Box in the Middle East*. Stanford, CA: Hoover Institution/Stanford University, 2011.

⁴ Emile Hokayem. "Mounting Fears over Egyptian Army's 'counter-revolution'" *Revolutionary Road: Dispatches from a Changing Middle East*. International Institute for Strategic Studies, 28 Oct. 2011. Web. 02 May 2012. <http://www.iiss.org/whats-new/iiss-voices/revolutionary-road/mounting-fears-over-egyptian-armys-counter-revolution/>.

⁵ Ali and Hassan. "Representatives of the Ultras." Personal Interview. 14 Mar. 2012.

⁶ Hokayem, paragraph 5.

This study is based on primary source evidence gathered from interviews of Egyptian intellectuals who were involved in the events of the past year and a half, as well as academic and news sources. It will argue that the military's historical handling of protests and its reactions to recent threats demonstrate a continuous commitment to self-preservation. Although the January 25th uprising opened a small window of political participation for ordinary Egyptians, the military has since used repression to its advantage and effectively maintained its ability to rule.

Outline

This study aims to explain how the Egyptian military has repressed the power of the street, controlled the emergence of an elected parliament, and managed the ongoing transition to ensure it remains in control. First, this study will examine the basis for the civil-military relationship in Egypt, with a focus on the interests and worldview of the military. Second, the weakening of the street by repressive military tactics will be examined through a historical lens, which reveals a pattern of violence and co-optation through various techniques. Third, the military's adaptation to current developments in attempt to remain in charge is examined. Finally, points of contention with this assessment will be explored.

The first part of this study examines the civil-military relationship in Egypt. By looking at the worldview and interests of the military, light is shed on its motives to hold onto power. The terms of a successful transition, *for the Egyptian military*, will be defined. As will be discussed, the military views itself as the guardian of Egypt and seeks to preserve that role while also maintaining specific interests.

The second part of this study outlines the historical relationship between the Egyptian military, the political establishment, and the street in order to highlight themes that emerge in their interactions today. When Gamal Abdel Nasser and the Free Officers came to power in 1952, they managed to fend off threats from a range of actors including the Muslim Brotherhood and communist organizations. Future challenges from the street were also either co-opted, as in the 1968 student protests, or violently put down. The methods used by the military have included force, the co-optation of dissidents and elite elements, and manipulation of the media. These past events provide a framework for understanding the tools that the military uses in the post-Mubarak context.

The third part of this study will examine how the SCAF has adapted to demands and pressures in post-Mubarak politics. The interplay between the SCAF, the Muslim Brotherhood, and civilian activists is one that will prove highly influential--domestically, regionally, and internationally. This section will explore how the military has managed its relationship with Parliament and street protesters to ensure that it ultimately remains in control.

Finally, this study will consider the consequences of the military's actions over the past year and a half to decipher its role in the transition. Arguments to the contrary, as described above, will also be covered. In conclusion, it is clear that the current power structure in Egypt has been re-organized, but not revolutionized. This study will show that the Egyptian military values stability and will always adapt to enforce it.

Methodology

The interview-based research included in this study was conducted in Cairo, Egypt. In March 2012, eleven Egyptians from various points on the political spectrum were asked questions regarding the 2011 uprising, the role of the military, and the prospects for continued activism. While eleven Egyptians certainly do not represent every possible political stance, they each provided valuable insight on behalf of their respective camps and, collectively, provide a general cross-section. Several of the interviewees are political activists who were, and continue to be, instrumental in the new political arena. Others included military representatives, both retired and active duty.

Political activists interviewed included: Two members named Ali and Hassan of the Ahli Ultras group; Ahmed Abdorabo of the Democratic Front Party; Basem Fathey of the Egyptian Democratic Academy; Esraa Abdel Fatah of the April 6th Movement and Media Director of the Egyptian Democratic Academy; and Noor Ayman Noor, son of presidential candidate Ayman Noor. Of the military establishment, both Dr. Ahmed Abdel Halim and Major General Hamdy Bekhiet opined from their perspectives as retired military officials, and Mohamed Youssry gave his perspective as a military intelligence officer who was present during some well-known clashes and participated in poll-monitoring during the parliamentary elections. Gamal Eid, Director of the Arab Network for Human Rights Information, spoke to the relevance of non-governmental organizations and Dr. Noha Bakr of the American University in Cairo and Assistant of the Minister for International Cooperation, provided a more academic and theory-based point of view.

Civil-Military Relations

Theory

It is critical to define what drives the Egyptian military in order to understand why it represses opposition in the particular ways that it does. The military has two key drivers: its belief that it is the guardian of Egypt, and its need to maintain its interests through any means necessary. These drivers prompt the military to react to change through both repression and co-optation at different times in order to sustain its role.

The Free Officers seized power in 1952 because they felt that the government and old intellectual classes had failed to provide a way forward. As Muhammad Husain Heykal asked, “where were the intellectuals in those days [before 1952]? What was their mission as the vanguard in the leadership of the masses?”⁷ The Officers felt they were the only uncompromised group able to lead Egypt. The liberals and monarchists had allegedly allowed Egypt to fall under the imperialist domination of Britain during the British occupation. This was something the Free Officers would not allow to happen again because they believed it was their duty to guide Egypt and act as her guardian.

This belief continues to guide military strategy and thinking, as evidenced by interviews with three military officials and its protectionist rhetoric.⁸ Even in light of the violent clashes on May 3rd, 2012 outside the Ministry of Defense in Abbasiya, *Al-Shorouk* News reported an interview Major General Mohammed Assar in which he

⁷ Anouar Abdel Malek, *Egypt: Military Society: The Army Regime, The Left and Social Change Under Nasser* (1968): 178.

⁸ Maj.Gen. Hamdy Bekheit, 16 Mar. 2012, Dr. Ahmed Abdel Halim, 11 Mar. 2012, & Mohamed Youssry 13 Mar. 2012. Personal Interviews.

indicated that the military will remain “the property” of the Egyptian people,⁹ suggesting an unbreakable commitment to the people’s well-being. However, to be of service to Egyptians, the military insists that it requires autonomy and economic benefits to be effective.^{10/11} The military uses this belief to justify both its control over much of the Egyptian economy, and the lack of transparency in military affairs.

To ensure its guardianship of Egypt, the military engaged in a transactional relationship with former president Mubarak and exerted influence through numerous institutions. By ruling indirectly, the military insulated itself from daily issues of governance; and the inclination toward indirect rule lingers today. Military officials claim that their top priorities stem from their traditionally appropriate roles, which are limited to the spheres of national security, border protection, and foreign policy. As such, Major General Bekhiet opined that the Egyptian military has no intention of retaining political power after a constitution is written and an elected president is sworn in.¹²

Because the military is highly institutionalized and professional,¹³ and is strongly linked to society through its practice of conscription, it can theoretically be somewhat open to reform.¹⁴ Today, the Egyptian military faces a dichotomy because it must both support the transition, *and* serve as a pillar of the regime. To compound this paradox, the military must also reckon with the notion that regular soldiers are different and divided

⁹ “العصر: الشد باب مع العنف نسد تخدم لا وذن الجيش في كاملة ثقة لاديه الشعب.” *Al Shorouk News*, 3 May 2012. Web. 04 May 2012. <http://www.shorouknews.com/news/view.aspx?cdate=03052012>.

¹⁰ Maj.Gen. Hamdy Bekheit. “Of the Egyptian Military.” Personal Interview. 16 Mar. 2012

¹¹ Niveen Wahish. “Egypt Military Official Defends Army’s Economic Interests.” *Ahram Online*, 28 Mar. 2012. Web. 04 May 2012. <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/3/12/37896/Business/Economy/Egypt-military-official-defends-armys-economic-int.aspx>.

¹² Bekheit. Personal Interview.

¹³ This study defines “professionalism” in the same way Samuel Huntington defines it in *The Soldier and the State*. The Egyptian Military has professional expertise, responsibility, and a corporate sense of self.

¹⁴ Derek Lutterbeck. “Arab Uprisings, Armed Forces, and Civil-Military Relations.” *Armed Forces and Society* April (2012), pg. 6.

from their leadership. It is important to make the distinction between public perception and the actuality within military ranks.

It is believed by some that the leadership embodied by the SCAF is quite different from the soldiers that compose the army. In an interview with *The Arab Digest*, Egyptian activist Yassir Siri makes the distinction that, “the Army of Egypt is the hope of the nation; it is greater and more lasting than SCAF.”¹⁵ Esraa Abdel Fatah also supports the notion that the Egyptian people “love their army” and will always revere it, while the leadership garners different sentiments.¹⁶ When soldiers stood up to their leadership in February 2011 and refused to fire on civilians, the former proclaimed that “the army and the people are one,” which lent credence to this opinion. Nonetheless, under pressure, the soldiers subscribe to the corporate orders of the SCAF.

Despite public opinion, in times of crisis the corporate identity will overshadow individual inclinations. After Mubarak was ushered out of office, the military ultimately took a strong unified stance in order to ensure their interests through stability. Since then, many of these first deserting officers, like Majors Ahmed Shuman, Amr Muttawaly, and Tamer Badr, have been awaiting military trial for their decision to defy orders.¹⁷ On April 8th 2011, anti-SCAF demonstrators sought to protect military officers that were participating amongst them.¹⁸ Patrick Galey suggests that 22 more officers were arrested

¹⁵ "The Arab Digest." *Yasser Siri: Egypt Doesn't Need American Aid!* 18 Feb. 2012. Web. 21 Apr. 2012. <http://www.thearabdigest.com/2012/02/yasser-siri-egypt-doesnt-need-american.html>.

¹⁶ Esraa Abdel Fattah. "Of April 6th Movement and Media Director for the Egyptian Democratic Academy." Personal Interview. 13 Mar. 2012.

¹⁷ Patrick Galey. "Soldiers of Conscience." *Dispatch*. Foreign Policy Magazine, 24 Jan. 2012. Web. 12 Apr. 2012. http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/01/24/soldiers_of_conscience?page=0,0, pg. 1.

¹⁸ "Army Forcibly Disperses Tahrir Protest, Reuters Reports 2 Dead." *Egypt Independent*. 9 Apr. 2011. Web. 13 Apr. 2012. <http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/army-forcibly-disperses-tahrir-protest-reuters-reports-2-dead>.

at these anti-SCAF demonstrations.¹⁹ With trials looming for these officers, others have been dissuaded from contradicting the corporate agenda. While many military officers remain in prison for their choice to join the people, on January 21st, 2012 the SCAF announced on its Facebook page that it would offer “January 25 Medals” to those soldiers who “protected the country’s security” (for entire announcement, see appendix 1).²⁰ This double standard further rewards those who remain in support of the military’s endeavors. Leveraging the corporate identity allows the military to maneuver as one, in order to ensure its success.

Defining “Success”

The meaning and manifestation of “success” take different forms when applied in different countries. That the Egyptian military is driven by its guardian narrative and corporate identity makes its definition of “success” unique. While “success” for one authoritarian regime might mean full political and governmental control in one instance, it might mean a more limited role in public governance juxtaposed by the maintenance of military autonomy over itself and its interests in another. As of this writing, the latter scenario more accurately describes the Egyptian military’s intentions and its likely accomplishment of them.

The Egyptian military is poised to achieve “success” because its ultimate withdrawal from daily governance does not mean that the military is necessarily going to make concession regarding its autonomy or economic assets. As long as the military

¹⁹ Galey, pg. 2.

²⁰ المسلحة للقوات الأعلى للمجلس الرسمية الصفحة (January 21, 2012). *Facebook*. 12 Apr.2012. <https://www.facebook.com/Egyptian.Armed.Forces>.

remains the backbone of the transition, it can steer the transition in a direction favorable to its interests, which are defined here as regime defense, economic assets, and ultimate autonomy despite civilian rule.

Notwithstanding the move toward democratic change and the ouster of Mubarak, many of his former officials remain major political players, and the SCAF is still in power; making regime defense a natural priority for the current caretaker government. “Defense” does not mean that the SCAF intends to immerse itself into politics by fielding candidates and engaging in governance. Rather, it means that any political gains made by newly-empowered civilians do not jar the military from its unrivaled position, and do not encroach on its ability to decide just how politically-involved it wants to be. By permitting the gears of democracy to turn in the form of parliamentary and presidential elections, the military actually protects itself from the potential damages of civilian rule while still making the claim that, “[it is] living up to [its] oft-invoked principles about democratic governance with practice.”²¹ Therefore, it is in the interests of the military to allow some democratic reforms in order to secure the status quo, which is defined by its pre- and post-Mubarak authority.

While the “necessary infrastructural component of a leading civilian political class” is something the military has successfully avoided thus far,²² it needs such a class to emerge before it can withdraw from daily governance and focus on its interests. Of particular significance to the military is its stake in the Egyptian economy—often estimated to be between 15 and 40%, although never officially verified. The military’s

²¹ Cook, *Ruling but Not Governing*. pg.134.

²² Ahmed Abdalla, “The Armed Forces and the Democratic Process in Egypt,” *The World Quarterly* 10.4 (October 1988): 1455.

extensive ownership of land, industrial and consumer-good production, in addition to its provision of services and control of factories,²³ make its economic entrenchment a critical component of its power, of which it is not likely to yield direction and command. Indeed, in November 2011, the military proposed constitutional legislation in Parliament that would have kept the extent of its economic activities and budget secret and free from oversight. While the legislation never passed, this is indicative of the SCAF's concern over civilian oversight,²⁴ and it suggests that the military is likely to approach this issue in the future through constitutional protections. Furthermore, since January 25th, the SCAF has couched its justification for its economic entrenchment in a narrative that marries its interests with those of the Egyptian people,²⁵ regardless of whether this conflation of interests actually serves the people. Therefore, the military's desire for exclusive oversight of its budget and other financial issues are likely to be a point of contention with the emergence of civilian leadership.

According to a report by the International Crisis Group, the military's reluctance to hand over power is directly related to its ability to "obtain requisite guarantees, despite its oft-repeated desire to step away from the limelight."²⁶ The Carnegie Endowment's Yezid Sayigh opined that the military's future involvement in politics will likely take one of two forms: true democratic transition without preservation of its interests, or, that it

²³ Sherine Tadros. "Egypt Military's Economic Empire - Features - Al Jazeera English." *AJE*. Al Jazeera, 15 Feb. 2012. Web. 03 Mar. 2012.

<http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/features/2012/02/2012215195912519142.html>.

²⁴ Tadros.

²⁵ Wahish.

²⁶ *Lost in Transition: The World According to Egypt's SCAF*. Middle East Rep. No. 121. Washington, D.C.: International Crisis Group, 24 April 2012. Web. 5 May 2012.

<http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/Middle%20East%20North%20Africa/North%20Africa/Egypt/121-lost-in-transition-the-world-according-to-egypts-scaf.pdf>.

will seek guarantees of its ultimate autonomy from civilian oversight.²⁷ As this paper will argue further, the latter scenario is highly more likely given the military's interests and its need to secure them. While it is assumed that the military will transfer power because the Egyptian street and elected parliament have gained some traction, the former will only do so on terms that ultimately benefit *it*, and not necessarily Egyptians' desires for real democracy. In this sense, the Egyptian military will have achieved *its* version of success.

Egyptian Military Repression: Past to Present

History demonstrates that the street has only periodically been a force in Egyptian politics; and only a force to the extent that the military has allowed it to be. It is important to note that a majority of Egyptian street protests were not solely against the regime, but often focused on specific domestic policies. It was not until 2005 that protests explicitly targeting the fall of the regime began. Additionally in 2011, it took military recognition that Mubarak's days were numbered for the fall of the regime to occur. Historically, Egyptian rulers have successfully used violence, co-optation, and the Egyptian media to cripple the power of the street and control political participation.

Since the Free Officers Revolt in the 1950's, the Egyptian military has relied on three methods to secure the stability of its regime. The first is the use of formal institutions and violence against protesters and regime critics. The second method is co-optation to seemingly address demands, but ultimately to serve the interests of the military. The third method is the use of informal institutions to attack the opposition and

²⁷ Yezid Sayigh and Marina Ottoway. "Egypt's Military Custodianship." *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, Event Report, Washington, DC. 18 January 2012. Web. 6 May 2012. <http://carnegieendowment.org/2012/01/18/egypt-s-military-custodianship>.

secure the military's success as previously defined. These methods amount to a system by which the military controls a weak polity through a façade of liberalization.

As “guardians,” the military deeply believes in its responsibility to protect Egypt from both internal and external threats, and will use force when necessary to do so; a trend started by Gamal Abd Al-Nasser. The Free Officers had the will, the ability, and the institutional mechanisms necessary to project force and implement policies. While there were some initial protests against the Free Officers, they soon established order. This stability, once enforced, stifled any serious protests against the regime until 1968.

Force is not the only tool that the military used, as co-optation proved effective when the state is weak. For instance, the 1967 War served a serious blow to the Egyptian psyche and resulted in trials of military officials. Public outrage at the outcome of these trials led workers and students to march into the streets, which resulted in numerous deaths, injuries, and arrests. This began a week-long series of protests and demands for greater political reforms, which represented a major challenge to Nasser's regime. However, Nasser defused the situation by co-opting the students and addressing their demands for greater political participation through the creation of the March 30th Program.²⁸

A Façade of Liberalization: March 30th

The March 30th Program exemplified the ability to co-opt the demands of Egyptian protesters while preserving military rule. Therefore, co-optation as seen in the March 30th program, has become an integral mechanism for military repression.

²⁸ Steven A Cook. *The Struggle for Egypt: From Nasser to Tahrir Square*. New York: Oxford UP, 2012, 104.

However, part of this co-optation requires the military to maintain a positive public image and create a façade that it supports protesters and is willing to listen to demands.

The changes brought about by the March 30th Program seemed startling at first. The Program promised a new constitution that would promote individual expression, a deepening of democratic practices, and a free press. However, these new freedoms were much more limited than they seemed because these new freedoms were placed within the framework of pre-existing laws. One of these law included the Egyptian emergency law, which stated that any actions or speeches critical of the government were heavily restricted.

Nasser's decision to implement the March 30th Program was due more to necessity than good will. The vehemence of the protesters, their numbers, and the variety of backgrounds they came from meant that it would be difficult for the regime to simply use force to crush them. Additionally, the students' demands represented a direct challenge to the Nasser regime, something that had not occurred since the Free Officers' initial rise to power. In part due to the resilience of the protesters in the face of violence, the military adapted its repressive approach to favor co-optation.

Nasser was forced to position himself as a reformer and create a pressure release through the March 30th Program. This was mostly successful, as protests later that year were not as strong and were eventually put down with force. Nasser was able to leverage demands for change during a period when the Egyptian state was weak to his regime's advantage. He created a program that was based on the demands of the protesters for increased personal freedom, but placed these freedoms in a restrictive framework. This allowed the military to stay on top of the political dynamic, and in turn encouraged the

protesters to leave the street. Though protesters returned later that year, their numbers were weaker since the Program had appeased many.

New Millennium, New Tools: Kefaya

Force and co-optation were the go-to methods of military repression in the 20th century, however technological advances in the 21st century added new tools that both protesters and the regime could utilize. In the early 2000s, protests were small, of little importance, and quickly subdued by military force. Major protests between 2000 and 2004 were primarily related to foreign policy issues, namely the second *Intifada* and the 2003 U.S. invasion of Iraq. However, it was out of these anti-war protests that the *Kefaya* (Enough) Movement, the first significant and successful student protest in a generation, would emerge. New media was crucial to the viral support it received. Anti-war protests provided grounds for organization, and also allowed dissidents to demonstrate against policies of the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP).²⁹

Kefaya's success can be seen as the result of three key factors: their clear message of government reforms, their ability to leverage information technology and social media, and their willingness to directly challenge the regime. These features of the Kefaya Movement made it the first real, credible challenge to the NDP regime in decades. In particular, Kefaya helped build opposition to the contested 2005 Egyptian presidential election and set off a wave a mass labor strikes. The Mubarak regime initially tried to use force to break the movement; there are numerous accounts of the police attacking and

²⁹ Baheyya. "Kifaya: Asking the Right Questions." 30 April 2005. Web. 27 April 2012. <http://baheyya.blogspot.com/2005/04/kifaya-asking-right-questions.html>.

arresting members who were peacefully protesting.³⁰ However, the size and breadth of the movement, in addition to savvy use of modern media, made it difficult for the government to defeat the movement by force alone. Although violent repression was a key element of the Mubarak regime's tactics for dealing with Kefaya, violence was not enough and the regime was also forced to use other methods of repression.

Ultimately, the deployment of security forces like those during the Bread Riots of 1977 did not happen with the Kefaya Movement. The 1977 Riots were only dismantled when the army used massive force against the tens of thousands of rioters, something that was not a viable option in 2005 due to increased international focus on Egyptian domestic politics and the Bush Administration's rhetoric on the importance of democratic development. Much like the protests of 1968, the regime responded in part by promising and issuing reforms. In particular, the Egyptian government opened the presidential election system to multiple candidates, which was a key demand. However, much like the reforms of the March 30th Program, the opening of the Egyptian presidential elections was a simple ruse; the reforms were only on paper. Approval by the Egyptian Parliament, which was fully controlled by the NDP, was required before any candidate could register.

Also, much like previous political protests, the Mubarak regime eventually dismantled the Kefaya Movement through violence and intimidation through traditional mechanisms and new technologies. Female activists found themselves victims of sexual assault, leading figures of the movement were imprisoned and tortured, and the state media caught up to the new technology and defamed the Movement by insinuating that it was a puppet of the United States. Between external pressures and internal fractures, such

³⁰ Hassen Zenati. "Pro-Reform Movement Spreads Across Egypt." *Middle East Online*, 28 April 2005. Web. 27 April 2012. <http://www.middle-east-online.com/english/?id=13357>.

as conflict between its secular and Islamist members, the Kefaya movement eventually fell apart.

Following the Kefaya movement, 2007 and 2008 saw a rising number of strikes across various industries, to include textile and telecommunications. Over 200,000 Egyptian workers participated in strikes in 2007, mostly over the increasing costs of living and low wages.³¹ However, these strikes began to take on an increasingly political tone. The Egyptian government attempted to stop these strikes through its usual methods of repression. It again employed security forces to violently overwhelm protesters, made claims that it was seeking to address their demands, and called on them to disperse in the name of stability. However, the strikes continued to pick up steam, culminating in the April 2008 strike.

By coordinating the strike through word of mouth and social media outlets such as Facebook, blogs, and SMS messages,³² the new April 6 Youth Movement attempted to organize mass demonstrations. These demonstrations were readily contained by police forces, so the military did not have to intervene. For the next three years, Egypt would experience intermittent protests, although none reached a critical level until January 25th, 2011.

In the period since the January 25th uprising, the Egyptian government has used many of the same techniques developed over the past 60 years to disable the power of the street. While many activists involved in the January 25th protests initially viewed the military as guardians of the transition, they have since come to realize that the military,

³¹ Joel Benin. "The Egyptian Workers Movement in 2007." *Chroniques Egyptiennes/Egyptian Chronicles 2007* (2008). Cairo, CEDEJ, 2008. Web. 20 Mar. 2012. <http://www.cedej-eg.org/IMG/pdf/10-Beinin.pdf>.

³² April 6 Youth Movement Official Facebook Page. *Facebook*. 5 May 2012. <http://www.facebook.com/shabab6april>.

led by the SCAF, is only interested in maintaining its superiority. As early as February 25th, 2011, the military began using force to remove protesters.³³ Since then, force has been a mechanism by which subsequent, smaller street protests have been dispersed. As recently as May 2012, the military has employed violence to suppress protests.

Additionally, much like in 2005, the military has used mass media to issue calls for stability, and encourage people to leave the streets. Democratic Front Party representative Ahmed Abdorabo, suggested that state media put forward “stars of the revolution” in order to defame them later and successfully eliminate those players as threats.³⁴ The state’s media has remained firmly behind the military and has branded the protesters as troublemakers; and, with such widespread illiteracy, the state’s propaganda remains widely accepted.³⁵

Finally, the military has co-opted demands from the uprising; for example, promising more open elections and a transition to democracy. However, events such as the disqualification of presidential candidates and the insistence of the military on certain supra-constitutional principles show that it is still setting parameters for the transition. The above examination of historical repression provides a framework for the current interactions between the military and the street. A pattern emerges where military repression leads to stifled progress and solidifies the military’s interests.

³³ Noor Ayman Noor. “Political Activist.” Personal Interview. 13 Mar. 2012.

³⁴ Ahmed AbdoRabo. “Of the Democratic Front Party.” Personal Interview. 11 Mar. 2012.

³⁵ Basam Fathey. “Of the Egyptian Democratic Project.” Personal Interview. 12 Mar. 2012.

Repression Post-Mubarak

According to Robert Springborg, during the days before Mubarak stepped down, the military was enjoying wide, popular support while other elements of the regime absorbed popular anger, despite being subordinate to the military.³⁶ The military was able to exploit the revolutionary sentiments of Egyptians to justify its withdrawal as the guarantor of Mubarak's regime. In playing to these sentiments, the military aligned itself with the efforts of protesters to the extent that it could be seen as protecting the people against a now illegitimate regime. As such, many of the protesters were initially hopeful that the military would protect them.

This seemingly protective role played by the military was highlighted by the contrasting violence perpetrated by the Central Security Forces (state police), whose aggressive and violent attacks during the uprising were widely captured and publicized on social and international media outlets. When protests continued and police forces withdrew, the military was called in to enforce order, and was subsequently hailed for not firing on civilians. Moreover, once there were massive labor strikes at Egyptian factories, the military fully realized the liability of continued support for Mubarak and thus strategized to support popular demands.

Mubarak stepped down after these strikes, despite previous refusal to do so. The political prowess of the military during the 18-day uprising, Egyptians' natural tendency to trust it, and the lack of public knowledge about the army's activities led many to believe that Egypt's traditional guardians would usher in a peaceful transition. Indeed, the military pledged to accommodate these demands by ending the state of emergency,

³⁶ Ken Stier. "Egypt's Military-Industrial Complex." *Time Online*. 9 Feb. 2011. Web. 11 Feb. 2012. <http://www.time.com/time/world/article/0,8599,2046963,00.html#ixzz1m6DegIRg>.

permitting free political expression, and holding fair presidential elections—once undefined conditions allowed. In light of this, it seemed that the army and the people were truly “in one hand.”

These pledges were made prior to the then newly appointed Vice President Suleiman’s announcement of Mubarak’s resignation.³⁷ Due to the resilience of the protestors and the factory strikes, the SCAF recognized the liability of continued support for Mubarak’s presidency. However, when Mubarak resigned, the SCAF realized that the best means of preserving its own power would be through a military-controlled transition. Despite this initial cooperation with civilians, the SCAF proceeded to use force against protesters. The goal of the SCAF has been, and remains, to act on behalf of its own interests, that are best realized through military-enforced stability.³⁸

Following the unprecedented power shift caused by Mubarak’s step-down, widespread uncertainty came to characterize all aspects of Egyptian society. State police forces no longer patrolled the streets, leading to increased petty and violent crime. Demonstrations continued every week for a variety of reasons, which ultimately led to clashes as the military sought to disperse crowds. These demonstrations became frequent altercations between civilians and soldiers dispatched by the SCAF (see appendix 2 for timeline). As the SCAF realized that people were not going home, it authorized the use of force against protesters. In the same vein, during altercations among Egyptian civilians, soldiers have stood by and allowed violence to escalate, seemingly abdicating their role as protectors.

³⁷ Steven A. Cook. "Egyptian Military's Moment of Truth." First Take. *Council on Foreign Relations*, 12 Feb. 2011. Web. 18 Feb. 2012. <http://www.cfr.org/egypt/egyptian-militarys-moment-truth/p24093>.

³⁸ *Lost in Transition: The World According to Egypt's SCAF*.

Nathan J. Brown and Emad El-Din Shahin posit that the Middle East *does* have some instances of democratic institutions, even if they are rendered virtually ineffective on a regular basis.³⁹ This phenomenon begs the question as to why, even after the unprecedented events that swept the region in 2011, *real* change in Egypt has been paralyzed by stagnation. While as of this writing Mubarak and his sons await trial and sentencing, many Egyptians feel the dictator's step-down has only been a cosmetic change—a change that only gave way to new players in the same repressive game.⁴⁰

Brown and Shahin's position captures the framework of post-uprising Egypt, despite having written their piece before the uprising, which underscores the lack of real change to the Egyptian political system. The authors state that reforms are often used as stall tactics to quell domestic discontent and appease external pressures in an overall strategy of regime self-preservation, which does not lead to real democratization. Furthermore, reforms are motivated by “the need that most of these regimes feel to salvage their eroding legitimacy, prolong their authority, and continue to secure the support of outside actors. Once these regimes feel that the pressure has eased, they revert to their old repressive practices.”⁴¹ Such a pattern leads to a façade of liberalization, or, in post-Mubarak politics, a façade of change. Reforms are collectively used as a pressure valve to be used when regimes must attempt to regain stability.

The Egyptian case appears to follow this model, despite the political reorganization resulting from the January 25th uprising. While the SCAF has promised

³⁹ Nathan J. Brown and El-Din Shahin, Emad (ed.). *The Struggle Over Democracy in the Middle East: Regional Politics and External Policies*. (Routledge, New York) 2010, pp. 3.

⁴⁰ A.Kadir Yildirim. "Facade of a Democratic Transition in Egypt." *Today's Zaman: Op-Eds*. 2 Feb. 2011. Web. 3 May 2012.
http://www.todayszaman.com/newsDetail_getNewsById.action;jsessionid=00AAF44A4EABB27FE994D774F59847D6?newsId=234176.

⁴¹ Brown & El-Din Shahin, pp. 4.

reforms and democratization, it has ultimately reverted to repressive methods in response to dissent from those who continue to be dissatisfied with the trajectory of the January 25th “revolution.” However, the Egyptian military has seen itself through periods of instability in the past, so it knows how to preserve its interests.

Violence and repression against civilians became the primary tactic of the military to disperse sit-ins and try dissidents in military courts.⁴² Any belief that this was an anomaly was dispelled when 17 women were subjected to virginity tests at a military prison in March 2011. Thereafter, they were charged with weapons possession and disrupting the peace in a military court.⁴³ Military courts have since held trials for protesters, bloggers, and activists as the SCAF attempts to assert its control over a population frustrated with the slow pace of change despite the sacrifices made to reach this point.

The repressive policies of the military compound the inability of pro-reform activists to foment post-revolutionary change through real political participation. This stems from decades-long political weakness of the Egyptian polity. Now that political participation and expression are more possible than before the uprising, expectations have risen for the revolutionary youth to take responsibility for Egypt’s transition in a truly representative system. These expectations are embodied in Parliament and revolutionary fervor.

The relationship of the military with various factions will play an important role in the future of Egypt’s power structure. Analysts, such as Ahmed Hashim, speculate that

⁴² Noor Ayman Noor. Personal Interview.

⁴³ “Broken Promises: Egypt’s Rulers Erode Human Rights,” Amnesty International, 2011. <http://www.amnesty.org/en/library/asset/MDE12/053/2011/en/47be269e-b67a-42f4-835b-787f91044e04/mde120532011en.pdf>, pp. 26.

co-optation will be the strategy employed by the military in those relationships.⁴⁴

Factions such as political and business elites and the Muslim Brotherhood have historically been able to steer social, political, and economic trends in the country, thus it is appropriate that the military powerhouse engage them.

Limiting the Influence of the Muslim Brotherhood

The military rationalizes its working relationship with the Muslim Brotherhood as logical since the latter is the largest and most well-organized group available in Egypt. Naturally, this is due to the widespread presence and popularity of the Brotherhood within Egyptian society. Despite intermittent confrontations between the SCAF and the Brotherhood, their working relationship is one of necessity, according to military officials interviewed for this study.⁴⁵

Furthermore, the Brotherhood has much more experience in the political arena than other parties, and has assumed control of Parliament, making them the foundation of civilian leadership. The military officials emphasized that the military has Egyptians' best interests at heart, and that is why collaboration with the Brotherhood is necessary as the transition to civilian-led government takes place.⁴⁶ The officials' insistence that Egypt's uprising was a fully successful, popular revolution underscores the military's belief that it

⁴⁴ Ahmed Hashim. "Egyptian Military, Part Two: From Mubarak Onward." *Middle East Policy Archives*. Middle East Policy Council, 2012. Web. 3 May 2012. <http://www.mepc.org/journal/middle-east-policy-archives/egyptian-military-part-two-mubarak-onward>.

⁴⁵ Maj.Gen. Hamdy Bekheit, 16 Mar. 2012, Dr. Ahmed Abdel Halim, 11 Mar. 2012, & Mohamed Youssry 13 Mar. 2012. Personal Interviews.

⁴⁶ David Kirkpatrick. "In Egypt, Signs of Accord Between Military Council and Islamists on New Charter." *World News: Middle East*. The New York Times, 23 Jan. 2012. Web. 03 May 2012. http://www.nytimes.com/2012/01/23/world/middleeast/signs-of-accord-between-egyptian-military-and-muslim-brotherhood-on-new-charter.html?_r=1.

protected Egyptians during the “revolution,” and will continue to do so by handing over their power, peacefully and as soon as possible, to a civilian-led government.⁴⁷

Unlike the NDP and regime-dominated parliaments of the past, the Brotherhood’s FJP secured a majority in the People’s Assembly. Despite claims that it will not impose an Islamic theocracy, some still fear an Islamist-led government would eventually consolidate an authoritarian regime.⁴⁸ The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt has shelved any ambitions it may have had for the immediate implementation of Sharia law in order to pursue gradual shifts to conservative policies. Khairi Abaza, a senior fellow at the Foundation for Defense of Democracies, suggests that the Muslim Brotherhood must bide their time before attempting drastic policy changes.⁴⁹

Michele Dunne pointed out that with such a commanding majority in Parliament, the FJP may be capable enough to stand up against the SCAF’s strong arm.⁵⁰ Two recent events have brought hope for, and fear of, a strong role for the Islamists. In March 2012, the People’s Assembly pushed for a vote of no confidence in the government of SCAF-appointed Prime Minister Kamal al-Ghazouli. At first, this threat seemed merely symbolic when Parliament dropped the motion due to intimidation by the SCAF, however, on April 30th 2012, to the objection of 158 members of Parliament (MPs),

⁴⁷ Bekheit, Halim, & Youssry. Personal Interviews.

⁴⁸ Heba Fahmy. "Protesters Rally against Islamists Dominating Constituent Assembly." *The Daily News Egypt*, 23 Mar. 2012. Web. 05 May 2012. <http://www.thedailynewsegypt.com/egypt/protesters-rally-against-islamists-dominating-constituent-assembly.html>.

⁴⁹ Khairi Abaza. "The Arab Revolts: Can Liberals Compete?" A Conversation with Khairi Abaza, Dan Arbell, Michele Dunne, and Reuel Marc Gerech. Foundation for Defense of Democracies, Washington, DC. 26 Jan. 2012.

⁵⁰ Michele Dunne. "Director of the Atlantic Council’s Rafik Hariri Center for the Middle East." Personal Interview. 21 Feb. 2012.

speaker Saad al-Katatni suspended Parliament until a new cabinet was appointed.⁵¹

Nonetheless, three days later, Katatni acknowledged that only the SCAF had the authority to expunge Ghanzouri's government, and Parliament resumed.⁵² This interchange exemplifies the military's limits on Parliament's influence.

Tension between the Brotherhood and the military is also playing out in the presidential elections campaign. On March 31, 2012, the FJP announced that its Deputy Supreme Guide, Khairat al-Shater, would be nominated for Egypt's presidential race, though the party previously vowed to refrain from fielding a candidate. This was troublesome for the Muslim Brotherhood's narrative of pragmatism and moderation, as it also dominated the Constituent Assembly responsible for writing the new constitution at that time. The *Washington Post* reported in early April 2012 that al-Shater claimed he "reluctantly stepped into the race to cement the political ascendancy of Egypt's most prominent Islamist group amid fears that the country's ruling military chiefs could hijack the transition to democratic rule."⁵³ In response to this announcement, and perhaps in response to its own fear of Islamist domination, on April 15th, 2012, the Supreme Presidential Election Committee (SPEC) headed by Farouk Sultan, a Mubarak appointee, banned 10 presidential candidates from the elections.⁵⁴ In a move to stifle the dominance

⁵¹ 158 «نائب يرفضون تعليق الجلسات.. ويتهمون الكتاتني بالخضوع لـ«المرشد»». *Soot Belady*, 30 Apr. 2012. Web. 02 May 2012. <http://www.sootbelady.com/news/view.aspx?id=fd55f19e-ca51-489a-9473-5696f1056d8e>.

⁵² رئيس مجلس الشعب: كنت سأرفض إذا عرض العسكري نقل السلطة لي حتى انتخابات الرئاسة. *Shorouk News*. 3 May 2012. Web. 5 May 2012. <http://www.shorouknews.com/news/view.aspx?cdate=03052012&id=20978439-aaa6-42d4-9f30-e7c55b5ff6a1>.

⁵³ Leila Fadel. "Muslim Brotherhood Candidate Says He Is Running to Cement the Group's Rise in Egypt." *World: In the News. The Washington Post*, 09 Apr. 2012. Web. 03 May 2012. http://www.washingtonpost.com/world/middle_east/muslim-brotherhood-candidate-says-he-is-running-to-cement-the-groups-rise-in-egypt/2012/04/08/gIQAnswd4S_story.html.

⁵⁴ Hussein Abdel-Rahman. "Egypt Bars 10 Candidates from Presidential Election." *The Guardian*. Guardian News and Media, 15 Apr. 2012. Web. 22 Apr. 2012. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/apr/15/egypt-bars-10-presidential-election-candidates>.

of the Brotherhood, Khairat al-Shater was amongst the banned candidates, and perhaps in order to quell the fears of regime resurgence, former intelligence chief Omar Suleiman, was also banned from the election. This balancing act between a majority Islamist stakeholder in Parliament, and the historically involved military, evidences military aversion to the rise of powerful civilian leaders. Both the military and Islamist leaders will now face pressure from the populace for accountability. The ideology of the street is varied and largely subjective, however, that the street expects change can be assumed with a degree of certainty.

Containing the Revolutionaries

The revolutionaries are another force with which the military must contend. In January 2011, the people demanded the fall of the Mubarak regime, and it was the military that essentially removed him from power. Nonetheless, with remnants of the old regime, corruption, patronage still in play, the demonstrators have labeled the SCAF and other figureheads as unwanted leftovers from the Mubarak regime and still seek to remove them. According to a December 2011 Gallup Poll, 63% of the general public indicated that a continuing military political role after presidential elections would be negative.⁵⁵ Although the military remains the most powerful player in the transition, it must adapt its approaches to effectively contain opposition.

However, the SCAF has also taken steps to reinforce the notion of “unity with the people,” while retaining its influence and prominence throughout the transition. Plastered

⁵⁵ Dalia Mogahed. "Tracking the Revolutionary Mood." *Foreign Policy Magazine: Feature*. Foreign Policy, 24 Jan. 2012. Web. 02 May 2012.
http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2012/01/24/The_State_of_Egypt?page=0,2.

throughout Cairo outside military installations and on tanks are signs stating, “*al-jaysh wa al-sha’ab iyd wahida*,” “the army and the people are one hand.” These signs suggest that the military is somewhat concerned with its public image and the level of legitimacy it has because it is willing to invest in a campaign to garner favor with the public.

In light of this seeming recognition of the street’s power, its disorganization leaves space for the military to continue to apply force. This space is available because the demands of the public, while specific, remain incoherent and short sighted. The people called for the end of the Mubarak regime, and the military delivered because it decided to act in its self-interest, which no longer rested with the Mubarak regime. The people demanded an end to the Emergency Law, and Tantawi conceded one year later with limitations. In keeping with adaptive measures to placate demands, Tarek Radwan suggests that by lifting the state of emergency, Tantawi “may have meant to ingratiate the SCAF to the public for the January 25 anniversary by suggesting greater freedom.”⁵⁶ The streets still await an end to military tribunals for civilians, the purge of Mubarak-era remnants, and an end to rule by the SCAF. These demands lack strategic planning, and thus result in short-term, limited gains, which the military grants knowing that they do not serve long-term progress.

A clear example of limited gains can be seen in the lifting of the Emergency Law. Field Marshall Tantawi ended the law on January 24th 2012, *except* in cases of thuggery.⁵⁷ Now that Mubarak has stepped down and elections have been held, many activists have retreated to their respective parties’ offices throughout Cairo, and the

⁵⁶ Tarek Radwan. "The Emergency Law Revisited." *Egypt Source: Following Egypt's Transition*. Atlantic Council, 24 Jan. 2012. Web. 03 May 2012. <http://www.acus.org/egyptsource/emergency-law-revisited>.

⁵⁷ "Egypt's Ruling Generals to Partially Lift Emergency Law." *BBC News*. BBC, 24 Jan. 2012. Web. 23 Apr. 2012. <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-16704551>.

remaining occupants of Tahrir Square are perceived as thugs and beggars. In this instance, the military granted an immediate demand while retaining the prerogative to draw the red line for application of the emergency law.

There have also been claims that the military has used the media to divide and discredit various revolutionaries in order to prevent the emergence of a charismatic opposition leader. Individuals like Khaled Said and Mohamed El Baradei were heralded as stars of the streets, personalities around whose causes' people could gather. However, these individual "stars" soon fell victims to state defamation campaigns; Ahmed Abdorabo suggested that leaders like El Baradei were deterred from the limelight due to these propaganda campaigns.⁵⁸ For example, El Baradei has been accused of being an agent of the United States with intents to divide Egypt through a Western vision of democracy.⁵⁹ In the case of Khaled Said, killed by police brutality, even death does not protect one from such defamation campaigns. In *Revolution 2.0*, Wael Ghonim suggests that state run *al-Gomhouriya* newspaper labeled Khaled Said as the "Martyr of Marijuana."⁶⁰ Some of these accusations were blatantly false, but they were employed to discredit any emerging rally points for opposition.

The military has also overturned the narrative that the Mubarak regime was controlled by the United States. A March 2012 Gallup Poll suggests that opposition to U.S funding increased from 52% in April 2011 to 82% in February 2012.⁶¹ As aversion

⁵⁸ AbdoRabo. Personal Interview.

⁵⁹ Manal Abdul Aziz. "Opinion: Coming to ElBaradei's Defence." *The Egyptian Gazette*, 5 Mar. 2012. Web. 01 May 2012. <http://213.158.162.45/~egyptian/index.php?action=news>.

⁶⁰ Wael Ghonim. *Revolution 2.0: The Power of the People Is Greater than the People in Power: A Memoir*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2012, pg. 64-65.

⁶¹ Mohamed Younis, and Ahmed Younis. "Egyptian Opposition to U.S. and Other Foreign Aid Increases." *Gallup World*. Gallup Inc., 29 Mar. 2012. Web. 30 Apr. 2012. <http://www.gallup.com/poll/153512/Egyptian-Opposition-Foreign-Aid-Increases.aspx>.

to U.S. influence gains increased traction, the military has seized the opportunity to expand its repressive tool box. Part of its defamation campaign has been the branding of opposition groups as being tools of foreign interests. According to Jacey Fortin of the *International Business Times*, military officials “claim that protests against their rule in Egypt are instigated by forces outside of their national borders.”⁶² This opposition to foreign influence has become a popular tactic to discredit dissidents, both by the military against activists and by adversarial activists against one another. A level of uncertainty about foreign intentions is naturally attributed to foreign entities; however, as long as the military is able to divert public attention away from its short-comings and toward those other entities, accusations of foreign influence will be a mechanism by which to defame its opponents.

Though the Parliament and revolutionaries serve as potential pressure points for the regime, the SCAF maintains a tight grip on power and a large role in governing as the transition moves forward. Many argue that military prominence in politics is only temporary. Major General Bekhiet insisted that the SCAF is sticking to a precisely calculated transition timeline, leading Egypt towards a democratic constitution and system of governance. However, since Mubarak stepped down, the military has reluctantly become increasingly involved in daily governance, and its interests are tightly fused with the outcome of the transition. It has used its tool of repression, co-optation, and the media to successfully limit the influence of an emergent parliament and polity to preserve its interests.

⁶² Jacey Fortin. "Americans Held in Egypt May Be Freed: What Happens Next?" News: World. *International Business Times*, 29 Feb. 2012. Web. 27 Apr. 2012.
<http://www.ibtimes.com/articles/306994/20120229/egypt-travel-ban-lifted-cairo-aid-workers.htm>.

Points of Contention

In spite of the current structure over which the military presides, there are possible scenarios that could invalidate the argument put forward in this study. Potential indicators of waning military influence include: a new constitution that subjects the military to increased civilian oversight, a second wave of intense protests to which the military responds with excess force, the rise of a charismatic opposition leader, a decision to govern indefinitely, or the possibility that the military is simply incompetent. These outcomes are less likely to occur due to the military's aversion to full civilian control, the inability of parliament or the people to actualize their power, the lack of civil war in light of violence and human rights abuses, and the military's use of the narrative that it is the linchpin of stability.

First, it is clear that if a new constitution brings the military under civilian oversight, this would surely limit military autonomy, even if it retreats to its barracks. The military will not withdraw from power until stability has been reached and its interests are secure. Preserving its interests require a great deal of autonomy and flexibility. Though parliament has potential to be a legal route to lasso the military, this scenario remains unlikely due to the parliament's inability to actualize this potential in the face of military pressure.

As such, the new Parliament has been deemed ineffective because of its inability and unwillingness to hold SCAF-appointed Prime Minister Ghanzouri and the Interior Minister accountable for lack of security, including the fallout from the massacre at Port Said. For these reasons, Noor Ayman Noor opined that there has *not* been a real revolution in Egypt, only a superficial makeover, being that Parliament remains

ineffective and SCAF continues to repress Egyptians like the Mubarak regime did.⁶³ At the same time, the Parliament has, on occasion, stood against the SCAF. In at least a symbolic gesture, the Parliament threatened a vote of no confidence against Prime Minister Ghanzouri's government.⁶⁴ Though nothing became of this threat, it tested the military-Parliament relationship and the SCAF still reigns supreme. *The Wall Street Journal* quoted Nezat Ghourab, a former member of the Nour party, as saying that "the performance of the FJP and Nour party was not living up to the magnitude of the revolution."⁶⁵ This sentiment of parliamentary ineffectiveness was echoed by others, including political activists such as Basem Fathey, Esraa Abdel Fatah, and Gamal Eid.

A second possibility that would contradict this study's argument that the military retains control would be an excessively violent response to an intense second wave of protests. Such a protest would require mass levels of participation, potentially having to exceed the numbers from January 25th. Many activists have agreed that the "revolution" is not finished, and that January 25th was only the beginning of a long transition process.⁶⁶ They continue to call for the end to military rule with an accelerated timetable for presidential elections. Some of those parties also call for a second wave of revolution to bring these demands to fruition. As long as the military retains such strong interests in business and politics, it will only retreat to its barracks when stability is achieved and its

Noor Ayman Noor, Personal Interview.

⁶⁴ Seinab El Gundy. "MPs Inch Closer to Vote of No-confidence in El-Ganzouri Government," *Ahram Online*. 29 Mar. 2012. Web. 22 Apr. 2012. <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/38042/Egypt/Politics-/MPs-inch-closer-to-vote-of-noconfidence-in-ElGanzo.aspx>.

⁶⁵ Matt Bradley. "Islamists Fortunes Fade Before Egypt Votes." World: Middle East. *The Wall Street Journal*, 26 Apr. 2012. Web. 30 Apr. 2012. <http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052702303990604577367654212903644.html>.

⁶⁶ Personal Interviews. Fathey, Noor Ayman Noor, Gamal Eid: 13 Mar. 2012, & Fatah.

interests are secured. If these masses were to overrun the military in an excessively violent last stand, catastrophic bloodshed or a regional confrontation may ensue.

The fervor needed for a second wave may be brought on by rigged elections, biased trial rulings for cases against figure heads of the Mubarak regime, or an unrepresentative constitution. All of these stipulations are left for broad interpretations, which place the balance between civil-military relations on a potentially volatile platform. Recent possible flash-points include the Islamist majority in the Constituent Assembly and its subsequent dissolution, the SPEC's act barring 10 candidates from the elections, and the recent deadly protests outside of the Ministry of Defense in early May 2012. These flash points have the potential to prompt the military to stay in power. The military seeks to oversee and guide the transition, but memories from the contradiction of its role as both the protector and the prosecutor of the “revolution” still linger for some. Despite the strong position that the military now holds, continued reports of violence by it harm the chances that it will maintain its prominence during the transition.

Popular protests created enough pressure to topple the Mubarak regime, thus the street is a formidable force to be reckoned with. However, a descent into conflict remains unlikely since the exact composition and intentions of the street remain obscure due to the variety of participants. In describing the demonstrations on April 20th 2012, Hannah Allam suggested that “the revolutionary movement appeared more diffuse than ever, with Islamists campaigning for their presidential candidates, youth activists demanding justice

for slain protesters, and liberals weighing their fears of a religious state against their commitment to democratic elections.”⁶⁷

Furthermore, Tahrir Square is currently sparsely occupied, and only by merchants and radical youths, although demonstrations sometimes take place. By both military and civilian calculations, “thugs” have taken up residence in the square. Groups like the Ultras, once hailed as the heroes on the front-lines in direct confrontation with security forces,⁶⁸ have become a liability for the image of the Egyptian street as their agenda focuses on altercations with security forces and gaining monetary honors for martyrs of the revolution.⁶⁹ Without long term strategic goals, they are likely to be perceived as instigators of conflict and inhibitors of progress. As such, the street offers many ambitious narratives, but few are viable to foment a true challenge due to their fragmentation, disorganization, and shifting alliances.

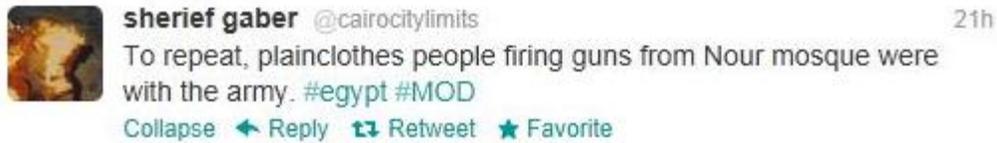
Not only is the street incapable of mounting the efforts needed for a successful second wave due to its fragmentation, but early violence has helped the military define the peoples’ threshold for such action. After public outrage in the aftermath of the Battle of the Camel, the Maspero incident, and in consideration of international outrage at events in Syria, the Egyptian military has resolved to use of the tools it knows are effective. In so doing this, it hopes to bolster its protectionist narrative by continuing to deny use of violence. However, the public remains convinced that the military brutalizes protesters, as most recently exhibited by reporting from the Ministry of Defense sit-in on

⁶⁷ Hannah Allam. "As Divided as Ever, Egypt's Revolutionaries Return to Tahrir Square." *McClatchy Newspapers*, 20 Apr. 2012. Web. 26 Apr. 2012. <http://www.mcclatchydc.com/2012/04/20/146195/as-divided-as-ever-egypts-revolutionaries.html>.

⁶⁸ Basem Fathey, Personal Interview.

⁶⁹ Ali and Hassan, Ultras, Personal Interview.

May 4th, 2012. Twitter feeds like the one below from Sherief Gabor suggest this military-security force cooperation:



12:28 PM - 4 May 12 via twicca - Details

70

Gaber suggests that the aggressors were both army and police personnel. Noor Ayman Noor also highlighted the fact that on top of the violence, many activists, even injured ones, were arrested.



11:55 AM - 4 May 12 via Twitter for Android - Details

71

The Egypt-Protest Defense blogspot lists 311 total arrests, many of which are women.⁷² The number of casualties in this particular confrontation is estimated at 11;⁷³ ultimately nowhere near the scale needed to stimulate a descent into civil war. This proves the utility of calculated and controlled violent repression by the military. Thus, it remains unlikely

⁷⁰ Sherief Gabor. "@cairocitylimits," *Twitter*, May 4, 2012. Web. 5 May 2012.

⁷¹ Noor Ayman Noor. "@NoorNoor1," *Twitter*, May 4, 2012. Web. 5 May 2012.

⁷² قائمة بأسماء المقبوض عليهم والمعروضين أمام النيابة العسكرية في إحداه 4 مايو. "جبهة الدفاع عن متظاهري مصر" Web. 05 May 2012. <http://egyprotest-defense.blogspot.com/2012/05/4.html?m=1>.

⁷³ Peter Beaumont. "Curfew around Egypt's Defence Ministry after Soldiers Clash with Protesters." *The Guardian*. Guardian News and Media, 04 May 2012. Web. 05 May 2012. <http://www.guardian.co.uk/world/2012/may/04/soldiers-injure-dozens-protesters-cairo>.

that these current clashes will lead to a second wave of protests that instigate a severely violent military reaction.

However, if a charismatic personality were to unify the Egyptian opposition, this, too, may lead to a check on military influence. Such renewed fervor under a unified ideology would challenge the military. This is why the military has gone to lengths to defame any potential figureheads who could really rally opposition forces. Examples of such campaigns were mentioned earlier include those against opposition leader Mohamed El Baradei and revolutionary inspiration Khaled Said.

Another scenario that would challenge the argument of military's prowess would be if the SCAF decides to abandon its aspirations to withdraw, and decide to remain in a position of governance. As the SCAF remains in politics and continues to control the pace of the transition, more and more people begin to fear that the military will sacrifice democracy for stability's sake by indefinitely suspending presidential elections. Given that the SCAF did not seize the opportunities it had during its initial period of legitimacy immediately following the January 25th uprising to enact reforms to the security apparatus, revolutionaries interpret this as an indication that it is determined to cling to power. This has led to an insistence that the "revolution" has not, and will not, be a success until all Mubarak regime remnants are removed and the military transfers power. The military desperately wants to leverage its traditionally heroic role, but with bloodied hands, many consider it the villain.

Members of the Democratic Front Party hold strong reservations about military intentions. Ahmed Abdorabo expressed his concerns that the SCAF is "out to get" his, and other, liberal parties in order to crush the opposition, dominate the government, and

consolidate a new dictatorship.⁷⁴ To be sure, this fatalist attitude is not shared by all the political parties, but it is mentioned here to emphasize the two extremes of the debate over military intentions. Military rhetoric suggests that to maintain complete governance is not to its advantage, and historical precedence supports its inclination to return to the barracks. Therefore, a power-grab is thus unlikely because the military values its ability to rule indirectly.

Finally, the argument that that military leadership is simply incompetent would also undermine this study's argument. Max Strasser of *The Egyptian Independent* suggests that, "the timetable set by the SCAF and inconsistencies of the current military-authorized constitution made a messy transition process inevitable."⁷⁵ Ayman Mohyeldin takes this argument further saying that, "every time there is a silver lining that gets people hopeful about a new Egypt, they are almost immediately undermined by either a deliberate or unintentional miscalculation by the ruling military council."⁷⁶ It is to be expected that any transition in the aftermath of internal conflict will be difficult. However, there is more to the military than meets the eye. The Free Officers have been effectively "ruling but not governing" since 1952. Additionally, they have managed to regulate post-Mubarak politics by only allowing gains only where its interests are not threatened. This is the manifestation of the military's success as it negotiates the transition without surrendering any autonomy thus far. This does not indicate evil genius,

⁷⁴ Ahmed Abdorabo, Personal Interview.

⁷⁵ Max Strasser. "SCAF's Poor Transition Planning to Blame for Egypt's Looming Crisis." News/Analysis. *World Politics Review*, 29 Mar. 2012. Web. 30 Apr. 2012. <http://www.worldpoliticsreview.com/articles/11786/scafs-poor-transition-planning-to-blame-for-egypts-looming-crisis>.

⁷⁶ Ayman Mohyeldin. "In Egypt, Chaos Is Pinned on Military's Incompetence." World News. *MSNBC*, 2 May 2012. Web. 04 May 2012. <http://worldnews.msnbc.msn.com/news/2012/05/02/11504899-in-egypt-chaos-is-pinned-on-militarys-incompetence?lite>.

but merely points to the fact that it is competent enough to forge a system that allows it to secure its interests and endure emerging challenges.

Conclusion

In light of history and recent developments, it is clear that Egypt's transition is still an ongoing process. Democracy and stability will not appear tomorrow. The military will continue to control the flow of the transition by enforcing stability and securing its own interests. In order to do this, the military will continue to use the tactics it has developed over the past 60 years. It will use violence, co-optation, and media outlets to limit the influence of an elected Parliament and an empowered street.

When there were protests against the Egyptian regime in the past, they were often crushed by the strong state security forces. As Dr. Noha Bakr suggested, the Egyptian military will use the tools in its possession to forge stability. It will continue to use the tools of force and repression to settle disputes and face the challenges of the transition.⁷⁷ On a handful of occasions, the street has become politically powerful due to a temporary weakness in the Egyptian state. In this weakness, the regime used co-optation to defuse tensions. By creating and guiding an agenda that appears to appease protesters, the military directs political change toward an outcome acceptable to it. The military will co-opt the objectives of the activists to weaken protests, and then it will employ certain levels of violence to destroy remaining elements of the street in order to preserve its power.

⁷⁷ Dr. Noha Bakr. "Political Science Professor and Assistant Minister of International Cooperation." Personal Interview. 15 Mar. 2012.

It must be noted that despite violent repression, bands of activists continue to take their demands to the street. Though their numbers have decreased and are nowhere near the “Million Man March” of February 1st, 2011, large numbers still emerge on Fridays and other designated days of protest. Thus, violence has weakened, but not destroyed, these movements. When violence is coupled with other forms of repression, the military is able to contain potential threats.

When faced with transitional challenges, it is important to look at the regime’s response through its own worldview. By all military accounts, the SCAF wants to ensure security and protection for the emerging system so long as the system does not impede its interests. The Egyptian military will go to great lengths to maintain its autonomy during a transition to civilian rule. Through various repressive tactics, it will ensure its success by the preservation of its autonomy and interests. Those tactics will continue to be combined and refined in order to contain emerging threats posed by those calling for the end of military rule. For now, political participation in Egypt has been re-energized, not revolutionized. The military remains a strong influence over the trajectory of the Egyptian uprising, and it continues to operate in accordance with its interests. With an ineffective Parliament and a divided polity, the military will continue to dominate the transition and dictate its trajectory to ultimately secure an outcome that preserves its economic assets and indirect ruling authority.

Appendix 1

المسلحة للقوات الأعلى للمجلس الرسمية الصفحة (January 21, 2012). Facebook. 12 Apr.2012.
<https://www.facebook.com/Egyptian.Armed.Forces>.



الصفحة الرسمية للمجلس الأعلى للقوات المسلحة
 January 21

رسالة رقم (1)

إلى شعب مصر العظيم من قوات المسلحة ..
 نحتفل جميعاً خلال أيام مرور عام على قيام ثورة 25 يناير المجيدة التي
 فجرها شباب مصر المتقد بالحماس والمخيم بالوطنية ، وشاركت فيها
 جماهير الشعب التواقة إلى نسيم الحرية وعبير الكرامة وحماها جيش
 مصر الذي انجاز لأهدافها واحتضن مطالبها وتعهد بتحقيتها .

يقرب احتفالنا وقد أصبح هذا اليوم عيداً لثورة 25 يناير الذي جسدت
 عظمة شعب وعزالة أمة ، يندكر فيه هذا الجيل والأجيال القادمة بكل
 فخر وعرفان تضحيات صفة من شباب مصر ، واجهوا القمع الوحشي
 بصورتهم وروا بمناهم الذكية مساحات ومبادئ مصر من أجل الحرية
 والكرامة .

تذكر بكل إجلال شهداء الثورة الأبرار وعزائنا فيهم أنهم أحياء عند ربهم
 يرزقون ، مذكرى أن أي تكريم مهما بلغ لا يرقى أبداً إلى ما قدموه
 لبلادهم وكذلك مصابي الثورة التي جادوا بمناهم وضحوا بأجزاء من
 أجسادهم بل وهبوا أعينهم فداء لوطنهم لكي ينهم بنو الحرية ، ولهم
 جميعاً تقدم ميدالية 25 يناير .

ولأبناء مصر من رجال القوات المسلحة الذين جفوا الثورة وقاموا وإخلاص
 على مدار العام ، وبذلوا فمبارى جهدهم وواصلوا الليل بالنهار في سبيل
 حماية أمت بلادهم في هذه الفترة العصيبة ، وضحوا بالأرواح والدماء من
 أجل تأمين مقدرات الشعب ومكتسبات الأمة .. لهؤلاء الأبطال اليواستل
 تقدم لهم باسم شعب مصر العظيم تحية التقدير والعرفان وتهديهم
 ميدالية 25 يناير بضعونها على صدورهم اعتزازاً بهذه الثورة العظيمة .
 والتزاماً باستكمال تحقيق أهدافها .

إن روح 25 يناير التي وحدت الشعب المصري رجالاً ونساء ، شباباً
 ونسواناً ، مسلمين ومسيحيين ، تحت راية الوطن في ثورة سلمية كانت
 منار إعجاب كل الأحرار في العالم ، تعونوا جميعاً إلى التمسك بوحدتنا
 ونبد دعوى الإنقسام والخرفه ومحاوات الوقيعة التي لا تعدم إلا أعياء
 الوطن والثورة .

وإننا في القوات المسلحة نؤكد أن عقولنا تسع لكل الأفكار والآراء ، وأن
 قلوبنا تسع كل أبناء مصر وفي الصدارة منهم شباب الثورة النقي الطاهر
 دون إقصاء لحركة أو إتلاف ، ودون إنتقاء أو استثناء .

ولابد لنا أن نعترف جميعاً أن مسار أي مرحلة إنتقالية دائماً ما يكون
 محفوظاً بالمخاطر والعقبات في ظل حالة الفوضى التي تحكمه .
 وهو أمر لابد أن نضعه في الاعتبار عند إصدار الحكم أو التقييم .

وبهذه المناسبة الغالية فقد صدق السيد رئيس المجلس الأعلى للقوات
 المسلحة على ما يلي :

- 1 - منح ميدالية 25 يناير 2011 لكل من شهداء ومصابي الثورة .
- 2 - تعيين جميع مصابي ثورة 25 يناير 2011 في وظائف حكومية عرفاناً
 وتقديراً لما قدموه لمصرهم العبيبة .
- 3 - منح ميدالية 25 يناير لكل أفراد القوات المسلحة من الذين شاركوا
 في الخدمة منذ أحداث الثورة .
- 4 - العفو عن باقي العقوبة المحكوم بها من المحاكم العسكرية عن عدد
 1955 محكوم عليهم من جرائم جنائية وبذلك يتبقى عند 1443 محكوم
 عليهم في جرائم جنائية .

يا أبناء الوطن الغالي

تعاهدكم بأن بطل الجيش المصري أميناً على أهداف الثورة وأن نظل
 قواكم المسلحة درع الوطن وسيفه تحدي الأرض وضمت الحدود وتردع
 كل من تسول له نفسه المساس بترابنا المقدس .

وإنه الموقف

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5,248 21,257 4,288

Appendix 2

Wael Eskandar. "Year of the SCAF: A Time-line of Mounting Repression." *Ahram Online*, 11 Feb. 2012. Web. 02 May 2012. <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/34046/Egypt/Politics-/Year-of-the-SCAF-a-timeline-of-mounting-repression.aspx>.

Summary

Case	Date
Mohamed Mahmoud/Mansour	2-6 February 2012
Port Said Football Riots	1 February 2012
The Cabinet Attacks	16-19 December
Mohamed Mahmoud	19-25 November
Essam Atta	27 October 2011
Maspero Massacre	9 October 2011
The church in El-Marinab	30 September 2011
Torture video of two men by army and police	28 September 2011
The battle of Abbasiya	23 July 2011
Assault on martyrs' families	28 June 2011
Nakba Day protests	15 May 2011
Ramy Fakhry	13 May 2011
Imbaba church attacks	7 May 2011
8 April officers	8/9 April 2011
Zamalek vs Africain match	2 April 2011
Torture and virginity tests	9 March 2011
Church demolition and burning in Atfeeh	6 March 2011
Corruption, abuses and miscellaneous others	February 2011 – to date.

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