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The Fall of Hosni Mubarak: Skocpol's Structural Approach

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A minor dissertation submitted in *partial fulfillment* of the requirements for the award of the degree of Master of Philosophy PPE

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COMPULSORY DECLARATION

This work has not been previously submitted in whole, or in part, for the award of any degree. It is my own work. Each significant contribution to, and quotation in, this dissertation from the work, or works, of other people has been attributed, and has been cited and referenced.

Signature: _____ Date: _____

Acronyms

ASU	Arab Socialist Union
BofA	Bank of America
ETUF	Egyptian Trade Union Federation
ICT	Information Communication Technology
IFI	International Financial Institution
IMF	International Monetary Fund
LR	Liberation Rally
MENA	Middle East North Africa
NDP	National Democratic Party
NGO	Non-governmental organisation
NU	National Union
PCSI	Popular Committee to Support the Intifada
SCAF	Supreme Council of Armed Forces
SMS	Short Message Service
US	United States of America
USAID	United States Agency for International Development

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Dedication

To My Grandmother, Patricia Price (1924-2011), always in my thoughts.

Abstract

The recent *Arab Spring* movement in the Middle East and North Africa has been heralded as a transition to democracy for a region plagued by authoritarian regimes and their durable leaders. This paper seeks to understand why *Hosni Mubarak*, Egypt's former long-time president, was forced from office during the early months of 2011. Influenced by recent work in political scholarship on the Middle East, the *Post-democratisation paradigm*, seeks to escape from the democratisation paradigm. Instead of viewing events as indicative of inevitable democratisation in the region, the paper attempts to explain events in terms of *Skocpol's structural approach* to revolution which can also be used to understand significant social change. In line with the structural approach the paper provides a *contextual and narrative history* of Egyptian politics, including opposition and protests, as a backdrop to the events between the *25th of January and the 11th of February 2011* which led to Hosni Mubarak leaving office. The paper exhibits structural contradictions in the Mubarak regime, some of which would lead to tension in the elite. Specifically, it highlights tension between the military and the Mubaraks over the matter of Gamal Mubarak's apparent succession of his father. This explains why the military would not use coercive force to help maintain Mubarak's power. It found that the social movement *#January25* was successful at maintaining momentum in the face of state repression, including an analysis of the role of social media.

Table of Contents

Figures.....	8
Chapter 1: Egypt’s Arab Spring.....	9
Introduction.....	9
Hosni Mubarak and the Egyptian State	11
Research question	12
Methodology.....	13
Delimitations and Limitations.....	13
The Arab Spring.....	14
The January 25th uprising, a narrative.....	15
Figure 1: Map of Tahrir Square and surrounding areas	16
In Conclusion	21
Chapter 2: Introducing the Conceptual Approach	24
Introduction.....	24
Structure vs. Agency.....	24
Theories of Social Change and Revolution	25
The Structural Approach.....	30
The state	32
The Remaining Principles.....	34
Stages of Social Revolution.....	37
Elite unity and the stability of regimes	40
Critiques of Skocpol’s Structural Approach	43
Appropriateness of the Structural Approach.....	45
In conclusion.....	48
Chapter 3: Historical Narrative of Egypt’s Political Landscape.....	50
The Colonial Context and establishment of the Modern state	50
From Nasser to Mubarak	53
Political Themes.....	53
Society and Economy	57
Foreign policy	62
In conclusion.....	65
Chapter 4: History of opposition movements, protests/collective actions, the #January25th movement and events leading to the fall of Mubarak.....	66
Introduction.....	66
Strikes and collective actions, a brief history	66
Opposition politics	67

Secular civil society: the emergence of Kefaya and beyond	67
The Muslim Brotherhood.....	72
Events leading up to the #January25th Uprising	74
In conclusion.....	75
Chapter 5: Factors in the Literature	77
MENA Region Regime Weakness.....	77
The Military and Gamal Mubarak	79
The role played by social and digital media	79
Youth unemployment and demographic bulge	82
Anger, Unchecked Power, Corruption, Labour Practices and Land.....	83
In conclusion.....	85
Chapter 6: Analysis and Conclusion.....	86
State Crisis	86
External pressures	87
Break in the elite: succession crisis	90
The military as final guarantor.....	93
Explaining the military's decision not to support the regime.....	95
'Urban uprising': a crisis from below	99
Conclusion	101
Bibliography	104

Figures

Figure 1: Map of Tahrir Square and surrounding areas

14

Chapter 1: Egypt's Arab Spring

Introduction

In late 2010 and early 2011 the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA), witnessed unprecedented social protest against corrupt authoritarian governments. Some of these movements morphed into more serious rebellions, which have been termed revolutions by some (in the case of Egypt), and others have led to serious civil conflicts (in the case of Syria). Regardless of the future outcomes for the region, the 'Arab Spring', as these movements have cumulatively been termed, provides a number of fascinating questions for social and political scientists.

The aim of this paper is to understand unrest in Egypt in early 2011. Hosni Mubarak, Egypt's president for nearly 30 years, was pushed from power during the 'Egyptian uprising' from the 25th of January to the 11th of February 2011. In light of the fact that opposition to his leadership, and questions about the legitimacy thereof, were not new, what made the period in early 2011 different? How can we understand the outcome of Egypt's experience of the Arab Spring? Related to this is the aim to understand why Egypt's military acted as it did? Unlike experiences in other MENA countries it did not act against demonstrators and failed to maintain Mubarak's power. In fact some evidence points to the military pushing Mubarak from power¹.

This paper argues that Hosni Mubarak lost power due to a state crisis emanating from tensions between the elite and the state. Specifically relationship between the military, a state institution, and the regime elite was strained, which affected its disposition to prop up Mubarak.

¹ Nathan Brown, "Egypt's Revolution Stumbles Forward," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, June 15th 2011, accessed August 21st 2012, carnegieendowment.org/2011/06/15/egypt-s-revolution-stumbles-forward/blu1#

To understand these events this paper will break-away from much of the literature on MENA politics by adopting a structural as opposed to a democratisation approach². This approach, which is state-centred, places emphasis on relations between different groups within states and relations between states in the international system. Structural conditions and social relations in Egypt are explored in order to shed light on the events in question. It is not yet clear what the outcome of Egypt's experience of the 'Arab Spring' will be, this is one of the reasons a structural approach is such a useful paradigm for understanding the events that led to the fall of Mubarak. The structural approach's emphasis on macro-structures allows for an understanding of how state crisis and upheaval from below can lead to significant social change in a society without being hinged on the end outcome. That is, what lies in Egypt's future is not necessary for a structural approach explaining the state crisis and upheaval from below that led to Mubarak's fall.

The rest of this chapter is devoted to understanding the Arab Spring and specifically the abovementioned events in Egypt. A short description of Hosni Mubarak and Egypt as a state with its associated political system is provided to emphasise why his loss of power and the 'Egyptian uprising' itself are interesting to understand. This paper's specific research question and its methodology are then discussed. A brief description of the Arab Spring follows. Egypt's specific experience is then highlighted. A narrative account of the events from the 25th of January to the 11th of February is given.

² Structural approaches are generally employed in the study of revolution. The structural approach in this paper will draw mainly on Theda Skocpol's structural approach which is the most prominent and recognised. This paper does not view or claim the recent events in Egypt amount to revolution. Also it is far from clear that what happened in Egypt amounts to 'a complete structural overhaul of political and social institutions'. However the events that led to, as well as the actual overthrow/resignation of Hosni Mubarak, do indicate significant change for Egypt. There also seem to be elements of class involved in protests against rising inequality between rich and poor, corruption and dropping standards of living coupled with massive scale labour actions. Furthermore the events have been referred to, both by international media and protesters, as a revolution which signifies that the general consensus that the events are viewed as amounting to some serious form of change. This paper recognises the usefulness of the structural approach in analysis of said occurrences, which can be considered as substantial, rapid change to Egypt's political institutions with some elements of class upheaval. For more information on her definition see: Theda Skocpol, "France, Russia and China: A Structural Analysis of Social Revolutions," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 18:2 (1976), 175.

Hosni Mubarak and the Egyptian State

Hosni Mubarak came to power in 1981 after then President Anwar Sadat was assassinated. There was, at the time, the perception that Mubarak, who was vice-president, had come to power by chance not selection as he was not elected President but rather inherited the position through Sadat's assassination³. Mubarak served as President of Egypt for nearly 30 years until he was unseated on the 11th of February 2011. His long incumbency was not without opposition or protest from Egyptians. During the 1980's he managed to cement his power and that of the National Democratic Party's (NDP)⁴ by for example using extended state of emergency laws.

In the last decade there has increasingly been resistance to the idea of continued rule by Mubarak, and especially to the notion that his son Gamal would succeed him. The sentiments expressed during protests in early 2011 were by no means new.

Mubarak was able to maintain his position for so long because of Egypt's political system. Technically Egypt was an authoritarian non-competitive multi-party state. The NDP was created in the 1970's after Sadat liberalised the Arab Socialist Union (ASU)⁵. Although there are other parties which are allowed to compete in elections, due to election rigging, unfair legislation and coercive force, the NDP maintained its position as the most dominant party in the system with no serious competition, thus making the system multi-party but non-competitive⁶. More specifically, Egypt has a presidential system which grants broad executive power to the president, allowing Mubarak the necessary coercive powers to keep his position despite opposition.

While there is space for government-controlled opposition parties, Egypt under Mubarak was considered to be a hybrid system of 'authoritarian upgrading'⁷ which refers to autocrats reacting to developments in their socio-economic environments by forming policies which

³ Ann M. Lesch, "Egypt's Spring: Causes of the Revolution," *Middle East Policy*, XVIII: 3(2011), 35.

⁴ The NDP was Egypt's most prominent political party, which Mubarak was the leader of and is discussed in detail in chapter 3

⁵ The ASU was the state party and is discussed in more detail in chapter 3.

⁶ Holgar Albrecht, "How can opposition support authoritarianism? Lessons from Egypt," *Democratisation*, 12:.3 (2005), 383.

⁷ Bertelsmann Stiftung, *BTI 2012 — Egypt Country Report*, (Gütersloh: Bertelsmann Stiftung, 2012), 3.

ensure the stability of authoritarian rule⁸. The extension of the state of emergency from Sadat's assassination is an example of this. Opposition parties were allowed in order to maintain the illusion of pluralism and reform⁹.

In more conceptual terms Jack Goldstone has described the Egyptian state at the time in question as being a 'sultanistic dictatorship'. By this he means that though it seems invulnerable to social upheaval and protest, it is in reality weak because of the above mentioned methods and structures the regime has used to stay in power. Other key features of this form of regime are a single dictator with a close circle of elite. They usually extend their own power and amass wealth at the expense of state institutions¹⁰.

With the above regime typology in mind, it becomes more apparent why Mubarak's fall from power is so interesting. He had managed to stay in power for nearly 3 decades, at the expense of the Egyptian population and state institutions. Understanding how this came to be has important ramifications for the region. If other states fit this 'sultanistic' description, they may also be vulnerable to state crisis and upheaval from below.

The next section lays out the research question of this paper as well as the methodology employed and the recognised limitations. This is followed by a brief description of the Arab Spring which helps to locate the Egyptian experience in its regional context.

Research question

How does the structuralist approach explain the fall of Mubarak, including the role of the military in contributing to this outcome?

A secondary question is: How did the #January25 Movement come to be and sustain itself throughout the abovementioned time period?

⁸ Paul Aarts, Pieter van Dijke, Iris Kolman, Jort Statema and Ghassan Damman, *From Resilience to Revolt. Making sense of the Arab Spring*, (Amsterdam: Amsterdam Institute for Social Science Research (AISSR), (2012), iv. Accessed January 21st, 2013, <http://aissr.uva.nl/events/publications/content/from-resilience-to-revolt.-making-sense-of-the-arab-spring.html>

⁹ Bertelsmann Stiftung, *BTI 2012*, 3-4.

¹⁰ See chapter 5 for more detail.

Methodology

The conceptual approach used is derived from structural approaches to revolution and significant social change. It draws heavily on Theda Skocpol's work in *States and Social Revolution* as her work is considered the most prominent and developed among structural approaches¹¹. In short, the structural approach requires the researcher to focus on the structures and relationships of the state both domestically and internationally, in a non-voluntarist¹² way in order to explain significant social change. This framework has been supplemented with elite theory from a number of authors. This is done to clarify and expand Skocpol's notion that division within the ruling elite can be a cause of state crisis. Specifically, the concept of elite unity is important because it lends understanding to the conditions under which tensions form and elites tend to fracture.

It also relies on the body of previous research studies and published academic literature on Egypt's general and political history. This has been used to build a narrative of the state and its structures, as well as its relationships domestically and internationally (among other structural conditions which may play an explanatory role). This is discussed in detail in chapter 2. It also relies on journalistic commentary where applicable to demonstrate the sequence of events or public opinion at the time. The aim is to understand the factors which led to state crisis and upheaval from below, which helps explain Mubarak's fall from power.

Delimitations and Limitations

Although every effort to include relevant information and voices in the discussion about Egypt has been made, some limitations exist. This paper specifically investigates the events between the 25th of January and the 11th of February 2011 which led to the resignation of long-time president Hosni Mubarak. A structural approach requires detailed historical and contextual background. Thus, a brief history of Egypt from Ottoman domination through British colonisation to the events beginning on the 25th of January 2011 is provided. This is imperative to locate key structural contradictions in the regime. Due to space constraints

¹¹ This paper recognises that there are many approaches to the study of political change/violence and revolution, the structural one has been chosen in this paper as most appropriate to address the research questions. The choice vis a vis other approaches will be discussed in detail in chapter 2.

¹² The causes of social change are viewed as emanating from structural conditions in the state rather than as a product of purposive movements.

events after the 11th of February will not be analysed; they are also not necessary for an analysis of state crisis and upheaval from below which resulted in Mubarak's downfall.

In terms of limitations this paper has firstly been constrained by the fact that the events being studied are so recent. There is a small rapidly growing literature on Egypt's experience of the Arab Spring. This has had a few implications for this study. Firstly, new literature has not always been readily available. Secondly, the literature is constantly growing and changing. This paper attempts to include the bulk of relevant literature while recognising it may not be possible to include every voice in the discussion on the Arab Spring.

The Arab Spring

This section explains the unrest/protest movements in the MENA region which have become collectively known as the Arab Spring. In late 2010 a young street vendor in Tunisia set himself alight to protest police corruption and brutality. His actions sparked widespread protests in that country, which eventually led to the end of long-time President Ben Ali's rule. This served to inspire citizens across the MENA region to begin movements of their own against their long-term authoritarian regimes. Protest movements were often organised through the use of social media sites like Twitter and Facebook as well as social media sharing platforms like Flickr and Youtube. The most significant changes thus far have been seen in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya where, to varying extents, there has been regime change. There is an on-going civil conflict in Syria which has led to massive casualties. Bahrain, Yemen, Jordan and Saudi Arabia, among others, have also experienced unrest¹³. With this in

¹³ While regimes benefiting from petrodollars have fared better in the Arab Spring, due to their ability to pay off the populace, the assertion that the military in these countries would ensure stability has shown divergent outcomes. Gause argues countries in which the military is a strong institution it will side with protestors, such as in Egypt and Tunisia. Egypt and Tunisia are homogenous societies (Sunni). Military leaders would foresee role for their institutions under new dispensations and so be more open to change. In countries like Libya and Yemen the military is closely linked with the ruling family and far less institutionalised. Another factor is whether or not the government represented the majority or was composed of a minority ethnic/religious group. In countries like Bahrain and Syria, the regime is minority led. In Bahrain Sunni led security forces backed the Sunni Monarchy in a country which is predominantly Shiite. Similarly in Syria the military is led by Alawite and other minority officers in a Sunni majority country. Gregory, F. Gause, III., "Why Middle East studies missed the Arab spring: the myth of authoritarian stability," *Foreign Affairs*, 90:4 (2011), 81.

mind, a discussion of Egypt's experience of the Arab Spring is useful. The next section focuses on a narrative of the events between the 25th of January and the 11th of February 2011.

The January 25th uprising, a narrative

Demonstrations in Egypt on the 25th of January 2011 were initially planned to protest police brutality and call for emergency law to be lifted, ironically to be held on the national holiday, Police Day. The protest occurred just after the events in Tunisia which led President Ben Ali to step down. Importantly, those close to Mubarak did not predict there would be any kind of substantial turn out for the Police Day protest¹⁴. On the first day, January 25th 2011, the crowd in Tahrir Square Cairo was about 80,000 strong¹⁵. During the initial days of demonstration, state TV completely ignored the protests. An anonymous NDP official admitted that this had been purposeful¹⁶. The regime believed if it ignored protests they would dissipate.

During the first day, activists had managed to warn one another of the police's whereabouts and tactics. They had also managed to arrange forms of flash mobs, clashing with police in one area, dispersing and then regrouping somewhere else, using social media especially Facebook and Twitter. By the end of the day, security forces used a strong show to push demonstrators back into the square, away from the Ministry of Interior and the Parliament¹⁷.

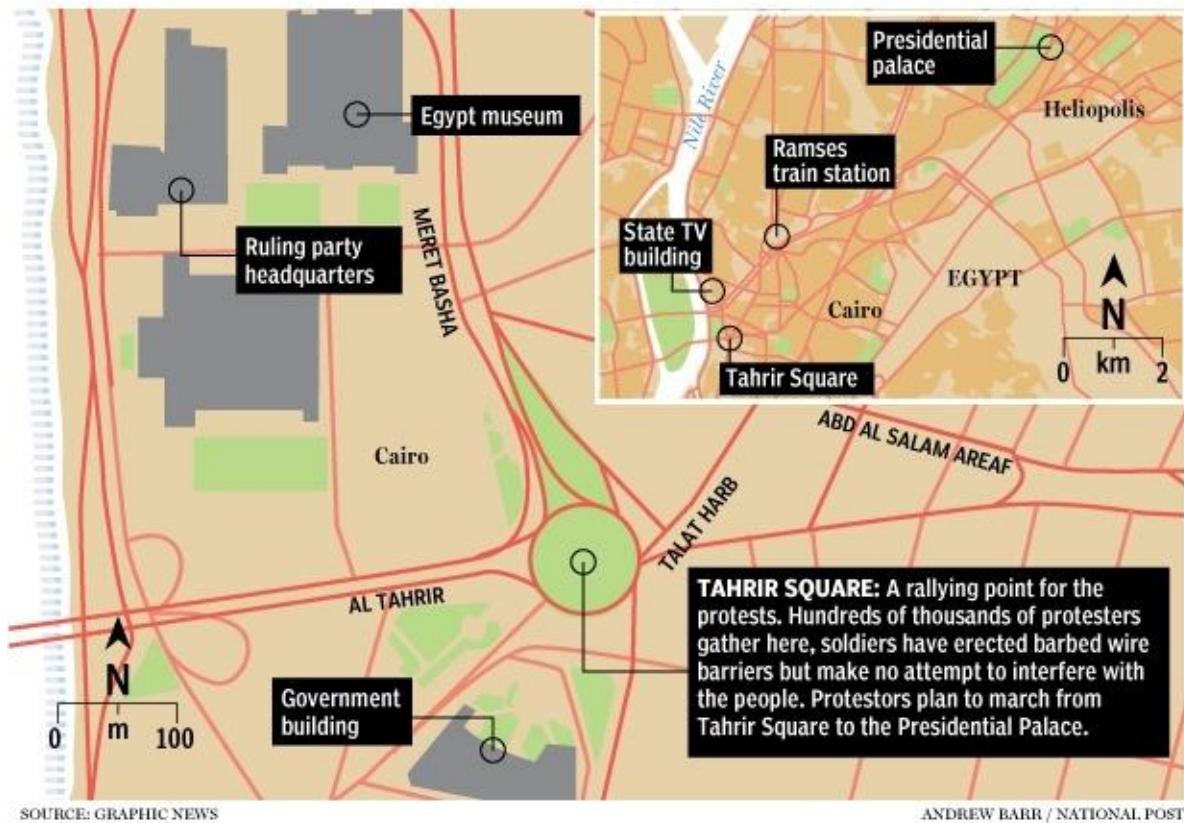
¹⁴ Steven A. Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt: from Nasser to Tahrir Square*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 2012), 281-282.

¹⁵ Merylyna Lim, "Clicks, Cabs and Coffee Houses: Social Media and Oppositional Movements in Egypt, 2004-2011," *Journal of Communication*, 62 (2012): 243.

¹⁶ Dina Ezzat, "NDP Promises Accommodation," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, January 27th to February 2nd, accessed September 23rd 2012, weekly.ahram.org.eg/2011/1033/eg7.htm

¹⁷ Cook, *The Struggle*, 284.

Figure 1: Map of Tahrir Square and surrounding areas¹⁸



The next two days saw dramatic increases in the level of participation. Cook estimates that it is possible that up to a million people were involved in protests in 7 of Egypt's 29 governorates. This included many thousands in Tahrir Square, tens of thousands in Alexandria (Egypt's second largest city), as well as large crowds in Suez where violence by riot police was particularly brutal¹⁹.

On 27 January the government blacked out Short Message Service (SMS) networks and almost all internet access. The internet was not restored until the 2nd of February and SMS networks only on the 6th. Protesters circumvented these restrictions by using Google's Speak2Tweet system, which allowed them to call satellite numbers and tweet by voice²⁰.

¹⁸ Map taken from Andrew Barr, "Map: Thousands of protesters gather in Cairo's Tahrir Square," *National Post*, February 1st 2011, accessed February 5th 2013, <http://news.nationalpost.com/2011/02/01/map-thousands-of-protesters-gather-in-cairos-tahrir-square/>

¹⁹Ibid, 284.

²⁰ Alexandra Dunn, "Unplugging a Nation: State Media Strategy During Egypt's January 25th Uprising," *The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs*, 35: 2 (2011): 19-21.

Protesters dubbed Friday the 28th the Day of Rage. It was a significant day as more sectors of society joined the protests, including businessmen, professors and government workers. Protesters attempted to take control of the Ministry of the Interior, resulting in three deaths. It also led to the surprise torching of the ruling NDP offices in Cairo. It was at this point that the crumbling security forces gave way to the military at Mubarak's command. This was a clear signal that the police and security apparatus were no longer in control of the situation²¹.

Although the Muslim Brotherhood²² initially refused to join the protests, many of its members joined as individuals. It was also invaluable in supporting the uprisings in terms of its established networks of social services. It is important to remember that these services were provided in the context of the withdrawal of the state from service provision²³. The movement also benefitted from the knowledge and experience of Cairo's militant soccer supporters who had clashed with the riot police on many occasions²⁴.

Early in the morning on Sunday the 30th, Mubarak gave a televised speech, his first since the protests had begun. In his address Mubarak offered a national dialogue and a commitment to reform. He appealed to Egyptians nationalism urging citizen's not to let the country fall into instability. Later that day he dissolved the government and named Omar Suleiman the Vice-President. These actions made little difference as protesters kept coming²⁵.

The regime had blamed foreign influences and the Muslim Brotherhood for the protests, in reality the Brotherhood only officially joined protests on the Day of Rage²⁶. Doaa El-Bay, a writer for *Al-Ahram*, commented two weeks later that state run media had fabricated and outright lied in this regard, spreading stories of foreign infiltration in demonstrations and blaming the Brotherhood. According to El-Bay all state-owned media either completely ignored what was happening with the protests, or ran stories that intimidated the public about

²¹ Cook, *The Struggle*, 284-285.

²² Egypt's primary opposition party, discussed in detail in chapter 5

²³ The Egyptian state's withdrawal from social service provision is discussed in chapter 3 and 4

²⁴ Lim, "Clicks, Cabs," 243. and Mona El-Ghobashy, "The Praxis of the Egyptian Revolution," *Middle East Report*, (2011), accessed 30 October 2012, stealthishijab.com/2011/05/31/the-praxis-of-the-egyptian-revolution/

²⁵ Cook, *The Struggle*, 285-286.

²⁶ Aljazeera, "Timeline: Egypt's Revolution: A chronicle of the revolution that ended the three decade long presidency of Hosni Mubarak," *Aljazeera*, February 14th, 2011, accessed September 23rd, 2012, <http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/01/201112515334871490.html>

looting and attacks²⁷. At the same time the rest of the world, and those who had access to satellite networks, watched as almost every notable news agency reported on the uprising. Aljazeera notably covered the events from start to finish.

The military intervention, for the most part, did restore order without having to resort to violence. Even though they had been a key pillar in the maintenance of the regime and Mubarak's power, they had also been in the background of the political life for the last 30 or so years, and were not associated strongly with Mubarak, his son or the NDP²⁸.

Feeling the pressure of the demonstrations, Mubarak addressed the crowds again in a televised speech on February 1st. This speech reiterated many of the points made in his first address but added more detail regarding planned modifications to article 76 and 77 of the constitution dealing with presidential candidacy. He would also not seek re-election²⁹. However the #January25 protesters were not appeased by this announcement and within just hours had begun to clash with pro-regime 'loyalists'. It was reported that the loyalists had in fact been paid by the NDP to attack protesters³⁰. Violence on the part of the Mubarak regime was mainly perpetrated by government loyalists and 'thugs'. These groups mobilised in Cairo and Alexandria specifically and attacked the pro-democracy #January25 protesters with weapons including Molotov cocktails and knives³¹.

While the military was not directly involved in any violence against protesters, it also did little to prevent situations in which citizens were being attacked by government loyalists. The military had been deployed in Cairo and Alexandria by the 3rd of February, at which point a 100 civilians had been injured in clashes, and yet for the most part they stood by as the clashes occurred. While the military had not until this point been involved in violent action against protesters, on the morning of the 3rd of February, military police had raided human rights organisations and law offices including the Hisham Mubarak Law Centre and made arrests³².

²⁷ Doaa El-Bay, "Lost Credibility," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, February 10th to 16th, accessed September 23rd 2012, weekly.ahram.org.eg/2011/1034/sc152.htm

²⁸ Cook, *The Struggle*, 286-287.

²⁹ *Ibid*, 287.

³⁰ Bahey al-Din Hassan, Neil Hicks and Michelle Dunne, "Egypt on the Brink," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, February 3rd 2011, accessed August 21st 2012. carnegieendowment.org/2011/02/03/egypt-on-brink/25fc

³¹ *Ibid*.

³² *Ibid*.

Later on the 3rd continuing to the 4th, and in the wake of 5 deaths and hundreds of injuries, the military began to secure the area around Tahrir. Most were grateful for the increased security, but the checkpoints also meant fewer protesters could reach the Square. At the same time the newly appointed Vice-President, Omar Suleiman, was trying to organise negotiations with the Brotherhood and other opposition figures. This was seen by some as a sign of Mubarak standing by his promise to institute reform, others were sceptical that a figure like Suleiman, who had in the past been responsible for insuring the Brotherhood did not come to power, would be open to instituting negotiated reforms³³.

The regime lead by Suleiman waited out the protests, by Monday the 7th it seemed as though they were losing momentum. On the 6th banks had reopened shortly for business and traffic police had been back on the streets³⁴.

Then two events occurred which changed the course of the uprising. Firstly, the Cairo University Law School issued a statement which supported those demonstrating across the country as well as their demands. As the state's security apparatus had long infiltrated the halls of all universities, and the Dean was a 'government functionary' the move was symbolic of one of the important regime support pillars falling. Secondly, activist and Google executive Wael Ghonim was released from police custody and appeared on a private channel called *Dream* where he gave an emotive interview. Ghonim was responsible for the 'We are all Khaled Said' Facebook page, and had been arrested on January 26th by Police near Tahrir. In his interview he appealed to citizens not to use the unrest as a time to settle scores but as one to build the country together, in contrast to Gamal Mubarak's sense of entitlement and arrogance, Ghonim came across as humble and authentic³⁵.

There was speculation as to how it came about that Ghonim was released. One possibility is that security forces were attempting to appease the demonstrators; following what was happening on Twitter meant they knew the release of Ghonim was a key goal for the movement. Another theory is that there was serious discord within the NDP by this point and

³³ Cook, *The Struggle*, 288.

³⁴ Aljazeera, "Timeline"

³⁵ Cook, *The Struggle*, 290-292. This seems to support the argument made in this paper that there were tensions within the elite

that there was a sort of power struggle in what remained of the Mubarak power structure and that ‘score settling’ may have led to his release³⁶.

Regardless of motivation, the effect was startling. It re-energised those demonstrating in Tahrir. Importantly it seemed to motivate different sectors of society to participate. Lawyers appeared at Tahrir in their robes, transport workers went on strike in Cairo and Suez. Workers were connecting their long felt economic woes to the corrupt and illegitimate regime. Average citizens began to congregate in Tahrir with their families and neighbours³⁷.

By Thursday the 10th of February the notion that the regime would be able to get control of the demonstrations was no longer held by many. There were widespread reports that Mubarak would step down. However, when he appeared on television late that evening, his address made it clear that he envisioned himself as part of Egypt's political future. The response in Tahrir was one of rage. He had decided to only delegate Presidential power to his Vice-President, Suleiman and not step down. What made matters worse was the fact that the transfer was only temporary and according to Article 84 of the constitution, Presidential power could only be transferred to the Speaker of the Assembly and not the Vice President³⁸.

This refusal to step down would ultimately be what pitted him against the army. As the crowds reacted to his refusal to step down, activists began planning a march to the Presidential palace. The military had blocked the approach and a march there would put the military in the position to have to make a choice about whether to support and maintain the regime by firing on thousands of protesters or to push Mubarak out of power³⁹. Significantly, according to Aljazeera, the protesters in Tahrir demanded that the military join their cause after Mubarak's speech on the 10th⁴⁰.

The next morning on February the 11th, while hundreds of thousands of protesters remained in Tahrir Square, yet more marched along Salah Salim Street towards the towards Mubarak's compound. The military did not fire on the protesters or prevent their movement. At 6pm in

³⁶ Ibid, 291.

³⁷ Ibid, 292-293.

³⁸ Ibid, 294.

³⁹ Ibid, 294.

⁴⁰ Aljazeera, “Timeline”

Cairo the Vice President appeared on state television and announced that Hosni Mubarak had resigned from his office as President of the Republic⁴¹.

On the 11th of February, before Mubarak stood down as President, there was speculation that it was becoming clear that the military was going to have to take a side. The military had, through a communiqué revealed that it would 'support the legitimate demands of the people' – this signalled a change from the past, according to Dunne, as the military did not engage in political commentary. There was commentary about what the response of the military would be if protesters were to, march on mass to the presidential residence and scale the walls. Demonstrators were gaining and not losing momentum, and this was increasingly putting the military in the position to choose between the people and the regime⁴².

Mubarak stepped down on the 11th of February 2011. Ottoway suggests that his resignation came as a result of pressure by the Egyptian military. In essence she suggests that Mubarak was sacrificed in order to maintain the status quo, and at the time of his resignation, power had shifted to the military⁴³. This view that the military was significantly involved in the resignation of Mubarak is one that is supported by Brown, who months later claimed that the military Supreme Council of Armed Forces (SCAF) had entered Egyptian politics just before Mubarak had stepped down⁴⁴.

In Conclusion

This chapter has given a brief description of Hosni Mubarak, the former President of Egypt, as well as a description of the Egyptian political system during his rule. It has briefly described the Arab Spring and discussed its divergent outcomes and possible reasons for them. As the aim of the paper is to understand Egypt's experience of the Arab Spring, and how long-time President Mubarak was pushed from power, it then focussed on a narrative of Egypt's experience and the events in question. The above narratives/descriptions have

⁴¹ Cook, *The Struggle*, 294-295.

⁴² Michele Dunne, "Forcing the Military to Choose," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, February 11th, 2011, accessed August 21st, 2012, carnegieendowment.org/2011/02/11/forcing-military-to-choose/2y9n

⁴³ Marina Ottoway, "Egypt's Regime Sacrificed Mubarak," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, February 11th, 2011, accessed August 21st, 2012, carnegieendowment.org/2011/02/11/egypt-s-regime-sacrificed-mubarak/rd9

⁴⁴ Nathan Brown, "Egypt's Revolution"

provided a foundational view of the events in question and are intended to contextualise the research question and the following chapters.

The paper ultimately argues that Hosni Mubarak lost power because of a state crisis caused by tensions between the elite and the state. The relationship between the military, a state institution, and the regime was also strained, which affected its disposition to support Mubarak. Finally, this paper focuses on the #January25th movement as the product of waves of protest which have developed since 2000. They have used social media to network and coordinate, as well as other societal or social networks which will be discussed in the coming chapters.

The second chapter explains the structural approach, and provides a theoretical foundation for the paper. It discusses why other approaches, particularly democratisation, have not been employed. It also provides examples of how structural approaches have successfully explained the Iranian revolution, which is geographically and culturally similar to Egypt, thus providing useful lessons.

The third chapter provides an in-depth historical narrative of Egypt's political landscape. It discusses the state and its structure, emphasising how the current system has developed over time. The chapter traces the origins of the elite during Mubarak's incumbency as well as other relevant social groups. It also assesses the relations between Egypt and other states, tracing its historical associations from the Ottomans, British to the United States (US) as well as discussing the impact of regional competition with Israel. This chapter provides the relevant historical and contextual background to apply structural analysis to the Egyptian case.

The fourth chapter takes a more in-depth look at Egyptian opposition politics. It emphasises the recent history of collective actions against the regime as well as strikes which have had a political tone. It traces the emergence of a social movement called Kefaya, which was the predecessor of the #January 25th movement responsible for protests in the period under examination. Finally, it traces the events which led to the 'Egyptian uprising'.

The fifth chapter discusses factors in the literature which are considered either causal or in some way significant to the Egyptian experience of the Arab Spring. The chapter looks at

both structural factors and voluntarist factors. These factors are useful in explaining state crisis and urban uprising.

The sixth and final chapter applies the structural approach to the internal and external relationships explored in chapters 3 to 5. Specifically it discusses the emergence of a 'state crisis', in which Egyptian elites fractured and the disenfranchised military failed to back the president. It then discusses 'upheaval from below' which details how protest movements were able to coordinate and sustain their protest methods.

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Chapter 2: Introducing the Conceptual Approach

Introduction

The previous chapter introduced the Arab Spring and Egypt's experience of it. With this context it introduced the research questions of the paper. This chapter is devoted to discussing the theoretical approach employed to address the research question. It begins with a discussion of the structure vs. agency debate in order to understand the different approaches/theories explaining significant social change and political violence. Then the chapter introduces these theories/approaches, specifically looking at why democratisation was rejected by this paper as a prism through which to view events. The structural approach is introduced, as well as a discussion about the centrality of the state to the approach, the principle underpinning it and finally the stages of revolution useful for the paper. A brief overview of elite theory is given as it is useful for understanding tensions in the elite and how they contribute to state crisis. Critiques of the approach are addressed to assess its usefulness and possible shortfalls. Finally the appropriateness of the structural approach in the Egyptian case is discussed once the conceptual approach itself has been clarified.

Structure vs. Agency

The structure vs. agency debate centres on whether political change occurs due to actors purposefully acting to achieve a goal, or whether structural factors and conditions lead to an inevitable outcome.

According to Mahoney and Snyder, the debate can be boiled down to the way each side views the effect of socialisation (structures) on human relations. The actor/voluntarist view is 'undersocialised', whereas the structural approach is 'oversocialised'. Voluntarists do not believe that human identity, behaviour or interests are formed by social structures. Human actions cannot be explained by external social relations. On the other hand, structuralists view human behaviour, interest formation and identity as a result of place in social structure and the related choices available. Agency based explanations do not completely ignore the role of

structure, but see it as ‘looser and indeterminate’ whereas the structuralist approach sees it as a ‘generative’ variable⁴⁵.

This debate has been prominent in the literature on social/ political change and revolution. As the approach used in this paper is structural, this debate is useful to discuss.

Theories of Social Change and Revolution

The following section outlines the various perspectives on social change and revolution in order to provide sufficient background on which to form the theoretical approach of this paper.

Marx and Engels’ *Manifesto of the Communist Party*, is viewed to be one of the most influential pieces ever written on revolution. Marxism contends that the movement of history would inevitably lead to revolution, creating a communist society, transforming one mode of production to another, as members of exploited classes would overthrow the ruling class. The basic premises are that revolutions are related to historical transitions, progressive and beneficial, and finally that they would usher in capitalism followed by those which introduce socialism, as its benefits are more widely felt by all classes⁴⁶. Marxism has proved to be less pertinent for Western societies⁴⁷, although it remains a seminal work and is applicable in some ways to the former Soviet bloc countries and some ‘Third World’ ones.

Alexis de Tocqueville published his book *The Old Regime and the French Revolution* in 1848 at the same time as Marx and Engels’ *Manifesto*. His view was complementary to theirs in that he agreed the aristocracy and feudal system had been destroyed by the French revolution. In contrast, he viewed this as part of strengthening a centralised state which now had dominion over all men, as everyone was now equal before the law⁴⁸. As opposed to Marx and

⁴⁵ James Mahoney and Richard Snyder, “Rethinking Agency and Structure in the Study of Regime Change,” *Studies in Comparative International Development*, 34:2 (1999), 5-6.

⁴⁶ Jack Goldstone, “Classic Approaches,” in eds. Jack Goldstone, *Revolution: Theoretical, Comparative and Historical Studies*, (Toronto: Thomson Wadsworth, 2003), 23 -36

⁴⁷ Rod Hague, Martin Harrop and Shaun Breslin, *Comparative Government and Politics: An Introduction*, (London: The MacMillan Press Ltd., 1992), 68-69.

⁴⁸ This focus on the state as the important in an analysis of revolution is taken up by Skocpol in her structural approach

Engels, de Tocqueville cautions that revolution may strengthen the state as opposed to being viewed as a triumph of a new class⁴⁹.

According to Goldstone there were 3 distinct periods of contemporary scholarship which followed. The first were the natural histories of the 1920's and 1930's which aimed to find patterns/events common among revolutions. While this approach did elicit valuable information it failed to answer basic questions like: what are the causes of revolution?

The second period was dominated by general theories, including social psychological and system-disequilibrium explanations, of political violence in the 1960's and 70's⁵⁰. The former focuses on the motivations of individuals. Why do they participate? Social psychology approaches are good examples of actor based approaches. Notably Gurr built on the work of Davies to develop his concept of relative deprivation, which can be described as individuals feeling like they are receiving less than what they are entitled to. According to his theory of relative deprivation people are most likely to revolt in situations where periods of improvement, such as sustained economic growth, are followed by a reversal or relapse. The strength of this approach is that it highlights perceived vs. actual grievances as important to people⁵¹.

Relative deprivation theory struggles to answer questions about forms of political violence and why riots may become rebellions and then revolutions⁵². Thus it is no signal that uprising is imminent; it is likely present, to some extent, in most societies. It is incapable of explaining the outcomes of revolution and its progress. It cannot answer questions about whose discontent matters and why⁵³. Many of the problems with this approach stem from its sole focus on actors over structure.

Another general theory developed by Smelser and Johnson focussed on the sub-systems of society (political system, economy etc) and what happened when one sub-system began to change independently. They theorised that imbalance can make incumbent regimes prone to

⁴⁹ Jack Goldstone, "Classic Approaches," 31.

⁵⁰ Jack Goldstone, "Introduction," in eds. Jack Goldstone, *Revolution: Theoretical, Comparative and Historical Studies*, (Toronto: Thomson Wadsworth, 2003), 1-19, 2

⁵¹ Hague and Harrop, 138.

⁵² Rod Hague, Martin Harrop and Shaun Breslin, *Comparative Government*, 71-72.

⁵³ Hague and Harrop, 138.

new ideologies which challenge its legitimacy⁵⁴. This is similar to Functionalist theory which posits that the main task of governments is maintaining equilibrium in society. As such they must respond to challenges and demands in a manner which maintains equilibrium. Where Marxism would view revolution as the result of the inevitability of history, functionalists see it as a failure of government. The most prominent scholar in this field is Chalmers Johnson who theorised that political change occurred when governments could not keep up with pressures for change. This resulted in governments losing legitimacy and effectiveness. According to Johnson, unsuccessful revolutionary attempts were even considered instances of revolutionary change. This seems to be an exaggerated claim and a weakness of this approach is that it is 'insensitive to different forms of political change'⁵⁵.

Goldstone also views general theories as suffering from a purposive view of revolution. They assume that revolutions are the result of an opposition movement's efforts as opposed to an internal breakdown of the state. General theories were also premised on the assumption that modernisation would lead to grievance. These notions were built on single path modernisation assumptions which no longer hold true, as it is not assumed all societies will develop along the same path⁵⁶.

Skocpol also critiques the above approaches for their focus on voluntarism and their inability to answer important questions. More of her critique is provided in this chapter when the distinction between her structural approach and other approaches is discussed.

The third phase, in the 1970's and 80's was dominated by structural approaches. A key difference of these theories was the emphasis placed on the nature and importance of the state. The structural approach will be discussed in the next section.

Finally there is a fourth, more recent, stage in political scholarship that has been dominated by the search for democratisation since the 1990's. The Cold War era resulted in pressure to fit the global discourse about democratisation. The discourse was dominated by Huntington's

⁵⁴ Hague and Harrop, 138.

⁵⁵ Rod Hague, Martin Harrop and Shaun Breslin, *Comparative Government*, 71.

⁵⁶ Goldstone, "Introduction," 6.

notion of democratisation⁵⁷ in the wake of Eastern European revolutions; followed by the prominence of Fukuyama's 'End of History' which positioned Western style democracy as the ideal system of governance⁵⁸, essentially claiming the triumph of Western style Liberal Democracy as a universal ideology.

Middle Eastern political scholarship in the 1990's described the region as experiencing 'Islamic exceptionalism', for not fitting the democratisation mould due to 'cultural incompatibility'⁵⁹. There were 'democracy spotters' in the literature claiming declining legitimacy of authoritarian regimes, elections and a growing civil society in the Middle East would herald democracy⁶⁰.

Regime led reforms were often mistaken as democratisation when they were actually engineered toward regime survival. Lack of change in regime type was framed as stagnation; relations with the opposition; changes within the opposition as well as changes within society itself were ignored⁶¹.

In terms of studying political change, Bank and Valbjørn, posit that the central question should be about what is as opposed to what ought to be? There needs to be a new way of studying Middle Eastern Politics, they have termed it post-democratisation, as it seeks to move scholarship beyond the search for a transition to democracy, towards a focus on the actual change⁶². Essentially, they argue, scholars have been providing 'old wine in new bottles' and it is time to provide 'new wine in old bottles'.

Does the argument against democratisation stand after the 'Arab Spring'? The MENA region experienced mass mobilisation and removed long time authoritarian leaders. Valbjørn believes that it would be foolish to call the events a process of democratisation. There are few

⁵⁷ Huntington's work followed on from that of Lipset's (1959,) "Some social requisites of democracy: Economic development and political legitimacy." Lipset essentially claimed that former non-British colonies and Islamic states would not develop into democracies.

⁵⁸Morten Valbjørn and André Bank, "Examining the 'Post' in Post Democratization: The Future of Middle Eastern Political Rule through Lenses of the Past," *Middle East Critique*, 19:3 (2010), 183.

⁵⁹For a discussion on cultural incompatibility with democracy of Islam see Samuel P. Huntington, "Will More Countries Become Democratic?" *Political Science Quarterly*, 99: 2 (1984)

⁶⁰ Bank and Valbjørn, "Examining the," 187.

⁶¹ Bank and Valbjørn, "Examining the," 188.

⁶² Bank and Valbjørn, "Examining the," 192-193.

reasons to believe the 'Arab Spring' amounts to democratisation. He argues we can consider it 'Mubarakism without Mubarak'⁶³.

There has been too narrow a focus on the regime in the Arab Spring; attention to other internal and external events⁶⁴ needs to be paid. Secondly, moving forward, scholarship should pay attention to the *re-politicisation* of the Arab world. This refers to the emergence of old collective actors as well as new ones that do not necessarily participate within the confines of conventional political participation⁶⁵. This seems particularly pertinent given the resurgence of mass-mobilisation politics during the 'Arab Spring'.

Democratisation can be further criticised for its focus on agency over structure. Huntington, for example, focuses on elites being central to the creation of democratic transitions, particularly moderate elites during times of crisis⁶⁶. Agency (voluntarism) is given prominent place as an explanatory variable. Agency centred explanations will look at structures as being 'external constraints which actors may or may not encounter as they pursue their goals'⁶⁷. Structural approaches by contrast view the interests of agents as being shaped by the structures and environments they encounter⁶⁸. This critique fits well with Valbjørn's about too narrow a focus.

This paper aims to move away from concluding that events in Egypt signal democratisation. Using a structural approach it attempts to study what is, and not what ought to be. It allows for focus on the regime, its domestic relationships, international relationships and any other pertinent structural conditions. The structural approach allows for considering the *re-politicisation* mentioned above. It provides new wine in an old bottle.

⁶³ Morten Valbjørn, "Upgrading Post-democratization Studies: Examining a Re-politicized Arab World in a Transition to Somewhere," *Middle East Critique*, 21:1 (2012), 28-29.

⁶⁴ Valbjørn mentions that Mark Sedgwick predicted in the special volume on post-democratisation in *Middle East Critique* that an internal or external event could 'ignite and explosion' in Egypt see: Mark Sedgwick, "Measuring Egyptian Regime Legitimacy," *Middle East Critique*, 19:3 (2010), 251 –267.

⁶⁵ Valbjørn, "Upgrading Post-democratization," 29-30.

⁶⁶ Samuel P. Huntington, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, (London: University of Oklahoma Press, 1991), 109-163.

⁶⁷ Mahoney and Snyder, "Rethinking Agency," 4.

⁶⁸ *Ibid*, 5.

The Structural Approach

This approach focuses on the actual relationships between groups in society. The approach used by this paper will be based on Theda Skocpol's structural approach, as it is the most prominent in the literature. Skocpol's approach is based on her study of three social revolutions in China, Russia and France, in her seminal work on structuralism *States and Social Revolutions*.

The relationships between the state and domestic groups, as well as the state and other states, illuminate the susceptibility of that state to radical political change. Substantial strains or pressures in these relationships make the state vulnerable to groups in society who could 'spearhead change from below'⁶⁹.

The structural approach focuses on the state as a potentially autonomous entity. Krasner discusses the move toward statist approaches, which include Skocpol's structural approach in *States and Social Revolution*⁷⁰. He defines the state as: "public bureaucracy or administrative apparatus as a coherent totality"⁷¹.

There are five characteristics which distinguish the statist from other approaches⁷², according to Krasner. These do not form a complete theory of the state; rather they help to explain how approaches like Skocpol's can be comprehended in relation to other approaches. Firstly statisticians see politics as more an issue of rule and maintaining control than resource allocation. Secondly the state and its policies should not be viewed as a result of society's preferences, rather as an actor in its own right. Thirdly statist approaches place emphasis on the way that structures and institutions shape and impact individuals decisions by forming perceptions of self interest. Fourthly, Krasner's work suggests viewing state structures as a product of historical contexts, as opposed to contemporary ones. Finally statist approaches focus on conflicts and disjuncture in political systems. It is not always clear what the rules of the game

⁶⁹ Rod Hague and Martin Harrop, *Political Science: a Comparative Introduction*, 4th Edition, (New York: Palgrave MacMillan, 2004), 139.

⁷⁰ Written after the behavioural revolution of the 1950's

⁷¹ Stephen, D. Krasner, "Approaches to the State: Alternative Conceptions and Historical Dynamics," *Comparative Politics*, 16:2 (1984), 224. This definition again fits well with O'Neils and Skocpol's which follows in this section.

⁷² Particularly the behavioural approach

are in terms of resource allocation, and crises or internal and external exigencies may change the rules⁷³.

Skocpol also discusses the political science and sociological theoretical views of the 1950's and 1960's, which preceded her work in *States and Social Revolution*, as society centred. These approaches did not give the role of the state much value. The government was viewed as an arena for resource allocation between economic/social interest groups. Most research centred on 'societal inputs' and 'governmental outputs'. The weakness of this was that often scholars found decisionmakers' policies far beyond the demands of those they represented⁷⁴.

Skocpol maintained that while Neo-Marxists scholars from the 1960's focussed on the 'capitalist state', they did however maintain a number of 'society centred assumptions'. These led to the central belief that the state is shaped by forces of production, thus assigning causality to state structures was difficult. The view of states changed during the 1970's due to increasing interdependence, they increasingly were viewed as actors. The centrality of the state became important; scholars looked back to writers like Weber and Hintze. They viewed the core of the state as emanating from its 'administrative, legal, extractive and coercive organisations'⁷⁵. This view demands we see the state as more than an arena and its structures as being shaped by historical and transnational contexts.

Viewing the state as central to any political analysis requires one consider state autonomy and capacity. State autonomy, in Skocpol's view, refers to the possibility that states may formulate policies which are not simply representative of the pressures and 'inputs' from groups in society. The ability to implement policies may be constrained by, among others, factors such as foreign relations/policy and important societal groups.⁷⁶. In the case of Egypt this paper shows that domestic policy has been constrained over the last 20 years by the aid relationship with the US.

⁷³ Stephen, D. Krasner, "Approaches to," 224-225.

⁷⁴ Theda Skocpol, "Bringing the State Back in: Current Research," in eds. Peter B. Evans, Dietrich Rueschemeyer and Theda Skocpol, *Bringing the State Back in*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 3-37, 4.

⁷⁵ Skocpol, "Bringing the," 5-7.

⁷⁶ Skocpol, "Bringing the," 17-20.

The state

The structural approach focuses on the class relations in a state⁷⁷; relations of states with one another and the relations of states with classes in society⁷⁸. This is done with the aim of explaining the creation of a revolutionary situation/ political crisis. The concept of the state is central to a structural approach.

There are three principles underlying Skocpol's structural approach⁷⁹. The third principle, which concerns the state will be addressed first as it is central to a structural approach. It requires that one conceive of 'states as administrative and coercive organisations which are potentially autonomous from socio-economic structures and interests'⁸⁰.

To understand the third principle, it is useful to discuss how it diverges from general assumptions underpinning other notions of revolution. It is widely regarded that revolutions start with a political crisis, followed by struggles in which organised political parties are involved, culminating in the formation of new societal organisations which cement socio-economic change⁸¹.

Political crisis is assumed to be epiphenomenal, the result of an 'incidental trigger'. Political groups are assumed to represent social forces. These assumptions rely on another assumption made about the nature of political structures and struggles: that they can be reduced to socio-economic forces and conflicts. The third principle maintains the state is possibly autonomous from these⁸².

Further assumptions about the source of state power are also rejected by Skocpol. Liberal theories (e.g. Johnson and Gurr) see power as stemming from legitimacy, and the cause of

⁷⁷Skocpol explicitly states that her approach is based in part on the Marxist view of revolution. That is class conflict is a factor to consider in a revolution. In line with the adherence to Marxism and political conflict theories (specifically Tilly) Skocpol firstly identifies different classes concerned and their interests, she then assesses the availability of organisation and resources available to members of classes for waging struggles in line with their interests. This is important to the analysis of a peasant uprising and answering questions like: why are revolutionary groups motivated to overthrow the existing regime? How do revolutionary movements organise and form solidarity? See Theda Skocpol, *States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia and China*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1979), 13-14.

⁷⁸ Theda Skocpol, *States and*, 31.

⁷⁹ These diverge from other theoretical approaches to studying revolution.

⁸⁰ Theda Skocpol, *States and*, 4.

⁸¹ *Ibid*, 24-25.

⁸² *Ibid*, 25.

political crisis as its loss. Marxists and political conflict writers (e.g. Tilly), view power as being fundamentally drawn from the ability to coerce. Both the liberals and Marxists, view the state as an arena for social conflict resolution (Marxists view it as an instrument of class)⁸³. Neither political conflict theorists nor Marxists view the state as autonomous⁸⁴. Skocpol critiques these views as they make conflict between the state and the dominant class absurd⁸⁵. This ultimately implies that the state can in no way be an organisation for itself. Seegers contends when considering Skocpol's third principle, that the state can be potentially autonomous from socio-economic interests and structures while also recognising that it will still be conditioned by them⁸⁶.

Rather, according to Skocpol, state crisis arises from contradictions within the old regime itself, as opposed to being a result of societal strain (such as relative deprivation) or class struggles. The state should be viewed as a macro structure, not simply an arena. The state, by nature, extracts resources from the population and uses them to maintain coercive institutions. Power is viewed as stemming from administrative and coercive capacity. The extent to which coercive and administrative organisations are free from the dominant class will determine the autonomy of the state⁸⁷.

The importance of competent and cohesive administrative and coercive state institutions is highlighted by the following quote. Speaking of the state from a structuralist perspective, Seegers states:

“Here scholars view the states' political structure neither as the executive committee of a particular class (or interests), with inevitable 'intransigence', nor as a vacuous political arena where conflict takes place. The state's political structure is viewed as an administrative entity, staffed by bureaucrats, which is – to a varying degree- dependent on certain social groups for the supply of political support and economic

⁸³ Ibid, 25-26.

⁸⁴ By autonomous Skocpol means a structure that has logic and interests of its own. These interests are not necessarily equivalent to or fused with the interests of the dominant class in society see Skocpol, *States and Social*, 26- 27.

⁸⁵ Ibid, 27.

⁸⁶ Annette Seegers, “Revolution in Africa: the case of Zimbabwe 1965-1980,” (PhD diss., Loyola University of Chicago, 1984), 13.

⁸⁷ Skocpol, *States and Social*, 29. This point will obviously be one of particular importance when looking at the Egyptian case as it is clear that there was at least in some way a separation between the military and the dominant class interests. However there was also clearly an overlap between the interests of the dominant class and the Egyptian police force/ interior ministry.

resources in order to fulfil its goals. Although administrative structures may vary, it is their weakness in the face of a (typically international) crisis that produces a revolutionary situation”⁸⁸.

If institutions of the state have a degree of autonomy, they may pursue interests which conflict with those of the dominant class, taxation for instance. It may lead to further conflict by strengthening the state's position, as there is no guarantee that the state will use this increased power to further the interests of the dominant class⁸⁹.

Skocpol maintains that states generally have two main aims which affect their relationships with dominant class interests. These aims are the maintenance of social contract and competition with actual/potential states. The easiest way to achieve the first aim is to maintain the status quo through subordinating lower classes, thus state interests are generally aligned with those of the dominant class. In times of crisis the state may be forced to make concessions to achieve either aim which are at odds with the dominant class. The state will pursue interests in terms of controlling and taxing the population and recruiting for the military (a result of international competition) despite the interests of the dominant class, thus the state can be autonomous⁹⁰.

Finally, states have a degree of autonomy due to the geopolitical environment in which they operate, which establishes opportunities and limits. Skocpol citing Otto Hintze posits there are two factors which impact the ‘real organisation of the state’: the structure of social classes and the external ordering of nation states and their position relative to one another⁹¹.

The Remaining Principles

This section explains the remaining principles of Skocpol’s structural approach. The first principle is a ‘non-voluntarist, structural view of causes and processes’⁹². Alternative theories of revolution maintain that the old-regime is destroyed by purposively organised groups who have planned to do so. Skocpol suggests this view is flawed because it infers that

⁸⁸ Seegers, “Revolution in,” 14-15.

⁸⁹ Skocpol, *States and Social*, 30.

⁹⁰ *Ibid*, 30.

⁹¹ *Ibid*, 30-31.

⁹² *Ibid*, 14.

no regime can survive without the consensus of the majority⁹³. This principle relates to the third one regarding state autonomy. Rejecting agency/voluntarist explanations also rejects legitimacy as an explanation of state power⁹⁴.

The structural approach instead focuses on the objective, structural conditions for revolution⁹⁵. The idea that social revolution is not made but comes is central⁹⁶. Rather than viewing revolutions as the result of purposively organised groups, they are in fact as a result of these same groups ('ideology and mass mobilised revolutionary organisations') exploiting 'revolutionary crises'⁹⁷. This is in line with the supposition that revolution is the result of a crisis representing a contradiction of the state. No matter how important one class or elite is in a revolution, simply studying their actions will never give the analyst a complete understanding⁹⁸. Furthermore outcomes in most cases have differed vastly from the expectations and ideology of revolutionaries. Recognising these ideas, this paper adopts a structural approach, while still recognising that agency based explanations have value in terms of explaining the motivations of those groups exploiting state crisis.

Identifying objectively conditioned and interweaving actions of the diversely situated groups in society is important. A look at institutionally determined relationships in society, i.e. between different groups as well as the interrelations of societies within the world, a focus on historically developing international structures is also useful. This principle will ultimately require an impersonal and non-subjective viewpoint⁹⁹.

The second principle of the structural approach requires there 'be reference to international structures and world historic developments'¹⁰⁰. Emphasis on world historical contexts, as they relate to the uneven spread of capitalist development and nation state formation is important. Alternative theories have also addressed this by applying an ideal type

⁹³ Ibid, 15-16.

⁹⁴ The third principle requires us to view the source of state power as being drawn from its administrative and coercive organisations

⁹⁵ Ibid, 16.

⁹⁶ Skocpol citing Wendell Phillips, 17.

⁹⁷ Skocpol defines a military crisis as originating from politico/military crises of that state and class domination.

See page 17

⁹⁸ Ibid, 18.

⁹⁹ Ibid, 18.

¹⁰⁰ Ibid, 10.

modernisation¹⁰¹. However as has been well noted not all countries will follow this 'ideal type'. What is important is historically transnational economic relations have always had a strong, differential influence on national economies¹⁰². The way the international system itself has developed over time has had a significant impact on world history¹⁰³. Factors such as: state administrative efficiency, the political capacity for mass mobilisation and geographic position must also be included when considering a state's place in the international/global context¹⁰⁴.

Transnational factors must be considered by a structural approach. These 'contextual variables', of which there are two, also affect the state and society. Firstly, the structure of the world capitalist economy and international system, give insight into the context and position of individual states, and forms the domestic class structure and state institutions. Transnational events during a revolution will also impact the outcome; according to Skocpol, military backwardness and political dependency are factors to consider¹⁰⁵.

The second contextual factor is the relevance of changes and transmissions in 'world time'; taking heed of historical orderings and world-historical changes and developments¹⁰⁶. The contexts within which revolutions occur are important, particularly in terms of the models and options available to revolutionary forces. 'Breakthrough' developments may alter the opportunities and challenges that face a revolutionary movement¹⁰⁷.

The next section discusses Skocpol's stages of social revolution. These will be important as they provide a framework for answering the research questions posed by the paper.

¹⁰¹ Ibid, 19-20. Skocpol also critiques original theories of modernisation based on their methodology, namely that they applied an a-historical framework of 'tradition' versus 'modernity' which relied on explaining any deviance from the 'norm' as chance. Skocpol applauds Wallerstein for his work on modernisation, even though she also critiques its broad scope, for breaking with the obsession for theoretically based studies. She states that the value to be taken from his book *The Modern World-System*, lies in his approach which is one that combines theory with contextual history. See Theda Skocpol, 'Wallersteins World Capitalist System: A Theoretical and Historical Critique', *American Journal of Sociology*, 82:5 (1977), 1075 – 1090.

¹⁰² Skocpol, *States and*, 20.

¹⁰³ Ibid, 20-22.

¹⁰⁴ Ibid, 22.

¹⁰⁵ Ibid, 23.

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, 23-24.

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, 23.

Stages of Social Revolution

This section looks at social revolution¹⁰⁸ as a three stage process¹⁰⁹. Only the first two are addressed as they can be applied to significant social change. They are central to the argument made in this paper, namely that Mubarak fell as a result of state crisis caused by tensions in the elite exploited by the #January25th movement's urban insurrection.

The first stage is the emergence of a revolutionary/political crisis. The second stage details insurrection in the states agrarian structures led by rural peasants. The third stage deals with the consolidation phase of social revolution and is not addressed in this paper as it will be unclear for quite some time what the outcome of Egypt's experience of the Arab Spring will be¹¹⁰.

The state crisis stage is important to this paper. State crisis, particularly caused by tensions in the elite, is central to understanding what happened in Egypt and to answering the research questions. State crisis, according to Skocpol, can arise from the inability of the state to meet challenges posed by international pressure usually in the form of economic or military competition with another state. This can lead to military collapse or fiscal crisis. The state may attempt a programme of reform aimed at strengthening its position¹¹¹.

State crisis is also centred in the structures and situation of the state and will tend to undermine and/or disorganise 'centrally coordinated and coercive controls over potentially rebellious lower classes'¹¹². Old regimes are often constrained by the relationship between their 'institutionalised autocratic organisations' and the 'landed upper classes'¹¹³. A cross

¹⁰⁸ Theda Skocpol, "France, Russia and China: A Structural Analysis of Social Revolutions," *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, 18:2 (1976), 175. In her earlier work, Skocpol draws on Huntington and Lenin's work to formulate her definition of social revolution, which her structural approach is aimed at understanding. From Huntington's work she infers that social revolutions are 'rapid, basic transformations of socio-economic and political institutions'. From Lenin's work she understands them as 'accompanied by and in part effectuated through class upheavals from below'. Social revolution entail a complete structural overhaul of political and social institutions coupled with massive class conflict/upheaval.

¹⁰⁹ Jerome L. Himmelstein and Michael S. Kimmel, "States and Revolutions: The Implications and Limits of Skocpol's Structural Model States and Social Revolutions: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China by Theda Skocpol," *American Journal of Sociology*, 86: 5 (1981), 1145.

¹¹⁰ This stage is not addressed as firstly the outcomes in Egypt are far from clear, and secondly it would require assuming a social revolution has occurred – which this paper does not.

¹¹¹ *Ibid*, 1146.

¹¹² Skocpol, *States and Social*, 47.

¹¹³ Skocpol views 'old regimes' as agrarian bureaucracies – a term which refers to the administrative capacity of the state and is explained in more detail later in the chapter.

pressure develops between the external/international challenge and the domestic class structures. It is at this point, that a cross pressure is reached, and states break apart as their militaries and central administrations experience fractures¹¹⁴. This opens up the opportunity for a revolution ‘spearheaded’ from below.

A ‘fundamentally politically relevant tension’ in society, according to Skocpol, can be found in the ‘relationships of producing classes to dominant classes and states, and in the relationships of the landed dominant classes to the autocratic imperial states’¹¹⁵. Tension between the state/dominant class and the producing class arises from partnership in exploitation of the latter by the former. Tension between the dominant class and the state arises from competition over resources¹¹⁶.

Democratic reform is not in the favour of dominant class members because as a minority in a representative system they would not have the same power or benefits. This realisation may result in dominant class members in public office obstructing reform policies. This can lead to a breakdown in administrative and military capacity¹¹⁷. Important basic reform policies, necessitated by external pressure/competition, may not be enacted¹¹⁸. When the military, is no longer able to enforce the dominant class’s place in society, there is room for an ‘assault from below’¹¹⁹.

The second stage of social revolution is peasant insurrection. This stage is also relevant in explaining the events in Egypt. Social revolutions are not achieved by political crises alone. Political crises may create ‘social-revolutionary situations,’ which can lead simply to a breakup of the existing system which is replaced by a similar one more liberal in its leanings¹²⁰. Seegers also mentions Trimberger’s assertion that in some cases bureaucracies may escape revolutionary situations by instituting reforms or ‘revolutions from above’¹²¹.

¹¹⁴ Ibid, 47.

¹¹⁵ Ibid, 48.

¹¹⁶ Ibid, 49.

¹¹⁷ Ibid, 49.

¹¹⁸ Ibid, 50.

¹¹⁹ Ibid, 50.

¹²⁰ Ibid, 112.

¹²¹ Seegers, “Revolution in,” 17. Citing Kay Trimberger, *Revolution from Above: Military Bureaucrats and Development in Japan, Turkey, Egypt, and Peru*, (New Brunswick, New Jersey: Transaction Books, 1978).

This second stage assumes a social revolution has occurred accompanied by an insurrection in the states agrarian structures led by rural peasants. All of these assumptions would be erroneous in the Egyptian case. However, in the Egyptian case it is clear there has been an insurrection from below, in the form of urban and middle class protests/uprisings¹²². The second stage is still applicable taking the above into consideration, and is used in this paper with the caveat that there is no assumption of social revolution occurring in Egypt.

Peasant insurrections coincide with, and take advantage of, lack of government control and supervision, resulting from political crisis. They allow for the breakdown of agrarian social relations and hinder political and military supporters favouring liberalisation/counter revolution. This is the case in primarily agrarian countries, where peasants are the major producing class¹²³. Fundamental politically relevant tension is between the dominant and producing class. As the agrarian peasant class is the producing class, a cautious transposition of the second stage onto a producing class in Egypt seems appropriate¹²⁴.

Peasant insurrections, as studied by Skocpol in the French, Russian and Chinese revolutions, were significant because they were widespread and targeted at landlords. As landlords were the dominant class at the time, striking their property and power served to 'weaken mainstays of the socioeconomic and political orders of the old regimes'¹²⁵. Because peasant revolts were widespread, and targeted at landlords, they created constraints in terms of the socio-political options available to elites¹²⁶.

It is important when applying the structural approach to look for a pattern of the behaviour beyond any previous regional unrest and explain more widespread and targeted behaviour. A structural approach maintains that it is not useful to look at the factors which are important explanatory variables in other approaches (such as: ideology, exploitation and relative deprivation). These explanations do not tell us what peasants could do as an aggregate about

¹²² As was the case with Skocpol's analysis of Iran which is discussed at the end of this chapter.

¹²³ Skocpol, *States and*, 113.

¹²⁴ The lower and middle working class in Egypt.

¹²⁵ *Ibid*, 113.

¹²⁶ Peasants in all three countries had previously rebelled against landlords. However, the revolutions were made possible by the fact that the peasant rebellions in each case were widespread as opposed to regional as they had been in the past.

their grievances. The important question is: ‘what transforms the peasantry, if only at local levels, into a collective force capable of striking out against its oppressors’¹²⁷.

This said the role of social media in the Arab spring is undeniable. It should be viewed as a breakthrough event or contextual variable as well as a factor which affects the ability to transform protesters into a collective force. While agency centred explanations are not afforded much weight by the structural approach, the role of agency in terms of the impact of social media is an important variable in the Egyptian case which is considered in this paper.

To achieve collective force peasants must have ‘internal leverage’ – which is the capacity for organised and collective action against superiors. This can be explained by structural and situational conditions. Firstly the solidarity between peasants by degree and kind; secondly the extent to which peasants are autonomous from landlords. Finally whether or not there is a level of relaxation of coercive force by the state¹²⁸.

The next section looks at elite theory and the notion of elite unity. This is done to give a better understanding of how state crisis developed in Egypt, as elite tensions are key to understanding how Mubarak lost power, and the role the military played in the outcome.

Elite unity and the stability of regimes

The above sections have established that a state's power stems from its administrative capacity and coercive force. This leads to the conclusion that elites¹²⁹ are important for stability.

¹²⁷ Ibid, 114-115. Skocpol drew on political conflict theories, specifically Tilly's work, because they enable the analyst an understanding of when class members find themselves able to struggle effectively for their interests. That is to say, political conflict theories help the analyst using a structural perspective understand the organisation of groups and their access to resources and what impact this has on revolution. See Skocpol, *States and*, 13.

¹²⁸ Ibid, 115.

¹²⁹ Parry maintains that it is difficult to assign any one definition to the term elite. Rather it is more valuable to trace the term's development through the literature. He says of formulating a definition of the terms: “Instead, one must trace the usage of the word, and related terms such as ‘power elite’, ‘social elite’, ‘oligarchy’, ruling class in the literature on the subject ... Hence its subject is will not merely be ‘politicians’ to whom the term political elite is sometimes confined. It will look at many minority groups, each with its inner group of leaders, which attempt to exert some influence, legitimate or otherwise, over the allocation of values in society”. See Geraint Parry, *Political Elites*, revised edition, (Essex: ECRP Press, 2005), 14.

Skocpol demonstrates the importance of elite stability when explaining crises in the French revolution. Crisis was precipitated by the monarchy's inability to deal with debt. It tried to institute a new system of taxation that was at odds with the interests of the ruling classes. There were demonstrations against the taxation, which the military was reluctant to suppress. All factions of the ruling class called for an Estates-General (general assembly) in which the way forward could be decided. Arguments broke out between the ruling classes about how voting would be conducted. This led to a paralysis and 'dissolution of the administrative system of the Old Regime'¹³⁰. This demonstrates how a fracture in the elite, and between the elite and the state, can be a cause of state crisis.

Putnam drawing on the work of Michels speaks about elite unity, describing the elite as 'internally homogenous, unified and self conscious'. Members of the elite are like members of an exclusive club. They will for the most part have similar backgrounds and interests (as well as loyalties)¹³¹.

Higley and Burton also maintain elite unity is central to regime stability. They describe elite unity as being present when there is firstly a consensus on the rules/ codes of political participation; and secondly when they participate in a structure which is integrated to a degree which allows them access to one another as well as key decision makers. This allows for a state where the elite view 'politics as bargaining' and not 'politics as war'¹³².

Hague and Harrop assert the elite's belief in their right to rule is central, and revolutions seen in Eastern Europe in the late 1980's were in part due to a failure of confidence among the leaders in those countries in themselves. They quote Schopflin: "authoritarian elite sustains itself in power not just through force and the threat of force but more importantly, because it has some vision of the future by which it can justify itself to itself. No regime can survive long without purpose¹³³". They also suggest that all the elite need to agree on the 'rules of the game'. What is necessary is viewing politics as compromise not 'us versus them'¹³⁴.

¹³⁰ Skocpol, *States and*, 64-65.

¹³¹ Robert Putnam, *The Comparative Study of Political Elites*, (New Jersey: Prentice – Hall, 1976), 4.

¹³² John Higley and Michael G. Burton, "The Elite Variable in Democratic Transitions and Breakdowns," *American Sociological Review*, 54:1 (1989), 19.

¹³³ Schopflin as quoted by Hague and Harrop, *Political Science*, 98.

¹³⁴ Hague and Harrop, 100.

There are two periods of elite theory, classical and pluralistic. Classical theory deals with a minority group which is cohesive, unified and controls decision making for the majority. More recent theories have been pluralistic focussing on individual elites as they compete for political influence¹³⁵.

In the classical literature the elite owe their power to revolution, conquest, or may have societal influence by virtue of owning productive means or having social or religious sway¹³⁶. In terms of unity Mosca asserts:

“But the man who is at the head of the state would certainly not be able to rule without the support of a numerous class to enforce respect for his orders and to have them carried out; and granting that he can make one individual, or indeed many individuals, in the ruling class feel the weight of his power, he certainly cannot be at odds with the class as a whole or do away with it... without the support of which action on his part would be completely paralysed”¹³⁷.

This is summed up by what Meisel termed the three c's, elite should have group consciousness, coherence and conspiracy (the latter meaning 'common will to action'). If an elite does not act in a unified manner, it is more a group of 'top persons', than an elite. Cohesiveness is considered to be the primary strength of any elite in classical theories. According to Mosca another element to regime stability is the quality of its lower stratum, the bureaucracy. It provides a pool from which the elite draw members, as well as being the linkage between the elite and majority¹³⁸.

Pluralist elite theory draws on a discourse related to modernisation theory. It contends that as societies develop, and diversify their economies, interest groups develop. These groups exert pressure on those who rule, and this leads to specialisation of the political process. Thus the elite that manage labour and housing state institutions, for instance, are not the same.

Whereas classical elite theory sees the hierarchy of elites as shaped like a pyramid, the pluralists would see it as a range of pyramids for diversified tasks.

¹³⁵ Geraint Parry, *Political Elites*, (London: George Allen and Unwin Ltd, 1969), 30.

¹³⁶ Ibid, 31.

¹³⁷ Gaetano Mosca, *The Ruling Class: Elementi di scienza politica*, (New York: McGraw-Hill, 1939), 51.

¹³⁸ Geraint Parry, 32.

In advanced democratic societies, there will be a number of elites making political decisions. The implication is that there is no longer a single unified elite.

Pluralists like Dahl recognise that societies outside of Western Europe and the United States are unlikely to be understood by this theory. As mentioned it applies only to advanced democracies, as well as states with a “strong elite of professional politicians with firm bases in parties and legislatures who can arbitrate between and co-ordinate the various competing elites¹³⁹”.

It is clear then that the Egyptian elites would fall in the classical paradigm. Egypt cannot be described as an advanced democracy. As is shown in this paper it is also far from having professional politicians who participate in pluralistic parties/legislatures. Thus elite unity is still applicable.

The next section looks at critiques of Skocpol’s structural approach. This is done to determine if there are any serious pitfalls to its application.

Critiques of Skocpol’s Structural Approach

William McNeil criticises Skocpol’s approach for not recognising the role of personality in revolution. He contends that for Skocpol to accept the role of personality in revolution would ruin the 'sociology' she is trying to find in human affairs¹⁴⁰. Goodwin mentions a number of critiques of Skocpol, which he refutes as a misreading of the text. The criticism that Skocpol only believes state institutions matter when explaining how and why revolutions occur is addressed by giving the example of her analysis of peasant revolts. He does say that it is possible to critique the neglected role of local peasant culture¹⁴¹.

¹³⁹ Ibid, 65-68.

¹⁴⁰ William McNeil, “States and Social Revolution: A Comparative Analysis of France, Russia, and China by Theda Skocpol Review by William McNeil,” *American Historical Review*, 85:1 (1980), 86.

¹⁴¹ Jeff Goodwin, “How to Become a Dominant American Social Scientist: The Case of Theda Skocpol review by Jeff Goodwin,” *Contemporary Sociology*, 25:3 (1996), 293-295.

Similarly, the contention that the role of ideas and beliefs is ignored is refuted by her work in chapter four of *States and Social Revolutions* on the role that can be played by political ideologies in revolutions¹⁴².

Finally the contention that a general theory explaining social revolution can be inductively derived through comparison, this is the criticism that Skocpol's structural theory might not be theoretical at all. Goodwin notes that, though Skocpol rejects meta-theory, she does deductively compare several instances of revolution and non revolution in order to test a theoretically based hypothesis. Thus her theory is both inductive and deductive. It is important to note it was never Skocpol's intention to create a general theory of revolution¹⁴³.

The strongest critique of Skocpol's approach comes from William Sewell¹⁴⁴. He does recognise that the structural approach mixes the conceptual power of the hierarchical method while gaining from the sense of 'sequence, conjuncture and contingency' that is gained by the narrative method¹⁴⁵. However he argues that, the role of ideology in revolution was inadequate, and provided an alternative conception which he then used to explain the French case.

Sewell agrees to the rejection of ideology as a causal factor in a purposive movement, not the view that ideology is an altogether useless explanatory variable. For instance the difference between the outcome of property in the French and Russian revolutions was ideology. He contends that the way in which Skocpol explains this, difference in world time – the availability of world time historical models- is basically recognising the role of ideology. There is also inconsistent treatment of the role of ideology vs. class as it is included with other factors to explain the outbreak of revolution as opposed to being considered of no explanatory value what so ever¹⁴⁶. Skocpol admitted at later points in her book *Social Revolution in the Modern World* that she neglected to address what she later terms 'cultural idioms'¹⁴⁷.

¹⁴² Ibid, 293-295.

¹⁴³ Ibid, 293-295.

¹⁴⁴ William H. Sewell, "Ideologies and Social Revolutions: Reflections on the French Case," *The Journal of Modern History*, 57:1 (1985), 57-58.

¹⁴⁵ Ibid, 57-58.

¹⁴⁶ Ibid, 60.

¹⁴⁷ Theda Skocpol, "Cultural Idioms and Political Ideologies in the Revolutionary Reconstruction of State Power: A Rejoinder to Sewell," *The Journal of Modern History*, 57:1, (1985), 86-96.

Despite the critiques of the structural approach, this paper has chosen this theoretical approach as the most appropriate tool to understand the Egyptian case. It will be demonstrated in the next section why this approach is deemed appropriate.

Appropriateness of the Structural Approach

Now that the structural approach has been introduced, its appropriateness for this paper can be discussed. The aim of this paper is to understand how Mubarak could be forced to step down after a long, durable tenure. Even though the structural approach was formulated to understand social revolution, it can still be fruitfully employed to understand 'political crisis' and significant social and political change. It provides a framework for answering the research questions in a meaningful, contextually relevant way.

A good demonstration of a structural approach to explaining state crisis in a situation which did not amount to social revolution is Robert Price's work *The Apartheid State in Crisis*. Price looks at the end of the Apartheid regime and the associated state crisis. He notes how the economic, domestic, regional and international environments changed over the course of Apartheid, and how these structural changes reinforced and exacerbated one another to produce state crisis¹⁴⁸. There were four shocks to the Apartheid system, some produced by the system, others with implications for it. Among these he notes the structural implication of the Apartheid designed economy was insufficient skilled labour (a product of 'bantus education' and labour policies) and low domestic demand¹⁴⁹. He also discusses changing regional dynamics and their security implications as former colonies were replaced by nationalist ones¹⁵⁰.

There are a number of reasons to use a structural approach to address the research questions posed by this paper. The Arab Spring has had disparate results across the MENA region and a structural approach allows for a meaningful explanation of these. The framework is useful as it gives guidance on the pertinent questions to ask when understanding significant

¹⁴⁸ Robert Price, *The Apartheid State in Crisis: Political Transformation of South Africa, 1975-1990*, (New York: Oxford University Press, 1991)

¹⁴⁹ A good example of a domestic structural relationship used to explain the Apartheid state crisis.

¹⁵⁰ Robert Price, *The Apartheid State*, 29-46. This demonstrates the structural relationship between the state and the international-regional system as an explanatory variable in state crisis

political/social change. The Egyptian state and its institutions are closely linked to the NDP which can be considered 'the state party'¹⁵¹, and is not separate from the state in any meaningful way¹⁵².

Institutions of state such as the police, judiciary, constitution and to an extent in the past the military, have been under NDP control. The NDP has maintained emergency law in Egypt for long periods to squash political opposition, and has changed the constitution, a state institution, to achieve the same goal. As is demonstrated in chapter 3, state institutions have been crafted by the NDP's predecessor organisations and so are inextricably linked to it. When studying the Egyptian state, government or regime it is difficult to unpick one from the other. This highlights why a structural approach is appropriate, it focuses on the state and its relationships with domestic and international groups and helps distinguish otherwise confusing dynamics¹⁵³.

Skocpol and Abrahamian's analysis of the Iranian revolution is important for this paper. The Iranian case, like that undertaken in this paper, did not meet the classic case Skocpol described in her work. There was no military defeat, nor was there a peasant uprising in rural areas. The revolution was mainly urban in nature. The Iranian state was also not an agrarian bureaucracy¹⁵⁴. Skocpol's structural approach was criticised at the time as these points obviously were not congruent with her assertions in *States and Social Revolutions*.

¹⁵¹ While there were other political parties, they were government controlled and so posed no real opposition.

¹⁵² Auda Gehad, "Egypt's Uneasy Party Politics," *Journal of Democracy*, 2:2 (1991), 383.

¹⁵³ The state is in this paper defined by the following according to O'Neil: "The monopoly of force over a given territory; a set of political institutions to generate and carry out policy; highly institutionalised and sovereign; characterised by such institutions as an army, police, taxation, a judiciary, and a social welfare system". A regime is characterised by: "Norms and rules regarding individual freedom and collective equality, the locus of power and the use of that power is institutionalised but can be changed by dramatic social events such as a revolution. Regimes can be categorised at the most basic level as either democratic or authoritarian; often embodied in an institution". Whereas a government can be characterised by: "The leadership or elite in charge of running the state. Weakly institutionalised and limited by the existing regime. Often characterised by elected officials, such as a president or prime minister or unelected officials such as in authoritarianism". Patrick H. O'Neil, *Essentials of Comparison*, Second Edition., (New York: W.W. Norton and Company, 2007), 23.

Skocpol identifies the state as being made up of administrative and coercive organisations. She also asserts that the state is potentially autonomous from socio-economic structures and interests. Both parts of this definition fit well with O'Neil's. He also sees the state being made up of institutions which amount to administrative and coercive capacity. He also recognises that these organisations have a higher level of institutionalisation than the 'government' which is the political elite. This suggests the state has a level of autonomy from the government.

¹⁵⁴ Theda Skocpol, *Social Revolution in the Modern World*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1994), 241-245. An Agrarian Bureaucracy is according to Skocpol a feature of 'Old Regimes' characterised by being *imperial* (centrally administered and coordinated – as well as having a well established military hierarchy), *proto-bureaucratic* (some state offices, at higher levels, were functionally specialised; there were 'explicit rules' which pertained to specific duties or offices as well as some degree of separation between public office and 'private property pursuits' but not considered fully bureaucratic) with a primarily agrarian economy with

Skocpol states explicitly of the Iranian case: “I did suggest in the conclusion to my book that its basic framework of analysis should be applicable to other revolutions, even in different types of societies and different world-historical circumstances from the 'classical' case I studied”¹⁵⁵. The Iranian case can still be considered from a perspective which considers the Iranian state, its society and contextualises it in its international environment.

Skocpol demonstrates how state relationships with society were mediated through oil revenue expenditures. Modernisation efforts led to rural-urban migration, resulting in burgeoning urban populations, reliant on the state. When revenue contracted, the Shah could not rely on his military or bureaucratic elite, because he had purposefully prevented them from being unified¹⁵⁶.

The Shah managed to further alienate the religious elite through exclusionary modernisation. This created a network of ideologically motivated and networked religious opposition. This opposition would eventually mobilise the aggrieved urban population through the 'bazaar culture'¹⁵⁷.

Abrahamian also successfully employs the approach, focussing on the socio-economic pressures which undermined the political establishment. He also notes the importance of the impact of oil revenues on per capita income, education and industry. This resulted in a growing urban working class¹⁵⁸.

Despite growth achieved by oil rents the Shah's regime was unpopular with the new urban working class. All forms of political opposition had been banned including: labour unions, opposition parties and professional associations. This led to a gap between the new middle class and the regime, exacerbated by the introduction of policies which only benefited the upper class. Despite the fact that Iran had made strides in education and health there was still

regional trade and the incapable of direct control, or even change to, agrarian socioeconomic relationships. See Skocpol, *States and*, 47-48.

¹⁵⁵ Theda Skocpol, *Social Revolution*, 243.

¹⁵⁶ *Ibid*, 244-245

¹⁵⁷ *Ibid*, 246-249

¹⁵⁸ Ervand Abrahamian, “Structural Causes of the Iranian Revolution,” in (eds.) Jack Goldstone, *Revolution: Theoretical Comparative and Historical Studies*, (San Diego: Harcourt Brace Jovanovich, 1986), 199.

wide-spread illiteracy and high infant mortality. Rural-urban migration had worsened living conditions in urban settings. Despite the White Revolution there was still high inequality in land ownership, as well as significant income inequality. This was worsened by a number of corruption scandals involving the Shah's regime¹⁵⁹.

A consequence of not allowing any pressure groups meant no links between the monarchy and broader population were established. The regime also began to break links with the established old middle class, the bazaar shop owners. This class remained important as it controlled much of the country's retail trade, and its organisational 'guilds', as well as having significant links with the religious establishment¹⁶⁰.

The initial policy toward the bazaars had been 'let sleeping dogs lie'. In 1975 the Shah transformed Iran from a military monarchy into a 'fascist-style totalitarian regime' by forming the Resurgence Party. An implication was the regime sought to take control of the bazaars and religious establishment. The bazaars became the target of government propaganda, painting them as being behind spiralling inflation. When religious leaders protested they were often tortured, sent to prison or killed¹⁶¹.

This served to turn the bazaar shop-owners, and the majority of the religious community against the Shah. As Abrahamian says: "For any state to survive an economic crisis... it needs to have a social base and enjoy the support of a significantly large base"¹⁶².

The Iranian case is powerful because it shows that even cases which do not fit the 'ideal type' can still be analysed using the structural approach. It also demonstrates that the structural approach can be successfully employed in a Middle Eastern country, with more similar cultural and geopolitical realities to that of Egypt than the French, Russian and Chinese cases.

In conclusion

This chapter has elucidated competing theories of social change/ violence with the aim of highlighting why the structural approach is a relevant choice. It has particularly discussed

¹⁵⁹ Ibid, 120-122.

¹⁶⁰ Ibid, 123.

¹⁶¹ Ibid, 124-126.

¹⁶² Ibid, 126.

why democratisation would not be useful. It then discussed the emphasis of the structural approach of the state and important assumptions made about its nature by the structural approach. The relevant stages of revolution, to this paper were then discussed. Finally elite theory was discussed in terms of the importance of elite unity. Skocpol does address the notion of elites through dominant class analysis. This paper however uses the more direct elite theory as it draws out the need to focus on class relations (which come with limitations of the class concept itself). Finally the structural approach was discussed in terms of its more direct appropriateness for the case of Egypt. In conclusion this chapter highlighted the need for a structural and contextual explanation of divergent outcomes of Arab Spring social movements; the usefulness of state centred approach in Egypt and finally the applicability of the approach to a Middle Eastern context¹⁶³.

This chapter has laid a theoretical foundation for the remainder of this paper. Understanding the importance of contextual and historical information to analyse a structural case, this paper now turns to an explanation of the Egyptian political landscape from Ottoman domination up to the events beginning on the 25th of January 2011.

¹⁶³ This is especially true in light of the fact that democratisation has explained the Middle East as an outlier due to 'cultural incompatibility.

Chapter 3: Historical Narrative of Egypt's Political Landscape

Introduction

This chapter provides a narrative of Egypt's political landscape with an emphasis on the creation and evolution of the Egyptian state and state institutions such as the military and constitution. The understanding of the Egyptian state provides the basis of analysis for later chapters and foundational context for the argument.

This chapter discusses Egypt's history of external domination from the Ottomans to the British. The discussion of the contemporary Egyptian state is broken into the following: political themes, society and economy and foreign policy. Each of these sections will trace changes from Nasser through to Mubarak – the aim is to explore relationships and structures as opposed to individual leaders¹⁶⁴. In line with this, the sections discuss the state, its development and domestic/external relationships. This discussion provides a contextual backdrop for locating contradictions in the old regime to explain state crisis.

The Colonial Context and establishment of the Modern state

By the beginning of the 20th century the MENA region, including Egypt, had largely been dominated by the Ottoman Empire for over 400 years. The Empire was under pressure internally from its own efforts to reform, and externally by the advancement of European powers (France and Britain)¹⁶⁵.

'Modern Egypt' began with the rule of Mohamed Ali¹⁶⁶ (1805-1849), who was named Pasha of Egypt (by the Ottomans), a royal hereditary title which offered Egypt partial independence

¹⁶⁴ As the approach employed by this paper is structural, and so non-voluntarist, it is more useful to discuss the evolution of the state and its relations than to provide a narrative of individual leaders. Thus the chapter's focus is on the state, its institutions (like the military and bureaucracy), important groups in society (the elite, working class, business elite etc) and their relations with each other and the state as well as the state relations with other states. Leaders are discussed in order to give the narrative temporal clarity and where it is deemed they had structural impacts.

¹⁶⁵ Roger Owen, *State, Power and Politics in the Making of the Modern Middle East*, 3rd Edition, (London and New York: Routledge, 2006), 5-6.

¹⁶⁶ A former member of the Ottoman army

from the Ottomans¹⁶⁷. During this period Egypt underwent significant change including land reform, which affected the class structure, as Ali made himself and close allies' owners of about half the agricultural land in Egypt¹⁶⁸.

State institutions were created during this time including a French style bureaucracy staffed with Turkish bureaucrats. An independent Egyptian conscript army was also created led by French and Turkish officers¹⁶⁹. Ali's son, Ismael developed Egypt's transport with the addition of rail and steam shipping on the Nile¹⁷⁰. An outcome of development projects was the creation of a middle class, composed of doctors, teachers, engineers etc¹⁷¹. It was in this class that nationalistic sentiment would develop.

Neither Ali nor Ismael had Egyptian development as a goal. Their projects were dynastic, aimed at exploiting a rich country they were able to subdue¹⁷². Sayyid-Marsot contends Ali viewed Egypt as a 'mulk' (possession won by the sword)¹⁷³.

Over time, however, the middle class became more 'Egyptian'. Prominent Egyptian families were tasked with sourcing soldiers for the conscript army and rewarded with swathes of fertile land. Many of the newly formed Egyptian middle class married into Turkish or Anatolian families¹⁷⁴. The composition of the class structure changed significantly between 1800 and 1900, the number of Egyptians considered to be poor peasants changed from 90% to 75%. The economy was still largely under the control of the Turkish and Europeans, but there were Egyptians climbing the 'socio-economic ladder'¹⁷⁵.

A growing sense of nationalism was galvanised by the British occupation of Egypt in 1882. In 1881 Egyptian army officers attempted to stage a revolt against Khedive Tawfiq (Ali's grandson) which ended when the British sent troops to enforce the Khedive's position

¹⁶⁷ Barbara Watterson, *The Egyptians*, (Oxford: Blackwell Publishers, 1997), 288. He was named Pasha on the condition that he give up certain territories to the Ottoman Empire

¹⁶⁸ Tarek Osman, *Egypt on the Brink: From the Rise of Nasser to the Fall of Mubarak*, Revised Edition. (New Haven: Yale University Press, 2011), 22-24.

¹⁶⁹ Ibid, 24-25.

¹⁷⁰ Ibid, 26.

¹⁷¹ Ibid, 28.

¹⁷² Ibid, 27.

¹⁷³ Afaf Lutfi Al-Sayyid-Marsot, *Egypt in the Reign of Muhammad Ali*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 1984), 100.

¹⁷⁴ Osman, *Egypt on*, 29.

¹⁷⁵ Ibid, 30.

beginning the British occupation¹⁷⁶. This was a turning point in the way Ali's line was perceived by Egyptians. They were considered to be 'turn coats', agents of foreign imperialism.

In the case of Egypt, an Anglo-Egyptian Condominium Agreement had been reached in 1899¹⁷⁷. When the British refused to allow a Wafd party¹⁷⁸ delegation to attend the Paris Peace Conference it ended in a wide-scale revolt in 1919 and resulted in the formation of the National Party. The British reassessed their position in Egypt; in 1922 they granted the Egyptians a qualified independence¹⁷⁹. That said the French and British were still very much in control of the region in the mid 1920's¹⁸⁰. The Ali dynasty realised they had to make room for increasing nationalism, resulting in a constitution and a nationally elected parliament in 1923¹⁸¹.

Despite the new government, problems persisted. Land ownership was still concentrated in a small, wealthy class. Much of the economy was foreign owned and stunted, with a lack of opportunities for the middle class. There was growing unemployment; urbanisation and population growth outstripped the crippled economy's ability to absorb new members¹⁸².

The monarchy was incapable of dealing with middle class discontent and nationalism. Middle class elites were entering the political sphere calling for the redistribution of wealth and power in Egypt. This ultimately led to the formation of a group of middle class army officers, the 'Free Officers', who would lead a coup d' etat against the Egyptian monarchy and government¹⁸³.

¹⁷⁶ Watterson, *The Egyptians*, 290-291.

¹⁷⁷ Panayiotis J. Vatikiotis, *The History of Egypt from Muhammad Ali to Mubarak*, 3rd Edition, (London: Weinfelds and Nicolson, 1985), 385.

¹⁷⁸ Wafd was an important nationalist party in the 1920's and 1930's in Egypt.

¹⁷⁹ Independence was qualified in the sense that while Egypt was now ruled by a constitutional monarchy Britain reserved the right to intervene on a number of conditions including the safety of foreigners on Egyptian soil.

¹⁸⁰ Owen, *State, Power*, 6-7.

¹⁸¹ Osman, *Egypt on*, 32-33.

¹⁸² Raymond Hinnebusch, *Egyptian Politics Under Sadat: The Post Populist Development of the Authoritarian Modernising State*, (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1985), 11.

¹⁸³ *Ibid*, 12.

The next section introduces Egypt's leaders since the 1952 coup and how each came to power. This provides temporal context when discussing the evolution of state structures and relationships in latter sections.

From Nasser to Mubarak

Gamal Abdel Nasser came to power in a bloodless coup in 1952¹⁸⁴. The group was made up of military officers/elites with a strong nationalist imperative¹⁸⁵. The Nasser era marked the first rule of Egypt by an Egyptian for a significant period of time¹⁸⁶.

Anwar Sadat, also a member of the 'Free Officers', came to power after Nasser's death in 1970 and attended military college with Nasser¹⁸⁷. Hosni Mubarak, vice-president under Sadat came to power in October 1981 after Sadat's assassination by radical Islamic splinter group *Jihad*, at a military parade¹⁸⁸.

Nasser had been viewed as a charismatic revolutionary, the leader of Arab nationalism. Sadat was viewed as the village chief or *oumda*, a man of honour and piety. Mubarak, According to Osman, was neither a man with 'Nasser's grandeur nor Sadat's appeal'¹⁸⁹.

This section has provided a background of the evolution of leadership within Egypt, the next section looks at political themes such as the creation of state parties, the bureaucracy and evolution and composition of the elite since the 1952 coup.

Political Themes

Nasser reformed Egypt's political system and process. He replaced the 'Turco-dominated aristocracy' with Egyptians¹⁹⁰, took power from opposition political parties (by trying and

¹⁸⁴ Osman, *Egypt on*, 52-53. Nasser was a member of the 'Free Officers' movement.

¹⁸⁵ Philip Marfleet, "State and Society," in eds. Rabab El-Mahdi & Philip Marfleet, *Egypt: The Moment of Change*, (London: Zed Books, 2009), 18.

¹⁸⁶ Osman, *Egypt on*, 53.

¹⁸⁷ Watterson, *The Egyptians*, 294.

¹⁸⁸ Fawaz A. Gerges, "The End of the Islamist Insurgency in Egypt?: Costs and Prospects," *Middle East Journal*, 54: 4 (2000), 601-602. Sadat had allowed Islamists more political space in order to gain more support against those who had supported Nassir on the left. The relationship between Sadat and the Islamists soured over his refusal to institute Sharia law and his foreign policy with regard to Israel and the West.

¹⁸⁹ Osman, *Egypt on*, 179-180.

imprisoning their leaders) and cemented his leadership through an incredibly powerful presidency¹⁹¹.

Significantly the composition of the elite changed, under the monarchy it had been comprised of the king's men, foreign businessmen and landlord-lawyers, the elite were now made up of members from the 'Free Officers' group, a small number of civilian technocrats and educated professionals. Civilian elites were drawn mainly from the middle to upper classes, but were chosen on education, skill and ability as opposed to status¹⁹².

Marfleet says: "The imperative of control was decisive and soon a new political formation was in evidence – one in which senior military men and technocrats were dominant' and speaking of Nasser: 'increasingly he ruled by concentrating power among a small group of loyalists within the armed forces"¹⁹³.

Nasser recognised the importance of Islam while maintaining secularism in politics. He promoted Egypt as the leader of the Arab world, free of emphasis on Islam, which he viewed as having a cultural, not political, role in the future of Egypt¹⁹⁴. This led to a strongly socialist government ruled by a bureaucratic military elite¹⁹⁵.

Nasser formed the Liberation Rally (LR) in 1953 followed by the National Union (NU) in 1956¹⁹⁶. These were mass state parties and served the elite¹⁹⁷. In 1962, when faced with political competition, Nasser transformed these institutions into the Arab Socialist Union (ASU)¹⁹⁸. The ASU served the purpose of forming a contract between 'regionally and locally influential elite', and provided a level of legitimacy through in-party elections after military

¹⁹⁰ Ibid, 53.

¹⁹¹ Hinnebusch, *Egyptian Politics*, 15.

¹⁹² Ibid, 15-16.

¹⁹³ Marfleet, "State and," 19-20.

¹⁹⁴ Osman, *Egypt on*, 60-61.

¹⁹⁵ Ibid, 54.

¹⁹⁶ Marfleet, "State and," 25-26.

¹⁹⁷ These were the only political parties during the respective periods, thus they are state parties. They also had universal membership in that every citizen was automatically considered a member. The LR's main function was as an arena for elite competition, while the NU's was a vehicle to maintain established elite rights and privileges. See Lisa Blaydes, *Elections and Distributive Politics in Mubarak's Egypt*, (New York: Cambridge University Press, 2011), 30-31.

¹⁹⁸ Unlike its predecessors, compulsory membership by all citizens was not a feature of the ASU. This was valuable as it conveyed political information about who was participating at what level.

defeat to Israel in 1968 which balanced the left and right wing elements of the elite¹⁹⁹. In reality the union was run by the military elite and high level bureaucrats, its main goal the co-optation of the opposition²⁰⁰. The ASU eventually become the ruling NDP²⁰¹.

When Sadat came to power the greatest threat to stability was competition within the elite. There were the leftists associated with Ali Sabri and the larger conservative group led by Sadat²⁰². Sadat undertook a series of reforms to cement his power; returning some land sequestered under land reform to wealthy families. He reoriented foreign policy toward the West (preparing for the Israeli peace process) and pursued economic liberalisation to solidify his base among the right-wing, under his *Infitah* or 'open door economic policy'. It allowed for more free foreign investment in Egypt and meant the elite could access new benefits. Blaydes contends that these liberalisations led to the formation of new business elite of speculators and profiteers established in the 1970's²⁰³. They joined the class of private capitalists and together with senior members of the military and the bureaucratic elite, pursued opportunities provided by economic liberalisation²⁰⁴.

Hinnebusch describes the power elite as: vice presidents, ministers, party executives, generals, and provincial governors. This group can further be distinguished as having a core membership with influence over Sadat. The top and core elite were reliant on Sadat for their positions and followed his lead. The middle elite were civil servants and senior military officials. The sub-elite were mid-level notables and local *umad* (village headmen)²⁰⁵.

The elite under Sadat underwent a transformation. Where Nasser's core elite came from the military, Sadat cemented power by a 'civilianisation' of the elite, removing officers that exhibited political ambition and sought elite whose skills matched his aims²⁰⁶.

¹⁹⁹ Blaydes, *Elections and*, 32.

²⁰⁰ Marfleet, "State and," 26.

²⁰¹ These institutions demonstrate how it came to be that the government, regime and state are so linked. The institutions of state were purpose built by the Egyptian military elite, and changed at will when they needed to serve a different purpose.

²⁰² Blaydes, *Elections and*, 33.

²⁰³ *Ibid*, 34.

²⁰⁴ Marfleet, "State and," 21.

²⁰⁵ Hinnebusch, *Egyptian Politics*, 109-110.

²⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 109-110.

Sadat also initiated an 'Open Dialogue' to establish the preferences of the elite without voicing his own. During this dialogue, the elite called for greater political liberty and more competition. In 1976 Sadat formed a committee to discuss political reform which led to the formation of three platforms which became opposition parties. This appeased the West, proving the regime could open up political space as well as 'courting' the conservative elite and business class. This class would remain as the power political elite, according to Blaydes, during the Mubarak era²⁰⁷. In 1978 political reform led to the replacement of the ASU with the formation of the NDP and other state controlled parties. Egypt changed from a single party state to a non-competitive multi-party one²⁰⁸.

According to Osman, following Sadat's assassination, Mubarak served as a 'national tranquiliser'. He was considered by some to lack strong leadership qualities, but was lauded for his ability to deliver policies and execute tasks²⁰⁹.

Mubarak inherited a jumbled legacy from Sadat. Peace with Israel and its consequences for Egypt's regional standing, the existence of what was termed the 'Infitah mafia' and finally welfare policies which were still largely in place from the Nasser era, did not always favour Mubarak²¹⁰.

The social base Mubarak inherited from Sadat was a result of the realignment of classes from the 'Infitah'. Realignment resulted in an alliance between 'elements from the pre-revolutionary semi-aristocracy, the state bourgeoisie of the 1960's and the commercial financial cliques of the Infitah era'²¹¹.

Blaydes contends the Mubarak regime's power stemmed from the right-centred elite and military, which were a vital component of its stability²¹². Senior military officials provided the Mubarak regime with 'bedrock support'²¹³. According to Osman Mubarak continued to invest in the security apparatus signalling that his trust lay more with the interior ministers,

²⁰⁷ Blaydes, *Elections and*, 36-37.

²⁰⁸ Holgar Albrecht, "How can," 383.

²⁰⁹ Osman, *Egypt on*, 180.

²¹⁰ Nazih N. Ayubi, "Government and the State in Egypt Today," in eds. Charles Tripp and Owen Rogers, *Egypt Under Mubarak*, (London: Routledge, 1989), 1.

²¹¹ *Ibid*, 10.

²¹² Blaydes, *Elections and*, 39.

²¹³ Marfleet, "State and," 22.

heads of intelligence agencies (such as Mabathet-Amn-Al-Dolah) and army commanders than with intellectuals/advisors²¹⁴.

Society and Economy

In the Nasser era class relations changed, in theory, by the shift in ideology toward socialism. The new regime's rhetoric was serving citizens equally and a goal of the state was to eradicate inequality and class, the state proclaimed its role as one of intervention to narrow the social gap between haves and have nots²¹⁵.

The relationship between the state and the elite changed to a point. Nationalisation and land reform meant that private capital was tolerated not encouraged. It is clear however, that the institutions established under Nasser, the ASU and NU, in theory socialist, did little to abolish the upper class. The elite and their interests were, to a degree, protected by these institutions²¹⁶.

The relationship between the state and the working class was formed by policies of the Nasser era. During the 1950's union leaders were co-opted with lasting implications. In return for guarantees of their own positions and those in the public sector, union bosses supported the regime which Marfleet quoting Beinín described as “a military dictatorship that had repeatedly demonstrated its unalterable opposition to a free trade union movement, the right to strike, and any form of independent initiative and action by workers”²¹⁷. Even Nasser loyalists claimed the ASU's main function was to spy for the regime.

Beinín says:

“social relations of production have remained similar: neither under 'socialism' nor under 'capitalism' have blue collar workers exercised significant influence over conditions in their workplaces, and both public – and private-sector workplaces have

²¹⁴ Osman, *Egypt on*, 183-184.

²¹⁵ Hinnebusch, *Egyptian Politics*, 14-15.

²¹⁶ Marfleet, “State and,” 26.

²¹⁷ Marfleet, 28. quoting Beinín and Lockman.

been managed in an extremely hierarchical and authoritarian manner, involving considerable implicit and sometimes actual violence”²¹⁸.

Changes implemented by 'Arab Socialism' did however improve the standard of living of the general population. Hinnebusch terms these 'egalitarian measures aimed to broaden opportunities and narrow class gaps'. They included open tertiary education, guaranteed state employment after graduation, full capacity employment in state firms, subsidies, price controls, and rent reductions²¹⁹. Education and employment policies had perverse structural outcomes though which established contradictions in the state. Hinnebusch says:

“The regime also pushed ahead the development of education and modernising skills. Education expanded by about 8% each year, roughly equally at all levels”

And

“Unfortunately, the supply of man power was not well-tailored to the needs of the economy. Despite efforts to shift education towards scientific and technical fields, the guarantee of employment to graduates channelled an excess of students into traditional fields resulting in a scarcity of middle-level technicians and too many college graduates who had to be absorbed by the bloated bureaucracy”²²⁰

According to Hinnebusch the form of socialism Nasser undertook is known as etatism. The basic premise of etatism is that the best way for modernisation to occur is under the supervision of the state in a mixed economy which allowed private capital to an extent²²¹.

There were two pillars of economic reform under Nasser. The first was land reform, seen as a means of correcting skewed wealth ownership. It aimed to transform an essentially feudal system into one based on 'progress and equity'²²². There were two periods of land reform, the first in 1952 followed by another in 1961²²³.

²¹⁸ Joel Beinin, “Workers Struggles under 'Socialism' and 'Neoliberalism',” in eds. Rabab El-Mahdi & Philip Marfleet, *Egypt: The Moment of Change*, (London: Zed Books, 2009), 68.

²¹⁹ Hinnebusch, *Egyptian Politics*, 24.

²²⁰ Ibid, 26.

²²¹ Unlike communism there was a private sector to the economy – as long as it was in the service of national development. Unlike capitalism the state played a vital role in planning and investing in development and production. See Hinnebusch, *Egyptian Politics*, 14.

²²² Osman, *Egypt on*, 55.

²²³ Ray Bush, “The Land and the People,” in eds. Rabab El-Mahdi and Philip Marfleet, *Egypt: The Moment of Change*, (London: Zedbooks, 2009), 53. Reforms were criticised for not distributing enough land, by 1980 only

The second pillar was the creation of the public sector. This entailed opening state owned factories and businesses, and the nationalisation of almost all of Egypt's large businesses. These reforms closely mirrored the goals of land reform, the transfer of wealth to Egypt's poor²²⁴.

When Sadat came to power after Nasser's death he continued with welfare policies like free tertiary education. The inherited free tertiary education policy did not serve the purposes of the *Infitah* as it neither favoured private education nor provided the skills necessary in the private economy²²⁵.

Sadat (and Mubarak later) actively sought to undo Nasser era socialist policies. The state withdrew from providing basic services to the *amma* (general public) such as education, health services etc. Under Nasser policy had focussed on service provision for the *amma*, the base Nasser relied on for power. Realising he would have to counter dissent from the left, as well as realising that supporting the *amma* was not fiscally viable, Sadat narrowed his support base. His policies benefitted the *khassa* (privileged class)²²⁶.

This illuminates the changing relationship between the state and domestic classes. It highlights the shift toward the *khassa*, away from the *amma* in terms of preferential access to resources from the Sadat era onwards²²⁷. It also exhibits how Sadat and his elite changed existing socio-economic structures in terms of reversing the socialist system of welfare provision to benefit the group which he appealed to for support.

Mubarak's early years in office after Sadat's assassination were marked by calm, stability and a sense of liberalisation. According to Osman, many of Sadat's controversial laws were

13.9% of agricultural land had been redistributed. Bush believes that reforms did help to reduce poverty and promote economic growth. Marfleet, however, points out that land reform was not as revolutionary as the Nasser regime claimed, affecting 10% of Egypt's arable land, and leaving large scale landowners with their property. See Marfleet, "State and," 19.

²²⁴ Osman, *Egypt on*, 55.

²²⁵ Hinnebusch, *Egyptian Politics*, 267-268.

²²⁶ Blaydes, *Elections and*, 43-45. While Nasser era policies were not completely abolished they were significantly diminished. See Chapter 4 for a discussion about the Bread riots under Sadat as an example of this shift.

²²⁷ Skocpol believes that an important part of a structural analysis is looking at how revolutionary crises come about. In order to do this one must look at the relationship the state has with its dominant class and other existing domestic socio-economic structures.

discreetly shelved. Civil associations and professional syndicates were allowed to develop. There was a relaxing of restrictions against political competitors through parliamentary elections were on list systems which allowed opposition parties to aggregate votes that would have otherwise been held by the NDP²²⁸.

During this early period Mubarak focussed on economic problems by upgrading the country's infrastructure. He was initially reluctant to enact reforms suggested by the International Monetary Fund (IMF), fearing the negative effect on lower classes²²⁹. By 1991 prevailing economic conditions meant the government needed short term financing and so adopted IMF structural adjustment programmes which led to reductions in Egypt's welfare system²³⁰. Marfleet argues that despite tough cutbacks under IMF conditionality, Mubarak managed to protect the interests of his military supporters²³¹.

An increase in economic liberalisation and electoral competition was not associated with an increase in democracy. Rather than a genuine attempt at opening up political space, electoral competition was allowed as a means of distributing resources among Egypt's rent-seeking elite²³². Economic liberalisation created an environment in which clientalistic relationships thrived in the political sphere²³³. The Mubarak era state is described by Marfleet as: "a state which combined centralised control over economic and political affairs with encouragement for private capital at the highest level, including within the state itself"²³⁴.

In terms of Mubarak's mixed inheritance, according to Ayubi, there were a number of structural contradictions in the state. Firstly, the state tried to maintain a role as arbiter between classes, but was clearly more amenable to the Infitah business class²³⁵. Secondly the state attempted to secure the support of the top echelons of elite, which widened the wage differential between the top bureaucracy and state/public officials. The bottom bureaucracy became disgruntled which led to strikes (e.g. the 'mutiny' of central security forces in 1986).

²²⁸ Osman, 181.

²²⁹ Ibid, 182. This was a common worry for Third World leaders implementing IMF structural adjustment programmes.

²³⁰ Ibid, 182.

²³¹ Marfleet, "State and," 22.

²³² Referring to an elite which offer support in return for 'rents' or patronage from the government. The notion that electoralisation was a means to distribute resources to the elite is discussed in detail in chapter 6.

²³³ Blaydes, *Elections and*, 27-28.

²³⁴ Marfleet, "State and," 22.

²³⁵ This said it often had confrontation with the bourgeoisie commercial class when attempting to regulate/rationalise aspects of trade and finance.

A third contradiction, which can be noted in a contemporary sense, was caused by Sadat's alliance with Islamic groups which sparked a large student based movement, a demographic which suffered the outcomes of the Infitah policy and subsequently turned against the state. Finally in terms of foreign policy, during the Mubarak era some of Egypt's notable allies, the US and International Financial Institutions (IFI), agitated for political/economic change which would weaken the regime's stability²³⁶. The mixed bag of old and new reforms inherited from Sadat led to contradictions in the regime.

Class relations remained important as the neo-liberal agenda was accelerated in 2004, when Dr Nazif was appointed to a cabinet position specifically tasked with furthering it. Policies led to wide scale job losses²³⁷. Protests, which have been occurring since the 'Infitah' policy of 1974, have become more 'narrowly based among urban working class' over the last ten years²³⁸. There is also the sense that workers did not associate their grievances with the regime and the lack of democracy. Beinín describes the movements as:

“Rooted in informal, local networks in industrial cities and suburbs, the workers movement does not have a national leadership, organisation or program. There have rarely been calls for democratisation or regime change; more typically, workers call on the government to rectify injustices”²³⁹.

In the first 5 months of 2009 that there were over 200 collective actions (strikes and protests) in Mubarak's Egypt²⁴⁰. These were a result of the advancement of neo-liberalism, which began with Sadat's 'Open Door' policy in and subsequent IMF structural adjustment programs with the IMF and later initiatives led by Gamal Mubarak²⁴¹.

The next section traces Egypt's foreign policy and relations from British colonisation to the Mubarak era, with the aim of locating external pressures on the regime.

²³⁶ Ayubi, "Government and," 10-12.

²³⁷ Joel Beinín, "Workers Protests in Egypt: Neo-liberalism and Class Struggle in the 21st Century," *Social Movement Studies*, 8:8 (2009), 450.

²³⁸ Ibid, 451.

²³⁹ Ibid, 451.

²⁴⁰ Ibid, 450

²⁴¹ Ibid, 450.

Foreign policy

British colonialism laid foundations for future political relations in the region. It established central administration and colonial policies in many MENA states²⁴². When Nasser came to power the influence of British colonialism was a driving force behind foreign policy, particularly the status of the Suez Canal and the Sudan region²⁴³.

An agreement reached in 1954 allowed for the withdrawal of British armed forces from the Suez area. Developments in the region eventually led to the Suez War between an alliance of France, Britain and Israel against Egypt²⁴⁴. The result was a Joint Defence Agreement between Egypt and Syria, which was significant because it established the basis for regional competition²⁴⁵.

Foreign relationships during the Nasser era were underpinned by nationalist rhetoric of Egypt as an Arab hegemon. There was a drive to replace 'Western domination' with Egyptian influence.²⁴⁶ Due to weakening Western influence in the region, there was an awakening of Arab nationalism. Egypt made significant strides in its foreign policy goals including: the withdrawal of the British, the capture of Suez Canal as well as the defeat of Western security pacts. These set Egypt apart as leader of the Arab nationalist movement²⁴⁷.

This 'Arab Nasserite nationalism', was at odds with the interests of three major players in the region, Saudi Arabia, the United States and Israel²⁴⁸. Egypt was not only exerting its influence in the region but competing with other states in this regard. After the Suez Canal crisis, backing of Algerian rebels against the French and sending troops to Yemen on the

²⁴² Owen, *State, Power*, 5-6.

²⁴³ Vatikiotis, *The History*, 385.

²⁴⁴ During this period Egypt's relationship with Israel soured when Britain had entered into a security pact with Iraq, Iran, Turkey and Pakistan, excluding Egypt. Failing to find support against Israel from the West, Egypt turned to the Non-Aligned Movement and the East for support. Egypt approached the Soviets to buy arms, which alienated it from the West even more. The situation escalated when the US, Britain and the World Bank pulled out of financing for the High Dam at Aswan. In retaliation Nasser nationalised the Suez Canal Company. This led to the war and Egypt then pulled out of the Anglo-Egyptian Agreement reached in 1954. See Vatikiotis, *The History*, 358-389.

²⁴⁵ *Ibid*, 385-390.

²⁴⁶ Hinnebusch, *Egyptian Politics*, 14 & 2.

²⁴⁷ *Ibid*, 21.

²⁴⁸ Osman, *Egypt on*, 66-67.

Saudi border to support a coup attempt, Nasser and his regional project were viewed in a much more serious light. He was considered a regional hero, which led to the Syrians forming a United Arab Republic with Egypt²⁴⁹. Regional competition had structural implications in later years as it is likely it was a driving force behind changes such as education reform, which Nasser instituted.

Nasser's drive to remove Western influence put him at loggerheads with the US because ousting the British from the Suez Canal and bases on the Gulf meant America was solely responsible for protecting oil reserves on which it was reliant. Nasser was also a threat because of his relationship with the Soviets, involving weapons dealing and funding for national projects²⁵⁰. He established the West and former imperial powers as the 'enemy', and used his projects of 'Arab nationalism' to unite both Egyptians and regional Arab states against this common enemy²⁵¹.

The most pressing foreign policy issue for Sadat when he came to power and after loss in war to Israel was ending the occupation of Sinai. Nasser had thought the only solution to the situation was force; resources had been diverted to the military. Sadat changed this policy and considered the use of force once it became apparent diplomacy was no longer an option. This policy was favourable with the new 'Westernised civilian elite' in Sadat's inner circle. It entailed moving away from the Soviet Union, who refused to back Egypt militarily, and forced the US to take an 'even-handed' mediatory role²⁵².

From 1974 to 1976 Sadat redirected foreign policy away from Arab nationalism and pursued US patronage; Egypt's relationship with the Soviet Union was 'near breaking point'. When the Soviets pulled out of the region Egypt's military strength was weaker than Israel's, Sadat took advantage of victory in the October war and the oil embargo to signal to the US 'the need to placate the Arabs if US Middle East interests were to survive'²⁵³. The result of mediation was the Sinai 1 and 2 agreements which removed Egypt from the Arab-Israeli war.

²⁴⁹ Ibid, 67. Iraq also signalled its intent to join the republic at some future point. This again demonstrates the intent of Egypt to alter the balance of power in the region in its favour to support its foreign policy objectives.

²⁵⁰ Ibid, 69.

²⁵¹ Ibid, 71.

²⁵² Hinnebusch, *Egyptian Politics*, 48.

²⁵³ Ibid, 54.

By 1981, Egypt had also given up any notion of non-alignment and embraced ‘American clientage’²⁵⁴.

When Iraq invaded Kuwait in 1990 an opportunity for Egypt to reassert itself as a regional leader was lost²⁵⁵. Egypt's position on the Gulf War was a result of military aid it received from the US²⁵⁶. Egypt's relationship with the US strengthened its military. Since 1979 Egypt has been the second biggest recipient of American foreign aid behind Israel. Since 1987 Egypt annually received \$1.3 billion. Part of this aid had been aimed at promoting democracy, which many have suggested has not been pushed for aggressively enough. Sharp claims the: “The vast majority of USAID assistance goes to government of Egypt-approved consensual, government-to-government projects”²⁵⁷.

Aid has come with pressure for economic/political reform. In a 2003 speech, President Bush admonished Middle Eastern authoritarian regimes suggesting Egypt spearhead change. The issue was raised again during a meeting between Mubarak and Bush in 2004. However, when protesters agitated for reform before the 2005 elections and were silenced by the regime’s security forces, the US remained silent²⁵⁸.

On the issue of the abuse of human rights a key factor is the alliance between Egypt and the US in the fight against terrorism. While the US promoted democracy it was unlikely to criticise Egypt for human rights transgressions as it was of too great a geopolitical value²⁵⁹. The push for pluralism and electoralisation by the US and IFI's did not call for democracy²⁶⁰. Perversely greater electoralisation led to a situation where Gamal Mubarak was being prepared for succession²⁶¹.

²⁵⁴ Ibid, 65-69.

²⁵⁵ Osman, *Egypt on*, 187. The regime opted to support the Saudi position, allowing the US to lead a force against Hussein. Its position in the Gulf changed, it became seen as a follower and provider of emigrant labour, as opposed to the leader of Arab nationalism.

²⁵⁶ Oweidat, Nadia, Cheryl Benard, Dale Stahl, Walid Kildani, and Edward O'Connell. *The Kefaya movement: a case study of a grassroots reform initiative*. Rand Corporation, (2008), accessed August 21st, 2012, http://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2008/RAND_MG778.pdf

²⁵⁷ Jeremy M. Sharp, *Egypt in Transition*. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Research Service Congressional Research Service Report RL33003, (2011), 13.

²⁵⁸ Oweidat et al., *The Kefaya*, 5-6.

²⁵⁹ Ibid, 7-8.

²⁶⁰ Blaydes, *Elections and*, 193-194.

²⁶¹ See chapter 5 for more detail of Blaydes’ argument.

Egypt's relationship with the US has had other significant effects. Referring to Ross, who writes about rentier affects of oil, Blaydes suggests his conclusions are applicable to rents gained from foreign aid. These affects are termed rentier, repression and modernisation. The rentier affect refers to governments collecting rents from aid being less reliant on taxes, and so less accountable/responsive. The repression affect refers to the ability to use aid rents to increase military/security forces²⁶². In fact the military became an important player in the Egyptian economy, particularly in the manufacturing, agriculture and construction sectors²⁶³. Finally the modernisation affect refers to increased resource wealth (from aid) not accompanied by higher education and specialisation²⁶⁴. As Egypt suffers from an oversupply of young university graduates, whose skills however are not compatible with the needs of the economy, the above relationship between aid and its impact seems true for the Egyptian case.

In conclusion

This chapter has provided a historical narrative of Egypt's political landscape from the rule of Mohamed Ali to Hosni Mubarak's Presidency. There has been an emphasis on the state's domestic and international relationships, as well as the evolution of the state and its structures/institutions. This historical context provides the necessary foundation to apply the structural approach. Chapter 6 will draw heavily on the narrative provided here to explain 'state crisis' and 'urban uprising'. The next chapter will look at Egypt's opposition politics and protest movements, as well as providing a narrative of the period in question.

²⁶² Which has been demonstrated in Egypt in regard to repressing the opposition

²⁶³ Marfleet, "State and," 22.

²⁶⁴ Blaydes, 194. Blaydes transposes Ross' notion of the effect of oil rents onto the impact of foreign aid. For more information see Michael Ross, "Does Oil Hinder Democracy," *World Politics*, 53:3 (2001)

Chapter 4: History of opposition movements, protests/collective actions, the #January25th movement and events leading to the fall of Mubarak

Introduction

This chapter briefly outlines opposition and protest politics in contemporary Egypt. This gives insight into the *re-politicisation* discussed in the first chapter and illuminates important relationships between the state and domestic groups, which are necessary context for a structural approach. This is especially important when explaining how the ‘urban uprising’ stage created ‘internal leverage’ and gives insight into important ‘breakthrough’ events.

The narrative begins with a short discussion of collective actions. It then discusses secular opposition with an emphasis on the predecessor organisations of the #January25th movement. The Muslim Brotherhood and its role as the main competitor to the NDP is discussed. Finally the chapter includes a discussion of events leading up to January 25th 2011.

Strikes and collective actions, a brief history

In 1977 Sadat called on the military to suppress the *bread riots* or '*intifada* of bread'. The bread riots were led by citizens reacting spontaneously to a decrease in their standard of living caused by IMF subsidy cuts²⁶⁵. The police were unable to contain the unfolding events and Sadat called on the military to restore order. Military commander, Field Marshal el Gamsay, would only act to restore order if Sadat withdrew the cuts to subsidies. Cooks suggests that this was as a result of the military being apprehensive about public opinion, or being blamed by politicians if something went wrong²⁶⁶. This demonstrates how Egypt's incumbents were reliant on the military to remain in power. It also exhibits the importance that Egyptian military places on its public reputation.

²⁶⁵ Beinin, “Workers Struggles,” 70. Part of Nasser’s egalitarian rhetoric had been subsidies for consumer goods. This changed when Sadat came to power. In January 1977, at the advice of the IMF, Sadat cut-back on subsidies. The response from the public was swift, lower and middle class students took to the streets to protest.

²⁶⁶ Cook, *The Struggle*, 141-142.

In 1986 the Mubarak regime faced a rebellion when thousands of police conscripts went on the rampage in Cairo and Alexandria, citing 'slave-like conditions'. Again the army was called in to contain the unrest²⁶⁷, exhibiting the importance of the military in maintaining order and the declining legitimacy of the regime.

These protests greatly affected the cost/benefit calculations that the Mubarak regime undertook when considering full IMF conditionality. Mubarak, in the context of the *bread riots*, was reluctant to introduce reform measures which may have created instability. Even if those reforms would encourage long term growth, the imperative was to maintain order²⁶⁸.

Opposition politics

During the 1990's under emergency law (in the context of opposing radical Islamic movements) Mubarak mostly shut down formal politics. This subdued the leftists, Islamists and 'human rights community' to the point where reform politics were stagnant²⁶⁹. The next section addresses secular and non-secular opposition. The first section will look at civil society movements like Kefaya. In light of a focus on the re-*politicisation* of politics the secular section will focus on social movements and coalitions. The second section explores the role played by the Muslim Brotherhood as Egypt's most influential and religious opposition.

Secular civil society: the emergence of Kefaya and beyond

Kefaya was unique because it brought together activists from communist, Islamic and secular nationalists who had been involved in political activism since the 1970's. Kefaya²⁷⁰ (enough) known as the Egyptian Movement for change, began in 2004. It was not a political party and was not structured like one; however it drew membership from across the political spectrum²⁷¹. Many Kefaya members had been jailed for their views and were well known in

²⁶⁷ Marfleet, "State and," 32.

²⁶⁸ Cook, *The Struggle*, 160.

²⁶⁹ Rabab El-Mahdi, "The Democracy Movement: Cycles of Protest," in eds. Rabab El-Mahdi & Philip Marfleet, *Egypt: The Moment of Change*, (London: Zed Books, 2009), 92.

²⁷⁰ Also spelt Kifaya

²⁷¹ Oweidat et al., *The Kefaya*, 10-11. Cook describes it as being constituted of 'political and social activists' See Cook, *The Struggle*, 241. Its steering committee was comprised of the Karama (Nasserist) Party, the Ghad²⁷¹

the Egyptian and Arab media. They came together with one demand, the end of the Mubarak regime and the formulation of parliamentary republic with separation of powers. They stood firmly against Gamal Mubarak as successor of his father²⁷². According to Shorbagy: “Egypt needs today, more than ever, a new form of politics that pulls together diverse ideas from across the political spectrum to forge a new national project”²⁷³.

Kefaya represents Valbjørn's notion of *re-politicisation* defined in the first chapter as: the emergence of old collective actors as well as new ones that do not necessarily participate within the confines of conventional political participation²⁷⁴. It also represents a departure from the stagnant opposition politics of the 1990's, and demonstrates that meaningful opposition had to come from outside of established political organisations²⁷⁵. It was an awakening of civil society.

The rise of these social movements can be explained by cycles of protest. These cycles have spillover effects – they are not self-contained: they initiate other movements, work in conjunction with other organisations and influence the greater political and cultural context of the country²⁷⁶. El-Mahdi and Lim argue that Kefaya emerged out of a third wave of protests that began with pro-intifada mobilisations in 2000-2001²⁷⁷. These were some of the biggest spontaneous protests in the Arab world since the first Gulf War. In Egypt thousands of students demonstrated in the face of regime violence. Twenty NGO's formed the Popular Committee to Support the Intifada (PCSI). This led to the formation of a number of other organisations which provided participatory structures for activists²⁷⁸. Demonstrations in solidarity with the Palestinian Intifada became arenas for mobilised citizens to voice grievances with the regime²⁷⁹.

A second wave of protests began in 2003 against the Iraq invasion. On the 20th of March 2003 activists called for a demonstration, over 40000 people came to Tahrir Square, it was

(liberal) Party, the Centre Party, the Labour (Islamist) Party as well as the Revolutionary Socialist Organisation. See El- Mahdi, 91-92.

²⁷² Oweidat et al., *The Kefaya*, 10-12.

²⁷³ Manar Shorbagy, “The Egyptian Movement for Change — Kefaya: Redefining Politics in Egypt.” *Public Culture*, 19:1 (2007): 176.

²⁷⁴ Valbjørn, “Upgrading Post-democratization,” 29-30.

²⁷⁵ El-Mahdi, “The Democracy,” 92.

²⁷⁶ *Ibid*, 92-93.

²⁷⁷ *Ibid*, 93. And Lim, “Clicks, Cabs,” 236.

²⁷⁸ In light of discredited official parties

²⁷⁹ El-Mahdi, “The Democracy,” 94.

the biggest demonstration since the 1970's. Kefaya can be understood against this backdrop. A new form of contesting state power had been established. Protesters adapted their approach based on the previous wave²⁸⁰.

Kefaya had notable successes. It was the first movement to coordinate a demonstration openly calling for the end of the Mubarak regime and 'hereditary rule'²⁸¹. Their success can be attributed to timing before the 2005 elections, and simplicity of message 'No to inheritance, no to extension'²⁸². Kefaya was adept at using communication technology and social networks. They organised protests through text messaging and utilising blogs to disseminate their message²⁸³. This allowed Kefaya protesters to march in Cairo without police presence²⁸⁴.

The decline of Kefaya can be attributed to a number of factors. In cases where the regime could not use co-option or division they resorted to violence. Activists who participated in protests were often beaten and detained without trial which was legal under emergency laws. Members eventually became less willing to participate in the face of state sponsored violence. The regime passed 'reform laws' which in fact allowed them even more scope in terms of violating rights, often under the guise of anti-terrorism. State controlled media eroded the legitimacy of the movement, painting its goals as 'daydreams' accusing it of being an agent of the US trying to destabilise the country. Finally it is in the interests of the ruling elite to view democracy as a threat to their interests. Issues like Israel's position in the region, and US foreign policy were spoken about in the context of 'national security' and used to defer attention from democratic reform²⁸⁵. This makes it hard for a movement calling for democracy to foment in a society whose dominant discourse is not reform but external forces and national security²⁸⁶.

²⁸⁰ Ibid, 95-96.

²⁸¹ In reference to succession by Gamal Mubarak

²⁸² Oweidat et al., *The Kefaya*, 17-18.

²⁸³ El-Mahdi, "The Democracy," 90-91. and Oweidat et al., *The Kefaya*, 21.

²⁸⁴ El-Mahdi, "The Democracy," 90-91.

²⁸⁵ This seems to fit well with Skocpol's contention that state crisis can emerge from the elite stalling reforms counter to their interests, see chapter 1.

²⁸⁶ Oweidat et al., *The Kefaya*, 27-36.

Internal politics also broke Kefaya down. There was tension between secular and Islamic elements. A bone of contention was whether the organisation should take an anti US and Israel stance.

The decline of Kefaya did not however deter members from continuing to blog. As police brutality which led to Kefaya's decline quashed street protest, online blogging exploded. The period of 2006/7 saw the Egyptian regime take note of this trend, sparking the 'War on Bloggers'. Police harassed and tortured many of Egypt's prominent political bloggers. This led many bloggers to report on the level state sponsored torture/brutality²⁸⁷.

The first movement following Kefaya was the April 6th movement. This was the first movement in Egypt organised through the social networking site Facebook. It named itself after a general strike on April 6th 2008. It signalled solidarity between the youth mobilised by Kefaya and a resurgent labour movement²⁸⁸. The workers actions following the demise of Kefaya have an organic connection with the April 6th movement²⁸⁹. Connecting these civil youth led movements with labour was an important step toward establishing the #January25th movement.

There has been serious strike action in Egypt since 2004. The number of collective actions stands at over 3000 involving more than 2 million Egyptians, which is significant because it outnumbered political protests over that period. Beinin et al say of the labour movement over this period: 'this is the largest modern labour movement in Egypt and the largest social movement in the Arab world since World War II'²⁹⁰. Serious strike action has occurred since 2006 affecting most Egyptian industries. Industrial action has mostly been illegal as it has not been approved by the Egyptian Trade Union Federation (ETUF). These strikes have unified workers from across Egypt, and resulted in the formation of independent trade-union committees which challenged the primacy of national federations²⁹¹. The labour movement would be crucial in demonstrations in early 2011; the fact that earlier ones unified workers

²⁸⁷ Lim, "Clicks, Cabs," 239.

²⁸⁸ Ibid, 293.

²⁸⁹ El-Mahdi, "The Democracy," 100-101.

²⁹⁰ Joel Beinin, Kamal Abbas, Sarah Whitson and Michelle Dunne, "Labor Protest Politics and Worker Rights in Egypt," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, February 17th 2011. accessed August 21st 2012. carnegieendowment.org/2010/02/17/.../d4i

²⁹¹ Marfleet, "State and," 29.

across the country is significant. Skocpol maintains that successful insurrection is only possible if 'peasants' can achieve widespread revolt (not just localised).

Between 2006-2008 the centre of industrial actions was the textile industry in Mahalla al Kubra where 26000 workers went on strike. The regime dealt with strikers in a manner that demonstrated their eagerness not to use coercive force. The situation erupted again on April 6th 2008, a significant date as it resulted in the deaths of three workers and initiated the April 6th movement²⁹².

The labour movement has political importance because it has been a grassroots example of democracy. Labour movements have shown that citizens are able to come together peacefully to voice concerns, make demands and jointly decide on goals. A journalists' union for example elected its leadership in 2008. 3000 members publically elected leadership, one of the first examples of an independent democratic union/organisation in Egypt²⁹³.

The April 6th movement used the online strategies of the Kefaya Youth. They used social networking sites like Flickr, YouTube as well as blogs, email and text messaging. They added newer social networks Facebook and Twitter. Although early protests and strikes failed to produce participation levels hoped for, by 2009 its Facebook page had 70 000 members when less than 900000 Egyptians had profiles. It attracted substantial media attention and the state's security apparatus', participation in planned strikes was not as high as hoped. The movement's most significant impact on the #January25th movement was using Twitter to organise and circumvent police. This was a tactic the April 6th movement learned from Iranian opposition movements²⁹⁴.

The advent of the social media and communication technology profoundly impacted the way opposition movements organise. The above clearly exhibits that social movements in Egypt have learnt from their predecessors, movements in other countries and benefitted from technological development.

²⁹² Cook, *The Struggle*, 179.

²⁹³ Beinín et al., "Labor Protest"

²⁹⁴ Lim, 240-241. This is an example of Skocpol's 'world time' concept – that models and tactics of other social movements being employed by the similar groups in other countries.

The next section describes the development and significance of the Muslim Brotherhood as Egypt's most prominent opposition.

The Muslim Brotherhood

The Muslim Brothers society was established in 1928 as a Muslim organisation whose aims were to build Islamic schools and mosques and to provide basic social services. The founder of the Brotherhood, Hasan al-Banna, founded it in response to what he considered the general decay of Islamic values caused by Western influence²⁹⁵. According to Blaydes the current Muslim Brotherhood 'defies classification as it combines aspects of a religious movement, social movement, charitable association and political party'²⁹⁶.

During the 1950's and 1960's the Brotherhood could be considered militant. They turned away from violence in the 1970s, at the time Sadat was balancing the leftist Nasser camp by courting a closer relationship with them²⁹⁷. He did this by declaring the Egyptian state one of 'Science and Faith', gaining the Brotherhood as an important ally²⁹⁸.

The Brotherhood changed from the grassroots movement it had been at inception. During the 1970's and 1980's it was mainly made up of wealthy businessmen allying with Sadat in order to take advantage of the Infitah policy²⁹⁹. The organisation returned to being a grassroots movement finding its appeal in the provision of services that the regime had withdrawn³⁰⁰.

The Brotherhood has a history with the students/youth of Egypt. Nasser era policies have contributed to contemporary Egypt having many educated, but unemployed, lower-middle class youth. This group is referred to as the 'lumpen intelligentsia'³⁰¹. The Brotherhood, in a contemporary context, benefits from this demographic's support³⁰².

²⁹⁵ Abd al-Monein Said Aly and Manfred W. Wenner, "Modern Islamic Reform Movements: The Muslim Brotherhood in Contemporary Egypt," *Middle East Journal*, 36:3 (1982)

²⁹⁶ Blaydes, *Elections and*, 148.

²⁹⁷ *Ibid*, 149.

²⁹⁸ Said Aly and Wenner, "Modern Islamic," 348.

²⁹⁹ Sameh Naguib, "Islamism(s) Old and New," in eds. Rabab el-Mahdi and Phillip Marfleet, *Egypt the Moment of Change*, (London: Zed Books, 2009), 109.

³⁰⁰ *Ibid*, 110.

³⁰¹ Blaydes, *Elections and*, 156. citing Wickham (2002)

³⁰² *Ibid*, 156.

During the early Sadat years, Islamic student activists successfully campaigned at Egypt's campuses. By the mid to late 1970's they were able to win leadership positions on student councils³⁰³. This rising support is considered a result of the 'mosque movement' of the latter half of the 1970's, a reply to the mainly secular political debate in the Muslim world from the 1950's. It considered that the Islamic way of organising daily life had been marginalised and sought to redress this³⁰⁴.

The Islamic student movement's main method of campaigning was to provide socially oriented services to students. However the group was factionalised into a moderate Dawa group and more radical Jihadi group. The Brotherhood would merge with the former, a decision which changed its outlook on political, ideological and social views³⁰⁵. This led the Brotherhood back to what it had been in the 1940's, a grass roots movement appealing to the youth and providing services to the general population. Most importantly it began an era of reform for the Brotherhood by contesting regime power, taking part in elections in professional syndicates and local/national assemblies³⁰⁶.

The Brotherhood did this to establish itself as a viable opposition. Elections were associated with Western ideals, but there was a sense of 'tactical pragmatism' involved. Elections provided the opportunity to disseminate the Brotherhoods message nationally³⁰⁷. Ultimately the Brotherhood participated with a long-run view of national politics, establishing itself as a viable alternative³⁰⁸.

In the context of the withdrawal of the state from basic services, the Brotherhood has become more relevant. Blaydes referencing Wickham talks about 'parallel Islamic sectors'³⁰⁹. Private mosques, Islamic associations and businesses all provide services and goods that help provide the daily needs of Egyptians. These services have cemented the Brotherhood's support base³¹⁰. Providing social services launched the organisation beyond one that just appealed to the 'lumpen intelligentsia'. The Brotherhood managed to 'transform itself into a populist

³⁰³ Naguib, "Islamism(s) Old," 109.

³⁰⁴ Blaydes, *Elections and*, 154.

³⁰⁵ Naguib, "Islamism(s) Old," 110.

³⁰⁶ *Ibid*, 110.

³⁰⁷ Blaydes, *Elections and*, 151.

³⁰⁸ *Ibid*, 151.

³⁰⁹ *Ibid*, 154, referencing Wickham, Carrie Rosefsky. *Mobilising Islam: Religion, Activism and Political Change in Egypt*, (New York: Columbia University Press, 2002), 97.

³¹⁰ *Ibid*, 155.

political force'. Its base of appeal spread throughout impoverished neighbourhoods, mosques, Islamic charities and appealed now to the youth, the workers and the poor³¹¹.

Election campaigns were run by an extensive network of volunteers with emphasis on personal contact. The Brotherhood conducted regular recruitment at homes, mosques and at universities. They had an extensive, centralised organisational structure and established protest network. It often organised marches and rallies in districts where it hoped to establish its strength in elections³¹². This clearly shows that the Brotherhood had the ability to organise and direct distinct and important groups in society.

Events leading up to the #January25th Uprising

The introduction of Arabic Facebook in 2009 led to a massive increase in membership, from 900000 Egyptian members in January 2009 to almost 5 million by the end of 2010. In mid-2010 a Facebook page called 'We are all Khaled Said' appeared after the death of a young blogger killed by the Egyptian Police in June 2010 because he had footage of corrupt police sharing the spoils of a drug bust. Pictures of his body, documenting police brutality and torture, flooded the web. The Facebook group became the most popular one in Egypt. From June to August five silent protests were organised by the group. Sharing the injustice of Said's death had managed to provoke a shared sense of anger and resentment towards the regime. The group created a collective identity for those involved, both in terms of relating to victimisation at the hands of the regime and in recognising the shared responsibility for opposition³¹³.

Khaled Said's death and the subsequent Facebook page memorialising it are a good example of a 'breakthrough' development which provided the opposition an opportunity to create a collective identity of injustice, creating the solidarity which Skocpol speaks of as creating 'internal leverage'.

2010 was an election year for the People's Assembly. Despite protests in the run-up period, elections were not free or fair. Eight people died, counting irregularities were noted, and there

³¹¹ Naguib, "Islamism(s) Old," 114.

³¹² Blaydes, *Elections and*, 149.

³¹³ Lim, "Clicks, Cabs," 241-242.

were instances of ballot stuffing and wide spread intimidation. Opposition groups and movements demonstrated against election results and claimed they were illegitimate. These demonstrations, just before those in January 2011, were significant because they brought together an array of opposition, with a united aim³¹⁴.

The 25th of January had been a protest date before 2011; the April 6th movement had held a protest on the same day in 2010 to mark police torture and brutality. The Tunisian uprising, just weeks before, galvanised the opposition and redirected their focus towards ousting Mubarak. The April 6th movement co-ordinated with the 'We are all Khaled Said' Facebook page and disseminated banners and video's across social networking platforms. The event was promoted as #January25 on Twitter³¹⁵ as early as the 15 of January. The April 6th movement distributed more than 20 000 flyers and informed cab drivers about the #January25th protest. Cab drivers spread news about the protests almost as effectively as social media and to different audiences³¹⁶.

The regime seemed to be aware of the risks in light of what had happened in Tunisia. One of Egypt's most popular daily newspapers, *Al-Ahram*, reported in its English weekly just before the beginning of the protests that regime officials had been rubbishing reports of a Tunisian style uprising in Egypt. It also mentions that rumours were rife that Mubarak was meeting with Generals and reversing cuts to subsidies³¹⁷.

This section has provided an account of the events leading up to protests beginning on the 25th of January 2011. This contextual background will help explain 'urban uprising'.

In conclusion

This chapter provided a brief history of collective actions; secular and non-secular opposition groups/movements and a narrative of the events leading up to the 25th of January 2011. This description provides insight into structural relationships between the state and domestic groups, as well as the context for understanding the events this paper explains from the 25th

³¹⁴ Cook, *The Struggle*, 278-279.

³¹⁵ Which is why this paper refers to the movement as such

³¹⁶ Lim, "Clicks, Cabs," 243.

³¹⁷ Dina Ezzat, "Invalid Comparisons," *Al-Ahram Weekly*, January 20-26 2011, accessed October 23rd 2012, weekly.ahram.org.eg/2011/1032/eg6.htm

of January to the 11th of February 2011. The following chapter provides explores some of the literature on the Arab Spring in order to outline factors which have been considered causal in Mubarak's loss of power.

Chapter 5: Factors in the Literature

This chapter reviews literature on Egypt's experience of the Arab Spring with a focus on factors that lend understanding to how state crisis developed in Egypt and how urban uprising was possible. It begins with structural factors such as the contention that some regimes in the Middle East suffered from inherent weaknesses. Related to this is a discussion of fractures between the military and the Egyptian elite surrounding succession issues. The role of social media is also discussed. Factors such as youth unemployment; anger toward Mubarak and the regime; the pro-longed state of emergency and police brutality; labour policies and land reform reversals are discussed as reasons for grievance illuminating the motivations for participation in urban uprising.

MENA Region Regime Weakness

A factor spoken about in the literature is that some regimes under pressure in the Arab Spring fell because they were weaker than they appeared despite being established for long periods. Lynch mentions that a common theme in Middle Eastern politics was the longevity of regimes. According to him this was attributed to governments in the region using patronage systems, as well as the existence of a 'social contract', which allowed the region's elite to dominate the 'domestic political scene' and economy for their own purposes in return for welfare concessions³¹⁸.

Another theme, according to Lynch, is that there was a commonly held belief by elites that people were content with the status quo. Connected to this was the mistaken idea that regimes were internally solid and military and coercive forces were inseparable from regimes³¹⁹. These beliefs were fallacious and there was significant weakness in these regimes.

³¹⁸ Brian Lynch, 'Arab Spring: Origins, Implications, Outlook: Brian Lynch Reflects on a Recent NZIAA Conference', *New Zealand International Review*, 36:6 (2011), accessed February 21st, 2012

http://ic.galegroup.com.ezproxy.uct.ac.za/ic/whic/NewsDetailsPage/NewsDetailsWindow?failOverType=&query=&prodId=WHIC&windowstate=normal&contentModules=&mode=view&displayGroupName=News&limitr=&currPage=&disableHighlighting=false&displayGroups=&sortBy=&source=&search_within_results=&action=e&catId=&activityType=&scanId=&documentId=GALE%7CA272806503

³¹⁹ Ibid, 5.

The idea that MENA regimes, especially Egypt, were weak appeared in the literature before 2011³²⁰. In 2007 Brown and Hamzawy contended Egypt was a ‘semi-authoritarian regime’ more open to reform than other states in the region which could be categorised as a weak/failing strongly authoritarian³²¹. They posit that semi-authoritarian states are those which have democratic institutions and practice on paper, not in reality.

These regimes allow for some popular participation. Egypt has on a number of occasions, opened up political space. In 2002 there was an initiative to improve Human Rights by establishing a National Council on Human Rights. In 2005 the constitution was amended to allow for multi candidate elections. Reforms led to political gains by the Muslim Brotherhood, but were followed by regime repression³²².

Jack Goldstone contends that some regimes in the region are weaker than they appeared; claiming that Tunisia and Egypt are what he terms ‘sultanistic dictatorships’. They appear invulnerable, but are actually brittle because of the strategies they use to maintain power³²³.

He argues that sultanistic regime leaders extend their power in the state at the expense of official institutions by appealing to the fear of internal and external enemies. These leaders, and their elites, typically amass great amounts of wealth. They promote economic development to further their own wealth. Sultanistic dictators attempt to control the military elite by dividing them into different commands. Sultans will avoid appointing successors for fear that they will be replaced. Regimes have patronage relationships with populations, using subsidies for key goods to ‘pay their populations’³²⁴. This system of patronage is combined with heavy surveillance and media control³²⁵.

Goldstone attributes weakness to the difficulty regime leaders experience when trying to balance self-enrichment and rewarding their elites. There is a contradictory nature of policies used to entrench power. By promoting education, the regime increases the number of people

³²⁰ Indeed all regimes have some weakness. Weakness in this case refers to the notion that MENA regimes suffered specific structural contradictions due to policies they employed to stay in power.

³²¹ Amr Hamzawy and Nathan Brown, "Arab Spring Fever," *National Interest*, 91 (2007), 33.

³²² *Ibid*, 34.

³²³ Jack Goldstone, "Understanding the Revolutions of 2011," *Foreign Affairs*, 90:3 (2011): 8-16.

³²⁴ *Ibid*, 2.

³²⁵ *Ibid*, 2.

with higher aspirations and awareness of the state's abuse of power and surveillance³²⁶. Subsidies weaken the regime, as the cost increases, the regime must divert increasingly more resources to maintain power, leading to serious strain on resources.

Succession can also lead to weakness. Where there has been corruption so wide spread that it has alienated the regime's elite, dynastic succession will be blocked. Dividing the military also leads to weakness as military and security forces are more likely to defect during mass protests as there is no central authority, ideology or independent institution to maintain unity and justify the use of coercive force³²⁷.

The next section discusses the relationship between the Egyptian military and Mubarak and his son Gamal.

The Military and Gamal Mubarak

Goldstone believes that in Tunisia and Egypt there were deep-seated resentments in the military towards both regimes. Both Ben Ali and Hosni Mubarak began their careers in the professional military³²⁸. In Egypt the military has historically been closely involved in the local business and politics to the extent that Egypt has been ruled by former officers since 1952. Resentment seems to have stemmed from the choice of Mubarak's son, Gamal as heir apparent. Gamal, who has never served in the military and is a banker, exerted his influence in business and politics through 'business and political cronies' as opposed to through the military³²⁹. Lesch also notes that during the last decade Gamal has 'sidelined the old guard' formerly entrenched in the government and the NDP³³⁰.

This tension between the military and Mubarak family and their circle is discussed in more detail in the final chapter. The next section looks at the role of social media.

The role played by social and digital media

³²⁶ Ibid, 3.

³²⁷ Ibid, 4.

³²⁸ Ibid, 6.

³²⁹ Ibid, 6.

³³⁰ Lesch, "Egypt's Spring," 36.

The Egyptian government has a history of censorship, especially when was content ‘anti-government’ in the mainstream media. This was historically limited to censoring radio, television and newspaper media, as was the case before the October 2010 elections. Censorship also extended to political websites³³¹.

During January and February of 2011 the government moved from content censorship to blockage of entire web based platforms like Twitter and Facebook. On the 27th of January in the run up to the ‘Day of Rage’ this censorship extended to shutting down internet services completely, followed by SMS networks (used by organisers as a fallback when social networks were shut down). There was even a point on the 28th of January, when the government shut down all mobile phone networks and some landline communication. Thus in the ‘Egyptian case’, it is clear that there was a shift in government’s censorship recognising the importance of social media³³².

One contention about the role of social media in the Arab Spring is that it is not a cause, but rather catalyst or accelerator of events. Stepanova claims that Information Communication Technology (ICT) had little or no role to play as an underlying cause of the unrest. Rather, long-standing socio-political and socioeconomic factors underlie the protests of the Arab Spring. ICT allowed for protests to happen sooner rather than later, especially in Egypt where protests followed quickly after those in Tunisia³³³. The social media and communication factor in Egypt’s experience of the Arab Spring can be summed up as enhancing social mobilisation and so acting as a catalyst.

A brief definition of social media is useful. Joseph quotes Kapland and Haelein's definition of social media: "a group of Internet-based applications that build on the ideological and technological foundations of Web 2.0 and that allow the creation and exchange of User Generated Content"³³⁴.

³³¹ Dunn, “Unplugging a,” 17-18.

³³² Ibid

³³³ Ekaterina Stepanova, "The Role of Information Communication Technologies in the “Arab Spring” *Implications beyond the Region*,” Washington, DC: George Washington University (PONARS Eurasia Policy Memo no. 159 (2011)), 1,

³³⁴ Web2.0 refers to online platforms that allow users to participate interactively. User generated refers to three criteria. Firstly it must be available on a publicly accessible website or social network site. Secondly it should entail a minimum amount of creative effort. Finally it should be 'create(ed) outside of the professional routines or practices'. See Kaplan and Haelein quoted by Sarah Joseph, “Social Media, Political Change, and Human Rights,” *Boston College International and Comparative Law Review*, 35 (2012)

What kind of penetration/actual usage do social networks like Facebook and Twitter have in Egypt? According to Dunn, Facebook is by far a more important social network in Egypt in terms of population penetration than Twitter. In February 2011 Facebook had 3.5 million users as opposed to Twitter's relatively paltry 12000 users³³⁵. These numbers may seem low, but consider that internet users in Egypt only amount to 13.5 million people³³⁶. Couple this with the fact that according to Bhuiyan 62% of Egyptian Facebook users in 2010 were under the age of 25, the main constituent group protesting, and the impact of a site like Facebook becomes more apparent³³⁷.

Howard and Hussain look at the impact of different forms of ICT during the uprisings in Tunisia and Egypt, as well as the access to these types of ICT³³⁸. They particularly mention that in the case of Tunisia online streaming video sites like YouTube, blogs and social media sites like Twitter and Facebook were helpful in achieving what they term 'cognitive liberation'³³⁹. People were able to share sympathy for Mohamed Bouazizi a street vendor in Tunisia who self immolated on the 17th of December 2010 in protest against a small fine he received from an inspector and the subsequent assault and cruel treatment he received from security officials when he tried to appeal.³⁴⁰ Citizens were also able to see content created by investigative journalism that would not otherwise have been aired, exposing corruption. This kind of communication allowed people to network with the aim of organising and mobilising to bring down the regime. This being said less than 20% of the population actively used social media in Tunisia. Mobile SMS networks seem to have, in the Tunisian case, been more important as tools for mobilisation³⁴¹.

Egypt, by contrast has higher levels of mobile network penetration, and the biggest internet population in the region apart from Iran. Similar to the Tunisian experience there was also the 'online memorial' created for a symbolic victim of the Mubarak regime, blogger Khaled Said, who was killed on the 6th of June 2010 by the Egyptian Police in retaliation for his

³³⁵ Dunn, "Unplugging a," 15-24.

³³⁶ Ibid

³³⁷ Serajul Bhuiyan, "Social Media and Its Effectiveness in the Political Reform Movement in Egypt," *Middle East Media Educator*, 1:1 (2011), 14-20.

³³⁸ Phillip Howard and Muzammil Hussain, "The Upheavals in Egypt and Tunisia: The Role of Digital Media," *Journal of Democracy*, 22:3 (2011), 36.

³³⁹ A term that Hussain and Howard coin from sociologist Doug McAdam

³⁴⁰ Ibid

³⁴¹ Ibid, 36-37.

exposing corruption. This led to the Facebook page ‘We are All Khaled Said’. According to Howard and Hussain, just as in the Tunisian case, this Facebook page allowed for a network of people who knew Said, or empathised with what happened to him, to communicate and share their grievances³⁴².

Social media in Egypt created a forum for the communication of grievances and networking. Bhuiyan also claims that it was useful in enhancing the desire for democracy and socio-economic change, as well as being a platform for idea and knowledge exchange. Social media was an important mobilisation and organisation tool³⁴³.

Howard and Hussain maintain that civil society in Arab countries are of the belief that the internet, mobile phones and social media have indeed made a big difference to the outcome of ‘Arab Spring’³⁴⁴. Social media built a network of people interested in furthering democracy, and political organisation³⁴⁵.

Regardless of the precise role of ICT during the uprisings, in Egypt specifically, the reaction of the government shows that the internet, social media and SMS networks were perceived as real and serious threats. Dunn posits that this can be tracked in the way the Egyptian government changed the way it censored information, and in the type of information censored after the uprisings³⁴⁶.

The next sections look at voluntaristic factors which motivated individuals to participate in ‘urban uprising’ by creating grievance.

Youth unemployment and demographic bulge

The MENA region has been experiencing high rates of unemployment. The youth population, aged 15-29, has steadily increased³⁴⁷. According to Mara Hvistendahl Egypt has a youth bulge in this age group accounting for 43% of the population³⁴⁸. Since 1990 the youth population in Egypt has grown 65%. Education programmes have led to a larger proportion

³⁴² Ibid, 36-37.

³⁴³ Bhuiyan, “Social Media”

³⁴⁴ Howard and Hussain, “The Upheavals,” 38.

³⁴⁵ Ibid

³⁴⁶ Dunn, “Unplugging a Nation”

³⁴⁷ Jack Goldstone, “Understanding the,” 5.

³⁴⁸ Mara Hvistendahl, “Young and Restless can be a Volatile Mix,” *Science*, 333 (2011): 552-554.

of this youth receiving a university education. College enrolment has quadrupled in Egypt over recent decades according to Goldstone³⁴⁹. This has resulted in a large educated youth population without an equal increase in employment.

Governments have been unable to keep job growth in line with the growth in educated youth. Egypt had in the past placed all college graduates in jobs; these were phased out due to cost. Many private sector jobs have been a means of patronage, used by elite to reward those in their circles. In fact in Egypt a college graduate is ten times as likely not to have a job as their peers with only an elementary education³⁵⁰.

Anger, Unchecked Power, Corruption, Labour Practices and Land

Anger toward Hosni Mubarak has built in the decade before the #January25th movement. The perception among the public was that Mubarak had accidentally come to power after Sadat's assassination in 1981. At this time he stressed the rule of law and the necessity for parliamentary elections. However, as soon as he took on a second term in 1987 he began cementing his and the NDP's power. This was done by refusing constitutional reform, extending the state of emergency (which allowed him to use security forces to keep opposition in check) and excluding opposition parties from participation in local councils³⁵¹.

Egypt's long standing emergency laws have allowed for arrests without charge and indefinite detention³⁵². Lesch asserts Egypt's political system, under Mubarak, concentrated power in the executive. This allowed, among other privileges, the power to appoint and dismiss the Prime Minister and the Council of Ministers. Furthermore, a winner takes all system at the local election level meant that the NDP's power was cemented nation-wide³⁵³.

Emergency laws extended by Mubarak indefinitely served to consolidate the president's absolute power. These laws allowed for, among other measures, security forces to hold individuals, tap their communications and search them without a warrant. Individuals could also be tried in Emergency State Security Courts, which were essentially military courts with

³⁴⁹ Goldstone, "Understanding the," 5.

³⁵⁰ Ibid, 5.

³⁵¹ Lesch, "Egypt's Spring," 35.

³⁵² Bhuiyan, "Social Media," 15.

³⁵³ Lesch, "Egypt's Spring," 36.

no appeal process, in conjunction with wide-spread beatings and torture by police and security forces³⁵⁴.

Corruption is pinpointed as being one of the causes of the Arab Spring; particularly in the case of Egypt Lesch pinpoints blatant corruption as a cause³⁵⁵. Corruption ranged from the widespread sale of the public sector for personal gain, to the blatant watering down of competition and anti-monopoly laws to ensure continued price fixing. Lesch details how cabinet members running for parliament used their official positions to pay for campaign 'expenses' such as coercing votes and bribery³⁵⁶. The corruption of the state and its elite was so blatant, that it was even documented by the state itself. Lesch quotes the head of a state investigator in the Ministry of Interior, who fled to Zurich in 2005, as having said: "The Mubarak era will be known... as the era of thieves. His official business is the looting of public money, and we find that the super-corrupt, ultra-delinquents have attained state posts"³⁵⁷.

A law was passed in 1992, Law 96, and implemented in 1997. Up until this point, under the previous Land Reform programmes, tenant farmers had inherited a permanent tenancy of their land. Law 96 allowed landowners to take back their land or demand any rental they saw fit. When the law was implemented in 1997 it led to many farming families being displaced and their belongings being ransacked by security forces charged with their eviction. Other families saw the rent on land going up tenfold. Living expenses were also pushed up further by the government's privatisation of basic services like water and electricity³⁵⁸.

The Mubarak regime controlled organised labour. All public sector workers were required to join the ETUF which was headed by members of the NDP. Strikes were made illegal, giving workers no way to voice their grievances. In 2003 a law was passed which made it legal to hire workers on short term contracts which did not require employers to provide benefits like

³⁵⁴ Ibid, 36

³⁵⁵ Ibid, 35-48.

³⁵⁶ Ibid, 40.

³⁵⁷ Lesch quoting the former head of an investigative unit of the Ministry of the Interior in Egypt, 42.

³⁵⁸ Lesch, "Egypt's Spring," 37. An impact of this policy, has been its impact on primary school enrolment. Families dispossessed of inherited tenancies or facing exorbitant rentals often resorted to daily wage labour. This would involve indenturing their young children to gain the cash wage for their labour. This led to a significant drop in primary school enrolment in 1997.

health or social insurance. The ETUF was an organisation in place to carry out the governments bidding as opposed to being a genuine trade union.

In conclusion

This chapter has presented a number of factors which have been discussed in the literature on the Arab Spring as either causal or significant in some way. The first three factors: regime weakness, the relationship between the military and regime - succession crisis and finally the role of social media, fit well into a structural approach in terms of state crisis creation.

The remaining factors rely on agency-based explanations which associate grievance with causation. These explanations should not be ignored, and are valuable for consideration as they explain why Egyptians were so determined to rid themselves of the regime. However it is also apparent that structural explanations add clarity to how events in Egypt unfolded. There is a great deal of grievance in populations across the MENA region, structural approaches help to clarify the unique outcomes in different states. Actor based explanations clarify motivations for individual participation in the urban uprising stage of the structural approach. The next chapter will conclude this paper. It will apply the structural approach to the historical and contextual narrative provided in chapter 3 and 4 as well as factors discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 6: Analysis and Conclusion

This chapter concludes the paper and draws from the discussions and framework outlined in previous chapters. The chapter begins with an analysis of the historical narratives of chapters 3 and 4, in conjunction with the discussion of events from the 25th of January to the 11th of February 2011, in terms of the structural framework provided in chapter 2. It also draws on the factors discussed in chapter 5. This paper argues that Mubarak lost power because of state crisis arising from contradictions in the regime, particularly tensions in the elite which made a successful urban uprising possible. The chapter is divided into sections, one focussing on the emergence of state crisis, and the second on urban uprising.

State Crisis

The structural approach discussed in chapter 2 suggests that military pressures abroad in conjunction with splits in the dominant class were necessary for the creation of a state crisis. In her assessment of the Iranian Revolution, Skocpol recognised that Iran suffered no military defeat, nor did it face pressure from abroad³⁵⁹. Despite this Skocpol employed a structural analysis to the Iranian case in terms of the 'interrelations of state, society and organised politics in Iran, and situates Iran in changing international and political contexts'³⁶⁰.

In terms of state crisis, Skocpol's assessment of Iran is useful. Egypt experienced no external military defeat, nor was it under exceptional external pressure. Despite this the Egyptian case can still be analysed, as was the Iranian one, in terms of structural conditions which produce a state crisis and significant social/political change.

The following sections explain state crisis in terms of external pressures and the contradictions they created, tensions in the elite and the military's motivation to act as it did.

³⁵⁹Skocpol, *Social Revolutions*, 141-142.

³⁶⁰ *Ibid*, 143.

External pressures

This section describes external pressures. The first comes from the US's policy on democracy in the MENA region. An explanation of elections and their function in Egypt is important. According to Blaydes elections in Egypt are a means of distributing state resources to politically influential groups (businessmen, party apparatchik and politically influential classes)³⁶¹. Access to parliamentary seats is valuable because of political and legal immunity that comes with them. The state's relationship with members of the elite is one of clientalistic patronage, the state gives 'membership' in return for support. Blaydes citing Tripp:

“In Egypt, there exists a series of reinforcing political and economic ties between the regime and the elite. Channels of patronage 'filter down' from the president and reinforce a system of rewards and punishments built into the hegemonic party structure”³⁶².

The role of the elite is to provide regimes with stability³⁶³. Elite unity is present when there is consensus on the rules/codes of political participation. The elite should also have a vision or purpose which they agree on. Meisel referred to the three c's, elite consciousness, coherence and conspiracy ('common will to action'). If an elite does not act in a unified manner, it is more a group of 'top persons', than an elite. Cohesiveness is considered to be the primary strength of any elite in classical theories³⁶⁴.

Mubarak and Sadat shifted their support base from the *amma* (public) to the *khassa* (privileged). Considering that Mubarak's regime at the time of the #January25th uprisings was appealing to the elite as its basis of support, tensions in this group could have caused a state crisis.

If 'membership' of a regime (by means of benefits/perks) is an incentive to take part in elections, and if the elite are important for stability, then the manner in which elections are conducted and resources distributed becomes important. Election campaigns are not paid for by the NDP, members of the elite pay for their own campaigns. This makes regular, 'fair'

³⁶¹Blaydes, *Elections and*, 48-49.

³⁶²Lisa Blaydes, 51 citing: Charles Tripp, (2001).

³⁶³Ibid, 49. And Higely and Burton

³⁶⁴Geraint Parry, *Elite Politics*, 32.

elections for elite to compete in important³⁶⁵. Individuals paying for campaigns may feel 'cheated' if elections do not provide a fair arena for competition. Blaydes, citing Young's contends:

“As members of the political elite pursue their careers, conflict over access to state resources has the potential to destroy the incumbent's coalition of support. Thus, equity, particularly the consistent application of norms for distribution of some set of resources or rights, is a condition for social stability”³⁶⁶

And

“Elections allow the regime to manage distributive expectations for Egypt's rent-seeking elite, particularly with the regard to the distribution of power, promotions, rents, access to state resources, and immunity from criminal prosecution for corrupt practices. In this way, elections provide a well-structured environment for elite competition and pre-empt more serious conflict between individuals and groups”³⁶⁷

Egypt's relationship with the US (and IMF), has come with conditionality³⁶⁸. During the Mubarak era, the biggest constraint on executive authority has come from these external donors, and has affected Egyptian foreign and domestic policy³⁶⁹. The decision to amend article 76 of the Egyptian constitution, to show greater electoralisation, as opposed to democratisation, as the latter would weaken the regime³⁷⁰. Democracy in the Middle East is a goal of US foreign policy following the September 11th terrorist attacks. In 2002 a new US aid doctrine was introduced focussing funding on democracy promotion. Blaydes contends that during a meeting in 2004 Bush made it clear to Mubarak that he would have to win the presidency in a multi-candidate election, to show Egypt's commitment to democratisation. To continue benefitting from aid, Mubarak announced amendments to the constitution allowing for multi-candidate elections (only amounting to increased electoralisation)³⁷¹.

³⁶⁵ Remember that elite unity relies on consensus on the rules/ codes of political participation

³⁶⁶ Lisa Blaydes, 49. Citing: Young, (1994).

³⁶⁷ Ibid, 53.

³⁶⁸ Ibid, 192-193.

³⁶⁹ Ibid, 194-196.

³⁷⁰ Ibid, 192. Blaydes contends that more elections do not mean more democracy if they are rigged and the candidate are predominantly from one party. Elections in Egypt were also typically prone to high levels of violence and intimidation to ensure NDP candidates win.

³⁷¹ Ibid, 200-204.

Far from liberalising the political process, the Mubarak regime was 'institutionalising a dominant party succession scenario'³⁷². The new institutional design afforded the NDP more power in elections, and a move away from 'personalist and military influences'³⁷³. Blaydes argues that the US pressure to democratise encouraged the Mubarak regime to adopt a dominant party succession method.³⁷⁴

Blaydes further suggests:

“Once in place, multicandidate elections are unlikely to be rescinded, and, if the ruling party splits over the selection of a nominee, this could create the type of division in the ruling elite that is often the first step in a democratic transition”³⁷⁵.

U.S. pressure has had a significant structural effect. Pushing for greater democratisation has indirectly led to the Mubarak regime to construct electoral institutions which favoured Gamal's succession. As Blaydes demonstrates disagreement over succession within the NDP would cause a split in the elite. A later section discusses Gamal Mubarak's path to succession as leading to tensions within the elite by side stepping elections as a mechanism for elite management.

In terms of other external pressures, regional competition dating back to the Nasser era played a role in establishing contradictions in the old regime. Nasser positioned Egypt to be a regional leader, while at the same time competing with Saudi Arabia, the U.S. and Israel. Against this backdrop Nasser 'modernised' and reformed Egypt. Rather than form an alliance with the West to prevent Soviet influence/hegemony he believed development was key. Heikal contends: “Nasser felt that the answer to communist infiltration did not lie in joining Western sponsored alliances with their imperialist overtones but rather in promoting internal economic and social development”³⁷⁶.

³⁷² Ibid, 205.

³⁷³ Ibid, 206.

³⁷⁴ Ibid, 207.

³⁷⁵ Ibid, 209. Citing Adam Przeworski, (1991). While this paper has refuted the usefulness of democratisation in understanding events in question it does recognise that the value when discussing elite politics, especially in terms of understanding where elite tension emanates from. This said the structural basis of elite politics is often ignored by democratisation, which this paper attempts to provide by locating elite tensions in the broader context/situation of state crisis.

³⁷⁶ Mohamed Hassanein Heikal, “Egyptian Foreign Policy,” *Foreign Affairs*, 56:4 (1978): 720.

Reforms to education and the institution of a vast welfare system are good examples of these development projects. These policies created the large educated but unemployed youth, and established subsidies for basic consumer goods which would prove problematic to remove. These led to long term structural impact when Sadat and Mubarak tried to move towards more neoliberal policies and from the public to the elite as a basis of support.

The relationship between US aid the Egyptian military has been established. Egypt receives \$1.3 billion annually and its military is a major benefactor of this³⁷⁷. Aid, in conjunction with the role the military plays in the economy already, strengthens its position in society. It also increases the stakes, making the military's economic interests that much more valuable³⁷⁸.

Break in the elite: succession crisis

The previous section demonstrated external pressures contributing to state crisis. It suggested that circumvention of election norms may have lead to conflict in the elite. It also contended if the choice of successor was unpopular it could cause tension in the elite. This section explores this argument in more detail.

Egyptian leaders traditionally come from military backgrounds, Gamal Mubarak does not. Before his entrance into politics, he had a lucrative career working for Bank of America (BofA) where it is claimed he used his position as the president's son to illicit unfair profits³⁷⁹. In the mid 1990's Gamal left his position at BofA and returned to Cairo from London, in 1996³⁸⁰, opening the equity firm, MedInvest Associates³⁸¹.

As Hosni Mubarak's age became noticeable in the late 1990's, conjecture about succession picked up momentum. Mubarak never tipped a successor³⁸²; there was no vice-president as he wanted to avoid competition³⁸³. Two candidates were likely, General Omar Suleiman, the

³⁷⁷ Zoltan Barany, "The Role of the Military," *Journal of Democracy*, 22:4 (2011): 28.

³⁷⁸ Ibid, 28.

³⁷⁹ Cook, *The Struggle*, 170-171.

³⁸⁰ Mohammed Zahid, *The Muslim Brotherhood and Egypt's Succession Crisis: The Politics of Liberalisation and Reform in the Middle East*, (New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2010), 130.

³⁸¹ Cook, *The Struggle*, 171.

³⁸² This was one of the features which Goldstone mentions as a weakness in sultanistic regimes which make them weak and prone to political instability.

³⁸³ Ibid, 202.

chief of the General Intelligence Directorate, at the centre of military succession scenarios and Gamal Mubarak³⁸⁴. Mubarak's son, Gamal, was considered to have the edge over Suleiman. It was rumoured Gamal was being positioned to take over as president. When Article 76 of the constitution was changed again in 2007, speculation was that changes had been tailored to allow for Gamal's nomination³⁸⁵.

Gamal was packaged as a champion of the youth. The creation of the Future Generation Foundation was what initially gave rise to the idea he was being groomed for succession, it was suspected it had been created as a platform³⁸⁶. In 2000 he joined the NDP General Secretariat, and in 2002 became the head of its Policy Secretariat, the centre of decision making power. While the Secretariat had 200 members, power was wielded by a small circle close to Gamal. He positioned himself to be viewed as a reformer, of both the party and economy. Within months of taking the new position, Gamal was rumoured to be more powerful, than the Prime Minister. Gamal and his circle were taking control of the reins of power and sidelining the old guard³⁸⁷.

From 2004 Gamal went on a number of trips to the US meeting with the Bush administration, on a level beyond his position if the notion of being groomed for succession was removed. Domestically there were efforts to develop an image of a statesman. He travelled around Egypt on 'thinly veiled political campaigns', often being received by a crowd manufactured by the NDP³⁸⁸.

Gamal surrounded himself with well educated, successful elites. There was a sense that some members enjoyed the power and influence they did because of their ties to Gamal. Cook highlights Hossam Badrawi, who was closely associated with Gamal, and despite his loss of a People's Assembly seat to an 'old guard' elite, he retained positions of power and influence in the Shura Council. Similarly Mohammed Kamal, 'burst onto the Egyptian political scene' in 2004 also as a result of his association with Gamal. He was a key member of Gamal's elite

³⁸⁴ Ibid, 204-205.

³⁸⁵ Ibid, 202.

³⁸⁶ Zahid, *The Muslim*, 130-131.

³⁸⁷ Ibid, 131.

³⁸⁸ Cook, *The Struggle*, 203.

calling for 'European' style economic and political reform³⁸⁹. This occurred in the context of Gamal's repeated calls for 'new faces' as part of reform efforts³⁹⁰.

These new elites circumvented regularised routes to power, through elections. They enjoyed the benefits of power through their personal connections to Gamal, flouting the norms established to distribute resources and power through elections. Even when members of his elite lost elections in the People's Assembly, they still held onto power and prestige that other members of the old guard had to pay for. Apart from sidelining the old elite, there was a sense that those associated with Gamal's path to succession came to their positions with disregard to the mechanisms established by the regime for elite power and resource management³⁹¹.

Members of the 'old guard' NDP elite were also concerned by the liberalisations, specifically the move to a floating exchange rate, which they believed would have negative social impacts³⁹². They were correct, floating the currency led to a bread shortage and demonstrated how deeply unpopular Gamal's reforms were. This emphasis on neo-liberal economic policies was an example of 'transnational events' – the world capitalist market shaping the new generation of elites and their beliefs. It also is an example of how the elite had differing visions of their role and the future of the country. Gamal and his circle aimed for economic reform, while the old-guard focussed on maintaining social stability. This difference would make unity difficult³⁹³.

Hosni Mubarak made sure that his son's newly found power in Egyptian politics was assured. In 2004 he reshuffled the cabinet in his son's favour. The cabinet, previously dominated by the old-guard, was now 'studded' with young, Western educated individuals³⁹⁴ demonstrating power distribution through connection to Gamal.

³⁸⁹ Ibid, 172-173.

³⁹⁰ Zahid, *The Muslim*, 133.

³⁹¹ Chapter 2 established the importance of regularised rules and codes of participation for elite unity which the elite surrounding Mubarak seemed to disregard.

³⁹² Cook, *The Struggles*, 177.

³⁹³ In chapter 2 it was established that elites must believe in their right to rule, and have a common vision of the future in order to justify their rule.

³⁹⁴ Zahid, *The Muslim*, 135.

Opposition to Gamal as successor began when Dr Saad Eddin Ibrahim, who had taught Gamal and the first lady, began asking whether succession was reasonable in the context of the rhetoric about a transition to democracy. He was arrested in mid 2000 and served time in prison. Similarly Ayman Nour and his political party also challenged the regime and the legitimacy of a succession scenario. He was also sent to prison in 2005³⁹⁵. He argued that Gamal had become so powerful in his position that he was 'effectively running the country by proxy'³⁹⁶.

There was also general opposition succession. Bloggers chronicled protests against a Gamal succession in 2004. This sparked a larger response in the blogosphere, as commentary and documentation of the brutal and predatory nature of the state flooded the web³⁹⁷. Beyond opposition in the 'blogosphere' there were a number of protests organised by organisations like Kefaya, specifically to highlight the issue of hereditary rule³⁹⁸. Protests against the succession of Gamal were held in late 2010³⁹⁹.

The media, especially newspapers, have been incredibly critical of Gamal. Many suggested that Mubarak had framed Gamal as the only alternative to the Muslim Brotherhood when dealing with the US⁴⁰⁰. A succession scenario involving Gamal Mubarak was deeply unpopular with the Muslim Brotherhood, student movements, secular opposition movements and significantly elements within the military and the security forces⁴⁰¹. The military had since the Sadat era been uninvolved in politics. They did however have increasing interests in the economy with everything from agri-business to house wares, and benefitted from US aid.

The military as final guarantor

How has the regime maintained its power vis-a-vis the frustrated and angry population?

³⁹⁵ Cook, *The Struggle*, 195.

³⁹⁶ Zahid, *The Muslim*, 137-138.

³⁹⁷ Cook, *The Struggle*, 194-195.

³⁹⁸ Samer Shehata, "The Gamal Mubarak Paradox," *Carnegie Endowment for International Peace*, August 18th 2008, accessed August 21st 2012, carnegieendowment.org/publications/index.cfm?fa=view&id=20848

³⁹⁹ The Gulf Daily News, "Protesters Beaten Up," *The Gulf Daily News*, September 22nd 2010, accessed August 21st 2012, www.gulf-daily-news.com/NewsDetails.aspx?storyid=287581

³⁹⁹ IOL News, "Egyptian's Slam Hereditary Rule," *IOL News*, September 22nd 2010, accessed August 21st 2012, www.iol.co.za/news/africa/egyptians-slam-hereditary-rule-1.680773#.UHKAgbTMi0w

⁴⁰⁰ Shehata, "The Gamal"

⁴⁰¹ Ibid

Power in Egypt is mainly maintained by repression and co-option. The Ministry of the Interior had 'hundreds of thousands of special police and security agents'⁴⁰². Even though coercive force used against journalists and activists, has not always muted opposition, other methods have proven successful. Co-option has been used with success⁴⁰³.

'Low intensity democracy' kept a lid on a nation experiencing an ever increasing inequality gap. In 1991 the poorest 10% of the population had access to 3.9% of the country's income; ten years later the same group had access to 3.7%. In that same period Egypt's richest 20% had gained from 26.7% to 29.5% of national income⁴⁰⁴. Class relations in Egypt have changed drastically over the Mubarak years. The widening gap between rich and poor is symptomatic of clientalistic relationships between the state and upper/business classes, while withdrawing from the arena of social service provision⁴⁰⁵. This is important in terms of Skocpol's contention that relevant tensions in society are between the dominant and producing class, and the state and the dominant class. In Egypt it is clear that both tensions existed⁴⁰⁶.

In terms of legitimacy, rather than considering elections in Egypt as a means of gaining legitimacy, one can consider them a tool to manage a state's domestic elite⁴⁰⁷. Skocpol's view of legitimacy, that it is not as powerful an explanatory variable when looking at causes of state crises, fits well with the view of elections. Legitimacy is important for politically powerful groups, the loss of it is not, *if* said group has the means to remain in power by coercive force. Basic causes of revolutionary situations can be found in the structure and capacity of the state. This reasserts the idea of 'old regime' contradictions. This places legitimacy in the position of intervening variable. It is still important in this analysis, but not in terms of the creation of a state crisis⁴⁰⁸. What is important is the ability to coerce.

⁴⁰² Marfleet, "State and," 27.

⁴⁰³ Cook, *The Struggle*, 198-199.

⁴⁰⁴ Marfleet, "State and," 17. quoting World Bank figures

⁴⁰⁵ *Ibid*, 17-19.

⁴⁰⁶ This tension would be captured by a concept like relative deprivation. However this agency based approach does not include an emphasis on other structural factors, i.e. what turns a relevant tension in society into a state crisis.

⁴⁰⁷ Blaydes, *Elections and*, 48.

⁴⁰⁸ As established in this paper, the Mubarak regime has long been suffering a crisis of legitimacy. This is an important factor. The tensions that existed between the elite, specifically the regime and the military, would never have led to the military forcing Mubarak from power had there not been pressure from the #January25th movement. But without the state crisis/break in elites, it is questionable if the movement would have succeeded in unseating Mubarak.

Cook argues that the strength of a state can be thought about in terms of the ability to 'elicit the compliance of their citizens'. He suggests that normative appeals (such as the 'American dream'), patronage and finally coercion can be used to elicit compliance. In Egypt, normative appeals have failed. This leaves the use of bribery and coercion to ensure social cohesion. Egypt's resources are finite and the Mubarak regime has used patronage in order to ensure the support of the elite. The rest of society has been forced to comply with the threat and use of coercive force⁴⁰⁹.

The power to keep Mubarak in office was in the hands of the military. Why did they choose not to support the regime? The position of the military during the first two and a half weeks of the unrest in early 2011 was mostly unclear at the time. During this period Barany argues that the military was hedging its bets, trying to secure its position with the ruling government while not openly moving against demonstrators⁴¹⁰.

By February 2nd, Mubarak had attempted to use coercive force against demonstrators, in the form of pro-regime thugs; a key turning point was reached with soldiers moving to the side of the protesters. Promised concessions, and attempts at repression by Mubarak had both failed to break up protests. In this context the military believed that escalating violence on their part would only decrease their legitimacy and influence in the situation⁴¹¹. On the 10th of February a reluctant SCAF took over control of the country, and the next day convinced Hosni Mubarak to leave power⁴¹².

Explaining the military's decision not to support the regime

The dislike of Gamal Mubarak and his succession is one reason the military did not support Mubarak. Mistrust was based on the fact that Gamal had the interests of himself and the young business elite he associated with as his top priority. Other reasons that Barany gives for the military not supporting Mubarak include: the alienation of Egypt's youth (by his policies), the possibility of encouraging Islamic radicalism as an alternative, stagnating economy, resentment at the favour and largesse of the security forces in relation to the

⁴⁰⁹ Cook, *The Struggle*, 269.

⁴¹⁰ Barany, "The Role," 27-28.

⁴¹¹ Ibid, 28.

⁴¹² Ibid, 28.

military and finally as a conscript army the actual soldiers in the military, who would have had to fire on protesters, had many close ties to society⁴¹³.

Albrecht and Bishara maintain that even though the military had been absent from politics it was *the* critical backbone of the regime. This was in the sense that the ultimate coercive force available to the regime was the military. It also importantly acted as a recruitment pool for the bureaucracy and cabinet in the past. Significantly, the military has vast economic interests⁴¹⁴.

The military was deployed on the 28th of January after security forces were withdrawn in the wake of bloody street battles with protesters. The security forces had, according to Albrecht and Bishara suffered an 'internal meltdown', in the wake of the torching of the NDP offices in Cairo⁴¹⁵. This is significant because security services in Egypt had become the main administrative arm of the state, conducting a number of important administrative tasks⁴¹⁶. Their breakdown thus signified the collapse of administrative and coercive force of the state, both central to Skocpol's conception of state power.

Following this on the 31st of January, the military stated they supported the legitimate demands of the protesters. However it was only by the 10th of February the SCAF Generals met without the president. According to Albrecht and Bishara this signals that they were reluctant to oust Mubarak from office until their choices were narrowed substantially⁴¹⁷.

February 10th and 11th marked the days the military took over the political institutions of Egypt and pushed Mubarak from office. A central question in the Egyptian case is why did the military become involved in politics when it was apparent they were reluctant to do so? Why not choose to support the regime?

⁴¹³ Ibid, 28. As demonstrated in chapter 4 the Egyptian military were cautious when it came to intervening in protests when they believed their public image would be marred.

⁴¹⁴ Holgar Albrecht and Dina Bishara, "Back on Horseback: The Military and Political Transformation in Egypt," *Middle East Law and Governance*, 3:1-2 (2011): 13-14.

⁴¹⁵ Ibid, 15-16.

⁴¹⁶ El-Ghobashy, "The Praxis" This meltdown may well have been as a result of tensions in the elite becoming exacerbated by the protests and in light of the NDP offices being targeted.

⁴¹⁷ Albrecht and Bishara, "Back on," 15-16.

Factors have been mentioned explaining why the military may have been reluctant to support Mubarak. Yet they appeared reluctant to push him from power. The use of some theory of how the military acts in politics is useful. Albrecht and Bishara use Finer's framework which includes looking at opportunity and disposition in order to explain military intervention. They argue that the military initially had strong opportunity to displace the regime but their disposition to intervene was low. This disposition changed over the course of events and explains why it took so long for them to change from a defensive position to one of intervention⁴¹⁸.

The military had, until the 10th of February 2011, very little interest in being involved in politics, largely because they had maintained a mostly positive relationship with the population since the 1973 battle with Israel. Chapter 4 demonstrated the importance of positive public perception to the military. They also had secure economic interests, and the ability to influence politics as they were in control of coercive force, and had traditionally, been a pool from which powerful members of elite were drawn. Thus their main imperative was to maintain their position in society⁴¹⁹.

Albrecht and Bishara argue that the relationship between the military and regime had been strained for some time over Gamal's succession and reform policies. The military preferred the economic policies of the Nasser era, namely etatism⁴²⁰. They also disliked the 'crony capitalism' which was developing as a result of neo-liberal policies⁴²¹.

Between the 28th of January and the 10th of February, Albrecht and Bishara argue that the military's perception changed. They began to see themselves as servants of the state, and not the Mubarak regime⁴²². As the regime and its institutions were crumbling, and with them the favourable position of the military, a choice about whom to support became apparent. Rage at Mubarak's refusal to step down on February 10th had led to a march by protesters to the Presidential palace⁴²³. This put the military in a position where it would directly have to choose between the regime and protesters, especially if demonstrators tried to gain access. The military could continue to support the regime, whose institutions were in shambles, and

⁴¹⁸ Ibid, 17.

⁴¹⁹ Ibid, 18.

⁴²⁰ Demonstrating again the importance of a unified vision for the elite.

⁴²¹ Ibid, 18.

⁴²² Ibid, 18-19.

⁴²³ Discussed in the narrative of events in chapter 1.

with which it had existing tensions. This would come at a cost, as it enjoyed a positive relationship with the public. Or it could increase its disposition to take control of the political institutions of state itself and protect its interests.

Complementary to Finer's framework is Alfred Stepan's explanation of how the military becomes a 'director' instead of a 'moderator' in a country's political system⁴²⁴. Stepan describes how the military in Brazil became involved as a 'director' of the political system as a result of 'the atmosphere of crisis that dominated Brazil from 1962 to 1964'. Certain 'trends' regarding the regime's capacity and ability within the political system led to a sense of structural crisis⁴²⁵. Stepan argues the 'civil-military' relationship in Brazil changed as a result of the perception of the capability of the regime to meet the demands it was faced with in the context of the declining legitimacy⁴²⁶. The military became a 'director' in the political system, as opposed to a 'moderator', when it became apparent the regime was no longer able to meet the challenges it faced. This fits in with Finer's analysis, the military in Egypt had the opportunity to take control of the political system on the 28th of January, yet it waited until the 10th to do so. Its disposition to do so progressed as it became increasingly apparent that the regime could not meet the challenges it was facing, and was facing a crisis of legitimacy⁴²⁷.

A further argument by Stepan could also explain the military's actions. The military in Brazil felt threatened as an institution and was hostile towards 'mobilisation politics', which threatened its situational integrity. This perceived threat eroded its position as moderator⁴²⁸. Stepan views the military in a similar fashion as he would a political institution, subject to similar pressures from society⁴²⁹. If we think of the military in Egypt in this sense it is reasonable to argue that the Egyptian military intervened when it felt the situation had

⁴²⁴ Alfred Stepan, *The Military in Politics: Changing Patterns in Brazil*, Princeton, (New Jersey: Princeton University Press, 1971), 134.

⁴²⁴ Important to note, is that Stepan is describing the circumstances under which the Brazilian military took control of the state in 1964. This paper does not argue that the situations are similar enough for his entire argument to be useful. However broad themes of his framework do lend greater understanding of the military's position in Egypt in the case under consideration. Thus while the structural contradictions/problems differ there is still value in looking at what Stepan considers the reasoning and motivation behind the Brazilian military's decision to become 'director' instead of 'moderator' of the political system

⁴²⁵ Ibid, 135.

⁴²⁶ Ibid, 152.

⁴²⁷ Legitimacy is important as an intervening variable; however it is not an important factor in the creation of a state crisis.

⁴²⁸ Ibid, 155.

⁴²⁹ Ibid, 8.

deteriorated to point that it was threatening its own institutional survival and autonomy. The Egyptian military may have been hostile towards the Mubarak regime's alienation of it in picking Gamal, a non-military member as a successor. The military was also hostile toward the regime's new economic policies. Finally, where the Egyptian military had been a pool from which the regime picked its leaders and bureaucrats, the Mubarak family was increasingly interpersonalising power. Instead of drawing from the military pool for top positions in the elite, the Mubaraks were increasingly drawing on Gamal's circle of influence to fill top positions. This may have threatened the military institution in terms of its importance and centrality in the political system. This fits well with Goldstones contention, in Chapter 5 that Arab leaders were extending their own power at the risk of official institutions and that this was a cause of their overthrow.

'Urban uprising': a crisis from below

According to the structural approach we know peasant insurrections are viable because they coincide with and take advantage of lack of government control, resulting from political crisis.⁴³⁰ Skocpol's analysis of the Iranian revolution in terms of its insurrection by mainly urban masses focuses on the factors which create solidarity and allow co-ordination.

Important for a structural approach is 'what transforms the peasantry, into a collective force capable of striking out against its oppressors'. In this regard 'internal leverage', the capacity for organised protests, is important. This is influenced by solidarity and the ability to escape coercive control of the state⁴³¹. In terms of the #January25 movement, we can look at the role played by organisations such as the Muslim Brotherhood, which we have established has an existing network of communication, organisation and social service provision networks that were important during the uprising.

In terms of establishing solidarity and co-ordination, it has been established how the #January25th movement grew out of waves of protests beginning in 2000. These waves included increasingly more activists, politicians and concerned citizens. They eventually included workers who then linked their grievances to the regime. The April 6th Movement,

⁴³⁰ It is again important to note that it is not necessary to make the assumption that there has been a social revolution in order to use the framework to look at state crisis in Skocpol's structural approach.

⁴³¹ Skocpol, *States and*, 114-115.

symbolised increasing solidarity between activists and labour movements. As mentioned, towards the latter half of the #January25th demonstrations there were rolling strikes in support of the protests happening all over the country.

More broadly, in terms of co-ordination and solidarity, social media connected and organised an otherwise fractured movement. The inclusion of Facebook and Twitter were central in the ability firstly of activists to create a shared identity in terms of victimisation by the state. The best example is the creation and impact of the 'We are all Khaled Said' Facebook page. Secondly, social media, specifically Twitter, made co-ordination not only widely possible but more efficient. Skocpol states any structural approach should make reference to *world historic developments*⁴³². The advent of the internet, but also social media as an externality of it, is possibly the most important world historic development for the case in question. It is important because it opens up a means for citizens, whether in rural or urban settings, to communicate and co-ordinate. Other 'breakthrough' moments were the release of Wael Ghonim and the creation of the 'We are all Khaled Said' Facebook page as well as Google's Speak2Tweet creation, which allowed protesters to use Twitter despite government communication blackouts.

Finally, it is important to consider how protesters overcame state repression which has successfully been used in the past. As mentioned in Chapter 4 there have been widespread instances of uprising in the past, for example the bread riots and security services uprising, however in both of these cases the military, after negotiation with the regime, stepped in to restore order. The structural approach emphasises the ability of the peasants to protest or rebel without coercive force being used against them. The Mubarak regime certainly did use its security forces and hired thugs against its citizen's, but was unable to use the military. Cook asserts that once the use of hired thugs on the 2nd and 3rd of February failed, in the wake of the meltdown of police and intelligence forces, that the only thing which would have saved the regime would have been a crackdown on the protestors by the military⁴³³.

⁴³² Ibid, 10.

⁴³³ Cook, *The Struggle*, 296.

Conclusion

This paper asked: *how does the structuralist approach explain the fall of Mubarak, including the role of the military in contributing to this outcome?* A secondary question was: *How did the #January25 Movement come to be and sustain itself throughout the abovementioned time period?* Central to answering these was understanding why the military did not step in to help Mubarak maintain power and how the #January25th movement was able to co-ordinate and sustain itself. In the context of moving away from the narrow focus of the democratisation literature, this paper chose to use a structural approach based on Skocpol's work. This structural approach was useful for analysing significant social change, and provided as Valbjørn and Bank put it, new wine in old bottles. It required that three main principles be taken into account. Firstly that states were thought of as administrative/coercive organisations which were possibly autonomous from dominant classes. Secondly a focus on non-voluntarist and structural explanations of causes and processes was required. Finally international structures and historic developments should also be taken into account. Classic elite theory has also been discussed, specifically the notion of unity. This was done to better understand elite dynamics and what may lead to tensions or breaks in the elite, and thus state crisis.

The aim of chapters 3 and 4 was to provide the contextual background needed to achieve this. Chapter 3 focussed on the political narrative focussing on the formation of the state and its domestic and international relationships. It established how and when policies, which would later become contradictory, were initiated and why. Chapter 4 looked at Egypt's opposition, including social protest movements since 2000 and the Muslim Brotherhood.

Chapter 5 investigated literature on the Arab Spring with a focus on highlighting factors which were considered causal, or in some way significant. There were a number of factors which could be considered structural, including the view that Egypt was a 'sultanistic' regime – which had inherent weaknesses because of methods employed to stay in power. There was also the view that the military's relationship with regime was strained over the issue of succession, particularly that it disliked Gamal Mubarak as successor. These factors contribute to the understanding of how state crisis formed. It also discussed factors which could be considered agency based, such as anger at the regime over emergency laws, police brutality, corruption etc. These are indeed valuable in an analysis of what has caused such wide-spread grievance in Egypt and help explain motivation for participation in urban uprising.

This final chapter has used the contextual background in chapter from chapters 3, 4 and the factors mentioned in chapter 5 to apply the framework described in chapter 2. It finds firstly that external pressure may have played a role in establishing contradictions in the Mubarak regime. Regional competition in the Nasser era led to grand development programmes including universal tertiary education and numerous subsidies which became fiscally unsound, but politically impossible to remove. USAID strengthened the position of the military, making it a more powerful player in the state.

U.S. pressure to democratise led perversely to greater electoralisation. This led to a situation where Gamal Mubarak was being groomed for succession through multi-candidate elections. Once in place they were unlikely to be rescinded, and the choice of who would succeed was likely to have cause tension in the elite. As has been demonstrated the military in particular was unhappy with the choice of Gamal. A number of authors mention this as the reason they did not intercede to help Hosni Mubarak remain in power. Related to Gamal's rise as successor was the possible resentment felt by the old guard elite. Gamal's close circle of associates rose to power outside the established system of elections as a means of resource distribution by the state to the elite.

The Military's decision not to act in favour of Mubarak was also explored in more detail. This paper argued that although the military had the opportunity to take over from the 28th of January they only did so later on the 10th and 11th when their disposition to increased. This happened when their choices were narrowed by Mubarak's refusal to step down, paired with the demonstrators marching on the presidential palace. Putting the military in a situation where they would inevitably have to choose, if the protesters began scaling the walls for example. Alfred Stepan's work was also used. He argues that the military moves from moderator to director of politics when it appears that the regime is no longer capable of meeting the challenges it faces, and there is an 'air' of structural crisis. He further argues that the military will step in to maintain its institutional integrity. As was argued above the security services had crumbled by the 28th of January, they were the main coercive and administrative arm of the state (importantly the structural approach views the power of the state as coming from its coercive and administrative capacity). Furthermore, it has been suggested that Mubarak was cementing his family's power at the expense of official

institutions. If the military as an institution with significant interests to protect, felt threatened by this, they would be less likely to intervene on his behalf.

In terms of elite unity common values, interests and a shared vision are important. The Mubarak regime and the military increasingly displayed diverging values (views on economic policy) and interests (as the military was 'sidelined'). Furthermore norms and rules of resource distribution, by means of elections, were increasingly being sidelined by personal relations to Gamal Mubarak. Both these factors potentially led to a break in the elite, and contributed to state crisis.

Finally this chapter discussed how an urban insurrection from below was possible. The #January25th movement was ultimately successful because it was able to take advantage of the state crisis and the lack of coercive control. The structural approach views wide-spread collective action as an important factor, influenced by solidarity. Chapter 4 established how waves of protest since 2000 have involved increasingly more activists and sectors of society, putting aside differences and uniting with the purpose of removing Mubarak from power. The #January25th movement also benefited from networks of social provision provided by the Muslim Brotherhood and the coordination and common identity made possible by social media.

It is clear that the structural approach together with insights from classic elite theory have been useful in addressing the questions raised by this paper. Mubarak, a seemingly strong leader was vulnerable as a result of contradictions in his regime, which among others included alienating the military by grooming his son for succession, which helps explain why they did not support him. It also explains why the #January25th movement was sustained and successful, significantly in terms of its ability to collectively organise using social media and established networks of solidarity built over a decade of 'protest waves'. It also looks at the impact of 'breakthrough' moments on the movement like the advent of social media, the release of Wael and the invention of 'Speak2Tweet'. Ultimately a structural framework allows for an understanding of events which is historical and contextual both in terms of domestic dynamics and international influences. It suggests that just like Agrarian Bureaucracies, Sultanistic Dictatorships maybe be vulnerable to significant social change.

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