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**CAN EGYPT BE DEMOCRATIZED?**

Bachelor's Thesis

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## **ABBREVIATIONS**

ASU = Arab Social Union

EU = European Union

GDP = Gross Domestic Product

MB = Muslim Brotherhood

NDP = National Democratic Party of Egypt

SCAF = 'Supreme Council of the Armed Forces' in Egypt

USD = United States Dollar

WB = World Bank

WVS = World Value Surveys

## **ABSTRACT**

Despite the nominal democracy established in Egypt in 1956, the country has not been able to achieve stable democratic structures. The short democratic experiment following the 2011 uprising ended by the military re-gaining power inside Egypt, plunging Egypt back into authoritarianism. Research on democratic transitions and consolidation of democracy has led to the formation of various hypotheses on intrastate tendencies influencing to the process of democratization. This thesis examines factors behind Egypt's failure to democratize. Four theories of democratization are applied to the case of Egypt by using of historical research. Different hypotheses are derived based on these theories and checked against the historical developments of Egypt to determine which ones can be applied to Egypt. This research concludes that various external and internal factors have led to Egypt's failure to democratize. These were geostrategic reasons of foreign states that consolidated authoritarian rule, heterogeneous middle class, low income inequality and elite that derived its wealth from the control of the public resources. This thesis concludes that reasons can be overcome, and they are not inherent.

Keywords: Autocracy, Civic Culture, Democratization, Egypt, Income Inequality, Islam, Military

## INTRODUCTION

Democracy is considered to be the best way of forming a government in the West. For example, the United States and European Union are spending large amounts of money to promote democratic development abroad. Since 1945, the number of democratic states has been rapidly increasing, but also some visible failures has occurred. This thesis relates to the comprehensive discussion about the requisites for successful democratization and what can explain failures to democratize. The conditions for successful democratization will be investigated by means of a case study of Egypt. Democratization problems in Egypt are an important choice of topic for various reasons. Egypt is a geopolitically strategic nation with a large regional influence that could function as an example of democratic development. Also, the increasing instability in the Middle East is a global problem that needs great attention. Democracy could work as a stabilizing force in the Middle Eastern region.

Egypt became independent in 1922, but from the creation of an independent Egypt until the time Gamal Abdel Nasser took power in 1956, the country is best described using the term constitutional monarchy. Power was extremely concentrated in the hands of military aristocracy, meaning the democratic quality of Egypt's regime was weak. During the regimes of Gamal Abdel Nasser (1956-1970), Anwar Al-Sadat (1970-1981), and Hosni Mubarak (1981-2011) Egypt was ruled by the military elite. In practice, this means that the Armed Forces governed the country despite the changes in the Presidency. The 2011 revolution in Egypt was the first uprising against the government inspired by ideas of better governance and civil liberties. Following the uprising, the Muslim Brotherhood backed Mohammad Al-Morsi won the first-ever democratic elections in Egypt's history. Nevertheless, the democratic development did not continue for long — in 2013 Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi's military coup d'état removed Morsi from power, re-constituting military-authoritarian reign in Egypt. After Sisi's coup d'état and deposition of Morsi he was — amongst several senior leaders of Muslim Brotherhood - prosecuted for fraud and conspiracy. Shortly after the removal of Morsi, Al-Sisi installed Adly Mansour as provisional president. Several months later, on 26 of March

2015, Al-Sisi resigned from his former post as the leader of the armed forces and announced that he would run as a candidate in the next presidential elections in Egypt. On 3 of June Sisi (gaining 96% of the vote according to the official sources) was declared the winner of the elections. The validity of 2014 elections has been questioned both by Egypt's opposition and international observers who considered the elections to have been rigged. The Presidential Elections Observation Report stated the elections to be characterized by a 'climate of oppression, self-censorship, and fear' (2014, 34).

As this short historical overview demonstrates, the entire history of modern Egypt has been marked by revolutionary changes from an authoritarian government to another. Egypt has never been able to establish stable and durable democratic government structures. Egypt has been a democracy in name only during the past 70 years, and a severe lack of commitment to the actual establishment of democratic structures continues to prevail among Egypt's governing elite. Assaults on universal human rights and basic civil liberties are ubiquitous. For example, extensive public sector corruption originating from the concentration of presidential power, lack of execution of civil liberties as well as government accountability and nepotism continue to trouble Egypt. Regardless of several attempts to establish a democratic regime in Egypt, all the legal reforms have been diagnosed as suffering from 'very large' and growing divergence between the country's de facto laws and their execution (Global Integrity Report 2010).

Democracy guarantees an equal framework for the citizen of a state, by enabling the rule of law, accountability of leadership and elections. In the context of this paper, the term 'democracy' will be defined according to the concept of liberal democracy, more precisely according to Robert Dahl's definition of 'polyarchy'. Dahl considers democracy as an ideal-type of a political system, whereupon he uses the term 'polyarchy' to refer to existing democracies. Dahl argues that modern democracies should be referred as polyarchies, since the practical execution of democracy is never fully corresponding to the theoretical model examples of democracy. According to Dahl polyarchies are defined by the following characteristics: "(1) Control over government decisions is constitutionally vested in elected officials (2) Elected officials are chosen in free, fair and frequent elections (3) Practically all adults have the right to vote in elections (4) The most adults have the right to run for elective offices (5) Citizens have the right to express themselves freely on political matters (6) Alternative sources of information are freely and legally available (7) Everyone has the right

to form parties, pressure groups and other associations independent of the state” (Dahl 1989, 233). Democracy thus manifests itself at multiple levels of society, and democracy as a research area is fundamental to modern political science research.

Problems of finding a consensus amongst different approaches to measuring democracy have been apparent. In the context of this paper, the measurements of the democratic quality of Egypt’s regimes are mainly derived from Freedom House’s Comparative Survey that rates countries by their political rights and civil liberties. The Survey utilizes checklists for political rights and civil liberties to assist in determining the degree of freedom present in each country and to categorize further those countries in a comparative manner. The Survey rates political rights and civil liberties individually on a seven category scale, where 1 represents the freest and 7 the least free.

To investigate the reasons behind the democratization failures in Egypt, it is essential to incorporate several theoretical perspectives. These are the theories of modernization, income inequality, elites wealth, and civic culture. The methodology is to derive various hypotheses from these theories, and to scrutinize them against the historical developments of Egypt. This research aims to discover the principal reasons for Egypt's failure to democratize and as such hope to contribute to the debate about the driving factors of democratization. The main causal factors identified by the theories mentioned above are the following. That absence of relatively heterogeneous middle class that could demand democratization, fairly low income inequality leading to weak popular demand for democracy, elite’s wealth that is derived from the control of public resources with the result that the costs of democracy are intolerably high for the governing elite, and foreign support of autocracy mainly driven by geostrategic reasons. The 2011 revolution aiming to establish democratic structures inside of the country can be mainly attributed to the increased awareness of political and social conditions within the country, ascension of the Muslim Brotherhood as the leading force behind the uprising and the revolution in Tunis as a triggering factor. The main research question will be as follows: “*Can Egypt be democratized?*”. The conclusion will be, that the position of the elite and foreign influence are the main factors that have hampered democratic development in Egypt. Nevertheless, these problems are not inherent and can be overcome. Thus, Egypt can be democratized.

# **1. HISTORICAL OVERVIEW**

## **1.1. Egypt between 1922 and 1952**

A new phase in Egypt's history commenced when it became independent from Great Britain during the 1919 revolution. Britain unilaterally declared Egypt to be independent in 1922, but it was only in 1952 when Britain ultimately recognized Egypt's sovereignty over Sudan. From 1922 until 1952, Egypt was officially a kingdom, and the British dominance in the area continued. Shortly after independence in 1923, a constitution establishing Egypt as a parliamentary monarchy was adopted, and elections were held in the following year. The victor party of the parliamentary elections committed to forming a constitutional government, but King Fuad I instinctively inclined to absolute royal powers. Nevertheless, between 1922-1952 ten general elections were held (Encyclopedia of Islam, 29). The revolution of 1952 ended the multi-party arrangement, which included the minority groups to politics as well. Opposition got its largest election victory (29.2%) in the last elections before the Free Officers Movement dethroned the monarchy (Quandt 1988, 75). During these years the democratic quality of the rule in Egypt was feeble despite the less restricted electoral system-wealth and power were concentrated in the royal ruling elite.

After World War II, anti-British turmoil in Egypt increased, and the relaxation of wartime restrictions led to heightened resentment towards the persistent presence of British troops in Egypt. The assassination of Egyptian Prime Minister Nokrashi Pasha and the chief of the Cairo City Police, perpetuated by the Muslim Brotherhood, further increased these tensions. Increased violence against the British forces and several riots further deteriorated the situation. On 22 July 1952 the "Free Officers Movement" led by Gamal Abdel Nasser and Muhammad Naguib overthrew the previous regime in a bloodless revolution.

## **1.2. Gamal Abdel Nasser's government (1956-1970)**

The 1952 revolution that paved Nasser's way to power was mainly based on the desire to end permanently the British colonial rule in Egypt, and not based on citizens aspirations for the creation of democratic regime. Following the revolution, a brief experiment with the civilian rule was carried out but in 1953 the Free Officers Movement overturned the former constitution and created the Republic of Egypt on 18 June 1953 (formalized with a new constitution in 1956). Nasser was elected President of Egypt on 23 June 1956 while being the only presidential candidate standing in the elections. Nasser replaced the former Turco-dominated aristocracy, at least theoretically representing the will of ordinary Egyptians. His support was mainly based on Arab nationalism, aiming to reunite all Arab people and to restore the dignity of Egypt after colonial rule.

The accession of Nasser was denoted by strong suppression of opposition forces within multiple levels: the armed forces, regional and municipal councils, the press, and amongst the political elite. After the elections, Nasser wanted to ensure a tight grip over Egypt, which meant the continuation of purges amongst politicians, the press, and especially amongst the Muslim Brotherhood during the following decade. The Muslim Brotherhood was largely compelled to go underground due to an assassination attempt of Nasser conducted by the Muslim Brotherhood in 1954.

Nasser overhauled Egypt's entire political system by creating a new constitutional order in 1956. This constitution proclaimed Islam as the state religion and was consolidated by a new system based on an ultra-powerful presidential leadership supported by an executive government. After these changes, the President could initiate and approve laws, appoint and dismiss Vice-Presidents and Ministers. The new detailed arrangements in the constitution further consolidated the tight grip of the government over domestic affairs, making the military-bureaucratic elite increasingly powerful. Arab nationalism and populism were the tools Nasser used to stabilize his personal rule - later applied also by his successor. Nasser discontinued the liberal political experimentation of the 1920s from 1940s and replaced it by a strongly socialistic and populist doctrine that was led by a military-bureaucratic elite.

### **1.3. Anwar Al-Sadat's government (1970-1981)**

Nasser's presidency ended with his death and was accompanied by internal power struggle. Muhammad Anwar Al-Sadat took over the presidency on 15<sup>th</sup> of October 1970. He was a member of the Free Officers Movement, and closely connected to Nasser as well. In addition he had worked for the Armed Forces during several decades before his presidency. Despite nominally guaranteeing several civil liberties like freedom of the press, the democratic quality of the regime did not improve: the President retained all executive powers, and ASU remained the only political party. The standard of living did not improve for the majority of the masses. In spite of the high expectations the gap between the rich and the poor widened. Disagreements with opposition parties led to several measures taken against them. The Muslim Brotherhood was tolerated to a certain degree, although it remained illegal. A referendum in 1977, which specifically restricted all political and media activity of Communists; pre-1952 politicians; the old regime; atheists and "enemies of religion" endorsed these.

Aggravated socio-economic problems and internal uprising marked the last months of Sadat's presidency. At the end of his rule, the extreme Islamists, the Left, the Nasserist and many intellectuals denounced Sadat. Consequently, between 1980-81 Sadat implemented increasingly harsh measures against his antagonists and critics, which respectively led to increased amount of arrests and the banning of several journals. Accumulated internal problems finally resulted in the assassination of President Sadat in October 1981 by Muhammad Abdel Salam Faraj -administered by *al-Jihad* Organization. In the following riots, the *al-Jihad* Organization gained control over the town of Asyut, but after heavy fighting they were defeated. It is notable that the revolutionary movement that led to the assassination of Sadat took place amongst the elite, and not by demands for democracy by the masses. The regime change that followed did not happen in the name of democracy but was more of a result of an internal power struggle.

#### **1.4. Hosni Mubarak's government (1981-2011)**

Hosni Mubarak served as Vice President of Sadat's regime and took over his place right after his assassination. He was elected President on the 14th of October 1981. Mubarak continued largely along Sadat's political path but unlike Sadat or Nasser, he was "an executive-technocrat, whose appeal to public was always marked by pragmatism and absence of long-term vision" (Sela 1999, 236). Political liberalization progressed in a number of areas throughout the 1980s, but Mubarak's government stopped these experimental movements after the 1990s. The regression of Egyptian society began; democracy, the rule of law, and the respect of the civil liberties were diminutive. A large amount of new and more authoritarian legislation was enacted, namely to stop militant Islam from spreading and to consolidate Mubarak's tight grip over Egyptian society. Insurrections against the government led to jailing of thousands of presumed militants without indictment. Additionally, the government re-imposed limits to political and civil liberties. High economic growth rates at the end of 1990s momentarily mitigated these problems, but in the beginning of the 21st century the popular disaffection with the government continued to increase, and security forces harshly suppressed antigovernment demonstrations.

In 2005 due to increased internal pressure, the first multi-candidate presidential elections in Egypt's history were organized. Mubarak's regime presented this amendment as a historic step towards contested elections, signifying a grand leap from the merely symbolic process of presidential election to real multi-candidate elections. Anyhow, in practice the election outcome was distorted, with Mubarak gaining 88 per cent of the vote with estimates of voter turnout varying from 23 to 15 per cent (CRS 2005, 4). New constitutional amendments to the 1971 constitution, which came to force in 2007, banned all religion-based political parties, which further isolated the only organized opposition: Muslim Brotherhood. During Mubarak's period of rule Egypt was not an electoral democracy either. The political system was structured to gain unitary majorities for the ruling NDP-party within all levels of government. According to the World Bank governance indicators the rule of law was practically the same in 2010 as it was in 1996 (Worldwide Governance Indicators c2015). In Transparency International's Corruption Perceptions Index, Egypt was ranked 98 out of 178 in 2010 (Transparency International 2010).

In 2010, the domestic political situation in Egypt became even more volatile after rumors of Mubarak's health problems, which increased the uncertainty over his future successor. This turmoil compounded the government's tightening of restrictions on political rights and civil liberties. Massive crackdowns started already before the official campaign period for the elections of the People's Assembly. The election period was defaced by series of state abuses, and independent observers considered the elections glaringly rigged (Human Rights Watch 2010). At the end of 2010, Egypt was extremely corrupt, and power was centered on a military elite. During the start of 2011 Egypt went through an internal struggle between its government and armed groups working not only to overthrow the regime, but to reform the whole society. The main contributor to the revolution was the Egyptian youth, who felt they were living under a completely rigged political system without any chances of realizing their dreams or potential. The fall of the Tunisian Ben Ali regime emboldened the Egyptian protestors, shocking Egypt and several other Arab regimes as well. Mubarak's regime wanted to show its strength and ability to control the situation and thus reacted to the protests with extremely heavy-handed measures. Despite harsh measures taken towards the protestors, by the end of 28th of January 2011, the police had completely withdrawn from Egyptian streets, and Mubarak stepped down on 11 February. Authority was delegated to the SCAF, more precisely to the former defense minister Marshal Mohamed Hussein Tantawi. This revolution finished the political order that had dominated the country over a half a century and was concentrated around demands for civil liberties and democratic government.

### **1.5. Mohammad Al-Morsi's government (2012-2013)**

Following, in the hasty elections of 2012, Mohammad Al-Morsi, the leader of Muslim Brotherhood, was elected to power with a small majority of 51,7 per cent of the vote. The tabulation of final results and "the PEC's opaque approach to resolving post electoral appeals still invited allegations and suspicions about the process" (Carter Center 2012). Nevertheless, Morsi can be considered the first democratically elected (and first Islamist) president of Egypt. Before the election he promised to be a leader for all the Egyptians, accentuating strongly the rights of minority groups such as Christians. At the time of Morsi election, the Muslim Brotherhood was the only party organized well enough to be able to govern Egypt. The Armed Forces were considered unreliable, despite their control over the military

machinery and extensive private ownership granting them also economic influence. From the time Morsi gained power in Egypt, he paid extremely little attention to the unsatisfactory human rights situation. Even though his accession was fueled with wishes for better governance and civil liberties, his period of rule did not seem to meet these wishes in practice. In addition to the exclusion of human rights issues from the political program, continued abuses and lack of attempts by the government to stop them worsened the situation in Egypt. Disregards of judicial autonomy by the government authorities, mistrust towards media, attempts to restrain peaceful protests and other social action, were a constant problem. Several human rights organizations reported extensive assaults on the freedoms of expression and peaceful assembly, religious liberties, harassment of political and labor activists, and increasing cases of torture and mistreatment by the police forces (Cairo Institute for Human Right Studies 2013).

Large-scale changes carried out by the Muslim Brotherhood reduced the political influence of the Armed Forces, and as soon as they started to suspect that Morsi was trying to interfere with their power they threatened to intervene. Disenchantment with Morsi amongst high-ranking Army officers later greatly contributed to the disintegration of Morsi's regime. The Armed Forces were not the only one opposing the radical politics of Morsi, and by the 30th of June Morsi had alienated almost all of his previous adherents as well — only the most radical allies were remaining (Bassem, Al Monitor 2013). On 3rd of July 2013, Abdel Fattah al-Sisi announced the suspension of the constitution after being unable to reach an agreement with Morsi on the resolution of the prevailing political crisis. Al-Sisi was chosen in August 2012 to replace Tantawi as the commander-in-chief and Minister of Defense and Military Production. Later the Army arrested Morsi, and Al-Sisi confirmed that he would run for president. These events designated a change from the democratically elected government back to military authoritarianism, ending the short democratic phase of Egypt's history.

## **2. THEORIES OF DEMOCRATIZATION**

### **2.1. Determinants of democracy and democratization**

'Democratization' can be concisely defined as a process by which a society develops towards a democracy. If we analyze the concept of democratization more accurately, it can be viewed as a process by which "the rule of law, elections, and leadership accountability is established, and where civil society develops" (Comparative Politics 2012, 30). Many scholars researching politics within the Arab world highlight the necessity of separating concepts and processes of 'political liberalization' and 'democratization,' which is especially essential in Egypt's case. Political liberalization is the "expansion of public space, opportunities for the citizenry to engage in relatively free political discourse and freedom of organization" (Brynen et al. 1995, 3). Nevertheless, the expansion of civil liberties following from political liberalization is a necessary precondition for a properly functioning democracy. Dahl's definition of democracy comprehends the freedom of expression, the right to form parties, pressure groups and other independent associations. These all are also essential factors of civil liberties.

After the publication of S. M. Lipset's article "Some Social Requisites of Democracy" in 1959, the debate over necessary conditions for successful democratization started. Researchers observed that despite numerous democratization attempts all over the globe, many countries still have foundered in establishing democracies. The hypotheses on the reasons behind the failure of democratization and essential pre-conditions for democratization vary, but a few prominent approaches prevail in the discussion. The following democratization theories shall be subsequently analyzed and applied to the Egyptian case in the following chapters: (1) S. M. Lipset's modernization theory; (2) Acemoglu and

Robinson's income inequality model; (3) North, Weingast and Wallis' theory on the origins of elite's wealth; (4) Almond and Verba's theory on civil culture; (5) Foreign influence towards Egypt's democratic development.

## **2.2. The modernization theory of democratization**

S. M. Lipset presented his theory concerning economic development, modernization, and democratization in 1960, backed by empirical research. He argued that two characteristics of a society 'bear heavily on the problem of stable democracy: economic development and legitimacy, or the degree to which institutions are valued for themselves and considered right and proper' (Lipset 1960, 46). He was of the same opinion with Weber in combining the capitalist industrialization and development of modern democracies. Lipset's thesis can be simplified to his generalizing sentence: 'the more well-to-do a nation, the greater chances that it will sustain democracy' (Lipset 1959, 75; 1960, 48-50). Lipset's empirical testing suggests that the average degree of wealth, level of education, degree of industrialization and urbanization is considerably higher in the more democratic countries. The modernization theory is based on the assumption that economic development empowers subordinate social classes and makes it more challenging to exclude them from the decision-making process. This socioeconomic tendency leads to the creation of powerful middle class, which is seen as the primary promoter of democracy. This can be derived from the assumption that the middle class mainly consists of entrepreneurs who increase economic growth, being the main tax-paying class. Also, most professionals are a part of the middle class, obtaining a better level of wealth and education than the lower class. Thus, they place more value on an accountable government and become a potent force to pursue government accountability, public services, infrastructure and similar services. This leads to the conclusion that economic development is a necessary pre-condition for democratization, even though wealth does not create democracy by itself.

Lipset also included other aspects of economic development in his theory: industrialization, urbanization, wealth, and education were seen to come with economic prosperity. Lipset notes that modernization manifests itself through altered social conditions that enhance the creation of a democratic culture and open class system that enables the democratic transition and the maintenance of a democratic regime. Thus, Lipset created a

connection between micro-level modernization and macro-level democracy — the modernization of the thought patterns within a society engendered by industrialization eventually establishes larger macro-level changes in governance.

### **2.2.1. Economic growth and the middle class in Egypt**

To investigate Lipset's theory pertaining the correlation between economic growth and democracy, the economic growth and size of the middle class shall be subsequently analyzed. Hypothesis based on Lipset's theory is that Egypt's was not ready for democracy before 2011. The 2011 uprising was the first revolution driven by popular demand for democracy. This means that the middle class was too weak to demand strongly democratic rights before, but in 2011 it was strong enough to require change. Nevertheless, this does not explain the re-establishment of authoritarian rule.

Egypt's transition from public sector dominated-economy to market orientation happened around 1985 after the collapse of oil prices (World Bank 2005). Economic growth in Egypt has been fluctuating, with the peak being in the time frame from 1974 to 1985 when the government launched an "Open Door Policy", liberating the trade sector and increasing the role of the private sector. Economic growth in Egypt averaged around 3.8 percent from 1992 until 2014, peak 7.3 percent measured during the first quarter of 2008 (Trading Economics). The record low point, -4.3 was measured in the first quarter of 2011 (Trading Economics) and was related to the internal uprising. In Egypt, the economic growth was fairly slow during the post-revolution years but started to revitalize at the end of 2014 (Central Bank of Egypt).

Measuring the middle class is fairly challenging since it is an abstract concept including multiple dimensions. The middle class is generally considered to consist of entrepreneurs, which create employment and enhance productivity growth. The middle class was created in Egypt during the 19th century when the normal Egyptians were allowed to work amongst the public sector, but it was only during the 20th century when the middle class was able to participate in political life. The middle class participation was realized during the first half of the 20th century with the expansion of newspapers, universities and later with the revolution against colonialism in 1952. Nasser's post-independence economic and social reforms contributed remarkably to the prestige of middle class that started to establish itself as a unified entity. Later on, the deterioration of the economic situation in the 1990s created

divisions amongst the middle class, lifting the entrepreneurs on top of the class as a separate entity. The second top category of the middle class is a greater segment of professionals, who aspire higher standards of wealth but are constantly occupied by the fears of shifting to lower social classes. This largest segment, which can be considered to be the backbone of middle class has not clear homogeneity amongst the ideals, on the opposite, 'internal differences reflecting different political identities' (Al Monitor, 13.5.2014) exist. Amongst the professionals, the reformist line is in line with the upper middle classes aspirations, which are changing over time from Nasserism to Mubarakism. The largest segment of middle class in Egypt consists of the employees and low-income workers, who belong to the middle class according to their education base and work, but are closer to poor segments regarding the quality of life.

After the start of the 21st century, the economy was rapidly growing in Egypt but failed to be inclusive. Middle class did not expand that rapidly during the last decade of Mubarak's regime, Thus millions of Egyptians were left to lower middle-class status, which left them living on \$2 to \$4 a day, and caused especially the younger population to feel economically and socially excluded. The Egyptian middle class did not expand rapidly enough during the period 2000-10, the last decade of the Mubarak regime. Moreover, a large proportion of the middle class was trapped in lower middle class status, living very close to the poverty line. The middle class, especially youth that was increasingly aware of the unsatisfactory political and economic situation, was a strong contributing factor in the 2011 uprising. Calls for social justice were consistent with increased extreme poverty and rise in inequality perceptions during the preceding two decades.

### **2.2.2. Application of the modernization theory to Egypt**

The Modernization theory considers large and homogenous middle class as the contributing and upholding factor of democratization. In Egypt the middle class was never a united entity, and thus the power to engender political change was fairly weak. During the 20th century, the middle class consisted to a large extent of people working in the government and military posts, which reflected the fact that the middle class did not execute the revolution earlier. Since a large section of the middle class was working for the government, it had no interest to rebel against the state institution or military. Probably some democratic ideas were evolving inside of the middle class, but it was not homogenous enough and did not have

enough people who would have sacrificed themselves in rebelling against the state. All in all, the majority of the middle class was dependent on government and army paychecks and did not want to sacrifice their position in the society for uncertain results of revolting. The fact that the revolution happened in 2011 was that the students — the future middle class — saw they had no possibilities to rise in the social scale and become the middle class. All the government posts were assigned to a certain elite, and rising to the same pay grade as their parents had was not an option. This combined with the revolutionary thoughts coming outside of Egypt, combined to the backing of Muslim Brotherhood caused the revolution to occur just in 2011.

**GDP per capita, in 2013 EK\$**

Egypt	India	Singapore
1112	684	4483
1212	832	4667
1 533	969	8 969
2 530	1 037	18 301
3 085	1 446	28 731
4 213	2 105	42 961
5 516	3 764	58 831

Table 1. The GDP per capita of Egypt, India and Singapore.

Source: (The Conference Board Total Economy Database 2014).

Lipset's approach has too many limitations for it to help genuinely in understanding the Egyptian case. Firstly, there is no clear correlation between wealth (per capita GDP) and democracy. Democratic development in countries like India shows the faults of modernization theory in practice. As shown in the Table 1., in comparison to Egypt, India has a smaller GDP per capita. Nevertheless, the country has still gone through a progress of democratization and established a stable democratic regime. This means that, unlike Lipset suggests, a universal connection between per capita GDP and democracy cannot be found. This means that the

baseline assumption Lipset develops his theory is incorrect, which raises questions about its further applicability.

Lipset admitted to this problem and further develops his argument in the expanded edition of 'Political Man' (1983). In this work he notifies that multiple social scientist 'have continued to work in this area and, using more statistically sophisticated methods, have also found positive relationship between economic development and democracy' (Lipset 1983, 470). However, he admits that there are still deviant cases. Most of them are 'oil-rich, otherwise less developed, highly inegalitarian, Middle Eastern states, or the more industrialized Communist regimes' (ibid: 473; Lipset et al. 1993). This exception applies to Egypt as well. Nevertheless, Lipset does not further describe the reasons for this abnormality.

The second major problem with Lipset's theory is that he generalizes an assumption about middle class with homogenous interests aiming to democracy. Like Egypt's case shows, in some situations the middle class has interests connected with the continuation of the authoritarian regime. The middle class is not always a homogenous entity with identical interests, and the middle class may be invested in upholding the authoritarian regime. Thirdly, Lipset's theory might be applicable when investigated the rise of Morsi to power but doesn't explain the democratic reversal that took place after. In the 2011 revolution, the middle class was demanding better governance, but it seems to have been more of a demand for abolishing nepotism, which does not necessarily mean demand for democracy. Fourthly, Lipset does not consider the possibility of democracy reversals. In Egypt the 2013, coup executed by the Army is not fitting into Lipset's theory either. He completely ignores the possibility that once a country democratizes it could drift back into authoritarianism. All in all, the various defects in applying the modernization theory make it relatively useless considering Egypt's case. Thus, income inequality model, which explicitly includes democracy reversals and does not assume a correlation between economic growth and democracy, is analyzed next.

### **2.3. Income inequality model**

Acemoglu and Robinson (2009) create their model of democratic transition between a cost-benefit analysis of democracy between two groups (the people and the elites), explaining when and where democracy will emerge. Unlike Lipset's model, the income inequality model also explains why democratic reversals occur. Acemoglu and Robinson suppose that the

political elite and the citizens always possess conflicting preferences and that there is a close connection between the political elite and the rich. A shared element between all of the autocratic regimes is the fact that the governing elite represents the interests of their subgroup, and not the wishes of the majority of the citizen. Democracy is seen to connect strongly with redistributive economic policies. This assumption leads to the conclusion that citizens have a stronger preference for democracy than the elite since it is seen to guarantee an equal income distribution.

Acemoglu and Robinson separate few subtypes of regimes based on the income sources of the elite. The first one of these being societies whose elites are heavily invested in land and the second whose elites have invested in physical and human capital. They observe a clear difference concerning democratic attitudes between these two groups, the former being less prone to democratization development and the latter being more favorable towards democratic development. The land is easier to tax than human capital; also it is less dependent on social and political turbulence often connected to democratization processes. Thus, societies with larger rural sector are less prone to democratization than societies with larger investments in physical and human capital.

Acemoglu and Robinson conclude that inequality and democracy are negatively correlated. They further subdivide countries by the level of income inequality to four classes: (1) Non-repressive non-democracy: low income inequality societies. In these states, the non-democratic systems are stable since the economic costs of resisting democracy are not outweighing the gains of a democratic regime for the masses. The elite is not strongly resisting democracy because it is not going to lose much in the transition. Nevertheless, the popular demand for democracy is very weak because people do not stand to gain much. These low income inequality states are stable non-democracies. (2) Consolidated democracy: medium inequality societies. In these societies, the medium inequality leads to stable democracy. Elite concession is procurable since the loss of income is moderate and does not outweigh the cost of repression. The medium inequality is enough motivation for the people to economic gains of democratic transition. Democracy will be consolidated because the cost of a coup does not outweigh the gains the elite would have in a return to non-democracy. (3) Oscillation path: higher income inequality societies. Within these societies, the economic cost of opposing democracy for the rules outweighs the costs of converting to democracy. Citizens have much to gain from democracy, thus strong demand for democracy exists. Nevertheless,

elites have a strong incentive to return to non-democracy. (4) Repressive non-democracy: very high income inequality societies. These states are stagnated by violent conflicts, and the probabilities of democratic transition and establishment of stable democracy are minimal. This means that the cost of introducing democracy to the rulers of these countries is so high that they always chose repression when unrest occurs (Acemoglu, Robinson 2009).

In practice, this means that as income inequality starts to increase from type 1 to type 2, the popular demand for democracy will increase as well. But as the income inequality increases also the elite's resistance for democracy grows, and they will try to reverse democracy as soon as they can. The cost of opposing fully mobilized masses during a revolution is too high. Thus, they will yield in a revolutionary situation. Nevertheless, the masses cannot stay mobilized for a long time. Once the situation has returned to normal the elites reverse to non-democracy. Following, if the income inequality further increases to correspond type 4 countries, the elites will have so much to lose they will not concede to any democratic movement.

The income inequality model of Acemoglu and Robinson assumes that rulers are independently wealthy, thus not acquiring wealth from state's resources. This means that the redistributive microeconomic policies associated with democracy are the only thing deteriorating elite's attitudes towards democracy. This assumption leads to conclusion that income equality reduces elites' resistance to democracy, but in addition also capital mobility will reduce the threshold for elites to transit into democracy since that enables money transfers overseas if taxes are increased. The hypothesis derived from Acemoglu and Robinson's model is that Egypt is the case 1 where income inequality is low. Investigating various data on Egypt's economy will subsequently test the hypothesis.

### **2.3.1. Application of the theory to Egypt**

Agriculture was the cornerstone of Egypt's economy during Nasser's, Sadat's and largely during Mubarak's period as well. During the 1970s agriculture employed over 90 percent of the Egyptian working population, which meant that the government was largely invested in the rural sector. Currently, the Egyptian economy has shifted from agriculture-oriented economy towards increasingly developing the service sector and the economic structure is one of the most developed in comparison to other African and Middle Eastern countries (Economic Watch 2010). Large investments in land could be partial reasons why

Egypt's elite has been negative towards democratic development in the past, but they do not explain the reluctance for democracy prevailing currently amongst the elite.

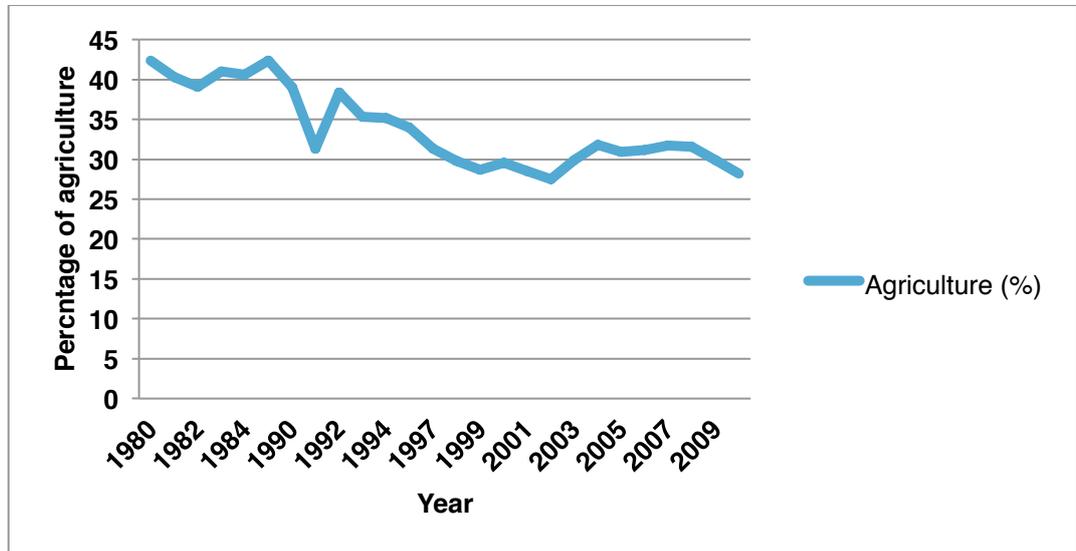


Figure 1. Employment in Agriculture (% of total employment)

Source: (International Labor Organization 2011)

Within the period from 1958/59 until 2013, economic inequality in Egypt has been relatively low by the standards of developing countries. The range in which the inequality rates have oscillated is relatively narrow despite major changes in the domestic economy. The peak of the income distribution inequality, 0.45 was experienced during 1990/91 during Mubarak's period of rule. The dip of 0.31 was experienced in 2008/09 and of 0.30 in November 2013 (World Bank 2014). According to World Bank's study "Income Inequality in Egypt" it is not possible to determine the trend of inequality between 1958/59 and 2008/09 based on the estimate values. The study presents a following development concerning the development of inequality patterns in Egypt; the evident inequalities present in the rural areas improved by the second half the 1960s but most probably fluctuated around fairly similar values during the following decades. The income gap in Egypt is more divided between four main cities than between rural and urban areas. A conclusion of fairly low or middle range income inequality in Egypt can be made. For example in the time-frame from 2005 to 2009 the income inequality in Egypt, as measured by Gini coefficient household surveys, was 34. This indication is notably lower than for example in the United States where the rate exceeds

40 percent. Also several other high income inequality countries have been able to develop sustainable democracies, Italy and United Kingdom for example. All in all in international standards the inequality rates in Egypt seem fairly low. Also, it is notable that income inequality is largely varying regionally. According to the Brookings Institution, the probability of being extremely poor in Egypt is still nearly four times higher for the rural population in comparison the people living in urban areas. According to the estimations, the percentage of total population living in poverty (2011) is 6.7 percent. In urban areas the figure is 2.6 percent, and in rural 9.6 percent (Hafez 2014).

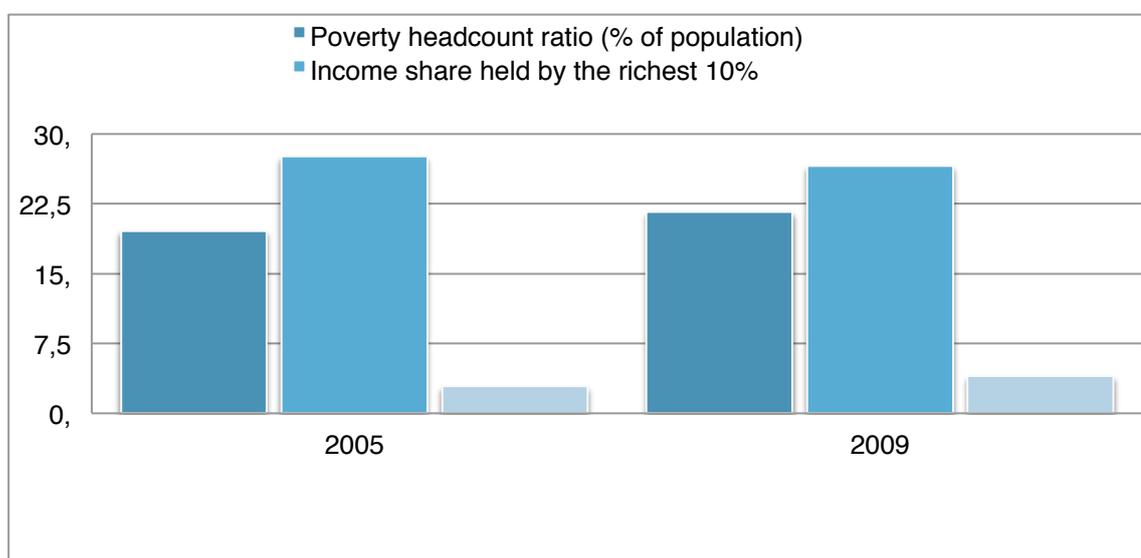


Figure 2. Income share ratios.

Source: (The World Data Bank c2015).

As mentioned above, income inequality in Egypt is relatively low. Many academics were surprised by the events of Arab Spring in Egypt because the country indeed looked fairly equal based on statistical data. Still the revolution was strongly connected to demands for equality. A World Bank study concerning the perceptions poverty perceptions in Egypt prior to Arab Spring showed that Egyptians experienced the income distribution to be highly unequal. The research conducted by World Bank's experts concluded that the priorities of Egyptians changed during the 21st century. A clear shift towards more concrete endeavors concerning GDP growth and a "clear decline in self-reported incomes and social status"

occurred (WB 2014, 96). The analysis found a clear increase in the mismatch between actual welfare measured by statistics and welfare expectations. Also, the inequality aversion was rapidly rising, and this is proven to correlate negatively with the degree of democratization.

The model of Acemoglu and Robinson helps to explain why there was a strong demand for more income equality in the democratic movement, but considering other aspects the theory cannot be properly applied. The statistical income inequality in Egypt was low. Thus it could be placed to the 1st category and more gradual democratic transformation would have been expected. The 2011 uprising fueled by demands for more income inequality cannot be fitted within the framework of Acemoglu and Robinson's model. The revolution took place regardless of low income inequality. This means that the subjective views and expectations on income inequality make a larger difference than the actual statistical, objective factors. The feelings of inequality were rising at the beginning of 21st century and strict government control over citizens life was used to hamper the democratic tendencies. In a similar manner to several other authoritarian regimes, also the Egyptian government gave small concessions on a regular basis whenever the demands for more freedom became too loud to suppress. After silencing the reformist voices, the governments started to reduce civil liberties and consolidate their autocratic rule. These governmental actions are not compatible with the theory of income inequality either. In the case 1 of low income inequality, the government does not attain strong opposition towards democracy. The 2013 democracy reversion does not seem to fit the low income inequality countries profile, where the government is not supposed to have incentives to reverse the democratic transition.

The final large defect of the theory is the assumption that elites gain their wealth from non-governmental sources. This excludes many non-democratic regimes where the source of elites wealth comes from their control of the state, be it from development aid or from the abuse of public resources, which is a notable aspect considering the development of Egypt as well. Thus, NWW theory that explains the development of democracy resulting from the source of elite's wealth is subsequently applied to Egypt's case.

## **2.4. Elite's wealth theory**

The theory of North, Weingast and Wallis (2009) falls into the same category of economic models of democratization as two previous models but adds a dimension. North et. al. note that in several situations the elites derive their wealth from the control of public resources or the foreign development aid directed to the country. In this case, the distributional aspect of democracy will become irrelevant in the sense that the elite's wealth is depending purely on the control of public resources. They assume that the democratic transition starts only when the "dominant coalition finds it a matter of self-interest to expand impersonal relationships and to institutionalize open access for all" (North, Wallis, Weingast 2009, 11). If the elite gains more from autocracy than democracy, the transition to democracy will be unlikely to happen. In this economic situation, the power is changing purely through 'palace revolutions' where the former autocratic elite will be replaced by a new one. According to this theory the transition to democracy will only happen if the public resources are diminishing and do not guarantee similar economic benefits as before, and democracy promises to do so instead. Also, if the wealth is derived from the control of the foreign aid money that is discontinued a transformation to democracy could be likely. To conclude, the elite would only give up power if democracy would seem economically more profitable.

### **2.4.1. Application of the NWW theory to Egypt**

To find out whether the elite of Egypt gets its wealth from the control of the public resources or from independently doing business, it is crucial to investigate the composition of the Armed Forces wealth. Throughout its independent history, Egypt has been a military-led state. All of the presidents, except Morsi, have been backed by the Armed Forces. According to Robert Springborg (2014) the Egyptian military first started to increase its influence in the economic sector after 1979. During that time, the top brass of Army was afraid that newly established peace with Israel would lead to downsizing. These worries caused the Army to get involved in everything from producing consumer goods, steel and metal components, to tourism. The government allocated the ownership to the Armed Forces. Springborg estimates that currently military companies and enterprises owned by retired military personnel make up about one-fourth of the Egyptian economy. Nevertheless, the official statements of the size of military-owned companies are much lower. The head of military studies at the government-

supported Ahram Center in Cairo, Mohamad Kadry, estimates the percentage of the Army-owned economy to be maximum 3 percent (Simon, J. 3.1.2012). Estimates of the size of the military controlled business in Egypt are varying, according to Springborg the figures range from 5 percent to 40 percent (WSWS 2011).

It is an undeniable fact that the Armed Forces runs firms in key industries such as food production, gasoline industry, clothing and kitchen products, hotel industry, and construction. These zones make according to some estimations about 87 percent of country's land area (Reuters 2012). In addition, the military is not obliged to pay taxes, which means that the wealth of the elite is at least partly derived from the control of the government resources. Army is also the second-largest recipient of development aid from the United States - according to estimations the Armed Forces received annually 1.5 billion USD from 1979 until the fall of Mubarak government (Al Jazera 2013).

The absence of reliable data on the real rates of the Army's resources makes it difficult to estimate the extent to which the Egyptian military forces gain profit from their status. Anyhow, it is clear that the Armed Forces wealth is largely bound to their position as the governing elite of Egypt. Consequently, the Armed Forces will do anything in their power to preserve their position and to hamper the democratic development of Egypt as long as they get economic profit from their position. This theory is from many perspectives applicable to Egypt. The Armed Forces has preserved its ruling position from the times Nasser gained power, until 2015 when Al-Sisi consolidated his power position with the support of the Armed Forces.

The theory about elites wealth can be applied well to Egypt. The Armed Forces has gained notable benefits from preserving its power prospects and thus hampered the democratic development. The only factor that is incompatible with the theory is the 2011 revolution that was largely based on demands for more democracy. Acemoglu and Robinson nor North, Weingast and Wallis can explain these demands given its level of income inequality. The revolution was generated by the Egyptian population frustrated with decades of autocratic rule and cannot be described as a palace revolution. The leading elite of the revolution was the Muslim Brotherhood, which was not a part of Egypt's military elite. The revolution lifted the Muslim Brotherhood to power from outside of the elite. Still, it can be questioned whether Morsi was aiming to establish another autocratic regime to replace Mubarak's autocracy. The 2013 uprising executed by Al-Sisi, who was backed the Armed

Forces can be explained according to the theory again. Even though the revolution took place in the streets, it was still led by the Armed Forces, and it lifted the elite back to power. This implies that the successful 2011 revolution was a sum of many factors, not likely to reoccur.

All three previous theories do not explain the democratic revolution that took place in Egypt in 2011. Also, the economic models have been criticized widely on their narrow views based on purely economic motives. Since these theories are not sufficient enough in explaining Egypt's democratization failures, a theory of civic culture shall subsequently be analyzed.

## **2.5. Theory of the 'civic culture'**

The problems of addressing democratization problems purely from an economic perspective are obvious. A conclusion about the fact that economic variables and democracy are not clearly correlated (based on Table 1. figures) is reached by investigating the cases of poor democracies (India) and rich non-democracies. In their book "The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations" Almond and Verba identify three types of political cultures. They conclude that civic culture is an element that connects individual attitudes with overall political system structure (Almond, Verba 1963). Their theory argues that cultures with a large emphasis on the family are "exclusive," and that characteristic would hamper the development the "sense of community and civic culture," thus possibly suppressing democracy.

Almond and Verba argue that the values and attitudes that emerge with, and function to sustain, participatory democratic institutions are related to the manner in which people within a polity view their relationships with others compared to their interests. They investigate five nations in terms of their attitudes and values, identifying three broad types of political cultures. 1) Parochial, which are underdeveloped agrarian societies where "political specialization is minimal" and citizens have no interest to get involved with politics. 2) Subject, which are modern authoritarian societies where institutional and role differentiations exist in political life, but towards which citizens have largely passive orientation. 3) Participant, where interactive relationships between governmental institutions and citizens exist, a strong sense of competence and confidence in comprehending the domestic political system. They explain the classification in a following manner: "A participant is assumed to be

aware of and informed about the political system in both its governmental and political aspects. A subject tends to be cognitively oriented primarily to the output side of government: the executive, bureaucracy, and judiciary. The parochial tends to be unaware or only dimly aware, of the political system in all its aspects" (Almond, Verba 1963, 79). The civic culture theory's strength is its applicability to the cases like Germany and India, which are developed in a different manner from economic models addressed before. In Egypt, the interest towards political influencing is fairly weak, but some interest towards political outputs exist. Thus, Egypt could be placed to the category 2., subject culture. The hypothesis is, that because of subject culture, Egypt has never been able to achieve democratic structures.

### **2.5.1. Application of the 'civic culture' theory to Egypt**

Almond and Verba identify a mix of the three types of political culture most functional for the operation of democracy. This society is consisted mainly out of 'participants', with fewer segments consisting out of 'parochials' and 'subjects' that moderate the participants. According to Almond and Verba, Egypt should be placed in the subject culture category, with the majority of citizens having passive orientations to politics. A review based on the World Values Survey is conducted in order to investigate the quality of civic culture in Egypt. The data from Egypt is from the fourth wave of World Values Surveys 2001 and the other one from 2012. Several questions from the WVS will be analyzed respectively.

In 2001 before any revolutionary movements in Egypt, and after half a century of autocratic rule, Egypt seemed to be indeed fitting to the "Subject culture"-category. For example to the question "When do you get together with your friends, do you discuss political matters?", 42.6 percent of the people answered they never discuss politics. Also, 57 percent of people stated being not very /not at all interested in politics. These characteristics can be attributed to the subject culture of Almond and Verba, who describe the citizen inside these states thinking about laws as something to obey, not something he helps to shape. The passive attitudes culminated in the fact that only 2.5 percent of the citizens have attended lawful demonstrations, and over 82 percent would never intend to take part in a lawful demonstration. This data shows the explicitly passive relationship to political influencing. Nevertheless, 90,5 percent of Egyptians agree that democracy is better than any other form of

government. This shows affective and evaluative orientation towards the outputs of the political system in Egypt, which also is a characteristic of subject cultures.

In 2012, after the revolution, the percentage of citizens that took part in lawful demonstrations had increased to 6.8 percent. Nevertheless, still 98.6 percent of people say that they are not a member of any political party, even though 75 percent of the population considers politics to be very or rather important in their lives. This shows the continuous dichotomy between clear interest in politics - 74,4 percent of the population states being very or somewhat interested in politics — but also reluctance in getting involved in the political sphere. 46.1 percent of the population said they always vote in the national elections, 28.6 percent usually voted, and 25.3 percent never voted. Like in many other authoritarian states, also in Egypt this division between relatively large interest in politics but fairly small interest in taking part in politics. Almond and Verba's theory cannot be applied to Egypt's case because we would not expect a democratic revolution occurring in a subject culture. Nevertheless, the cultural approach might be useful for investigating the reasons for Egypt's democratization process.

### **2.5.2. Islam and democracy**

Much of the opposition towards reigning governments in Egypt has traditionally come from Islamist groups. All in all, there have been manifold suggestions that Islam has complicated the democratic development in Arab countries since it is seen to hinder the creation of accountable government. Especially the western researchers in the area have suggested that Islam and democracy are incompatible. For example, Huntington sees culture as the reason for democratization failures in Muslim societies. He argues that this 'failure has its source at least in part in the inhospitable nature of Islamic culture and society to Western liberal concepts' (Huntington 1996, 114). Various studies have been conducted, especially in the United States, on the link between religious attachments and more conservative views on politics (Jelen 1991). Nevertheless, no clear description about how religiosity correlated with attitudes towards democracy was discovered.

Tessler and Sanad carried out an encompassing study investigating the relation between Islam and democracy at the individual level. The research was conducted between 1988 and 1996, and comprised multiple surveys executed in Palestine, Morocco, Algeria, and Egypt. The research deduced that Islam seems to have a lesser effect on political attitudes

than the common presumptions by students of Arab and Islamic society imply (Tessler, Sanad 1994). The surveys regarding Egypt displayed subsequent attitudes: preference of parliamentary government, preference of liberal democracy over Arab nationalism, socialism and Islamic government and preference of competitive political system along the European model. Also for example Indonesia is the world's largest nation with the majority of the population being Muslims and also a democracy with Islam as the state religion. The Economist's 2012 Democracy Index ranked Indonesia as "flawed democracy" — in the same ranking where several EU member countries, for example, Estonia are categorized (The Economist Intelligence Unit 2013). This ranking clearly proves that Islamic attitudes and democratic convictions are not incompatible.

### **2.5.3. Conclusions and limitations**

Almond and Verba assume that positive affect toward the institutions of representative government is essential for functioning democracy (31). In 2012, the percentage of Egyptians who answered to trust the government a great deal/quite a lot was 39,7 when the vast majority 60,1 percent answered they had little or no trust in the government. According to Almond and Verba, the lack of trust towards the government impedes the democratic development in less-developed nations. Nevertheless, within the EU large rates of mistrust towards government occur and these countries are still considered democratic. The theory of civic culture seems relatively applicable to Egypt before the uprising in 2011, but the large-scale demonstrations against the government are not applicable to the model. According to Almond and Verba's categorization, Egypt would fit into the subject culture category. Nevertheless, revolutions are not expected to take place within societies with the majority of the population consisting out of "subjects". The causal relation of Almond and Verba's theory can also be questioned. While analyzing the political culture within an authoritarian country, questions concerning the origin of the prevailing subject culture rise. Is the impassive attitude towards political influencing a cause of authoritarianism or a product of authoritarian regime, where the influencing possibilities are often diminutive?

Also, civic culture as phenomena is a fairly qualitative concept, which Almond and Verba tried to quantify. Thus, a question remains whether it is possible to measure political culture satisfactorily at the first place. Another problem lies in the definition of political culture as an independent variable — is it distinguishable as an independent phenomenon or is

it a dependent variable? For example, Vanhanen suggests that the relationship between democracy and political culture is interactive, which makes it problematic to use it as an independent variable (Vanhanen 2003). Nevertheless, for example, Diamond (1999) recognizes the significance of political culture as central factor in the process of consolidating democracy. He notes that democracy "requires a distinctive set of political values and orientations from its citizens: moderation, tolerance, civility, efficacy, knowledge, participation" (Diamond 1999, 161).

In their model, Almond and Verba, as well as all the other three theories, only consider the domestic political sphere of a country as an isolated entity with no regard to external influence. In Egypt's revolution, the social media played a large part, and without it the domestic situation in Egypt possibly would have remained much more serene. Also, other external actors have contributed on the domestic politics of Egypt. Thus, a model concentrating to the external influence is subsequently analyzed.

## **2.6. Influence of external factors**

It is not adequate to investigate only the role of domestic politics of a state since countries in the international system are interconnected. In Egypt's case, there have been various external factors that have contributed to the domestic democratization failures. Also, the effect of the Tunis revolution as triggering factor of the 2011 uprising has been major. If the political situation in the geopolitical areas near to Egypt would have remained stable, it is quite possible that Egypt would have never gone through an internal uprising. On the other hand, another factor behind persistent lack of democracy has been the strategic concerns of the West, mainly the U.S, to assure steady supply of oil and to restrain the threat of Islam (Bellin 2004). The hypothesis here is that the influence of external actors has caused Egypt's democratization process to fail.

To guarantee 'regional stability', the U.S has provided Egypt with remarkable amounts of military and economic assistance from the late 1970s. U.S. policy makers have routinely explained aid to Egypt as an investment in regional stability, built primarily on long-running cooperation with the Egyptian military and in sustaining the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty. Between 1948 and 2015, the U.S donated 76 billion USD in the framework of bilateral foreign aid to Egypt (Sharp 2015). This amount includes the \$1.3 billion yearly military aid

from 1987 to present. Egypt is important for the U.S due to its geographical location, demographics (largest Arab country) and soft power that it exerts to other Arab countries. Nevertheless, the support is directed to the Armed Forces, which remains the main political actor in the country. Thus, the military aid "benefit short-term U.S. national security interests but arguably hinders long-term hopes for Egypt's development and stability" (Sharp 2015). In October, the Obama Administration suspended the provision of specific large-scale military systems, but on January 2015 Obama announced that he will continue the military aid given to the Egyptian government. Some see this as the restoration of the old realpolitik stance of the U.S (Hamed, Y. 6.4.2015). The realpolitik can be simplified in the stand that supporting autocratic regimes in the Middle Eastern area keeps the states affirmative towards the west but did not enhance democracy.

Saudi Arabia and Qatar have historically had relatively bad bilateral relationship stigmatized by mutual distrust. This lack of confidence also reflected the Egyptian domestic politics when Saudi Arabia and Qatar have supported opposing forces in the area. Saudi Arabia has strongly opposed the Muslim Brotherhood and supported the regimes together with the United States. For example during 2013 economic crisis that Egypt drifted into after the revolution, Saudi Arabia offered remarkable amounts for Egypt to revitalize the economy. Also Kuwait and United Arab Emirates restarted the support for Egyptian state after the resignation of Morsi. Gulf States are reported to contribute over 20 billion USD worth of grants, loans, and petroleum products by the mid-2014 (Mada Masr 1.7.2014). The United States and Saudi Arabia have been the main supporters that have helped to stabilize autocracy in Egypt.

Qatar, on the other hand, has supported the Muslim Brotherhood fueled opposition in the area. In addition, Qatar has for a long time been a safe haven for the Muslim Brotherhood and has supported the organization financially as well. Qatar started supporting the Muslim Brotherhood already during the 1960s but steered its activities to other countries within the region, and the organization was never active inside the borders of Qatar. Qatar saw the Muslim Brotherhood as a way to project its influence abroad. Nevertheless, Qatar's foreign minister announced on 19 August 2013 "Qatar has never given aid to an Egyptian group or an Egyptian political party. The aid has always been provided to Egypt" (Global Security). In 2014, Qatar also deported several senior leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood, due to strained

relations with Saudi Arabia and their neighbors. Saudi Arabia and Qatar have supported opposite forces as well in Tunisia and externalized their rivalry to other countries.

The foreign influence has admittedly been a large factor in the democratization process in Egypt. By offering financial support, the foreign actors have strengthened the already existing tendencies in Egypt, thus influencing the democratization process as well. Nevertheless, because foreign economic support can be used to influence Egypt's politics, the foreign influence could be used in opposite way as well. If the United States and other states offering financial support for Egypt would push for economic reforms to get the military out of the control of the country's economic sector, it would contribute to the democratization process positively.

### **3. REASONS FOR DEMOCRATIZATION FAILURES**

Throughout its independence, Egypt has been a military autocracy, with the short period of democratic rule by the Muslim Brotherhood. Prior to 2011 revolution, the MB had long collected its strength as an underground movement. With the intensified turmoil in Tunisia and the rebellion of the Egyptian youth against the government finally made it too expensive for Mubarak to keep the regime together. Already prior to the Arab spring the dissatisfaction towards the government started to grow due to the government structure that Mubarak had petrified, making it impossible for people outside of the elite to rise in the social scale. The income differences between rural and city areas were extremely large, and before 2011 the government had kept the rural areas peaceful with government food subsidies that prevented the outbreak of revolutionary movements. When the 2011 uprising proceeded, the Armed Forces realized that they could not resist the change in government, thus they placed themselves against Mubarak. Despite large attempts to hamper Muslim Brotherhoods success in the elections, Morsi still won the majority of votes. After trying to execute large-scale institutional reforms that the elite tried to prevent, Morsi started to lose his support amongst the elite. This contributed to the deteriorated economical situation caused by the Arab Spring finally left to the counter-revolution executed by the army and Al-Sisi and the re-establishment of authoritarian rule in Egypt.

In Egypt, multiple liberalization procedures have been implemented, by granting concessions too dilute to engender systematic change but large enough to merit symbolical prestige to the governing regimes both domestically and internationally. When the civil discord seems to become so strong it could threaten the regime, the mitigations made are retreated. Consequently, Egypt has been relatively 'politically liberal' but without these measures engendering the process of democratization. Egypt is a model example of the fact that it is possible for state-controlled political liberalization to exist without democratization. The time Egypt gained its independence until 2015, Egypt has been strongly controlled by the

military elite and the future perspectives seem pretty similar. Al-Sisi's government has the support from the United States and several regional powers, making it extremely powerful. The gains for the elite from preserving authoritarian rule in Egypt are major, which means they will do everything in their power to stop democratic transition inside Egypt. The state controls the media and its citizen, complicating the formation of any unified opposition. The Muslim Brotherhood, which was a functioning opposition before, has lost its general support base after the events of 2012 that dethroned Morsi.

The development of democracy is a long process influenced by multiple factors. When Egypt first became independent it had no tradition of democracy, and evolving of such requires several things. Firstly an improved economic situation, which is currently still not the case, especially in Egypt's countryside. After independence the majority of the Egyptian population living in the rural areas was poor and no real amelioration in the situation has yet occurred. Secondly, a revolution for democracy requires consciousness about the political situation of the country and also a revolutionary elite that will conduct the revolution. In 2011, it was the controlling force of the revolution, but since Al-Sisi's government the organization is again compelled to reduce its functions inside of Egypt.

### **3.1. Democratization failures from theoretical perspective**

Various hypotheses for the future of Egypt's democratization process can be drawn based on the four main theories of democratization. Considering Lipset's theory of modernization, democratization would seem possible. It is a viable scenario that a homogeneous middle-class demanding change would develop inside Egypt. Currently, the youth is unemployed and has difficulties with finding a job fitting for their education. They can no longer attain government or military posts, making the future prospects under autocracy seem relatively unsatisfactory. Thus, they could be the generative force behind another revolution that could establish a democratic rule to Egypt. From the perspective of the income inequality theory, the future prospects of democratization cannot be analyzed. Income inequality failed to explain the democratic revolution in 2011. Thus, it is not applicable in discussing the motivation of the people. The only conclusion that could be drawn from the income inequality model is that the low income inequality will lead to elite to put up less resistance for democracy. If the perception of inequality keeps rising it could be a generating

force behind another revolution. Nevertheless, the NWW theory is more applicable to Egypt's situation.

In Egypt, the Armed Forces has been the ruling elite from the time Nasser gained power in 1952 continuously. The only exception is the period from 2011 to 2013 when the Muslim Brotherhood ruled the country. The Army continues to be heavily invested in the regime and clearly deriving its wealth from the control of public resources. Thus, the elite has extremely much to lose with the transition to democracy. This position means the elite will resist democracy by all means, backed by the monopoly of military machinery. Under Mubarak's period of rule, the Egyptian military was able to create its economic empire, supported by the government and foreign powers. Currently, Sisi is already strengthening his position, and it would seem unlikely that another revolution could take place if his power prospects do not weaken. Thus, according to this theory the only possibility for a democratic transition in Egypt would be some worsening of the public economy or the emergence of possibilities to earn more by transferring Egypt to democracy. Currently, the Armed Forces notably benefits from the autocracy. Also, the country's economy has recovered from the post-2011 stagnation. Under these circumstances, it would seem unlikely that a transformation to democracy would allure the elite more than autocracy.

Considering Almond and Verba's theory of civic culture, it would not be likely for Egypt to democratize within a short time frame. In addition, a theoretical question about whether the subject culture in Egypt is the reason or consequence of the autocratic rule remains. Right after its independence Egypt slide in the authoritarian military rule. At that time, the middle class did not have enough incentives to demand political change and it was not influential enough to have an effect to politics. A large part of the population lived in the rural areas and lacked the knowledge that would have enabled the creation of more critical views towards the government. Right after its rise to power the Armed Forces used every possible mean to establish a strong power position in Egypt. The people got used to a political system where elections were only nominal; opposition did not exist, and all kind of political influencing was impossible. This kind of political environment easily passivates the citizen when they realize no real possibilities to influence the inputs of a political system exists. Thus, it can be challenging to determine to how large extent the authoritarian environment in the country has compounded to passive attitude towards politics.

Almond and Verba notify that loyalty to the political system could be created through a shared experience (i.e. revolution) or conducts of a charismatic leader (Almond, Verba 1963, 372). They also note that the creation of a civic society is not possible through a ready-made formula. Perhaps the revolution of 2011 will form to be shared experience that will enhance the creation of a democratic regime. Development of a participant culture inside Egypt is possible, but within in a longer period. After the revolution in Egypt, some attitudes are starting to change. The enthusiasm to get politically involved has increased. Thus, it seems possible that a participative political culture will evolve inside Egypt. Purely the civic culture might not be enough to change the political system created to consolidate the tight control of the military elite.

After applying various theories of democratization to Egypt, it is obvious that the democratization failures in Egypt cannot be confined to one specific reason. The problems with creating a functional democracy in Egypt are caused by various internal and external factors. Firstly, it is obvious that a strong foreign influence in the area has largely affected to the impossibility to establish democratic structures. The economic assistance of U.S and Saudi Arabia to the military elite has consolidated its power positions. What became obvious in the 2011 elections is that democracy in Egypt would inevitably lead to the rule of Muslim Brotherhood, which is a questionable organization according to western standards. For example to the United States it is hard to acknowledge that establishing democracy in Egypt would lead to the rule of anti-western and extreme Islamist government. Naturally this is seen as a great security threat from the western perspective, and thus the U.S and several other states have continuously supported the pro-western Armed Forces. The MB has been the only real political alternative besides to the military, and this has further complicated the domestic political situation from foreign and domestic perspective.

Secondly, various economic and political benefits caused the elite (backed by foreign powers) to use all possible measures to ensure their ruling position. Thirdly, until the 21st century, the middle class in Egypt consisted to a large extent of citizens working for the government or military. Deriving its subsistence from governmental posts means that the middle class has a relatively large threshold to rise against the political elite if the gains are not considered considerably higher than preserving the prevailing situation. Fourthly, Egypt was (and continues to be) fairly equal in terms of income level and, also, the government subsidies for poorer countryside population long contained the economic incentives to rebel

against autocracy. Fifthly, according to value measurements, Egypt is a state dominated by largely politically passive subject culture attitudes. The majority of the countryside population long remained unaware of the prevailing political and economic situation. It was only during the 21st century when a real perception of the domestic situation was comprehended more widely, and the interest of citizen towards politics increased. All in all, many reasons have led to the democratization failures inside of Egypt Nevertheless, these reasons can be overcome, and Egypt can be democratized.

All of the theories of democratization overestimate the importance of structural factors, which leads to biased predictions of democracy in Egypt. Lipset considers wealth as the main factor behind efficient democratic transitions. Nevertheless, a clear correlation between economic wealth and democracy was not discovered. Acemoglu and Robinson argue that the income inequality is the steering force behind democratization processes, but in Egypt the perceptions of inequality influenced more than the statistical inequality. Also, Islam was proven to be compatible with democracy, and as the emergence of democratic revolution in a subject culture showed that cultural factors should maybe be considered as the dependent and not the independent variable. Instead, democracy seems possible given the growing demand for it, especially amongst the middle class.

### **3.2. Conclusions**

After analyzing Egypt's situation through various theoretical frameworks, seems that the democratization of Egypt is possible and mainly two obstacles in the way of democratization exist. Firstly, the position of the elite according to the NWW framework. The elite is strongly invested in Egypt's economy and thus has a strong incentive to preserve the current power position. Secondly, the foreign support for autocracy in Egypt derived from fears of instability. The United States and several other countries still continue their support for autocracy in Egypt, which notably hampers the democratization process. From these, the first one seems more crucial than the second. If the elites lost their interest to preserve their political position due to economic reasons, democratization would probably not lead to instability. If the foreign support for the Army discontinued, the elite would still have strong preferences to stay in power. Nevertheless, both of these factors are not inherent and can be changed.

The 2011 uprising and the short democratic period of rule showed that Egypt can organize democratic elections, and a demand for democratic governance exists. There are several reasons behind the 2011 revolution. The collective action problem often hampers large-scale uprisings towards authoritarian rule. Organizing mass protests is considered to demand a revolutionist 'elite' or some large-scale domestic problems that would act as a catalyst or the revolution. In Egypt's situation, the both elements were present. The uprising in Tunisia raised awareness amongst the youth of Egypt, economic problems culminated causing the poorest segment of the society to become even more miserable, and the Muslim Brotherhood had collected enough power underground to function as the conjunctive force of the revolution. These trends were a consequence of long-lasting developments, and finally made it too expensive for Mubarak's autocracy to defend itself towards democratic demands. The 2011 revolution shows that as a consequence from various tendencies the Egyptian people could revolt and demand more democratic government again.

All in all, it seems that the democratization of Egypt is achievable. The future's middle class, an educated but unemployed youth, seems to be moving towards greater integrity. Feelings of inequality are increasingly stimulating people to question the governmental structures in Egypt. After the revolution in 2011 the people have started to show increased interest towards politics, and that tendency is not likely to change despite the re-establishment of authoritarian rule. The 2011 uprising unified people, showing that there are existing tendencies that could lead a successful establishment of democracy to Egypt.

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