Theses and Dissertations 1. Thesis and Dissertation Collection, all items

2012-03

Assessing the Impact of Social Media on the 25 January 2011 Egyptian Revolution

Gawhry, Lilas N.

Monterey, California. Naval Postgraduate School

NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL

MONTEREY, CALIFORNIA

THESIS

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA ON THE 25 JANUARY 2011 EGYPTIAN REVOLUTION

by

Lilas N. Gawhry

March 2012

Thesis Advisor:	Abbas Kadhim
Second Reader:	Mohammed Hafez

Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

REPORT DOCUMENTATION PAGE		*Form Approved OMB No. 0704-0188*
Public reporting burden for this collection of information is estimated to average 1 hour per response, including the time for reviewing instruction, searching existing data sources, gathering and maintaining the data needed, and completing and reviewing the collection of information. Send comments regarding this burden estimate or any other aspect of this collection of information, including suggestions for reducing this burden, to Washington headquarters Services, Directorate for Information Operations and Reports, 1215 Jefferson Davis Highway, Suite 1204, Arlington, VA 22202-4302, and to the Office of Management and Budget, Paperwork Reduction Project (0704-0188) Washington DC 20503.		
1. AGENCY USE ONLY *(Leave blank)*	**2. REPORT DATE** March 2012	**3. REPORT TYPE AND DATES COVERED** Master's Thesis
4. TITLE AND SUBTITLE Assessing the Impact of Social Media on the 25 January 2011 Egyptian Revolution		**5. FUNDING NUMBERS**
6. AUTHOR(S) Lilas N. Gawhry		

7. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES)
   Naval Postgraduate School
   Monterey, CA 93943-5000
		8. PERFORMING ORGANIZATION REPORT NUMBER

9. SPONSORING /MONITORING AGENCY NAME(S) AND ADDRESS(ES) N/A		**10. SPONSORING/MONITORING AGENCY REPORT NUMBER**
11. SUPPLEMENTARY NOTES The views expressed in this thesis are those of the author and do not reflect the official policy or position of the Department of Defense or the U.S. Government. IRB Protocol number _____N/A_____.		
12a. DISTRIBUTION / AVAILABILITY STATEMENT Approved for public release; distribution is unlimited		**12b. DISTRIBUTION CODE**

13. ABSTRACT (maximum 200 words)

In the light of the dramatic events of the 25 January 2011 Egyptian Revolution, many media sources gave too much credit to social media and often labeled it as the "Facebook and Twitter revolution" while dismissing the role of Egypt's most important asset, the Egyptian citizens. This thesis aimed to explore the role and impact of the new social media on sustained social mobilization and the outcome of the 25 January 2011 Egyptian Revolution that led to the ousting of former President Hosni Mubarak. The research showed that social media was a vital tool that enabled preexisting networks to override state repressive measures; however, social media was only one of many tools (or factors) that smoothed the progress of social mobilization, and to some limited extent, had an impact on the outcome of the revolution. In sum, both online and offline tools, tactics and strategies, as well as political opportunities facilitated social mobilization, communication, and organization of Egyptian revolutionaries, and therefore, all impacted the outcome of the revolution.

14. SUBJECT TERMS 25 January Egyptian Revolution, Social Media, Egypt			**15. NUMBER OF PAGES** 87
			16. PRICE CODE
17. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF REPORT Unclassified	**18. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF THIS PAGE** Unclassified	**19. SECURITY CLASSIFICATION OF ABSTRACT** Unclassified	**20. LIMITATION OF ABSTRACT** UU

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

ASSESSING THE IMPACT OF SOCIAL MEDIA
ON THE 25 JANUARY 2011 EGYPTIAN REVOLUTION

Lilas N. Gawhry
Lieutenant, United States Navy
B.S., University of Maryland University College, 2007

Submitted in partial fulfillment of the
requirements for the degree of

MASTER OF ARTS IN SECURITY STUDIES
(MIDDLE EAST, SOUTH ASIA AND SUB-SAHARAN AFRICA)

from the

NAVAL POSTGRADUATE SCHOOL
March 2012

Author: Lilas N. Gawhry

Approved by: Abbas Kadhim
                 Thesis Advisor

                 Mohammed Hafez
                 Second Reader

                 Daniel Moran, PhD
                 Chair, Department of National Security Affairs

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

ABSTRACT

In the light of the dramatic events of the 25 January 2011 Egyptian Revolution, many media sources gave too much credit to social media and often labeled it as the "Facebook and Twitter revolution" while dismissing the role of Egypt's most important asset, the Egyptian citizens. This thesis aimed to explore the role and impact of the new social media on sustained social mobilization and the outcome of the 25 January 2011 Egyptian Revolution that led to the ousting of former President Hosni Mubarak. The research showed that social media was a vital tool that enabled preexisting networks to override state repressive measures; however, social media was only one of many tools (or factors) that smoothed the progress of social mobilization, and to some limited extent, had an impact on the outcome of the revolution. In sum, both online and offline tools, tactics and strategies, as well as political opportunities facilitated social mobilization, communication, and organization of Egyptian revolutionaries, and therefore, all impacted the outcome of the revolution.

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

TABLE OF CONTENTS

LIST OF FIGURES

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

LIST OF ACRONYMS AND ABBREVIATIONS

ASU   Arab Socialist Union

IDSC   Information and Decision Support Center
ISP   Internet-Service Provider

NAC   National Association for Change
NPD   National Democratic Party

OCR   Optical Character Recognition

RCC   Revolutionary Command Council
RNN   Rasd News Network

UAR   United Arab Republic

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

I. INTRODUCTION

A. MAJOR RESEARCH QUESTION

Under repressive authoritarian governments, the perceived impact of the new social media on contemporary revolutionary movements, more specifically on the Arab Spring, is that today's revolutions require digital tools as these tools facilitate mass organizing, coordination, encourage demonstrations, and mobilization of groups while bypassing the traditional state control of the media. The aim of the thesis is to explore the role and impact, if any, of non-conventional media or the new social media (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, blogs, etc.) on sustained social mobilization and the outcome of the 25 January 2011 Egyptian Revolution, hereafter known as the 25 January Revolution, that led to the ousting of former President Hosni Mubarak. The main research question is as follows. How did social media impact and/or effect the creation and mobilization of social movements against an authoritarian regime, as observed during the 25 January Revolution?

B. IMPORTANCE

In the light of the dramatic events of the 25 January Revolution, it is important to evaluate the impact of the new social media and its effect on the revolution and recognize how valuable it is becoming in the Middle East and North Africa under authoritarian regimes. The role of the social media in relevance to regime change has gained remarkable attention since the civil unrest that started in Tunisia and spread in various countries in the Middle East, including Egypt. The 25 January Revolution was the first major leaderless revolution where social media capabilities were highlighted as being influential in initiating and coordinating the protests because under authoritarian regimes, conventional media (radio, television, and print media) are heavily censored, monitored, and partially owned by the government. The government controls what people watch and read, and in many instances, fabricates the truth. Newspapers agencies in Egypt, for example, are heavily monitored by the Ministry of Information to eliminate any regime

criticism. The Egyptian Emergency Law also entitles the government to arrest citizens for any period of time and without the right to trial. Additionally, without permission from the government, any (five or more citizen) gatherings are illegal.[1] Therefore, in fear of the Emergency Law and/or being incarcerated by security services, Egyptians are repressed and unable to express their social, economic and political frustrations, as well as human rights issues in a country characterized by a high unemployment rate, corrupt regime, poor economy, and extreme poverty.

As the new social media was on the rise and became popular among the under 30 youth population, the government was less successful in regulating and monitoring it; therefore, many saw an opportunity to break the fear barrier and voice their anger and concerns, while challenging the government at the same time; in other words, freedom of speech was found through the World Wide Web. What makes the social media unique when compared to conventional media, is its ability of instant communication/interaction, real time dissemination of information, free access to information, speedy reaction to events, affordability, and the ability to self publish.[2]

Whether or not the new social media had an impact on the 25 January Revolution, it is still of importance to study it as it may ultimately have an impact on the Middle East. The civil unrest across the Middle East took the world by surprise possibly due to digital activism, and therefore, it is vital to study and understand the role and the possible impact of the new social media on revolutionary change. Studying, and closely monitoring, the new social media can turn into a valuable open source collection tool in an effort to understand the motivation of those who strive to create political change under repressive authoritarian governments. In addition, monitoring the new social media can offer analysis on why allied and antagonistic regimes may possibly re-strategize domestic and foreign policies (as they see fit) depending on whether or not the new social media threatens their rule.

---

[1] Jijo Jacob, "What is Egypt's April 6 Movement?" February 1, 2011, http://www.ibtimes.com/articles/107387/20110201/what-is-egypt-s-april-6-movement.htm.

[2] Adel A. Sadek, "The Internet and Political Reform in Egypt," *Central for Political and Strategic Studies*, July 15, 2007, http://acpss.ahram.org.eg/eng/ahram/2004/7/5/EGYP97.HTM.

C. PROBLEMS AND HYPOTHESES

This thesis explores three possible explanations of the impact of the new social media on social mobilization and the outcome of the 25 January Revolution. The first hypothesis is the null hypothesis in which social media had no critical impact on sustained social mobilization and the outcome of the Egyptian Revolution. In other words, the first hypothesis states that the 25 January Revolution would have happened without the effects of social media. This hypothesis highlights that the desire for political reforms were present before the tweets, YouTube videos, and Facebook posts moved the situation to the world stage and propelled those forms of media into the spotlight.

The second hypothesis is the antithesis of the first; it argues that social media was the most critical factor in achieving sustained social mobilization, and therefore, it was the most critical factor that affected the outcome of the revolution. This hypothesis argues that the new social media undoubtedly had the most critical and influential role in fomenting the revolution and the underlying support for reforms. The new social media was responsible for the revolution and was absolutely essential for the events to unfold as they did for the main reason that it allowed Egyptians to break the fear barrier and mobilize and protest under a repressive authoritarian government.

The third hypothesis is the synthesis of the first two hypotheses. It posits that social media was a vital tool that enabled pre-existing networks to override state repressive measures; however, social media was only one of many tools (or factors) that smoothed the progress of social mobilization, and to some limited extent, had an impact on the outcome of the revolution. This hypothesis does not downplay completely the role of the new social media in facilitating the transmission of the message and mobilization of resources; however, the new social media is not a rationale for the revolution. The praiseworthy actions taken by the Egyptians in Tahrir Square and around the country were the key actors involved, not the various media tools available to spread the message. This hypothesis highlights that revolutions existed before the new social media, and therefore, the new social media was not a pillar of the revolution in and of itself.

3

One issue that the major research question can possibly raise is that now the world has witnessed the impact of popular unrest and how it led to revolution, is the future role of social media going to be in question, especially when social media are still currently evolving?

D.   LITERATURE REVIEW

1.   Introduction

Current new social media studies introduce three different schools of thought on the new social media and its impact on contentious politics under authoritarian governments. However, before introducing the three different schools of thought, it is important to understand the role of the Internet. According to Andrew Chadwich, in *Internet Politics: States, Citizens and New Communication Technologies*, "The Internet is a network of networks of one-to-one, one-to-many, many-to-many, and many-to-one local, national, and global information and communication technologies with relatively open standards and protocols and with comparatively low barriers to entry."[3] A telephone call is an example of a one-to-one communication media, while conventional broadcast media (such as television and radios) are one-to-many. The new social media can function as one-to-one, one-to-many, and most importantly, many-to-many means of communication.[4]

2.   First School of Thought: The New Social Media Is a Critical Tool in Social Mobilization, but So Are the Traditional Mobilization Strategies

An ongoing debate exists on whether the new social media had the most impact, a significant impact, or no impact on bringing about political change and/or even toppling authoritarian regimes in the Middle East. The first school of thought argues that although some point out that the role of the social media had been overstated and exaggerated, they

---

[3] Andrew Chadwish, *Internet Politics: States, Citizens and New Communication Technologies* (NY: Oxford University Press, 2006), 7.

[4] Clay Shirky, *Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations* (London: Benguin Books, 2008), 86–87.

emphasize that the role of the new social media is a critical tool when used by citizens committed to bringing about political changes (democratization, reforms, etc.); however, traditional mobilization strategies cannot be disregarded.

Rafat Ali, a social media expert and founder of PaidContent, stated that for the Egyptian Revolution, modern communication and technology had the most potent impact, especially Facebook and Twitter. Ali claimed, "Facebook definitely had a role in organizing this revolution, it acts like an accelerant to conditions which already exist in the country."[5] Like Ali, Philip Seib, in *New Media and the New Middle East*, illustrates in his arguments how the new media technologies in the Middle East are reshaping lives, as well as politics. Seib points out that the power of the Internet now allows Arab societies to participate in the political decision-making process, and therefore, citizens are "…able to plant the seeds for democracy and freedom and nourish its growth."[6]

The actual growth of communication over social media has not been a major concern for scholars; however, as a tool, its enabling power to create a sense of collective behavior that transforms to collective action, and therefore, may impact the outbreak of a civil unrest under an authoritarian regime, is. Emotional interaction occurring over social networks proves that relationships matter, and in turn, encourages citizens to come together and protest for a cause. According to Sidney Tarrow in *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*, "The culture of collective action is built on frames and emotions oriented toward mobilizing people out of their compliance and into action in conflictual setting."[7]

Although the new social media can create a sense of collective behavior and action, it still cannot replace traditional social mobilization strategies, which is best illustrated during the 25 January Revolution when Egyptian authorities cut off Internet and telephone access in the midst of protesting for several days before restoring it. The

---

[5] Sam Gustin, "Social Media Sparked, Accelerated Egypt's Revolutionary Fire," *EPICENTER*, February 11, 2011, www.wired.com/epicenter/2011/02/egypts-revolutionary -fire/.

[6] Philip Seib, *New Media and the New Middle East* (NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007), 230.

[7] Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*, 2nd ed. (NY: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 112.

disruption of the Internet and telephone lines hindered the government's efforts to conduct damage control and stall the demonstrations; in fact, it encouraged traditional mobilization tactics and face-to-face communication, increased physical presence in the streets, and focal points locations transformed into various gatherings locations.[8]

3. Second School of Thought: The New Social Media Can Impact Social Mobilization; However, There Are Other Relative Factors That Come Into Play

Within the second school of thought, the common consensus in the literature is that social communication and revolutions are not a new phenomenon and it is inaccurate to state that social media causes revolution. As stated earlier, social media is a vital tool but tools alone are not responsible for revolutions; other contextual factors play a significant role that can impact social mobilization. To argue otherwise, is equivalent to saying that revolutions did not exist before social media; revolutions happened in the past before the existence of the Internet. For example, Aaron Ng stresses that social media is only a facilitator to revolutions just like "Pamphlets were used during the American Revolution in the eighteenth century, tape recorders in the 1979 Iranian Revolution, and fax machines during the Tiananmen Square incident in 1989."[9] Like Ng, others stress it is inaccurate to allow the tools (social media) used by social activists to be the one praised, rather social activists should be defined and praised by their causes, not their tools.[10] In other words, the people using the social media are responsible and accountable for the political change; the social media was not more than an enabling tool when political and social issues are bubbling underneath the surface.[11]

---

[8] Navid Hassanpour, "Media Disruption Exacerbates Revolutionary Unrest: Evidence from Mubarak's Natural Experiment" (paper presented at the American Political Science Association 2011 Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, August 7, 2011), http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1903351&download=yes##.

[9] Aaron Ng, "Facebook and Twitter: New Hope of Revolution?" *S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies Commentaries*, no. 64/2011, April 27, 2011, http://www.rsis.edu.sg/publications/Perspective/RSIS0642011.pdf.

[10] Malcolm Gladwell, "Small Change: Why the Revolution Will Not Be Tweeted?" *The New Yorker*, October 4, 2010, http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/10/04/101004fa_fact_gladwell.

[11] "Facebook's Growth in the Arab World Is Surging with Demands for Political Change," *Managing Technology*, February 23, 2011, http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/arabic/article.cfm?articleid=2626.

In support of the conventional knowledge in literature that social media alone is ineffective in bringing about political change under an authoritarian regime, some argue that social media and/or new technologies can harm such efforts as authoritarian regimes, according to Professor of New Media, Clay Shirky, at New York University, are becoming better at controlling and silencing or suppressing the dissent.[12] In authoritarian and semi-authoritarian regimes, governments are implementing methods to monitor, block, interdict certain websites and shape Internet usage. In China, for example, authorities block and filter certain websites, especially those of human rights organizations and/or politically sensitive foreign news media, while Cuba delimits access to the Internet. Similarly, in the Middle East, in countries, such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates, specific censorship restrictions are implemented to prevent access to certain websites.[13] From a different take, countries, such as Iran, can crack down on protestors from the Internet as they did after the Green Revolution collapsed. Iranian security forces were able to follow the trail the protestors left behind online in which it aided in their arrests, which is an example of how the Internet can become a "double-edged sword" where technology can help and, at the same time, could harm those who use it.[14] Another issue commonly emphasized with social media (when used as a tool to aid in social mobilization) is the phenomena of slacktivism. Slacktivism is simply supporting a cause online to make an individual feel as if a change or a difference is being made, when in reality, such mouse clicking amounts to little contribution in real life.[15]

---

[12] Clay Shirky, "The Political Power of Social Media: Technology, the Public Sphere, and Political Change," *Foreign Affairs*, February 2011, http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/67038/clay-shirky/the-political-power-of-social-media.

[13] Shanthi Kalathil and Taylor C. Boas, "The Internet and State Control in Authoritarian Regimes: China, Cuba, and the Counterrevolution," *First Monday* 6, no. 8 (2001): 23, http://firstmonday.org/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/viewArticle/876/785.

[14] Ng, "Facebook and Twitter: New Hope of Revolution?"

[15] Onnik Krikorian, "Social Media and Political Activism in the Caucasus," *EAP Community*, August 10, 2011, http://www.easternpartnership.org/community/debate/social-media-and-political-activism-caucasus.

4. Third School of Thought: The New Social Media Has the Power to Revolutionize the Methods Political Activists Are Exploiting to Reach a Broad Audience Expeditiously

The general consensus is that social media as a tool, when compared to censored conventional media, are unique in its ability of instant communication, interaction, real time dissemination of information, free access to information, speedy reaction to events, affordability, and the ability to self publish.[16] Joseph Roberts, in *How the Internet is Changing the Practice of Politics in the Middle East: Political Protest, New Social Movements and, Electronic Samizdat*, calls attention to how social movements take full advantage of new media technologies to reach a broad audience, endorse and execute their agendas, while recruiting new members and raising funds if necessary.[17]

To illustrate, Egyptians were not using the new social media to post pictures of recent vacations, generate status updates for their friends on the latest fashion trends, or follow celebrities on Twitter. They were utilizing the social media to tackle sensitive issues, such as corruption, unemployment, lack of fair and free elections, poverty, and human rights issues. Social media is not a new phenomenon prior to the 25 January Revolution; human rights activist were using the new social media to post videos of Egyptian police brutality and abuse. For example, a recent incident of police torture was the 2010 "We are all Khaled Said" movement that started as a Facebook page, after Egyptian businessman Khaled Said was brutality murdered by police forces for his attempt to try and expose corruption, and quickly transformed into a full anti-police brutality and abuse campaign.[18] The "We are all Khaled Said" Facebook page was created by Wael Ghonim, the Google executive for the Middle East and North Africa, who although managed the page anonymously, was shortly detained by Egyptian

---

[16] Sadek, "The Internet and Political Reform in Egypt."

[17] Joseph W. Roberts, *How the Internet Is Changing the Practice of Politics in the Middle East: Political Protest, New Social Movements, and Electronic Samizda* (Edwin Mellen Press, 2009).

[18] Mike Giglio, "'We Are All Khaled Said': Will the Revolution Come to Egypt?" January 22, 2011, http://www.thedailybeast.com/blogs-and-stories/2011-01-22/we-are-all-khaled-said-will-the-revolution-come-to-egypt/full.

authorities for 10 days prior to his release.[19] With thousands of supporters, "We are all Khaled Said" highlighted the corrupt and abusive regime and broke the silence of many, while giving them the opportunity to detail out protests. Another example is that of the 2008 April 6 Movement that generated over 70,000 supporters on Facebook in an effort to raise awareness of striking textile workers. As a result, on April 6, thousands of workers rioted, four citizens died, and 400 were arrested.[20] Using the new social media, activists have been building their influence over the past few years to the degree that when Tunisian Mohammed Bouazizi set himself on fire to protest against unemployment, his story was popular over the new social media and became the final straw that inspired the civil unrest in Egypt. These examples illustrate how the new social media revolutionized the methods political activists use to mobilize and seek maximum support for their cause.

5. Possible Gaps in Literature

Just like it is widely believed (and as mentioned earlier) that social media alone does not cause revolutions, overthrow dictators, or even cause civil unrest, a popular belief exists that social media is a threat to authoritarian regimes and such regimes are attempting to limit access to it. However, the role of the Internet, and more specifically, social media or other new technologies, in literature fail to address how it can undermine authoritarian rule. Some argue that scholarly work on the Internet and politics has been mainly focused on advanced democracies and not enough on authoritarian regimes. Empirical work conducted on social media (or other new technologies) and politics under authoritarian governments is rare as such tools are relatively new and will continue to evolve.[21] In other words, and as Daniel Lynch argued, in *After the Propaganda State: Media, Politics and 'Thought Work' in Reformed China*, "on the question of

---

[19] "Egypt's Revolution by Social Media: Facebook and Twitter Let the People Keep Ahead of the Regime," *The Wall Street Journal*, February 14, 2011, http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703786804576137980252177072.html.

[20] "April 6 Youth Movement: How is Started?" February 22, 2011, http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/revolution-in-cairo/inside-april6-movement/#.

[21] Kalathil and Boas, "The Internet and State Control in Authoritarian Regimes: China, Cuba, and the Counterrevolution."

telecommunications, the silence of the transitions literature is deafening."[22] It is important to note that opinions have been published, but a general absence of scholarly media content analysis on the new social media when compared to conventional media does exist.

6.   Conclusion

Today's information environment is extremely complex and currently evolving. No doubt exists that the flow of information over the Internet and the manner in which people communicate impacts politics; however, it only impacts politics to an extent. Among the three school of thoughts discussed earlier, the common consensus among all of them give importance to social media as a tool, and not a catalyst, to bring to light political frustrations, concerns, and issues in an effort to bring about political change under authoritarian governments. In this era of globalization and the diversity of the new Internet technologies, understanding the new social media is paramount for today's political environment, especially the political environment under authoritarian regimes in the Middle East.

E.   METHODS AND SOURCES

The author's methodology was an in-depth case study analysis of the 25 January Revolution as social media was used extensively and may have impacted the dramatic events and the outcome of the revolution. The selected case examined the facts and analysis of the events.

Conventional (newspapers) and non-conventional media sources (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, blogs, etc.), both in English and Arabic, were used as empirical data. The author also reviewed various primary, secondary and tertiary sources to include, but not limited to, media studies, journals for background on conventional and non-conventional media, historical trends and media effects in the Arab world, public polling data/surveys, online open source reports, and interviews with media scholars and/or

---

[22] Daniel C. Lynch, *After the Propaganda State: Media, Politics and 'Thought Work' in Reformed China* (Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999), 227.

political figures on the subject. This research also focused on the role of the Internet, social networking group trend analysis, and youth opposition movements to analyze accurately the civil unrest events that occurred in the Middle East.

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

II. EGYPT'S AUTHORITARIAN REGIME: FROM NASSER TO THE 25 JANUARY REVOLUTION

A. INTRODUCTION

As the 2011 Tahrir Square revolutionary change took the world by surprise, many questioned why Egyptians did not rise up earlier against the regime's inequities that had been building up over the decades. Alaa Al Aswany, in *On the State of Egypt: What Made the Revolution Inevitable*, illustrated the reason best as he stated, "Egyptians are an ancient people with a history stretching back seven thousand years and so, like old men, they have the wisdom to avoid problems insofar as they can while continuing to live and bring up their children. Only when they are certain that compromise is no longer possible they turn to revolution."[23] The 25 January Revolution did not just happen in a vacuum; since the 1952 Free Officers Revolution, conditions in Egypt dating back decades during the Gamal Abdel Nasser, Anwar Sadat, and Hosni Mubarak's years all contributed to the 25 January Revolution. During the last 60 years, Egypt was trapped in a state of authoritarianism that ultimately led to dependence on state repression, single-party hegemony, and economic cronyism. The aim of this chapter is to cover a brief history of the Egyptian authoritarian regime up to the detailed events of the 25 January Revolution. This chapter highlights specific events, policies, and reforms implemented under Nasser, Sadat, and Mubarak, with special emphasis on the main elements (state repression, single party hegemony, crony capitalism, the over exaggeration of militant Islamism, and peace with Israel) that empowered Mubarak to stay in power for three decades all under the false impression of civic order and political stability.

---

[23] Alaa Al Aswany, *On the State of Egypt: What Made the Revolution Inevitable* (NY: Random House, Inc., 2011), viii.

B.   GAMAL ABDEL NASSER

Gamal Abdel Nasser was the leader of a small group of army officers, who were united by patriotism, called themselves the Free Officers and were actively plotting to overthrow the corrupt and British influenced monarchy in Egypt in 1952. The 1952 Revolution abolished the Egyptian monarchy and marked the beginning of Gamal Abdel Nasser to power. As Egypt was declared a republic, Nasser became the "soft-hearted"[24] engaged and independent authoritarian leader from 1954 until his death in 1970. During that period, Nasser was the president of Egypt and also the leader of the Arab world. Highly engaged in Arab affairs, his influence on other Arab states was so powerful that the term Nasserism was linked to a common political reference of pan-Arab nationalism, anti-imperialism and anti-Zionism, as well as socialism.[25] In fact, Nasser overtly emphasized Arabism and Pan-Arab unity in his 1956 constitution as it stated that Egypt is an Arab country within an Arab nation.[26] Nasser presidential years and institutional legacy are marked with various significant events, policies, and reforms that shaped Egypt on what is it is today.

Nasser initial efforts were to end the British occupation in Egypt, establish institutions and social reforms, eliminate feudalism, and formulate a strong army. Nasser led the Revolutionary Command Council (RCC) to serve as the executive body of the government with the intention to respond to situations as they rose. The RCC gained legitimacy as it introduced the Agrarian Reform Law that stripped the Egyptian aristocracy from its land, along with the laws that abolished all civil or Turkish titles (pasha, bey), and the introduction of the new constitution. The political system during Nasser's rule aimed at guiding the popular will; candidates of the national assembly were nominated and screened while decision-making authority was centralized giving maximum powers to the president. Nasser generated the legacy of a single-party regime, which basically became the hegemonic party system and gave maximum powers to the

---

[24] William L. Cleveland and Martin Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East* (CO: Westview Press, 2009), 301.

[25] Ibid.

[26] Ibid., 310–313.

president. Although Sadat and Mubarak opened up the system to a multi-party pluralism, the single party system still remained a hegemonic party system. Additionally, Nasser empowered the military to the degree that it became a critical institution in Egypt's polity.[27]

As a result, every president after Nasser came from a military background and state repression became a standard operating procedure through the empowerment of the military and security institutions. For example, after the emergency law (Law 162 of 1958) was enacted, Nasser became obsessed with the media most likely because he conquered the Arab world through the radio. He placed heavy censorship on the media, as well as restrictions on union activities and political organizations.[28] Nasser also had a secret police, intelligence services, political spies within the Arab Socialist Union (ASU), and political prisoners (members of the Muslim Brotherhood and Communists) who were beaten and tortured. In addition, Nasser's nationalist status excluded Islam from its political agenda, hence his emphasis on a secular Arab nation and the crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood, as well as the evident role that Egyptian Christians played in public life. To an extent, Nasser institutionalized state repression through torture and political coercion and over-exaggerated the threat from militant Islamism (i.e., members of the Muslim Brotherhood), that later positioned Sadat and Mubarak to fear and repress them at varying degrees.[29]

The Egyptian industry was underdeveloped and the slow paced industrialization was the result of low levels of public and private investment and population growth that outnumbered the rate of employment billets, and therefore, affecting the standard of living. The solution to such problems was the creation of a hydroelectric dam on the Nile near Aswan, later known as the Aswan High Dam. The Aswan High Dam, a brilliant invention that would politically increase the government's prestige, had economic advantages, as it would store enough water to expand land cultivation and generate

---

[27] Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 310–313.

[28] Steven A. Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt: From Nasser to Tahrir Square* (NY: Oxford University Press, 2011), 82.

[29] Tarek Osman, *Egypt on the Brink: From Nasser to Mubarak* (New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010), 49–68.

enough hydroelectric supply for the whole country. However, the project required funds that the Egyptians simply did not possess at the time without engaging with the international community.[30] Without compromising Egypt's sovereignty, the assertive Nasser announced the nationalization of the Suez Canal in 1956 to take the revenues from the canal and fund the Aswan High Dam project. The Western powers reaction of the nationalization of the Suez Canal was labeled as hostile as Nasser relieved the French and the British from having any control over the Suez Canal. As a result, Britain, France, and Israel generated a joint agreement (the Tripartite Aggression) to attack Egypt but fell short of complete execution as the United States and the Soviet Union intervened. In turn, the weeklong conflict of the Suez crisis transformed from a military defeat to a political triumph for Nasser and Egypt.[31]

Such triumph placed Nasser in the spotlight as a heroic Arab leader, a status that was a burden, as well as an opportunity for Nasser. His success and prestige were built on his perceived courage to stand in the face of the former imperial powers, and to maintain his prestige, he felt that he had no choice other than to continue with his foreign policy successes that many Arabs expected of him. The creation of the United Arab Republic (UAR) in 1958 symbolized just that, an Arab unity, while the collapse of the UAR was a negative hit on Nasser's prestige that somewhat forced him to reassess his goals. Following the collapse of the UAR, Nasser adopted Arab socialism, which included reforms in egalitarianism and social warfare.[32]

Throughout the post-Suez decade, Egypt's dominant Arab nationalist role disseminated its influence throughout the Arab world as Egypt supported the Algerian Revolution and the Yemeni revolutionary forces against the monarchy. Additionally, Egypt became the ideal model and inspiration that rebel movements mimicked throughout the Gulf.[33] Although the Egyptian economy, job security, and educational opportunities were improving under Nasser during the 1950s and 1960s, Nasser's active

---

[30] Eugene Rogan, *The Arabs*: *A History* (NY: Basic Books, 2009), 286–287.

[31] Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt: From Nasser to Tahrir Square*, 67–69.

[32] Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 313–317.

[33] Osman, *Egypt on the Brink: From Nasser to Mubarak*, 49–52.

engagement with the Arab states and foreign policy can still be criticized in diverting his attention away from domestic issues, proper management, and oversight of his government. The defeat of 1967 Six Day War was the apparent result of such criticism that questioned Nasser's achievements.

The aftermath of the Israeli 1967 June war was a humiliating event for Nasser and the Arab world and, without question, marked the end of the Nasser era. Years later Nasser's successor, Sadat, stated that Nasser did not die in 1970 but symbolically died on the first day of the 1967 war.[34] Although Nasser was a dictator, he was an honest dictator with a corrupt and mismanaged military; he trusted his military leaders who were incompetent. Due to the outcome of the war, Nasser announced his resignation that loyal Egyptians refused to accept, and therefore, brought back their hero to govern a country to which he gave structure, a feeling of pride, and a sense of excitement and hope for a better tomorrow. Unfortunately, the defeat of the 1967 war weakened the Nasser era as Nasser shifted his focus on political survival and somewhat abandoned his policies that defined Nasserism. The aftermath of the war can be characterized by the increased Soviet Union influence on Egyptian military, the Egyptian-Israeli war of attrition, the acceptance of the UN Resolution 242, and the apparent distance of the Arab unity quest.[35]

Although Egyptians were poor in the early 1950s and stayed poor throughout the end of the 1960s, Nasser offered hope for a better future through his agricultural reform, free education, minimum wages, and employment guarantee for college graduates.[36] However, accusations against Nasser were beyond economic reforms. Some of the issues that proved lacking in the aftermath of the 1967 war were the public sector. The public sector adopted a "…Soviet-style system of sterile thinking, a deathbed for talent, a site of mediocre resource allocation, inefficiency, suffocating bureaucracy, waste and decrepit

---

[34] Osman, *Egypt on the Brink: From Nasser to Mubarak*, 64.

[35] Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 344.

[36] Galal Amin, *Egypt in the Era of Hosni Mubarak 1981–2011* (NY: The American University in Cairo Press, 2011), 31.

management; in no way could it support lasting economic development in the country."[37] Some can argue that land reform, for example, replaced capitalized large landowners with low-skilled individuals who produced low quality products, affected the marketing management of crops, and therefore, established poor links to the international markets. Going beyond economic mismanagement, Nasser created a military bureaucratic system that may have stood in the road of democracy as he failed to transfer his aspirations into institutions, and more importantly, into a state. The failure to define a state occurred as all of Nasser's projects and reforms identified and revolved around him whether it was intentional or not; without Nasser, changes, such as the Arab nationalist identity and foreign policies, etc., could not survive. Although Nasser's projects became the foundation of the Egyptian government and authority, they failed to evolve into proper institutions, and such failure became evident as Nasser's successors steered Egypt away from Socialism and revised its strategic agenda.[38]

Understanding the nature of Nasser's years in power is critical as it can shed light on what eventually led to the 25 January Revolution that took the world, and even Egyptians, by surprise. With that said, it is of importance to note that Nasser did not devote enough time towards domestic issues nor proper oversight of his leadership. Instead, his institutional legacy consisted of state repression through the empowerment of the military and security institutions. Additionally, he created a hegemonic single-party regime; and therefore, halted any potential progress towards democracy. Although Sadat and Mubarak somewhat entertained the idea of including the Muslim Brotherhood in politics, the exclusion of Islamism was Nasser's legacy and continued with Sadat and Mubarak; both feared and repressed them and may have even over-exaggerated their threat.

C.   ANWAR SADAT

Anwar Sadat, Nasser's successor who initially had no popularity and insignificant number of supporters, came to power with efforts to steer Egypt away from Nasserism.

---

[37] Osman, *Egypt on the Brink: From Nasser to Mubarak*, 67.

[38] Ibid., 67–70.

Sadat's efforts "…abolished Nasser's socialism; altered Egypt's strategic orientation from Arab nationalism and a close friendship with the USSR to an alliance with the United States; shunned progressive revolutionism and joined Saudi-led Arab conservatism; diluted the public sector in favour of resurgent capitalism; and reversed the regime's relationship with the people."[39]

Sadat inherited Nasser's economic and diplomatic problems. For example, the years post the 1967 defeat were years of no war and a no peace situation with Israel, which in turn, took a negative toll on the Egyptian economy (tourism, Suez Canal, and foreign investment). Sadat assessed that to influence Israel in a way that could favor Egypt, he must distance his alliance with the Soviet Union. Therefore, he dismissed approximately 20,000 Soviet military members from Egypt in 1972. The next step was to show the United States that the Israeli military was not as powerful as the United States assumed it was in an effort to have the United States enter a negotiating process. The result was the October 1973 war considered a strategic victory for Egypt and a political triumph for Sadat as Egyptians launched an initial attack on the Israeli forces on the east bank of the Suez Canal and succeeded in crossing the canal. The sudden attack on October 1973 later labeled Sadat as the "Hero of the Crossing." [40] The next step for the "hero" was to tackle the economy.

Sadat's economic project, al-Infitah or "the opening," deviated from Nasser's socialism and towards promoting foreign investments, the private sector, and the integration with the international community. However, with foreign debt, high inflation rate and defense budget, only the wealthy benefited from al-Infitah.[41] The system was flawed as the regime used al-Infitah to "…build its own power base, to reward its cronies and allies and to create a capitalist class whose loyalties were not to free markets and open economies – and certainly not to democracy – but rather to the regime itself."[42] Al-Infitah strengthened the private sector, and as a result, the private sector became a

---

[39] Osman, *Egypt on the Brink: From Nasser to Mubarak*, 70.

[40] Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 374–377.

[41] Ibid., 377–378.

[42] Osman, *Egypt on the Brink: From Nasser to Mubarak*, 118.

significant economic actor in Egypt; Sadat and his regime quickly aligned with the wealthy while neglecting the poor.[43] As a result, Sadat opened up the political system to crony capitalism, which persisted after his death.

Unlike Nasser who lived and died in the same house that he had before the revolution,[44] Sadat enjoyed presidential perks. For example, villas, mansions, and a special presidential office in an old royal palace in Cairo identified Sadat as similar to the corrupt Faruq II or the khedive. Sadat's high styles of living, along with his association with the Western image and his wife's public role, were factors that most certainly contributed to his unpopularity among the Egyptian population,[45] and his failure to identify with them. Nasser, on the other hand, lived a moderate life along with his wife without the extravagances that Sadat and his wife possessed; and therefore, the majority of the Egyptian population was able to identify with him and perceive him as one of them.

The "Hero of the Crossing" lifted some restrictions on the press and the Muslim Brotherhood; however, criticism of the government, the military, and the president and his family remained off limits. Sadat also ended the ASU and replaced it with the National Democratic Party (NPD), and placed Law 40 as a mean to keep unwanted political groups away from his political area of responsibility. Of note, Law 40 (amended in 2005) played a critical role in Egyptian politics up until the 25 January Revolution that brought down the regime.[46] Sadat's failed efforts to improve the country gave him no other choice but to arrange with a settlement with the Israelis in hopes of improving the Egyptian economy. Shortly after the riots that broke out in response to the increase in subsidies, the world tuned in to watch Sadat as he made his way to Jerusalem to announce peace with Israel publicly. Less than a year later, Sadat signed the Camp David Accords on September 17, 1978. The Egyptian population was not at ease with the Camp David Accords Israeli agreement that Sadat committed Egypt to for the reason that Israel

---

[43] Osman, *Egypt on the Brink: From Nasser to Mubarak*, 127.

[44] Amin, *Egypt in the Era of Hosni Mubarak 1981–2011*, 30.

[45] Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 381.

[46] Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt: From Nasser to Tahrir Square*, 139–140.

continued to occupy other Arab territory (the Gaza Strip, the West Bank, and East Jerusalem). In addition, Egyptian bitterness increased as Egypt was perceived as becoming distant from the Islamic Arab world and closer to the West (the United States). Sadat, also known as the "man of peace," became characterized as the one who supported peace with Israel and becoming close to the West, which Mubarak adopted from Sadat and continued while in power.[47]

Like Nasser's socialist approach that failed to prevent the 1967 defeat, Sadat's capitalist approach failed to improve the economy and did not produce perceptible improvements. Ironically enough, since Sadat lessened the restrictions on the Muslim Brotherhood's activities, an Islamic militant group that opposed his policies, his backing of the exiled Shah of Iran, and Egypt's relationship with Israel and the United States, assassinated him on October 6, 1981. It is important to note that active Islamic militant groups increased since the 1979 Iranian Revolution.[48] A month before his assassination, Sadat became aware of the rise of the dangerous clandestine Islamic groups (al- Jihad and al-Takfir wa al-Hijrah) against his regime, and therefore, he ordered the arrest and imprisonment of over 1,000 suspects. Such militant Islamic groups were educated individuals and the product of "…a mixture of religious belief, social despair, and economic deprivation."[49] Mubarak also adopted Sadat's pattern of inclusion and then exclusion of Islamists. Although Sadat had dramatic shifts in foreign and internal economic policies, he, however, did not alter the political state of authoritarianism that Nasser had set; the single party hegemony and the role of the military and security institutions remained forceful, and therefore, allowed room for state repression and economic cronyism.

---

[47] Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 377–382.

[48] Arthur Goldschmidt Jr., "Egypt Under Mubarak," in *The Contemporary Middle East,* ed. Karl Yambert (Oxford: Westview Press, 2006), 211.

[49] Cleveland and Bunton, *A History of the Modern Middle East*, 381–382.

D. HOSNI MUBARAK

Hosni Mubarak, Sadat's successor, was sworn into office on October 14, 1981 before the People's Assembly and had a promising start. Mubarak's impressive military background and reputation as the commander of the Air Force, and later as a vice president, earned him the respect of the people. Mubarak's first speech to parliament was a positive indicator towards Egypt's future as he reached out to the opposition and also as he stated to use the emergency law in a limited manner. Mubarak's challenges in the 1980s and early 1990s were economically based (external debt, significant unemployment, and a growing population[50]).[51] During his first term, Mubarak focused heavily on domestic issues; he freed thousands of prisoners, eased censorship on the press and the professional syndicates, and appeared to guide Egypt toward a democratic political system (open elections of 1984). However, Mubarak's intentions were a clever tactic in an effort to appear as if he was actively trying to lead the country towards a democratic setting; however, he was only trying to contain a tense country. In other words, the players that such reforms could be applicable to were actually agents controlled by the government; and therefore, such players (or agents) never evolved into actual opposition groups or groups that insisted on change. Furthermore, Mubarak expanded the national security forces (Mabaheth-Amn-A-Dolah), the central security (containment forces) apparatus, and only trusted his security chiefs, as well as the heads of his intelligence services.[52] By the fourth presidential oath and during his first 20 years in office, it was clear that Mubarak became the "Pharaoh" of Egypt; his "…economic reform became crony capitalism, political change was fortifying the authoritarian system under the guise of reform, and presidential succession that meant a potential inheritance of power."[53]

---

[50] See Figure 1.

[51] Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt: From Nasser to Tahrir Square*, 157–159.

[52] Osman, *Egypt on the Brink: From Nasser to Mubarak*, 166–171.

[53] Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt: From Nasser to Tahrir Square*, 167.

Egypt : Population

21% growth since 2000

78.9 million
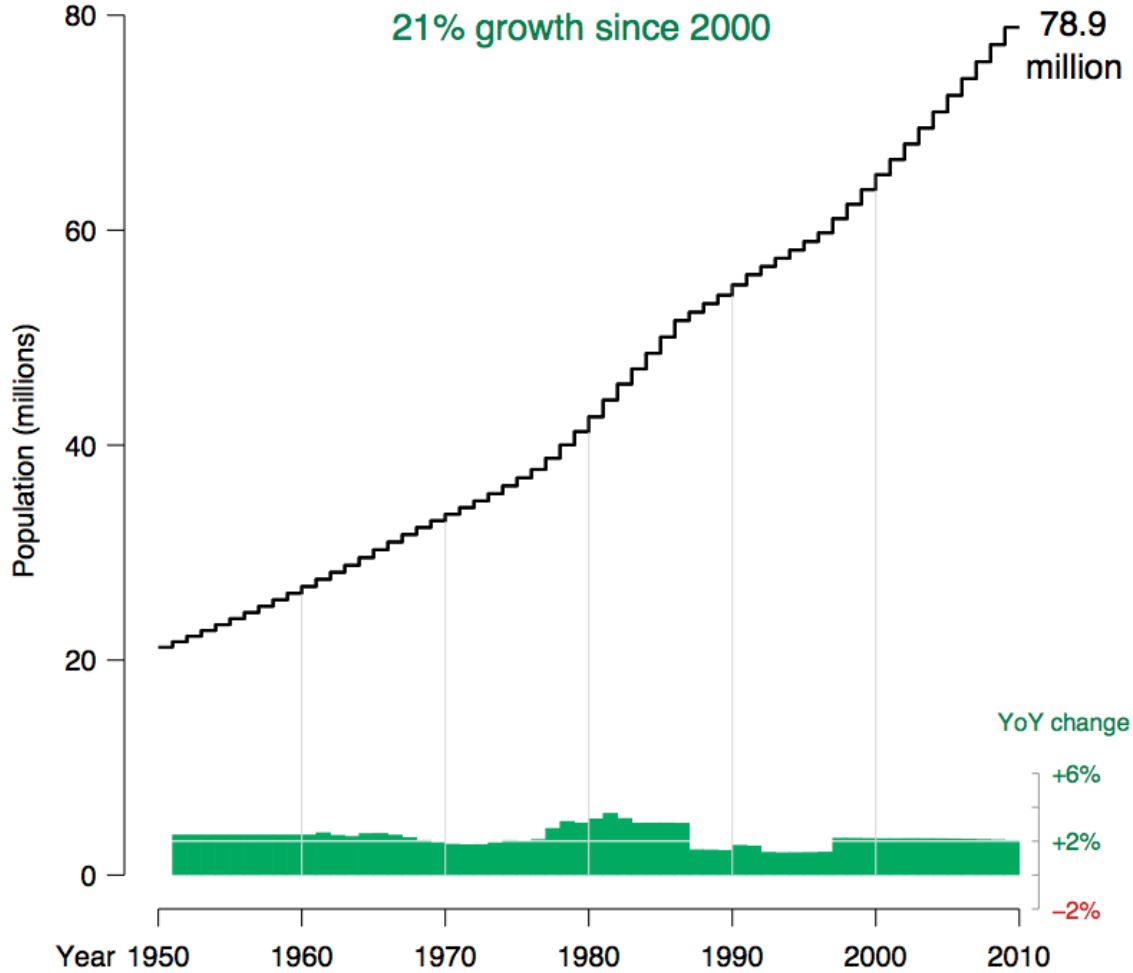
Figure 1.   Egypt's Population Growth Graph from 1950–2010

Corruption existed under Nasser and Sadat; however, both leaders showed progress through major projects in hopes of improving Egypt and the lives of Egyptians. Mubarak, on the contrary, had no major project to drive him forward, and therefore, corruption became an institutionalized system that led him to hold on to power for nearly 30 years. With Nasser and Sadat, Egyptians were willing to tolerate a level of corruption as long as the country was moving forward and improving the lives for the majority. With Mubarak, the corruption persisted with no resulting benefit for the people or advancement of the Egyptian society. Mubarak's first prime minister was the last

qualified minister to assume duties and responsibilities of such position. All ministers that proceeded after him obtained their positions through presidential ties or networks, and primarily in favor of their self-interest. Additionally, their entire political future depended on their relationship with the president; they all had to praise his accomplishments, never dare to disagree with him on any matter, and of course, be willing to cooperate with his security agencies. With that said, it was only natural for such unqualified and selfish ministers to build and be surrounded by corrupt staffs only concerned with their self-interest.[54]

Corruption welcomed rigged elections. Although the Egyptian legal/judicial system is an independent branch of the government, as per the constitution, responsible for supervision duties during the presidential and parliamentary elections, it is in fact ironically embedded in the executive branch. The president is the chief executive and has excessive powers and overall influence over the judicial branch by appointing judges. Under articles 170 and 171, the constitution allows citizens to participate in establishing justice; however, and according to Fahmy in *The Politics of Egypt: State-Society Relationship*, "…since the President is the representative of the nation, he can in his capacity interfere in the course of justice."[55] The regime attempted to use judges to mask elections rigging in the past; however, judges refused to support the government's fraud. The regime then depended on the Ministry of Interior to execute orders for rigging the elections to favor Mubarak. As soon as the president conveys to the interior minister to fabricate the elections' result, the message is then passed to the police officers and civil servants to execute the orders by preventing citizens from voting and/or calling in thugs to harm those brave citizens who do attempt to vote or those who do not belong to the ruling party. From there, unfilled ballots are filled in and the fabricated results are announced to favor Mubarak as originally planned.[56] Untimely, over the years, Egyptians boycotted the elections, as they knew in advance that the elections were going to be

---

[54] Amin, *Egypt in the Era of Hosni Mubarak 1981–2011*, 41.

[55] Ninette S. Fahmy, *The Politics of Egypt: State-Society Relationship* (New York, NY: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002), 53.

[56] Al Aswany, *On the State of Egypt: What Made the Revolution Inevitable*, 39.

rigged. A famous quote by Josef Stalin summarizes Mubarak's election rigging process, "The people who cast the votes do not decide an election, the people who count the votes do."[57]

Corruption became a way of life. At a high level, for example, numerous loans were granted without collateral by state banks to people who have or were associated with seats of power, many of whom vanished without making payments. At a lower and middle level, population growth and unemployment has led many to break the law to avoid a life in the slums of Egypt and provide for their families. Bribes, in all amounts, were expected and overtime, were factored into one's monthly salary.[58] Corruption from the top generated difficult economic conditions, which motivated many writers, activists, and bloggers to expose the regime. However, Mubarak continued to use terrorism as an excuse to continue using the emergency law, and through such law, crackdowns on the media and new media became the norm.

During Mubarak's early years of presidency, the press enjoyed a short period of freedom of expression; sadly, such freedom did not last for long. The government then began to control what journalists published, and therefore, controlled what people read. Conventional media (radio, television, and print media) were heavily censored, monitored, and partially owned by the government. Newspapers agencies in Egypt, for example, were heavily monitored by the Ministry of Information to eliminate any regime criticism. Despite such strict censorship regulations, the government still failed to silence the brave ones who broke the silence or the fear barrier; such individuals of course paid a heavy price. The government managed to shut down newspapers entirely, arrest journalists and/or editor-in-chiefs, or even go as far as torture, beatings, and sexual assaults.[59] Especially during sensitive events, such as parliamentary elections, the government tightly controlled what was published and restricted anything other than positive coverage on government activities to the point that even privately owned satellite stations were not exempt from such regulation. For instance, a 12-year-old popular talk

---

[57] Denis G. Campbell, *Egypt Unshackled* (UK: Cambria Book, 2011), 26.

[58] Amin, *Egypt in the Era of Hosni Mubarak 1981–2011*, 42–43.

[59] Ibid., 112–119.

show "Cairo Today," broadcasted over private television networks, was shut down after its politically outspoken editor Ibrahim Eissa was relieved of his duties.[60] Although the Egyptian Minister of Information denied the talk show's association to political dimension, the closure of the talk show was during the same period of parliamentary elections.[61]

Activists and journalists who opposed and questioned the regime during the late Mubarak period also became victims of threats, imprisonment, and assaults. For example, 2006 was not a good year for the Egyptian blogosphere as authorities arrested approximately 100 bloggers and online activists, including award-winning blogger Ahmad Said al Islam. One of the bloggers arrested was blogger Mohammed el Sharkawi who was tortured and raped in custody. Many arrests were based on affiliation and membership to the Muslim Brotherhood, supposedly disrupting Egypt's reputation, spreading false information, demonstration organizing, criticizing Islam, etc. To the regime, such activists were breaking an informal political rule, and therefore, harassment, intimidation, and arrests were justified. Journalists were not the only ones threatened with prosecution; reporters also received a fair share of harassment, threats, and abuse. For example, in 2008, various opposition media dailies reported on Mubarak's deteriorating health and were later accused of publishing false information. Accusations against the editors were eventually dropped but they were, nevertheless, required to pay a fine because in the eyes of the regime, the editors were violating the informal rules of the political game. [62]

Unlike Nasser and Sadat, Mubarak managed to stay in power for nearly 30 years without naming a vice president. It was only during the 25 January revolutionary events that Mubarak finally named a vice president as he struggled to regain control of his country. Mubarak avoided naming a vice president over the years because he was grooming young Gamal Mubarak (his son) to succeed him. Although Gamal never

---

[60] Maggie Michael, "Egypt Journalists Decry Government Media Crackdown," *The Huffington Post*, October 4, 2010, http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/10/04/egypt-journalists-decry-g_n_749330.html.

[61] Ibid.

[62] Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt: From Nasser to Tahrir Square*, 194–198.

indicated he was interested in becoming his father's successor, he also never denied it either. During the late 1990s, it was evident that young Mubarak was on the road of succession as he became a public figure in the Egyptian state-run media. Assuming a leadership position in the NDP, Gamal positioned himself on the right road to presidency. Additionally, it appeared as if the 2007 constitution amendment to Article 76 was tailored towards making Gamal the next Egyptian president. Furthermore, frequent on-the-job-training was another factor that made the succession from Hosni Mubarak to Gamal Mubarak most likely; Gamal accompanied his father on multiple official trips to Washington, made annual performances at the World Economic Forum in Davos, and made frequent official visits to foreign capitals under the disguise of "personal" business.[63]

Accusations were leveled against the young Mubarak blaming him for Egypt's deteriorating state, but he was also given credit for reviving the economy since he was his father's political advisor when it came to creating the "new Egypt." Along with the help of his son or unofficial advisor, Hosni Mubarak created the "new Egypt" with the shopping centers, malls, gated communities, resorts, and "alleged" political progress that only catered to a minority of people. The majority of Egyptians could not afford high end products and luxuries on the wages they were earning from their full time jobs. In fact, over 16 million Egyptians were living under two dollars a day.[64] Due to such harsh conditions, Egyptians rejected the idea of succession; why would any Egyptian desire the return of a monarchial regime? In addition, the young Mubarak has no military background or enough political talent to resume such position. Gamal may be educated, but over 40 million Egyptians are educated, have graduate degrees, and are far more qualified that Gamal could ever be. However, it is important to note that the regime has always used the Muslim Brotherhood as a "bogeyman" to convince Egyptians, along with the West, that succession is best for all.[65]

---

[63] Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt: From Nasser to Tahrir Square*, 201–203.

[64] Ibid., 175.

[65] Al Aswany, *On the State of Egypt: What Made the Revolution Inevitable*, 8–9.

The Egyptian under-30 disgruntled youth population accounts for approximately 60 percent of Egypt's population.[66] Since 1990, Egypt's unemployment rate increased gradually leaving many unemployed, living in poverty, vulnerable to committing crime, and hopeless. Over eight million desperate Egyptians (which accounted for over 10 percent of the population) applied for the American green-card lottery to flee their devastating economic conditions. Additionally, about half a million Egyptians entered Europe as illegal immigrants in the 2000s.[67] Many educated Egyptians would rather work for minimum wages in a foreign country and risk their lives getting there over staying in their homeland and living under poverty, corruption, oppression, and constant humiliation. Such frustrations, grievances and resentment allowed social movements, such as Kefaya! ("Enough!") that opposed the forced blood succession from Hosni Mubarak to Gamal Mubarak or the April 6 movement that used social media in 2008 to mobilize for labor strikes or even the "We are All Khaled Said" Facebook group that aimed to expose police brutality, to break the fear barrier and confront the regime.

---

[66] See Figure 2.

[67] Osman, *Egypt on the Brink: From Nasser to Mubarak*, 196–199.

Egypt's Population Pyramid, 2010
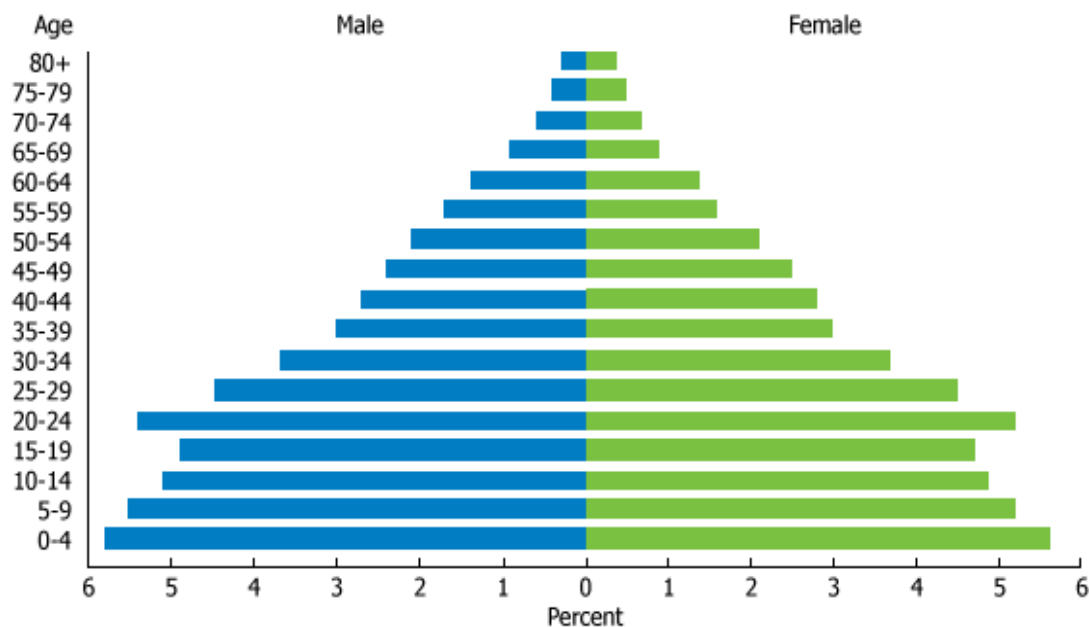
Figure 2.　Egypt's Youth Bulge

Aside from the fact that Egypt's last three presidents were all dictators, shared a military background, and ruled Egypt using coercion, they all represented themselves differently. Nasser was the coup leader to the Egyptian hero, Sadat was the "Hero of the Crossing," and finally, Mubarak as the corrupt and stubborn dictator whose 30 years of rule brought about Egypt's most recent revolution and ousted him from power.

E.　25 JANUARY REVOLUTION

On January 25, 2011, the commemoration of Egypt's national Police Day, thousands of Egyptians stormed in the streets demanding the resignation of Hosni Mubarak. Opposition groups initially planned to protest on January 25 in front of the Ministry of Interior against police brutality and to demand the abolishment of the emergency law. It is of importance to note that Police Day was intended, as Mubarak stated in 2004, to be "a valuable symbol of patriotism and sacrifice," and a day on which Egyptians can have an opportunity to express their appreciation, as well as pride for the

police forces. Instead, January 25, 2011 was not a date to commemorate the police; instead, it was the "Day of Rage." Timing for the revolution was everything; the planned demonstration was only 11 days after the Tunisian president Zine El Abidine Ben Ali was overthrown.[68] The non-violent protests ended up occurring near locations of the NDP, the foreign ministry, state television, as well as other locations throughout the country. Tahrir Square, however, became the symbolic center for the protests. Aljazeera stated that the protest organizers heavily depended on social media to mobilize and communicate. There were also reports of casualties. The Ministry of Interior initially tied the Muslim Brotherhood as the creators of the "Day of Rage," a claim that the Muslim Brotherhood denied.[69]

The following day, the regime fought back by shutting down the Internet and ordered police forces to break up the crowds and force them off the streets. It is significant to note that the demonstrators consisted of a large number of educated men and women of all classes, Muslims and Copts, and all ages were chanting secular anti-Mubarak slogans demanding political freedom and human dignity.[70] At that point, violence broke out between the police and the demonstrators; casualties increased and three people were reported dead. Over the next few days, phone text messaging, along with the Internet, were disabled, protests continued, violence erupted, many were arrested, and opposition leader and former member of the International Atomic Energy Agency, Mohamed ElBaradei, returned to Cairo to join the protests. January 28 became the "Friday of Rage" as the government ordered the military to assist the police forces; however, the military did not interfere with the police and the demonstrators' confrontations. By Friday, "Friday of Rage," 11 were reported dead and over 1,000 injured throughout the country.[71]

---

[68] Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt: From Nasser to Tahrir Square*, 281–282.

[69] "Timeline: Egypt's Revolution," *Aljazeera*, February 14, 2011, http://english.aljazeera.net/news/middleeast/2011/01/201112515334871490.html.

[70] Amin, *Egypt in the Era of Hosni Mubarak 1981–2011*, 1.

[71] "Timeline: Egypt's Revolution."

By January 29, Mubarak addressed the nation live on television to announce his decision to dismiss his cabinet and appointed a vice president (Omar Suleiman) for the first time in nearly 30 years; however, Mubarak refused to resign and imposed a curfew. Within one week since January 25, the protesting continued and the protestors remained grounded in Tahrir Square, broke curfew, and continued to call on Mubarak to step down. By February 1, Mubarak made a second live television appearance claiming not to run for another term in elections, promised political reforms, and economic improvement. Still, Mubarak refused to step down. The number of protestors at Tahrir Square increased to over one million Egyptians, while thousands more took to the streets of Egypt throughout the country. Clashes between anti-Mubarak and pro-Mubarak broke out that night. By February 5, the NPD leaders resigned (including Gamal Mubarak), the military remained deployed with its tanks, the Internet and telephone lines partially restored; however, the violence continued. The United Nations reported that 300 personnel might have been killed since the protesting begun.[72]

By February 7 and 8, Tahrir Square looked like a tented campsite as protestors camped out. By February 7, banks had reopened for business but school and other institutions remained closed.[73] In addition, state authorities released Wael Ghonim, the Google executive, political activist, and creator of the "We Are All Khaled Said" Facebook page. On the evening of his release, Ghonim appeared on *Dream* (a privately owned Egyptian channel) to give a heart-felt, moving interview. A day after Ghonim's televised interview, Egypt witnessed the largest number to date of protestors in Tahrir Sqaure, including those that returned from abroad to join the uprising, as well as supporters of Ghonim.[74]

By February 9, labor unions joined the protestors along with many other average citizens (accompanied by their children) who joined the Tahrir Square protesting. The Human Rights Watch reported 302 Egyptians had been killed since January 25. On February 10, many assessed that Mubarak would finally step down; however, his

---

[72] "Timeline: Egypt's Revolution."

[73] Ibid.

[74] Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt: From Nasser to Tahrir Square*, 291–292.

televised speech indicated otherwise. He was not going to resign and Egyptians were enraged; the demonstrations intensified with anger and frustration to the point that the uprising reached a nationwide level. By six p.m. on February 11, Vice President Suleiman appeared on television to announce the following:

> Citizens, in these difficult circumstances the country is going through, the President Mohamed Hosni Mubarak had decided to leave his position as the president of the Republic, and had entrusted the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces to administer the nation's affair.

In 18 days, the 83-year-old Hosni Mubarak's nearly 30 years of power officially ended.[75]

---

[75] Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt: From Nasser to Tahrir Square*, 292–295.

III. EXAMINING THE MAJOR FACTORS AND ELEMENTS THAT IMPACTED THE OUTCOME OF THE REVOLUTION

A. UNDERSTANDING THE INTERNET AND THE NEW MEDIA IN EGYPT

The Egyptian Universities Network and the Egyptian cabinet's Information and Decision Support Center (IDSC) first introduced the Internet in Egypt in 1993; however, the general public did not gain access until 1995. More specifically, Internet access did not become easily accessible and affordable until Egypt's Ministry of Communication and Information Technology launched the Free Internet Initiative in 2002. The Free Internet Initiative allowed any Egyptian with a computer and a telephone line to access the Internet for US$0.15 an hour. Today, with an approximate Egyptian population of 80.4 million, Internet penetration accounts for only 24 percent, which is a significant increase from 0.58 percent in 1999. Internet-service providers (ISPs) that serve Egypt's entire population number 214; 70 percent of the Internet's bandwidth is owned by TE Data ISP, a stated owned landline.[76]

With a 67 percent penetration rate, mobile telephone subscribers have grown to 55.3 million. Vodafone, Mobinil, and Etisalat are the three mobile telephone operators in Egypt that also offer Internet connections via USB modems.[77] Smartphones, or camera mobile telephones, are increasingly becoming popular due to their ability to access the Internet. In fact, social media applications are accessed through Smartphones (BlackBerry, iPhone, Android) and other hand-carried devices, such as an iPad. In addition, 70 percent of mobile Internet users are mobile only. Falling PC costs, the penetration of Smartphones, and the increased availability of the Internet in cafes, work spaces, etc., made Egypt the second largest country of Internet users after Nigeria.[78]

---

[76] "Freedom on the Net 2011: Egypt," *Freedom House*, April 18, 2011, http://www.freedomhouse.org/images/File/FotN/Egypt2011.pdf.

[77] Ibid.

[78] Mark Alexander Shalaby, "Mobile Internet in Egypt: the Hope and the Hype," May 2011, http://www.partager-le-savoir.org/template/fs/malte2011/presentations/shalaby_malta.pdf.

Ironically, under Egypt's authoritarian regime, no laws regulate Internet use and censorship; in fact, Egypt's constitution, along with the 2003 Law of Telecommunications, protects citizens' privacy, freedom of speech, and restricts surveillance without a proper judicial warrant. In the past, attempts were made to ban certain websites. For example, in 2007, a judge ruled against banning 51 Egyptian websites, including many associated with human rights organizations, in an effort to emphasize the importance of the Internet's freedom of expression.[79] Nevertheless, the Egyptian Emergency Law gave the government room to repress Internet activism by employing non-technology methods of intimidation, harassment, arrests, torture, and detentions.[80]

Over the last few years, Egypt witnessed a remarkable increase of online activism and a diverse blogosphere. Many online activists and bloggers became outspoken and overtly discussed sensitive topics to relieve their social, economic and political frustrations. By 2008, over 160,000 blogs helped increase the diversity of the content and opinions online. By 2010, the common goal of many online activists and bloggers became political change. Additionally, the increase of social media networking websites (Facebook, Twitter, YouTube, Blogs, etc.) over the last few years generated a new culture, which also supported online activism.[81]

Although social media networking websites became popular in 2007, they have been around since the late 1990s. The evolution of social media helped Egyptians connect and engage one another. Social media platforms are characterized by allowing one to blog, network, and video share.[82] The nature of each web-based social media site can vary. However, generally speaking, social media networking sites can be defined in terms of allowing one to "(1) construct a public or semi-public profile within a bounded system,

[79] "Court Rejects Request to Ban 51 Websites," *International Freedom of Expression Exchange*, January 2, 2008, http://www.ifex.org/egypt/2008/01/02/court_rejects_request_to_ban_51/.

[80] "Freedom on the Net 2011: Egypt," *Freedom House*, April 18, 2011, http://www.freedomhouse.org/images/File/FotN/Egypt2011.pdf.

[81] Ibid.

[82] Adeek A. Shah and Sheheryar T. Sardar, *Sandstorm: A Leaderless Revolution in the Digital Age* (USA: Global Executive Board LLC, 2011), 26–33.

(2) articulate a list of other users with whom they share a connection, and (3) view and traverse their list of connections and those made by others within the system."[83] This thesis focuses on Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube as they became the most commonly used social media networking sites by the Egyptian under 30 youth population. It is important to note that the younger (under 30 years of age) population accounts for 60 percent of Egypt's population.[84]

After Turkey, Egypt's Facebook users comprised the second largest number in the Middle East and North Africa with more than five million users.[85] Facebook evolved among the youth population in Egypt, as it became the social website of choice to the extent that "Facebooking" became a commonly used verb. Facebook, as a social network site, works because it is private and it allows control of the living social circle on a digital platform. Users are able to add others as friends, post and share information (including videos and photos), comment, chat, exchange messages, as well as join common interest groups. Twitter, on the contrary, evolved among the youth population because it is public. Twitter is a micro-blogging social network site that allows users to generate no more than 140 characters (or tweets) in a personalized message through a newsfeed on the site.[86] Twitter has more than 200 million users worldwide; however, Egypt only had (at the time of the 25 January Revolution) approximately 20,000 subscribers (equivalent to one percent of the globe's users).[87] Similarly, YouTube is a video sharing website that allows the uploading, sharing, and viewing of videos. YouTube, as a social network site, allows users to influence what others watch by sharing videos and also by creating videos to influence viewing trends.[88]

---

[83] Danah M. Boyd and Nicole B. Ellison, "Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship," *Journal of Computer-Meditated Communications* 13, no. 1, article 1 (2007), http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol13/issue1/boyd.ellison.html.

[84] "Country Report: Egypt," *Open Source Center*, July 2011.

[85] Abbas Alidina, "MENA Facebook Digest: Tracking Facebook Users in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)," May 22, 2010, http://logicks.com/pdf/2010-05-22-MENA_Facebook_Digest.pdf.

[86] Shah and Sardar, *Sandstorm: A Leaderless Revolution in the Digital Age*, 26–31.

[87] Campbell, *Egypt Unshackled*, 18.

[88] Shah and Sardar, *Sandstorm: A Leaderless Revolution in the Digital Age*, 26–31.

Freely available social media networking sites revolutionized communication and gave every user a voice as it placed information in the hands of users and viewers. For example, "Posting on a social networking site is like throwing a stone in water, the ripples can reach far and wide."[89] In other words, as users post information on social networking sites that same information does not lose power at its initial post, as it has the potential of easily going viral when the information is reposted (or retweeted) to a different audience over one or more social networking platforms. Every person reposting the information acts as an independent source that furthers the dissemination while at the same time sparking a diversity of opinions, discussions, and commentary. The information repeated the most is obviously the information of interest among the majority; it is also information that most likely has emotional ties, common concerns, experiences, and/or issues among the majority.[90] In sum, social media networking sites can be characterized by its ability of instant communication/interaction, real time dissemination of information, free access to information, speedy reaction to events, affordability, the ability to self publish,[91] and most importantly, the ability to discuss sensitive topics openly that state-owned traditional (or conventional) media could not.

B. THE RISE OF SOCIAL MOVEMENTS INCREASED MOMENTUM TOWARDS PROTESTS, STRIKES, AND DEMONSTRATIONS

During the 1990s, street dissent was nonexistent in Egypt; Mubarak's "dirty war"[92] between Islamists militants banned public gatherings and demonstrations to the degree that trade unions were placed under government control. After a period of non-mobilization, Egypt noticed the emergence of politics returning to Egypt in 2000–2001 after the second Palestinian intifada that encouraged various political and social activists to protest and mobilize in the streets and universities for the Palestinian solidarity.

---

[89] Shah and Sardar, *Sandstorm: A Leaderless Revolution in the Digital Age*, 33–34.

[90] Ibid., 26–37.

[91] Adel A. Sadek, "The Internet and Political Reform in Egypt," *Central for Political and Strategic Studies*, July 15, 2007, http://acpss.ahram.org.eg/eng/ahram/2004/7/5/EGYP97.HTM.

[92] Hossam el-Hamalawy, "Egypt's Revolution Has Been 10 Years in the Making," *The Guardian*, March 2, 2011, http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/mar/02/egypt-revolution-mubarak-wall-of-fear (accessed 6 Dec. 2011).

Although the protests were towards the Palestinian solidarity, they cleverly generated an anti-regime dimension and became the first significant protest where tens of thousands of Egyptians took to the streets and participated since the 1977 bread riots.[93]

In 2003, the U.S. invasion of Iraq created outrage among Egyptians and approximately 30,000 Egyptians protested in Tahrir Square, clashed with police forces, and destroyed Mubarak's billboards.[94] The war in Iraq became the turning point for creating an anti-war wave of demonstrations in Egypt, starting with the birth of Kifaya! (Enough!) in 2004.[95] Kifaya!, also known as the Egyptian Movement for Change, is a pro-Palestinian and anti-war movement. Kifaya! achieved a greater profile in 2005 during two important events, the constitutional referendum and the first multi-candidate presidential elections as the group overtly expressed rejection towards Mubarak's fifth election term, as well as his efforts towards grooming his son to succeed him. Unfortunately, the group lost momentum as it became heavily criticized for its inability to reach the masses. The group appeared to reject strongly the status quo and Mubarak, in particular; however, its inability to provide qualified candidates or solutions to problems caused many to label the group as the pastime of a "bunch of kids."[96] Regardless of its criticism, Kifaya!, nevertheless, generated public attention and broke the taboo of overtly criticizing the president, while paving the road for other social movements to emerge and evolve. One group of significance is the April 6 Youth Movement.

From 2004 forward, the number and frequency of worker activism, strikes, and demonstrations significantly increased. The years 2006 and 2008 signified the Mahalla al Kubra (Egypt's dominant textile industry) strikes. In 2006, 27,000 workers went on strike demanding higher wages and delinquent bonuses to which they were entitled. Furthermore, the strikes also helped expose how privatization affected the working class. Elections of the General Federation of Egyptian Trade Unions were rigged to favor the

---

[93] el-Hamalawy, "Egypt's Revolution has been 10 Years in the Making."

[94] Ibid.

[95] Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt: From Nasser to Tahrir Square*, 241, 265.

[96] Manar Shourbagy, "The Egyptian Movement for Change—Kefaya: Redefining Politics in Egypt, http://publicculture.org/articles/view/19/1/the-egyptian-movement-for-change-kefaya-redefin/.

government, and in reality, did not represent workers and their interests. In 2008, a Facebook group called April 6 Youth Movement was founded by Ahmed Maher to support workers of Mahalla al Kubra. The group used the Internet (social media and blogs), mobile telephones, and word of mouth to prepare, organize, and call for a strike on April 6, 2008 throughout the country against low wages and increased food prices.[97] However, security forces that infiltrated the factories and intimidated workers from going on strike aborted the strike; security and police forces also squashed similar rallies across the country. As a result, three protestors were killed, over 30 activists and 150 workers were arrested, and over 100 people were injured.[98],[99]

The April 6 Youth Movement failed in its efforts to generate enough anger and enthusiasm to get thousands of Egyptians out into the streets. There is no denying that Egyptians were angry and needed better wages to survive; however, the problem was their wages were already low enough, and therefore, they could not afford to go on strike and lose a day's worth of pay. In other words, Egyptians were too poor to strike.[100] In addition, security and police forces instilled enough intimidation that discouraged many Egyptians from striking for fear of being detained, fined, and incarcerated. Although it was a failed attempt to strike, be heard and demand change, it is safe to conclude that the April 6, 2008 strike was a rehearsal or a replica of a mini revolution to the 25 January Revolution that occurred almost three years later. Additionally, Kifaya! and the April 6 Youth Movement inspired Egyptians to connect and form other pressure groups, such as Mohammed ElBaradei's 2010 pressure group, the National Association for Change (NAC).

ElBaradei, an opposition leader and former member of the International Atomic Energy Agency, formed the NAC to represent all Egyptian voices of civil society in

---

[97] Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt: From Nasser to Tahrir Square*, 178–179.

[98] "Clashes in Egypt Strike Stand-Off," *BBC News*, April 6, 2008, http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/7332929.stm.

[99] Jean Duval and Fred Weston, "Egyptian April 6—A Dress Rehearsal for Bigger Events in the Future," *In Defence of Marxist*, April 7, 2008, http://www.marxist.com/egyptian-april-6-dress-rehearsal.htm.

[100] Jeffery Fleishman and Noha El-Hennewy, "Egypt Too Poor to Strike?" *Los Angeles Times*, April 6, 2008, http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/babylonbeyond/2008/04/egypt-too-poor.html.

efforts to work towards democracy and social justice, especially emphasizing the importance of free and fair election. From the time the NAC was formed, it gained a lot of support, including support from the Muslim Brotherhood.[101]

One entity all the discussed movements shared is a common purpose or similar basic notions about Egypt's future: democracy, free and fair elections, and social justice. All groups were important actors or "carrier groups"[102] that formed the background of the 25 January Revolution.

C.   2010 SENSITIVE EVENTS INCREASED EMOTIONS AND ANGER TOWARDS A COMMON PURPOSE

Inequality, poverty, unemployment, government and election corruption, the emergency law, police brutality, wealth gaps, and economic stagnation have been embedded in Egyptians' everyday lives and within society as a whole to the degree that they were tolerated and/or ignored due to the regime's intimidation, harassments, and threats against those who complain. However, sensitive events in 2010 are assessed as possible factors that heightened tensions and easily brought those with deep repressed grievances and anger together against the regime. Such events allowed certain network building to exist, radiate out, and disperse throughout Egypt, while giving the world a front row seat to observe it all. Two significant events in particular linked anger to mobilization, the 2010 "We are all Khaled Said" Facebook page and the New Year's Eve Alexandria church bombing.

1.   "We are all Khaled Said"

"We are all Khaled Said" started as a Facebook page, after Egyptian businessman Khaled Said was brutality murdered by police forces for his attempt to try and expose corruption, and quickly transformed into a full anti-police brutality and abuse campaign.[103] Wael Ghonim, the Google executive for the Middle East and North Africa,

---

[101] Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt: From Nasser to Tahrir Square*, 206–207.

[102] Jeffery C. Alexander, *Reformative Revolution in Egypt: An Essay in Cultural Power* (NY: Bloomsbury Academic, 2011), 31.

[103] Giglio, "'We Are All Khaled Said': Will the Revolution Come to Egypt?"

created the page and managed it anonymously. The page had mobile telephone images posted of Said's disfigured face, along with morgue images being contrasted against images of Said's happier days. Along with heart-breaking YouTube videos of Khaled Said, the graphic images posted on Facebook, generated "emotional valence aimed at converting passivity into action."[104]

Like rigged elections corruption, police brutality has been occurring for so many years that over time, it became the norm under Mubarak's Egypt and any complaints about torture and abuse were overlooked, and in certain cases, ignored by officials. With the increase of smartphones, many online activists exposed police brutality by posting online horrific videos and still photos on new media outlets of police abuse and torture. As a result, mobile telephones became such a threat to the police force that the Ministry of Interior tried to ban all mobile telephones from police stations claiming that mobile telephones disrupt work. Although the court refused to ban mobile telephones inside police stations, it is important to note that it was not just a coincidence that the ruling came shortly after Khaled Said was beaten to death by police officers.[105]

Gruesome photos posted online of Khaled Said went viral and created an emotional collection reaction, "We are all Khaled Said" had more than 800,000 members,[106] 70,000 of whom indicated their intent to partake in the January 25 demonstrations, the first day of the Egyptian Revolution.[107] According to Sidney Tarrow in *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*, "The culture of collective action is built on frames and emotions oriented toward mobilizing people out of their compliance and into action in conflictual setting."[108] Said's Facebook page accumulated many supporters who were outraged by police torture and brutality; most of

---

[104] Sidney Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*, 2nd ed. (NY: Cambridge University Press, 1998), 112.

[105] Ramadan Al Sherbini, "Egyptian Court Refuses to Ban Mobile Phones in Police Stations," *Gulfnews.com*, June 20, 2010, http://gulfnews.com/news/region/egypt/egyptian-court-refuses-to-ban-mobile-phones-in-police-stations-1.643645.

[106] Shah and Sardar, *Sandstorm: A Leaderless Revolution in the Digital Age*, 45.

[107] Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt: From Nasser to Tahrir Square*, 291.

[108] Tarrow, *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*, 112.

those supporters heavily contributed to the discontent that led to the protesting on National Police Day, January 25. The collective emotional reaction generated from Kahled Said's disfigured body transformed that reaction into political action from hundreds of Egyptians who saw themselves as Khaled Said: captured, tortured, and beaten to death. Said's torture, in this case, became everyone's suffering. Wael Ghonim illustrated it best when he commented on Said's photos of brutality and stated, "His photo after being killed by those police officers made all of us cry…I personally connected to him. This could be my brother."[109]

2. New Year's Eve Alexandria Church Bombing

Although religious (Muslim-Coptic) tensions and violence have been increasing over the last 40 years in Egypt, the Egyptian regime was notorious for denying such tensions and constantly sweeping the issue under the rug. The New Year's Eve Alexandria church bombing was a hostile religious incident that generated mass panic among Egyptians (both Muslims and Copts) and increased tensions shortly before the revolution.[110] After the church bombing, the government did not recognize the threat through formal channels, and therefore, methods to deal with the issue were never established. Such informal response to deal with dangerous religion issues is possibly due to the government's effort to maintain the Sunni Muslim's dominance over the country.

The church attack left 23 killed and approximately 90 people injured; it was by far the one of the worst attacks against the Copts. A few days after the attack, Copts took the street to protest "…in the most powerful protest that Christian Copts ever held in recent history."[111] Coptic Christians were outraged when Mubarak gave credit to an Al-Qaeda affiliated network for the attack instead confronting the real threat that targets the

---

[109] Alissa Hauser and Marianne Manilov, "Lessons from Egypt," *The Engage Network*, April 20, 2011, http://engagenet.org/ideas/lessons-from-egypt.

[110] "Coptic Christian Pope to Egypt's Leaders: Address Discrimination," January 3, 2011, http://www.statesman.com/news/world/coptic-christian-pope-to-egypts-leaders-address-discrimination-1161439.html.

[111] Coptic Protests in Shubra Following Church Bombing," *Out of Egypt*, 2011, http://www.persecution.org/outofegypt/category/alexandria-church-bombing/.

Copts.[112] However, that is nothing new for the Copts in Egypt; the Copts (who account for approximately 10 to 12 percent of Egypt's population) have been treated as second-class citizens through varying discrimination from low representation in public office/elections to citizenship discriminating laws. Copts require presidential approval to repair churches and experienced more difficulties building new churches than Muslims building new mosques. It is nearly impossible for an Egyptian Copt to run for president and very unlikely for Egyptian Copts to hold government jobs or become deans and/or professors at public universities; most Copts are in private professions and are doctors, lawyers, business entrepreneurs, etc.[113]

The Copts were fed up with the oppression and the lack of religious freedom under Mubarak's regime. A human rights Coptic activist Wagih Yacoup best summarized the Coptic Christians frustrations when he stated the following, "We have suffered a lot as Christians. We've seen churches being bombed, innocent people being killed, girls being kidnapped, and the spread of Islamization against our will. We want to get rid of the dictatorship that we have been living under for over thirty years."[114]

The New Year's Eve Alexandria church bombing heightened the Muslim-Coptic tensions, but also contributed to generating active participation from the Coptic minority during the 25 January Revolution. The Coptic population was aware that the government did not consider it urgent to respond to religious matters and often swept them under the rug; therefore, it was not surprising that the Copts' participation and unity among Muslim Egyptians during the 25 January Revolution was a direct reflection of their frustration towards the regime and efforts to end tyranny.

---

[112] Coptic Protests in Shubra Following Church Bombing."

[113] Mohamed Haggag, "Religion in Egypt: Past, Present, and Future," 2008, http://www.slideshare.net/ender14/religion-in-egypt-presentation.

[114] "Coptic Protests in Shubra Following Church Bombing."

D. POLITICAL OPPORTUNITY: TUNISIA THE CATALYST THAT EMPOWERED APOLITICAL EGYPTIANS TO RISE

Egyptians were well aware of their corrupt government and the poor conditions that Egypt experienced. However, the near apathy that many Egyptians had did not translate to their lack of hunger and desire towards reforms and change in Egypt. It is important to note that the new media encouraged dissent through a distant post online, rather than a bloody encounter with security forces. This online presence is assessed to have been the typical form of protesting until the Tunisians demonstrated that a more direct approach was needed to bring about the reforms that so many supported. In other words, support for reforms in Egypt has been present on the Internet through blogs and social media networks, but the institutions of the state and the coercive apparatus were such that there was little incentive and much to lose by taking action. For example, on May 25, 2005, opposition activists held a non-violent protest against the Egyptian constitutional referendum to protest against the amendments that they claimed to be anti-democratic. Although the protest was peaceful, the police force and the government hired "thugs" still attacked and beat the innocent protestors and any others, including journalists present in the area. Additionally, sexual assaults of women during the protest later labeled as the "watershed moment"[115] were also reported and witnessed. Horrific photos and videos of the event were publicized; however, the government still dismissed them as evidence and focused instead on targeting activists not content with the status quo.[116]

Due to the frequent beatings, torture, and assaults cases reported of active activists, online activism increased. Active activists were simply waiting for a political opportunity to present themselves for their political dissents to move away from the comfort zone that the new media generated for them and into the traditional role of a political engagement that involved active protest with masses of like-minded people working toward the same objectives. The political opportunity was Tunisia.

---

[115] Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt: From Nasser to Tahrir Square*, 194.

[116] Ibid., 194–195.

In an act of desperation, Mohamed Bouazizi, a poor yet educated Tunisian produce vendor, lit himself on fire outside the governor's house after he was insulted, humiliated, and ignored for attempting to plead his case to government officials to retrieve his unlicensed fruit cart after it was confiscated by government authorities. His death triggered a Tunisian uprising and in 23 days, the Tunisian government crumpled. The Tunisian Revolution was publicized on all media channels around the globe.[117]

Egyptian opposition groups initially planned to protest on January 25 against police brutality and to demand the abolishment of the emergency law. January 25 was not originally intended for a revolution to occur, but was rather a day of mass protesting; however, Tunisia happened and Egypt's planned protest was only 11 days after the Tunisian president Zine El Abidine Ben Ali was overthrown.[118]. Tunisia empowered Egyptians across the country to believe in change, especially those who were only online activists or were apolitical at first because they either submitted to the regime due to cowardice, were preoccupied with their own problems and efforts to make a living, or just less inclined towards a revolution in general.[119] Tunisia was, therefore a political opportunity for Egyptians to rise as it inspired them to believe in the power of change; otherwise, it could be argued that the Egyptian revolution could have possibly taken longer to come about if it was not for Tunisia's influence. The events that unfolded in Tunisia provided hope to Egyptians and showed that popular uprisings could topple the regime and bring the change that they previously avoided confrontation with or were perhaps only comfortable posting about and blogging.

---

[117] Shah and Sardar, *Sandstorm: A Leaderless Revolution in the Digital*, 45–46.

[118] Cook, *The Struggle for Egypt: From Nasser to Tahrir Square*, 281–282.

[119] Al Aswany, *On the State of Egypt: What Made the Revolution*, vii–viii.

E. IMMEDIATE EFFORTS LEADING TO THE 25 JANUARY REVOLUTION

1. Planning and Training

Traditional social mobilization strategies were vital from the beginning to the end of the revolution as it helped sustain the collective identity and action of the people. Although claimed as a leaderless and spontaneous revolution, a group of young and Internet savvy members and organizers were reported to having held face-to-face meetings before and throughout the uprising. During the revolution, such meetings were held in the evening and were towards efforts to cover the blueprint for the next day, to include routes, slogans, specific details, actors, etc. The highlights of the meetings would then be distributed the next day via SMS, email, and social media networks to other members and significant personnel.[120] Those members were reportedly meeting at one of the members' home twice a day, every day leading up to January 25. Days prior to January 25, the organizers began to sleep in various places for fear of being detained for their efforts.[121] Clandestine meetings were vital to ensure all details were properly covered and courses of action were established.

The organizers included personnel from six youth movements that ranged from social activists to labor rights groups. Although united for revolutionary common goals and shared ideas, those organizers came from different backgrounds. Their day jobs and social background varied. Some were associated with non-government organizations, some owned businesses, some held high-technology jobs, while others were full time political organizers; some were feminist or labor activist while others were religious leaders. However, what they all had in common was their relative youth, enthusiasm, and their collective identity. Those members originated from social movements, social groups such as Kifaya!, April 6 Movement, and NAC.[122]

---

[120] Alexander, *Reformative Revolution in Egypt: An Essay in Cultural Power*, 32.

[121] Shah and Sardar, *Sandstorm: A Leaderless Revolution in the Digital Age*, 61–62.

[122] Alexander, *Reformative Revolution in Egypt: An Essay in Cultural Power*, 34–35.

Over the years, as the rise of social movements increased momentum towards protests, strikes, and demonstrations, the revolutionaries (or organizers) began to educate themselves on strategic non-violence methods of protesting, paying special attention to "…the ideas of Gene Sharpe, the American whose philosophy of radical civil protest derived from Mahatma Gandhi and Martin Luther King and whose strategic thinking had inspired the Serbian youth group Otpor's struggle against Slobodan Milosevic."[123] Furthermore, some activists traveled to Serbia to receive political re-education, while others created the Academy of Change in Qatar in an effort to promote Sharpe's ideas on non-violent struggle. Shortly prior to January 25, members of the Academy of Change and organizers from Serbia trained the Egyptian revolutionaries in Cairo and emphasized the importance of maintaining a non-violent approach towards protests and demonstrations.[124] Furthermore, as momentum increased, organizers started turning to "young soccer fans to help them organize against police actions" since they had "experience with unruly mobs and police."[125]

2.   Publicizing the First Day of the Revolution

As mentioned earlier, the Egyptian population is slightly over 80 million people and Internet penetration account for no more than 24 percent. With only 24 percent of the population with Internet access, activists and organizers had to find other means to reach those Egyptians not online to participate on January 25.

Over 85,000 Egyptian taxi drivers are on the crowded streets of Cairo. Egyptian taxi drivers are the most heterogeneous group of people in the Egyptian work force; many are college-educated individuals unemployed by the government, while others are supplementing their primary income by becoming taxi drivers. Most taxi drivers in Egypt are talkative and gregarious; they easily engage in conversations with their customers. Organizers of the 25 January Revolution decided to incorporate Egyptian taxi drivers

---

[123] Alexander, *Reformative Revolution in Egypt: An Essay in Cultural Power*, 35.

[124] Ibid.

[125] Jim Michaels, "Tech-Savvy Youths Led the Way in Egypt's Protests," *USA Today*, February 7, 2011, http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2011-02-07-egyptyouth07_ST_N.htm.

indirectly to disseminate information on the demonstrations occurring on January 25. Activists and organizers decided to not appeal to the taxi drivers directly, in case they attempted to argue or debate with them, but rather let them overhear a supposedly "secretive" telephone conversation that covered details of the first day and were most likely bound to repeat it to others, including their customers. The plan was a success; the message went viral and spread in Cairo on busses, in cafes, shops, mosques, universities, etc. Egyptians were aware that something big would happen in Tahrir Square on January 25.[126]

Away from the luxuriant neighborhoods in Cairo, activists and the revolution's organizers were interested in targeting the slums of Cairo, Egyptians struggling to make a living and provide for their families, to increase protest participation on January 25. In poor neighborhoods, like the neighborhood of Imbaba in northern Cairo, Egyptians had little or no knowledge of the new media platforms. The urban poor areas were ideal for gathering people; anti-Mubarak social economic chants, banners, and slogans motivated the poor to participate. In turn, Egyptians began to leave their homes and join others on the streets. While chanting together, the poor were reminded of the harsh conditions they were living under and the basic necessities they were deprived of because they simply could not afford it. Their chants created a sense of collectiveness that encouraged and increased Egyptians to march towards Tahrir Square. In other words, Egyptians, especially the poor, were united by their collective struggle. As a result, the word of mouth went viral and brought tens of thousands of Egyptians out of their comfort zone and into the streets of Cairo. The collective struggle was so heart felt that it inspired other Egyptians in different cities (Alexandria, Suez, Ismailia, and Gharbeya) in Egypt to do the same.[127]

---

[126] "How Facebook Changed the World: The Arab Spring," *BBC*, 2011, http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b014l2ck/episodes/guide.

[127] Ibid.

3.   Information Dissemination (Without the Internet)

For information access, dissemination, and communication, the new social media became an important tool before and during the revolution. However, after the first few days of the uprising leading to the revolution, the new media had little impact on the revolution due to an Internet and mobile telephones outage. Possibly, because of the outage, anonymous leaflets circulated in Cairo providing guidance and information to protesters. After the government shut down the Internet and mobile telephone access in the midst of protesting to cripple the protesters from communicating and disrupt the flow of communication, such disruption instead hindered the government's efforts to conduct damage control and stall the protests. In fact, the disruption of the Internet and telephone lines encouraged traditional mobilization tactics, face-to-face communication, increased physical presence in the streets, and focal points locations transformed into various gatherings locations.[128] In other words, Internet access did not significantly matter to Egyptians as momentum was up and because they already knew where to go and how to get there.

Signed "Long Live Egypt," anonymous leaflets circulated in Cairo during the revolution and provided tactical and practical advice and suggestions for mass demonstrations, such as aerial photos marked with approach routes, diagrams of formations, instructions on how to confront and defend against riot police, methods to protect each other, recommendation that banners and posters should be hung from apartment and office balconies, suggestion on specific slogans to chant during the protests, what to wear, what to carry, where to be, etc. In addition, it also stated that Egyptians should maximize redistribution of the leaflets through photocopies and/or email, but not on social media networks as security forces were monitoring social media networks.[129]

---

[128] Navid Hassanpour, "Media Disruption Exacerbates Revolutionary Unrest: Evidence from Mubarak's Natural Experiment" (paper presented at the American Political Science Association 2011 Annual Meeting, Washington, DC, August 7, 2011), http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1903351&download=yes##.

[129] Ian Black, "Middle East: Protests Plans: Leaflets Being Circulated in Cairo Give Blueprint for Mass Action," *Guardian*, January 28, 2011, 26.

F.   THE NEW MEDIA MEETS CONTENTIOUS POLITICS

The government only discovered the importance of the new media during the revolution. Its limited mindset assumed that by cutting off Egyptians from Internet and mobile telephone access, it could stall the demonstrations. When its plan failed, the government attempted to use technology to its advantage when Internet and mobile telephone access were restored. For example, as soon the government restored Internet and mobile telephone access, it was well aware of Egypt's high rate mobile usage, and therefore, sent out the following patriotic text message to all of its mobile telephone subscribers in hopes of reaching out to the mobilized youth to, again, stall the demonstrations. "Youth of Egypt beware rumors and listen to the sound of reason. Egypt is precious so look after her."[130] However, the text message had zero effect on Egypt's mobilized youth.[131]

As previously noted, the mobilized Egyptian youth account for 60 percent of the Egyptian population. It is the under 30, educated, and an Internet literate generation eager to demand its long overdue rights from its government to succeed in life. The Egyptian youth (social movements, activists, and organizers) was aware of the new media's value in its ability to function as a tool; however, it was also aware that the new media was not its "magic bullet" to create a revolution on its own.[132]

G.   THE NEW MEDIA, AS A TOOL, HELPED SPREAD THE MESSAGE OF THE REVOLUTION

1.   Asmaa Mahfouz Video Blogs

---

[130] "How Facebook Changed the World: The Arab Spring."

[131] Ibid.

[132] Sean Aday et al., "Blogs and Bullets: New Media in Contentious Politics," *Peaceworks,* no. 65 (2010), http://www.usip.org/files/resources/pw65.pdf.

On January 18 (exactly one week before the revolution), a 26-year-old activist Asmaa Mahfouz, also one of the founders of the April 6 Youth Movement, posted a video blog on Facebook directed to Egyptians to take a stand against the government. In her video, she stated the following:

> If you think yourself a man, come with me on 25 January. Whoever says women shouldn't go to protests because they will get beaten, let him have some honor and manhood and come with me on 25 January. Whoever says it is not worth it because there will only be a handful of people, I want to tell him, 'you are the reason behind this, and you are a traitor, just like the president or any security cop who beats us in the streets.'[133]

Asmaa's video went viral within days. It was uploaded to YouTube and reposted on Facebook. Many sources were labeling the video as the video blog that inspired Egyptians to participate on January 25. To understand how Asmaa's video inspired others to take a stand against the regime, one must understand "…how a movement reaches critical mass in the digital world."[134]

The first step to tap into human emotions is to make a real, genuine video blog. Asmaa's video blog did not have any special lighting, décor, or background music; her video was simple, brief, and she spoke from experience. Uploading her video to Facebook was a reality awakening to those stunned by her level of conviction. Here was a young veiled woman, brave enough to expose her identity, while being aware of the repercussions, in an effort to encourage others to take a stand against the regime and, as her video blog stated, "Go down to the street, send SMS (short message service), post it on the Internet, make people aware."[135] Asmaa's video blog tapped into the social circle on Facebook. Since each person on Facebook has individual social micro networks, the video quickly disseminated as it was reposted from one micro network to another. Additionally, because many Facebook users connect their Facebook accounts to other social media networks, as members started reposting the video blog, it simultaneously

---

[133] "Asmaa Mahfouz and the YouTube Video That Helped Spark the Egyptian Uprising," *Democracy Now!*, February 8, 2011,
http://www.democracynow.org/2011/2/8/asmaa_mahfouz_the_youtube_video_that.

[134] Shah and Sardar, *Sandstorm: A Leaderless Revolution in the Digital Age*, 63.

[135] Ibid., 64.

appeared on other social media networks. For example, on YouTube, the video blog became easier to find and access by those who did not have access to the Facebook post. As a result, the video blog spread like wildfire. The popularity of the video was so compelling to the degree that it was not just popular online; the video blog started being referenced in face-to-face conversations, and at the same time, further spreading the message among those friends offline. As Asmaa's video blog gained popularity on social media platforms, it also encouraged online discussions through comments. Some criticized the video, some defended the video, and others supported the video and rallied behind the cause.[136]

Asmaa released two additional video blogs in the same manner as her initial video. The second video was intended to be a follow-up video and was released on January 24. As the initial video gained popularity in the digital world and became a significant effort for an important event, the second video was critical to build up momentum. The video acknowledged the efforts of those Egyptians assisting in the setup of January 25 and the commitment of those who confirmed participation. The video also acknowledged the fear and nervousness felt by supporters and all other Egyptians taking a stand against the government on January 25. As expected, the second videos revived the attention of initial supporters, as well as attracting new supporters who either did not have an opportunity to see the initial video or chose to ignore it the first time around. In fact, the second video attracted more viewers because many Egyptians saw the second video before the first one, and some went back to search for the initial video. By the time Asmaa released the third video after January 25, the message was out. All three video blogs became "teaching tools for late comers to the cause, providing them with compelling, firsthand experiences of an Egyptian revolutionary."[137]

2.   Facebook Groups

Several Facebook groups were created before, during, and after the revolution. The most important and influential group of all was the "We are all Khaled Said"

---

[136] Shah and Sardar, *Sandstorm: A Leaderless Revolution in the Digital Age*, 63–66.

[137] Ibid., 66–67.

Facebook page. As previously mentioned, "We are all Khaled Said" Facebook page drew in more than 800,000 members actively interacting and coordinating among one another through online comments, postings, messages, as well as SMS. However, other Facebook groups, such as the "Rasd News Network (RNN)" Facebook group, were also of importance as far as their notable effort to contribute to the revolution. RNN, for example, provided news and media reaction updates to the public during the events of the revolution. It also became a significant resource for protestors to obtain the times and locations of the protests, as well as warnings and instructions on how to defend themselves if approached by the regime's hired thugs and/or the security forces.[138]

RNN captured over 400,000 viewers, which was one of the reasons that led the regime to ban access to social networking sites. Through third-party proxy servers, Facebook groups were able to get around the filters and regain access. In turn, the regime decided to shut down Internet and mobile telephone access in hopes of disabling communication and mobilization. The regime's effort to block access to social networking sites, followed by complete shutdown of Internet and mobile telephone access, were useless as Egyptians were already in the streets, already mobilized, and tuned into conventional media sources (such as Al Jazeera) for news updates.[139]

H. THE NEW MEDIA GARNERED INTERNATIONAL ATTENTION TOWARDS EGYPT

A significant generation gap exists between the Egyptian regime and the Egyptian youth population, assessed to be the tech-savvy individuals who used the new media platforms and networks as tools before and during the revolution. Since the average age of an Egyptian new media activist is in the twenties, the regime was less successful in regulating and monitoring the new media as it did not understand it. The average age of government members and officials is 60s to 70s, ruled by Mubarak who was 83 years old. The regime as a whole was underqualified to establish proper measures to fight the battle

---

[138] Mohamed Qsam, "The eRevolution," *Famous Bloggers*, February 14, 2011, http://www.famousbloggers.net/the-erevolution.html.

[139] "The Role of the Internet and Social Networking," *Egypt's Awakening*, February 6, 2011, http://awakeningofegypt.wordpress.com/2011/02/06/the-role-of-the-Internet-and-social-networking/.

of the new media in the digital age, as it simply did not comprehend it. Even if the regime did comprehend the new media, the government's IT workers were underqualified as they were only hired because of their "loyalty" to the regime.[140]

Due to such a generation gap, the Egyptian government was mainly concerned with the conventional, non-digital media. Therefore, the Egyptian regime heavily censored and monitored conventional media, especially during sensitive events. During the events of the revolution, the government tightly controlled what was published and often fabricated the truth. Al Ahram, an Egyptian state owned daily newspaper in circulation since 1875, and also the most widely distributed newspaper in the country, described the Egyptian protesters as nothing more than a minority group of troublemakers before Mubarak stepped down.[141] Throughout Mubarak's rule and before he stepped down, the conventional media restricted anything other than positive coverage on government activities to the point that even privately owned satellite stations were not exempt from such regulation.

Like BBC and CNN, Al Jazeera, for example, provided comprehensive and accurate around the clock coverage "broadcasting live images from Tahrir Square, sending live updates and clear messages to protestors on the critical gathering points"[142] while allowed the entire world to follow the events as they were unfolding. As a result, Nilesat (the Egyptian government run satellite transmission) dropped Al Jazeera Mubasher on January 27 in the midst of protesting, while detaining six English Al Jazeera journalists the following day and confiscating their camera equipment.[143] The regime prior to January 25, and even in the midst of the demonstrations, attempted everything in its power to crack down and silence the conventional media (banning, chasing, and attacking journalists and reports); however, it was nearly impossible to silence the new media.

---

[140] Qsam, "The eRevolution."

[141] "Egypt State Media Changes Sides," *Al Jazeera*, February 13, 2011, http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/02/201121361556414860.html.

[142] Qsam, "The eRevolution."

[143] Hugh Miles, "The Al Jazeera Effect," *Foreign Policy*, February 8, 2011, http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/02/08/the_al_jazeera_effect?page=0,0.

During the protesting, the social media was used as an outlet to update the rest of the world, broadcast, and disseminate information in real time. Egyptian demonstrators were reported setting up online hubs during the protesting in Tahrir Square to disseminate information as it happened and upload clips of the protests shortly after they were filmed using web live streaming devices. In addition, through activists' posts, online interaction, and communication, Twitter hashtag #25JAN became an identification to encourage Egyptians to come out and participate in the protests marked for January 25. As a result, following the first day of protesting on January 25, the hashtag date stamp was utilized to gather information and updates on the protests, and was also used by other Middle Eastern countries as their identification of individual unrest.[144]

Furthermore, YouTube users on scene posted live footage of violence against peaceful protestors. With the world watching, the digital frontlines generated expressed interest and support from the international community. The digital frontline exposed what the Egyptians were fighting for, and as a result, the regime shut down access to the Internet and mobile telephone services for a few days before restoring it as to them, it was a threat they could not control. The new media allowed Egyptians to upload on social media networks "some of the pictures and video clips showing the massacres conducted by the central police forces and thugs on civilians during the early days of protests; live bullets, snipers, people run by cars, others beaten to death, thugs with machetes, Molotov cocktails thrown on protestors and many other indescribable atrocities."[145]

The new media garnered international attention towards Egypt when Google stepped in to help the Egyptians. Google created a new system for Egyptians called "speak2tweet" to continue passing information without Internet access. Google allowed Egyptians to used landlines and "call in and leave a voicemail that would appear on a web page linked to Google's Twitter messages, hash tagged with the word 'Egypt.'"[146]

---

144 "Arab Revolt: Social Media and the People," *Channel 4 News*, February 25, 2011, http://www.channel4.com/news/arab-revolt-social-media-and-the-peoples-revolution.

145 Qsam, "The eRevolution."

146 Shah and Sardar, *Sandstorm: A Leaderless Revolution in the Digital Age*, 67–69.

Additionally, activists and organizers sought the assistance of Richard Allan, the Facebook's director of policy for Europe, to ensure important Facebook pages associated with the revolution, such as "We are all Khaled Said," were continuously being monitored for all activity to prevent third-party hacking and to also protect against disabling mechanisms.[147]

Furthermore, Egyptians living abroad were also supporters of the revolutionary cause. During the Internet blackout, using landlines and fax services, Egyptians living abroad would receive faxes through regular landlines from their families/friends in Egypt, and in turn, would "use Optical Character Recognition (OCR) technologies to convert the fax image into text contents, and post the contents, news and updates into Facebook, Twitter and different blogs."[148] Another example of an individual going above and beyond is a man by the name of Shervin Pishevar. Shervin tweeted so much on the Egyptian Revolution that he ended up exceeding his tweet limit. Working towards maintaining the lines of communication open between Egypt and the rest of the world, Shervin began an organization called OPENMESH, which functioned independently of Tweeter. OPENMESH aimed at generating a system of open mesh routers to eliminate a total Internet outage in case the government decided to halt Internet access again.[149]

With unfiltered coverage of the revolution, people from around the globe were able to watch the events as they were unfolding in real time. The new media garnered international attention towards Egypt, and as a result, generated supporters willing to step in and offer their services towards disseminating information, rallying the world, and most importantly, furthering the cause.[150]

---

[147] Mike Giglio, "Middle East Uprising: Facebook's Secret Role in Egypt," *The Daily Beast*, 24 Feb. 2011, http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2011/02/24/middle-east-uprising-facebooks-back-channel-diplomacy.html.

[148] Qsam, "The eRevolution."

[149] Alexia Tsotsis, "We're Now Watching the 'You' News Network," *Tech Crunch*, January 31, 2011, http://techcrunch.com/2011/01/31/you/.

[150] Shah and Sardar, *Sandstorm: A Leaderless Revolution in the Digital Age*, 63–69.

I. THE MAIN RESEARCH QUESTION

Based on the researched information discussed, the author returns to the main research question, how did social media impact and/or affect the creation and mobilization of social movements against an authoritarian regime, as observed during the 25 January Revolution?

The third hypothesis, which states that social media was a vital tool but only one of many tools that enabled preexisting networks to override state repressive measures, smoothed the progress of social mobilization, and to some limited extent, had an impact on the outcome of the revolution, is the closest hypothesis in answering the research question. This hypothesis does not downplay the role of the new social media in facilitating the transmission of the message and mobilization of resources; however, the new social media is not a rationale for the revolution. The praiseworthy actions taken by the Egyptians in Tahrir Square and around the country were the key actors involved, not the various media tools available to spread the message. The researched information discussed proves that social media was not a pillar of the revolution in and of itself.

The outcome of the 25 January Revolution was the result of the following tools, events, and factors: rise of social movements over the years; increased momentum towards protests, strikes, and demonstrations; sensitive events (Alexandria church bombing and "We are all Khaled Said") that increased emotions and anger towards a common purpose, traditional social mobilization strategies (face-to-face planning, meetings, coordinating, and training), creativity of resource utilization (taxi drivers, soccer fans, and poor neighborhoods' participation), a political opportunity (Tunisia), dedicated, brave, and fully charged organizers, activists, ordinary citizens (both Muslims and Copts), and outside supporters; conventional media, and of course, digital technology to include nonconventional media (social media and mobile telephones).

IV.   CONCLUSION

A.   OWNERSHIP OF THE 25 JANUARY REVOLUTION

Margaret Mead's, an American cultural anthropologist, famous quote best illustrates the power of the people in relevance to the 25 January Revolution. "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it is the only thing that ever has."[151] Although the new media, to include social media, had a limited impact and/or effect on the creation and mobilization of social movements against Mubarak and his regime, Egyptians recognized other factors that also had an impact on the outcome of the revolution. "Thank God. Thanks to all who died for us to live in freedom. Thanks to all the Egyptians who slept rough in Tahrir, Alexandria, and everywhere...thank you Tunisia" and "…thanks to the international solidarity."[152] The 25 January Revolution was the product of the Egyptian disgruntled citizens; their motivation, dedication, passion, performance, and creativity have generated one of the most important democratic movements, or a "world historical event," in the Arab world.[153] With or without the help of the new media, Egyptians have always been unitary in wanting freedom, justice, economic prosperity and self-rule; it was only a matter of time before the dictatorship would fall.

Along with traditional methods of mobilization, current events, and political opportunities, the new media facilitated the creation of social movements, mobilization, and generated a new mode of action. For example, by allowing Egyptians to circumvent state censorship, social media allowed everyday citizens to self-publish online videos, blogs, etc. (i.e., Asmaa Mahfouz Video Blogs), expose the regime's atrocities (online

---

[151] Campbell, *Egypt Unshackled*, 302.

[152] Jeffery C. Alexander, *Reformative Revolution in Egypt: An Essay in Cultural Power* (NY: Bloomsbury Academic, 2011), 84–85.

[153] Ibid., ix.

pictures and videos of Khaled Said), and to disseminate information easily and interact (instantly and in real time) with like-minded individuals who have common grievances at a low transactional cost.

For Egypt's youth bulge, or Egypt's college graduates with no future, technology, without a doubt, "…expanded the space and power of the individual."[154] Additionally, "The fact that regimes go (went) to such trouble to monitor, identify, capture, beat, torture, and jail young people using online tools suggests that they, at least, see the power of the new media."[155] However, with a population of over 80 million people, Internet penetration only accounts for approximately 24 percent, and therefore, traditional methods of creating social movements, organizing, and mobilizing were employed before and during the revolution. In other words, the new media did not inevitably lead to the downfall of Mubarak and his supporting regime but it did somewhat shift the balance of power to favor the Egyptian people; Egyptians "…just know more than they used to" and "have better understanding of power."[156] Nevertheless, the ownership of the 25 January Revolution will always belong to the Egyptian people and not to social media or any other tools. The revolution, as Google executive Wael Ghonim stated during his 60-minute interview on CBS, "…is like Wikipedia…Everyone contributing small pieces, bits and pieces. We drew this whole picture of a revolution. And no one is the hero in that picture."[157] Characterized as a leaderless revolution, the people, without a question, are the individuals that impacted the outcome of the 25 January Revolution and not the tools employed by them.

B.   FUTURE RESEARCH DESIGN ON THE NEW MEDIA

Social media, based on the research conducted in this thesis, had a limited role on the outcome of the revolution, as well as the unrest that spread like wildfire in other Arab

---

[154] Paul Mason, "Twenty Reasons Why it's Kicking Off Everywhere," *BBC News*, February 5, 2011, http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/newsnight/paulmason/2011/02/twenty_reasons_why_its_kicking.html.

[155] John Pollock, "Streetbook: How Egyptians and Tunisian Youth Hacked the Arab Spring," *Technology Review* 114, no. 5 (2011): 82, http://www.technologyreview.com/web/38379/.

[156] Mason, "Twenty Reasons Why it's Kicking Off Everywhere."

[157] Wael Ghonim, interview by Harry Smith, February 13, 2011, *60 minutes* (CBS).

countries; therefore, it is very possible that its role may increase in contentious politics and civil society in the future. In the mean time, social media will continue to be either overexaggerated or criticized for its role and the level of impact it had on the outcome of the revolution. Pessimists emphasize how social media can actually be a double-edged sword by helping authoritarian regimes track and monitor its citizens. Furthermore, other skeptics believe that social media, when used as a tool to aid in social mobilization, can encourage slacktivism; in addition, they claim that social media may be nothing more than just a trendy "hook" for citizens to tell political stories.[158] Regardless on how social media will be judged in future academic work, it is too early to evaluate its role properly as little rigorous research is currently conducted to analyze the casual effects and its consequences on the creation, organization, and mobilization of social movements. Nevertheless, "Scholars and policymakers should adopt a more nuanced view of new media's role in democratization and social change, one that recognizes that new media can have both positive and negative effects."[159]

Current assessments indicate that no proper measures of methodological foundations are in place to aid with understanding the relationship of the new media with the creation, organization, and mobilization of social movements under authoritarian regimes; in turn, a problem for policymakers, activists, and social scientists is created. To act effectively in today's technological and fast-paced world, scholars and policymakers must understand the casual relationship. Case selection, counterfactuals, hidden variables, causal mechanisms, environmental impacts,[160] system effects, new media outlet selection, and strategic interaction must be all considered during the research design. Just as important is data analysis. The diversity of data must be properly sorted and examined

---

[158] Aday et al., "Blogs and Bullets: New Media in Contentious Politics."

[159] Ibid.

[160] Marc Lynch, "After Egypt: The Limits and Promise of Online Challenges to the Authoritarian Arab State," *Reflections* 9, no. 2 (2011): 307, http://www.marclynch.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/download-Lynch-article.pdf.

before general conclusions can be made In other words, to understand the impact of the new media, both successes and failures must be properly understood, examined, studied, and even challenged.[161]

Proper research design on new media tools can turn into valuable open source collection tool in an effort to understand the motivation of those who strive to create political change under repressive authoritarian governments. Equally important, the new social media can offer analysis on why allied and antagonistic regimes may possibly re-strategize domestic and foreign policies (as they see fit) depending on whether or not the new social media threatens their rule.

C.   HYPOTHESES ANALYSIS

This thesis presented three possible explanations of the impact of the new social media on social mobilization and the outcome of the 25 January Revolution were presented in this thesis. The first hypothesis or the null hypothesis, which states that social media had no critical impact on sustained social mobilization and the outcome of the Egyptian Revolution, along with the second hypothesis, which is the antithesis of the first, are safe to eliminate. Research proved that social media did have an impact, but a limited impact just as equivalent as traditional strategies of social organization and mobilization.

Furthermore, the second hypothesis, which argues that social media was the most critical factor in achieving sustained social mobilization impacting the outcome of the revolution, is an over-exaggeration of the role of the new media. The second hypothesis is "…blind to hidden variables, confuse output with impact, or assume casual relationships that may be spurious."[162] Journalists, writers, and reporters who support the second hypothesis often prefer to focus on heroic-like stories of activists over complex arguments, and therefore, may possibly ignore serious analysis of the effects of the new media on contentious politics.[163]

---

[161] Aday et al., "Blogs and Bullets: New Media in Contentious Politics."

[162] Ibid.

[163] Ibid.

The third hypothesis states that social media was a vital tool that enabled preexisting networks to override state repressive measures. However, social media was only one of many tools (or factors) that smoothed the progress of social mobilization, and to some limited extent, impacted the outcome of the revolution, came the closest in answering the main research question. The research conducted proved that social media was not a rationale for the revolution. The new media tools were nothing more than tools used to disseminate information, facilitate communication, organization, and mobilization; the desire for political reforms were present before the tweets, YouTube videos, and Facebook posts. Additionally, traditional methods (face-to-face planning, meetings, etc.), or an offline program, were just as important in achieving same effects as the new media tools had on the 25 January Revolution. In fact both, an online and offline program, were equally significant tools used by Egyptians to impact the outcome of the revolution.

D. THE WAY AHEAD

The story of the Egyptian revolution began when Egyptians, who lived under an oppressive dictatorship for decades, finally took a stand against their regime. Both the over-exaggeration of the social media's role, and impact during the revolution and the downplaying of its role and impact on the revolution, are incorrect. Many media sources gave too much credit to social media and often labeled it as the "Facebook and Twitter revolution" while dismissing the role of Egypt's most important asset, the Egyptian citizens.

Without a doubt, the people used both online and offline strategies and tools to facilitate communication, organization, and mobilization before and during the revolution. Although media sources may have placed more emphasis on the new media tools, the revolution would not have been possible if it were not for all the offline strategies (face-to-face planning, training, meetings, organizing, and coordinating) used, as well as the creativity of using other resources, such as taxi drivers, to spread the word on the mass demonstrations. Additionally, political opportunities (such as Tunisia's

revolution) and open source events (such as the police brutality of Khaled Said and the New Year's church bombing) also aided in revolutionizing Egyptians "…against an archaic, unjust, and inefficient system, or way of doing things."[164]

The power of the new media is, without a doubt, dependent on those individuals who utilize it. The new media is today's tool, and therefore, cannot be excluded from other forms of communication, expression, or action in the future.[165] In today's fast-paced world, the new media changed, and will continue to change, the media environment through the power of the World Wide Web.

During revolutionary events or mass demonstrations, media sources can sometimes skew perceptions of an event by not presenting all of the details to the story; it is, in their defense, difficult to report on everything, and therefore, selectivity is inevitable. As a result, media sources often have the power to present events as a Hollywood script (as observed during the 25 January Revolution): Mubarak and his oppressive regime (the bad guys) toppled by a group of young Egyptians (the good guys) armed with nothing more than smartphones, Facebook and Twitter accounts. However, as this thesis has illustrated, that was not the case or the complete story. The 25 January Revolution was not a Hollywood movie, "…dictatorial regimes are not nearly as vulnerable, citizens are not nearly as organized, and new media not nearly as powerful" as these media sources and narratives assumed.[166]

The events that unfolded in Egypt proved that leaderless, non-violent uprisings could topple the regime (with or without social media). Although Egyptians successfully toppled authoritarianism through online and offline tools, tactics, and strategies, Egypt will still experience difficulties towards its road to a liberal and democratic society. After a revolution, a civil war, an uprising, and major protests, demonstrations and strikes, countries usually take time to let the dust settle before they can reconstruct itself socially,

---

[164] Doreen Khoury, "Social Media and the Revolutions: How the Internet Revived the Arab Public Sphere and Digitalized Activism," March 10, 2011, http://www.ps.boell.org/downloads/Perspectives_02-12_Doreen_Khoury3.pdf.

[165] Ibid.

[166] Aday et al., "Blogs and Bullets: New Media in Contentious Politics."

economically, and politically; the more the causalities and violence used, the harder it will be. Nevertheless, one thing is evident. Revolutions occurred before the new media, and therefore, the new social media was not a pillar of the revolution in and of itself. Technology will continue to expand, improve and become more of a crucial tool in the future; however, it will never alone by itself topple an authoritarian regime. The human agency is the most important player in any revolution past, present, and future.

THIS PAGE INTENTIONALLY LEFT BLANK

LIST OF REFERENCES

Aday, Sean, Henry Farrell, Marc Lynch, and John Sides. "Blogs and Bullets: New Media in Contentious Politics." *Peaceworks,* no. 65 (2010). http://www.usip.org/files/resources/pw65.pdf.

Al Aswany, Alaa. *On the State of Egypt: What Made the Revolution Inevitable*. NY: Random House, Inc., 2011.

Alexander, Jeffery C. *Reformative Revolution in Egypt: An Essay in Cultural Power*. NY: Bloomsbury Academic, 2011.

Alidina, Abbas. "MENA Facebook Digest: Tracking Facebook Users in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA)." May 22, 2010. http://logicks.com/pdf/2010-05-22-MENA_Facebook_Digest.pdf.

Al Sherbini, Ramadan. "Egyptian Court Refuses to Ban Mobile Phones in Police Stations." *Gulfnews.com* (June 20, 2010). http://gulfnews.com/news/region/egypt/egyptian-court-refuses-to-ban-mobile-phones-in-police-stations-1.643645.

Amin, Galal. *Egypt in the Era of Hosni Mubarak 1981–2011*. NY: The American University in Cairo Press, 2011.

"April 6 Youth Movement: How is Started?" February 22, 2011. http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/revolution-in-cairo/inside-april6-movement/#.

"Arab Revolt: Social Media and the People." *Channel 4 News* (February 25, 2011). http://www.channel4.com/news/arab-revolt-social-media-and-the-peoples-revolution.

"Asmaa Mahfouz and the YouTube Video That Helped Spark the Egyptian Uprising."

Democracy Now! (February 8, 2011), http://www.democracynow.org/2011/2/8/asmaa_mahfouz_the_youtube_video_that.

Black, Ian. "Middle East: Protests Plans: Leaflets Being Circulated in Cairo Give Blueprint for Mass Action." *Guardian* (January 28, 2011).

Boyd, Danah M., and Nicole B. Ellison. "Social Network Sites: Definition, History, and Scholarship." *Journal of Computer-Mediated Communications* 13, no. 1, article 1 (2007). http://jcmc.indiana.edu/vol13/issue1/boyd.ellison.html.

Campbell, Denis G. *Egypt Unshackled*. UK: Cambria Book, 2011.

Chadwish, Andrew. *Internet Politics: States, Citizens and New Communication Technologies*. NY: Oxford University Press, 2006.

"Clashes in Egypt Strike Stand-Off." *BBC News* (April 6, 2008). http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/middle_east/7332929.stm.

Cleveland, William L., and Martin Bunton. *A History of the Modern Middle East*. CO: Westview Press, 2009.

Cook, Steven A. *The Struggle for Egypt: From Nasser to Tahrir Square*. NY: Oxford University Press, 2011.

"Coptic Christian Pope to Egypt's Leaders: Address Discrimination." January 3, 2011. http://www.statesman.com/news/world/coptic-christian-pope-to-egypts-leaders-address-discrimination-1161439.html.

"Coptic Protests in Shubra Following Church Bombing." *Out of Egypt* (2011). http://www.persecution.org/outofegypt/category/alexandria-church-bombing/.

"Country Report: Egypt." *Open Source Center* (July 2011).

"Court Rejects Request to Ban 51 Websites." *International Freedom of Expression Exchange* (January 2, 2008). http://www.ifex.org/egypt/2008/01/02/court_rejects_request_to_ban_51/.

Duval, Jean, and Fred Weston. "Egyptian April 6—A Dress Rehearsal for Bigger Events in the Future." *In Defence of Marxist* (April 7, 2008). http://www.marxist.com/egyptian-april-6-dress-rehearsal.htm.

"Egypt's Revolution by Social Media: Facebook and Twitter Let the People Keep Ahead of the Regime." *The Wall Street Journal*. (February 14, 2011). http://online.wsj.com/article/SB10001424052748703786804576137980252177072.html.

"Egypt State Media Changes Sides." *Al Jazeera* (February 13, 2011). http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/02/201121361556414860.html.

"Facebook's Growth in the Arab World Is Surging with Demands for Political Change." *Managing Technology* (February 23, 2011). http://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/arabic/article.cfm?articleid=2626.

Fahmy, Ninette S. *The Politics of Egypt: State-Society Relationship*. New York, NY: RoutledgeCurzon, 2002.

Fleishman, Jefferey, and Noha El-Hennewy. "Egypt Too Poor to Strike?" *Los Angeles Times* (April 6, 2008). http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/babylonbeyond/2008/04/egypt- too-poor.html.

El-Hamalawy, Hossam. "Egypt's Revolution Has Been 10 Years in the Making." *The Guardian* (March 2, 2011). http://www.guardian.co.uk/commentisfree/2011/mar/02/egypt-revolution-mubarak- wall-of-fear.

"Freedom on the Net 2011: Egypt." *Freedom House* (April 18, 2011). http://www.freedomhouse.org/images/File/FotN/Egypt2011.pdf.

Ghonim, Wael. Interview by Harry Smith (February 13, 2011). *60 minutes* (CBS).

Giglio, Mike. "Middle East Uprising: Facebook's Secret Role in Egypt." *The Daily Beast* (February 24, 2011). http://www.thedailybeast.com/articles/2011/02/24/middle-east-uprising-facebooks-back-channel-diplomacy.html.

———."'We Are All Khaled Said': Will the Revolution Come to Egypt?" January 22, 2011. http://www.thedailybeast.com/blogs-and-stories/2011-01-22/we-are-all-khaled-said-will-the-revolution-come-to-egypt/full.

Gladwell, Malcolm. "Small Change: Why the Revolution Will Not Be Tweeted?" *The New Yorker* (October 4, 2010). http://www.newyorker.com/reporting/2010/10/04/101004fa_fact_gladwell.

Goldschmidt, Arthur Jr. "Egypt Under Mubarak." (In *The Contemporary Middle East*, edited by Karl Yambert. Oxford: Westview Press, 2006.

Gustin, Sam. "Social Media Sparked, Accelerated Egypt's Revolutionary Fire." *EPICENTER* (February 11, 2011). www.wired.com/epicenter/2011/02/egypts-revolutionary -fire/.

Haggag, Mohamed. "Religion in Egypt: Past, Present, and Future." 2008. http://www.slideshare.net/ender14/religion-in-egypt-presentation.

Hassanpour, Navid. "Media Disruption Exacerbates Revolutionary Unrest: Evidence from Mubarak's Natural Experiment." Paper presented at the American Political Science Association 2011 Annual Meeting, Washington, DC (August 7, 2011). http://papers.ssrn.com/sol3/papers.cfm?abstract_id=1903351&download=yes##.

Hauser, Alissa, and Marianne Manilov. "Lessons from Egypt." *The Engage Network* (April 20, 2011). http://engagenet.org/ideas/lessons-from-egypt.

"How Facebook Changed the World: The Arab Spring." *BBC* (2011). http://www.bbc.co.uk/programmes/b014l2ck/episodes/guide.

Jacob, Jijo. "What is Egypt's April 6 Movement?" February 1, 2011. http://www.ibtimes.com/articles/107387/20110201/what-is-egypt-s-april-6-movement.htm.

Kalathil, Shanthi, and Taylor C. Boas. "The Internet and State Control in Authoritarian Regimes: China, Cuba, and the Counterrevolution." *First Monday* 6, no. 8 (2001): 23. http://firstmonday.org/htbin/cgiwrap/bin/ojs/index.php/fm/article/viewArticle/876/785.

Khoury, Doreen. "Social Media and the Revolutions: How the Internet Revived the Arab Public Sphere and Digitalized Activism." March 10, 2011. http://www.ps.boell.org/downloads/Perspectives_02-12_Doreen_Khoury3.pdf.

Krikorian, Onnik. "Social Media and Political Activism in the Caucasus." *EAP Community* (August 10, 2011). http://www.easternpartnership.org/community/debate/social-media-and-political-activism-caucasus.

Lynch, Daniel C. *After the Propaganda State: Media, Politics and 'Thought Work' in Reformed China*. Stanford, CA: Stanford University Press, 1999.

———. "After Egypt: The Limits and Promise of Online Challenges to the Authoritarian Arab State." *Reflections* 9, no. 2 (2011). http://www.marclynch.com/wp-content/uploads/2011/06/download-Lynch-article.pdf.

Mason, Paul. "Twenty Reasons Why it's Kicking Off Everywhere." *BBC News* (February 5, 2011). http://www.bbc.co.uk/blogs/newsnight/paulmason/2011/02/twenty_reasons_why_its_kicking.html.

Michael, Maggie. "Egypt Journalists Decry Government Media Crackdown." *The Huffington Post* (October 4, 2010). http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2010/10/04/egypt-journalists-decry-g_n_749330.html.

Michaels, Jim. "Tech-Savvy Youths Led the Way in Egypt's Protests." *USA Today* (February 7, 2011). http://www.usatoday.com/news/world/2011-02-07-egyptyouth07_ST_N.htm.

Miles, Hugh. "The Al Jazeera Effect." *Foreign Policy* (February 8, 2011). http://www.foreignpolicy.com/articles/2011/02/08/the_al_jazeera_effect?page=0,0.

Ng, Aaron. "Facebook and Twitter: New Hope of Revolution?" *S. Rajaratnam School of International Studies Commentaries*, No. 64/2011 (April 27, 2011). http://www.rsis.edu.sg/publications/Perspective/RSIS0642011.pdf.

Osman, Tarek. *Egypt on the Brink: From Nasser to Mubarak*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press, 2010.

Pollock, John. "Streetbook: How Egyptians and Tunisian Youth Hacked the Arab Spring." *Technology Review* 114, no. 5 (2011). http://www.technologyreview.com/web/38379/.

Qsam, Mohamed. "The eRevolution." *Famous Bloggers* (February 14, 2011). http://www.famousbloggers.net/the-erevolution.html.

Roberts, Joseph W. *How the Internet Is Changing the Practice of Politics in the Middle East: Political Protest, New Social Movements, and Electronic Samizdat*. Edwin Mellen Press, 2009.

Rogan, Eugene. *The Arabs*: *A History*. NY: Basic Books, 2009.

Sadek, Adel A. "The Internet and Political Reform in Egypt," *Central for Political and Strategic Studies* (July 15, 2007). http://acpss.ahram.org.eg/eng/ahram/2004/7/5/EGYP97.HTM.

Seib, Philip. *New Media and the New Middle East*. NY: Palgrave Macmillan, 2007.

Shah, Adeek A. and Sheheryar T. Sardar. *Sandstorm: A Leaderless Revolution in the Digital Age*. USA: Global Executive Board LLC, 2011.

Shalaby, Mark A. "Mobile Internet in Egypt: the Hope and the Hype." May 2011. http://www.partager-le-savoir.org/template/fs/malte2011/presentations/shalaby_malta.pdf.

Shirky, Clay. *Here Comes Everybody: The Power of Organizing Without Organizations*. London: Benguin Books, 2008.

Shirky, Clay. "The Political Power of Social Media: Technology, the Public Sphere, and Political Change." *Foreign Affairs* (February 2011). http://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/67038/clay-shirky/the-political-power-of-social-media.

Shourbagy, Manar. "The Egyptian Movement for Change—Kefaya: Redefining Politics in Egypt." http://publicculture.org/articles/view/19/1/the-egyptian-movement-for-change-kefaya-redefin/.

Tarrow, Sidney. *Power in Movement: Social Movements and Contentious Politics*. 2nd ed. NY: Cambridge University Press, 1998.

"The Role of the Internet and Social Networking." *Egypt's Awakening* (February 6, 2011). http://awakeningofegypt.wordpress.com/2011/02/06/the-role-of-the-internet-and-social-networking/.

"Timeline: Egypt's Revolution." *Aljazeera* (February 14, 2011). http://english.aljazeera.net/news/middleeast/2011/01/201112515334871490.html.

Tsotsis, Alexia. "We're Now Watching the 'You' News Network." *Tech Crunch* (January 31, 2011). http://techcrunch.com/2011/01/31/you/.

INITIAL DISTRIBUTION LIST

1.   Defense Technical Information Center
        Ft. Belvoir, Virginia

2.   Dudley Knox Library
        Naval Postgraduate School
        Monterey, California