DEMOCRATIZATION IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA IN THE AFTERMATH OF THE ARAB SPRING: SUCCESS FACTORS AND FAILURE CAUSES

A Comparative analysis of Egypt and Tunisia

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" You can cut all the flowers but you cannot keep spring from coming"

Pablo Neruda

DEDICATION

This Thesis is dedicated to the light of my eyes

My parents

Dear Father (Essa) & Beloved Mother (Yazi)

"My Lord!

have mercy upon them as they brought me up [when I was] small."

And to

the Nobleman Mr. Awad Al-Ali & my dearest cousin Mr. Jassim Al-Thamer

May Almighty God bless them and protect them forever

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Sincerely,

Ali Issa Al-Mohammad

May 31st , 2021

ABSTRACT

The theme of this study will be the Arab Spring and democratization. The impact of the Arab Spring has, in one form or another, extended to almost all countries of the Arab region in the MENA. However, this paper will be limited to compare two countries, in particular Tunisia and Egypt by analyzing their democratization and examining how two similar states achieved widely differing outcomes in the aftermath of the Arab Spring. Tunisia and Egypt are both predominantly Muslim-majority, Arabic-speaking countries, and both of them were subject to authoritarian regimes (Ben Ali in Tunisia, Mubarak in Egypt) before the outbreak of the Arab Spring. After the first wave of uprisings, Tunisia made remarkable progress in the transition to democracy, but in Egypt the situation faltered when the army overthrew a democratically elected president and then the country underwent a counter-revolution, bringing it back to square one (i.e. the yoke of tyranny). The four variables that this research will revolve around as an explanation and possible analysis of the secret of this difference in outcomes between these two countries are: the role of the international and regional community, the position of the military and armed forces in the state, the role of religious political parties, and the effectiveness of civil society organizations across the country. After reviewing all four variables, the final result of the paper suggests that the military, religious, international, and civil society variables are the strongest indicators of the reason for the great difference in the democratic progress in both countries. This paper facilitates an understanding of democratization by identifying the critical factors in determining whether a nation's transition from dictatorship to democracy will be successful or not.

Key Words: Middle East and North Africa, Arab Spring, Democratization, Egypt, Tunisia.

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

ACRPS   The Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies

CPR   Congress for the Republic

CSOs   Civil Society Organizations

EU   European Union

 FHI   Freedom House Index

FJP   Freedom and Justice Party

GCC   Gulf Cooperation Council

LAS   League of Arab States

LTDH   The Tunisian Human Rights League

MENA   Middle East and North Africa

NGOs   Non-Governmental Organizations

SCAF   Supreme Council of Armed Forces

UAE   United Arab Emirates

UDHR   The Universal Declaration of Human Rights

UGTT   Tunisian General Labor Union

UK   The United Kingdom

UN   The United Nations

UNGA   The United Nations General Assembly

USA   United States of America

I. CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

The Arab region in the MENA witnessed a significant political turn embodied in massive popular protests, that began in Tunisia on December 17th, 2010, when a street vendor named Mohamed Bouazizi set himself on fire in the city of Sidi Bouzid in protest against local police and municipal officials who arbitrarily confiscated his goods and mistreated him. Also it was a reaction due to the poor living conditions that force youth and educated people to sell fruits and vegetables on the streets to survive financially[1].

Consequently, this painful scene unleashed the first spark of the Arab Spring and represented the beginning of the Arab Spring, which soon spread, like wildfire, across the Arab world, leaving no country in the region unaffected. Of course, this event caused great turmoil and change in the Arab scene, but to a very different degree from one country to another. It was crowned with success and the transition to democracy in Tunisia, suffered a setback in Egypt, achieved relative success in Morocco, Algeria, Sudan and Jordan. It was also put down in Bahrain, Lebanon and Iraq, and turned into a bloody war in Syria, Yemen and Libya [See Figure 1].

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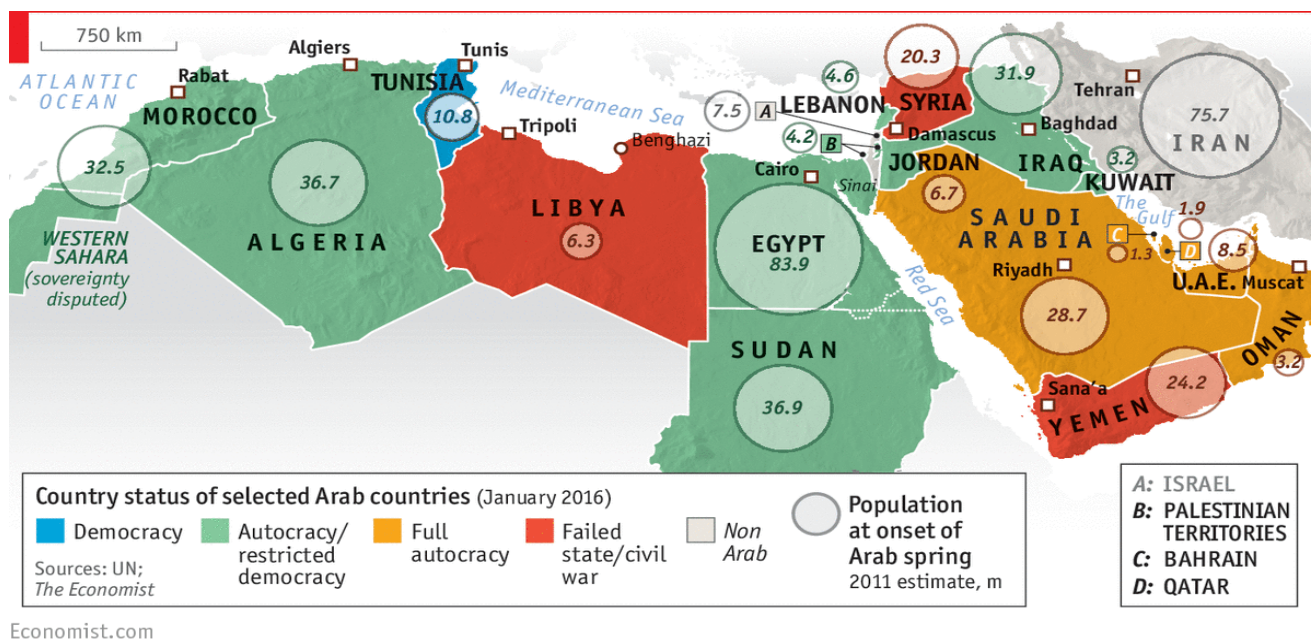
[1] Howard, P. N., & Hussain, M. M. (2013). *Democracy's fourth wave? Digital media and the Arab Spring.* Oxford University Press, pp. 18-20.

Figure 1: Layout of all the Arab Countries that were a part of the Arab spring. Retrieved from: https://www.economist.com/graphic-detail/2016/01/11/the-arab-spring-five-years-on.

This illustrates an interesting and puzzling contrast among the states of the region - countries that are similar in many ways - but where the Arab Spring had quite a different degree of impact. How can this be explained, and what are the factors that caused this difference in the case of democratic transition? The Arab Spring, as it is known, is a contemporary phenomenon. There is still much uncertainty about the direction that the Arab countries will take and whether the rapid developments will lead to a complete democratic transition or not. Nevertheless, this study will endeavor to explain and analyze the variation in the results of popular movements calling for democratic transition. To this end, this research will not delve into studying all the experiences of Arab countries struck by the winds of change. Rather, it will be limited to studying only two experiences, the Tunisian case as a successful democratic paradim, and the Egyptian case as a failed one.

But before anything else, it is necessary to crystallize the criteria for judging the success of the Tunisian experience and the failure of its Egyptian counterpart. Needless to say, there are a number of conditions for the success and continuation of the democratic transition to complete the democratic system, and some have pointed out that several rules govern the political game during the democratic transition and that these rules ensure that there is no backsliding from the democratic process. These indicators include:

A) Separation of powers: democracy necessitates that powers should not be in the hands of a single individual or body, and the Constitution must guarantee the separation of powers; B)The institutional structure of the State: the institutionalization of the system, which means that political decision-making depends on different structures and systems of parliaments and parties to ensure the continuation of the democratic system and not return to the authoritarian system; C) Freedom and impartiality of the electoral process: the electoral system is not a stand-alone system but rather includes other elements that support it in a manner that is neutral and transparent and satisfies all conflicting currents in the political arena; D) Identification of groups participating in or excluded from the political process: there are some forces which it is helpful to exclude from exercising a

political role in a democracy, such as the military, while others, such as civil society organizations, must be allowed to enter the sphere of political participation in order to express their views, protect their interests and bring about the success of the compromise and bargaining process involved in democracy; E) Freedom of opinion, the press, and the media: meaning freedom of access to information, freedom of opinion and freedom to exchange information and opinions; and F) The rule of law: A set of rules governing the social, economic and political life of society, to be adhered to by both the rulers and the governed.[2]

In a general sense, the indicators mentioned above are indispensable to determine a successful democratic transition in a country. An electoral process, for example, is unthinkable without respect for citizens' civil and political freedoms, and it also includes the principle of political participation, in the sense that political decision is the result of the ideas and discussions of the groups involved in the democratic process. Freedom of media and the press implies oversight, transparency, communication channels, and feedback between the people and power. The rule of law is the fundamental guarantee of the rights and freedoms of individuals in the face of the arbitrariness of power and of the equality of those who are governed, it is generally the instrument that brings discipline and stability to society. It is undoubtedly essential to identify groups involved in the political process that do not turn the democratic process towards specific goals and objectives.

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[2] Follesdal, A., Cramme, O., & Hobolt, S. B. (2014). Democratic standards in an asymmetric union. *Democratic Politics in a European Union under Stress, Cramme, Olaf Hobolt, Sara B.(eds.), Oxford,* pp. 199-216.

1.1 RESEARCH PROBLEM

Beyond the shadow of a doubt, the protests and the overthrow of authoritarian regimes in the Arab world is an unprecedented and unexpected event, and it also did not come by chance. Rather, it is the result of the accumulation of various internal causes and factors, economic, social, cultural and political. In addition to the external factors that cannot be overlooked. These widespread protests caused many of the region's longtime dictators to fall away into the dustbin of history. However, once autocratic rulers were overthrown, countries took vastly different trajectories in their struggle for a democratic foundation. Many countries have now slipped into old political systems, suffering from economic stagnation and political violence with no light at the end of the tunnel, with the exception of Tunisia. Tunisia presents a successful case of democratic transition in the wake of the Arab Spring, which makes it of great geopolitical importance for democratic studies. The country has so far held three parliamentary elections, two presidential elections, and two municipal elections, and enacted a new constitution. The political spectra have been able to build an effective political structure, which contrasts sharply with neighboring countries such as Egypt, whose military coup toppled the elected government, dissolved parliament, and ruled the country with an iron fist, Which constituted a stumbling block to the democratic transition.

Thus, the problematic of the study lies in discovering the reasons behind the different paths of the Arab Spring, despite the unity of the causes and factors that led to the outbreak of the uprisings, from one angle, and the reasons for the different outcomes of the democratic transition from one country to another, from another angle.

1.2 RESEARCH AIM

The purpose of this study will be to determine and analyze the factors that contribute to the success of democratization, and the reasons that lead to its failure by comparing Tunisia, a country that succeeded in democratizing after the protests in 2011, with Egypt, a country that has returned to authoritarian rule. This is a research area that is very current and scientifically relevant in view of how devastating the consequences of failed democratization processes have been in Egypt, Libya and Syria, among others. At the same time, by realizing the success of the Tunisian experience and the failure of the Egyptian experience, the article aims to contribute to the existing literature on democratic transitions and more specifically about democracy in the MENA region. Studies of democratic transition in the Middle East and North Africa region have rarely taken into consideration, due to the absence of democratic transitions in the past. Thus, the events of the Arab Spring present a golden opportunity for democratization research to study and analyze the region.

1.3 RESEARCH QUESTIONS

With the research problem and the thesis' aim, the tow following research questions (RQ) were formulated:

RQ.1: Has the Arab Spring resulted in democratic gains in Egypt and Tunisia?

RQ.2: Why has the democratic transition succeeded in Tunisia but failed in Egypt? What are the decisive factors that prompted those countries to take different paths?

1.4 RESEARCH MOTIVATIONS

A large stream of political researchers and analysts tend to compare the pathways of the Tunisian and Egyptian cases a decade after the eruption of the two revolutions, as Egypt witnessed a military coup on the third of July 2013, at a time when Tunisia witnessed parliamentary and presidential elections that some considered a milestone in the history of Tunisia, and a smooth transition from revolution to the state, which means the success

of the Tunisian revolution compared to its grand sister, the Egyptian revolution, which stalled under the feet of the military and the forces of the counter-revolution.

Some have tended to link the relative success of the revolution in Tunisia with talking about the rationality and political pragmatism of the Tunisian Ennahdha Party, which has an Islamic reference and is affiliated with the Muslim Brotherhood, while the failure of the revolution in Egypt is linked to the inability of the Muslim Brotherhood and its political arm "Freedom and Justice Party" on managing post-revolution balances, the inability to maintain the unity of the revolutionary ranks, and linking the success of the coup in Egypt to the failure of the Muslim Brotherhood to recognize the size of the threat and thus the inability to deal with it.

Within the framework of the comparison approach, and based on Larry Diamond's theory that highlights the role of the external factors, such as foreign pressure and sanctions,[3] alongside O'Donnell and Schmitter who stress the importance of the internal factors, namely, the civil and political society.[4] it can be argued that two basic sets of factors can be distinguished in analyzing the democratic transition in Egypt and Tunisia:

External factors, which come from the external environment (regional or international), most importantly the regional role and political standing of Tunisia and Egypt, and their attitude towards conflicting regional and international hubs in the region.

Internal factors, which stem from the Tunisian and Egyptian environment, most importantly: the attitude of the military, the effectiveness of CSOs, and the behavior of the Islamic forces that came to the power.

In conjunction, these factors contributed to the success of the Tunisian experience compared to the Egyptian experience, which will be discussed in detail later on in the analysis section.

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[3] Larry Diamond. (2008). The spirit of democracy: The struggle to build free societies throughout the world. Macmillan. P. 106.

[4] O'Donnell, G., Schmitter, P. C., Whitehead, L., & Lowenthal, A. F. (Eds.). (1986). Transitions from authoritarian rule: Southern Europe. JHU Press.

1.5 RESEARCH SIGNIFICANCE

The reality of the Arab Spring is in constant need of in-depth, quantitative and qualitative studies. Despite the number of studies that examined the subject of the Arab Spring in general and the reasons for which protests and revolutions broke out in most Arab countries, especially the first wave between 2011-2013 and the second wave between 2018-2019, the studies are still limited and do not cover all aspects. Given the importance of what has happened and is still taking place in the Arab region under the umbrella of the so-called Arab Spring, and the changes it has created, as well as the potential changes for a region that is so vital to its peoples and to the world as a whole, this modest study sheds light on some angles neglected by previous studies (e.g., Asseburg & Wimmen, 2016; Cavatorta, 2015; Heydemann, 2016; Brownlee, Masoud, & Reynolds, 2015), and analyses new facts that earlier studies did not keep pace with.

Consequently, this research's importance lies in its focus on outlining and analyzing the .most critical factors that led the Arab Spring to take different pathways

DISPOSITION

A presentation of the theoretical basis and context within which the research is to be placed initiates the study in chapter 2, followed by the research design. It encompasses a presentation of the methodological basis of the thesis and a critical discussion of the chosen method and the alternative methods. Chapters 4 and 5 account for a historical overview and in-depth study of the political landscape of Egypt and Tunisia. This is followed by the analysis in chapter 6. The thesis concludes with a final discussion of the research topic and its findings and remarks in chapter 7.

II. CHAPTER TWO: THEORETICAL PERSPECTIVES

This chapter will first and foremost present the definition of the concept of democratization. The following is a theoretical framework, and finally previous research on democratic transition.

2.1 THE CONCEPT OF DEMOCRATIZATION

A major component of the research and debate about what promotes and makes democracy is the lack of real consensus on a unified meaning of democracy[5]. For a long time, the concept of democratization was generally taken for granted and was rarely properly articulated[6]. Definition selection is not only a theoretical question. Research and experimental data collection are also essential in this context. The concept of democracy in political studies has been understood superficially from a thin-thick perspective[7].

It goes without saying that using a precise definition in empirical research makes it easier to identify theoretical factors in the case study and leads to more reliable outcomes. Accordingly this study will be depending on a fairly simple definition formulated by Robert Dahl. The definition is limited to the political part of society as the concept relates to political processes. The democratic process according to Dahl "(a) should achieve the effective participation and equality of voting for all citizens in society[8]. (b) It should also provide citizens with opportunities to understand civic matters and permit them to observe issues that reach the decision-making agenda"[9].

In the same vein, the process of democratic transition is defined as "the phase between one political regime and another new political regime "[10]. Thus, it is the interval that begins with the demise of an authoritarian regime and ends with the birth of a new democratic government[11]. This research will be counting on Stradiotto and Guo's definition of democratic transition. Accordingly, the process of democratic transition is defined as "a political process of the movement whose purpose is to create a democratic

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[5] Diamond, L. (1999). *Developing democracy: Toward consolidation*. JHU Press, p.7.

[6] Ibid, 1999. p.8.

[7] Grugel, J., & Bishop, M. L. (2013). *Democratization: a critical introduction.* Macmillan International Higher Education, p.6.

[8] Dahl, R. (1998) *On Democracy.* Yale University Press, p. 37.

[9] Ibid, 1998. pp.37, 38.

[10] O'Donnell, G., Schmitter, P. C., Whitehead, L., & Lowenthal, A. F. (Eds.). (1986). *Transitions from authoritarian rule: Southern Europe.* JHU Press, p.6.

[11] DICORTONA, P. G. (1991). *From Communism to Democracy-Rethinking Regime Change in Hungary and Czechoslovakia*. International Social Science Journal, 43(2), 315-330.

political system, support democratic values and goals, promote tolerance of opposition, stimulate bargaining and compromise between different political factions in order to resolve social conflicts and promote national cohesion, institutionalize pluralistic structures and procedures in which all multiple and different political forces compete for power, organize the process of transfer of power, in addition to engaging in the fundamental transformation of the political structure"[12].

2.2 THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

The theoretical framework of this research is purposefully rooted in some fundamental differences in both cases. Although some other factors have also contributed to variation in outcomes, such as education level, population size, and geostrategic location (i.e., independent factors), this research will focus (due to limitations) on the four factors mentioned earlier in the introduction, which are considered most important, namely: the attitude of the military institution, the effectiveness of CSOs, the influence of the international community and the counter-revolution, and finally, *the decisive factor,* the behavior of the Islamic parties that gained the reins of power. Within the framework of the broad study of democratization, this paper concentrates on the temporal aspect of democratization-transitology. It examines the transition from the yoke of authoritarianism; and looks at why some transitions lead to democracy while others do not.

According to Philip C. Schmitter (2014), **Transitology theory** focuses primarily on the transition period when a country moves away from one authoritarian regime to another. When this overthrow, revolution, even slight change in an authoritarian regime occurs, there are four possible and foreseeable consequences of this transition:

1- The first possible outcome is a return to the same authoritarian regime or another form of authoritarianism.

2- The second possible outcome is the formation of a new hybrid regime that does not fully meet the standards of democracy, but only embraces some key institutions such as voting - such a system is not a stable and permanent form of government and is very

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[12] Ibid,1986, p.10.

likely to revert to authoritarian rule, or one day may become a truly representative political democracy.

3- The third possible outcome is summarized in the establishment of an unconsolidated democracy that is more robust than a hybrid-regime and appears to fulfill all the minimum procedural standards for democracy, but without an acceptable set of rules to govern the political game between political forces.

4-The fourth and most desirable possible outcome is the establishment of a full-fledged democracy. This democracy must be consolidated through mutually acceptable norms and valuable institutions of political tolerance, civil freedom, as well as fair competition among its key actors.

2.2.1 The significance of the international community

The importance and sensitivity of the international dimension is often overlooked when discussing and analyzing democratization and the transition from authoritarian regimes. In her article, Eva Hanson describes the impact of domestic democratic transition on international relations and vice versa, the effect of international relations on democratic transition[13].

Hanson describes a number of Western countries that backed and strengthened authoritarian military regimes in developing countries and third world countries in the past, and how this contributed to perpetuating the era of authoritarianism instead of promoting the transition to democracy. Hanson also highlights the democratic catalytic effects of international relations. For instance, cultural exchange, geographical proximity, media, and social networks, among other factors and considerations, have been shown to enhance democratic transformation[14].

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[13] Gustavsson, J, Tallberg, J. (2014*). Foreign policy, International relations*. 3rd ed. Lund: Studentlitteratur, 259-278.
[14] Ibid, 2014.

2.2.2 The impact of the military institution

Impact is measured, according to Wagner, Reittberger and Bowman[15], through how actors in the political scene use their capabilities to dominate and control the political environment. Throughout the period of the Egyptian transition process, the Egyptian military effectively used its influence and authority to maintain and expand their influence in Egyptian politics.

Schmitter and O'Donnell have many ideas about military, including how to defuse a politically powerful and active army, how to properly settle a former account of military violence against its own citizens, and how militarized the former authoritarian regime was[16].

2.2.3 The behavior of Civil society and Islamic parties

Stepan, one of the most important researchers in the field of democratization, developed a theory called the Twin Tolerations, which dealt with the issue of religion in political life, specifically in the countries that witnessed the waves of the Arab Spring. Accordingly, the Twin Tolerations is first and foremost the tolerance of religious citizens with state authority, and the state's welcome and tolerance of religious peoples in politics in return[17]. This is an accurate and important theoretical approach that must be paid attention to, while analyzing the great failure of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, and the success of the Ennahda movement in Tunisia.

2.2.4 Overlaps and intersections of the prior factors

It is important to note that there are many overlaps, intersections, and interactions between these various factors mentioned above. For example, the Egyptian army's attitude internationally affects, in one way or another, its internal influence in Egyptian society and its hold on power, and thus the Egyptian army has affected the country's

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[15] Wagner, W. M., Baumann, R., & Rittberger, V. (2001). *Neorealist foreign policy theory. German foreign policy since unification.* Theories and case studies, 37-67.
[16] O'donnell, G., Schmitter, P. C., & Whitehead, L. (2013). *Transitions from authoritarian rule: Tentative conclusions about uncertain democracies*. JHU Pres
[17] Ibid, 2012.

political culture. On the other hand, we find that Tunisia's international stance has clearly affected its political culture. The theoretical overlaps may be confusing at first glance, however, and since every theory is related to every factor, I will not address this topic in this theoretical chapter, but I will postpone talking about it in the analysis chapter, in which I will explain in detail how these factors are related, overlapped and affected each other.

2.3 PREVIOUS RESEARCH

Modernization theory and a large part of its conflicting literature and research have been central components of transitional literature in the past two decades. Official models of democratic transition discuss and analyze how political institutions change in the context of the process of democratization[18]. In particular, the transition itself is nothing more than the product of a strategic choice by the active elites[19] although another motivation for transition is the risk of revolution[20]. Thus, to prevent mass violence, elites often find the wise choice to turn to democracy and hope for a fair distribution of power through the ballot box. Cooperation and dialogue between officeholders and the opposition is, therefore, the best way to advance reform, as it reduces violence and chaos, on the one hand, and contributes to the consolidation of true democracy, on the other.

Some scholars see that the transition through the collapse and breakdown of the old regime through an uprising would achieve a smoother and fairer transition than cooperation, as the nascent government would be able to hold free and fair elections and allow former elites to defend power in the process of democratic transition. Leff and Munck argue that reform by demolishing the old regime is the easiest way to make a democratic transition because it leads to a complete transformation in a country's manner of thinking about political participation and governance. But displacing the former elites in a quick or violent process paralyzes the capacity for friendly dialogue that could lead to building relationships with the new government. Regime cooperation is therefore the

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[18] Ibid, 1986.
[19] Acemoglu, D., & Robinson, J. A. (2006). *Economic origins of dictatorship and democracy*. Cambridge University Press.
[20] Ibid, 2006.

best way to achieve high and acceptable levels of democracy in the post-transition phase since violence ruptures society and is ultimately not in the interest of democracy[21].

However, this can be problematic. In the case of Brazil, the impetus for change took place within and outside the incumbent elite as part and parcel of an early liberation movement aimed at widening support for the authoritarian regime. When an opposition campaign to demand fair popular elections was launched in 1984, military rulers prolonged the transition till 1990. The new regime was to some extent democratic, but the factors of change that protesters were demanding to adopt in the new constitution fell short of expectations. It is thus clear that post-transition politics have not been marred by those who refused to participate in a democratic system, but, quite the contrary, have been marred primarily by the conflicts within the new democratic norms adopted during the transition period[22]. The first legislative elections, for instance, included 19 parties in 1990, which in turn eliminated any possibility of gaining a majority in Congress and in the country in general. At a time when the old elites emerged as a competitive democracy, they had the potential to shape ongoing talks about the new constitution and re-enter politics through the institutional openness created by the Round Table Agreement[23]. While a lame democracy was achieved only on paper, it did not mirror the image of Brazil the opposition had aspired to.

Another notable case of transition is that in Chile, where the main motivation for the change came from a group outside the ruling class and the incumbent president, General Pinochet. Deprived of inciting regime change, Pinochet's opponents were forced to promote their ideas and opinions within the existing regime at that time. They formed a coalition to oppose the ruling class from outside, effectively creating real competition within the political system[24]. However, the Coalition was forced to comply with the terms of Pinochet's regime, such as accepting Pinochet's role as commander-in-chief of the army after his ouster, in addition to granting many other military powers. Thus they were

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[21] Munck, G. L., & Leff, C. S. (1997). *Modes of transition and democratization: South America and Eastern Europe in comparative perspective.* Comparative Politics, 343-362.
[22] Ibid, 1997, pp. 348, 349.
[23] Ibid, 1997, p. 349.
[24] Valenzuela, J. S. (1990). *Democratic consolidation in post-transitional settings: notion, process, and facilitating conditions.* Helen Kellogg Institute for International Studies, University of Notre Dame.

obliged to accept a limited version of democracy, as the old elites still demonstrated strong and dominant control over the democratization process and the new constitution[25]. By restricting the shape of the future government, the former Chilean regime and the mode of transition in post-transition politics influenced the way forward, forming institutions that were supposed to move towards democratic unification.

These patterns of transition illustrate the difficulties and obstacles that can come from social movements that press for integration and solidarity in the political arena, but then face conflict on two fronts, with the outgoing regime on the one hand, and with each other on the other. Often the government structures that arise from transitions come for long and complex periods of arduous negotiations, where all parties feel as if they have an "absolute right" to have their opinions and ideas about politics[26]. The democratic transition balances the violent reaction of former leaders, those who feel humiliated under the former regime, and those who seek nothing but peace, all while adhering to a commitment to democracy. As a result, defining what it means to be a democratic government plays a vital role in analyzing and studying democratic transition.

For the purposes of this study, I will be relying primarily on Robert Dahl's concept of modern democratic government as a definition of acceptable and successful democracy[27]. Dahl relied on the following six pillars and institutions to classify the ideal democratic system and the institutional provisions that represent the ideal system[28] :

(1) Frequent, fair and free elections, (2) Elected officials and representatives, (3) Freedom of opinion and expression, (4) Full and inclusive citizenship, (5) Associative independence, and (6) Alternative information.

Thus, it should be taken into consideration that it is not possible to compel governments to follow this imperfect ideal and to apply every institutional standard. Dahl didn't mean

[25] Munck, G. L. (1994). *Democratic Stability and Its Limits: An Analysis of Chile's 1993 Elections.* Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs, 36(2), 1-38.
[26] Munck, G. L., & Leff, C. S. (1997). *Modes of transition and democratization: South America and Eastern Europe in comparative perspective.* Comparative Politics, p. 357.
[27] Dahl, R. A. (1998). *Justifying democracy*. Society, 35(2), pp. 90, 91.
[28] Dahl, R., & Lindblom, C. (1953). E. (1976) *Politics, economics, and welfare*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.

governments to be this stature. Rather, he wanted to identify the countries that were changing to be democratic.

Hegre discovered that many endeavors to achieve a transition to democracy lead to a medium range of the democratic scale and thus almost impossible to quantify[29]. We are witnessing many authoritarian regimes trying to emancipate, but at best they do not cross the threshold to become democracies in the true sense. This is particularly difficult when using indexes such as the Polity Index to assess whether or not the transition was successful. It is difficult to use such an indicator in this research because it does not cover all of the democratic principles and institutions that Dahl referred to above. Furthermore, there is a risk of overestimating the degree of democratization and incorrectly categorizing non-democratic systems as having transitioned to democracies[30]. With regard to the Arab Spring, for example, a large part of the countries that have embraced democracy have fallen into the turmoil of civil war and sectarian conflicts, and thus it is impossible to compare their governments with established democracies. Polity also lacks data on countries with small populations, and therefore does not represent the mini states, which make up a large proportion of the world's democracies[31].

Among the other widely used instruments to measure political freedoms is the Freedom House Index. The "Freedom in the World" Index, published since 1972, is utilized to examine and evaluate levels of democracy based on civil liberties and political rights[32]. This data will support my analysis of Dahl's democratic institutional factors, as it does not neglect the institutions identified by Dahl that are essential to any system in order to be evaluated as a democracy.

An enormous number of scholars have also concentrated on issues of regime consolidation rather than actual transition to democracy[33]. This field of research sheds

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[29] Hegre, H., Ellingsen, T., Gates, S., & Gleditsch, N. P. (2001). *Toward a democratic civil peace? Democracy, political change, and civil war,* 1816-1992. American political science review, 33-48.
[30] Munck, G. L. (1994). *Democratic Stability and Its Limits: An Analysis of Chile's 1993 Elections*. Journal of Interamerican Studies and World Affairs, 36(2), 1-38.
[31] Anckar, D. (2008). *Microstate democracy revisited: developments in time and space. The Open Political Science Journal*, *1*(1).
[32] House, F. (2008). *Freedom in world index.* Available at: [MATHEMATICAL LEFT ANGLE BRACKET] http://www. freedomhouse. Org/template. Cfm.
[33] Di Palma, G. (1990). *To craft democracies: An essay on democratic transitions*. Univ of California Press.

light on countries that are already fairly democratic and evaluates the growing democratic ideals inwards the existing system. While this is fundamental and sensitive, much of the world is still undemocratic in the strict sense of the word, and therefore the perception of transitions and the factors to which they contribute remains a topic worthy of research. Most of the data on the nuances of democratization cannot be applied to many cases due to how distinct each case is. There is an urgent need for more empirical analysis, particularly across the region, in the field as a whole to confront contradictory and conflicting views of what constitutes a transition period.

Success is often defined differently and cannot be generalized on the same level across different regions and cultures. The idea of success can be subjective and it is necessary to bind countries to widely accepted definitions when assessing the success of their transition toward democracy. As a result of this subjectivity, I will not assess the quality of democracies after their transition, but rather whether the transition has been successful and led to democratic gains or not. In the next section, I will highlight the crucial factors in the course of democratization.

III. CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

In order to narrow my interests down to one question, it is necessary for me to apply a proper methodology. The major purpose of this study is to give an explanation of why Tunisia's democratic transition has done better than Egypt. So I have opted to apply a qualitative comparative case study approach. A more in-depth explanation of this methodology is found in the following section.

3.1 RESEARCH DESIGN

The cases of Egypt and Tunisia were chosen in the context of democratization in the MENA-region due to the distinct characteristics of the two countries, as the first spark of the Arab Spring was launched from them, and both experiences were crowned with success in the beginning, but they parted in the middle of the road towards democracy, so Egypt returned to its previous era, that is, to the grip of the military, after the coup that toppled the legitimate elected government in 2013, while Tunisia pursued its path to

democracy with balanced and steady steps and showed a unique and successful model for its movement towards democracy in light of the successful election results in recent 2014. This has given the two cases great geopolitical importance because they provide good knowledge of democracy in the MENA-region, and the selection of two cases for research is based on the research questions and its explanatory ambitions. Moreover, the motivation for choosing comparative case studies as a method of research is the pursuit of research to contribute to knowledge and increase understanding of a recent and relatively unfamiliar political phenomenon in the history of the Middle East and North Africa. Thus, the purpose of research is certainly not to generate new theories or theoretical perspectives. Instead, the primary goal is to understand the cause of the success and failure of the Egyptian and Tunisian cases.

Comparative case studies, according to Goodrick, are most appropriate when there is a need to understand and explain how features within a context affect the success of a program or policy initiatives. Comparative case studies involve analyzing and synthesizing the similarities, differences, and patterns across two or more situations that share a common focus or goal. Therefore, understanding each case is important in establishing the basis for the analytical framework that will be used in the case comparison.[34]

3.2 RESEARCH METHOD

This study is mainly based on a qualitative analysis, with the primary focus on a comprehensive review of the literature on democratization processes in countries in transition. It will follow a comparative case study approach in investigating the horizons and obstacles of democratization processes, as the Arab Spring provides a rich study area to examine the process of "turning away" from tyranny and oppression on the one hand, and it also sheds light on the transitional challenges during the transition towards democracy. So when conducting this research, the case study method will be used. Through close research and exploration in each of the two countries, Egypt and Tunisia, from which the first shout of the Arab Spring that shook the thrones of dictators took off.

[34] Goodrick, D. (2020). *Comparative case studies*. SAGE Publications Limited.

In order to complete my research, I relied on some primary sources available to the public, such as interviews with some journalists and the main political actors responsible for overseeing the transformations in their countries, but to be honest, secondary sources had the lion's share, which consisted of what appeared in the media, what was published in the various kinds of press, books and articles published on publishing houses and think-tanks, studies conducted in specialized research centers, both Arab and foreign, what has been produced of documentary and analytical work, in addition to some written reports on the Arab Spring as well as country-specific tracks in its wake.

3.2.1 The position of the international community and the role of the counter-revolution

This section will analyse factors emanating from the external (regional and international) environment, including but not limited to the regional role and political standing of Egypt and Tunisia in their regional and international contexts. It also highlights their position on the conflicting regional axes in the region, in particular, that of supporting counter-revolutions and military coups and rejecting revolutionary change (led by Saudi Arabia and the UAE), and that of supporting popular revolutions and incubating revolutionary change processes in the region (embraced by Turkey and Qatar).

This section will also focus on the influence of the dominant international powers on democratic transitions in Tunisia and Egypt, especially European and American, in light of the changing positions adopted by these dominant countries in accordance with their interests and privileges in the MENA-region.

3.2.2 The role of the military institution

The key factor I will focus on in this regard is the role of the military in political life, and whether the military has political ambitions to take over the reins of power, and assess their separation from the government. I will also focus on the extent to which the military participated in the formation of a new government before and during the Arab Spring, and today. I will also highlight whether the leadership of the army holds positions of governing authority, or is linked by any state-supervised economic and financial interests.

Furthermore, I will refer to the historical role of the military in the issues of governance and administration of the country and its coup d'etat in the years following independence and prior to the dawn of the Arab Spring. As for when the talk comes about the uprisings that broke out in the Arab streets and squares, I will assess the position of the army, was it an active participant in these uprisings, or took a neutral position, or stood by the authoritarian regime? To illustrate this, I shall draw on some primary sources of the testimony of some members of the military in the official media, as well as on the academic and newspaper articles available in this field.

As to whether the army has participated in the formation of a new government, I will assess whether the army and the armed forces have an interest in drafting a new constitution. Both the powers and decisions that have been allocated to the military and the affairs in which it is allowed to interfere under the new constitution will also be analyzed. I am also going to look at the role that the military plays in today's political stage and government structure, and illuminate the scene how the current leadership came to power, if military officers have hidden fingers in the official government of both countries at the moment.

3.2.3 The effectiveness of civil society organizations

When it comes to the discussion of civil society organizations, the main focus will be on their independence from the regime, as well as on their ability to mobilize the masses. Emphasis will also be placed on the effectiveness of civil society organizations in reconciling political visions and grouping political parties and currents around a unified vision and an effective strategy that would lift the country out of chaos, division and a descent into civil war that would break society and tear the nation apart.

3.2.4 The political pragmatism of political parties with an Islamic reference

The discussion in this regard will focus on the ability of the Islamic parties that took over the reins of government, represented by the Ennahda movement in Tunisia and the Freedom and Justice Party in Egypt, to absorb all components of the society, and to be open to other political parties and forces, including the remnants of the former regime in managing the affairs of the country and reaching with them a win-win solution, and the

belief that the transition phase in the country should be governed by consensus of views away from exclusion and capture of power. The analysis will also focus on the extent to which these parties realize that victory on the basis of their poll numbers will not guarantee their stability in a turbulent political landscape and its quicksand that will not rest in the short term. In addition, I will highlight the political experience of parties and political currents in building alliances, coordination, and dialogue between the various political forces, and creating some kind of agreement on the foundations of a democratic system that will take the country out of the dark tunnel and put it on the right track.

Last but not least, part of the analysis will focus on the type of political leadership that has existed in the transition period, advocating the gains of the revolution, managing the democratic transition process and building political alliances.

3.3 LIMITATIONS IN METHODOLOGICAL APPROACH

Needless to say, the comparative approach as a systematic approach is a valuable and effective method of research while endeavoring to illuminate a social or political phenomenon. However, one of the disadvantages of this method is that it is very limited, especially in terms of the possibility of generalizing its outputs and results when only two cases are analyzed. Outcomes may change once other cases are included or if other aspects of the research are taken into account.

Moreover, qualitative research can present some methodological problems, especially when it comes to the limits of generating generalizable results. This makes qualitative studies more difficult to replicate compared to quantitative studies, as qualitative research is mainly based on the interpretations and analyzes of researchers.[35] This, in turn, could contribute to the problem of determining study quality in terms of validity and reliability.[36]

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[35] Bryman, A. (2008). *Of methods and methodology. Qualitative Research in Organizations and Management:* An International Journal, p. 368.

[36] Ibid, 2008. p.376.

3.4 ALTERNATIVE METHODS

A historiography approach can also be used when studying the events of the Arab Spring in Egypt and Tunisia. It is also appropriate to combine it with comparative case studies. "Historiography is an empirical research paradigm using an interpretive or qualitative approach which focuses on a chronology over a substantial period of time in order to obtain a fuller and richer understanding of a situation or set of circumstances"[37]. So it involves much more than mere collecting dates and facts. Over and above, it is a study of events and the influence surrounding those events. Furthermore, historical inquiry can also provide data to observe the area of study. Unquestionably, realizing the background to any issue or to any situation embraces our comprehension and improves our capacity to visualize what is influentioal and what is not.[38]Hence historical research involves interpreting past events so that ideas surrounding those events can be better recognized and communicated towards fresh ones.

Over and above that, with regard to the democratic gains, the study will be relying on the Freedom House Index (FHI), as an alternative method, to find out and evaluate whether the Arab Spring has resulted in democratic transition and democratic gains in Egypt and Tunisia or not.

The scale is weighted as per Silander and Denk as follows:

"Since 1972, Freedom House has collected various data on democratization. Based on that data, this study will categorize states as 'free', 'partly free', or 'not free'. These divisions are based on the average values registered for the states in two indexes. One index concerns political rights and freedoms, while the other focuses on civil rights and freedoms. Based on the levels of rights and freedoms states are allotted a score between one and seven. When a state's average value for both indexes falls between 5.5 and 7.0, the state is considered non-democratic (not free). A state receiving the value of 1.0 to 2.5

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[37] O'Brien, J., Remenyi, D., & Keaney, A. (2004). Historiography-A neglected research method in business and management studies. *Electronic Journal of Business Research Methods*, *2*(2), 135-144.

[38] Ibid, 2008.

is considered democratic (free). States falling within the range of 3.0 to 5.0 are categorized as partly free. While states that are considered not free or partly free are typically the focal points of studies in democratization".

The two indexes rely on seven underlying sub-indexes (dimensions), which can be used to study democratization based on different institutional dimensions. The seven dimensions are: electoral processes, political pluralism and participation, functionality of politics, freedom of speech, freedom to organize, rule of law, and personal autonomy and individual rights.[39]

Among the most important questions that are usually asked in the field of political rights is: Are the presidential, executive and legislative elections free, fair and transparent? Are there active opposition parties that are allowed to compete and participate in the electoral process without obstacles or exclusions?

As for when it comes to questions in the field of civil liberties, they include: whether there is a free, independent media that is not subject to the will and directives of the authority? It also sheds light on whether citizens are able to exercise their rights and enjoy equal protection under the umbrella of the law against discrimination on the grounds of race, sex, national origin, color, sexual orientation, race or religion?[40]

Based on these questions, which are in line with Dahl's necessary institutions, which I referred to in the theoretical paragraph, that define what a system must have in order to be considered democratic, and the outcome derived from it will determine whether or not Tunisia and Egypt are democracies. While relying on Dahl's conception of democratic transition, I will be using the Freedom House scale for two main purposes: First, to assess the quality and democratic gains, and secondly to identify the factors that led the two experiences to take different paths.

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[39] Denk, T., & Silander, D. (2012). *Problems in Paradise? Challenges to future democratization in democratic states.* International Political Science Review, 33(1), 25-40. p. 28.

[40] Joseph, S., & Castan, M. (2013). *The international covenant on civil and political rights: cases, materials, and commentary.* Oxford University Press.

For research purposes, I will use the latest data available from Freedom House to present the results in a useful and constructive way to determine the state of democracy in Egypt and Tunisia.

IV. CHAPTER FOUR: EGYPT CASE STUDY

This chapter is dedicated to illuminate indepth the factors that contributed to the success or failure of democratization, and also played a critical role in the divergence of the Egyptian and Tunisian experiences. Accordingly, when it comes to comparing and analyzing the two aforementioned experiences, the researcher and the reader should be familiar with the following in each case:

4.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In 1952, a group of Egyptian officers staged a military coup against King Farouq, part of the same dynasty that was founded by Mohammad Ali in the early 19th century[41]. This coup group was led by a charismatic officer named Gamal Abdel Nasser, who grew to become one of the most famous leaders in the Arab world. Nasser was really a military man and he ran the country in this manner. Many of his policies were socialist aimed at benefiting the masses, but he did not tolerate dissent in general and political dissent in particular. Tens of thousands were arrested in the Stalinist-style purges in which the Muslim Brotherhood, Communists, and supporters of the former regime were imprisoned[42].

Land reforms and anti-colonial practices gained Abdel Nasser popularity and confidence among the Egyptians, as well as his challenge to the attack of Britain, France, and Israel when he nationalized the Suez Canal, which connects the Mediterranean with the Red Sea[43]. Nevertheless, he suffered a humiliating defeat in the 1967 war against Israel, and

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[41] Rogan, E. (2009). *The Arabs*. A History, p. 140.

[42] Ibid, 2009. p. 288.

[43] Ibid, 2009. p. 339.

died in 1970 of a heart attack, marking the beginning of the end of the Arab nationalism project he was adopting[44].

Anwar Sadat was Abdel Nasser's vice president at that time. He was also a military man and one of the members of the "Free Officers" group that overthrew King Farouk in 1952[45]. One of the most important events of his presidency was the peace treaty he signed with Israel after the 1973 war. The aforementioned peace treaty with Israel (starting with the annual American military aid to Egypt, which is estimated at about $ 1.8 billion) had many consequences for the geopolitical role of Egypt in the Middle East, and the role of the army inside Egypt. The most obvious result was his assassination by Islamic extremists, who shot him during a military parade disguised as a soldiers[46].

After the assassination of Sadat, his deputy, Hosni Mubarak, who is also a former army officer, assumed the presidency. Mubarak ruled for the next 30 years with the infamous "emergency law" that was in effect throughout his rule (Family, 2012). As per the Al-Jazeera documentary, The Family, Mubarak appeared to have embraced liberal reform in his early years, but once he tightened his grip on the state, he quickly descended into more authoritarian rule, expanding his powers, the powers of the secret police and the notorious security forces, and suppressing the opposition of all spectrums[47].

During the rule of the Mubarak regime, the relationship between it and the Islamic opposition and the Muslim Brotherhood in particular was marred by complexity. But it can be summed up by stating that the government worked selectively with the Brotherhood, which allowed them to function only as a socio-non-political organization,

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[44] Ibid, 2009. p. 395.

[45] Ibid, 2009. p. 408.

[46] Ibid, 2009. p. 398.

[47] Al-Jazeera (2012): *The Family*. Available: http://www.aljazeera.com/programmes/2012/06/2012620124818367927. (Accessed, 2021-02-15).

and allowing very limited political activity[48]. However, Mubarak's neglect of widespread discontent eventually led to his downfall. In mid-February 2011 Mubarak handed over his powers to the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF). After a transitional period of nearly a year, the SCAF organized parliamentary and presidential elections in which the Muslim Brotherhood Party gained the majority of seats in Parliament and won the second round of the presidential elections[49].

A year after the Muslim Brotherhood candidate, Mohamed Morsi, was elected president, he was ousted in a military coup, after unprecedented protests against his rule. This led to the formation of a transitional government appointed by the military. Defense Minister Abdel Fattah al-Sisi led this campaign, which launched a crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood, imprisoning more than 20,000 people, and sentencing more than 500 people to death at one time, including the elected president and prominent leaders of the Brotherhood. And then the coup leader Sisi ran for the presidency in a race that no one doubts he will win[50].

4.2 THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION

Egypt is a pivotal Arab country to both the EU and the USA due to its geopolitical location, large demographics, military power, and political influence in the MENA-region. It borders Israel and controls the Rafah Gate, making Egypt a decisive party in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Egypt also controls the Suez Canal, which connects the Mediterranean to the Red Sea. Additionally, it has historically served as a mobilizing agent for Arab societies with a leading role in promoting numerous social and religious movements such as Arab nationalism, Arab socialism and the Muslim Brotherhood. The

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[48] Ibid, 2012.

[49] Al-Jazeera (2011a): *Timeline: Egypt's Revolution*. Available: http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2011/01/201112515334871490. (Accessed, 2021-02-15).

[50] Kirkpatrick, D. D. (2014). *Hundreds of Egyptians sentenced to death in killing of a police officer*. New York Times, 24.

course of political transition in Egypt was therefore of paramount importance to external actors, as developments in Egypt were likely to have a diffusion effect in the region.[51]

Since 1952, Egypt has been a strategic ally of the USA, economically, politically, and militarily. The US-Egyptian alliance therefore emerged on the basis of providing stability and security in the region. The USA has an essential interest in such an alliance, such as maintaining Arab-Israeli peace and cooperating with Egypt against Islamist militancy, particularly in the Sinai Peninsula and Gaza Strip. Consequently, successive American administrations have committed to providing military and financial assistance to Egypt as an investment to regional stability, where Egypt is the anchor of security in it, as well as to cooperating with the military to preserve the 1979 Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty.[52]

Given the special relationship that the USA has with Egypt, it has been necessary for the American position to be present in the transformations that Egypt has experienced since January 25, 2011, as well as the Russian and European position. In addition to the positions of the regional powers that also had an influential role in the Egyptian arena, among them are those who want to maintain Egypt's stability, and the other seeks to spread chaos in the Egyptian arena.[53]

To call a spade a spade, the role of the USA and the role of the Gulf States cannot be ignored when it comes to demonstrate the democratic transition in Egypt, because the other roles are somewhat secondary. With regard to the USA role, the USA sees Egypt as its gateway to the Arab and Islamic world, and this realization dates back to the 1970s, where the USA was popularly and politically rejected in the Arab region; Egypt was its ally in the Arab region by marketing the positive aspects of its role in the Arab and Islamic worlds. The American recognition of Egypt's importance resulted in strong and

[51] ERDOGAN, A. (2020). Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Egypt: The Role of External Actors. *Türkiye Ortadoğu Çalışmaları Dergisi*, 7(1), 169-202.

[52] Sharp, J. M. (2009, May). Egypt: Background and US relations. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS WASHINGTON DC CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE.

[53] Didier, B. (2017). European Union and United States approaches towards Egypt: the trap of short-term realism.

distinguished relations with Egypt[54], and the USA even considered Egypt its second ally, after Israel, in the ME.[55]

As for the role of the Gulf states in Egyptian affairs, Egypt is considered, for the countries of the Gulf Cooperation Council "mother of the world" and of distinct importance, not only because of its political weight as it represents the heart of the Arab system, but also because it is an actor close to the Gulf regime and an important part of the security of the Arab region. Given any transformation takes place in Egypt could be reflected, positively or negatively, on the Gulf States. The Gulf States saw the January 25 revolution as an existential threat to their regimes, especially as the Muslim Brotherhood came to power and sought to enhance relations with Iran on the one hand, and to strengthen relations with Turkey on the other, viz, with the fierce competitors of the Gulf States in the ME-region. Therefore, the focus of the Gulf States on Egypt was very strong, especially the role of the UAE, which was evident in supporting the "Tamarod Movement" that led popular incitement and gave popular cover to the coup d'etat on the legitimate authority, and in supporting military intelligence that was led by General El-Sisi who led the military coup in 2013 and toppled the elected government.[56]A large part of our focus in the analysis section will be on the international (USA) and regional (GCC) roles, given their crucial role in the path to which the January 25 revolution has drifted.

4.3 THE MILITARY INSTITUTION

Beyond the shadow of a doubt, one of the most important factors in whether Egypt has achieved democracy is the role of the military in the Egyptian government. Unlike Tunisia, the Egyptian army has a track record of interfering in political affairs. The rise of the military's influence in political life in Egypt began from the moment when the free

[88] Sharp, J. M. (2009, May). Egypt: Background and US relations. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS WASHINGTON DC CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE.

[56] Khan, M. (2014). Islam, democracy and Islamism after the counterrevolution in Egypt. *Middle East Policy*, *21*(1), 75-86.

officers took power in 1952 led by the officer and former President Gamal Abdel Nasser, their abolition of the monarchy and the declaration of a republic, the dissolution of political parties, and the subsequent expansion of the appointment of the military at the head of most government ministries and bodies including cultural, press and television bodies, with the public sector being given a greater role in leading the development process. This created a radical change in the power structure by replacing former elites with a new military elite.[57]

The January 2011 revolution caused the army to return to the forefront of the political scene as the interim ruler of the country after forcing Mubarak to step down and presenting him as a scapegoat, just to absorb popular discontent and to hold the strings of the political game back, but its influence remained restricted by the popular uprising and its aspirations for democratic transformation and a civil state.¨Although the Military Council sought constitutional superlatives that guaranteed a privileged status for the military in the political landscape, these provisions were rejected by the street and the main political forces, particularly the Muslim Brotherhood, which aspired to a broader political role, as these provisions were considered a basis for military guardianship over the elected civil authority.[58]

With the assumption of the presidency by the former president and member of the Brotherhood Mohamed Morsi in June 2012, after deposing the minister of defense and the chief of staff, and appointing the director of military intelligence, Al-Sisi, as minister of defense. The army seemed to have chosen to pull out of the political scene, return to the shadows again and play behind the scenes.[59]Despite the Brotherhood's propaganda that Morsi trimmed the nails of the army and resolved the conflict in favor of civil power, this propaganda was soon revealed to be false as the army re-marketed itself as a political

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[57] Anwar, A. (1962). *Egyptian Society and the Army 1952-1967*. Cairo: Al- Mahrousa Book.

[58] Hatem, A (2013). *Al-Sisi: the Army is fire, don't play with it, and don't use it… its return to politics is a grave danger.* Al-Shorouk newspaper. 11 May. Available at: http://tiny.cc/jkoadz. (Accessed 2021-04-11).

[59] Ibid, 2013.

party free from polarization, as was evident in its calls to political forces for community dialogue; to heal the political rift, as well as the Defense Minister's frequent public appearances and speeches. Many political forces saw no objection to the army's return to the political scene; In favor of achieving popular demands for early elections.[60]

The army's overthrow of Morsi on the third of July 2013 constituted a milestone in Egyptian history, through which the army returned to power again, but this time with the support of large public sectors. With the demonstrations demanding the army's mandate to fight terrorism on July 26, 2013, the army, in cooperation with the Ministry of Interior, began a war against the Brotherhood and its supporters. At the same time, it opened bridges of understandings with other political and party forces, and the task of forming the government was entrusted to Hazem Al-Beblawy, a member of the Egyptian Social Democratic Party.[61]

Following the assumption of the country's presidency by former Defense Minister El-Sisi in 2014, the army began to extend its control over the state by appointing military leaders to multiple government positions, giving a wider space for the army's economy to expand and grow, and working to ensure this situation in the future, which is clearly reflected in the constitutional amendments that took place in April 2019, which approved the army's guardianship over the civilian state, and emphasize the military establishment's status distinct from other ministries, especially in appointing its minister, as well as its authority to try civilians militarily.[62]

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[60] Arabiya.net (2013). *Salvation Front: Army statement engaged with the demands of the people.* 2 July. Available at: http://bit.ly/2vZQcfU. (Accessed 2021-04-11).

[61] Ibid, 2013.

[62] Marshall; S (2015). *The Egyptian Armed Forces and the remaking of an economic empire.* Carnegie Middle East Center. Available at: https://carnegie-mec.org/2015/04/15/egyptian-armed-forces-and-remaking-of-economic-empire-pub-59726. (Accessed 2021-04-11)

4.4 CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS(CSOs)

Civil society has been a term that has been widely used in recent years, both academically and politically, internationally and domestically, and civil society organizations have also played an important and influential role in the political changes of January 25.[63]

Civil society began to emerge in the context of the search for a formula for a peaceful transition to democracy and for structures that could defend individuals and small groups against the hegemony of the state.[64]

Although there are many roles for civil society organizations (CSOs) in social and cultural contexts, the idea of "no democracy without a civil society" is prevalent in many pieces of literature because the process of democratization in any society depends on the establishment of political culture. There is also much talk about the role that civil society plays in the democratization process in terms of building a democratic state.[65]

Civil society is one of the pillars of the modern state, which creates the legislative environment for regulating the functioning of civil organizations and groups within society. The state and civil society are inextricably linked, and no modern State is without civil society. Rather, civil society is one of the pillars of the State's strength and an indicator of its democracy. There is no democracy without civil society, so I will provide a brief summary of the state's relationship with civil society from the end of the Mubarak era to the era of President Al-Sisi, in reference to the role of civil society in the Egyptian revolution.[66]

Former President Hosni Mubarak's era is described as hostility between the regime and Egyptian civil society. Civil society organizations in Egypt have been subject to many

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[63] Hassan, H. A. (2011). *Civil society in Egypt under the Mubarak regime*. Afro Asian Journal of Social Sciences, *2*(2.2).

[64] Ibid, 2011.

[65] Ibid, 2011.

[66] Ibid, 2011.

laws that restrict their ability to work to promote freedom and democracy. In addition to the emergency law that allows the Government to interfere in the affairs of civil society organizations, there is also the Associations Law No. 84 of 2002, which gives the Ministry of Social Affairs broad authority to regulate, dissolve and monitor the funding sources of such organizations. This law prohibits civil society organizations from engaging in any political or trade union activity.[67]

To make matters worse, the Ministry of Social Affairs was given the right to appoint a board of directors of such organizations in order to ensure full control over them. Those restrictive legislative acts had led some of those organizations to exercise self-criticism and avoid political life and had led others to circumvent those laws by registering as civil companies, which were not under the jurisdiction of the Ministry of Social Affairs.[68]

In addition to cutting off funding, domestic funding was banned without government permission, resulting in a lack of financial independence for these organizations, restrictions on their work, and media smear of civil society organizations for treason and endangering national unity.[69]

Egyptian civil society organizations played a pivotal role in the Egyptian Revolution of 25 January 2011. It is credited with education and awareness of rights, such as awareness of legal and constitutional rights, training on international instruments for the protection of human rights and training in election observation skills.[70]

Moreover, after the revolution of 25 January, a number of politicians and jurists called for the creation of a National Council for the financing of Civil Society Organizations (CSOs) as an alternative to foreign funding to ensure their independence and

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[67] Ibid, 2011.

[68] Ibid, 2011.

[69] Ibid, 2011.

[70] Khalil, A. (2012). *Liberation square: Inside the Egyptian Revolution and the rebirth of a nation*. St. Martin's Press.

transparency. They also asserted that these organizations work for the public good, serving citizens, rejecting what they described as "political money" that comes from abroad in the electoral process, because it is possible for a certain entity to acquire the rule and be loyal to the funder, which ultimately enables the funder to intervene in the decision-making process.

As a matter of fact, the conflict between the state and civil society organizations did not end unexpectedly after the revolution of 25 January, and despite the important role they played in preparing for the revolution, the relationship has become increasingly strained. Although the elected president, Mohamed Morsi, tried to assert support for civil society organizations and lift administrative restrictions that impeded their work, and stressed that the state would not restrict these institutions, after the overthrow of Mohamed Morsi in July 2013, the post-coup presidents of 23 July, under the pretext of returning to stability, took several measures to narrow public work spaces and re-nationalize it again, measures that paralyzed the revolutionary movement, marginalized civil society and weakened its capabilities.[71] Furthermore, the issue of foreign funding has also become one of the instruments of pressure by the regime, which it uses when it wishes to restrict the work of civil society organizations. As a result, the options for civil society organizations became limited in the face of this onslaught, the most important of which has been either to curtail their activities or to work outside Egypt.[72]

4.5 THE ISLAMIC PARTIES

To examine the experience of Egypt's democratic transition, which followed the revolution of 25 January 2011, one has to highlight a key component and difficult figure in the Egyptian political scene, which is the Muslim Brotherhood.

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[71] Mirshak, N. (2019). *Rethinking resistance under authoritarianism: civil society and non-contentious forms of contestation in post-uprisings Egypt.* Social Movement Studies, 18(6), 702-719.

[72] Ibid, 2019.

Hassan Al-Banna is considered the first founder of the Muslim Brotherhood movement in Egypt in 1928, and its ideology quickly spread beyond the borders of Egypt, and to include more than seventy-two Islamic and non-Islamic countries.[73]

The Muslim Brotherhood experienced a tremendous rise in the early stages of its founding, and its sweep of the intellectual and political arena continued until the 1948 Palestine War; it quickly spread to most Egyptian cities. On the other hand, they suffered from a political weakness disproportionate to the size and spread of the movement; It was absent from parliament for a long time and engaged in a ruthless clash with authority under Nasser, ending up in jails and detention camps. Its leadership imposed a voluntary seclusion throughout the reign of President Sadat, who released them at the beginning of his reign and returned and detained them at the end of his reign. As a result, members of the movement chose to withdraw from political participation.[74]

Hassan al-Banna inculcated in the Muslim Brotherhood the belief that the foundation for building an Islamic State must take a political dimension in a variety of forms, including participation in parliamentary life. In 1944 they entered the elections but were unsuccessful due to the pressure exerted on them, and the movement subsequently witnessed a series of setbacks; the movement was dissolved, and its leadership faced arrests, violence, and military trials in late 1954.[75]

Then Gamal Abdel Nasser accused them in 1965 of trying to overthrow the regime and arrested them again. The detainees were not released until 1971 during the era of Anwar Sadat, in light of what he called "the state of institutions." After the assassination of Sadat in 1981, his successor, Hosni Mubarak, in the early days of his rule pursued a policy of reconciliation and appeasement with all political forces, including the Muslim Brotherhood, so they participated in political life again and registered some electoral

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[73] Zahid, M., & Medley, M. (2006). *Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt & Sudan.* Review of African political economy, 33(110), 693-708.

[74] Ibid, 2006.

[75] Ibid, 2006.

successes and entered Parliament. In 2007, the group officially expressed for the first time its desire to form a recognized political party with the intention of differentiating between the political and religious spheres.[76]

In general, the Muslim Brotherhood lived on the margins of political life, but it did not give up. It continued to seize the opportunity that came with the revolution of January 25, 2011, and joined the revolution that it was not the initiator of them, and released its first statements that "the January 25 revolution is a popular revolution not led by a specific political faction, and that the legitimacy of the Mubarak regime has ended with protests and demonstrations." The movement also, at the same time, reassured the military that it did not aspire to gain power.[77]

After the overthrow of Hosni Mubarak, the Muslim Brotherhood formed the Freedom and Justice Party as the political arm of the movement, and they entered the parliamentary elections in 2011, winning 223 seats in parliament, and their rise in the Egyptian arena continued until their candidate, Mohamed Morsi, won the presidential elections in 2012.[78]

Morsi tried to establish a stable political life through the constitution; It stated that the people are the source of power and that the system of government in Egypt must be democratic, guaranteeing the dignity and equality of citizens. He also included rights in the constitution that Egyptians had not known in their previous constitutions. On foreign policy, President Mohamed Morsi has also emphasized Egypt's regional role, attracted new potential partners, and strengthened public support through foreign-policy activism. But this experiment was not meant to continue; a coup d'etat on July 3, 2013 blew up all

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[76] Wickham, C. R. (2011). *The Muslim Brotherhood and democratic transition in Egypt*. Middle East Law and Governance, 3(1-2), 204-223.

[77] Ibid, 2011.

[78] Al-Awadi, H. (2013). Islamists in power: the case of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt. *Contemporary Arab Affairs*, 6(4), 539-551.

those efforts, the president was removed from office by a military statement, and events accelerated, bringing the Muslim Brotherhood back to prison.[79]

V. CHAPTER FIVE: TUNISIA CASE STUDY

The modern history of Tunisia and Egypt is essential to understanding current events and political contexts. The time frame for this historical background is not the same in either case, as further historical analysis is needed in Tunisia.

5.1 HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Four years after Nasser's coup d'état in Egypt against King Farouq in 1952, Tunisia attained its independence from France[80]. In 1954 negotiations began for the independence of Tunisia from France. Meanwhile, the Tunisian national movement was growing steadily, and charismatic Habib Bourguiba came to the fore. After that, Bourguiba established the National New Constitution Party, which dominated independence negotiations two years after their inception, and Tunisia adopted a new constitution and elected Habib Bourguiba as President of the Tunisian Republic.[81] Bourguiba was an ally of the West, and a proponent of peace between the Arabs and Israel. He was also a pioneer in the field of women's rights. Nevertheless, shortly after taking power, he changed the constitution, permitting him to be president for lifetime[82].

Among the things Bourguiba did during his reign was that he prioritized education, a well-established tradition in Tunisia, and made the means of birth control readily

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[79] Ibid, 2013.

[80] Rogan, E. (2009). *The Arabs*. A History, p. 330.

[81] Ibid, 2009. p. 331.

[82] Pace, E. (2000). *Habib Bourguiba, Independence Champion and President of Tunisia, Dies at 96*. The New York Times, on April, 7.

available, and legalized abortion as well[83]. However, the most important work mentioned for Bourguiba was his complete separation of the army from politics, and the military's prevention of them from joining the ruling party[84]. But his collective campaigns in the agricultural sector, along with other factors, led to a major economic collapse in Tunisian society[85]. Consequently, Bourguiba became increasingly authoritarian, throughout the 1970s and 1980s, and took harsh measures against political Islam, which was in opposition to many of his policies that were against the teachings of Islamic law. Therefore, he was overthrown in a bloodless coup led by his newly appointed prime minister, Ben Ali in 1987, on the grounds that the president was not medically fit to pursue his job as president and to carry out his duties[86].

As a side point, Ben Ali was not part of the military when he staged the coup. It also kept the army separate from politics and the state, like its predecessor, until the army became a small and modestly funded force whose function was to monitor and protect the borders, nothing more, nothing less[87]. Following in the footsteps of his predecessor, he also suppressed political Islam[88]. Ben Ali re-established the electoral institution, but won every election with such an overwhelming majority that the people had no doubt that the system was corrupt. Furthermore, Ben Ali also allowed political parties to exist, but he made it extremely difficult for them to function under his regime. As such, Tunisia under

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[83] Ben Mabrouk, A (2013): *Reflecting on Bourguiba, 13 Years after his Death*. Available: http://www.tunisia-live.net/2013/04/09/reflecting-on-bourguiba-13-years-after-his-death. (Accessed, 2021-02-16)

[84] Barany, Z. (2011). *Comparing the Arab revolts: The role of the military.* Journal of Democracy, 22(4), 24-35.

[85] Pace, E. (2000). *Habib Bourguiba, Independence Champion and President of Tunisia, Dies at 96*. The New York Times, on April, 7.

[86] Ben Mabrouk, A (2013): *Reflecting on Bourguiba, 13 Years after his Death*. Available: http://www.tunisia-live.net/2013/04/09/reflecting-on-bourguiba-13-years-after-his-death. (Accessed, 2021-02-16)

[87] Barany, Z. (2011). *Comparing the Arab revolts: The role of the military.* Journal of Democracy, 22(4), 24-35.

[88] Schraeder, P. J., & Redissi, H. (2011). *The Upheavals in Egypt and Tunisia: Ben Ali's fall.* Journal of Democracy, 22(3), 5-19.

Ben Ali was in fact more authoritarian and less free than Egypt under Mubarak, according to Tunisian political analyst Dr. Muhammad al-Hachimi. Ben Ali expanded the powers of the brutal secret police on the one hand, and restricted freedom of the press and the media on the other.

This tyranny practiced by Ben Ali formed a framework for deepening tensions across the country and making Tunisia on the crater of a volcano of popular discontent, which was sparked by the incident of the fruit seller, Mohamed Bouazizi, who set himself on fire, thus igniting the Arab Spring in the Arab region from the ocean to the Gulf[89]. This painful event mirrored the frustration and despair that many young Tunisians feel due to the poor social and economic conditions and the brutal treatment of the authorities, which did not spare even the wealthy. As more than 45% of university graduates in Tunisia were unable to find work during the Ben Ali era[90].

The massive protests led to Ben Ali's escape from Tunisia, and then a civilian body took over the leadership of the transitional process. Army commander General Rashid Ammar made it clear from the day one that the armed forces had no political interest in Tunisia's future[91].

The Islamist Ennahda Party gained 41% of the seats in the 217-member Constituent Assembly in the first free elections held in October 2011, and the aforementioned council appointed the government led by the former Secretary-General of the Ennahda Movement, Hammadi al-Jabali as the head of government[92]. During this period, a new constitution was drafted for the country, and it was approved by the people through a referendum. And due to the occurrence of political tensions in mid-2013 following the assassination of political leaders such as Shukri Belaid and Mohamed Brahimi, Jebali resigned, unlike Morsi in Egypt, and agreed to give his powers to an interim government

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[89] Ibid, 2011.

[90] Ibid, 2011.

[91] Ibid, 2001.

[92] Stepan, A. (2012). *Tunisia's transition and the twin tolerations*. Journal of Democracy, 23(2), 89-103.

of technocrats to finalize the constitution and prepare the country for presidential and parliamentary elections[93].

5.2 THE INTERNATIONAL COMMUNITY AND THE COUNTER-REVOLUTION

After the outbreak of the Tunisian revolution, which surprised the Arab world and the West alike, which then did not seem like a real revolution, and that it was seeking seriously to overthrow the ruling regime, so regional international positions varied towards it. From the first day of the revolution until its triumph, there were successive statements that reflected the position of every country, between those who support the path that Tunisia is heading towards, those who oppose it and those who expressed concern about the outcome of the situation. A prudent examiner of these disparate positions understands the self-interest that underlies each.

Tunisia is known to have strong ties of partnership with the EU, such as the 1995 European Partnership Agreement, which provided for the removal of all barriers to trade between Tunisia and the EU, under which Tunisia became a full partner of the EU in 2008. Not to mention good-neighborly relations, intelligence cooperation, exchange of security experiences, arms exports from the EU, and coordination of efforts in combating terrorism and al-Qaeda in northern Africa.[94]

Accordingly, the European position was marked by ambivalence and confusion at the beginning of the Tunisian Revolution. Also the EU-member states had a big problem with where to stand on events, and do they risk supporting the regimes in order to preserve their current interests? Or do they venture and stand on the side of revolutions in

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[93] The Economist. (2013): *Keep That New Democracy Afloat*. Available at: http://www.economist.com/news/middle-east-and-africa/21587843-tunisias-islamists-seemhave-learnt-their-egyptian-peers-debacle-keep. (Accessed, 2021-02-16).

[94] Aleya-Sghaier, A. (2012). *The Tunisian revolution: The revolution of dignity.* The Journal of the Middle East and Africa, 3(1), 18-45.

* A full-spectrum combatant command, AFRICOM is responsible for all U.S. Department of Defense operations, exercises, and security cooperation on the African continent, its island nations, and surrounding waters.

order to ensure its future interests? Hence, European positions were blurry and confused in the halls of the EU.[95]

The US-position was very similar to the EU-position on the Tunisian Revolution. Tunisia is an important axis in American foreign policy in North Africa in the war on terrorism and the implementation of US agenda in Africa, whether in terms of the military facilities that AFRICOM* enjoys (the use of ports, airspace, intelligence...), the Palestinian issue (hosting Fatah movement for years), or Arab relations (hosting the headquarters of the Arab League for years), not to mention its role in striking Islamist strongholds in cooperation with US intelligence.[96]

As a result, the US-attitude towards the Tunisian revolution was marred by hesitation and an attempt to hold the stick in the middle in line with American strategic interests and projects in the region, calling on the regime to calm the atmosphere and call for dialogue and expedite reforms that meet the demands of the Tunisian people. And also by appearing as a supporter of the Tunisian people in their aspirations for freedom and democracy on the other hand.[97]

As for the regional and Arab position, which was afraid of spreading the infection of the Arab Spring to its countries in light of the political, economic and social tension that their countries were witnessing, its positions were dominated by anxiety, confusion and division, between supporting the Tunisian revolution (such as Qatar, Turkey and Iran) and opposing it such as the Gulf countries (Saudi Arabia and the UAE) which carried the banner of the counter-revolution.[98]

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[95] Ibid, 2012.

[96] Ibid, 2012.

[97] Ibid, 2012.

[98] Al-Rasheed, M. (2011). *Sectarianism as counter-revolution: Saudi responses to the Arab Spring.* Studies in Ethnicity and Nationalism, 11(3), 513-526.

5.3 THE MILITARY INSTITUTION

The role of the military in Tunisia's democratic transition leads us to examine the historical background of the military and the nature of the civil-military relations in Tunisia.

Since independence, Tunisia's political system has been characterized by civilian control over the military. This is in principle a health condition, but Bourguiba overly limited the role of the Tunisian army.

Tunisia's military establishment had a limited role in a post-independence state, and did not rule in the name of revolutionary legitimacy like its counterparts in other Arab countries. The Tunisian army played a minor role in the national movement. Bourguiba reduced the size of the military establishment and lost its role.[99] Bourguiba limited the army because he feared that some officers would overthrow him, after the Arab region experienced a series of coups in the 1960s.[100]

Political life in Tunisia has been characterized by the uniqueness of Bourguiba's leadership, within the framework of patriarchal relationship between the leader, State institutions and the people.[101]As Bourguiba endeavored to keep the military institution away from the political decision-making circles, it did not have any political role, but rather its tasks were limited to defending national sovereignty and supporting the political authority in managing the crises that the country faced, and this is what made the Tunisian army acquire high professionalism.[102]

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[99] Grewal, S. (2016). *A quiet revolution: The Tunisian military after Ben Ali*. Carnegie Middle East Center. p.2.

[100] Al-Medini, T (2018) *The Fall of the Police State in Tunisia*, (Beirut: The Arab House of Sciences Publishers, 1st edition. p. 272.

[101] Bishara, A (2012) *the glorious Tunisian revolution with the intention and revolution of a revolution through its diaries.* Doha: Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, 1st edition.

[102] Jebnoun, N (2012) "*The Role of the Army in the Tunisian Revolution," in: The Tunis Revolution: Reasons, Contexts, and Challenges*, Doha: The Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, 1st edition, pp. 329-331.

The situation did not differ during the reign of Ben Ali. Where civil-military relations were built in the same format as that developed by Habib Bourguiba, which is, obviously, to curb and marginalize the army.[103] The degree of marginalization and exclusion has reached a significant level, since the army has not been involved in political decision-making or in the process of national construction, but only guarding the borders. In return, Ben Ali strengthened the internal security apparatus by giving it broad powers, such as shaping the form of the state and drawing the general political lines of the regime and society.[104] While the security apparatus, composed of the Internal Security, Police, and the Presidential Guard, numbered about 15,500, the army had only 5,000 troops and was deprived of all the financial and property privileges that the security apparatus had the lion's share of them.[105]

From the above it could be said that the Tunisian army remained a prisoner in the barracks under Bourguiba and Ben Ali reign.

Larry places importance on the pivotal role that civil-military relationships play in the process of democratic transition. If the military is subordinate to the will of the civilian government, democracy is achieved, but if the politics is directed by the military, then the democratic transition will reach an impasse.[106]

Diaman's point of view certainly applies to the Tunisian case, where the subordination of the army to civilian authority was positively reflected in Tunisia's democratic process, which will be explained in detail in the analysis section.

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[103] Brooks, R. (2013). Abandoned at the palace: Why the Tunisian military defected from the Ben Ali regime in January 2011. *Journal of Strategic Studies*, *36*(2), 205-220. pp. 209-210.

[104] Ibid. 2013, pp.216-217.

[105] Ibid. 2013, pp.218-220.

[106] Abdullah, S (2005) *Contemporary Trends in the Study of Democratic Theory*. Jordan: Scientific Center for Political Studies, 1st edition, p.38.

5.4 CIVIL SOCIETY ORGANIZATIONS (CSOs)

At the outset, Tunisia's civil society is diverse and has played an important role since its inception. Just as they fought colonialism, dictatorship, ignorance, and religious extremism, some of them were (and still are) mere instruments in the hands of those mentioned above. Civil society has never been completely detached from the political atmosphere, although the relationship between the two has differed.[107]

With the proclamation of the Tunisian Republic in 1956 and the accession of Bourguiba to the reins of power, Tunisia gradually entered a one-party and authoritarian rule phase. Civil society has also entered one of the darkest phases of its existence and has had to struggle for survival and liberation for more than five decades.[108]

The Bourguiba regime sought to exclude any opposition breath and to contain and neutralize any entity that could be a "counter-authority". It was natural for work to domesticate civil society and convert its bodies into annexes to the ruling party and state organs.

It is therefore absurd to speak of "civil society" in Tunisia as early as the 1960s, as the vast majority of organizations and associations became instruments of mobilization and propaganda in favor of one party and the sole leader.

This remained the case until the bloodless coup of 1987, led by Ben Ali, which was seen by many as a glimmer of hope. Indeed, the first years of Ben Ali's rule were a period of relative political détente, and an expansion of the field of freedoms and organization.

Ben Ali, however, approached civil society differently from Bourguiba's method, and instead of containment, he adopted a strategy based on two tactics: dumping and drying up the sources. During his reign, thousands of associations and organizations were established to brighten the image of the regime in return for generous funding from the

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[107] Bellin, E. (1995). Civil society in formation: Tunisia. Civil society in the Middle East, 1, 120-147.

[108] Ibid, 1995.

State Treasury and donations from loyal businessmen, focused on sports and recreation. In turn, independent organizations were besieged from all sides and subjected to violent repression.[109]

With the intensification of repression, independent "civil society" became the gateway to political action, especially for leftist and, to a lesser extent, Islamists. Of course, the regime was aware of this and did everything possible to tighten the noose on these organizations so that its opponents could not use them as a "Trojan horse" to penetrate its regime. It can be argued, however, that thanks to the maneuverability of civil society, it has created some loopholes in the regime and has helped to reduce repression of opponents.[110]

After decades of exclusion, with the 2011 revolution Tunisians discovered a taste of freedom, and their desire to express and contribute to public affairs increased. The country has turned into a large workshop and the ceilings of the dreams of everyone - ordinary citizens, politicians, intellectuals, artists, and civic activists - have risen. Likewise, civil society organizations have been at the forefront of building a pluralistic democratic system.[111]Despite the efforts of the new components, the "old" associations and organizations remained the most prominent and effective because of their accumulated historical experience and strong structures, especially the Tunisian General Labor Union, which has become a difficult figure in the Tunisian equation. However, as a result of the "competition" represented by new organizations, many old organizations have reformed their internal structures and laws in order to demonstrate their democracy and their compatibility with Tunisia's new phase.[112]

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[109] Alexander, C. (1997). *Back from the democratic brink: Authoritarianism and civil society in Tunisia*. Middle East Report, 34-38.

[110] Boose, J. W. (2012). *Democratization and civil society: Libya, Tunisia and the Arab Spring*. International Journal of Social Science and Humanity, 2(4), 310.

[111] Ibid, 2012.

[112] Ibid, 2012.

Equally important, from the first days following Ben Ali's exit from Tunisia, civil society played an important role in the political sphere, most notably in the formation and management of the "Committees for the Protection of the Revolution" that emerged in January 2011 to ensure two main objectives: first, the organization of citizens to manage daily life in the light of insecurity, and second, the creation of a popular political leadership that frames the course of change and the achievement of the goals of the revolution.[113]

Most importantly, in late 2013, with the acute crisis, civil society emerged as a savior. Four major organizations proposed and conducted a "national dialogue", which calmed down the atmosphere by reaching new consensus and deals that hastened the end of the "transitional period" and the consolidation of the "renewed" system.[114]

5.5 THE ISLAMIC PARTIES

Needless to say, the Jasmine Revolution of December 17, 2010 transformed the Tunisian scene, which saw the first Arab Spring revolutions, and included many political actors on the Tunisian scene. One of the most prominent political players was the "Islamic Ennahda Movement", which was characterized by a popular presence after three decades of exclusion, a history of struggle, a moderate vision of renewal and openness, and an accompaniment to the development of the Tunisian street.

To put things into perspective, Ennahda is "a political party with an Islamic reference that operates within the framework of the Tunisian republican system and according to its laws, and adopts the means of democracy to assume responsibilities, with the motto "Freedom, Justice, Development".[115]

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[113] Ibid, 2012.

[114] Baker, V. (2015). *The Role of Civil Society in the Tunisian Democratic Transition*. Undergraduate Thesis. University of Boulder, Colorado, Boulder, Colorado.

[115] Wolf, A. (2017). *Political Islam in Tunisia: The History of Ennahda*. Oxford University Press.

In order to find out what the Ennahda Movement is, we can divide the Tunisia Ennahda movement into four phases:

The first phase 1960-1981: Jemaah Islamiyah (the Islamic Group)

The birth of the "Ennahda movement with an Islamic reference" was a response to the policies pursued by Bourguiba, who was very influenced by the French civilization, in an attempt to protect the Islamic and Arab cultural and civilization heritage of Tunisia. The Ennahda movement was distinguished by its adoption of the cultural line in response to the Westernizing approach that the ruling regime went through during the rule of Habib Bourguiba.

In response, the first nucleus of the Islamic Group was established in the Zeitouna Mosque, and included Moro, Ghannouchi, and others.

This period did not witness any quarrels between the regime and Jemaah Islamiyah (Islamic group) from its inception until 1979, despite the extent to which the movement criticized the regime for its policies of secularism and Westernization. The reason for this was that the regime needed an active Islamist movement to counter leftist and nationalist currents as it was unable to suppress and contain leftist and nationalist student movements.[116]

The second phase 1981-1987: the Islamic Trend Movement

At this point, the Iranian Revolution of 1979 took place, and was celebrated as an Islamic revolution that toppled the Shah's regime, allied to the Western camp. The Iranian Revolution supported the Islamic Group in Tunisia with the necessary force to announce the dissolution of the Islamic Group and the establishment of the Islamic Trend Movement in 1981. The regime, therefore, arrested Ghannouchi and a group of the movement's leaders and charged them with membership of an illegal association. The regime also took a number of steps to put an end to the Islamic trend movement,

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[116] Allani, A. (2009). *The Islamists in Tunisia between confrontation and participation: 1980–2008.* The journal of North African studies, 14(2), 257-272.

including firing its members from government employment and preventing its members from delivering sermons and lessons in mosques.[117]

The third phase 1987 -2010: the Ennahda movement under Ben Ali regime

This period witnessed a bloodless coup against Bourguiba by his first minister, Ben Ali. A relationship of consensus and understanding prevailed between the Ben Ali regime and the Ennahda movement in 1988 after the overthrow of the Bourguiba regime, as Ben Ali released the Ennahda detainees, a dialogue took place between the movement and the regime, a national pact signed by all parties was agreed upon in 1988, and the movement changed its namefrom the Islamic trend movement to the Ennahda movement, where an atmosphere prevailed that reflected a state of harmony between the Ennahda movement rife with victory and a new regime seeking stability.[118]

However, the growing popularity of the Ennahda movement led Ben Ali's regime to harass them, and to intensify security prosecutions against its members, causing many to flee abroad.

The fourth Phase 2010-Nowadays : the Ennahda movement under the Arab Spring

The Tunisian revolution on December 17, 2010 cast a shadow on the Tunisian political scene, in the changing balance of power with the growing role of political forces and parties, and the fading of others. The Ennahda movement, was able to take advantage of the Revolution to present itself as a political alternative to the previous regime, helped by the exclusion policy practiced against it and the good organization as a political party. With the first post-revolution elections, Ennahda achieved high results in the elections to the first Constituent Assembly on October 23, 2011, which is invested in establishing the Troika coalition with secular and liberal parties, and lasted for two and a half years in

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[117] Ibid, 2009.

[118] Ibid, 2009.

running the Tunisian government.[119] which will be the focus of discussion in the analysis chapter.

IV. CHAPTER SIX: ANALYSIS OF DEMOCRATIC TRANSITION IN THE MIDDLE EAST AND NORTH AFRICA

Indeed, since January 14, 2011, when former President Ben Ali left Tunisia, the Arab region has experienced major events and profound transformations unprecedented in the Arab world.

Four Arab regimes, from Tunisia to Egypt to Yemen to Libya, collapsed under the furious cries of the masses, crying out for a single demand that was their absolute priority: "The people want to topple the regime!" These fast-paced events have aroused the enthusiasm of the peoples of the region and opened the door of hope for them. Nevertheless, it has placed the peoples of the Arab region at a crossroads and turned the Arab Spring into autumn, and even into a stormy, dark, and bloody tragedy.[120]

This seismic event occupied the whole world, and researchers, thinkers, and experts from all sides, from the east and west, regardless of their different specializations, orientations, and areas of interest, studied this phenomenon and its implications. All the more so given that, in the context of regional and international transformations, events have resulted in serious distortions, all of which warn of a bleak future from which no one can be spared.

The common linkage between the two countries, where mass protests have erupted, that they are plagued by larger income gaps, a poor standard of living, a very high unemployment rate especially among educated young people. The combination of these problems has exacerbated popular discontent, which political leaders have turned a blind eye to. Popular uprisings in squares, streets, and public squares exploded, at the

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[119] Guazzone, L. (2013). *Ennahda Islamists and the test of government in Tunisia*. The International Spectator, 48(4), 30-50.

[120] Kamrava, M. (2014). The Rise and fall of Ruling Bargains in the Middle East. *Beyond the Arab Spring*, 17-45.

beginning of the second decade of the 21st century, as an expression of dissatisfaction with their status-quo.[121]

Many scholars argue that the persistence of authoritarianism, political tyranny, and the misdistribution of wealth are the driving force and the fundamental impetus for people to protest and demonstrate.[122]

6.1 THE ARAB SPRING AND DEMOCRATIC GAINS

In parallel, what made the Arab Spring protests an influential phenomenon is their simultaneous shaping across the MENA region. Given their social and political uniqueness (i.e. Arab exception), a range of scholars(Bellin,2012; Kamrava, 2014; Kienle, 2012) argue that these protests could eventually lead to democratic gains in the MENA-region.

An annual survey of political and civil liberties worldwide showed that the countries whose rulers were overthrown in the "Arab Spring" uprisings in 2011 mostly made democratic gains in 2012.

The survey conducted by Freedom House, showed that Tunisia, which ten years ago sparked the change in the Arab region, consolidated the political gains it made in 2011, and described Egypt's progress as "modest.[See Table 2]"[123]

To put things into perspective, we will address the results of Freedom House's survey on political and civil liberties regarding the Arab Spring in the pre-transition phase 2010-2011, during the transition phase 2012-2014, and then the post-transitional phase 2015-2020. As mentioned in the methodology chapter; "based on that data, this study will

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[121] Bellin, E. (2012). Reconsidering the robustness of authoritarianism in the Middle East: Lessons from the Arab Spring. *Comparative Politics*, *44*(2), 127-149.

[122] Kienle, E. (2012). Egypt without Mubarak, Tunisia after Bin Ali: theory, history and the 'Arab Spring'. *Economy and Society*, *41*(4), 532-557.

[123] House, F. (2014). *Freedom in the world 2014: The annual survey of political rights and civil liberties*. Rowman & Littlefield.

categorize states as 'free', 'partly free', or 'not free'. These divisions are based on the average values registered for the states in two indexes. One index concerns political rights and freedoms, while the other focuses on civil rights and freedoms. Based on the levels of rights and freedoms states are allotted a score between one and seven. When a state's average value for both indexes falls between 5.5 and 7.0, the state is considered non-democratic (not free). A state receiving the value of 1.0 to 2.5 is considered democratic (free). States falling within the range of 3.0 to 5.0 are categorized as partly free.

The two indexes rely on seven underlying sub-indexes (dimensions), which can be used to study democratization based on different institutional dimensions. The seven dimensions are: electoral processes, political pluralism and participation, functionality of politics, freedom of speech, freedom to organize, rule of law, and personal autonomy and individual rights".[124]

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[124] Denk, T., & Silander, D. (2012). Problems in Paradise? Challenges to future democratization in democratic states. International Political Science Review, 33(1), 25-40. p. 28.

6.1.1 The pre-transition phase 2010-2011

Table 1: Two-Year Rating Timeline For (The pre-transition period) Under Review (Political Rights, Civil Liberties, Status)

Country	Year	Political Rights	Civil Liberties	Freedom Rating	Freedom Status	
	2010	6	6	6,5	Not Free	
Egypt	2011	5	5	6,5	Not Free	
	2010	7	3	7,5	Not Free	
Tunisia	2011	5	4	3,4	Partly Free	

6.1.2 During the transitional phase 2012-2014

Table 2: Three-Year Rating Timeline For (The transitional period) Under Review (Political Rights, Civil Liberties, Status)

Country	Year	Political Rights	Civil Liberties	Freedom Rating	Freedom Status
Egypt	2012	5	5	5,5	Partly Free
	2013	5	5	5,5	Partly Free
	2014	5	6	5,6	Not Free
Tunisia	2012	3	4	3,4	Partly Free
	2013	3	4	3,4	Partly Free
	2014	3	4	3,3	Partly Free

6.1.3 The post-transitional phase 2015-2020.

Country	Year	Political Rights	Civil Liberties	Freedom Rating	Freedom Status
Egypt	2015	6	5	6,0	Not Free
	2016	6	5	6,0	Not Free
	2017	5	6	6,0	Not Free
	2018	6	6	6,5	Not Free
	2019	6	6	6,5	Not Free
	2020	6	6	6,5	Not Free
Tunisia	2015	3	1	3,1	Free
	2016	1	3	3,1	Free
	2017	1	3	3,1	Free
	2018	2	3	3,3	Partly Free
	2019	1	3	3,1	Free
	2020	1	3	3,1	Free

Table 3: Six-Year Rating Timeline For (The post-transition period) Under Review (Political Rights, Civil Liberties, Status)

Based on the above data, it can be argued that both Egypt and Tunisia emerged peacefully from the phase of the revolution. They came out neither with ideology, nor with guns, but with politics and dialogue. In Tunisia there is a lot of negotiations and dialogue (this is another exception in a region that is afraid of negotiations and dialogue and their outcomes). Thus, Tunisia first managed the post-revolutionary transition, then drafted a new constitution agreed upon by all segments of Tunisian society, with its diverse political, ideological, and political affiliations, and succeeded in the first parliamentary and presidential elections on the basis of the new constitution, thereby wisely laying the foundations of the second republic.[125]

As can be seen from the survey available from Freedom House organization, Tunisia moved from a not free state in the pre-revolution period [Table 1], to a partially free state in the transition phase [Table 2], to a free state in the aftermath of the transition period [Table 3]. It has achieved tangible results in the area of freedoms and rights, fair and transparent elections, and freedom of the press and media, etc.

As for Egypt, according to the same source, it is noted that it went in the same directions, as Tunisia, in its begining, as transparent and fair parliamentary and presidential elections were held, and a constitution was drafted that was accepted by the majority of the Egyptian people, and the doors were opened to freedoms and rights, and Egypt also moved from a country not free in the pre-revolutionary period [Table 1], to a partially free state during the transitional phase [Table 2].[126] Nontheless, it differed radically from its Tunisian counterpart on 23 July 2013, when the military stifled the nascent democratic experiment in its infancy, abolished the constitution, suppressed freedoms and confiscated rights. Where the military declared a state of emergency across the country and launched a campaign of arrests targeting thousands of civilians, politicians, activists,

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[125] Ibid, 2014, pp. 705-707.

[126] Ibid, 2014, pp. 229-231.

media professionals and journalists, to silence any voice that could oppose, expose or even denounce the military coup.[127]

Dramatically, since the July 2013 ouster of President-elect Mohamed Morsi by Egyptian Defense Minister Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, Egypt has witnessed several massacres in which thousands of people opposed to the coup were killed in cold blood, namely in the two massacres of the Rabaa Al-Adawiya Square sit-ins in eastern Cairo and Al-Nahda Square in its west, by a joint army and police militia.In this sense, Egypt has returned to the yoke of former tyranny regimonce again, a country not free, as per Freedom House organization [Table 3].[128]

Based on that, Egypt's democratic gains during the transition period were faded overnight, while Tunisia successfully protected its democratic gains and is still working to maintain and consolidate them.

Undoubtedly, after the Egyptian democratic experiment was aborted a year after its outbreak, with the military coup that toppled the elected president, it is crystal clear that the first result, which was referred to in the theoretical chapter, is what happened in Egypt, specifically the return to the same tyrannical regime that prevailed before Mubarak's ouster. However, the situation is completely different in Tunisia, where, as Alfred Stepan sees, Tunisia has achieved the third result and is on its way to becoming a fully established democracy, albeit at a slow pace[129].

6.2 DEMOCRATIZATION BETWEEN SUCCESS IN TUNISIA AND FAILURE IN EGYPT

In fact, a wide range of external, internal and overlapping factors played a key role in the different trajectory taken by the Egyptian and Tunisian experience towards democracy.

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[127] Housden, O. (2013). Egypt: Coup d'Etat or a Revolution Protected?. *The RUSI Journal*, *158*(5), 72-78.

[128] Ibid, 2013.

[129] Stepan, A. (2012). *Tunisia's transition and the twin tolerations*. Journal of Democracy, 23(2), 89-103.

6.2.1 EXTERNAL FACTORS

Egypt's failed and Tunisia's successful revolution could not be thought of independently of the role of external actors - whether directly or indirectly - in the process. In spite of political rhetoric emphasizing strengthening democracy and political reforms, the USA and the EU failed to pursue contributing and consistent policies to Egypt's democratic transition, lest the electoral victory of Islamist forces harms their interests in the region. On the other hand, the Gulf States played an axial role in establishing military rule by providing political and financial support to the military-backed government as a shield against Egypt's democratically elected government.

6.2.1.1 International community pressure

*Overview

This section highlights the role played by the super-powers, in particular the USA and the EU, and by the regional States, Saudi Arabia and the UAE, in thwarting the Egyptian experience out of fear for their security, economic and political interests, given Egypt's geopolitical and strategic importance and effective role in the Middle East. It also shows how Tunisia survived this pressure because of its modest role and its unimportant geostrategic position with regard to the aforementioned powers.

First and foremost, Hanson sees that transitology and traditional democratization theories have ignored many of the complexities associated with regime change. Thus, according to her, regime change is not just a simple process beginning with political liberalization and ending with the consolidation of democracy, but rather a very sensitive and complex process.[130]

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[130] Gustavsson, J, Tallberg, J. (2014). *Foreign policy, International relations.* 3rd ed. Lund: Studentlitteratur, 259-278.

Arguably, international pressure (or lack thereof) in the Arab world can illuminate many of the consequences of the Arab spring countries after the outbreak of mass demonstrations across the Arab region.

But before anything else, it must be taken into account that there are some fundamental differences between Egypt and Tunisia, which explains why the global and regional powers have been involved in the Egyptian situation, while the Tunisian situation has been completely ignored. Egypt is a pivotal Arab country to both the USA and the EU due to its geopolitical location, large demographics, and military power and political influence in the Middle East and North Africa region. It borders Israel and controls the Rafah Gate, making Egypt a decisive player in the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. Egypt also controls the Suez Canal, which connects the Mediterranean to the Red Sea. Additionally, it has historically served as an agent for mobilizing Arab societies with its leading role in promoting numerous social and religious movements such as Arab nationalism, Arab socialism and the Muslim Brotherhood. The course of political transition in Egypt was therefore of paramount importance to external actors, as developments and events in Egypt were likely to have a diffusion impact in the region. Unlike Egypt, Tunisia is a relatively unimportant country in the international context. It is a small country with a much smaller population than Egypt and does not share borders or agreements with Israel.[131]

Accordingly, the political role and geopolitical weight (in the regional and international spheres) characterize Egypt compared to Tunisia, whose political role and geopolitical weight are very limited and do not qualify it to play any influential role in this regard.[132]

Needless to say, the international community has important vital interests in the Arab region, including stimulating security and stability, pushing the wheel of peace between Palestinians and Israelis, ensuring the continued flow of oil and gas, reducing the rise in extremism and terrorism, preventing the flow of weapons of mass destruction, and

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[131] ERDOGAN, A. (2020). Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Egypt: The Role of External Actors. *Türkiye Ortadoğu Çalışmaları Dergisi*, *7*(1), 169-202.

[132] Willsher, K. (2011). France rocked by news of aid to Tunisia and Egypt. *Los Angeles Times*, *5*.

limiting the flow of illegal immigration from the MENA- region to Europe. A successful democratization process in the Arab region would thus, in theory, serve all of these interests, as the international community recognized when the Deauville Partnership was established at the G-8 summit in 2011.[133]

In practice, principles were sacrificed for the sake of interests, as international stances regarding the Egyptian and Tunisian revolutions appeared to be inconsistent with the principles advocated by these countries. The USA, for example, initially sided with the old regimes, and then hesitated to support the alternatives that would replace the Ben Ali regime in Tunisia and the Mubarak regime in Egypt, fearing that Islamic forces would come to power and threaten US interests in the Arab region[134]. In Tunisia, the USA expressed concern over violence and continued to support the Ben Ali regime even after Ben Ali's escape, called on the new government to implement the promises made by Ben Ali in his recent speech, and later declared its support for stability, peace, and the building of a democratic society in Tunisia.[135]

In Egypt, despite the openness of the USA to all political spectrums in Egyptian society, including the Muslim Brotherhood, its most important communication, and coordination was with the military junta. After the Muslim Brotherhood won the presidential election, the White House announced a new position of the USA towards Egypt, declaring that Egypt's new government is neither an ally nor an enemy of the USA. However, it is noticeable in this regard, that the USA has curtailed economic aid to Egypt, and has not allocated new funds to support the democratic transition there, but merely kept the military aid to the Egyptian army unchanged.[136]

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[133]Sharp, J. M. (2009, May). Egypt: Background and US relations. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS WASHINGTON DC CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE.

[134]Bali, A. U., & Rana, A. (2011). Pax Arabica: Provisional Sovereignty and Intervention in the Arab Uprisings. *Cal. W. Int'l LJ*, *42*, 321.

[135]Ibid, 2011.

[136] Sharp, J. M. (2011). *Egypt: The January 25 Revolution and implications for US foreign policy*. Diane Publishing.

Compared to the support given to Egypt's current regime, America's complicity in supporting the coup and torpedoing Egypt's democratic experience is clearly evident. In the wake of the army's intervention and overthrowing the president-elect in July 2013, the US administration did not describe this process as a coup. On the contrary, military coordination between the two countries continued intensely. US Secretary of State Kerry considered what happened in Egypt as "a restoration of democracy". Moreover, the head of the United States Joint Chiefs of Staff, General Dempsey, declared "the importance of the common interests between Egypt and the United States, and the commitment to the Camp David Agreement, and that the Israeli army considers the Egyptian army a strong ally".[137] After the 2014 presidential election play in Egypt, Egyptian-American relations returned to their first stage, as was the case during the Mubarak era.

It also emerged later that Egypt's defense minister, Sisi, had taken the green light from the US to launch the 2013 coup and topple the Muslim Brotherhood government. Several American newspapers have appeared exposing this issue, pointing to the role played by the USA in cooperation with Saudi Arabia and the UAE, the Egyptian army, and some remnants of the Mubarak regime, such as Ahmed Shafiq, to overthrow the legitimate government in Egypt and stifle its democratic experience in its cradle.[138]

As per "Without Borders" TV-program on Al Jazeera channel, Anthony Cordesman, an adviser to the Pentagon and State Department, revealed why the US supported the military coup in Egypt in 2013, reflecting the reality of the American position. In that interview, Cordesman stressed that "what Egypt witnessed is just a conflict between the

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[137] Mietzner, M. (2014). Successful and failed democratic transitions from military rule in majority Muslim societies: the cases of Indonesia and Egypt. *Contemporary Politics*, *20*(4), 435-452.

[138] Pardo, I (2020). *THE EL-SISI REGIME: THE HISTORY AND PROTAGONISTS OF CONTEMPORARY EGYPT*. The Patrick Zaki Affair (2). Available at: https://www.thenewfederalist.eu/the-el-sisi-regime-the-history-and-protagonists-of-contemporary-egypt?lang=fr. (Accessed, 2021-05-15).

military and the Muslim Brotherhood for power, and we as Americans are dealing with a regime that guarantees our interests, not the one that should exist".[139]

As for the EU position, it was clearer than the American position. The EU supported Tunisia economically by financing many reform projects in Tunisia, and diplomatically by supporting the Tunisian dialogue that spared the country from sliding into chaos and division. In this regard, the President of the Council of the EU, Charles Michel, called for the strengthening of the partnership between Tunisia and the EU and stressed that the EU stands by Tunisia in its democratic experiment in establishing a pluralistic and democratic society.[140]

However, the European stance towards Egypt was not as clear, despite the EU's condemnation of violence and its support for democratic change, it did not condemn the military coup in 2013, excluding Sweden and Norway, which explicitly condemned the coup. The attempts of the EU in this regard were also limited to proposing mediation between the conflicting parties in Egypt, not to restore the constitutional legitimacy that was toppled by the military coup, but to persuade all parties to participate in the path set out by the military coup in 2013 as a road map to get Egypt out of the quagmire of chaos. Then, Egyptian European relations returned to their previous era.[141]

The reason for the EU's resumption of its relations with Egypt after the military coup, as per Azmi Beshara, director of the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies, is the fear of Europeans of refugee convoys that may overwhelm Europe if the situation in Egypt is turbulent, noting what Al-Sisi revealed in a dialogue with the channel "Deutchlandfunk" German, in which he said: "His regime is protecting Egypt from collapse and if Europe abandons support for his regime, its collapse will lead to 93

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[139] Mansour, Ahmed. Al Jazeera (2021). *Without Borders - Anthony Cordesman reveals why the US supported the 2013 military coup in Egypt* [Video]. https://youtu.be/3FLH6jERN4k. (Accessed, 2021-05-15).

[140] Van Hüllen, V. (2012). *Europeanisation through cooperation? EU democracy promotion in Morocco and Tunisia. West European Politics*, *35*(1), 117-134.

[141] Echagüe, A., Michou, H., & Mikail, B. (2011). Europe and the Arab uprisings: EU vision versus member state action. *Mediterranean Politics*, *16*(2), 329-335.

million Egyptians fleeing and seeking refuge in Europe". Sisi warned Europe that their choice was to support his regime or prepare to receive Egyptian asylum convoys to Europe. This is what forced the European Union to accept dealing with the Sisi regime based on de-facto at the expense of de-jure.[142]

On the other hand, the Gulf states played a pivotal role in establishing the military rule, by providing political and financial support to the military-backed government, as a shield against the democratically elected Egyptian government, lest the Arab Spring infection spread to it with the domino effect from one Angle, as Egypt represented symbolism throughout the Arab world that sees Egypt as the "mother of the world ". From another Angle, the Gulf states fear falling between the hammer of the Iranian regime from the East, which since 1979 has been seeking to export its revolution to the Islamic neighborhood, and the anvil of Egypt's new democratic regime from the West, which may play a role similar to that of Iran and transmit the contagion of the Arab Spring 2011 to the Arab world and to the neighboring Gulf monarchies in particular.[143]

In the meanwhile, Tunisia was quite forgotten. In light of the preoccupation of the global and regional powers with containing the Egyptian, Syrian, Libyan and Yemeni revolution, the aforementioned powers threw the ball in the court of political forces in Tunisia, which has become at a crossroads, so either these political forces overcome their differences and reach a political settlement that gets the country out of the bottleneck, or pave the way for global and regional powers to repeat the Egyptian scenario in Tunisia. Especially if we know that Tunisia is considered "miniature-Egypt in the Arab world" as the leader of the Ennahda movement, Ghannouchi, calls it. Consequently, the success of

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[142] El-Shimy, Y., & Dworkin, A. (2017). *Egypt on the edge: How Europe can avoid another crisis in Egypt*. European Council on Foreign Relations.

[143] Sons, S., & Wiese, I. (2015). *the Engagement of Arab Gulf States in Egypt and tunisia since 2011:* Rationale and Impact.

its snowballing experience will form a beacon whose light is transmitted to all parts of the region.[144]

To sum up, the influence of international and regional powers on the democratization process can be seen in Tunisia and Egypt, most notably France (as a historical player in Tunisia) and the United States (as a key player in international relations both at the current stage and since the end of the 1991 Cold War era). These roles had limited impact in Tunisia due to France's focus on Libya, Mali, and Syria, the USA, and the UK's focus on Syria, Iraq, Egypt, Libya, and the Gulf States' focus on Bahrain and Yemen. Hence the Tunisian internal parties were free of international pressure and influence compared to Egypt, where, the external support for the military-backed regime, whether economic, political or military, has thwarted prospects for Egypt's democratic transition.Western players and the Gulf States have put their weight behind the army, which would otherwise have had greater difficulty dealing with the country's growing economic, security and political challenges. The explicit and implicit support received from the West (USA, EU) and the Gulf States (Saudi Arabia, UAE, Kuwait) earned the legitimacy of the military regime for which it yearned, and convinced the generals that they would save their faces regardless of the ferocious massacres of civilians. Having come to the understanding that they could easily escape human rights violations without paying any price, these generals continued their undemocratic political practices and inhuman treatment of activists and civilians.

In one word, the world superpowers that support authoritarian dictatorships are extremely important, given that Egypt receives $1.8 billion in military aid annually from the US*. In the same vein, Cameron's decision to open an investigation into alleged terrorist plots by the Muslim Brotherhood in the UK should be taken into account in this regard. Also, the international factor should not be neglected when considering Tunisia's relationship

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[144] Al Jazeera channel(2014). *Without Borders - Ghannouchi: There is no return to dictatorship, and Tunisia is not Egypt* [Video]. YouTube. https://youtu.be/8XsdYLI-PlQ

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with France, and the fact that many Tunisian migrant workers prefer to travel to France rather than the Gulf countries (as is the case in Egypt)[145].

6.2.1.2 The role of the counter-revolution

Overview

This section explains the focus of the counterrevolution, adopted by Saudi Arabia and the UAE, on Egypt, where the wave of protest movements that led to the downfall of longtime dictatorships created fear for the rulers of the Gulf states, who viewed democracy as a direct threat to the political stability of the Gulf monarchies. Egypt is an old strategic ally of the Gulf states, as it protected the Gulf states from the Iraqi invasion in the 1990s, and it constituted a balance of power in the Shiite-Sunni conflict with Iran, which is considered an existential threat to the fragile Gulf states.

The counter-revolution can be called the twin of the revolution, as it appears simultaneously with the revolution, and disguises itself by its clothing. It is, thus, like a virus that hides among healthy cells, and then begins to necrosis healthy cells. These elements take advantage of the dysfunction of the revolution, and they create a delusion of the people about what it really is, leading the people to confuse the path of the revolution with the path of the counter-revolution.

Undoubtedly, the counter-revolution carries goals that are completely different from those advocated by the revolutionaries, and it works hard to derail the revolution and its true goals.

The best example in this context is the French Revolution in 1789, as the slogans of the French Revolution were very clear, namely: freedom, equality, justice, and fraternity, in which the thinker Ocalan points out that "if the French Revolution had ended as it began it would have changed the direction of the world". But the emergence of the so-called Jacobite Club movement, and its circumvention on the revolution, changed the course of

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* "According to the Camp David Accords sponsored by the United States between Egypt and Israel in 1978, due to the strategic importance of the Egyptian army in maintaining Israeli peace and security."
[145] Stepan, A. (2012). *Tunisia's transition and the twin tolerations*. Journal of Democracy, 23(2), 89-103.

the revolution completely, as the real revolutionaries were eliminated, and thus the counter-revolution triumphed, as well as the course of the revolution changed from its goals towards building the nation-state, which was not one of the objectives of the French Revolution.[146] In this regard, French revolutionary Jacques Danton famously said, "The revolution eats its own children."

Returning to the subject of the research and when it comes to the counter-revolution to the Arab Spring, we must take into account, as the scholar Mohammed Al-Talabi pointed out, that the counter-revolution is based on two main pillars. The first pillar is domestic (i.e. the deep state and the remnants of the previous regime), such as the Tamarod movement in Egypt, and the Nidaa Tounes party in Tunisia; and the second pillar is international (i.e. the dominant states on the international stage), such as the USA, Russia, France, and the UK. There is also a third regional pillar (Saudi Arabia and UAE), no less powerful than the previous two, which serves as the umbilical cord feeding the domestic pillar on the one hand, and as a cat's paw to implement the agendas of the global hegemonic powers on the other hand.[147]

For the Gulf monarchies, democratic change in Egypt and Tunisia will benefit the Muslim Brotherhood, whose political power is viewed as an existential threat to the continuation of their monarchies, as the Brotherhood represent an Islamic democracy, as well as has several offshoots and grassroots in the region and their electoral victory will set a role model for them. In the same vein, the Muslim Brotherhood ideologically presented a modern alternative to the Gulf monarchies, combining Islam and democracy, and the Gulf monarchies feared that this new political mixture would challenge their local legitimacy and the entire basis of their regional supremacy. More importantly, the Gulf

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[146] Öcalan, A. (2016). *Manifesto of Democratic Civilization - The Kurdish Question and the Solution of the Democratic Nation*, translated by Zakho Shiyar, Martyr Hercul Press. p. 462.

[147] Ruya Lilfikr (2018). *Democratic Transition Criteria | Dr. Muhammad Al-Talabi* [Video]. https://youtu.be/J900jI9eup8. (Accessed, 2021-05-19).

monarchies awe that they will become between the hammer of the Iranian Shiite mullahs regime on the right bank of the Arabian/Persian Gulf in the east, and the anvil of the Egyptian Sunni Brotherhood regime on the left bank of the Red Sea in the west [See Figure 2]. Therefore, Saudi Arabia and the UAE were the first to launch the counter-revolution against the Arab Spring, and were quick to assist the remnants of the old regimes with a generous aid package.[148]

Figure 2: GCC-countries between the hammer of Iran and the anvil of the Muslim Brotherhood. Retrieved from:https://watchjerusalem.co.il/154-iran-and-egypt-will-become-allies.

Accordingly, the Arab Spring in Tunisia and Egypt was met with counter-revolutions that brought about a coup against the Arab Spring in Egypt, which was also planned for Tunisia. Indeed, these counter-revolutions are supported not only internally but also externally and regionally by certain Gulf regimes that fear that their regimes will be swept by the Arab Spring, particularly Saudi Arabia and the UAE.[149]

To more clearly illustrate this issue, Saudi Arabia collaborated with the UAE, and spent tens of billions of dollars to oppose not only the revolution but also democratic reform in the MENA. In Egypt, Saudi Arabia, the UAE, and Kuwait supported Mubarak, their longtime ally, in the face of the uprisings and acted immediately to contain the spread of pro-democracy movements that had swept the Arab world. Their first and most important

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[148] Karagiannis, E. (2019). The rise of electoral Salafism in Egypt and Tunisia: the use of democracy as a master frame. *The Journal of North African Studies*, *24*(2), 207-225.

[149] ERDOGAN, A. (2020). *Revolution and Counter-Revolution in Egypt: The Role of External Actors.* Türkiye Ortadoğu Çalışmaları Dergisi, 7(1), 169-202.

priority was to maintain the status quo, as well as keeping Egypt in the Sunni coalition to create a counterweight to the Iranian alliance at all costs. Furthermore, the Gulf Monarchies, supported Abdel Fattah el-Sisi's counter-revolution and financed a bloody military coup that committed crimes against humanity, toppled a legitimate and elected government in 2013, and imprisoned and executed thousands of Egyptian politicians and activists. In Tunisia, Saudi Arabia and the UAE also supported anti-democratic forces, and their recent support focused on one of the symbols of the counter-revolution, Abeer Moussa, who was a government official under Ben Ali and currently leads the Free Constitutional Party. Moussa has denounced the Arab Spring reforms and continues to defend and praise Ben Ali's old dictatorship. For many in Tunisia, Abir Moussa represents the new momentum of the counter-revolution.[150]

Although mainstream American media have attributed Mossa's rise to domestic politics, calling it "nostalgia for the former regime that challenges Tunisia's democratic gains", the fact is that she is also funded by Saudi Arabia and the UAE - which see her as their chance to install a Tunisian version of Egyptian anti-democratic Sisi.

In the same context, the leader of the Ennahda movement, Abdul Karim al-Haruni, asserted that "the UAE tried to seduce the President, Al-Baji Qaid Essebsi, with a large financial offer in exchange for removing Ennahda from government and political life, and stifling the democratic experience."[151]

In the same token, Mahmoud Refaat, Director of the European Institute of International Law and International Relations, stressed in that regard that the UAE had endeavored to abort and counter the Arab Spring; With the help of former British Prime Minister Tony Blair, who has drawn up a plan for that. Since then, the Arab Spring began to receive fatal blows and severe setbacks from far and wide. Furthermore, the UAE and Saudi

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[150] Ibid, 2020.

[151] Al Jazeera (2020). *A leader of the Tunisian Alnahdah reveals: the UAE has lured Al-Sebsi with money to oust us.* https://www.tellerreport.com/news/2020-07-05-a-leader-of-the-tunisian-renaissance-reveals--the-uae-has-lured-al-sebsi-with-money-to-oust-us-and-algeria-has-set-a-red-line-for-her.HJbzZqZ1kv.html. (Accessed, 2021-05-25).

Arabia have worked to host and finance everyone who is against the Arab Spring, such as the Tamarod movement, the Nidaa Tounes party, and some deep statesmen in Tunisia and Egypt.[152]

In light of the above, it can be argued that the counter-revolution, with its three pillars, domestic, regional, and international, played an important role in putting down the Arab Spring (at least temporarily) by a fatal blow that aborted Egypt's democratic experience in 2013, however, its efforts to put an end to the Tunisian experience were in vain.

6.2.2 INTERNAL FACTORS

Alongside with external factors, the success of the Tunisian democratic experiment and the failure of its Egyptian counterpart can be attributed to three internal factors. In Egypt these factors are: the strong presence of the army, the behavior of the Brotherhood, and the weakness of civil society. In contrast, the factors in Tunisia were the absence of the army, the success of the Ennahda party, and the strength and vitality of civil society. The success and failure can be undeniably measured here by the success of the transition in harmonizing the political forces, the completion of a new constitution that will underpin the post-revolution period, and the dominance of politics and political performance during this period. The second criterion is the size of the transition achieved at the end of the transition relative to the pre-revolution situation.

6.2.2.1 The military institution attitude

Overview

This section discusses the impact of the army on the path of democratic transition, and how the presence of the Egyptian army in the political arena thwarted the Egyptian experience, and on the other hand, how the absence of the Tunisian army from the

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[152] Alkhaleej online (2020)"*Ten Years of the Arab Spring". Fallen regimes and Emirati Malignant Roles.* http://khaleej.online/QmYNKK. (Accessed, 2021-05-26).

political arena contributed to the success of the Tunisian experience. It also sheds light on the factors that created the atmosphere for the growing role of the army and its politicization in the Egyptian case, to the extent that made it a difficult figure in the political equation, unlike the Tunisian case, in which the army's role was limited and had no political agendas.

After the collapse of the Ottoman Empire at the turn of the 20th century, the Arab world came under the direct control and influence of the Western powers (specifically the UK and France), as their armies occupied the Arab states directly, and appointed agents of their interests in the Arab region that fragmented into small, fragile and weak states.[153]

As a result of the changing balance of power in the aftermath of WWII, the leadership of the Western world shifted from UK and France to the emerging USA as the new superpower.[154]

The USA, thus, wrested Britain's and France's spheres of influence. However, the style of domination adopted by the USA fundamentally differed from the direct style of Britain and France, as the USA replaced direct colonialism by indirect colonialism through economic colonialism on the one hand, by plunging these countries into debt and seizing their economies, and military domination on the other hand, by handing power to some puppet officers through bloody coups d'etat.[155]

As a result of this shift in the system of influence and control conducted by the USA after WWII from direct to indirect, the countries of the Arab world began to witness so-called

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[153] PBS (2002). *How were the modern nation-states of the Middle East?* http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/globalconnections/mideast/questions/nations/index.html. (Accessed, 2021-05-28).

[154] Ibid, 2002.

[155] Ibid, 2002.

successive military coups, and in order to deceive the Arab peoples, they called these coups as revolutions and their leaders as revolutionaries and free officers.[156]

Based upon this, the Arab peoples have been ruled with iron and fire, and the fate of these peoples and their hopes became hostage to the will of the military, which had the upper hand and the last word in all aspects of life without exception. Neither freedom, democracy nor social justice can happen if the military does not want it. In this context, Bishara, The general director of the Arab Center for Research and Policy Studies (ACRPS), argues that democratic transition cannot be brought to light in the Arab world unless it has the support of the army institution or at least guarantees its neutrality. Otherwise, any democratic transition will be stillborn if this institution opposes it.[157]

As a matter of fact, there are many reasons that created the atmosphere for the increased role of the army, its increased presence on the political scene, and its politicization in the Egyptian case, compared to its Tunisian counterpart, to the point of making it a difficult figure in the political equation.

It goes without saying that since the founding of the ancient Egyptian state in the prehistoric era, through the establishment of the modern state during the reign of Muhammad Ali in 1805, then the July 1952 revolution, and up to the January 2011 revolution and the subsequent fateful political interactions and developments, state survival and regime stability were linked with strength, efficiency and cohesion of the Egyptian army.[158]

The specificity of regional interactions and the complex and protracted nature of the Arab-Israeli conflict have made it necessary that the closer the Arab State is to Israel's borders and to the front of direct confrontation with it, the more the army will contribute to making its foreign policy and managing its internal affairs, which is considered as the

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[156] Ibid, 2002.

[157] Bishara, Azmi (2020). *The democratic transition test: why did Egypt fail and Tunisia succeed?* [Video]. YouTube. https://youtu.be/cTFVZbPYpNU. (Accessed, 2021-05-15).

[158] Ibid, 2020.

womb in which that policy is formed and emerges. Accordingly, since Egypt is one of the most clashed Arab States with Israel, being the pivotal base of war and peace and being the largest of those states, in terms of military power and demographic weight, all these data have enhanced the role of the Egyptian army in political life.[159]

On another note, the incompetence and weakness of civilian political elites, and the erosion of the confidence of the majority of the public in their competence and ability to manage the country's affairs, especially in the face of debilitating external challenges and devastating internal crises, paved the way for the expansion of the Egyptian army's political role. In addition to raising the level of public acceptance and expecting the "military establishment" to play the role of the country's savior, in light of the failure of the ruling civilian political elites and their deviation from the right track.[160]

The shrinkage of the civilian elites, including political parties and civil society, and the emergence of parallel political elites with professional and politicized military backgrounds who managed to record the historic achievements of her country, contributed also to the military establishment at the forefront of the scene.[161] Egyptian ancient, modern and contemporary history is replete with many examples in this regard, such as the officer Ahmed Orabi in the 1880s, the free officers in the 1950s, and then the Field Marshal Al-Sisi, on whom many rely to get the country out of the dark tunnel of this period.

In contrast, and despite his leadership's significant role in the success of the popular revolution that toppled the Ben Ali regime in January 2011, the army's presence on the Tunisian political scene seemed modest over the past few decades. In addition to Tunisia's geostrategic distance from Israel and not being considered a state of direct confrontation with it, its ousted president, Ben Ali, during the years of his rule strengthened the security and police services at the expense of the army, whose political

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[159] Ibid, 2020.

[160] Ibid, 2020.

[161] Ibid, 2020.

role gradually began to decline after the departure of President Bourguiba and the assumption of Ben Ali, who had previously taken over the interior ministry and intensified the influence and political role of the security services, while the army tended to distance itself from the political scene, as was evident during and after the overthrow of Ben Ali's regime.[162]

This proposition may be reinforced by the fact that Egypt's civilian elites, unable to compete and defeat the Muslim Brotherhood through democratic mechanisms, resorted to calling on the army to intervene, at a time when such demands have diminished dramatically in the case of Tunisia, whose Islamist and secular political fringes have called for political negotiation and dialogue to agree on all contentious issues and files rather than calling on the army.[163]

As a result, the Egyptian army gained political momentum, popular support, and legal justification in order to regain its historical leadership role, undermine and strangle the democratic process in its cradle, whereas the Tunisian elites avoided this trap and pulled the rug out from under the feet of the army, thereby blocking the way for it to play a role similar to that of its Egyptian counterpart. Not to mention that the Tunisian military establishment is a toothless dog in terms of limited in size and influence compared to what it enjoys in Egypt, as the military establishment in Egypt dominates more than 40% of the Egyptian economy, and has the upper hand over many of the state's capabilities and wealth and monopolizes many economic and civil sectors. The Egyptian army also has a dominant role in the political life of Egypt since 1952 and this is evidenced by the fact that all the presidents of Egypt before the 2011 revolution are children of this institution, while the Tunisian army has been completely absent from political life.[164]

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[162] Ibid, 2020.

[163] Ibid, 2020.

[164] Sharp, J. M. (2009, May). Egypt: Background and US relations. LIBRARY OF CONGRESS WASHINGTON DC CONGRESSIONAL RESEARCH SERVICE.

Equally important, Bishara considered that Egypt and Tunisia are the only two Arab Spring countries where democratic transitions have occurred, and the reason for this is that in both countries the military establishment refused to obey the regime in suppressing revolutions. Yet the difference between them is that the Egyptian army had an agenda and political ambition, from day one, to take power, while the Tunisian army had no agenda or political ambition to seize power, so the democratic transitions in Tunisia succeeded and faltered in Egypt. In this regard, Bishara concluded that a democratic transition cannot be achieved if the military is hostile to it. In order for it to succeed, the army must either support the democratic transition or remain neutral, as indicated at the beginning of this paragraph.[165]

In the same vein, former Tunisian President Moncef Marzouki believes that the Tunisian army is a professional, non-coup army, and has no connection in economic or political matters. Unlike the Egyptian army, which has a history of coups, and is involved in politics from head to toe, and has the lion's share of the Egyptian economy. This has led the Tunisian army to remain neutral and at the same distance from all political parties and factions, thus facilitating the democratic transition and crossing the country to safety. While this was not the case for his Egyptian counterpart, which quickly circumvented the will of the Egyptian people and toppled the elected president, and brought the revolution back to square one.[166]

In short, in light of Transitology theory, it can be argued that the military expanded its influence in Egypt, and succeeded in controlling all the joints of the state, thus gaining the upper hand and the last word in all state affairs without exception. To put it another way, Egypt became a hostage in the grip of the pharaonic military, which is the most severe sort of tyranny and subjugation.While, the lack of such a military presence, in Tunisia, affected positively its democratic transition[167].

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[165] Bishara, Azmi (2020). *The democratic transition test: why did Egypt fail and Tunisia succeed?* [Video]. YouTube. https://youtu.be/cTFVZbPYpNU. (Accessed, 2021-05-28).

[166] AlarabyTV (2015). Moncef Marzouki: Our army is different from Egypt's. The Tunisian army is professional and non-coup. [Video]. YouTube. https://youtu.be/wGeSro9SKFg. (Accessed, 2021-05-19).
[167] Stepan, A. (2012). *Tunisia's transition and the twin tolerations*. Journal of Democracy, 23(2), 89-103.

Thus, the first internal factor that contributed in the success of the Tunisian experience and the failure of the Egyptian experience, is that in the Tunisian case; there is an army of the state, while in the Egyptian case; there is a state of the army. In other words, the Tunisian army is a servant of the state under the roof of the constitution, while the Egyptian army is the master of the state and above the ceiling of the constitution.

6.2.2.2 Effectiveness of Civil society organizations (CSOs)

*Overview

This section examines the role of CSOs in democratization and in bridging political views. It also shows the effectiveness, independence and strength of these organizations in creating a balance among the political forces in Tunisian society, enabling them to play the role of a credible broker to get the country out of the political impasse and bridge the gap between the components of Tunisian society. While the marginal, weak CSOs that have been subjugated since its inception to the Egyptian regime has not allowed it to play any significant role in this context.

It goes without saying that the strength of civil society is one of the most important internal factors threatening the survival of authoritarian regimes. Civil society organizations (CSOs) gain their power as a result of general social degradation, low levels of economic development, and declining urbanization. In this context, de Tocqueville describes civil society organizations as "the cornerstone of democracy, directly challenging authoritarian regimes by tracking vital interests in society, which erode the ability of authoritarian rulers to control their own societies."[168]

As a matter of fact, the relationship between the state and civil society is an integrated relationship. (CSOs) are one of the pillars of a modern State that creates a legislative environment for regulating the work of civic organizations and the various currents within society. The State and civil society are two sides of the same coin, and there can

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[168] Sardamov, I. (2005). '*Civil society'and the limits of democratic assistance*. Government and Opposition, 40(3), 379-402.

be no modern State without a civil society. Indeed, civil society is the most important indicator of democracy in any country. There is no democracy without a civil society.[169]

Civil society is one of the terms that has gained wide currency in recent years, both academically and politically, internationally and domestically. Additionally, civil society organizations played an important and influential role in the political changes during 25 January in Egypt and 17 December in Tunisia.[170]

Therefore, to identify civil society, it is necessary to recognize, on the one hand, the role of the State in which civil society has emerged and, on the other hand, the level of development of the State and its legal system, both of which are related to the degree of political and social modernization. Thus, the emergence of the state in the modern sense, the enlargement of its administrative apparatus, and its multiplicity of responsibilities have left a clear imprint on civil society.[171]

Civil society began to emerge in the context of the search for a formula for a peaceful transition to democracy, structures that could defend individuals and small groups against the hegemony of the state.

There are many roles for civil society organizations, but despite a variety of social and cultural roles, the idea of "no democracy without a civil society" is prevalent in many pieces of literature because the process of democratization in any society depends on the establishment of a political culture. There is also much talk about the role that civil society plays in the democratization process in terms of building a democratic state.[172]

Accordingly, civil society organizations (CSOs) have a prominent role in driving the process of democratic transition in many cases, and the weakness and absence of civil

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[169] Ibid, 2005.

[170] Pilati, K., Acconcia, G., Suber, D. L., & Chennaoui, H. (2019). *Between organization and spontaneity of protests: the 2010–2011 Tunisian and Egyptian uprisings.* Social Movement Studies, 18(4), 463-481.

[171] Ibid, 2019.

[172] Ibid, 2019.

society in all Arab countries, and in Egypt in particular, is one of the clear explanations for the absence and fragility of democracy, and this indicates the close link between civil society and the processes of democratic transition.[173]

To put things into perspective, it is necessary to know that civil society organizations are not a substitute for government, since individuals are quite free to assemble and form organizations that can expand the scope of government responsibilities, by creating an agenda and partnership with government agencies. Civil society organizations (CSOs), primarily non-governmental organizations (NGOs), help to achieve more rational governance by mediating the relationship between the individual and the state, through their capacities to better mobilize the efforts of individuals and influence public policies of the state.[174]

It is also known that civil society organizations (CSOs), especially defense organizations, seek to defend and protect human rights, promote citizen status, and curb the regime in the case of corruption or tyranny, and that is why civil society organizations in Egypt and Tunisia have seen more clashes between authoritarian regimes and human rights organizations.[175]

On this pattern, it can be argued that there can be no democratic transition in any country unless there are already democratic civil society organizations, capable of creating the infrastructure for democracy in society, including parties, associations, trade unions, women's movements.... etc. This is one of the strongest internal factors that contributed to the success of the most powerful transformation path in Tunisia, compared to its neighbor Egypt, as illustrated below.

The nature of Tunisian CSOs, which is characterized by a high degree of openness due to great cultural contact with the European continent, particularly France, Italy, and the UK,

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[173] Ibid, 2019.

[174] Ibid, 2019.

[175] Ibid, 2019.

and therefore these organizations were characterized by independence, professionalism, and mobilization capacities, such as the Tunisian General Labor Union (UGTT), which is called "the presidents-maker" in Tunisia.[176]

Quite unlike Tunisia, Egyptian CSOs, dominated by a closed tribal and intellectual culture. These organizations were affiliated with the regime, and only a limited number of them were liberated in the last five years before the revolution of 25 January. This has had a negative impact on their ability to manage dialogue and political tolerance, and to build political consensus and alliances in Egyptian society.[177]

Nafisi, head of political science at Kuwait University, argues that what distinguishes Tunisian civil society from Egyptian counterpart is that Tunisia is a country open to Europe whose universities, schools and media are very influenced by the European model.[178]

As for Egyptian society, Nafisi describes it as a pharaonic and oppressive society, and that Egyptian society has coexisted with this phenomenon. Nafisi claims also that the periods in which Egypt has lived a democratic life are very short given Egypt's history, which spans more than 7,000 years. Thus, Egypt does not have the democratic capacity that its counterpart Tunisia does.[179]

Therefore, Nafisi believes that the reference for the Tunisian democratic experience is European in many aspects, and Europeans, as per Nafisi, have rich experience in the fields of political dialogue, political education, political parties and also political and civil organizations. This, in turn, has provided a proper political climate to the efficient and

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[176] Deane, S. (2013). *Transforming Tunisia: The role of civil society in Tunisia's transition.* International Alert, 28.

[177] Mirshak, N. (2020). *Education as resistance: Egyptian civil society and rethinking political education under authoritarian contexts.* Critical Sociology, 46(6), 915-930.

[178] Al Mehwar Channel (2020). *Egypt is a pharaonic and repressive society*. [Video]. YouTube.https://youtu.be/he3EkTUlxtY. (Accessed, 2021-05-25).

[179] Ibid, 2020.

effective functioning of civil society organizations. Such a climate was absent in Egyptian society, which negatively affected the work of civil society organizations, which remained tied up and paralyzed for fear of the regime's oppression.[180]

Briefly, In both the Tunisian and Egyptian cases, a creative and cohesive civil society was the backbone and cornerstone of the uprisings that toppled the Mubarak regime in Egypt and Ben Ali in Tunisia, as per Stepan[181]. Nevertheless, the fundamental difference between the two cases is that in Tunisia this civil society has been translated into a successful and balanced political society.

According to the viewpoint of the theory of Twin Tolerations referred to in theories chapter, this was achieved as a result of the tolerance of the different parties and political spectrums with each other, and also the fruit of the agreements and guarantees created in the wake of the overthrow of Ben Ali regime[182].

6.2.2.3 The behavior of the Islamic parties

Overview

This section compares the behavior of the Islamic parties that came to power in Tunisia and Egypt, namely, the Ennahda movement in Tunisia and the Muslim Brotherhood movement in Egypt, how the Ennahdha movement gave priority to Tunisia's national interest at the expense of its partisan interest and ceded power in favor of a technocrat government, saving the country from chaos and ruin. At a time when political selfishness, exclusion, and the attempt to brotherize the country prevailed over the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, which prompted all segments of society to line up against them and resort to the army to remove them from power.

Initially, the two movements (the Brotherhood and the Ennahda) did not have an active or influential role in the outbreak of the Egyptian or Tunisian revolutions, but rather they

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[180] Ibid, 2020.
[181] Ibid, 2012.
[182] Ibid, 2012.

participated in them after they were spontaneously sparked by the youth of both countries (i.e. Bouazizi in Tunisia, Khaled Said in Egypt). The Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt created a political arm called the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP), and the Ennahda movement created a political arm called the "Ennahda Party". Both movements sought to have political weight in the new political system, but their approaches to accomplish this varied, resulting in different outcomes of the democratic experiment and democratic gains in both countries.[183]

Stepan demolishes, as mentioned in the theortical chapter, the widespread claim that religion is an insurmountable obstacle to democratization and modernization. Through in-depth studies, including the case of Tunisia, he reached the conclusion that the "hard secularism" historically associated with the Third Republic in France is in fact a dilemma to democratic transformation in its own right.

On this basis, what had happened in Egypt, which was the crucial reason for the failure of its experience, is that the Muslim Brotherhood's narrow partisan interest prevailed over that of the Egyptian state. The Muslim Brotherhood dealt with other political forces on the principle of *a zero-sum game*, and did not agree with the rest of the political force to establish the new democratic state for which the revolution came. Also, the Brotherhood in Egypt did not understand the nature and specificity of the stage that the country is going through, and that they alone and without their partners of other forces and other political factions, would not be able to build the state and establish democracy.[184]

Unlike the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, the Tunisian Ennahda movement showed enviable flexibility during the transitional phase negotiations. Although it had the majority in the October 2011 elections, it did not cling to the so-called "legitimacy of the fund" but rather was careful not to provoke and antagonize the rest of the political currents by seizing power repeating outdated regimes model. The movement thus tended

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[183] Pargeter, A. (2016). *Return to the shadows: The Muslim Brotherhood and An-Nahda since the Arab spring*. Saqi Books.

[184] Pioppi, D. (2013). *Playing with fire. The Muslim Brotherhood and the Egyptian leviathan.* The International Spectator, 48(4), 51-68.

to align with other forces as much as possible, especially "Nidaa Tounes" and "Popular Front" movements, and formed a coalition government consisting of an Islamist, liberal and leftist Troika that included Ennahda and the two largest secular parties that came after it in the Constituent Assembly elections.[185]

As a matter of fact, the Ennahda movement in Tunisia handled the political scene completely differently from its counterpart in Egypt, where it dealt with the other political opposition factions on the principle of *a win-win solution*, and made it clear to all that it understands the nature of the phase and that the real electoral battle is when the pillars of democracy are established and the new state is built.[186]

In the same context, the difference between the Brotherhood of Egypt and the Tunisian Ennahda also appears in the way they deal with other factions of political Islam, specifically Islamic jihadist extremist groups. Unlike the Brotherhood's approach, the Ennahda movement has been more rigorous in using the army to fight and eradicate the Salafi-jihadi hotbed, whose terrorist practices and targeting secular political activists have caused the disfiguration of Islamists and intensified criticism of the Ennahda movement.[187]

As a result, the fate of the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt and the Ennahdha in Tunisia varied. While the Ennahdha movement has become an integral part of political life, and a major player in the process of democratic transformation and the achievement of the goals of the Tunisian revolution, the Muslim Brotherhood has fallen victim to political suicide after it put itself in direct confrontation with the Egyptian army and society at the

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[185] McCarthy, R. (2018). *Inside Tunisia's al-Nahda: between politics and preaching (Vol. 53).* Cambridge University Press.

[186] Ibid, 2018.

[187] Merone, F., Sigillò, E., & De Facci, D. (2018). *Nahda and Tunisian Islamic Activism. In New Opposition in the Middle East* (pp. 177-201). Palgrave Macmillan, Singapore.

same time, and thus lost the moral foundations for its historical legitimacy, and condemned itself to leave the political scene, at least temporarily.[188]

Equally important, in Egypt the Brotherhood has never ruled in their lives, nor in Tunisia, but the main difference is the political unawareness with which the Muslim Brotherhood has dealt with the Egyptian scene, the most important manifestation of which is the Brotherhood's alliance with the Military Council against the rest of the other political forces, that were their allies against Mubarak's rule[189]. As it is said, "He who lives by the sword dies by the sword", or to put it more simply "what goes around comes around". The Muslim Brotherhood joined the military junta to pull the rug from under the feet of other political forces and seize the reins of power. Nonetheless, as soon as the army had the opportunity, the popular cover, and the appropriate political atmosphere, it led a bloody coup d'etat against the Muslim Brotherhood, removed them from power, and threw them into jail.[190]

On the contrary, the Tunisian Ennahdha movement understood the requirements of the delicate transitional period, it stepped down from power and did not run for elections after stepping down from power. In doing so, they preferred the national interest over the narrow partisan interests of the movement. Meanwhile, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt gave the army an excuse, to return to the political stage, with their obstinacy and lack of understanding of the requirements of the transitional period, as per Bishara.[191]

To put things into perspective, it can be argued that the pragmatism of political forces with an Islamic reference represented in the Tunisian Ennahdha Movement, as Ennahda leader, Ghannouchi, announced "that his party is ready to form a coalition government and that he would not oppose officials from the government of former President Ben

[188] Zollner, B. H. (2019). *The metamorphosis of social movements into political parties.*

[189] Ibid, 2018.

[190] Ibid, 2018.

[191] Bishara, Azmi (2020). *The democratic transition test: why did Egypt fail and Tunisia succeed?* [Video]. YouTube. https://youtu.be/cTFVZbPYpNU. (Accessed, 2021-05-15).

Ali".[192]Whereas, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt was dominated by political egoism and reliance on the legitimacy of the electoral fund in the ruling. This political egoism led to a state of hostility and tension between the Muslim Brotherhood and other political forces, which paved the way for the army's return to the political stage again.[193]

Needless to say, the Muslim Brotherhood, who came to power in Egypt, came from prisons to power. As a result, they were characterized by closed-mindedness, extremism, exclusion, and insufficient perception of the democratic process. As for the members of the Ennahda movement in Tunisia, they are most of the diaspora in the Western world (France and UK in particular), and therefore they were distinguished by openness, flexibility, in addition to having a great democratic heritage thanks to their contact with the Western world during their diaspora.[194]

In addition to the above, the Ennahda movement's strategy for the democratic process is *the bottom-up approach*. This stimulated the movement into accord with the whole spectrum of the Tunisian people, the secular, the leftist, the remnants of the old regime, and the independents. Consequently, they succeeded in blocking off the way for any military coup that could disrupt or undermine the democratic process.[195]Whereas, the Muslim Brotherhood's strategy for a democratic process is *the top-down approach*. This led them to become involved in a clash with the deep state (by presenting some symbols of the old regime to trial on charges of corruption and bribery), a clash with the military establishment (by dismissing the Minister of Defense and the Chief of Staff), a clash with the judiciary (by dismissing the Public prosecutor), a clash with other political parties (secularists, leftists, and even Islamists), and a clash with the entire spectrum of the

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[192] Malik, M. (2017). *From political Islam to democrat Muslim: A case study of Rashid Ghannouchi's influence on ABIM, IKRAM, AMANAH and DAP*. Intellectual Discourse, 25(1).

[193] Pioppi, D. (2013). *Playing with fire. The Muslim Brotherhood and the Egyptian leviathan.* The International Spectator, 48(4), 51-68.

[194] Pargeter, A. (2016). *Return to the shadows: The Muslim Brotherhood and An-Nahda since the Arab spring*. Saqi Books.

[195] Netterstrøm, K. L. (2015). *After the Arab Spring: The Islamists' Compromise in Tunisia*. Journal of Democracy, 26(4), 110-124.

Egyptian people. This opened the door wide for the army to overthrow them with the blessing of the Egyptian people, thus eliminating the most important gains of the revolution and suppressing the 25 January Revolution, due to the political stupidity of the Muslim Brotherhood. Meanwhile, fair elections were held in Tunisia, where a legislative council was elected, a president was elected, and a new constitution was agreed upon with the blessing of all segments of Tunisian society, as a result of the wisdom and foresight of the Tunisian Ennahda Movement. Stepan claims, in this regard, that Ghannouchi and Ennahda Movement's exposure to the international community caused them to be less dogmatic and more moderate than the Muslim Brotherhood in Eygpt.[196]

In sum, negotiations and agreements are an inevitable and necessary criterion for a successful and acceptable transition to democracy. In Egypt, for example, the agreements negotiated during the Muslim Brotherhood administration have neither been consolidated nor translated into reality. On the contrary, in Tunisia, many political pacts were strengthened, which effectively contributed to the drafting of the constitution, which was accepted by the majority of Tunisians, regardless of their political views and party affiliations. A political pact is defined as merely an agreement, explicit or non-public, between a group of actors who desire to better define the basis of power and safeguard their vital interests[197]. These agreements are often seen as temporary solutions to defuse tensions and avoid unwanted outcomes, such as falling into the trap of an authoritarian counter-coup, as happened in the Egyptian case.

6.2.3 OVERLAPPING FACTORS

It is important to note that there are many overlaps, intersections, and interactions between these various factors mentioned above. For example, the Egyptian army's attitude internationally affects, in one way or another, its internal influence in Egyptian society and its hold on power, and thus the Egyptian army has affected the country's

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[196] Baker, R. W. (2019). *Eric Trager, The Arab Fall: How the Muslim Brotherhood Won and Lost Egypt in 891 days*. *International Journal of Middle East Studies*, *51*(1), 172-174.
[197] O'donnell, G., Schmitter, P. C., & Whitehead, L. (2013). *Transitions from authoritarian rule: Tentative conclusions about uncertain democracies*. JHU Press, pp. 37, 38.

political culture. On the other hand, we find that Tunisia's international stance has clearly affected its political culture.

6.2.3.1 Political and civil society- Military attitude

It is no secret to anyone that the period of the transitional process in Egypt was under the control of the military, as it was the military that imposed the removal of President Mubarak, and the military that took power after the President stepped down and took over the transitional phase. It was also the military that handed power over to the Brotherhood after winning parliamentary and presidential elections, then overthrew them, and regained the reins from them. The military junta headed by Tantawi ruled the country and manipulated political and civil forces, often in a negative way, by pitting polarized actors and groups against each other, only to create the right climate for attacking and re-establishing "the regime", or simply "divide and conquer." Likewise, the Tunisian side at this stage, the Tunisian elites were also seeking their own interests and were competing with each other, but the essential difference from Egypt is that the Tunisian army was not a player or part of this political game, but rather moved away from the political stage and let the civilian force struggle with each other until the first legislative elections after the revolution, in which the Ennahda movement won and formed the troika government headed by Hamadi Jebali, in partnership with other political currents. It is therefore prudent to keep these causal factors separate rather than speak of the military attitude as the only factor that matters.

6.2.3.2 International pressure- political and Civil society

Due to its vital geostrategic position and its growing influence in the regional and international environment, Egypt and its revolution have not been spared from various and continuous waves of external interference in order to abort the revolution or to divert it from its course or to harness it in the interest of this or that party. As for Tunisia, compared to its counterpart, it was less vulnerable to regional and international interventions, given the specificity of its geostrategic position and its modest regional and international impact in terms of its distance from hot spots in the region such as the Arab

Gulf region, or Arab regional neighbors such as Iran, Turkey, and Israel. As a result, Egyptian political and civil forces were shackled, dispersed, and limited in options. Regional and international interventions have shown the poverty and weakness of civil political elites and the erosion of the confidence of the majority of the public in their competence and ability to manage the country's affairs, especially in the light of debilitating external challenges and devastating internal crises. So even though the Arab spring originated in Tunisia, it was Cairo's Tahrir Square that captured the scene and became a political icon for the Spring Revolutions. But the Egyptian failure came on the same historical scale, with the same reverberations. Meanwhile, Tunisia was digging under the shadow for the success of its experiment, which was envied by all the countries that had seen the Arab Spring.

In sum, one of the major reasons for the fact that Tunisian political and civil society is more successful than Egyptian society is that it is safe from regional and international intervention. However, this is not the only reason. The willingness of political actors and groups to cooperate and build consensus is the central reason for their relative success in the political society, where political parties, including the Islamists and secularists, have resorted to political negotiation and dialogue in order to agree on all contentious issues and files. So these causal factors were kept separate.

6.2.3.3 Military attitude- International pressure

Even though American military assistance to Egypt created much of Egypt's military leverage, the army could not thrive unless it exploited its popularity and its history as Egypt's protectors. Correspondingly, the lack of considerable international contributions to the Tunisian army is not the sole reason for abstaining from political involvement but also goes back to Tunisia's political history. Wherefore, these causal factors remained separate as well.

6.2.3.4 International pressure- counterrevolution

Despite the great impact of the international community in Tunisia and Egypt, the great powers could not intervene without the help of regional countries that paved the way and

set the atmosphere for them. In return, the regional countries would not have dared to support the counter-revolution and restore the deep state to the scene without the tacit approval of the international community. Nevertheless, it was not only the international green light that spurred regional countries to support counter-revolution but their fear that they would be stricken by the winds of change or contagious by the Arab Spring. Similarly, internal factors were the first and foremost thing that paved the way for international intervention. This makes the role of the international pressure, in the failure of the Arab Spring, secondary to regional (counter-revolutionary) and internal roles.

V. CHAPTER SEVEN: CONCLUSION

This research has concentrated on democratization in the MENA in the aftermath of the Arab Spring. The main focus has lied on two selected countries Egypt and Tunisia. Both of them have experienced considerable political changes during the Arab Spring. The mentioned two countries have been compared to each other in order to explain the state of democratization, as well as discovering which factor(s) could explain the differences of democratization between these two countries. This has been conducted with the aid of modernization and translatology theories. As a complement, this research also reviews other rational explanations for the state of democratization and the major differences between the two countries.

The failure of the democratic transition process came as a result of a set of internal political, economic and social factors, as well as external factors that played a decisive and effective role in impeding the process of change in Arab societies, and stood as a stumbling block in the way of the transition from tyranny to freedom and from dictatorship to democracy, for which the peoples of the region aspire.

A study of Tunisia and Egypt shows that what happened in them was very different due to the different outcomes of the popular movement and the paths of political change through the different phases of transition.

Where Tunisia formed the exception, and remained far from all forms of chaos, and achieved significant political achievements, despite the economic challenges it faces, due

to several factors, the most important of which is the long history of the establishment of the state, in addition to the relative societal cohesion, the strength of civil society, and the refusal of the establishment neutral military to protect the regime. As for the crucial thing that made the great difference with Egypt, it was the success of the various political forces (which took over the reins of power) during the transition process in building a political consensus, which helped it to reduce the intensity of internal attempts and external breakthroughs that seek to influence the process of democratic transition and push it towards retreating from the achieved results achieved after the upraisings.

In Egypt, despite the relatively peaceful and democratic transition from Mubarak's rule, the political elites failed after that and faltered in the labyrinths of the transition phase, which experienced many political turmoils. This stumbling resulted from the absence of political consensus and dialogue between the various Egyptian political parties, which ended with the overthrow of the elected president by the military establishment that reproduced the former authoritarian regime with new faces, as well as buried Egyptians' hopes of aspiring to democracy.

Thus, the "Arab Spring" did not result, at least temporarily, in successful new democracies per the universally recognized standards. Alternatively, it can be said it succeeded to some extent in Tunisia, while it was aborted by a bloody military coup in Egypt, and the rest of the Arab region fell into the quagmire of chaos, and slipped into the cycle of internal armed conflict and "proxy" wars by regional and international actors.

Eventually, the researcher believes, in light of what has been discussed above, that the Arab Spring fell victim between the hammer of external forces that awe that it would harm their interests, and the anvil of internal factors that fear that it would eliminate their privileges. Therefore external forces and internal factors have combined with the aim of turning the Arab Spring into a dry autumn, a harsh winter, or to a blazing summer. The researcher also believes that there are also subjective factors played a crucial role in the divergence of the Egyptian and Tunisian experiences, namely that Egypt did not benefit from Tunisia's experience in what it should do, while Tunisia benefited from Egypt's experience in what it should avoid.

To sum up, the Arab Spring was born in Tunisia and buried in Egypt.

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