

4-8-2010

## Mubarak's Machine: The Durability of the Authoritarian Regime in Egypt

Andrea M. Perkins  
*University of South Florida*

Follow this and additional works at: <https://scholarcommons.usf.edu/etd>



Part of the [American Studies Commons](#)

---

### Scholar Commons Citation

Perkins, Andrea M., "Mubarak's Machine: The Durability of the Authoritarian Regime in Egypt" (2010).  
*Graduate Theses and Dissertations*.  
<https://scholarcommons.usf.edu/etd/1737>

This Thesis is brought to you for free and open access by the Graduate School at Scholar Commons. It has been accepted for inclusion in Graduate Theses and Dissertations by an authorized administrator of Scholar Commons. For more information, please contact [scholarcommons@usf.edu](mailto:scholarcommons@usf.edu).

Mubarak's Machine: The Durability of the Authoritarian Regime in Egypt

by

Andrea M. Perkins

A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment  
of the requirements for the degree of  
Master of Arts  
Department of Government and International Affairs  
College of Arts and Sciences  
University of South Florida

Major Professor: Abdelwahab Hechiche, Ph.D.  
Dajin Peng, Ph.D.  
Eunjung Choi, Ph.D.

Date of Approval:  
April 8, 2010

Keywords: bureaucracy, democratization, Gamal, reform, dictatorship

© Copyright 2010, Andrea M. Perkins

## Table of Contents

Abstract	ii
Introduction	1
Previous Explanations of Authoritarian Durability	5
Putting the Authoritarian back in Authoritarianism	22
Mubarak's Ascent and Consolidation	26
The Man, the Myth, the Legend	26
Building the Machine	32
Oiling the Machine	38
Egyptian Authoritarianism: Breaking the Third Wave	54
Weathering the Storm of Reform	55
Post-Mubarak Projections	66
Institutional Bridges to Next-Generation Authoritarianism	67
Gamal Mubarak's Civilian Challenge	71
Conclusions	77
References	80
Appendices	82
Appendix A: Confirmation of Theory in Similar Cases - Syria, Iran, and Libya	83
Appendix B: Confirmation of Theory in Dissimilar Cases - Romania and Greece	89

# **Mubarak's Machine: The Durability of the Authoritarian Regime in Egypt**

**Andrea M. Perkins**

## **ABSTRACT**

The Egyptian authoritarian regime is a mammoth machine created and headed by President Hosni Mubarak as an instrument for the exercise of his own power. His ability to influence every facet of the character of Egypt lies in his previous career experience, the involvement in politics of his immediate family, his commitment to unpopular but lucrative foreign policies, and the bureaucratic obstacle course he created for opposition entities to navigate.

Through persistent efforts to prepare himself for national leadership prior to gaining power, then to consolidate his power in the institutions of Egypt, Mubarak has built a state organization with a solid legal basis for suppression of opposition. Using an extensive system of patronage, Mubarak maintains elite support for his continued control of the state. Sustained adherence to the 1979 Egypt-Israel peace treaty brings Egypt significant foreign aid that compensates for some of its economic shortfalls, and affords Mubarak the opportunity to serve as a regional partner in advancing the Middle East Peace Process, reinforcing Mubarak's fitness to rule on the international stage. The maintenance of a pervasive and fiercely loyal security apparatus also gives Mubarak the ability to disrupt any internal opposition activity before it can fully mobilize a call for change.

The manner in which Mubarak crafted a democratic façade to cover his authoritarian regime is an artful nod to the Third Wave of democratization; he recognized

that to remain in power in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Egypt must be perceived as democratic in nature by the international community. That election irregularities, policy barriers to political participation, and single-party control of the legislature prevent the creation of a truly representative government is an important, but difficult to prove fact that Mubarak's façade democratic motions are designed to disguise.

It is prudent to consider how Mubarak's exit from Egyptian politics will affect the authoritarian system he has built and managed since 1981. The likely accession of his son, Gamal, will keep most power guarantors in place, but the globalizing forces of this century will require a fresh approach to managing domestic, international, and global relations.

## **Introduction**

Many words have been written in the last twenty years about the transitions of authoritarian systems to forms of democratic governance in what Samuel Huntington called the Third Wave of democratization. He defined a “wave” as a group of transitions from nondemocratic to democratic regimes that occur within a specified timeframe that significantly outnumber transitions in the opposite direction. His Third Wave began in 1974 and has yet to be officially declared complete, though transitions had slowed considerably by the mid-1990s (Huntington 1991, 15). The extensive attention paid to democratizing transitions during this period created an assumption in the field of political science that democracy is the most preferable form of government, and hopeful researchers proclaimed the inevitability of democratic transitions in the remaining authoritarian regimes as globalization would surely inspire demands for political self-determination in societies worldwide. Despite the optimistic projections of scholars since the Third Wave began, many authoritarian systems remain, many dictators control their public and private spheres as before, and many populations are no more insistent on a voice in politics than before the wave.

Authoritarianism in the 21<sup>st</sup> century must be studied anew, as it is no longer just a manner of controlling citizens within a state, but is also employed as a defense against external pressures and a protection of the sometimes painful process of development in countries too politically weak to implement modernizing changes through participative politics. For many (especially Western) researchers, the authoritarian system presents an interesting topic of study simply because it is different from the liberal democratic

tradition in which they were raised, and the comparisons possible increase understanding of both forms. Authoritarianism has been the most common form of governance throughout history, and several major players in international politics are still authoritarian; this prevalence, coupled with Huntington's ideas on reverse waves of democratization, compels research into how authoritarian states function in order to be prepared for any possible reversions to authoritarian rule by newly-democratized states (Brooker 2000, 1-2). Egypt is an impressive example of authoritarian durability through the Third Wave of democratization, and as a major regional player in the volatile Middle East, bears study as both a model of regime preservation and a case for the positive role that authoritarian systems can play in maintaining stability in a state that would otherwise be mired in chaos and claim-staking by competing elites and struggling lower classes.

Egypt's authoritarian nature can be characterized as dynamic, but immobile; that is, there is almost constant political activity on various fronts, but no movement of the central interests of the state away from the core of the authoritarian leader. The military histories of Middle East regimes are formative in determining the leadership styles of its authoritarians and, in most cases, have aided the regimes in preventing steps toward democratization (Cook 2007, ix). It is logical that citizens are not concerned with seeking greater political rights when their survival or security is being threatened, and the repetitive conflicts in Egypt's history since the 1952 "revolution" has had a demobilizing effect on its citizens and made its leaders reticent to share power with anyone whose top priority is anything other than the defense of the nation. When Gamal Abdal Nasser led the Free Officers in a factional military coup in July 1952, part of the military quickly took over the rest of the military first, government buildings second, and media and

communications nodes third, which allowed the coup participants to control the government's coup defenses before they even knew they were under threat (Brooker 2000, 69). After taking power, the Free Officers sought to maintain popular support by civilianizing the ruling structures - though still controlled by military personnel - by instituting control of the state by a political party. Thus, the same actors were cast in new roles as the "civilian" leadership of the new republic (Brooker 2000, 121).

The ruling party structure has survived to the present, and the current Egyptian president, Muhammad Hosni Mubarak, is a product of this tumultuous period in Egyptian history. His style of authoritarian leadership is distinct from both of his post-revolution predecessors, Presidents Nasser and Sadat, and the determination of President Mubarak to maintain Egypt's national role as the leading Arab state has shaped his actions to consolidate and defend the power of the ruling party, which in turn ensures his position of strength within the country. This unquestioned mandate to govern in his own state gives his perspectives great weight among the leaders of the Middle East in discussions of transnational issues, thus reinforcing Egypt's prominence externally and Mubarak's dominance at home.

Beginning even before his ascension to the presidency, Mubarak worked to elevate the interests of the dominant political party, the Arab Socialist Union (renamed the National Democratic Party in 1978), in order to build a solid powerbase for his control. He encouraged the clear delineation of Egyptian elite "Ins" and lower class "Outs" to gain the support of the Ins who bolstered his power by accepting his patronage. The truly impressive second step in Mubarak's legitimation was the empowerment of thousands of state bureaucrats (who were cast as Nearly-Ins) to control the function of the



state at lower levels and prevent claim-staking by the Outs. This co-optation of what could have become an elite-challenging middle class shows the foresight Mubarak put into constructing his authoritarian regime, whose core objective is stability, and the commitment he has to preventing the descent of Egypt into an unknown, potentially chaotic transition to democracy.

It is prudent to consider Mubarak's intent in maintaining his authoritarian control beyond the oft-cited Western assumptions of greed and power mongering, and to avoid normative judgments on the propriety of his actions. Taking those ideas into account, this research is simply an argument that the man of Hosni Mubarak is every bit as responsible for the durability of the Egyptian authoritarian regime as the elevation of the military elite or the dominance of the ruling party. Neither military control nor institutional factors could have provided the coherent, stable, modernizing leadership that Mubarak has provided since 1981. In examining the traditional causes of transition to democratic governance, Mubarak's defenses to those causes, and the methods by which he has addressed the nation's basic needs outside of participative politics, this study lays out a case for his primary effect on the continuation of authoritarian rule in Egypt. In addition to the driving force of Mubarak's dominance, this research will prove that Mubarak carried out a type of self-preparation for rule that allowed him to make the most effective use of the instruments of state power in order to maintain his own control for nearly three decades.

## **Previous Explanations of Authoritarian Durability**

Samuel Huntington recognized that Egypt was an exceptional state system that had not fallen to the Third Wave of democratization despite major socioeconomic and political challenges that would have destabilized, deconstructed, then democratized other states. He contends that regime change is initiated by competition among political elites, that the elite factions compete to convince the urban middle class to champion their cause in the street, and that regime change in favor of the winning faction occurs when the public discontent reaches critical levels. Huntington admits the failure of this formula in Egypt is three-fold. First, Mubarak has prevented the emergence of competition among elite factions through steady, large-scale patronage of the political elite. With fairness and continuity, he has removed the motivation for various elites to vie for more power and influence. The power is his and the benefits are theirs; to compete for a share of his power is to risk the loss of their benefits, so the elite remain loyal (Huntington 1991, 36). Second, there is no urban middle class to champion other causes in the street. The cultivation of the Nearly-Ins as something better than Outs allows the tier of society that would have formed a middle class to instead create an extensive (sometimes invasive) state bureaucracy that acts to uphold the structure of the government rather than protest it (Huntington 1991, 67). Finally, the prospect for any public discontent to reach critical levels in Egypt is very dim due to the overwhelming presence and tactical freedom of the security apparatus. Even if Egyptian elites did compete, and even if there were an urban middle class who would clamor for reform, the public space for such dissent is very limited (and could be completely closed) by the mass of security and intelligence organs

that are well-trained and empowered to neutralize threats to the regime as if they are threats to their own family, because they are. The fierce loyalty of the security forces is more economic than ideological, but the crushing poverty in the country means that loyalty may be even stronger than an ideology could inspire (Huntington 1991, 76).

Having conceded that Egypt is unlikely to undergo a transition to democracy soon enough to be part of the Third Wave, Huntington goes on to make clear that he does not consider Egypt a member of a reverse wave either (Huntington 1991, 290-91). Defining a reverse wave as a group of countries reverting to authoritarianism after being part of a wave of democratization, Huntington points out that even during its period of relative liberalization during the 1990s, Egypt never experienced a true transition to democracy from which it has regressed. Motions made toward increasing public access to politics do not constitute democratization if they coincide with efforts to reduce the power of the structures in which the public is given influence (Huntington 1991, 287). That Egypt was able to completely avoid the Third Wave of democratization, including avoiding reform calls from citizens and elites alike, is a testament to the strength of the system Mubarak built and his effectiveness at responding to changing global conditions that could threaten his power.

One of the major new theorists in authoritarian regime durability is Jason Brownlee, whose perspective on institutional factors as the main guarantor of regime perseverance is compelling (Brownlee 2007, 2). He cites the importance of how an authoritarian regime is formed as indicative of how well it will survive, giving two conditions necessary for the maintenance of the system. First, the new regime must take advantage of its initial leverage over the state to form institutions that channel its own

power into the critical nodes of society that must be controlled to deter challenges to its rule. These institutions (ideally) will also channel the efforts and energies of potential challengers away from those critical nodes, thus protecting the regime's control. Second, the regime should institute some form of limited elections. This will divert some opposition efforts into "competing" for a stake in the regime, though obviously at a severe disadvantage, and will thus decrease the grounds upon which reformists can demand wider political rights (Brownlee 2007, 33). Elections with odds like a casino have been a part of Egyptian politics for decades. Much ruling party effort is expended channeling opposition effort into these polls; naturally, the house always wins.

Brownlee's focus on Egypt and other authoritarian systems has allowed him to compile a list of truths about non-democratic regimes that can be used a rubric to test new regimes or as an outline to describe the function of an authoritarian system in detail. The characteristics heavily favor his own contention on the primacy of institutions in durability, but they are present in each regime regardless of which keeps the regime in power. He posits first that organizational restraints prolong and expand the power of the regime. Allowing only certain groups to engage in certain activities at certain times for specific purposes makes that action more likely to produce expected outcomes. Predictable action by oppositionists can be defended against and regime interests insulated from its effect, and so opposition activities may be allowed in some cases to reduce public pressure for change without endangering the regime's hold on power.

Egypt's restrictions on unsanctioned political gatherings and extensive monitoring of opposition groups to ensure their activities are not against the "national interest" are examples of this type of organizational restraints (Brownlee 2007, 202). The idea that

elite defection is needed for opposition activism to be effective is borne out in many regimes where an elite faction co-opts some facet of the reform agenda in order to attack the ruling elite and gain a greater share of power for itself. The Egyptian case proves his point, though in reverse: the general ineffectiveness of opposition activism in Egypt may well be a result of the lack of factional competition at the top (Brownlee 2007, 202). The third truth about authoritarian regimes Brownlee identified is that the successful management of elite conflict facilitates the management of the institutions that protect the regime. Through patronage, Mubarak eliminates most sources of elite friction, thus giving him a simpler job of managing his upper class than other dictators may have. Certainly keeping the nation's higher-ups from squabbling keeps them focused on the position they play in the government structure, where in many roles they all carry out the same function of regime protection (Brownlee 2007, 203).

According to Brownlee, maintaining a strong political apparatus allows the authoritarian regime to legalize structures and processes that bolster their strong repressive apparatus, from security forces to censorship of media. The Emergency Law in effect in Egypt since 1981 curtails citizens' rights and criminalizes any action deemed harmful to the state, which allows the regime to use broad definitions of "harmful to the state" to justify crackdowns on all manner of political dissent (Brownlee 2007, 203). In contrast to many theorists, Brownlee found that pressure for democratic change applied by foreign governments (especially the United States) was less effective than homegrown movements at inspiring policy reform in authoritarian states. The Bush Administration's 2003-04 push for democratization in the Middle East was met in Egypt by the successive constitutional "reforms" in 2005 and 2007 that further consolidated the power of the

executive vis-à-vis the legislative branch while appearing to expand access to the People's Assembly for opposition candidates (Brownlee 2007, 203).

On the nature of the elites who control the social and political space in authoritarian regimes, Brownlee contends that personal self-interests most often determine how they negotiate the social concerns for the general public. He did not find a grander purpose of the "good of the people" motivating the actions of the elite in resolving political, economic, or social difficulties. This is evident in Egypt in the refusal of most major players to respond to calls for reform that could improve the political position of the lower classes, not because they are opposed to political rights for citizens, but because to defy their source of patronage in seeking change would jeopardize the significant benefit they derive from being loyal to the regime (Brownlee 2007, 203). The threat of elite factionalization as a threat to regime durability is widely reported, and Brownlee wrote that the simplest way to avoid potential infighting between upper class figures is to focus their attention on how preferable it is to be elite versus being on the periphery of the state. This distraction has the added effect of disallowing them to focus on the actual performance of the regime, which could give rise to claim-staking if a deficiency is identified. By keeping the elites focused on the major benefits of being regime-affiliated Ins versus being Outs, President Mubarak prevents the recipients of his patronage from demanding democratic progress that could endanger their privilege (Brownlee 2007, 203).

Brownlee's description of the various regime types in less-developed countries circa 2001 presents a clear picture of authoritarianism worldwide, including its prevalence and the diversity of its forms. His work is strongly influenced by the

classification scheme put forth by Barbara Geddes in her formative work on political inquiry, *Paradigms and Sandcastles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*, which he credits for determining the many combinations of authoritarian power that form durable and nondurable regimes. Brownlee draws heavily on her single-party and militarist types of dictatorship to explain the Egyptian system, despite Geddes' own designation of Egypt as a triple-hybrid regime, meaning the governing structure has characteristics of all three types of authoritarian system: personalist, militarist, and single-party (Brownlee 2007, 28). Further study into the personalist characteristics of Mubarak's rule would make Brownlee's description more complete.

Geddes' perspective on the triple-hybrid nature of the Egyptian political system is not that it divides its time among behaving in the manner of each type of rule, but rather that it addresses the various facets of rule from each of the three angles when it is most beneficial to the regime. Mubarak rules as a personalist leader in terms of controlling the pace and scope of reform, and in the design of a succession process that will extend his vision of Egypt's national role (and the benefit of his family) beyond the time of his presidency. He remains true to his military powerbase in matters of national defense, ruling as a militarist leader in the matters of defense procurement budgeting and foreign policy which maintains the salience of the massive military as protector of the state despite the lack of a credible conventional military threat. The national economy and state bureaucracy are Mubarak's realms for the display of single-party rule, with cadres of loyal National Democratic Party members carrying out Mubarak-approved fiscal and structural policies down to the lowest levels of society. While comfortable identifying the

Egyptian regime as triple-hybrid, scholars like Brownlee downplay the role Mubarak has in directing the action of the military and party, though surely his nearly three-decade rule merits closer examination of how his use of the tools of domination have ensured not just the survival of the Egyptian authoritarian regime, but of his rule as well (Geddes 2003, 83).

Geddes identified three facets of systems of governance that must be changed in order to constitute a regime transition, which explain her assessments of why a triple-hybrid regime is so durable. She contends that transition entails a change in the basic institutions that determine who will rule, a change in how rulers will be chosen, and a change in how basic distributive decisions will be made. The strength of a triple-hybrid regime, then, lies in its ability to effectively guard against any one of these changes from taking place, much less all three. With physical control over the action of electing rulers, political control over the potential candidacies of successive leaders, and structural control over the distribution of resources to privilege the regime and demobilize the public, the Egyptian authoritarian regime is well-constructed for durability beyond President Mubarak's tenure (Geddes 2003, 9).

Egypt's geographical and cultural locations on Africa and in the Middle East, respectively, may also play a role in protecting the regime from major public movement for reform. Geddes outlined two requirements for regime transitions, namely the presence of an intolerable regime and an organized, popular support base for the overthrow of the regime. If correct, this should provide (in the converse) two conditions for durability of regimes: a tolerable dictatorship and disorganized, unmotivated dissent. Egypt is a neighbor to states with even more striking records of regime cruelty and violence, closed



political systems, and Islamist control of governments; in comparison by many Egyptian citizens, the rule of Hosni Mubarak is certainly more tolerable than those of the leaders in neighboring countries. Even among Middle East states, Egyptians see their limited and flawed democracy as preferable to a monarchical system with no elections, as in Saudi Arabia, or to government structures controlled by a minority group along sectarian lines, as in Bahrain or Saddam Hussein's Iraq (Geddes 2003, 53).

Geddes's study also identified five broad categories of threats to authoritarian regime stability, each of which President Mubarak has already successfully countered. The first two, elite rivalry and loss of elite support, are both addressed using extensive patronage of elite personalities and actions to maintain elite buy-in to regime policies through increasing the power and prestige of the elite vis-à-vis everyone else. This is especially true during times of the third threat, economic crisis, when the maintenance of elite privilege is more difficult fiscally and politically, but which Mubarak has always managed to carry out. In dealing with economic crisis and the general public, Mubarak has used innovative foreign policies and defense purchases to infuse cash into Egypt's largely inefficient economy, such as opening procurement talks with China on systems of little military necessity for the purpose of strengthening the trade relationship as well.

Natural and man-made disasters can challenge an authoritarian ruler, either by placing blame for the disaster or citing deficiencies in the coordination of relief or reconstruction. President Mubarak has effectively employed the massive state bureaucracy to respond as well as possible to Sinai flooding, fast-moving fires in Cairo, and frequent public transportation accidents that usually yield high numbers of casualties. He also avoids public criticism of his handling of disasters by declaring his intention to

prosecute the parties responsible for man-made tragedies. In cases of gross negligence by a regime-affiliated businessman causing massive loss of life, as in the February 2006 Al Salam ferry disaster, Mubarak issues arrest warrants for cronies just as their Europe-bound flights depart. After an appropriate “investigation” period (during which public outrage for the disaster quiets among all but the victims families), a trial is held in the absence of the accused and acquittals are generally the outcome.

In the case of the Al Salam, in which over 1,000 people died when a grossly overloaded, poorly-maintained ferry caught fire then sank in the Red Sea, the ferry owner was a loyalist member of the upper house (Shura Council) of the Egyptian parliament who had been appointed by Mubarak himself. Six people were charged with various crimes that led to the disaster, but the only conviction issued in the 2008 trials was a \$2000 fine for the captain of another ferry for failing to show compassion and make an attempt to rescue the Al Salam’s passengers. President Mubarak initially received harsh criticism for the government’s delayed arrival to the accident scene and insufficient regulation of the transport industry; however, his personal provision of survivor benefits to the victims’ families (and directive to the ferry company owner to pay the families the maximum benefit allowed by Egyptian law) eventually muted the discontent. Widespread media coverage of his immediate travel to Hurghada, Egypt to visit survivors and offer condolences to relatives of those lost prevented the spread of serious anti-Mubarak sentiment among the population in areas further from the disaster. Geddes’ final challenge to authoritarian regime preservation is the broad category of “international changes”, which includes diplomatic, military, economic, or demographic shifts in the global landscape that affect the way an authoritarian can exercise state power or impact

the cost-benefit calculus of the likely outcomes of both domestic and foreign policy actions.

Nearly immediately after taking office, Mubarak was presented the challenge of the Israeli invasion of Lebanon, which spurred major public protest against the Egyptian peace treaty with Israel within Egypt and across the Arab world. Mubarak certainly would have had widespread popular and regional support for abrogating the treaty and re-entering a state of conflict with Israel after their invasion of another Muslim country. His decision to suffer the public criticism and regional ostracism in maintaining the peace was both economic, as the treaty allows access to massive U.S. aid, and strategic, as Israel's withdrawal from the Sinai Peninsula only two months before was a critical military gain that Mubarak was unwilling to jeopardize. By recalling the Egyptian ambassador from Tel Aviv, Mubarak expressed his displeasure over the Lebanon invasion without risking the loss of any of the benefits offered by the Camp David framework (Geddes 2003, 17-19).

The consistent, strong control of President Mubarak shown above supports Marina Ottaway's contention that Egypt is not experiencing a transition toward democratic governance. She classifies the Egyptian system as semi-authoritarian due to its limited participative political structures, but adds that it cannot be said to be transitioning because it has made no true progress toward democracy in over 20 years (Ottaway 2003, 8). It is possible that the political institutions in Egypt are so under Mubarak's control (through his dominance of the ruling party and security apparatus) that even the pseudodemocratic processes Ottaway identifies are simply a façade on a strictly authoritarian regime, making her "semi-authoritarian" designation optimistic in itself

(Ottaway 2003, 41). She correctly states that an authoritarian regime will remain in power as long as it can successfully address the myriad challenges faced by state leaders. The capability to address challenges is actually greater for nondemocratic states than their democratic counterparts because the leaders themselves can design the landscape in which challenges to the regime must be presented. Mubarak enjoys home-field advantage against any threat because all opponents are forced to work within the authoritarian channels of power to seek reform (Ottaway 2003, 42).

Oppositional demands, of course, have changed over time, and authoritarian systems in the Middle East have persisted because they have been dynamic in their methods for addressing demands. King argues that the new form of authoritarianism in the Middle East based on liberal economic policies, ruling coalitions, controlled political pluralism, and electoral legitimation mechanisms that protect the leader may actually provide a greater level of stability and progress in states like Egypt than fully functional democracy could (King 2009, 4-5). If authoritarian leaders make small moves toward political opening, and then use party organizational power and patronage-based economic liberalization to reinforce their control over the process, they can advance their society without really redistributing power (King 2009, 4).

Brooker's two most salient characteristics of authoritarian regimes reflect a more traditional perspective on state management under authoritarianism: freedom is restricted in favor of obedience to authority, and authority is exercised with little restriction (Brooker2000, 22). These ideas are not contradictory to King's, as the processes King identified are actually methods for removing restrictions on the exercise of power and distancing the freedom to challenge authority from a position of real influence on the

conduct of politics. Egypt is not an example of mass praetorianism, in which a society's political institutions are *unable* to cope with political participation by the urban lower class, but rather a case of the regime being *disinclined* to accommodate political involvement from the periphery of the society (Brooker 2000, 31).

Brooker also offers a few reasons why authoritarian regimes ultimately end, though each can be (and has been in Egypt) managed in a way that strengthens the overall authoritarian control of the state. First, a decline in leader charisma can threaten a personalist rule; President Mubarak's reliance on organizational support vice charisma in building his rule means the public is not expectant of great charismatic appeal from Mubarak, but instead see his diligence in quiet management of the state as evidence of his suitability to lead. Second, the creation of rules for the exercise of power can threaten regimes, but only if the structures are not deliberately designed as favorable to the authoritarian control of processes or if government repressive capability is too weak to prevent enforcement of power sharing rules. Mubarak's many political measures to "open political space" and increase the "representative" character of Egyptian politics have actually built rules for the exercise of power that exclude all but his approved actors and token opposition (whose cast is also Mubarak-approved). Third, military regimes can be threatened by civilianization of the system, usually in response to economic challenges the military is unable to address. Mubarak's early co-optation and privilege of the military leadership has allowed a great degree of civilianization to take place in many ministries of the Egyptian government without compromising the presidential powerbase (Brooker 2000, 27). Mubarak's attention to these potential sources of instability during his initial regime formation period allowed him to insulate against possible threats before

they had the chance to mount a serious challenge.

In the same year that Mubarak took over the presidency in Egypt, Perlmutter identified the three tools an authoritarian leader needs to build a lasting authoritarian regime; it is almost as if he wrote Mubarak a primer on national control because Mubarak has implemented a system of domination exactly along the guidelines Perlmutter laid out. First, a single authoritarian party must control the political space. Second, a strong bureaucratic-military complex must control the public space, in terms of both services and security. Finally, there must be parallel and auxiliary structures of domination, mobilization, and control, which are manifest in Egypt by the various intelligence organizations, the co-opted local notables that run villages according to central government direction, and the unofficial cadres of patronage-seeking Nearly-Ins who rally to government causes as instructed in hopes of advancing in the authoritarian hierarchy (Brooker 2000, 34).

The rubric of 13 authoritarian regime characteristics presented by Baker allows the analysis of a country's level of authoritarianism using consistent criteria and a comprehensive focus. The traits he identified are:

- Centralized authority and decision-making structures
- Presence of a control structure to stifle dissent and maintain order; usually in the form of a widespread bureaucracy
- Top-down rule from leader to citizens through the bureaucratic structure
- Presence of a powerful, even intrusive, bureaucracy charged with making and distributing tangible goods
- Construction of a civil service to represent the center down to the local level

- Prevalence of nepotism over merit as basis for hiring decisions in civil service
- Opportunities created by bureaucracy for corruption or “unofficial income”
- Resistance to change by bureaucratic structure; preference for official cover-up of system shortfalls over correction
- Presence of a civil service of unquestioned loyalty and unchallenged servitude to the center
- Maintenance of patron-client relationship between leader and elite created by regime enhancement of elite power and privilege
- Poor horizontal state coordination
- General public distrust of civil service
- Bureaucratic secrecy that builds regime cohesion through mutual suspicion

(Baker 2002, 5-6)

Because the focus of this research is to prove the role of President Mubarak in the durability of the Egyptian authoritarian regime, not to prove the obvious authoritarian nature of his regime, Baker’s criteria will be used as a framework according to which Mubarak’s influence in building the authoritarian state will be measured.

The final explanation of Egyptian authoritarian rule that greatly informed the scope of this project is the study by Steven A. Cook on the role of the military enclave in ruling, but not governing, the Egyptian system. Mubarak’s military background might cause one to assume that the military leadership holds great decision-making power, or that Mubarak is only the mechanism of execution of the military plan for state control. While Cook’s assessments of the power sharing relationship between Mubarak and the military elite may understate the unilateral prerogative of the president to some degree,

his identification of military interests in society is critical to understanding the context in which Mubarak may exercise his prerogative while remaining true to his first powerbase, the military.

In Egypt, the military has four types of interests: nationalist, state and political, security and foreign policy, and economic. These interests are broad because (since the last major regime change came through military coup in 1952) the responsibility of the military for the defense of the regime is a broad task, and threats to order can come from any of these sectors. The military's interests in nationalism are to gain and increase legitimacy through pro-military accounts of recent military history. The National Egyptian Military Museum in Cairo has an entire hall dedicated to the contributions of Egyptian forces in protecting Yemeni unity during that country's civil war, but there is no exhibit on the 1967 conflict with Israel in which the Egyptian military suffered a crushing physical, psychological, and political defeat.

The maintenance of a nationalist spirit in Egypt also causes the military to accept tactical compromises in order to gain tangible, well-publicized benefits of military action. For example, the demilitarization of the Sinai Peninsula, legally Egyptian territory, as part of the peace agreement with Israel is a tactical loss and affront to the sovereign right of Egypt to defend its entire homeland. The military agreed to the move because it was accompanied by a complete withdrawal of Israel forces from the Peninsula, which the military could then proclaim as a great victory produced by their honorable effort in defense of the nation (Cook 2007, 26). The interest of the military in the running of the state and structure of the political apparatus is in maintaining the façade of political liberalization that protects the regime, which is the source of the military's privileged



position. By enforcing restrictive laws, controlling dissent and filling many governor posts, the military disseminates and upholds the policy of the regime and prevents threatening changes in the political landscape (Cook 2007, 26).

Similar protective duties in the area of security and foreign policy shape the military's interests, including the use of secret budget processes and procurement policies to maintain a force capable of responding to any conventional threat and advance political objectives through military agreements. The maintenance of the strategic military relationship with the United States is another priority for Egypt, which may explain why the military did not protest President Mubarak's decision to retain the Camp David Accords after the Israeli invasion of Lebanon. The strength of the military can also be used to compensate for weaknesses in other areas, such as when Egyptian support for the Coalition in the liberation of Kuwait yielded significant economic benefit for all of Egypt, not just the military (Cook 2007, 23). According to Cook, economic opportunity does factor into the military's interests as well. Individual negotiations on contracts, systems, and projects are most successful when they offer personal financial gain to the military leadership, followed by those that merely provide benefits to the capabilities of the armed forces, and least successful when the proposal is designed to use military effort or resources only for the good of the Egyptian public.

The most effective way that President Mubarak has been able to harness the power of the military machine to advance Egypt's economy is by increasing military leader's access to profit through military production schemes like the National Service Project Organization (NSPO). The military ventures are shielded from reform and privatization efforts, and are heralded as engines of productivity in the manufacture of

military and civilian goods from tanks to toasters. The heavy subsidization of the raw materials used for the production, however, offsets any real economic benefit the efficient military production could provide (Cook 2007, 19).

The complex inter-workings of the Egyptian authoritarian regime, from its robust military to its pervasive bureaucracy, form a veritable fortress through which disorganized calls for reform are not likely to break easily. This research addresses the role of President Hosni Mubarak in first constructing, then managing, the Egyptian system so as to prevent meaningful changes in the distribution of power and to propagate his style of control to Egyptian leaders beyond his reign. The military events in Egypt between 1967 and 1973 greatly affected the conduct of state affairs in Egypt; even Cook, who sees the military enclave as a strong player in the Egyptian system contends that “perhaps the greatest consequence [of the military events] was the institutionalization of the presidency as the undisputed actor in Egyptian politics” (Cook 2007, 63). Proving the primacy of President Mubarak in the system since 1981 (and strong influence before as Vice President) will require only an honest look at the man, his perceptions of his role, and the actions he has taken to meet his objectives within that role. This study will illustrate those concepts and assess the prospects for authoritarian durability in a post-Mubarak scenario.

## **Putting the Authoritarian back in Authoritarianism**

Most research into authoritarian systems focus either on the organization responsible for its creation (as in the military enclave or revolutionary faction) or the structures that protect the authoritarian elite (such as processes and institutions of uneven benefit). This study will prove that the maintenance of a strong authoritarian system is most possible through the effective use of those levers of power by a central leadership figure - the authoritarian himself. By tracing the spread of Hosni Mubarak's influence from the military, to the National Democratic Party, to the presidency and then throughout the range of Egyptian state policy, it will be possible to identify the individual actions and accesses that he uses to maintain his own position as head of a state that functions according to his design.

First, this study will identify the traits that allowed Mubarak to influence other people and the actions that he took to position himself for advancement within his chosen avenue to power, the military. Mubarak's high modernist perspective on leadership keeps him involved in the micro-level detail of his macro-level control. His involvement in the daily activities of both the military and ruling party (rather than purely state interests) is due to his desire to use those bodies as instruments of his statecraft. Neither body functions autonomously, as that would negate his ability to design the landscape of state affairs to accommodate his objectives. He maintains the loyalty of the party and military structures during this subjugation of their freewill by consistently his exhibiting his own loyalty to their interests; three decades of preferential policy have solidified NDP and armed forces support for the President.

Second, a review of Mubarak's state actions that build his powerbase and minimize challenges to his control will further explain how he has remained in power. In order to build the regime-preserving system of privilege for himself and his elite supporters, Mubarak must manage public perceptions such that they match his own assessment of his suitability for leadership. Mubarak's double method of maintaining the salience of the military without the presence of a conventional military threat through threat rhetoric and the deflection of public criticism for unpopular policies using bureaucratic scapegoats and feigning institutional constraints is overwhelmingly effective at maintaining public support for his rule. Even civil society organizations largely follow presidential guidance in terms of focus issues and methods of dissent; this is most likely due to the recognition of his ability and prerogative to eliminate their groups as a whole if they don't fit comfortably in his custom-tailored political landscape.

Exploring the ways in which Mubarak has given himself the power to control Egyptian society, and the methods by which he has shielded that control from the democratizing pressures of globalization, will provide an explanation of the durability of his authoritarian system up to now, and its potential for continuation in the post-Mubarak era.

Economic policies and conditions that benefit the Egyptian elite are designed by Mubarak as protections for his rule, but carry the added bonus of demobilizing the general public, which must sacrifice the time it takes to press for political change to focus on survival. To balance the deactivation of the public through economic hardship, Mubarak must implement economic policy that doesn't threaten his regime but which prevents major civil unrest by the millions of Egyptian poor. Mubarak makes unilateral

decisions on lucrative foreign policy opportunities in order to gain infusions of cash that stifle dissent in the short-term and camouflage the long-term disadvantages created by the inefficiencies and disparities of the Egyptian economy.

The pervasive security apparatus is employed by Mubarak for political gain, specifically in upholding laws that disadvantage political opposition, allowing the conduct of elections to legitimate Mubarak's hold on power, and constricting the public space in which anti-regime or special interest groups can organize and mobilize for change. These state reactions to potential challengers form the third point of study by which this research will prove Mubarak's singular focus on maintaining his own dominance.

In addition to control of the public through overwhelming police presence and the mutual suspicion that characterizes states with several parallel and overlapping intelligence services, President Mubarak's prevents popular claim-staking with the use of threat rhetoric in his domestic speeches. Through consistent messaging about the dangers facing the nation, and the sole ability of Mubarak's regime to protect the citizens from an inevitable and catastrophic fate, the President retains public support for his rule. While occasionally Mubarak will cite an external party as an existential threat to the Egyptian way of life, his most intense accusations are reserved for the Islamist opposition in Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood. Regime handling of the challenge of political Islam is that of staunch opposition, as Mubarak seeks to minimize the popularity of the Brotherhood gained through widespread social welfare programs that exceed the government's capacity to provide for the citizens in some of Egypt's poorest areas.

Mubarak's successful management of Egypt's relationship with the United States

is another indicator of his regime's durability. Frequent statements on the existence and growth of democratic processes in Egypt belie the continuing authoritarian nature of the Egyptian system, but are issued by President Mubarak as a public nod to the United States' democratization objectives in the Middle East. U.S. policymakers are not unaware of Mubarak's commitment to retaining his authoritarian control, and his predictable purposes make him a more productive partner in addressing issues of mutual concern. In some cases, Mubarak's style of leadership is necessary to address U.S. interests in the region, such as the containment of potentially dangerous political Islam.

The consistency with which Mubarak has exercised control of multiple levers of power, addressed internal threats, and responded to external pressures show that his position in the Egyptian authoritarian system is one of active direction. He determined his path to the highest authority as a young man, and took advantage of every opportunity to advance his influence throughout his military and political careers. He is not a figurehead atop the grinding bureaucracy of the state protected by a powerful military; this research will prove that his coherent construction and governance of those instruments of power have allowed his steady control of the larger society of Egypt for nearly thirty years.

## **Mubarak's Ascent and Consolidation**

In any work stressing the influence of one man on the political realities of an entire state, careful attention must be paid to the character of the man, including his origins, his formative experiences, and his activities after reaching the age of volition. Many men have possessed intelligence and leadership qualities to equal President Mubarak's, but his drive to lead the country and management skill to protect his own power have been unmatched. His understanding of Egyptian atmospherics in the 1952 timeframe led to his decision to use his career in the military as the starting point for his ascent to the presidency. The operational successes Mubarak led during his military career positioned him well for political advancement opportunities and shielded him from public criticism, as his primary goal of national defense was supported by all Egyptians.

### **The Man, the Myth, the Legend**

Born in 1928 in the small village of Kafr el-Maselha, in Menoufiya governorate between Cairo and Alexandria, Muhammad Hosni Said Mubarak did not come from a family of privilege, but focused on attaining educational success at every opportunity. As an early teenager during World War II, Mubarak was certainly aware of the role of the military in national defense, as Egypt became the stage for several major battles between British, French, American, and German forces.

Mubarak attended the Egyptian Military Academy and then the Egyptian Air Force Academy, earning bachelors degrees in both military and aviation sciences in 1950 at the age of 22. He was commissioned as a pilot in the Egyptian Air Force the same year,

and served nine years as a fighter pilot and then instructor at the Air Force Academy. It was during his time as a fighter pilot that the Free Officers seized control of the Egyptian government from the monarchy, and his position in the military allowed his career to progress without interruption throughout the revolutionary period. By 1959, President Nasser's warming relations with Moscow during the Cold War provided Mubarak the opportunity to attend two years of bomber pilot training in the Soviet Union, which allowed him to command units of various mission types in the Egypt Air Force until after the 1967 Arab war with Israel.

The painful defeat of Arab forces in June 1967 spurred several high-level personnel shifts in the Egyptian military, and Mubarak was promoted to the commandership of the Air Force Academy in November 1967, a traditional pipeline position to the Egyptian Air Force Chief of Staff. Mubarak assumed the Chief of Staff position only two years later, and by 1972 had been appointed the Commander of the Egyptian Air Force and Deputy Minister of Defense. This dual access to operational forces and defense policymaking was the first major step in Mubarak's national decision-making, and he put the paired responsibilities to good use in forging his own support base. In less than two years, Mubarak designed, operationalized, and executed the air operations of the 1973 October (or Yom Kippur) War that marked the only military success against Israeli forces by any Arab state up to that time. The initial gains made by Egyptian Air Force assets allowed the breach of the Bar-Lev line and eventually resulted in the negotiated return of the Israeli-occupied Sinai Peninsula to Egyptian control.

The military benefits of Mubarak's plans were large: the recovery of territory and the bolstering of the Egyptian military's ego, which had been battered by the 1967 defeat.



The political effect of Mubarak's operational success was the renewal of Egyptian nationalism as a public and official priority. In the afterglow of the admittedly limited victory, the military and political elite recognized the contribution of Mubarak in healing the nation's wounds, and his formal military career ended in 1975 with his appointment as Vice President of Egypt by Anwar Sadat.

Mubarak's first steps to authoritarian control of state institutions were taken during his six years as Vice President. He was intimately involved in the running of the Arab Socialist Union, which was the ruling party under which Sadat had been building institutions for party control of state structures. Mubarak became the vice chairman of the party when it renamed itself the National Democratic Party (NDP) in 1978, which gave him control over the various Egyptian intelligence services and the responsibility for the foreign policy of Egypt concerning the Middle East. Mubarak conducted several diplomatic visits worldwide in the run-up to the 1979 signing of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, but allowed public criticism of the Camp David Accords to fall squarely on the shoulders of then-President Sadat. Mubarak's public position distancing himself from the signing of the treaty laid the foundation for the eventual rapprochement of Egypt with the Arab states, who broke diplomatic relations with the Egyptian regime over the perceived sacrifice of Palestinian interests and Arab unity the treaty entailed.

The peace with Israel sparked domestic discontent as well, and within two years of the treaty, an Islamic extremist from within the ranks of the military assassinated President Sadat, allegedly for his betrayal of the Palestinian cause. Mubarak was lightly wounded in the attack, and used the murder of the head of state as proof that Egypt needed a strong leader in charge to maintain order and development; he had a candidate

in mind when he made this appeal. Mubarak assumed the chairmanship of the National Democratic party following Sadat's death, and was quickly elected President as well. His determination for professional advancement and skillful handling of crises had elevated him to the top of the Egyptian power structure, but to maintain that position, Mubarak knew he needed to continue the expansion of his influence while reshaping the existing power structure to address his concerns and protect his dominance.

The unyielding desire to control the highest levels of a society may seem unattractive in a potential leader, but Mubarak operates from a high modernist perspective in which he believes that he possesses specialized skills for leadership, and that the group of associates that he directs in the running of the state form the vanguard of society. This highest group of leaders employs Western technologies and organizational capacity to speed the development of the country in terms of industrialization and production. Due to the limited presence of specialized leadership skills in society at large, the primary responsibility of the high modernist clique is to protect its own influence rather than to advance the country. Mubarak believes his dominance is in the best interest of the state, and the lack of a serious challenger in nearly three decades has reinforced that idea among ruler and ruled (Cook 2007, 15).

The dominance of the Mubarak authoritarian regime is heavily insured by the unquestioned and unquestioning loyalty of the military to the President. He perpetuates this loyalty through the maintenance of a system of privilege for military leadership, and some researchers have noted that military privilege could create an imbalance that then inspires claim-staking by counter-elites (Cook 2007, 74). While most of the elites in the Egyptian system are of a military background, Mubarak must employ other levers of

power or patronage to either control or co-opt potential challengers. If his ability to maintain support among the military elite is any gauge, the civilian elites are likely to follow suit; the rewards for loyalty serve to deactivate the military from independent political activity, and the civilian elites may react the same way to the benefits of state patronage. As Cook says of the military elite, “The officers have grown comfortable with arrangements in which one of their own remains the head of state and a range of pseudo-democratic institutions and representative structures insulate them from politics” (Cook 2007, 77).

Considering the largely unchallenged ability of Mubarak and the military to control the public space in Egypt, it is interesting to consider why they bothered to continue and even expand the façade of democratic governance at all. The answer lies in their desire for durable control; political “reforms” were instituted to enshrine the benefits and dominance of the elite in law, and small, contradictory, or even blatantly imbalanced reform measures provide some top cover for the authoritarian regime from the pressure of Western democratization drives (Cook 2007, 74).

In order to implement pseudo-reforms, Mubarak depends on the dominance of the ruling NDP in politics and the adherence of the NDP to his objectives. Using liberal application of patronage ensures party loyalty similar to the military’s, and effective use of the security apparatus during election periods has maintained the NDP-heavy legislative branch on which Mubarak’s freedom of action depends. Mubarak’s personalist rule within this system of mutually reinforcing dominance was built on his appropriation of party power during his regime formation period, not on a wave of public support for his charismatic leadership. There is no account of Mubarak’s gaining widespread popular

admiration beyond gratitude for his war success in the years leading up to his presidency. He simply assumed control of the NDP structure and used its influence down to the lowest levels to inform the public of their support for the Mubarak regime (Brooker 2000, 129).

Because Mubarak was aware that politics is by nature a contentious field, he expanded the political structures in Egypt to cover as many issues as possible, thereby forcing reform efforts into channels already under the control of the regime. Building the playing field for political dissent allows Mubarak perpetual home-field advantage in addressing opposition and civil society demands for change (Cook 2007, 76).

Jamal stated in his work on Egyptian politics that “The Egyptian regime can manipulate the political and social atmosphere in Egypt at will,” and President Mubarak provides the focus and preferred methods for the use of the regime’s influence (Jamal 2007, 118). The wide use of executive power and imposition of reform measures that actually constrict public space for political action counter Derek Hopwood’s assessment of Mubarak as a democrat who genuinely seeks wider democratic governance in Egypt; his actions show a commitment to authoritarian rule that his speeches may deny (King 2009, 103).

Mubarak gained power as the head of the “October Generation,” and has structured his power to prolong his rule. The following sections address how Mubarak built his machine of dominance and how he “oils” it to keep it running in an ever-changing global arena and in the face of various domestic challenges.

## **Building the Machine**

Mubarak inherited a large party structure and capable military when he took power after Sadat's assassination, but his political perspectives on leadership and national goals did not seamlessly align with Sadat's, so some changes to the governing institutions were necessary. The Egyptian constitution adopted in 1956 and the laws enacted at the same time contained language that gave the appearance of a liberal democratic system. These foundational documents and newer laws have been interpreted by President Mubarak in ways that bolster his own power, degrade opposition, and maintain national stability at all costs (Cook 2007, 65). The most significant of the legal measures Mubarak uses to control Egyptian society is the Emergency Law, which has been in force in Egypt nearly continuously since 1958. The law had been repealed only five months before Sadat's assassination, and Mubarak's immediate response to the killing was to reinstitute the state of emergency. The Emergency Law, as applied in 1981, allowed the censorship and closure of press outlets in order to control the information flow to the public on any disturbances. It also prohibited workers strikes as potential sources of instability, and required Ministry of Interior approval prior to any meetings of political groups, public rallies, or protests on any topic. To deal with public safety concerns or threats to national security, the Emergency Law established a parallel judicial system outside the normal channels of oversight, and allowed for the trial of civilians in special military tribunals to reduce public scrutiny of the cases and circumvent Justice Ministry due process controls (Cook 2007, 71). The perpetual state of emergency since 1981 has ultimately reduced judicial power in favor of the executive, and Mubarak has capitalized on the shift to claim the supremacy of the rule of law while freely repressing any challenges to the political

security (Ottaway 2003, 44-45). The practical application of the Emergency Law has involved mostly suppression of political dissent and limiting the activities of the Muslim Brotherhood.

In order to create public support for his political stances, President Mubarak declared his full support for Egyptian democracy almost immediately upon taking office (Pratt 2007, 74). Pointing to the institution of multiparty elections during his vice presidency, in which the NDP predecessor party, the Arab Socialist Union, vied for seats against Wafd, Tagammu, Ahrar, and socialist Labor Party candidates, Mubarak trumpeted his history of support for political pluralism (Pratt 2007, 71-72). These statements on democracy were muted, however, by his maintenance of the robust presidential powers accumulated under Sadat. Mubarak retains the authority to dissolve the People's Assembly, decree laws, declare a state of emergency, command the armed forces, and be re-elected to an unlimited number of six-year terms as president. The removal of presidential term limits in 1980 came just two years before President Sadat would have had to leave office. Mubarak adopted Sadat's method of legislating his own dominance by continuing the unlimited presidential terms and moving to buttress ruling party power through legal constraints on potential challenger parties (Cook 2007, 72).

The National Democratic Party authored the law in 1978 (the same year Mubarak became its vice chairman) that allowed its own formation as the ruling party of Egypt and established guidelines for the formation of other parties that heavily discouraged opposition organization. First, the law required that all parties in Egypt adhere to five doctrinal principles in their platforms: national unity, the alliance of working people, social peace, democratic socialism, and workers' rights. Most potential parties of the day

(with the obvious exception of the Islamists, who sought sharia rule) fully supported the five principles, but were held up by the second half of the 1978 law, which forbade the licensing of parties too similar to an existing party (Cook 2007, 69). The seemingly contradictory requirements of adherence to a central platform and the differentiation from existing parties gave the NDP nearly complete freedom within legal bounds to rule on the suitability of a particular party for sanctioning into Egypt's political process.

The empowerment of the Political Parties Committee to manage the party registrations process provided another venue for NDP dominance, as NDP loyalists hold six of the nine seats on the committee. The body also holds the power to shut down any party for various "offenses" to electoral or political action laws, and can even refer serious violators for prosecution in Egyptian courts (Cook 2007, 71). This power was still in use as recently as 2004, as the charging, trial, and incarceration of the Al Ghad Party's head (and 2005 presidential hopeful) Ayman Nour showed. Nour was sentenced to five years in prison for alleged forgery of signatures on his party formation petition.

Measures such as control of media content to feature only NDP candidates' campaign materials and allowing the use of state funds for campaign activities of regime loyalists are two ways in the NDP counters the efforts of the political opposition. Additionally, regime-affiliated figures carry out assaults on the democratic process itself through ballot stuffing, tampering with voter registration rolls, announcing false results according to the desire of the regime, and the use of the state security apparatus to intimidate opposition candidates and their supporters (Pratt 2007, 105). The disregard for government accountability by the NDP bolsters the assessment that the party gains support through patronage and voter intimidation, not as a result of a popular platform or

positive performance in managing the state (Ottaway 2003, 49).

There are a number of areas in which Mubarak has appeared to cede some control over Egyptian life, however in practice the behavior of the parties in these cases of limited freedom is still strictly monitored for adherence to Mubarak's interests. Official statements herald the freedom of the Egyptian press when coverage reflects positively on the regime, but legal constraints on the media prohibit the dissemination of "false or defamatory" information, or any information that could harm the national economy or national interest. National interests are broadly defined as Mubarak's interests, and critical information about the ruling elite is automatically declared false and defamatory, so any press publication or broadcast of which the regime does not approve is illegal. Press violations carry penalties of heavy fines and even incarceration if the alleged offense is deemed harmful enough (Cook 2007, 71). In view of this, the official praise for Egyptian press freedoms rings as hollow as Mubarak's pronouncements on the effectiveness of the country's legislature. The People's Assembly, which is the lower house of the parliamentary structure, is allowed purview only over interests that apply to the bourgeois constituencies of the members. Even with its heavy NDP majority, the Assembly is relegated to managing only portfolios in which state intervention is unlikely to be needed to maintain stability, such as agriculture, youth, and local administration (Cook 2007, 75). Matters of internal security, external defense, major economic policy shifts, and foreign policy are handled by Mubarak himself, with some input from the military and NDP leadership. Mubarak's delay in implementing the restructuring guidelines of the International Monetary Fund (IMF) in the late 1980s, despite parliamentary approval for the measures, was likely caused by fear of widespread rioting



similar to what followed the 1977 attempt to remove consumer subsidies on food staples. His later decision to join the U.S.-led coalition in liberating Kuwait was based solely on the economic benefits that could be gained from it (which cushioned the impact of the IMF restructuring), and he entered the coalition without consulting the People's Assembly (Pratt 2007, 74).

Mubarak's handling of political Islam in the first years of his rule was a major factor in strengthening his position at the top of Egyptian politics. In the first few months after taking office, Mubarak released from prison hundreds of political dissidents and Islamists who had been detained under Sadat. Additionally, he allowed the Muslim Brotherhood, though still technically a banned organization in Egypt, to participate politically in the professional syndicates and at the national level as part of a coalition with the Wafd party. These actions were hailed as measures to open the political process to all Egyptians, but were in reality Mubarak's first steps in defining the boundaries for MB activities (Pratt 2007, 94). Mubarak informally assigned the MB leadership at the time with the task of moderating Egyptian Islam, including reining in the extreme and violent factions who could pose a threat to stability. The Brotherhood cheerfully complied with the tasking, as for the first time, the organization had a sphere of influence in which to operate with the support of the ruling regime (Cook 2007, 78). Knowing that the MB would continue to try to increase its support in areas besides moderation of Islam, Mubarak bolstered the institution of Al Azhar (both the mosque and university) to balance the Islamist messaging of the Brotherhood. By designating Al Azhar as the seat of Islamic jurisprudence and knowledge for Egypt, Mubarak reduced the appeal of the MB's claims of divine calling to rule Egypt according to sharia (Pratt 2007, 107).

Having his roots in the Egyptian Armed Forces, President Mubarak used his military successes and speedy ascent to a commanding military leadership position to establish himself as the protector and leader of the Egyptian military enclave. Citing the historical leadership role of the military in Egypt since the 1952 revolution and his appointment to the vice presidency in 1975, Mubarak convinced service members and citizens alike that he was the most suitable candidate for head of state. Taking office at a time when the major conventional military threat to the country had been neutralized by the Camp David Accords, Mubarak designed a process to keep the military salient in society and loyal to his rule: military production. Through various organizations, such as the National Service Project Organization and the Arab Organization for Industrialization, Mubarak harnessed the effort of the armed forces to manufacture and distribute consumer goods throughout the country. This gave the military an important task to accomplish, and acclimated the citizenry to the role of the military in the production of everyday items from canned goods to scent plants. The level of state control of the economy when an arm of the government is the main producer in it is intense, which allowed Mubarak to maintain fiscally detrimental subsidies and use the opacity of the economy to hide gross inefficiencies within the military production system (Hidalgo 1994, 21) Making true changes to the economic system in Egypt would have challenged Mubarak's power, not bolstered it, so he simply ignored the negative effects of the import-substitution industrialization model on Egypt's economy during his regime formation. Camp David Accord payouts and oil revenue were substituted for sound fiscal policy, allowing the regime to postpone unpopular IMF restructuring that could have sparked civil unrest reminiscent of the 1977 Bread Riots (Cowell 1989).

President Mubarak carried out many legal actions during his regime formation period to strengthen his own power, particularly in the area of legalizing his own party's dominance and preventing access to politics for challengers. This foundation of nondemocratic governance has withstood nearly three decades of international changes, domestic challenges, and globalization-driven pressures for political pluralism. The Mubarak machine has not remained static in the face of change, but has used a process of constant motion without mobility to appear to respond to democratizing pressure while always reinforcing Mubarak's own control.

### **Oiling the Machine**

Mubarak oils the machine of his authoritarian regime and protective bureaucracy through regular, incremental, well-publicized legislative actions and unilateral decisions that meet public demands for progress while having little impact on the state of Egyptian politics as a whole. These small steps are carried out only after the NDP Policies Secretariat has ensured their inability to challenge the current regime, and all occur within a prescribed range of acceptable policy positions. Though the policy pendulum may move different directions at different times in order to respond to salient events and issues of the day, the policies implemented will never deviate from Mubarak's interests far enough to disrupt the natural swing of his control.

The primary guarantor of Mubarak's continued dominance is the ability to quell opposition and prevent popular mobilization through the renewal of the Emergency Law since 1981 (Pratt 2007, 93). This legal basis for the deactivation of the public in politics creates a permissive environment for Mubarak's personalist control of the state. Brooker

posits that the Egyptian government operates in an “overlapping, gray area where flawed democracy or semi-democracy verges on the semi-dictatorship that is produced by the use of semi-competitive elections to disguise a dictatorship” (Brooker 2000, 2). While the identification of the Egyptian elections as a disguise for dictatorship is accurate, Brooker overstates the competitiveness and democratic nature of the electoral exercise in Egypt in labeling either as “semi” competitive or democratic. The Egyptian polls are by design noncompetitive, as true competition would allow the possibility of reduced NDP dominance. The allowance of non-NDP candidates to participate in elections and even win seats in the People’s Assembly happens at the discretion of the regime, which reserves the right to simply disallow any candidate from taking office if it pleases. The presence of opposition members in elected bodies are allowed by the regime as a bulwark against international criticism, not in response to voter input. This lack of competition is linked to the lack of democratic principles behind the Egyptian elections as well. If the regime can override election of a winning candidate according to its interests, the responsiveness of the Egyptian government to voter desires, and its ability to be representative of them, is minimal. Calling a regime “semi-democratic” to avoid the sensitivities that spring from labeling one a “dictatorship” is an action unsupported by theory. Either a government is accountable to its citizens in the conduct of representative politics according to citizen preferences, or it isn’t; Mubarak’s machine is not.

Ensuring the overwhelming dominance of the National Democratic Party is the main political avenue by which Mubarak protects his personal control of Egypt’s “democracy,” and thus society as a whole. King identified three main actions that Mubarak took in the first several years as chairman of the party to guarantee its primacy

for the long haul. First, the party shifted its main constituency from its traditional common worker powerbase to the business elite. This served both to supply the NDP with loyal followers of means and the mutually reinforcing strength of the party structure and the elite supporters allowed the NDP to marginalize the Wafd, its greatest challenger in the 1980s, and to deactivate common Egyptians in the political sector. The shifting of politics to being a rich man's game helped ensure the continued leadership of the NDP in a landscape without challenge from Egypt's burgeoning lower classes (King 2009, 93).

Second, the NDP prevented the formation of a secular party that could advocate for the interests of the working class. Without a true labor-oriented party, the NDP is free to dispense just enough social and economic benefit to the peasant masses to prove that they are the only party who can provide for the needs of the people, a policy which has consistently earned them the working man's vote (King 2009, 93).

Finally, the NDP protects against challenges from without by preventing fragmentation from within. This is not to say there are not divergent interests within the party; there are, but the NDP leaders have proven adept at managing the various demands of party members in order to remain a solid, unified front. The strongest example of this skill is the party's handling of the challenge to the status quo brought by Gamal Mubarak in the late 90s as the head of the breakaway Future Party. The Old Guard who had supported Mubarak since 1981 (and who Mubarak had supported through patronage for the same period) was faced with a challenge to its way of doing things for the first time, and by the son of the president. Not knowing to what degree President Mubarak supported the demands of the Future Party, and fearful of losing access to the benefits of rule, the Old Guard made serious concessions to the Future Party in order to prevent a

split of the NDP.

This is a serious strength of the NDP as concerns its durability; the organization is so committed to the continuity of its rule that it can alter its own goals and be dynamic in its positions on any topic in order to maintain the cohesion of the group (King 2009, 94). It should be noted that not every challenge to the NDP order is likely to meet with such conciliatory behavior from the leadership. Clearly the role of President Mubarak as the father of the Future Party's leader caused enough uncertainty among the Old Guard over the advisability of countering the Future Party that acceding to Gamal's demands was the option with the smallest political risk.

The unity of the NDP members allows the party to act in concert to achieve political objectives, foremost of which is securing its own control of the access to power in Egypt. The overwhelming majority of the NDP in all political structures in Egypt allows the party to legislate benefits for itself. Preferential access to media, state funding for party business, and access to sources of "unofficial income" (a euphemism for fraud, graft, and corruption) are just a few of the NDP's rewards for continued support for Mubarak. This imbalanced allocation of state benefits simultaneously limits opposition effectiveness and recruitment and reduces the legislative process to a mechanism for NDP control (Cook 2007, 70).

NDP-sponsored changes to Egyptian electoral laws have also heavily advantaged the ruling party, thus ensuring Mubarak's freedom of action in policymaking through legislation. Mubarak's political machine frequently passes legislation that is designed to look like a political opening but is in fact a limiting factor to participation. Amendments to the political parties law in 2005 required 1,000 signatures on a petition in order for a

party to apply for sanctioning by the political parties committee. The move was hailed as ensuring the “representative” nature of any party seeking registration by making sure it had a large enough number of popular supporters, but in reality the measure closed the channels of political power to smaller parties. By the time a group became influential enough to garner the required signatures, its activities were visible enough to allow the regime to assess the new party’s potential to challenge the status quo and neutralize the newcomer if necessary (Cook 2007, 70).

Much NDP energy is put into controlling opposition parties, and the legal bases for many state actions against opposition groups allow the ruling party wide berth in controlling the activities of its opponents. Through legal permissions to shut down organizations that threaten Egypt’s internal stability, the Political Parties Committee can halt the activity of any group that speaks against the regime or causes disturbances. In 2000, the committee shut down the Labor Party in retaliation for the group’s sponsorship of public protests against the publication of a novel that had passed the government censorship review but which the Labor Party leaders found objectionable (Dunn 2000). The protest activity and the negative reflection on the regime for approving the book’s publication during an election year was more than enough to make the Political Parties Committee eject the Labor Party from Egypt’s political playing field (Pratt 2007, 109).

The management of the political process at the lowest levels is accomplished through temporary infusions of funds to peasants across Egypt in the period immediately preceding elections. The elections take place while the memory of the NDP provision of an improved standard of living is still fresh, so the NDP receives the support of the lower classes despite their spotty performance record at implementing policies to benefit the

peasants. The methods used to raise the funds that are disbursed to encourage pro-NDP voting are not transparent, and are generally assessed to be fiscally irresponsible given the sheer number of Egyptian poor who receive the patronage (King 2009, 95).

The physical provision of funds and food assistance to the state-estimated 63 million citizens needing aid requires the logistical support of local notables who can carry out distributive functions on the NDP's behalf. This logistical support is less likely to be motivated strictly by ideological support for the ruling party, rather requiring instead another layer of patronage to co-opt local leaders into ensuring the pro-NDP vote of their villages' peasants (King 2009, 96). In some areas, the co-optation of businessmen to become party loyalists allows the use of the employer-employee relationship as yet another tool for encouraging political support for Mubarak's party. Both incentives, such as a free day off work, and disincentives, such as the threat of withholding benefits, are used to encourage employees to vote according to the wishes of their employer (King 2009, 95).

Beginning from these grassroots actions to control the conduct of Egyptian politics, Mubarak takes numerous actions to protect Egyptian "democracy" according to his interests. The Mubarak regime frequently touts its ongoing process of liberalization, which in practice involves the alternating expansion and contraction of political space. This process of control is perpetually dynamic, but immobile; constant motion on liberalizing actions without moving the center of politics toward freer access and more accountable governance is not a liberalizing force at all (Kaye et al 2008, 38). The colloquialism "two steps forward, one step back" is even too progress-oriented to describe the movement of the Egyptian polity toward democracy. Mubarak's



authoritarianism is so entrenched that challengers take two steps forward, are forced to take two steps back, and are then fined or jailed for having taken forward steps in the first place.

Tracing the representation of opposition figures in the lower house of the Egyptian parliament, the People's Assembly shows the widening and narrowing of the political space under Mubarak. Multiparty elections were instituted in 1977; the next round of polling was postponed following the assassination of Sadat and did not occur until 1984. The number of opposition figures in the Assembly has varied widely since then, from 6 to 121 seats, but this represents variance within no more than a 26 percent opposition contingent.

Even during the periods of wider political access for non-NDP candidates, the dominance of the ruling party has never been threatened, proving that the legal measures taken to ensure the "representative" nature of Egyptian politics were really designed to protect the Mubarak regime (Ottaway 2003, 43-44). The institution of a party list system in 1984 yielded a more pluralistic body than the 1977 Assembly had been, and the adoption of a mixed system of proportional and individual races allowed even more non-NDP hopefuls to win seats in 1987. At the height of this phase of liberalization, opposition candidates held 93 of 448 seats, or nearly 21%. While this opening is staggering for the authoritarian context in which it occurred, the overall control of the ruling party was not challenged, and the regime halted further gains by the opposition with a package of laws touted as "easing candidacies" for the 1990 elections, but which really legalized gerrymandering to the benefit of the NDP (Brownlee 2007, 125).

The electoral law changes of 1990 were recognized by the opposition as legal

moves to reassert regime control over the People's Assembly, and boycotted the elections en masse. At the end of the day, only 6 opposition figures won seats in the body, and the regime cast the boycotting oppositionists as unpatriotic. The boycott had not produced positive results for the opposition groups, reducing their voice in politics and degrading their image among the relatively politically unsophisticated Egyptian voters (Brownlee 2007, 126).

The 1995 polls were no more opposition-friendly, with widespread voting irregularities spurring violence in many governorates that left 36 dead and over 400 injured (Brownlee 2007, 126). With the state of electoral politics in Egypt in general disarray, the High Constitutional Court (HCC) stepped in after 1995 to assess and solve the problems of the legislative branch in the conduct of popular elections. The HCC was more aligned with the executive than the judicial branch of government, and its challenges to the electoral status quo were made possible by a shift of power from the legislature to the executive soon after the institution of multiparty elections (Pratt 2007, 95). In 2000, the HCC issued a decision that the balloting for the 1995 People's Assembly had been mismanaged and dissolved the Assembly in favor of new elections. This action was praised as a positive indicator of judicial independence by domestic and international reform groups. The five-year delay in issuing the decision, however, means the dissolution only ended the parliamentary term a few months early, so it is unlikely the move had any real impact on either the composition or the function of the body (Cook 2007, 76).

The main liberalizing effect of the motion was to set the stage for another round of political opening in the 2000 elections. The first legally sanctioned judicial supervision

of Egyptian elections took place in 2000, but was restricted to monitoring activity inside polling places. Blatant, sometimes violent, voter harassment just outside polling places ensured the electoral success of the NDP, though the opposition did win 66 seats in the Assembly for a 15% total presence (Brownlee 2007, 135).

The 2000 elections were conducted in three stages due to a shortage of judicial supervisors needed to carry out nationwide polling on the same day. The 2005 parliamentary elections were similarly three-phased, which allowed the regime to gauge the success of opposition candidates in the first round and determine the level of state interference that would be needed in subsequent rounds to maintain the NDP's overwhelming majority in the Assembly. In a shock to the Mubarak regime, the Muslim Brotherhood gained 34 seats in the first round of the 2005 elections, making harsh government control of the polls in the second and third rounds necessary. In the end, the Muslim Brotherhood ended up with 88 seats, and other oppositionists 33, creating a record-breaking 26% opposition presence in the People's Assembly.

During the expansion and contraction of political space, creation and amendment of various electoral laws, and 25 years of less-than-transparent polling, several themes have characterized Egypt's election landscape since 1984. First, no party or group of parties has been able to challenge the National Democratic Party in representation or legislation. The support of the NDP supermajority is required for the passage of any legal measure, so Mubarak's control of the party allows control of all laws as well. Second, the Muslim Brotherhood has become the strongest opposition group, not because of a popular political platform or widespread ideological support, but due to its provision of social welfare benefits and programs that appeal to the peasants in areas that are out of

the reach of the government services structure. Third, the regime has been able to maintain control even during periods of political opening through the effective extension of NDP patronage and resources to voters (King 2009, 93). The importance of the provision of benefits to citizens to ensure support cannot be overstated, as it is the main guarantor of continued NDP dominance.

Given the prominence of financial incentives in the maintenance of the Mubarak regime, it is important to examine the government's handling of the economy before and since 1981 to understand how the provision of incentives has been made possible and assess the long-term viability of the patronage system. Under Nasser, the Egyptian people sacrificed democratic rights for the improved living conditions brought about by the institution of an import-substitution industrialization economic model. The immediate benefits allowed the government time to consolidate Nasser's authoritarian control, so that once the negative repercussions of import-substitution were revealed the people had little room to demand change (Pratt 2007, 57).

The fiscal crisis, trade deficits, inefficiencies of production, and regional and sectional inequalities brought about by import-substitution made economic liberalization necessary, giving President Sadat something to fix upon taking office. (Pratt 2007, 61). Because the economic liberalization policies needed to correct the inherent problems of the import-substitution system can be harsh for citizens, especially the poorest ones, Sadat did not announce his "infitah," or opening, policies until after the successes of the 1973 war had increased his popularity. The public support for the president softened the blow of his liberalizing changes, and he astutely began looking for a more permanent fix to Egypt's fiscal challenges that did not rely on his personal popularity or the conduct of

interstate warfare. It is very likely that economic motivations were part of what brought Sadat to Camp David in 1978, where talks led to the conclusion of the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty in 1979 that yielded hefty financial benefits from the United States to both signatory countries (Pratt 2007, 65).

Mubarak learned from the delaying and top-cover methods of Nasser and Sadat, and applied aspects of both in the implementation of his economic vision for Egypt, which rested on the privatization of most of the economic functions of the state. As mentioned previously, Mubarak delayed the structural reforms required by the IMF, including privatization measures, until his participation in the U.S.-led coalition to liberate Kuwait earned Egypt \$24 billion in cash and debt forgiveness. The provision of 35,000 troops to help eject Iraqi forces from Kuwait was a political decision with economic implications, much like Sadat made at Camp David. The bounty of Gulf War cooperation allowed privatization to take place without serious challenge to Mubarak's rule, but the process was by no means a smooth one for the majority of the population (King 2009, 121).

By declaring his support for the wellbeing of the working man immediately upon taking office, Mubarak distanced himself from what would be painful changes of the economic structure under privatization. This distance gave Mubarak room to express solidarity with the working class against the policies of "The Man" who was hurting the workers' standards of living by privatizing, despite the fact that Mubarak was, in fact, The Man himself (King 2009, 99).

Remaining true to his authoritarian nature, Mubarak implemented privatization in his own style, namely one that would protect his own dominance, ensure loyalty from his

powerbase, and present enough benefit to the people to maintain order. Accordingly, privatization in Egypt consisted of a shift from state-owned monopolies to private ones owned by Mubarak's cronies. Loyalist bureaucrats sold state firms to their businessmen friends at heavily discounted prices in order to receive a cut of the firm's profit after the sale. This led to extremely smaller inflows of revenue from the privatization sales than had been forecast, and the use of the funds received to invest in job creation for the working class (as Mubarak had initially promised), never materialized (King 2009, 114).

It is believed that the president's family is intimately involved in various forms of corruption and graft through its strong ties to the businessmen who own the firms that were previously part of the state economy. Presidential sons Gamal and Alaa maintain close relationships with the owners of most major businesses, and allegedly manage the acquisition of state firms by close friends of the president at below-market prices and using loans from the state bank with favorable terms and which require no collateral (King 2009, 116). Each of these allegations, if true, signal a deliberate disregard by President Mubarak of the negative outcomes of corrupt economic management. The scope of this research does not include normative judgments on the behaviors of Egypt's authoritarian leader, but seeks to prove that his influence on the affairs of the state is so strong as to prevent meaningful challenge to his rule.

The general instability caused by the privatization drive in the 1990s is a perfect example of how Mubarak maintained order during a time of unrest through the application of force by his pervasive security apparatus. Beginning with widespread strikes by workers in 1991 and continuing throughout the decade, privatization and subsequent land redistribution measures brought peasants to the streets in unprecedented

numbers. Strikes were made illegal, but have occurred sporadically in times of severe economic stress (King 2009, 97). In all cases, security organizations quickly controlled all such protests, demonstrations, and rallies, and prevented meetings of resistance groups by force (King 2009, 100). To prevent press reporting of security apparatus actions from reflecting badly on the regime, Mubarak disallowed reporting on peasant uprisings against land redistributions that increased tenant poverty. Citing a desire to prevent widening violence and protect people and property, Mubarak banned media coverage of the opposition activities that would necessarily have shown his forces' heavy-handed responses (King 2009, 99-100).

In addition to the stick method of repression of workers groups to prevent strikes and protests, Mubarak awards periodic carrots to the economically disenfranchised to limit complaints. The sales of state-owned enterprises, though not as profitable as they should be due to corruption, do provide temporary infusions of cash that Mubarak uses to meet immediate, tangible needs of peasants and prevent instability (King 2009, 97). Arguably, the long-term investment of the funds into overall economic growth and job creation would yield more solid results, but not in time to remove the poorest Egyptians' desire to protest ineffective government economic policy.

Several political measures were also instituted during the privatization drive to protect Mubarak from opposition to the policy. In 1995, changes to the trade union law effectively froze the leadership of the union, preventing the ascent of anti-privatization members to power (Pratt 2007, 101). Amendments to the press law in 1995 and 1996 instituted incarceration as punishment for criticism of the regime by the media; this was designed to reduce public discontent by limiting citizens' awareness of the scale of

government repression operating in the country at that time (Pratt 2007, 104). Not every contraction of press freedoms, though, is designed to prevent instability, though all are for the benefit of the regime. Intensely personal motivations can inspire media restrictions, such as those that followed the 1995 allegations of corruption against Mubarak's sons in their handling of the purchase of Airbus planes for EgyptAir, the state airline (King 2009, 125).

The final area requiring Mubarak's attention to maintain his authoritarian rule is limiting the political appeal of the Muslim Brotherhood. Political Islam had challenged the Egyptian state since before Mubarak's presidency, but Mubarak had given the Islamists a role in Egypt's political life during his regime formation period in exchange for the Brotherhood controlling and moderating the extremist strains of Islam in the country that favored violence over voting. The attacks on tourists in the 1990s by radical Islamist groups showed that the Muslim Brotherhood had not fulfilled its task of moderating the extremists, so President Mubarak rescinded the rewards of cooperation by reversing the political liberalization that had benefited the Brotherhood in the late 1980s (Cook 2007, 89). Violent repression of Muslim Brotherhood members, lawyers, activists, journalists, and human rights organizations took place throughout the 1990s, as the regime sought to deal with its terrorism problem and silence critics of its counter-terrorism methods (Pratt 2007, 100).

Beginning with the 1995 parliamentary elections, large numbers of Muslim Brotherhood figures were detained immediately prior to the polling, including both candidates and financiers (Pratt 2007, 100). This level of government attention around election time shows that the Muslim Brotherhood has become the most popular



opposition group, but citizen uncertainty on the potential effects of sharia-based policy on the political and economic landscape in Egypt prevents the group's support from surpassing the NDP's (King 2009, 102). Some authors contend that the growth of MB support and increase in MB representation in the People's Assembly since 2000 is evidence of a miscalculation by Mubarak's authoritarian system of the effects of political liberalization (Cook 2007, 78). Despite the MB gains, however, the repressive capability of the regime remains intact and the international community remains supportive of firm control of Islamist groups in order to prevent the occurrence of acts of terrorism.

While arrests can have short-term effects on the organizational capacity of an opposition group, systemic changes to the political environment were needed for Mubarak to effectively limit the influence of the Islamist bloc. The regime astutely targeted the MB in its areas of strength, including fundraising and in professional syndicates. By prohibiting foreign funding without government authorization, Mubarak gained the double advantage of gaining the ability to monitor the inner workings of MB finances and then limiting the sources of funding to the MB. The shift of responsibility for the elections to board positions of professional syndicates to the judiciary and changes to election rules to require 50% of the group's membership to vote for the board severely hampered MB control in very large or very dispersed syndicates over which their control was too consolidated in the center (Pratt 2007, 101). In the very political active and MB-dominated engineers and lawyers syndicates, the regime cited financial irregularities as justification for placing the groups under official supervision by the judicial system. Designed to halt the spread of MB-style Islamism in public universities, the regime's 1994 law allowing university presidents to select the deans of their academic departments

legalized the marginalization of Brotherhood-affiliated educators at the highest levels of Egyptian education (Cook 2007, 91). The final step in reducing MB influence occurred when President Mubarak terminated the practice of local elections, effectively limiting MB access to its own political turf, the neighborhoods and villages that benefit from MB-sponsored social welfare programs (Cook 2007, 92).

Mubarak's construction of a reliable machine of dominance during his regime formation period allowed him to maintain his power throughout several major challenges by simply oiling the machine with his traditional practices of legislating control for himself and repressing challenges before they can gain momentum. Identifying the ways that Mubarak used these processes to defy the democratizing forces of the Third Wave will explain how one man used the myth of political liberalization to build a legendary system of authoritarian control.

## **Egyptian Authoritarianism: Breaking the Third Wave**

Huntington's assessment that Egypt exhibited no signs of transition to democracy is both supported by evidence and somewhat expected, given the lack of a democratic tradition in Egypt and in the region that makes spontaneous transition unlikely. The ability of President Mubarak to sustain an authoritarian system of governance with few challenges to his rule during a time of widespread transition to democracy lies in his talent for combining the strongest parts of each type of authoritarian leadership to defend against the various stressors that cause regime breakdown. The regime type that most closely resembles the Mubarak machine is the sultanistic regime, though with one major difference.

In a sultanistic system, the rule of the leader is based on his personal authority, but is not gained through popular ideology, mission, or charisma; loyalty to the leaders is bred by fear and rewards. There are few restraints on the use of power by the leader, and his use of corruption and nepotism are unquestioned. These characteristics are all descriptive of Hosni Mubarak's role in the maintenance of Egyptian politics, however the final trait of a sultanistic regime, weak legal-rational legitimation, is not at all a part of Mubarak's authoritarian model (Chehabi & Linz 1998, 7). The core of Mubarak's dominance is that he has been able to legislate it to appear as a popularly supported mandate. This ability to add structural legitimation to improve the durability of a straight sultanistic regime is but one reason Mubarak's tenure has lasted nearly three decades.

The overwhelming majority of the NDP in all government bodies degrades public faith in the electoral politics. The resigned acceptance of NDP measures to ensure

election victories for its candidates and a sincere belief that another group is not likely to govern any better than the NDP combine to deactivate the public sector in politics. The citizens are willing to forego political rights for improvements in living conditions or security, especially as some still feel that democratization is a foreign instrument designed to subjugate Egypt to the West that interferes in the traditional methods by which leaders are expected to care for their people.

Even among those who do favor stronger democratic processes, the severe economic scarcity in the country reduces the amount of time and money available for citizens to dedicate to political activism. This elevates the political realm to a rich man's playing field, where the needs of the working class are less likely to be addressed and businessmen-politicians seek to legislate their own influence after the model of President Mubarak himself. Nevertheless, pressure for reform of the Egyptian political system from international sources and domestic activists do require some response from the regime, which Mubarak designs and disseminates after the response has been sculpted to present no serious or lasting challenge to the dominance of the president and his elite supporters.

### **Weathering the Storm of Reform**

Government responses to calls for reform can take various forms, though each will address the pressures (which can be internal or external) in a manner designed to offer the fewest concessions by the government that will pacify the source of the pressure. The most efficient and nonthreatening method for the authoritarian regime to apply is to find a single solution that appears to address internal and external calls for change, but which does not actually shift the distribution of power at all. The most

shining example of this process is Mubarak's announcement in 2005 of Egypt's first competitive elections for president. This move was applauded by international groups and Egyptian activists for opening the channels of power to challengers. Some observers were skeptical of the change, as a true opening of the competition for president would have been drastically out of character for Mubarak, and the terms of the wider candidacy law confirmed the skeptics' suspicions.

Several legal hurdles to competition were present in the constitutional amendment that opened the competition, and NDP dominance in several government bodies allowed the party to control the enforcement of those legal hurdles. For example, the amendment required that any candidate be a member of an established party for five years, but the NDP-heavy Political Parties Committee restricts the registration of political parties according to their interests. Second, the amendment required that any party seeking to field a candidate hold 5% of the seats in both the People's Assembly (lower house) and Shura council (upper house). Tight regime control of the outcomes of elections and presidential appointment of one-third of the upper house, of course, prevent any single opposition party from attaining those standards (Cook 2007, 73).

Candidates must also have served on a higher committee within their party for at least one year before the election, making potential rivals visible to the ruling regime a year in advance, giving Mubarak plenty of time to assess the threat potential of each candidate and determine whether to allow him to compete and at what level of government interference. Finally, as further evidence of the "democratic" change Mubarak was proposing for the presidential race, a process was instituted by which independent candidates could contest the election for the head of state. The terms for the

entry of an independent candidate into the race, however, were impossible, as unaffiliated hopefuls were required to gain the endorsement of 65 members of the lower house, 25 members of the upper house, and 10 local council members in 14 different governorates in order to present their candidacies. The endorsement of 230 serving officials would be impossible for a non-NDP candidate given the hefty NDP majority in all of the bodies from which endorsements are required (Cook 2007, 73).

It is interesting to note that because active military and security officers cannot belong to a political party (lest they be divided on the protection of the nation), Mubarak quite intentionally assured the civilian nature of the next president. Non-party members could not serve on an executive committee for a year, and were as unlikely as any independent to meet the candidacy endorsement conditions, and thus could not run for president (Ottaway & Choucair-Vizoso 2008, 30). It is unknown if this aspect of the move was intentional to prevent military figures from seeking political power after Mubarak leaves office, but if it was, it certainly calls into question Mubarak's repeated denials of a plan for his son, Gamal, to succeed him.

Next most preferable, if a convincing "solution" cannot be found, is to find a legal basis to deny the change requested. The Mubarak machine has rested in the constitutional prohibition on religion-based political parties to maintain the ban on the political registration of the Muslim Brotherhood. The third most preferable manner for dealing with reform demands is to find a logistical or practical reason to deny the reform. When demands for judicial supervision of elections became too loud to ignore in the late 1990s, Mubarak instituted judicial monitoring but cited a shortfall of qualified monitors to justify conducting the elections in three-phases. The three-phased approach allowed

greater opportunity for the regime to carry out election irregularities other than ballot fraud that ensured its dominance despite the physical presence of judiciary personnel in the polling places.

Finally, if the calls for reform cannot be co-opted with a nominal solution or denied for legal or logistical reasons, the arena of play on the issue must be taken out of the public sphere. While most Egyptians support the repeal of the Emergency Law in order to increase personal freedoms and encourage public trust in the government, the continuation of the law is not put up for public debate, rather the NDP-heavy People's Assembly and Shura Council decide on the law's renewal at the direction of the president. The above methods represent the non-violent means of stifling opposition to the regime, and Mubarak uses the above methods frequently due to his correct assessment that quelling demands for reform by force is not a long-term solution to the perpetual problem of activists seeking change.

Reducing public calls for change in the first place is an effective way to minimize energy that must be put into nominal reform efforts. Making small changes to less critical parts of government structures give the appearance of change without threatening the status quo, as in when Mubarak increased the power of the People's Assembly to oversee budget functions in Egypt or when he created a process by which the People's Assembly could withdraw confidence from a government minister with a certain level of support. What initially looks like a concession of power from the president to the parliament may only be a new tool of influence for the president, as the dominance of the NDP in the People's Assembly makes it highly unlikely that parliamentarians will oppose either budget moves or the ministers who are higher in the structure of Mubarak's regime for

fear of stunting their own growth potential within the patronage hierarchy (Ottaway & Choucair-Vizoso 2008, 29).

In keeping with Mubarak's tradition of making incremental changes frequently, the 2007 amendments to the Egyptian constitution that modified some of the terms of the 2005 amendments ostensibly created more "openings" for political participation. The document relaxed the party seat requirements for presidential candidacy privileges to 3% (and allowed parties holding just one seat to field presidential candidates until 2016), but also specifically reduced the role of the judiciary in supervision of elections (Ottaway & Choucair-Vizoso 2008, 25). The maintenance of the requirement for candidates to be a member of party's higher committee for at least one year prevents the tactical coalition of smaller parties immediately prior to elections, allowing the large NDP to continue its controlling interest in the legislative branch (Ottaway & Choucair-Vizoso 2008, 26).

The 2007 amendments created an electoral commission to ensure the fairness and transparency of Egyptian democracy, however the composition of the group is not wholly from the judicial branch, likely a punishment for the attempts by the Judges Club to assert their independence during the 2005 amendment process that reflected poorly on the regime. The commission consists of 11 members, of whom the judiciary only gets to appoint four. The other seven members are appointed by the parliament, and the group is responsible for districting, voter registries, election supervision, results handling and announcement, and the role of civil society bodies in monitoring election activities in Egypt (Ottaway & Choucair-Vizoso 2008, 27). The final portion of the 2007 amendment enshrined two of the most onerous terms of the Emergency Law in the constitution: the right to try civilians in military courts and the capacity to suspend citizens' rights if



necessary to combat terrorism (Ottaway & Choucair-Vizoso 2008, 29).

The total package of amendments to the constitution in 2007 received little media attention compared to the 2005 amendments, and the two NDP parliamentarians who opposed the changes were immediately expelled from the party (Ottaway & Choucair-Vizoso 2008, 25). Other groups who have tried to assert their independence have met regime resistance as well, such as when the judiciary instituted a drive for autonomy that spurred the creation of security courts and tribunals for a net loss of judicial power. This is evidence that institutions and persons who choose not to play by Mubarak's rules in his structures will be marginalized (Cook 2007, 75).

To maintain the right to carry out even façade reform activity, organizations must accept their role as advisory diversions whose stances can become policy positions so long as they align with the regime's vision of Egypt's preferred future. The National Council for Human Rights was created in 2003 as an organization that produces credible reports on the human rights situation in Egypt; however, the Council recognizes that the regime ignores their reports and chooses not to push the government to recognize their findings, a challenge which could lead to the disbanding of their movement (Ottaway & Choucair-Vizoso 2008, 30).

Another way to use political action to counter reform efforts is to proactively find an issue of tertiary importance to which the government can apply reform effort without challenging overall dominance. One example of an issue that the NDP could reform for its own benefit is the lack of effective competition legislation in Egypt. A law that allegedly abolishes monopolistic practices, but in fact crafts the master plan for how to legalize them, would give some media coverage to a government-initiated reform

activity, gain the regime some kudos from activists, but require absolutely no meaningful change in business practices (King 2009, 204).

Effective management of the civil society landscape is crucial to Mubarak protecting his dominance while projecting his commitment to democracy. Cook defines civil society as the arena of the polity where self-organizing groups, movement, and individuals, relatively autonomous from the state, attempt to articulate values, create associations, and advance their interests. Egypt is a haven for such groups, with over 19,000 civil society organizations registered with the government (Cook 2007, 6). By placing legal and cultural constraints on the behavior of civil society organizations (CSOs), Mubarak controls the scope and pace of reform activity and disallows demands for change that he cannot address in a manner beneficial to himself.

The 1999 Associations Law restricted the activities and funding sources of CSOs, and created a major dilemma for organizations: register with the Ministry of Social Affairs and receive substantial funding but stifling state control, or form under the Companies Law to reduce the government oversight of activities but forfeit state resources (Pratt 2007, 101; Jamal 2007, 123). The formation of national issue councils and population of the councils with members of CSOs dedicated to the issue directs the efforts of the reform movements into government channels, and allows the national council to disregard the input of the CSO contributors in favor of NDP-approved “reforms” (Pratt 2007, 133-34).

The regime has closed CSOs that criticize the government too harshly or bring up issues the regime cannot address. The Arab Women’s Solidarity Association was closed in 1991 on technical grounds, but observers contend that its focus on combating

oppression of women in the private sphere embarrassed the regime, which had no capability to address the issue from a policy standpoint, but whose inaction was viewed as a lack of support for improving women's rights. A focus by the Association on discrimination against women in the public sphere would have brought at least some progress as the regime took whatever action was necessary to limit criticism of its policies vis-à-vis women (Pratt 2007, 144). Mubarak designed the landscape of reformist politics as an obstacle course to control the scope and pace of change in the interest of stability. Civil society organizations bolster his authoritarian control by focusing on the wrong issues (that is, issues that the regime cannot fix and will thus marginalize) and playing the regime's game of choosing what issues are important and what methods of correction are acceptable. The probability of success when playing Mubarak's game is almost negligible; as in any game of chance, the house always wins (Pratt 2007, 19).

Even without regime interference, though, the opposition parties have internal weaknesses that limit their popular appeal. None of the parties have fresh, dynamic, persuasive leaders and non present concrete plans of action for fixing the national problems indentified in their speeches. Most are not nationwide organizations, leaving them unable to compete with the NDP all the way to the borders and down to the village level. Parties lack internal democracy, and so do not gain followers for their shining democratic example. The small size and often reform-focused platform of opposition parties results in little ability to relate to constituents, as citizens are more concerned about improvements to their daily lives than changes to electoral laws or the advancement of human rights (King 2009, 96).

Despite the weaknesses of the reform-minded opposition parties, President

Mubarak still responds to the calls for reform with his customary intimidation of opposition figures and declarations of his commitment to the rule of law. Politicians such as Ayman Nour and countless Muslim Brotherhood candidates have been jailed on accusations of impropriety in the handling of political business, and reformers are regularly arrested for alleged defamatory language or harming the nation's interest by criticizing the regime. One of Egypt's most notable reform personalities is Saad Eddin Ibrahim, who lives in exile in Qatar due to outstanding arrest warrants for him in Egypt based solely on his reform activities. Mubarak deflects criticism for the repression of these figures by citing the constitutional duty of the state to uphold laws, repeating the charges each detained or exiled person is accused of committing, and laying the responsibility for the treatment on the enforcing security organization, since such matters are not the concern of a president. In 1995, Mubarak commented on his handling of Islamist and other political challenges within Egyptian democracy: "Your media said that Americans were 'advising Egypt with their dialogue.' Never. And whoever says to me 'dialogue,' I tell him, 'No. Go have a dialogue in your own country. We know our people, and how to deal with them'" (King 2009, 105).

Mubarak recognizes the practical challenges that Egypt faces in allowing policy decisions to be carried out in the public sphere. Unlike other countries in the 2008 study by Kaye, Wehrey, Grant, and Stahl, Egypt has not experienced decreased levels of terrorism during more openly democratic periods. In Egypt, violence and liberalization occur in tandem, so Mubarak has little motivate to promote democracy at the expense of security. His authoritarian control is a mechanism of protection for the Egyptian society (Kaye et al 2008, 54).

The use of the security services for political action is Mubarak's instrument of choice for stifling reform pressures from domestic groups. The pervasive police presence maintains a climate of suspicion, and the abuse or intimidation of political prisoners prevents some citizens from seeking political change. The popular reform activist Saad Eddin Ibrahim is an outspoken critic of the Mubarak regime, and was arrested and prosecuted in 2000 for violations of the electoral code. He allegedly used foreign funding to pay for election monitors during the parliamentary polls, which is illegal under Egyptian law. Ibrahim was eventually acquitted during his third appeal in 2003, having been incarcerated for the length of his trial and appeals, and soon took a position lecturing in the United States. He eventually went into self-imposed exile in Qatar, and has since been convicted in absentia of "defaming Egypt", making his return to his home country unlikely. The willingness of the Mubarak government to arrest and detain well-known reform figures and use security threats to marginalize them before the domestic audience shows the dedication of the authoritarian system to silencing calls for change. The security services also design media campaigns to divide opposition leaders and impede group progress (Ottaway & Choucair-Vizoso 2008, 35). The reach of the police and intelligence organizations is extensive enough to repress most citizens if necessary, and as long as the repressive apparatus is perceived as capable by the bulk of Egyptian citizens, the regime will be able to count on public acquiescence to virtually any political action (Pratt 2007, 11).

International human rights and reform organizations criticize the use of the security services to repress society in the interest of quelling violence and maintaining stability. In 1993, Human Rights Watch, an international group that reports on human

rights violations, predicted that Mubarak's heavy-handed approach to halting the violence and civil unrest occurring in Egypt at the time would ultimately fail to bring order to the country. Stating that "official efforts to restore the rule of law by systematically flouting it are bound to fail," the group must have miscalculated the degree of Mubarak's control and his motivation to realign the citizens with orderly standards of behavior (Kaye et al 2008, 32). Seventeen years later, the repressive apparatus remains and Mubarak is the head of a stable state.

## **Post-Mubarak Projections**

The scope of this study has been to explain how the person of Hosni Mubarak has shaped the institutional party and military forms of control that have allowed his authoritarian leadership to remain so durable during the Third Wave of democratization that toppled so many nondemocratic systems. It is wise, though, to also examine the durability of the structures Mubarak built as a framework for Egyptian governance after Mubarak's departure from politics. Is there a likely successor waiting in the wings who will be able to balance elite demands, international pressures, the constraints of poverty, and regional diplomatic challenges as effectively as President Mubarak has? If so, can the state structure Mubarak built be shaped by the new leader to accomplish his dominance, or will the new leader have to be shaped to the state?

As the architect of Egypt's current authoritarian regime and its leader for nearly three decades, Mubarak seems a timeless character. He has enjoyed a lifetime of privilege and power, but as he nears his eighty-second birthday in May 2010 observers of Egyptian politics must address who (or what) will come after Mubarak in the governance of the regional heavyweight. Mubarak has a number of health problems common for his age and has survived six assassination attempts (including one by the younger brother of Sadat's killer), but has remained securely at the helm of the state leadership, deflecting all physical and political challenges to his dominance. The successor to such a leader will need to be a hardy man. The institutions of military, political, economic, and social control are in place and functioning, but Egypt's next president will have to prove his proficiency in managing those levers of power to maintain his own dominance.

## **Institutional Bridges to Next-Generation Authoritarianism**

The contention of some scholars that the institutional bureaucracy in Egypt is so strong that it will likely be somewhat independent of whatever leader comes to power next is in conflict with the operating mechanics of the bureaucracy as built by Mubarak. The state structure has not been required to exercise initiative, so independent decision-making and policy design are not within the capacity of the Egyptian bureaucracy. Just as Mubarak offers constant detailed guidance for the implementation of policy, a central leader will be necessary to ensure unity of purpose between the large organs of the authoritarian system: the National Democratic Party, the military, and the security and intelligence services. Without a clear designation of a preferred successor by Mubarak, the potential for chaos exists, as the leaders of each of the large organs may face uncertainty regarding for whose succession they should exercise their “kingmaker” role. The shift of power from Mubarak to his successor will need to be seamless to prevent destabilizing claim staking at all levels of the bureaucracy during the transition.

The role of the institutions that Mubarak built will be key in allowing the stable functioning of the government of Egypt during the new leader’s regime formation period, though each bloc will still require overarching direction from the new leader. Most important will be the leadership of the National Democratic Party, as the party is the structure through which the patronage system is implemented, and thus is the engine that keeps the government functionaries functioning. In addition to disbursement of loyalty-inducing benefits, the NDP structure will also be able to hold the processes and procedures of government steady for the initial transition period, which the party will be happy to do since the likely successor will have come from its ranks. Finally, in order to



protect the new leader's dominance and the party's legitimacy as the ruling entity, the NDP structure, with the assistance of the security forces' intimidation schemes, will be responsible for carrying out the first round of elections after Mubarak's tenure using his traditional toolkit of polling irregularities for NDP gain.

The role of the military will also be important, as it will enforce order during any civil unrest seeking social change during the transition. By keeping the streets quiet and maintaining the productivity of the largely military-controlled economy (especially in the production of the subsidized food staples that so many Egyptian poor depend on), the armed forces will be able to minimize widespread public discontent.

The final effect of the institutional structures in Egypt during transition from Mubarak to another leader will be the opportunity the structures will provide for the co-optation of new actors. If, after playing the losing game of reform for thirty years, an actor wants to join forces with the ruling party and attempt to make a difference from within, the regime is very likely to welcome him into the NDP fold. The willingness to absorb former challengers springs from the recognition that attractive patronage benefits and organizational inertia on projects other than the President's objectives will deactivate the reformer-turned-NDP member, thus neutralizing another internal pressure for reform. Serving as a buffer for criticism is the main way the institutions built by Mubarak will support the new leader as a bridge to his own form of dominance. His authoritarian style may not replicate Mubarak's, but the consistency of control offered by the institutional bridge will allow him to prevent challenges to his rule while he consolidates state power for himself.

In addition to creating the structures of power, Mubarak uses a distinct set of

authoritarian techniques that his successor will likely have to learn to build a regime as durable as Mubarak's. First, the declaration of a viewpoint in contradiction to a policy direction gives Mubarak political cover for the negative effects of policy actions or inaction. When implementing privatization measures that improved the economic function of the state, but increased poverty for the masses, Mubarak's speeches about his commitment to the wellbeing of the workers were purely to placate the lower classes. There was no fiscal way to prevent the increased poverty while opening the economy, but the speeches were seen as evidence that the difficulty must be either coming from another source or was beyond the president's control, for his support for the working class was sure.

Second, Mubarak's ability to predict the outcomes of policy changes and then rework the policy to ensure it presented no threat to his dominance was robust. During the 2003-2004 push for democratization in the Middle East by the United States, Egyptian authoritarianism was roundly criticized by pundits and reform groups inside Egypt began to apply new boldness to their calls for change as their cause was aligned with the U.S. effort. President Mubarak announced in early 2005 that he would seek an amendment to the Egyptian constitution to allow competitive presidential elections for the first time. Previously, the president had been nominated by the NDP-dominated People's Assembly then approved by the citizens in a yes-no referendum. Mubarak had been president for 24 years when he first competed for his job. The move was hailed internationally as a major opening of the political process in Egypt, and following Mubarak's resounding victory, was touted by the NDP as proving that he had been the best president for Egypt all along. The legal particulars of the amendment, however,

show that Mubarak had no intention of sharing or shifting power as a result of the 2005 changes to the constitution. By severely limiting the number of parties that could present candidates and carrying out election irregularities as always, the regime ensured that the new presidential election system did not threaten Mubarak's position at the top (King 2009, 108). After the conduct of the 2005 elections, further amendments in 2007 "opened" the presidential race to more candidates (within the margin of continued NDP control), while simultaneously enshrining Emergency Law concepts into the constitution that will allow the current state structure to deal with future challenges in a legal but opaque way.

The dynamic nature of Mubarak's authoritarianism is often lauded as openness to change, however the incremental nature of the numerous reforms has painted a quite static picture on the macro scale. In nearly three decades, the regime has made hundreds of changes to laws and processes in the name of political liberalization, however the landscape of Egyptian politics is still just as unfriendly to challengers as in 1981. The practice of making small steps in sequence rather than a large package of changes at once allows the regime to manage public expectations of how much change they will be able to see or feel from each step. More importantly, it also gives the regime time between each step to monitor their own level of dominance and reduce any openings for challenge to its power that a previous step created before instituting another. Façade reform after façade reform can be implemented by the authoritarian system as long as no genuine shifts in control of the state are likely to take place.

Ayubi spoke of each Egyptian president having a revolution within the 1952 revolution that served as his legacy. For Nasser, the nationalization of the Suez Canal

steered the character of Egypt through his tenure, and Sadat's participation in the Camp David negotiations changed the face of the entire Middle East by bringing the first peace between Israel and an Arab country (Owen & Tripp 1989, 14). What will Mubarak's revolution be? Is it possible that his brand of authoritarian control, the nondemocratic "democracy," is his legacy? The many Egypt analysts who assess that Mubarak is grooming his younger son, Gamal, to take over the presidency seem to focus on his meteoric rise to prominence in the National Democratic Party as evidence that he is the most likely successor to Mubarak. If the elder Mubarak intends to add the institution of hereditary rule to the list of ways he ignores democratic tradition, this may very well be the case. The transition of power from father to son would encounter as many logistical challenges as any other transition, and the final section of this study identifies the major things Gamal has done and has yet to do to succeed his father and maintain the durability of Egypt's authoritarian regime.

### **Gamal Mubarak's Civilian Challenge**

Gamal Mubarak has a hefty task list to accomplish if he is to take over the reins of power of the largest Arab state from his father. Convincing internal and external parties of his fitness to rule will require a demonstrated ability to continue the benefit scheme and policy predictability that the elder Mubarak used to gain global backing. Gamal's strength of leadership has been shown in his speedy ascent to one of the highest positions in the NDP structure, the head of Policies Secretariat, and the move may also show a new focus by the NDP on technocratic progress, which Gamal would be well-suited to lead (Brownlee 2007, 147). As a simple cog in the party machine, Gamal began to make

himself known as a political force in 1999 when he formed the Future Party movement of young technocrats from NDP ranks, in direct challenge to the NDP. Claiming a desire to advance the country, the Future Party forced accommodation of their objectives by the mainstream NDP leadership in order to prevent a full split in the dominant party. Interestingly, the traditional rift between the Old Guard and the New Guard in the party was actually repaired a great deal by the strength of Gamal's challenge and the willingness by the offshoot group to maintain unity with the main party once its demands were met (Brownlee 2007, 133). That Gamal knew precisely what concessions to ask for and on what scale his demands would be achievable may have shown some of the Old Guard that his political savvy was greater than they had assessed, and his preference to avoid public sparring that could damage the party likely won him further support. The lack of a reaction to the Future Party challenge by the military shows that the whole situation proceeded with the blessing of the President, which likely also inspired some of the conciliation of the Old Guard. The possibility remains that Hosni Mubarak's blessing is strong enough to deliver the presidency to his chosen successor after his departure from politics, especially if that departure is planned.

Gamal has shown the Old Guard that his political ascent is not a threat to their financial benefit as supporters of the Mubarak leadership. By channeling his development efforts through the Future Foundation and the Future Generation Foundation, both non-profits, Gamal showed the NDP elite that he could meet his goals without costing the government, the NDP, or its members financially. His selection to the NDP policies secretariat in 2000 is evidence that his prestige was bolstered through his initiation of the Future Party challenge, and his support from the Old Guard has grown as he has taken on

and solved some of the party's most difficult situations (Brownlee 2007, 134).

The phenomenon of junior NDP members who were not selected for candidacy on the NDP party list running in parliamentary elections as independents and then rejoining the party after unseating the official NDP candidate was a major point of contention between the senior members and their younger challengers. The practice was a threat to the cohesion of the party, and like his father, Gamal recognized the need to prevent the formation of factions within the ruling elite. Gamal designed a party caucus system to select the official candidates for the NDP list, and also like his father, held secret negotiations with the higher elites to determine the winners of the caucus polls ahead of time. Further, any NDP members who ran for parliament seats without official NDP backing were automatically expelled from the party, effectively marginalizing themselves in Egyptian politics for the rest of their lives (Brownlee 2007, 146). This bold move by Gamal must have curried favor with the Old Guard, as the change created a legal basis to uphold what had previously been only customary dominance by the senior party leaders.

Gamal's international reputation is also positive, with heads of state regularly willing to meet with him during his travels outside Egypt. His ability to maintain solid relationships with countries that benefit Egypt, such as the United States, will help him consolidate his power without drawing serious reform pressures from foreign sources or jeopardizing the financial assistance international cooperation brings.

The novelty of an Egyptian president without a military background causes some scholars to doubt whether Gamal can succeed his father. It is true that the military elite serve as guarantors of the power of the presidency, and that some of that elite may prefer another military leader become head of state. What is most likely, though, is that the

military elite will support whichever potential president is best able to protect their privileged position in Egyptian society. According to Linz, the nature of Egyptian politics is beneficial to the military enclave in that it incorporates limited political pluralism that is not responsible to the public; it has no guiding ideologies, only mentalities about the way the country should be run; it allows little political mobilization by the citizens; and it includes few checks on the exercise of power by the leadership (Brooker 2000, 23-26). In a country where the head of that beneficial system is also a military man, the military elite can operate without worry about the durability of their privilege. The military leader also prevents wider claim staking by the military because the leaders of the armed forces can assume that the leader is committed to their interests by virtue of his common service (Cook 2007, 74).

The challenge for Gamal in gaining the support of the military will be in assuring them of his intention to continue the tangible benefits of their loyalty, in terms of patronage and nepotism, and in meeting as many of their needs as possible to prevent an increase in military claim staking that would weaken the new president. First, the simplest method by which Gamal could strengthen military support for his leadership is not to change things in the initial stages of his presidency. By maintaining status quo, Gamal can build progressively stronger ties to the military elite until he is able to influence them without drawing opposition; to attempt change too early is likely to motivate the military leaders to bend him to their will, which could end disastrously for a new president (Cook 2007, 139). Second, maintaining the current relationship between the government and the military will also prevent problems that Gamal may not be able to face at the beginning of his tenure. For example, the People's Assembly has the legal

authority to oversee defense allocations and procurement plans, but has not once exercised that right. Defense Minister Tantawi presents the Egyptian military budget, allocation scheme, and procurement plan to the Assembly annually, but no one, not even opposition members, questions the Minister on the objectives or expenditures laid out in the session (Cook 2007, 74). The silence by the parliamentarians, especially opposition members, shows the pervasive power held by the elder Mubarak that Gamal would have to replicate credibly among the Assembly in order to prevent a potentially embarrassing incident during a future presentation by Tantawi that would create major anti-Gamal backlash among the military elite.

Reform-oriented publications claim that the Egyptian people need to be convinced of Gamal's suitability to rule before he can succeed his father, but the idea of a popular mandate being necessary flies in the face of Egypt as an authoritarian state in the first place. If Gamal seeks public backing, he will need to shift focus from himself as "Gamal the President's Son" to that of "Gamal the Competent Leader." While both titles may be true, only the latter will help citizens judge his fitness to lead based on his merits, and possibly remove their objection to his accession which is often solely based on an opposition to hereditary power, not on a negative opinion of how Gamal is likely to govern. The "competitive" nature of the presidential elections now may assist in the socialization of Gamal as a future leader, while the actual terms of entry for the presidential race remain too strict for the entry of most candidates (Brownlee 2007, 150). The best-case scenario for Gamal would be for a sense of inevitability of his succession to descend on the Egyptian electorate so that he genuinely wins the presidency as more citizens attempt to join the ranks of those who will benefit from NDP dominance under



Mubarak dynastic rule.

It seems most likely that Gamal will not distance himself appreciably from the position of Mubarak's son, because in reality the will of the people has little influence in the selection and maintenance of an Egyptian president. Playing up his attachment to Hosni Mubarak and the continuity of NDP dominance is likely to win Gamal more effective support from the elite who actually determine how durable a presidency can be. Gamal is not likely to choose a populist platform (which he is too rich to really pull off anyway) over the nearly guaranteed benefit of heading a strong and complex authoritarian structure that taking over his father's regime would allow.

## Conclusions

This study has laid out the manner in which President Hosni Mubarak took over an authoritarian system and ossified it within a bureaucratic structure to prevent a transition to democracy. The important role Mubarak has played in the Egyptian structure began even before his presidency, as he positioned himself for leadership at every level, rising quickly through the ranks of the Egyptian Air Force and to the top levels of the National Democratic Party. His strong action during his regime formation period, including legalizing the dominance of the NDP, limiting the role of political Islam, and protecting the support of the military enclave, allowed him to face challenges to his power successfully and generally ignore internal and external calls for reform.

Periodic and incremental legislative steps that mimic political liberalization have prevented major public demands for change and have quieted international pressures for reform. Various policies, mostly economic, that impede the development of Egypt's poorest areas and sustain staggering poverty for a majority of citizens are maintained by the Mubarak machine, but are occasionally and temporarily overcome with financially lucrative foreign policy decisions. The consistency with which Mubarak has found opportunities to compensate for some negative aspects of his authoritarian rule before widespread discontent could seriously challenge his dominance is difficult to explain in terms of luck or favorable timing; it is likely that such opportunities for diversionary policy are frequently present and that Mubarak is simply more astute than other leaders at taking advantage of the opportunities for personal political gain.

Following the proof of the integral piece Mubarak has provided to the management of the authoritarian system in Egypt, the research briefly addressed the

projections for Egyptian authoritarianism after Mubarak's departure from office, especially the prospects for the succession of presidential son Gamal Mubarak. Covering both the institutional bridges that will sustain state function while a new leader consolidates his control as well as the tasks that Gamal will need to accomplish among the various groups of elites in order to take power without weakening the structure as a whole, the second part does not question that an authoritarian regime will survive in Egypt in some form. The lack of a democratic tradition makes the continuity of authoritarian control in the country a virtual certainty.

An important consideration for any study on the prospects for democratization in a country that survived the Third Wave unscathed is whether a transition out of authoritarian control is even beneficial for the country or the international system. Despite the periodic calls for increased political openness in Egypt by the major Western powers, it is not certain that there is true international support for transition. Democracy is an inherently uncertain form of governance, and the interest of the West in stability in the second- and third-tier states is paramount. Serious pressure by the major states concerning democratization is usually supported by consistent statements to the authoritarian state on the need for liberalization. It is possible that the United States, in particular, is only nominally interested in the reduction of Egyptian authoritarian control.

Egypt's main utility to the U.S. is as a partner in peace with Israel. Israel's government changes frequently due to its democratic process, and the U.S. may not have confidence that the Egypt-Israel peace treaty would have survived more than 30 years if Egyptian leaders of various political streams had rotated as often since 1979. Each leader would have been preoccupied with consolidating his own temporary power, and may not

have been able to respond to the various international challenges that Mubarak's authoritarian control withstood without violence. The Israeli invasion of Lebanon, the First Intifada, the Second Intifada, and the violence and blockade of Gaza following the 2006 democratic victory by the militant group HAMAS all brought great pressure on the Egyptian government to abrogate the peace treaty to protest Israeli actions. A weaker leader than Mubarak may have been swayed to cancel the treaty, leading to a massive increase in regional instability and a financially debilitating loss of the \$2.3 billion in U.S. aid annually that forms the main incentive for maintaining the treaty.

Mubarak came to power as the head of the "October Generation," and built a structure for peace from his background of war (Cook 2007, 74). The next president will likely be a member of the "Camp David Generation;" he will have no war hero status to claim popularity from, and his objective will not be ensuring stability in the country but creating development from a faulty economic structure. It will be a difficult job, as leading a country always is, but as the successor of Mubarak, the new president will benefit from the bureaucratic structure of control that Mubarak built. Implementing the necessary economic changes to bring advancement to the Egyptian society at large will be challenging, but possible, due to the hands-on control of Hosni Mubarak since 1981.

## References

- Baker, Randall, ed. 2002. *Transitions from Authoritarianism: The Role of the Bureaucracy*. Westport, CT: Praeger Publishers.
- Brooker, Paul. 2000. *Non-Democratic Regimes: Theory, Government & Politics*. New York: St. Martin's Press.
- Brownlee, Jason. 2007. *Authoritarianism in an Age of Democratization*. New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Chehabi, H.E. and Juan J. Linz. 1998. *Sultanistic Regimes*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Cook, Steven A. 2007. *Ruling but Not Governing: The Military And Political Development In Egypt, Algeria, And Turkey*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Cowell, Alan. "Egypt Faces an Economic Squeeze," *The New York Times*, June 26, 1989.
- Dunn, Michael Collins. "Egypt's Culture Wars Lead to Crackdown on Labor Party," *The Estimate*, June 2, 2000.
- Geddes, Barbara. 2003. *Paradigm and Sand Castles: Theory Building and Research Design in Comparative Politics*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press.
- Hidalgo, Jose. 1994. "Defense Reinvestment in Egypt -- a Proposal: The Time is Now," *DISAM Journal* 16, no. 4: 20-25.
- Huntington, Samuel. 1991. *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*. Norman: University of Oklahoma Press.

- Ibrahim, Muhammad. 2003. "Libya: The Sons Also Rise." *Foreign Policy* 139: 37-39.
- Jamal, Amaney A. 2007. *Barriers to Democracy: The Other Side of Social Capital in Palestine and the Arab World*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.
- Kaye, Dalia Dassa, Frederic Wehrey, Audra K. Grant; and Dale Stahl. 2008. *More Freedom, Less Terror?: Liberalization and Political Violence in the Arab World*. Arlington, VA: RAND Corporation.
- King, Stephen J. 2009. *The New Authoritarianism in the Middle East and North Africa*. Bloomington, IN: Indiana University Press.
- Ottaway, Marina. 2003. *Democracy Challenged: The Rise of Semi-Authoritarianism*. Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.
- Ottaway, Marina, and Choucair-Vizoso, Julia, eds. 2008. *Beyond the Facade: Political Reform in the Arab World*. Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.
- Owen, Roger, and Charles Tripp, eds. 1989. *Egypt under Mubarak*. New York: Routledge.
- Pratt, Nicola. 2007. *Democracy and Authoritarianism in the Arab World*. Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers.
- Storm, Lise. 2009. "The Persistence of Authoritarianism as a Source of Radicalization in North Africa." *International Affairs* 85, no. 5: 997-1013.

## **Appendices**

## **Appendix A: Confirmation of Theory in Similar Cases – Syria, Iran, and Libya**

### **Syria**

Syria under Hafez al-Asad experienced timid steps toward democratization in the 1970s, and accomplished privatization through crony capitalism much in the same way Egypt did in the 1980s. Syria similarly allowed limited pluralism in political processes with a single party maintaining institutional control. The political landscape that Bashar al-Asad took over on his father's death in 2000 was subject to his influence, though (like his father) he did not exercise unilateral control of the system. Bashar, an ophthalmologist, was the second son of Hafez, and began being groomed for the presidency only after his politician brother, Basil, was killed in a car accident in 1994. In the six short years of preparation for a job he had not originally been destined to fill, Bashar had to undertake as much of the personal and professional development as possible that he would need to effectively steer Syria into the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Like Egypt, a state of emergency remained during his preparation and regime formation periods, and extensive use of the security apparatus ensured order while he consolidated power. International stressors hampered his ability to institute unquestioned dominance, though, as the assassination of Rafiq Hariri (and international condemnation of alleged Syrian government involvement) forced Asad into a very weak position and spurred the withdrawal of Syrian forces from their lengthy occupation of Lebanon (King 2009, 127). The desire to regain power on the international stage has caused Syria to seek strong relations with Iran, to the detriment of its relations with its Arab neighbors and the West.



The recent example of hereditary succession in Syria draws frequent and vehement criticism from the Egyptian public, who feel the practice is the result of inherently *unfree* politics. It is possible that the populace fears that the accession of Gamal Mubarak would leave Egypt weak enough to need external support, compromising its regional prominence and internal freedom of action.

The short duration of Asad's self-preparation may not signal a lower quality of the training. Unlike President Mubarak, Bashar had the benefit of a father-son relationship with his predecessor, and several legislative challenges to his succession and rule were eliminated by his father prior to Bashar taking office. Hafez al-Asad also signaled his intent for Bashar's succession early and often, and took measures to ensure the support of his inner circle for his son. Gamal Mubarak may benefit from a similar "insider" method of learning statecraft, but will also need more vocal support from his father to bridge the generational gap between himself and the highest supporters of the current Egyptian regime.

Key question for Syria in light of the framework of this research: *Can the self-preparation period of an incoming authoritarian be compressed in time if it is paired with strong efforts to build the dominance of the new leader by the incumbent?*

## **Iran**

The current leaders of the authoritarian system in Iran began preparing their dominance even before the revolution, so it is interesting to examine how much self-preparation for control of the religious establishment translated to effective control of the

state after the Islamic Revolution of 1979. Specifically looking at the current Supreme Leader, Ali Khamenei, the interplay between politics and the clergy is tight and mutually reinforcing. Khamenei used his mid-grade religious credentials to gain entry to the political scene in Iran, and then used his pliability as president to gain the favor of former Supreme Leader Khomeini. Simultaneously limiting true reform in Iran and building strong ties in the Revolutionary Guard showed Khomeini his intent to be a strong leader committed to revolutionary principles, who then allowed Khamenei to be his successor. By alternating influence between two of the heaviest levers of Iranian state power, the armed forces and the clerical establishment, Khamenei built his reputation among leaders and the people, and benefitted from the legislative action of Khomeini in consolidating and insulating the power, position, and person of the Supreme Leader prior to Khamenei's accession (Brownlee 2007, 158-162).

This path to prominence mirrors that of Bashar al-Asad's self-preparation in that his own efforts to increase his influence are augmented by the incumbent. Because President Mubarak does not publicly express support for Gamal's succession, the legislative actions he has taken to limit the access of others to the political process cannot be certainly attributed to a desire to help Gamal. The measures definitely support the advancement of the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP), in which Gamal is a powerful figure, so the elder Mubarak may feel that supporting the party and allowing Gamal to strive for his own gains within the NDP will provide Gamal more genuine support from the party and maintain the veneer of democratic governance he claims to oversee.

Key question for Iran in light of the framework of this research: *Can self-preparation for leadership positions other than national political leadership accomplish the same outcome of allowing the authoritarian leader to make effective use of all the instruments of state power to protect his dominance?*

## **Libya**

Libya shares a post-revolutionary frame of reference with Iran, and the continued rule of Muammar Qadhafi since the 1969 overthrow of the monarchy is an interesting case of authoritarian durability. The governing structure of Libya differs from most Syria, Iran, and Egypt in that it has no political parties, but employs a multi-layered system of councils to address issues at the local, governorate, and national levels. Qadhafi's system disallows trade unions or strikes by any groups, and allows the formation of non-governmental organizations only on state-approved topics with state licensure. This contrasts with the dynamic but immobile state of play in Egyptian politics, where 19,000 civil society groups and various parties attempt political influence but are unable to challenge the regime. Reasons for this difference may lie in the small population of Libya (6.2 million compared to Egypt's 81.5 million), the lack of legal or traditional precedents for democratic competition, and the adoption of foreign policies by Qadhafi that are the inverse of Egypt's since the end of the monarchy. Libya's "third way" of the 1970s that eschewed dominance by either the Soviet Union or the United States eventually brought international isolation and economic hardship, while Egypt's method of gaining as much benefit as possible by maintaining cordial ties with as many states as possible helped to keep Egypt relevant in the 20<sup>th</sup> century and prevent major humanitarian crises during the

difficult transition toward a capitalist economy (Ibrahim 2003, 37-38).

Qadhafi took power in Libya at only 27 years old, and has sufficient power within his system to take major policy actions (such as relinquishing his nuclear program in 2003 in order to spur rapprochement with the West) that are of benefit to himself and his family. The political space in which his sons may be conducting self-preparation in hopes of their eventual succession is not large, due to the relatively limited combat activity of the Libyan armed forces since 1969 and the small influence of the Libyan system of governing councils on national policy. The traditional avenues to power that a future Egyptian leader may traverse on his way to the presidency are not certain pathways to influence in Libya. Two of Qadhafi's sons are seen as potential successors to their father, who at only 67 years old is not likely to leave power of his own accord anytime soon. Muatassim is Libya's National Security Advisor and maintains good relations with the group of revolutionary officers still in power. While certainly privy to the state actions that guarantee his father's dominance, it is not known if Muatassim has the support of his father for the eventual leadership of the state. The assessment that the elder Qadhafi does not favor Muatassim may come from the repeated attempts to give his brother Saif al-Islam an official position within the government, which Saif has then repeatedly refused. Saif al-Islam is a businessman and self-described reformer with no military ties and little interest in politics beyond influencing the country toward political openness and market-based economic principles (Storm 2009, 1002).

The character of Gamal Mubarak may provide a template for Saif al-Islam Qadhafi to eventually tailor for his own move for control over a new Libyan regime. In the same way that Gamal used his business ties to build support for his accession, Saif

could use the drive for reform to gain popularity and then power; it is unknown if he will remain true to his democratization goals after assuming the presidency. What is certain is that he is accomplishing the self-preparation needed to succeed his father, and could have a durable period of control if the elder Qadhafi takes some legislative action to protect his son prior to leaving office. A protracted rule by Muammar Qadhafi (nearly 20 years younger than his head-of-state counterparts), however, could weaken Saif's chances – and desire – for succession.

Key question for Libya in light of the framework of this research: *Can self-preparation take the shape of reform advocacy in order to relieve domestic calls for political progressiveness while structuring continuity of the status quo through support activity by the incumbent?*

## **Appendix B: Confirmation of Theory in Dissimilar Cases – Romania and Greece**

### **Romania**

Despite the general perception that Nicolae Ceausescu exercised firm control of Romanian society during his 15-year rule, his execution in 1989 shows that some element of state control must have been missing in order for him to be overthrown. Ceausescu had been involved in political activity since 1965, when the unexpected death of the previous leader left a triumvirate of state bureaucrats in charge of the country. Ceausescu carried out intense self-preparation during the nine years leading up to his official presidency, but the narrow focus of his political preparation excluded the co-optation of the armed forces. Using only his longevity in the Romanian Communist Party, Ceausescu appropriated party powers for himself, used selective policy enforcement to remove political challengers, and placed his family members in leadership positions atop each of the bodies of political influence in Romania. Despite his assumption of the title of Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces after becoming president in 1974, he had not built his dominance into the military structure prior to his accession, and did not place relatives in the highest military positions. Without personal control of the military, the president could not effectively use the “legal use of force” instrument of state power to meet his authoritarian objectives. This oversight cost Ceausescu when his November 1989 order to the Defense Minister to fire on pro-democracy protestors in the capital was rebuffed, and the execution of that minister caused the wholesale mutiny of the armed forces that eventually ousted the authoritarian regime.

President Mubarak’s self-preparation was more effective than Ceausescu’s in that

he initially built relationships in the military arm of the government but then expanded his powerbase (through patronage even more than nepotism) to the political, economic, and international diplomacy arenas. Gamal Mubarak will need to strengthen his role in the defense and diplomacy realms if he is to succeed his father and continue the rule of the current authoritarian system.

Key questions concerning the former regime in Romania in light of the framework of this research: *Presuming that an authoritarian leader intends to expand his dominance to cover all instruments of state power, does the order in which he assumes control of each lever affect the durability of his regime? Given a leader's finite amount of influence, does applying less intense, but simultaneous, effort across the instruments of power yield more effective control of all of them than a sequential power acquisition process would?*

### **Greece**

The military coup in Greece in 1967 followed two years of chaotic power struggles and popular protest against the various contenders. The inability of the military leaders to build institutional support for their regime during this tumultuous period severely limited their ability to exercise control of and make use of the instruments of state power. For lack of institutions to influence before accession, the military leaders were forced to use repressive measures *after* taking power to thwart challenges to their dominance. The focus of the military on maintaining its own dominance led to neglect of the political process in Greece as a whole, and military leaders such as General Ioannides were only able to use military activity to show their suitability for rule. The danger in

relying on military action as a legitimating tool is that the salience of the military (and thus the leaders' legitimacy) is dependent on the presence of military conflict or public perception of an existential threat. The Greek generals, led by Ioannides, overestimated their own freedom of action (and military capabilities) when they undertook military action to overthrow the government of Cyprus in 1974. The strong Turkish response to the operation resulted in the partition of the island and nearly brought Greece and Turkey into open conflict, a prospect so overwhelmingly unpopular among Greek citizens that many senior officers withdrew their support for the ruling military faction. Only because no preparation had been done by the military leaders to ensure control of the nonviolent levers of power did the withdrawal of support for the junta also signal the dissolution of the regime. No central figure with broad appeal had cultivated a powerbase that would have allowed continued dominance of military figures after the missteps of the 1974 Cyprus fiasco.

Because President Mubarak had done extensive political, economic, and international diplomatic self-preparation before Sadat's assassination, he was able to swiftly reinstitute the Emergency Law to prevent claims-staking or challenges to his succession at all levels. His dominance was not solely guaranteed by his military's salience, so even during his regime formation period he was not compelled to react militarily to international events, such as the 1982 Israeli invasion of Lebanon, in order to protect his rule.

Key questions concerning the former regime in Greece in light of the framework of this research: *To what degree do general instability and lack of state institutions in a country*



*constrain a potential authoritarian leader's capacity for self-preparation for control of the various instruments of state power? What is the minimum level of non-military power structuring necessary to allow military authoritarian leaders freedom of action to build regime prestige through military operations?*