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The Role of Political Islam in Egyptian Democratic Experience

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Abstract

The aim of the study was to understand the role of political Islamists in Egyptian democratic experience by the two research questions. Islamists' Ideological self-contradiction and conflicting ideals with democracy turned the democratic transition into failure in Egypt. They have accepted election to attain the power but not the democratic values and culture as a whole. Military, the most significant internal actor, with their authoritarian state apparatus, also played an imperative role to make the political transition unsuccessful. In this qualitative study, documents are analyzed in the case of Egyptian political change.

Keywords: Political Islam, Islamists, Political Transition, Democratic Transition, Egyptian politics

1. Introduction

Political Islam has turned into the focal point of international and different national politics after the 9/11 incident in America. In the Arab spring events, it has acquired the momentum. Both the democratization in the Muslim world and the role of political Islam has moved forward in this process. The Arab Spring which in effect began with the overthrowing of the authoritarian regimes in Tunisia and Egypt in the early months of 2011, has forced the Arab states to countenance many challenges even before democratic regimes have replaced the old authoritarian ones (Mustafa & Yousef, 2013). There are lots of researches and writings on political Islam and democracy, especially after the Arab Spring in political or social science. However, as the political Islamists played an important role in the democratic transition of Tunisia and Egypt, it has an appeal to study in different approaches. The issue deserves study, which should be more organized and specific. Mustafa & Yousef (2013) have written an article, but it was written with the time frame before the downfall of Morsi. Therefore, his writing could not focus on the causes of Morsi's failure or failure of democratic transition. Browne-Michael (2017) has done a study for partial fulfillment of his honors degree titled, "Political Islam and Democracy." In his study, he has taken three countries- Iran, Tunisia, and Egypt as case study to draw conclusions from comparative analysis on each case study, on whether it is possible to have democracy in a state where Islamic ideologies are a major

factor. Iran shows adversity to western democratic bodies, which falls in line with the idea that Islam and democracy are odds. Like turkey, Egypt is a secular republic with the majority of its citizens being from Sunni Islamic sect. It has recently shown an inclination to be the most democratic nation out of these three countries. He has shortcomings to show the contradictory role of Islamists, military, seculars, and the international actors that is the most important factor, which will be shown in this study only in an in-depth analysis. Moreover, any consensus is yet to develop among the academicians and policy makers about the role of political Islamists in unsuccessful democratic transition in Egypt. This study is operated through an investigation, integration, and analysis of the available literature, secondary data, and information. It has identified the consistency and inconsistency between the theory and practice of the role of Islamists through a case study on Egyptian political transition. Mainly Mubarak to Morsi (2000 to 2013) regime will be studied to understand the transition result. The output of this study will have a theoretical perspective from which hypotheses can be drawn as well as it may help the national and international policy makers. These hypotheses can also be used to reexamine historical cases as well as to make predictions about the future. The paper is structured with theoretical and applied sides of the theoretical discussion. The inquiry of the study is based on two fundamental questions- 1. What was the role of political Islamists in the democratic transition of Egypt? 2. Is political Islam helpful for the democratic transition? This study will contribute to attaining a new perspective of knowledge about political Islam for academicians. Political parties, national and international policy makers also will be benefitted from the study.

2. Methodology

It is an output of qualitative study based on document analysis and single case study using secondary data. Research questions will be answered by a single-case study on the willingness of the Islamists for democratization before and after the ousting of Hosni Mubarak in 2011. The time frame of the study is from January 25, 2011, to June 30, 2013, when the protests were started against calling the fall of that regime and ended up in the rule of Mohamed Morsi. Case study is suitable here because it gives the opportunity to address the historical, political, sociological, and ideological sides of the topic as it focuses on institutions, identities, and ideology of the actors. Moreover, the case study provides the opportunity to test the implications from theories against observations and to use those results to add new insights to the existing theory. A case study is the ultimate method for exploring complex casualties and for retaining a holistic and meaningful interpretation of real-life events (Yin, 2009). Its strength is at first to provide a high level of conceptual validity. The limitation of the case study is the *small-n*, of which the consequence is that the study results cannot be generalized to all cases. In this study, I deliberately have chosen to conduct a single case study because the Egyptian case has both theoretical and political aspects. In Egypt, the military is highly institutionalized and deep-rooted in the regime. On the other hand, political Islamists are operating their activities for long to establish their ideology both in the state and in Egyptian society with great influence. Exploring this case can add relevant insights to the existing literature on the role of Islamists in democratic transition. The answer of the research questions is studied under some indicators. They are as follows- 1. Role of some specific political institutions of Egypt (President, Parliament, and Political parties, especially Islamists) 2. Role of military

3. Conceptual Frame Work

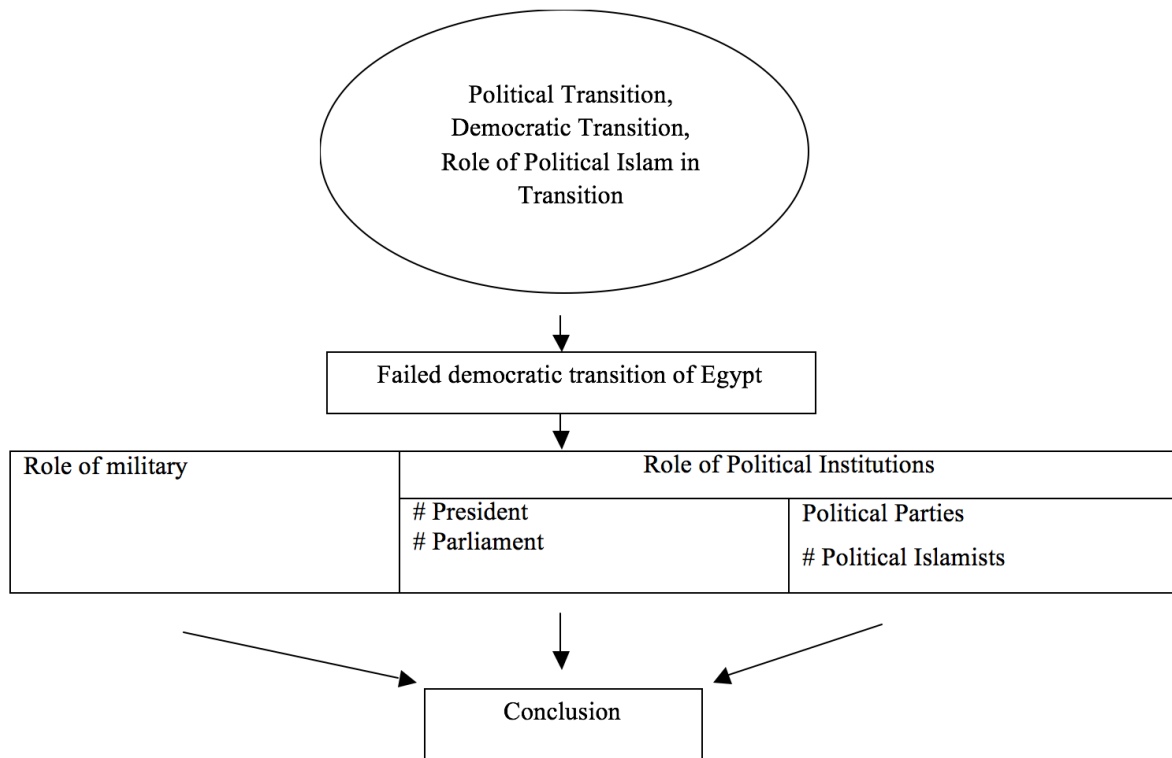


Fig-1: Conceptual Frame Work of the study

3.1 Political Transition

Generally, political transition means a radical change in the political system and culture of a state. In four of the six Arab countries where uprisings occurred, a political transition took place from an authoritarian regime into 'something else.' An authoritarian regime indicates to the capability of a regime to contain the state power together with relevant elites that are related to one another through a network of trust, interests, favours, and friendship having the ability to survive against their potential enemy. Actually, the security institutions often act as the protector of the authoritarian regime and form the key variable in explaining their stability (Droz-Vincent, 2011; Cook, 2007)

The transition into 'something else' may be the establishment of a political democracy, the re-establishment of a new form of authoritarian rule which means that following governments fail to institutionalize political power, or widespread violence, which gives way to a revolutionary regime (O'Donnell & Schmitter, 1986).

The transition period ends according to O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986) when politics is back to 'normality.' It means that there is a clear set of rules that will be obeyed to have access to government positions and procedures on decision-making. In short, political transition refers to the interval connecting the ending of the authoritarian regime and the installation of the other regime, being it a democratic, authoritarian, revolutionary or a hybrid one (O'Donnell & Schmitter, 1986; Stepan & Linz, 2013). In contrast to most political transformations in Latin America, Southern, and Eastern Europe, the political transformations in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) did not begin with cracks in the government and were not the elite and the top down driven rather these were grounded by popular uprisings. These uprisings were caused by the eruption of nonviolent mass protests over many days across different important cities and the control of protestors over public spaces, such as Tahrir Square in Cairo, Egypt and the Pearl Roundabout in Manama, Bahrain (Brownlee, Masoud & Reynolds, 2013). Moreover, most of the Arab countries do not have previous practice with democracy as most Latin

American, Southern, and Eastern European countries had. Mass-based political parties, labour unions, and independent press are almost non-existent, and furthermore, democracy in the MENA is often linked with colonial supremacy, rather than with self-determination (Bellin, 2004; Cook, 2007). Therefore, big or superpowers are still playing a significant role behind political transition in the Middle East or Muslim world.

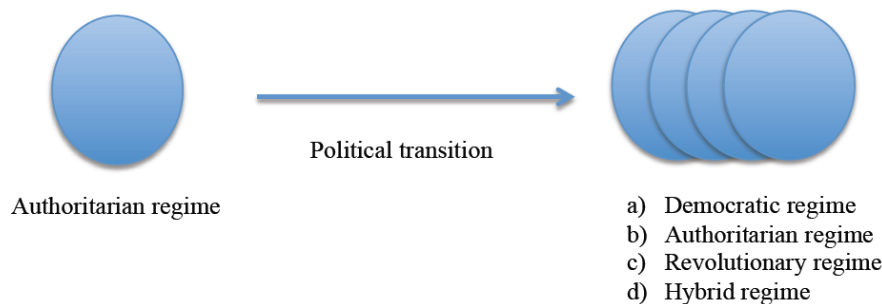


Fig-2: Schematic view of transition period

During the years, there have been different forms of militarized authoritarian regimes. Finer (1962; 1974) classifies those regimes based on their political structure and their constitutional role, and he differentiates five political structures on the basis of the degree to which the military controls major policies and the degree of secrecy. These are (1) direct open military rule, (2) direct quasi-civilianized rule, (3) indirect continuous rule, (4) indirect intermittent rule and, (5) dual rule.

3.2 Democratic Transition

Democratic transition is a combination of multifarious structural change of a state apparatus from an authoritarian or autocratic regime to a political government. In the modern age, it is considered a shift towards a democratic system. According to Fukuyama (2014) democratization passes in three stages: (1) initial mobilization to get rid of the old regime, (2) holding free elections, and (3) being able to deliver public services and public goods.

The Freedom House's democracy rankings categorize different states as- i. Pre-transition Stage ii. Transition Stage and iii. The Consolidation Stage considering 28 countries of east-central Europe in *Nations in Transit* 1999-2000 (McConnel & Becker, 2002).

i) The Pre-transition Stage:

This is a preparatory stage in which states prepared themselves for a Journey to democracy from authoritarian rule. The pre-transition stage deals on societal conditions under the old regime. The states try to determine what kind of changes need to take place.

ii) The Transition Stage

This stage can be characterized as a historical moment when the previous regime no more holds political power; when the military or the dictator is gone away from the government's regular function, government is placed under civilian control; when contested elections are held; and when political institutions are established (Linz & Stepan, 1996).

iii) The Consolidation Stage: This is the most difficult stage to consolidate a sustainable democracy. Several elements must be established if a state wants to claim itself as a consolidated democracy. State must be democratic attitudinally, behaviorally, and of course, constitutionally. The state functions must be accountable, transparent, representative, competitive, and accessible. The ruling regime must produce sufficient positive output to create legitimacy for the democratic process (Diamond, 1999).

The Freedom House lists some criteria for measuring democracy worldwide among the states every year. The survey that comprises both analytical reports and numerical ratings measures freedom according to two broad

categories: 1. Political rights, and 2. Civil liberties

Political rights ratings are based on an evaluation of three subcategories:

1. Electoral process
2. Political pluralism and participation and
3. The functioning of government.

Civil liberties ratings are based on an evaluation of four sub-categories:

- a. Freedom of expression and belief
- b. Associational and organizational rights
- c. The rule of law
- d. Personal autonomy and individual rights

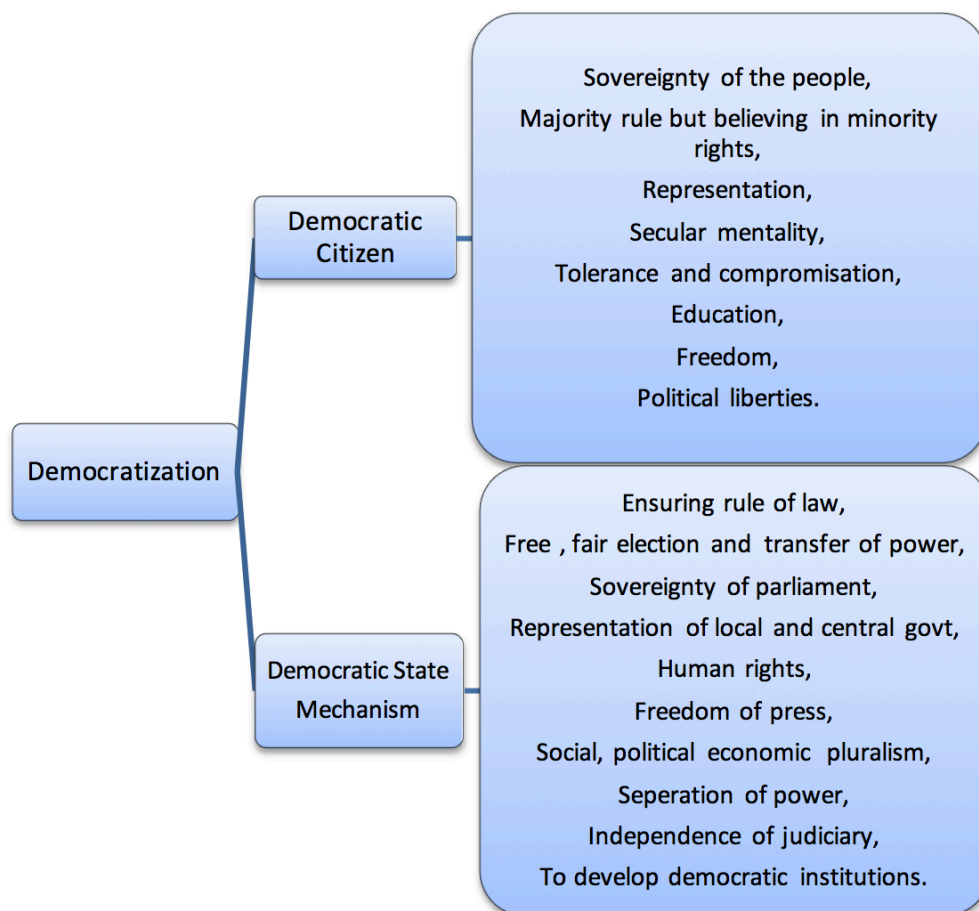


Fig-3: Mandatory factors for the success of the democratic system

3.3 Political Islam

Political Islam is an Islamic revival movement mainly in the Muslim world. Often it is distinguished by moral conservatism, literalism, and the attempt to implement Islamic values in all spheres of life. It is also known as Islamism. The different Islamist movements have been identified between two poles": at one end is a strategy of Islamisation of society through state power seized by revolution or invasion and on the other hand "reformist" or moderate "pole" Islamists work to re-Islamize society "from the bottom up" (Roy, 1994). The movements have arguably altered the Middle East after the abolition of Ottoman Caliphate.

Islamists may give emphasis to the implementation of *Sharia* (Islamic law) of pan-Islamic political unity, including an Islamic state;(Soage, Belén, 2009) and of the selective removal of non-Muslim, particularly Western military,

economic, political, social, or cultural influences in the Muslim world that they believe to be incompatible with Islam (Dale, 2007).

The main perception of political Islam is, Islam is the answer not only to spiritual impulses or religious needs but for social and political order, as well. Islamism, in this sense, not only defines and regulates the relation between man and God but also equally between man and man (and woman) and this includes the relation between the ruled and the ruler. The adherents also advocate that the ideal society is one in which the Holy Prophet started in Medina. Governance, according to Islamic law, the *Sharia* is a central principle to the Islamists. Their fundamental target is to establish Islam in state and society, not the democracy.

Prominent figures of modern Islamism include Hasan al-Banna, Sayyid Qutb, Abul Ala Maududi Taqiuddin un-Nabahni and Ruhollah Khomeini. Most of these promoters of political Islam emphasize on peaceful political processes, whereas Sayyid Qutb, in particular, called for armed revolution to change the authoritarian political system. His followers are generally called 'Islamic extremists' by the secularists.

4. Result:

There are some significant findings, which are different from previous studies. The self-contradictory role of MB and military are responsible for the unsuccessful political transition of Egypt.

4.1 Role of Political Islamists in Political Transition

Moderate and reformist Islamists who accept and work within the democratic process include parties like the Tunisian Ennahda Movement. Jamaat-e-Islami of Pakistan and Bangladesh claim them as socio-political and democratic parties, but they added political influence in different times indirectly encouraging military coup d'état in the past. The Islamist groups like Hezbollah in Lebanon and Hamas in Palestine participate in the democratic and political process as well as armed attacks, seeking to abolish the state of Israel.

Radical Islamist organizations like al-Qaeda and the Egyptian Islamic Jihad, and groups such as the Taliban and Hizb-ut-Tahrir, entirely reject democracy, often declare as *kuffar* those Muslims who support. Only Hizb-ut-Tahrir claim that they are a non-violent international party working mainly to return the Caliphate system, Contrarily this group supports election to select the leaders or people's representatives (Nabahni, 2002).

4.2 Nature of Transition in Egypt

"The military should be granted some kind of insurance under Egypt's new constitution so that it is not under the whim of a president and the military should not be subjected to parliamentary scrutiny" – SCAF member (in Martini & Taylor, 2011)

From the monarch Faruk the military took over the power in 1952. Contemporarily, the only civic and political organization that has posed serious threats to the autocratic regime was the Muslim Brotherhood, the *Ikhwan* after its birth in 1928 which survived against the tyrant rulers applying many maneuvers. The Brotherhood was not formally legalized but was allowed to sermonize, organize, and mobilize its activities. In 1992 the Muslim Brotherhood became successful in forming the largest opposition group of independent candidates in the lower house (Cook, 2007). The regime ended the Muslim Brotherhood's accommodated position in 1992, and leaders and political activists of the Brotherhood were tried to the Supreme State Security court and later on to military tribunals (Cook, 2007). Later in different national (2005) and local level election (2008), Muslim Brotherhood gained some mentionable victory.

In recent years MB has seen a rising of youth activism due to an increase in Internet access and the rise of Arabic mass media. Calls for demonstrations on January 25, 2011, were in the first day of the Egyptian uprising. These were made through Facebook groups of which the most significant was the April 6th Movement, 'We Are All Khalid Sa'id', and 'Youth for Justice and Freedom.' The Kifaya Movement, a movement that already in 2004 protested for the step-down of Mubarak (FH, 2006) and some other syndicates joined those groups on January 25.

The opposition parties, like the Tagammu and the Muslim Brotherhood (the Muslim Brotherhood joined on January 28) clearly missed the initial demonstrations (Miller et al., 2012).

In the modern age, over the world, it is observed that transition generally happened from military or monarchical (authoritarian) rule to democratic rule that was not ultimately successful in Egypt. On January 25, 2011, peaceful demonstrations exploded in Cairo and other major Egyptian cities, calling for reforms. Protesters were from all walks of society, crossing ideological, socio-economic and sectarian lines. The New York Times reported on January 25, 2011, "the protests represented the largest display of popular dissatisfaction in recent memory, perhaps since 1977" (Fahim & El-Naggar, 2011). On January 28, the Muslim Brotherhood officially joined the demonstrations. On January 29, 2011, Mubarak ordered a nationwide deployment of the military (Albrecht & Bishara, 2011; Droz-Vincent, 2011). The military was deployed, but on January 31, 2011 field marshal and minister of defence Husayn Tantawi affirmed that the military will not use force against protestors and that the military recognizes the legitimacy of the protestor's demands (Reuters, 2011).

Contrarily, on February 11, 2011, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF)¹ interfered and declared that it would protect 'what the protestors have achieved' and would watch over a transition to a new constitution, free elections and an eventual end to the state of emergency (New York Times, 2011). Mubarak resigned and was replaced by field marshal Husayn Tantawi, minister of defence since 1991 and Commander of the Armed Forces. The outbreak of mass demonstrations and accordingly ousting of president Mubarak was rather rapid than gradual. The size, cross-class, and peaceful character of the demonstrations proved to be political game changers.

The initial step, after the ousting of Mubarak, the SCAF suspended the 1971 constitution as well as dismissed the People's Assembly and Shura Council on February 13, 2011. In its statement on February 13, it stated that the SCAF had the intention to "temporarily administer the affairs of the country for a period of six months or until People's Assembly, Shura Council and Presidential elections are held" (New York Times, 2011). The SCAF furthermore installed a body of legal experts to amend the articles regulating presidential elections of the 1971 constitution (Lang, 2013). The Egyptian military council introduced a number of amendments to the constitution, with the focus on the sections related to the electoral process as well as election procedure. In the national referendum, 72% of the voters approved the amendments (Mustafa & Yousef, 2013). In the process of political change, one of the main debates was about the future of the regime in post-revolution became more acute. On the position of the amendment, the Egyptian political forces were divided into two main camps. The first one includes the various Islamist groups (the Muslim Brotherhood, the *Salafi* movements, both moderate and extremist, and the independent Islamist groups) while the second one includes secular movements, parties, and groups, leftwing liberals, and young leaders of the revolution, such as the 'Revolutionary Youth Alliance' and the 'Revolutionary Youth Union'. The first camp supported the amendments, but the latter did not on different political and ideological grounds (Mustafa & Yousef, 2013).

In the president and parliament elections, Islamists achieved the victory. Under Morsi, a new constitution was drafted, and the top military generals were sent to retirement and were appointed new to positions within the cabinet (FH, 2013). Morsi's inability to unite the different political fractions, the severe economic circumstances and his power grab, led to public unrest. Demonstrations against his government swelled after June 30, 2013, prompting the military to set out Morsi on July 3, 2013, and to suspend the constitution (FH, 2014).

After the ousting of the Muslim Brotherhood, the military initiated a harsh crackdown on the party and declared the party a terrorist organization (FH, 2014). Consequently, the overall political transition came into halt again.

4.3 The major political institutions, military, and the transition

¹ The SCAF formed with nineteen military officers who had not played an active role in the making of political decisions before the uprising on January 25, 2011. The SCAF had existed before the uprising but only met on an irregular basis to discuss political issues on which it provided recommendations to the president (Albrecht and Bishara, 2011).

The most important change in the first months of SCAF's ruling in comparison to elections under Mubarak was the strengthening of the role of the judiciary in overseeing elections and allowing for political pluralism (Martini & Taylor, 2011; Freedom House, 2012). The SCAF issued a decree in March 2011 establishing the High Judicial Committee in charge of supervising elections. Furthermore, the registration of political parties became more transparent. Prohibited political parties were legalized, and new ones were allowed to be operative themselves (Martini & Taylor, 2011)². The Justice and Freedom Party (JFP), the Muslim Brotherhood's political wing, was formally legalized on June 6, 2011 (Irshad, 2012)³. The NDP, the ruling political party under Mubarak, was closed by an administrative court in April 2011.

4.3.1 Parliament

Despite the manipulation of the SCAF on the electoral process and its gatekeeper function in allowing political parties to run in elections, the parliamentary elections have been considered to meet international standards. The elections as a whole were free, fair, and enjoyed wide participation (FH, 2012; Stacher, 2012; IFES, 2013). 489 were the total number of seats of House of Representatives (Maglis El Nowwab). The Islamist parties the Justice and Freedom Party (JFP) got 47% of the votes, and the Salafist Al-Nour party 25%. The remaining seats went to the liberal Wafd party (8%), the Egyptian Bloc Coalition (7%), which is a coalition of liberal, social democratic and leftist political parties, and the other smaller parties (Azzam, 2012: 4; Stacher, 2012). The elections were held in three rounds. Voter turnouts have been historically higher for Egypt. In the first round, the voter attendance was 65%, in the second round 43% and in the last round 62% (International Election System [IFES], 2013; Azzam, 2012; Irshad, 2012).

Following the lower house elections, the upper house elections took place in January and February 2012. Again, the majority of the votes went to Islamist parties: 60% to Freedom and Justice Party, 25% to Al-Nour, 14% to Wafd and 8% to the Egyptian Bloc. Voter turnout was, however, very low, around 15% (Freedom House, 2013). Apart from some indiscretions and low voter attendance, the elections were considered as free and fair (IFES, 2013).

According to Frisch (2013: 189), the SCAF had an apparent strategy by firstly organizing parliamentary elections and only afterward presidential elections. This way, the SCAF could already weaken and divide the ranks of parliament prior to a president was elected. This became clear when the Muslim Brotherhood, despite its electoral success, was unable to form a government as the SCAF refused to withdraw its support from the Ganzouri government, which it had appointed as an interim government until a new president would be sworn in (Azzam, 2012; Sayigh, 2011).

The People's Assembly did not function for long, as in June 2012, the SCC dissolved lower house (Droz-Vincent, 2013). Once Morsi was inaugurated on June 30, 2012, he recalled the resolved parliament. The SCC, however, suspended Morsi's decree, leaving the parliament suspended for the rest of the year (Sayigh, 2013; IFES, 2013).

4.3.2 President

The first post-Mubarak presidential elections were planned in May 2012. The elections were, although not perfect, close to international standards (Freedom House, 2013). The Presidential Election Commission, installed by the SCAF, disqualified ten contestants, including the most popular Islamist candidates. Their pronouncement was ultimate and could not be appealed (Freedom House, 2013).

In June, Morsi and Shafiq raced against each other in the second round of presidential elections. Morsi won the elections with 51.7% of the votes. The voter turnout in the first round was 46,6%, and in the second round, 52% (Irshad, 2012).

² The new constitution adopted in January 2014 banned religious parties from running (FH, 2014).

³ The JFP has been banned since the ousting of Morsi in July 2013. The Muslim Brotherhood was declared a terrorist organization at the end of 2013.

Two weeks before Mohamed Morsi was inaugurated as Egypt's first democratically elected president, and the SCAF issued an interim constitutional decree limiting the powers of the newly elected president and expanding its own powers (Brown, 2013; Droz-Vincent, 2013; Sayigh, 2013). The decree granted the SCAF authority over the new constitution-writing process, the right to assume the responsibilities of the parliament as long as no new assembly is voted, and "the upper hand in running the armed forces" (Egypt Independent, 2012). Moreover, the SCAF appointed the Supreme Constitutional Court (SCC) to have the last word on the constitution in case the SCAF and other actors would disagree on its content (Ahram Online, 2012).

Once in office, president Morsi nullified the decree of the SCAF and issued a constitutional declaration giving him full executive and legislative powers, including the right to shape a new constitutional assembly (IFES, 2013).

In November 2012, Morsi caused stirring among the Egyptian public by expanding his presidential command in a 'dramatic way' (Brown, 2013). He decreed that his decisions were beyond judicial review, as well as that the constitutional meeting and Shura council were immune for closure by the SCC (FH, 2013). This escorted to massive demonstrations in Cairo. Later in December 2012, he cancelled the decree, but only after he had protected an Islamist-dominated constitution assembly from dissolution, enabling the panel to pass a controversial draft constitution (Mccrummen, 2012).

During Morsi's year in office, his relationship with Egypt's people and the military was getting bitterer. In the spring of 2013, activists started to campaign against his presidency, leading to mass protests on June 30, a year after his inauguration. The military detained him on July 3, 2013, and suspended the constitution. Instead of the SCAF, the SCC was tasked with executive power (Freedom House, 2014).

5. Discussion

According to the idea of Freedom House, the role and the rule of FJP of MB and Nur party in Egypt were not successful in pre-transition, transition stage, and consolidation stage for a democratic transition. During the consolidation stage (Power in position), they failed to implement successfully of the referred indicators of democracy. MB after its establishment from 1928, cultured the people towards an Islamic emotion to vote them rather a secular democratic culture. At the first stage of transition or culturing a nation towards democracy was defective in the perspective of a secular democratic citizen as ideologically Islamists are against modern secular ideals and concepts.

The Islamists favored amendments because of ideological ground regarding the status of religion in the post-revolution regime. Even before it was decided which articles of the constitution would be amended, a heated debate broke out in Egyptian society— one that will continue until a new constitution is written— about the status of Article II: "the principles of Islamic law are the chief source of legislation." The Islamist camp wanted to carry on this article in the new constitution. They had a strong motivation to vote in favor of the amendments before the election of a new parliament that would draft a new constitution (Mustafa & Yousef, 2013).

In the second stage of transition after the national election during their short-lived rule, FJP completely failed to tackle the old authoritarian apparatus which were looking after their interest. They failed to keep democratic institutions participatory and effective. From one side, the military and from the other SSC actually limited Morsi's working areas making bar after bar towards a successful political or democratic transition.

Besides, the conflict between two ideologies is another universal fact, which is observed in the case of capitalism and socialism in recent world politics. Accordingly, political Islam is emanated from Islamic ideology, and modern democracy is standing on the basement of both secularism and capitalism. Therefore, political Islam and liberal democracy prescribe different polity and society, as well as both, have different aim of the state and society that is the fundamental ground of conflict between two ideologies. Egypt is the practical field of this battle. In Egypt, the secular military, judicial elites, and some secular political parties have never wanted that Muslim Brotherhood

or Islamists rule the country. Through a lengthy movement against the authoritarian ruler of Egypt, the Islamists have gained huge popularity. Ideologically, historically and systematically it is completely impractical to establish traditional and authentic Islamic system in an authoritarian, secular democratic system or capitalist democratic system without radical change (Nabahni, 2002) which Muslim Brotherhood has tried in Egypt. The Muslim Brotherhood's politics neither was purely an Islamic, nor could they be able to establish an Islamic *Ummah* (nation) by their politics of 80 years. Ultimately, the people were confused about their power-centric politics rather an Islamic cultural change in the state and society.

Political Islam developed in Egypt as the consequence of the destruction of Caliphate to revive it again to struggle against the British or western colonial hegemony in both Egypt and in the Muslim World. Based on its Islamic ideology, it wants to return the Islamic political system in the Muslim world. According to many scholars, Islamic political system has some fundamental conflict with modern or liberal democracy such as Islam does not support popular sovereignty that is reflected in the Islamists political principles (Nabahni, 2002). Islamists of Egypt ideologically also don't believe in secularism, man-made law and western concept of freedom and personal freedom (for example- homosexuality, drinking wine). They prescribe politics, social policy, and culture in the light of the guideline of the Quran, Hadith, and Islamic tradition. In the 'pre-transition stage' and 'transition stage' Islamists did not receive the opportunity to play a significant role for any political transition.

Morsis's own discourse stresses that he is a defender of democratic transition and his main allies in the power game were in the military and the business elite whose main concern was to maintain stability in economy and politics rather than to promote Islamic Sharia law. Their leaders promised the people to establish Sharia law during the election campaign in 2012. Even they pronounced the word Caliphate though after gaining the power, they turned into a secular government like Mubarak. Even Morsis's secular opponents branded him as a "New Mubarak," "New Pharaoh," and sometimes as "New Khomeni" (Roy, 2012).

Islamists were not the main actors of the revolution but the young generation to change the autocratic government and to hold a fair election and establish good governance. Historically sometimes, the alliance between Islamists and military is observed, which sometimes hinders the democratization process. In 1952 Egypt's monarchy was removed from power by a group of nationalist military officers (Free Officers Movement) who had formed a cell inside the Brotherhood during the first war against Israel in 1948.

The initially planned elections for the lower and upper house within three months were held nine months later in November 2011 and January 2012. The SCAF remained the executive and legislative power for over fifteen months after the ouster of Mubarak, until the presidential elections in June 2012. Civilians performed an inadequate role in directing the transition, leading to regular protests against the 'military regime' (Elshami, 2011; Sayigh, 2013). In the meantime, the Brotherhood was willing to compromise and negotiate with the generals and entered a tacit deal with the SCAF. In return for ceasing its protest, it gained political rights (Albrecht & Bishara, 2011; Stacher, 2012). The Muslim Brotherhood has consequently backed the SCAF by boycotting protests, calling those protests illegitimate and by organizing pro-government protests (Martini & Taylor, 2011). The SCAF and police forces have brutally oppressed the anti-government demonstrations and detained many protestors without charge the leading human rights organization Amnesty International (2011) declared that the human rights situation in Egypt in 2011 was worse than Mubarak regime.

After the win, MB did not declare to establish an Islamic state or Caliphate rather declared to establish Civil State. Islamists participate in the democratic election or democratic process to attain state power. They take part election or democratic process as a means to attain their purpose. Therefore, to establish democracy is not their purpose. Hasan-al- Banna, the founder of Muslim Brotherhood, Moududi of Jamati Islami and Taqiuddin Nabahni of Hizbut-Tahrir completely disagreed with the western secular democracy, modernization, and liberal ideas. All of them supported the Caliphate form of government primarily. Many criticize Islamists for their different policies. Rule of Brotherhood was neither Islamic nor democratic. Once Islamists won the elections in Egypt, and it was time to write the constitution, the discomfort with democratic values of universal equality and progressive laws

based on evolving norms of human rights and dignity resurfaced (Albrecht 2013). The Egyptian constitution, passed by the Islamists, fudged on the equality of all citizens by privileging one religion, Islam, over others (Articles 1 and 2), and subverting the equal status of women and minorities. Even the status of democratic legislation was undercut by making Al-Azhar University, the arbiter of the Islamic laws that is informed in the normative framework of the constitution (Articles 4 and 219). Thus, the legislature was not fully empowered to write laws; an unelected academic institution could overturn them. The contrast can be seen starkly when one looks at the constitution written by Islamists in Egypt and Tunisia.

Morsi and the MB have not presented any grand vision for the country. It has used slogans such as 'Islam is the solution,' which it dropped, however, what has been notably absent is where they planned to take the people and exactly how they planned to enrich the nation by a political transition. Indeed in its rush to placate international opinion, they abandoned all pretence to Islamic politics. In doing so, they think they are being pragmatic, smart, and politically perceptive. Whilst it comes to apply Islamic politics, they mention constitutional barriers and the need to maintain minorities' affairs. When it comes to apply Islamic economics, they cite the need to avoid scaring global investors and tourists. When it comes to apply the Islamic foreign policy, they cite the requirements to show a moderate image and to appease the colonialists.

Furthermore, international actors the USA, Israel, European Union, and Saudi Arabia do not want to witness Islamists or a strong representative government in power that is a threat to control Egyptian military, the 10th largest army in the world that is also a factor of the balance of power in this region. Actually, imperialist UK, USA, and Russia have kept dictators in power in not only Egypt or the Middle East but also many different parts of the world for their strategic interests and ideological cause.

The weakness of the study is the used data sources are generally secondary, and conclusion of the study is drawn on a single case study on Egyptian Islamists. Further study may explore the role of Islamists in other countries in democratic transition.

6. Conclusion

The Muslim Brotherhood and *Salafi* Nur party are ideologically typical having common political aim and activities. They cultured the people, supporters, activists neither towards secular democracy nor towards a comprehensive Islamic system with Islamic political culture in the pre-transition period. Neither they propagated about the Caliphate system nor did they have any specific Islamic manifesto or principles to establish an ideal Islamic polity. If some secular laws are incorporated in an Islamic State, it will not be turned into a democratic state because for an ideal democracy it requires some specific secular indicators such as values, culture and institutions building which are discussed in section 2.2 of this writing. Accordingly, if in an authoritarian regime or a hybrid-democratic system, some Islamic laws are incorporated, it will not be turned into an Islamic state or so-called 'Islamic democracy' that the Muslim Brotherhood is trying to establish in Egypt. Actually, Islamist of Egypt cannot adopt secular democratic norms, values, and culture as a whole rather, and they accepted only the election as a means of attaining the state power. Contradictorily, in primary stage their party ideology was Islam, but their power fascination drives them in a shifted way of compromising with secular ideals and system that made them both inappropriate for Islamic or for the democratic system. As a result, they could not play a positive role in the democratic transition or a political transition in Egypt.

It is very tough to assimilate political Islam and democracy as they carry ideologically two opposite political concepts and systems. In no country of the world is found that political Islamists are successfully running the democratic system or secular democracy suiting with their ideologies. Role of Islamists in Egypt was actually confined in their movements to survive in a long time autocratic ruling apparatus. The long-ruling military kept very limited scope for the civilians or the politicians either for the Islamists or the seculars in state building and nation-building process for a sustainable political transition. In the presidency, Morsi's short term rule was established on military or on an authoritarian superstructure which kept his hand everywhere limited. The

revolution actually could not bring any radical change in the power structure of the military regimes. The change of Mubarak was a change of a person but was not a change of political system and administration. Election does not always ensure democracy or rule of the majority. The democratic institution or representative bodies i.e., parliament, president, political parties were kept very weak and under strict military control directly or indirectly in the Egyptian political system. Moreover, Morsi's compromising policies with the military also made it impossible for Islamists to bring a radical change either for Islamization or for democratization.

In all the democratic institutions, Morsi or Islamists government could play a minimal role because of the influence of SCAF (Military) and SSC (Judiciary). However, in their party and election manifesto, they showed some superficial intention to democratize the ruling system, but they did not have enough internal and external support. As a result, the democratic transition becomes must to be failed.

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