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Perceptions on Policy: The Effects of the U.S. *Greater Middle East Initiative* on Egyptian Political Attitudes

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Perceptions on Policy: The Effects of the U.S. *Greater Middle East Initiative* on Egyptian

Political Attitudes

by

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A thesis submitted in partial fulfillment
of the requirements for the degree of
Master of Arts
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policy, Egypt, the Middle East.

To my family for their unwavering support which has enabled me to fulfill my dreams. Without the knowledge from my father, wisdom from my mother, encouragement from my sisters, and prayers from my grandparents, this would have never been possible.

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ABSTRACT

This study examines the political attitudes of seven educated Egyptians from
Alexandria, Egypt. It seeks to understand their interpretations of the U.S. democratization
policy in the Middle East, the *Greater Middle East Initiative*. The goal is to understand if
these Egyptians are receptive to the suggestion of democratic reforms and Egypt. Personal
interviews with open-ended questions allowed for individual insights and rich depth of
information.

Interviews were conducted in Alexandria, Egypt as a traditionally liberal city with a
long history of exposure to Western ideas. The respondents are a part of a small elite sub-
group of Egyptian society. As typically more liberal and open to Western ideas, educated
members of Egyptian society have a distinct political culture and have been examined
separately from the mass population.

Aside from one anti-Islamic respondent, the respondents express an overall negative
view of the U.S. government, of which three cite positive feelings toward American people.
Six of the seven respondents had very similar political attitudes including a belief that that
the U.S. invaded Iraq as a quest for oil and to control of the Middle East, not for genuine
democratic reforms. Every participant expressed considerable pessimism about the
prospects for democratization in the region. The majority do not welcome America's call for

reform in Egypt because of mistrust of the U.S. or the belief that American values are ill-suited for Egyptian society. The results show that the personal narratives of these seven Egyptian individuals are very similar to the perspectives found in public opinion surveys previously conducted among the masses in Egypt.

Qualitative interviewing showed their strong belief that there is an all-powerful U.S.-Jewish conspiracy that enacts policies to target the Arab world. This neo-colonial worldview interprets and perceives all negative political events as an example of the repeated injustices against Arabs and Muslims by Western powers.

CHAPTER 1   INTRODUCTION

Research Questions and Hypotheses

In response to global terrorism, U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East has shifted by

emphasizing the concept of democratization and liberal political reform. This policy, The Greater

Middle East Initiative, is defined as a formal foreign policy doctrine for freedom in the Middle

East. The September 11th terrorist attacks on the U.S. acted as the catalyst for the change in

policy as U.S. policymakers may the claim that democratization is a central part of the U.S.

counterterrorism policy. The Bush Administration has shifted U.S. policy of accepting the status

quo of authoritarian Middle Eastern regimes to one that encourages democratic reforms.

The Greater Middle East Initiative aims to restructure the political, economic and

strategic profile of the region from Pakistan to Morocco.[1] On May 9, 2003, U.S. President

George W. Bush formally proclaimed that it was time for the United States to support democracy

in the Middle East:[2]

> We support the advance of freedom in the Middle East, because it is our founding
> principle, and because it is our national interest. The hateful ideology of terrorism is
> shaped and nurtured and protected by oppressive regimes. Free nations, in contrast,
> encourage creativity and tolerance and enterprise. And in those free nations, the appeal of

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[1] "EU/Middle East: Solana's Talks in Egypt Focus on Reform Initiative," *European Report* (Europe
Information Service, 6 March 2004): 506 [journal online]
http://web6.infotrac.galegroup.com/itw/infomark/383/661/48082959w6/purl=rc1_EAIM_0 (accessed 6
April 2004).
[2] Glenn Frankel, "Egypt Muzzles Calls for Democracy," *Washington Post Foreign Service,* 1 June 2004.
http://coranet.radicalparty.org/pressreview/print_right.php?func=detail&par=7686 (accessed March 29,
2004): p. 1 of 8.

extremism withers away.[3]

The ultimate goal of this policy is to protect America's national security interests claiming that by promoting political participation, it will serve as a complement to the war on terrorism. By alleviating the political repression in the Middle East, the argument continues, Arab citizens will have an outlet for grievances, which will ultimately prevent the radicalization of Muslims. These alleged goals for democracy promotion are also clearly stated in the Bush administration's 2002 National Security Strategy of the United States and described as a core part of the overall U.S. national security doctrine:

> America must stand firmly for the nonnegotiable demands of human dignity: the rule of law; limits on the absolute power of the state; free speech; freedom of worship; equal justice; respect for women; religious and ethnic tolerance; and respect for private property.[4]

Bush claims that during the past sixty years Western nations have excused the lack of freedom in the Middle East and has not made them safe because stability cannot be substituted for the expense of liberty.[5] The objective is to combat the threat of terrorism by alleviating repressive conditions that contribute to the radicalization of Muslims. By promoting democracy in the closed societies of the Middle East, the Bush administration seeks to promote a set of values that will be a powerful alternative to the appeal of religious extremism. This will ultimately prevent its channel of expression, violent terrorist activity.

The U.S.-led war in Iraq in 2003 has been promoted by the Bush administration as a part of the U.S. effort to create a democratic world order. U.S. leaders expected the mainstream Arab public to be impressed by the gratitude of the Iraqi people for their newfound freedom. Anti-

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[3] Speech by President George W. Bush on 9 May 2003 at the University of South Carolina, (White House Government News Release), available from http//www.whitehouse.gov/news/releases/2003/05/20030509-11.html.
[4] *The National Security Strategy of the United States of America* (September 2002) : 3.
[5] "Bush Says Democracy in MidEast Will be a Focus of U.S. Policy" (based on a speech by George W. Bush on 6 November 2003 at Whitehall Palace, London, England), in *Official Texts of Greater Middle East Initiative* (Cairo: Information Resource Center of American Embassy, 7 March 2004).

Americanism would then be discredited and new ways of thinking would emerge.[6] The

democratic transformation of Iraq was to be the model for the rest of the Middle East.

Public opinion in the Middle East about Iraq has generally scoffed at the Bush

administration's rhetoric of democracy promotion. Language used by Arabs to describe the

American presence in Iraq was not filled with gratitude; rather it paralleled descriptions of the

hated Israeli occupation of the West Bank and Gaza where American troops are called

"invaders", not liberators.[7] The ambivalent U.S. attitudes toward Iraqi democracy have further

reinforced deep preexisting skepticism about American intentions in the region. The aggressive

U.S. policy of democratization through force has actually threatened the integrity of American

political ideals. It has further alienated the Arab world from the U.S. and the democratic ideals it

seeks to promote.

Bush administration, however, misjudged the reaction of regarding the war in Iraq, and as

a result, is having a difficult time being viewed as a champion of democracy. The overwhelming

majority of Arabs in the Middle East claim that America's decision to topple Saddam Hussein's

regime was driven by the desire to consolidate its regional and global hegemony, not for genuine

democratic reform. Additional survey research confirms these perceptions.

The American goal of spreading of democracy, often referred to as international

liberalism, has been a component of liberal U.S. foreign policy throughout many previous U.S.

administrations. Promoting democratic values has been considered an integral part of the national

interest of the country. The theory is that of the U.S. supports freedom, individual rights, the rule

of law, and democratic institutions around the world it will help secure peace and stability among

states, and advance human rights within states. The spread of liberal values to other countries is

thought to secure the American way of life.

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[6] Marc Lynch, "Taking Arabs Seriously," *Foreign Affairs* 82, no. 5 (2003) : 88, 81-94.
[7] Ibid., 89.

This democratization policy rests on a set of assumptions about democratic nations. The rationale is that democratic institutions and processes will allow for a peaceful reconciliation of grievances and provide channels for participation in policymaking, thereby, addressing the underlining issues that fuel the rise of Islamist extremism.[8] The claim is that a democratic government is subject to the will of the people and therefore less prone to war and less likely to breed or harbor terrorists.[9] Similarly, tyrannical governments are expected to disregard international agreements and coerce their neighbors because they mistreat their own citizens.[10] The domestic affairs of a nation are assumed to be directly related to its foreign policy. The U.S. democratization policy is based on the assumption that more democracies in the world will provide greater stability, less terrorism, and peaceful relations with other countries.[11]

The American definition of democracy includes various characteristics. Democratization is seen as a process that promotes democratic practices including the right of adult citizens to choose their leader through free and fair elections. Citizens should have the opportunity to participate in making decisions that affect their lives and have the right to criticize their government for its actions. Leaders should be accountable and responsive to the needs of their citizens because of the transparency of political decision-making. A national economy that fosters competitions and free enterprise is also considered vital for a viable democracy. The Greater Middle East Initiative sets three reform priorities to achieve these goals: promoting democracy and good governance, building a knowledge society, and expanding economic opportunities.[12]

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[8] Jennifer L. Windsor, "Promoting Democratization Can Combat Terrorism," *The Washington Quarterly* 26.3 (2003) : 43, 43-58.

[9] Suzanne Nossel, "Smart Power," *Foreign Affairs* 83, no. 2 (2004) : 135, 131-142.

[10] Robert Jervis, "Understanding the Bush Doctrine," *American Foreign Policy: Theoretical Essays* 5d ed., ed. John G. Ikenberry (New York: Pearson Longman, 2005) : 577, 576-599.

[11] Ibid.

[12] Marina Ottaway and Thomas Carothers, "The Greater Middle East Initiative: Off to a False Start," *Policy Brief* 29 (Washington D.C.: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, March 2004).

The U.S. is particularly interested in Egypt as one of its most important allies in the Middle East. Egypt has considerable moral influence on other Arab states as well as a central geographic location that contributes greatly to its strategic importance.[13] Throughout history cumulative research on this "political trendsetter" has introduced methods and concepts in study of Arab political systems more generally and has provided a barometer of "changing trends and generational shifts in approaches to understanding Middle Eastern politics."[14] Egypt's future political course has and will continue to have an immense affect on the rest of the Middle East.

In relation to U.S. interests, few other countries in the Middle East are considered as vital as Egypt. It is considered the "gate to the Arab world and the anchor of American Middle East policy,"[15] because of its proximity to the oil-producing Gulf region and active involvement in the Arab Israeli peace process. The U.S. made Egypt an important ally in the region when it became the first Arab country to make peace with Israel. As Egypt continues to be a pivotal actor in diplomatic efforts in the region, it remains the second biggest recipient of U.S. military and economic aid[16] receiving over two billion dollars each year.[17]

The importance of Egypt to U.S. policy is emphasized once again in relation to the new effort to promote democracy in the Middle East. U.S. President George W. Bush encourages democratic reform in Egypt by saying, "The great and proud nation of Egypt has shown the way toward peace in the Middle East, and now should show the way toward democracy in the Middle

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[13] Joseph P. Lorenz, *Egypt and the Arabs: Foreign Policy and the Search for National Identity* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1990), xiii.
[14] Pamela Day Pelletreau and Robert Springborg, "Egypt," *Handbook of Political Science Research on the Middle East and North Africa,* ed. Bernard Reich (Westport, CT: Greenwood Press, 1998), 23-43.
[15] Fawaz A. Gerges, *America and Political Islam: Clash of Cultures or Clash of Interests* (Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1999), 171.
[16] Frankel, "Egypt Muzzles Calls, 2.
[17] Gerges, 171.

East."[18] The hope is that the Egyptian regime, led by President Hosni Mubarak, will start implementing meaningful political reforms and causing other Arab regimes to follow its lead.

A transition to a viable democracy in Egypt will be significantly affected by a very important aspect of the political process, the political culture of society. Political culture refers to the beliefs, values, and feelings that influence political behavior[19] and give meaning to the political process. It is an essential variable that will help determine the functioning of a political system of a nation-state. Without citizens' support for a democratic political process, it will be very difficult for Egypt to make a successful transition to a stable democracy.

The Egyptian citizens themselves must see the need for reforms and support the necessary changes to do so. Therefore, it is vital for to emphasize the importance of Egyptian political culture and make every effort to understand its political history and perceptions before a democratization policy can be implemented. It is vital to understand political attitudes of Egyptians regarding democratization in order to assess the prospects of a viable democracy and how best to promote it. Increasingly, survey research has provided insight regarding political attitudes among the mass population in Egypt and the rest of the Middle East as well. Public opinion surveys are useful in aggregating perceptions of the masses in society and providing an overall view of public opinion.

The concept of political culture rests on the idea that each individual incorporates their own historical context and personality, knowledge, and feelings about politics.[20] It is a subjective notion that gives meaning to the polity and is made up of both a "collective history of a political system and the life histories of the individuals who currently make up the system."[21] Therefore, it

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[18] George W. Bush speech, 6 November 2003 in Washington D.C.
[19] Gabriel A. Almond ed., "The Intellectual History of the Civic Culture Concept," in *The Civic Culture Revisited,* ed. Sidney Verba (Boston: Little, Brown and Company, 1980), 29.
[20] Lucian W. Pye, ed., "Introduction: Political Culture and Political Development," in *Political Culture and Political Development,* ed. Sidney Verba (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), 7.
[21] Ibid., 8.

is rooted in both public events and private experiences equally. This study examines these private experiences in order to complement the earlier findings of political culture in Egypt found in survey research.

There is specific sub-group of society that should be given special emphasis for the study of political culture and democratization. The educated members of society have a special role to play in the mobilization of the masses and the push toward reform. Typically those who have been in a university setting have been exposed to a wide array of ideas and engaged in critical thinking. This experience with education often makes an individual more receptive to new ways of thinking and approaches to life. They are more likely to be open to Western ideas of rational thought, equality, and liberty, which are fundamental for the emergence of a democratic system.

In Egyptian society, those who obtain a university degree are considered among the elite in terms of social status. In 1998-99, only 1.28 million full-time and 250,000 part-time students were enrolled out of a population of approximately 52.5 million. This means that only a small percentage (roughly 2.5 percent) of Egyptians are students that graduate with opportunities to become doctors, lawyers, journalists and entrepreneurs. According to 2005 statistics, only 59.3 percent of the adult population in Egypt is literate (69.4 percent of males and 48.9 percent of females).[22] There is a growing disparity between the citizens with access to higher education and those who are more concerned with survival.

While a university education allows individuals more opportunities than those without, widespread nepotism and corruption in government practices often restricts opportunities available to them. In a free and fair democratic society, the educated stand to gain the most in a 'survival of the fittest' system that rewards those who have the knowledge and capabilities to progress. They would greatly benefit from having their voices heard by a more democratic

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[22] "Egypt," *Encarta Online Encyclopedia*, [database on-line]; available from http://encarta.msn.com/encyclopedia_761557408_2/Egypt.html#endads.

government. They may even take the opportunity to become active in the government and may even consider running for office in an election. It is logical to assume then that it is more likely that educated Egyptians would have a positive view towards the idea of democratization than others in society. They would benefit from a political system that promotes free market capitalism and participation in the political process. Are these educated elites looking forward to America's push for democracy in Egypt? Do they see it as an opportunity to move forward and finally have a say in the political process? The present study will answer these questions by taking a comprehensive look at the political attitudes of these educated individuals.

The individuals selected for the study are from a city that has historically been more exposed to Western thought than any other in Egypt. Since its establishment by Alexander the Great, the city of Alexandria has a rich history full of foreign influence. As the main port of the country, Alexandria is located on the Mediterranean Sea amidst the only trade route to Asia and Africa for hundreds of years. Fareed Zakaria calls Alexandria, "a cosmopolitan city that was more Mediterranean than Arab."[23] It has long been the intellectual center of Egypt known for its scholars and famous libraries full of scholarly works. Citizens of Alexandria often spoke four of five languages including French, English, German, and Spanish. With a long history of Western thought, these citizens are more likely to be open to Western ideas than others throughout Egypt.

To fully grasp the political attitudes of educated individuals in Alexandria, an interview approach is most valuable. It provides each respondent with the freedom to respond to open-ended questions in order to better understand the interpretative style of each subject. The purpose is to understand a person's mind that cannot be directly observed or quantified. Open-ended interviews allow those being interviewed to express their perspective without influencing them

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[23] Fareed Zakaria, "Islam, Democracy, and Constitutional Liberalism," *Political Science Quarterly* 119, no. 1, (Academy of Political Science, 2004): 5, 1-20.

with preconceived categories. Entering into another person's perspective is the goal of an interview. The assumption is that their perspective is meaningful and able to be made explicit.[24]

The study provides a systematic analysis of the perceptions of seven Egyptian respondents who have been educated and reside in Alexandria. The relatively small number of respondents allows for an in-depth analysis of the personal narrative of each individual. This approach is valuable for understanding the personal narratives of each individual. Marc Howard Ross provides three concrete reasons for the importance of personal narratives. The first is that their metaphors and images allow social scientists to understand how these individuals "understand the social and political worlds in which they live."[25] Personal narratives also reveal "deep fears, perceived threats, and past grievances that drive a conflict."[26] Lastly, these narratives are vital in identifying particular actions and responses given for the explanations of certain events.[27]

The qualitative interview approach is crucial for the study of perception and cultural interpretations that affect political attitudes. It allows for a comprehensive insight that is essential to providing a complete picture of the social science phenomena that is being studied. While quantitative research conducted through mass surveys and opinion polls often provides valuable information about the general population, it neglects to explore the rich, detailed experience of an individual's perception. Indeed, the factual information collected from polls can be quantified neatly into neat numbers and provide precise conclusions. However, the concept of personal perception is not necessarily precise or neatly quantifiable. Quantifying perceptions may be precise in its methodology, while in terms of applicability, conclusively inaccurate.

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[24] Michael Quinn Patton, *Qualitative Evaluation Methods*, (Beverly Hills, CA: 1980), 196.
[25] Marc Howard Ross, "The Political Psychology of Competing Narratives: September 11 and Beyond," in *Understanding September 11,* eds. Craig Calhoun, Paul Price, and Ashley Timmer (NY: New Press, 2002), 303.
[26] Ibid.
[27] Ibid.

The important questions explored throughout each interview involves each respondent's definition of democracy, involvement with political parties, view about motivations of U.S. democratization in Iraq, attitude towards the U.S. and whether and to what extent they welcome American democratic ideals in their country. How does each respondent make sense, interpret, or make meaning of U.S. democratization policy in the Middle East? How does each respondent describe his or her feelings, opinions, or cultural beliefs? The goal is to understand how the respondents view the subject, to learn about their terminology and judgments, and to capture the complexities of their individual perceptions and experiences.[28] The meanings given to specific concepts and events including issues concerning democracy, political parties, and U.S.-led invasion of Iraq will be studied.

Based on the political history of Egyptians and various scholarly works, the hypothesis is that the perceptions of the educated respondents will be similar to those found in public opinion surveys. They mostly have similar negative opinions toward U.S. democratization policy in the Middle East. The basic assumptions of the hypothesis include: respondents will most likely have a deep mistrust of the U.S. because of its foreign policies, rather than for American values; the respondents will mostly likely name alternative explanations for U.S. intentions in Iraq such as a quest for Middle East oil, global hegemony, or to engage in a war on Islam (much like during the time of the Crusades); the respondents will not believe that democracy promotion as truly the reason for the U.S. removal of Saddam Hussein, and will be highly mistrustful of the entire concept of democratization in the Middle East. The respondents will show deep mistrust of U.S. policies in the region, similar to those previously cited in public opinion surveys in the Middle East. They will mistrust U.S. intentions in Iraq and the implementation of The Greater Middle East Initiative interpreting it as a means to increase American control of the region.

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[28] Patton, 197.

Many discussions about democracy in the Middle East are based on anecdotal experiences and theological beliefs. There is actually very little field research that has been done in the region concerning public opinion and democratic reforms. Some claim to understand Arab and Muslim peoples without first-hand knowledge of the region and its culture. This study will go beyond anecdotal evidence and explore the personal narratives of citizens who live in the region and are a part of the political culture.

Methodology

Field research of a political nature is rarely conducted in Egypt because of tight government restrictions. The Egyptian government sees the discussion of democratization as a politically sensitive issue that increases the chances that participants will more openly express any dissatisfaction they may have with the regime. Since the researcher has Egyptian citizenship and does not need a visa to enter the country or stay for extended periods of time, governmental approval is not required for the research. In addition, all interviews were conducted in Egyptian Colloquial Arabic as the spoken language and dialect of the country. The fact that the interviewer speaks the language with the appropriate dialect helped build rapport with each respondent and increases the likelihood that the respondents were in fact honest.

The repressive political environment in Egypt means that the interviewer has an ethical obligation to ensure that the participants would not be harmed as a result of the study. It is the researcher's responsibility to ensure that each respondent will not be harmed emotionally, physically, or financially.[29] To protect the participants from governmental measures including possible arrest and detainment, the name of each participant is disguised and their identity hidden. Each respondent was verbally assured by the interviewer that their identity would not be

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[29] Herbert J. Rubin and Irene S. Rubin, *Qualitative Interviewing: The Art of Hearing Data* (London: Sage Publications, 1995), 94.

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uncovered in any written and verbal accounts of the research. The promise of confidentiality was an effort to alleviate any possible fears of imprisonment by the Egyptian government allowing more honest answers. This is especially true if a respondent in the event that a respondent was particularly concerned about their government's repressive measures against freedom of speech.

The possibility of oppressive government measures did not allow the interviewer to tape record the interviews. The possibility that the tape could be confiscated by the Egyptian authorities would make the respondents highly uncomfortable and would most likely influence their answers. Transcription of the answers allowed the respondents to answer the questions more candidly without the uneasiness that would accompany tape recording. Handwritten notes were taken by the interviewer in order to help make the respondents feel more at ease to answer questions concerning sensitive issues such as democratization. The open-ended nature of the questions required approximately two hours of transcription for each half hour interview.

The fact that the interviewer had to both ask questions and transcribe the answers was not without its costs. It made it more difficult to observe non-verbal cues and physical gestures, which can be helpful in capturing each nuanced response. Multitasking also made it more difficult to ascertain is a respondent was not being honest or discreetly lying. The very nature of handwriting increased the chances that the answers were recorded less accurately. The fact that each response was written by hand makes it more difficult for the interviewer to record every possible gasp, sigh, and hesitation.

Without a tape of the interviews, it was not possible for the interviewer (or additional researchers) to listen to each interview repeatedly. The benefit of multiple interpretations of the raw data was not possible. As the sole recorder of the data, the interviewer had to be even more aware of the importance of non-bias. The objectivity of the interviewer is even more important given the inability for other interpretations of the raw data collected. The interviewer maintained their objectivity without seeming completely disassociated with the respondent. An interviewer

who is too formal or objective would be sacrificing sensitivity necessary to maintain the desired informal conversational partnership. Objectivity was maintained as all questions were asked in the same tone without non-verbal cues from the interviewer, such as nodding of the head that may lead respondents or influence their answers.

While these drawbacks of transcription were unfortunate, they were also unavoidable. Tape recording would have resulted in greater negative consequences in terms of reliability. Other than making it almost impossible to find participants willing to be recorded, those who would have agreed would not have been truthful for fear of punishment by the government. Answers especially related to the political situation in Egypt would have been restricted and limited to a more positive description for fear of repercussions by the government. Tape recording compromises the honesty of each respondent and the rapport with the interviewer with whom they already regard with suspicion. These costs are much more detrimental to the study than missing non-verbal cues associated with transcription.

Even with the precautions of handwritten notes, there is still a possibility that the respondents were not honest in expressing their true opinions and feelings. Although the interviewer is of Egyptian heritage and speaks the language, they are naturally suspicious of foreigners who live in the U.S. (even Egyptian-Americans). It is possible that a few respondents were fearful that the interviewer was a spy for the U.S. government. For example, respondents may have falsely described the political system in Egypt as a democratic system in the hopes that it will be relayed to U.S. government authorities.

The interview method is a combination of an in-depth qualitative and standardized approach. The interviews were standard because the same questions are asked in the same order. This maintains consistency of the subject matter and increase the reliability of the data. Respondents were asked a standardized set of questions in order to maintain focus and a common theme among all the interviews. Given the flexible nature of qualitative research however, open-

ended questions follow the standard questions. The exploratory approach gives each respondent

the ability to express their own interpretation of events and issues without being constrained by

the interviewer's questions.   It allowed the interviewer to deviate from the script to probe for

more detail if necessary. The respondents were not pressured to answer in brief concise terms.

This captures the individual's feelings more completely than very rigid standardized interview

approaches.

  The qualitative approach allows for a flexible and exploratory interview in which

respondents are asked open-ended questions designed to allow them to express personal

experiences and detailed stories. Questions asked such as "why?" or "why not?", for example,

are truly open-ended and allowed each respondent to choose from a range of possible responses.

This shows what themes, examples, and words the subject associates with question in order to

describe their feelings and thoughts.[30] This interview style matches the goal of the interviews,

which is not to identify an objective truth, but to understand the perception and conclusions

drawn regarding U.S. foreign policy. Each respondent's unique interpretation will be encouraged

through the flexibility of this qualitative approach. The respondents will have the opportunity to

elaborate on their opinions and feelings in order to help the researcher understand the

explanations of their thoughts and behaviors.[31]

  The interviewer had to balance the exploratory nature of qualitative interviewing with

another ethical consideration during the interviews. The issue concerns pressing a respondent for

information without making them feel threatened.[32] Again, the environment in Egypt plays a role

in the increased level of suspicion felt by the respondents especially when being asked questions

pertaining to democratization. When faced with the decision of whether to probe further, the

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[30] Patton, 212.
[31] James K. Doyle, "Introductions to Interviewing Techniques," in *Handbook for IQP Advisors and Students* [database on-line] (Worcester, MA: Worcester Polytechnic Institute, 2004) available from http://www.wpi.edu/Academics/Depts/IGSD/IQPHbook/ch11.html (accessed 23 July 2005).
[32] Rubin and Rubin, 97.

interviewer did not want to risk the rapport with the respondent and therefore chose not to probe

further. Pushing too hard for explanations would run the risk that the respondent will lie or

distort their answers even shut down completely.[33] The interviewer probed very carefully and

selectively in order to maintain a comfortable atmosphere that was necessary for rest of the

interview. Not fully covering each issue raised by each respondent may have slightly

compromised the validity of the data collected.

One drawback of in-depth qualitative interviewing is that fact that it is time consuming

and requires a great deal of effort on the part of the interviewer.   This made it difficult to conduct

comprehensive interviews with a many more participants as a larger sample of those educated in

Alexandria. The seven respondents interviewed in this study represent a relatively small sample

of all of those educated in Alexandria. While their perspectives alone cannot be generalized to

the entire Egyptian population, they will be compared with those of found in mass public opinion

surveys as a more complete approach.

The researcher adhered to various ethical obligations while conducting the research. All

deception was avoided with the parameters of the research outlined before each interview. Every

respondent was verbally informed of the nature of the research and the purpose of the study. The

research was explained as an attempt to understand perceptions of democratization and U.S.

foreign policy. The respondents were also informed about how the data were to be used. They

understood that the results would be used as academic scholarly work and that their participation

was completely voluntary. The respondents were not asked to sign an informed consent form to

verify their willingness to participate. A signed written agreement would have violated the

anonymity of each respondent and broken the vital trust between the researcher and the

respondent, ultimately disrupting the research.

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[33] Ibid., 98.

There were only two criteria for the selection of respondents, education and residence. Each respondent must have obtained a University degree and be a native of Alexandria. The politically sensitive environment made the process of selecting the respondents is a very delicate one, since the majority of Egyptians are highly reluctant to speak about issues such as democracy and U.S. policies with a stranger. Getting past these barriers requires a trusted mediator to vouch for the identity and trustworthiness of the interviewer. The interviewer contacted various personal contacts in Egypt to assist in the random selection of other participants. Each contact was told the same exact information regarding the purpose of the interview. They were also told to randomly choose a willing participant based only on their education and residence. The use of a mediator to select respondents was essential in making contacts with the respondents. Without this critical link, the interviews would not have been possible.

There are drawbacks to this method of participant selection. The first involves the idea that each personal contact asked to select the respondents is associated with the interviewer. This leaves the possibility that each respondents is chosen from essentially the same pool of people. To lessen the likelihood of this occurring, the interviewer made a conscience attempt to contact seven different contacts who did not know one another. Another possibility is that these personal contacts chose people whom they thought would be appropriate, rather than completely at random. The bias of this mutual contact may have affected the selection of the respondents. They may have chosen respondents who are more outspoken or politically knowledgeable, for example, which may have in turn, affected the validity of the data.

The selection process resulted in seven willing participants; two from the Coptic Orthodox Christian minority and five were from the Sunni Muslim majority. This is appropriate given the Muslim majority in Egypt. The gender breakdown was slightly less balanced. Women were underrepresented in the study with only one Coptic woman interviewed. The perspective of at least one other woman would have contributed to the study by allowing for a valuable

comparison between answers of men and women. A perspective of a Muslim woman, therefore, is not addressed in this particular study.

In addition, the timing of the interviews may have affected the respondents' answers. They took place in the summer months between June and May 2004, two years after the invasion of Iraq by a U.S.-led coalition and the subsequent overthrow of Saddam Hussein. Larry Diamond, who served as a Senior Advisor to the Coalition Provisional Authority in Baghdad, described the situation in Iraq as, "endemic violence, a shattered state, a nonfunctioning economy, and a decimated society."[34] Part of the predicament was that Iraqis, although grateful for the overthrow of their dictator, were suspicious of U.S. motives in their country. Many Iraqis viewed the invasion not as liberation, but as an occupation by Western powers. This view coupled with the U.S. policy in the Arab-Israeli conflict caused the occupation authority to lack a considerable amount of legitimacy[35] in the eyes of many Iraqis as well as other Middle Easterners.

Like many other media outlets around the world, the Arab media shows increasing violence and disorder in Iraq created by an opposing insurgency. Images of the horrors of war are continuously shown throughout Egypt and the Middle East. Media outlets such as the Qatar-based news channel, *Al-Jazeera*, often show images of injured Iraqi women and children as well as destroyed homes as a result of the war. Respondents who may have been recently exposed to these images may have a more negative perception of U.S. democratization policy. The effects of media exposure on perceptions may be short-term and not necessarily reflect long-term deeply held beliefs. To adequately examine this point, perceptions must be studied over time to account for surrounding events that may have temporarily influenced their political attitude. It was not

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[34] Larry Diamond, "What Went Wrong In Iraq," *Foreign Affairs* 83, no. 5, (2004): 34, 34-56.
[35] Ibid., 43-44.

possible to interview each respondent more than once to explore whether their perceptions were maintained over time.

A respondent's interpretation of a question or specific word within the question may have also been a determining factor. For example, the term "democratization" may denote a negative connotation for a respondent who may consider the concept as foreign or an idea imposed from the outside. In addition, one question asks the respondents why they think the U.S. has enacted a democratization policy. This may have led them to consider alternative reasons (other than democracy promotion) that they may not have thought of otherwise.

Documented Survey Analysis

The interview questions were similar to questions asked in a mass survey conducted a year earlier. This allows for a valuable comparison of data with many benefits. The combination of results from two kinds of inquiry provides more complete picture of Egyptian political attitudes. Interview results of the political attitudes of the educated elite in Alexandria will be compared to those of the masses surveyed in Cairo. How do the educated respondents compare with the opinion of the masses? How are they similar or different? Similar attitudes suggest that there is continuity among the educated elite and the masses on issues concerning U.S. democratization policy. The benefit of incorporating the quantitative results of the survey with the interview findings also allows for greater applicability to the general population and an increased ability to generalize the findings from the interviews.

Another extremely beneficial outcome of combining the qualitative findings is the ability to facilitate the interpretations of a quantitative approach. While the mass survey established that a majority have negative public opinions of the U.S. and its policies, it does not provide comprehensive reasons that account for this sentiment. The qualitative study helps to explain the underlying factors behind this broad relationship. The complex nature of a person's perception

requires a more in-depth approach than quantitative survey research. Comprehensive interviews

will more adequately explore the reasons behind the respondents' answers as well as non-verbal

elements of behavior, which is naturally overlooked in quantitative analysis. Survey findings are

supplements with comprehensive personal narratives that provide a deeper look as to why and

how these perspectives may have been formed. The interview process allows for a nuanced and

intricate understanding of the perception of each respondent. The respondents have an

opportunity to answer the same questions asked in the survey, only this time, with the added

value of using their own words. The benefit giving them a choice of words and explanations is

having complete understanding of their perspective without limits that naturally accompany

close-ended questions.

The results of the survey conducted by Professor Shibley Telhami from the University of

Maryland for the *Zogby International* organization and will be the basis for a valuable

comparison. From February 19 to March 11, 2003, the survey was distributed among the mass

population in the Middle East.[36] The questions focused on perceptions of the U.S. and its policies

abroad and were conducted in six Arab countries, Saudi Arabia, Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, the

United Arab Emirates, and Lebanon, surveying a total of 3,020 men and women.[37] The results

show similar that public opinion was similar in all of the countries surveyed.

The total sample size in Egypt is 700 and consists of respondents who filled out

questionnaires in Cairo, the capital city.[38] All respondents were above 18 years of age with the

gender composition based on that of the Egyptian population. The sample was selected based on

a Systematic Random Sampling Scheme because of the lack of a population census. The

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[36] Shibley Telhami, "A View From the Arab World: A Survey in Five Countries" (Washington D.C.: The Brookings Institution and Saban Center for Middle East Policy, 13 March 2003) available from http://www.brookings.edu/fp/saban/survey20030313.pdf.
[37] Youseff M. Ibrahim, "A Post-war Arab World- Three Views - Democracy Be Careful What You Wish For," *Washington Report on Middle East Affairs* 22, no. 4, (2003), 14.
[38] Telhami, "View From the Arab World," 2003.

stratified random sample selection ensured that the probability will be proportional to the size

(PPS) of the population in the selection of both males and females and Muslim and Coptic

Christians. Of the three strata of economic social classes surveyed, there were 274 in the low

social class, 147 in the middle class and 279 in the high class. Of that sample 20 were Coptic

Christian in the low social class, 6 in the middle and 17 in the high class. The margin of error is

+/- 3.8 percent.[39] The selection of respondents from various categories including economic class,

religious affiliation, and gender, ensures that a wide array of people is represented. This allows

for the results of the survey to be applied to the larger population.

The results show that anti-Americanism is at an all-time high with both the U.S. and its

policies are viewed favorably. Less than 6 percent of the respondents believed that the United

States was waging a campaign in Iraq to create a more democratic Arab world. Close to 95

percent were convinced that the motivation was control of Arab oil and the subjugation of the

Palestinians to Israel's will. A major source of negative attitudes is resentment of U.S. policy

toward the Arab-Israeli conflict and deep mistrust of American intentions in Iraq."[40]

The mistrust of American intentions in Iraq is also accompanied by pessimism about the

outcome of the war. Asked if the result of the war would bring more or less democracy, only 2

percent of Moroccans, 3 percent of Saudis, and 6 percent of Egyptians believed that the Middle

East would be more democratic after the war.[41] These views surely provide evidence that the

U.S. public diplomacy campaign has not succeeded in changing the negative views of the U.S. in

the region.[42]

The findings of this survey in Egypt show that that Egyptian public opinion towards the

U.S. is highly unfavorable with only 13 percent who expressed a favorable opinion compared to

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[39] Ibid.
[40] Shibley Telhami, "Arab Public Opinion on the United States and Iraq: Prospects for Changing Prewar Views," *Brooking Review* 21, no.3, (2003): 24.
[41] Ibid., 27.
[42] Ibid.

79 percent who expressed an unfavorable view. When asked whether this opinion is based on U.S. foreign policy or their own values, the results were more evenly divided with 43 percent basing it on their values and 46 percent on U.S. policy.[43] This shows a clear indication that the majority of Egyptians surveyed have a negative view of the U.S. What is less clear, however, is what the majority of Egyptians base their opinion on; their own values or U.S. policies.

Other questions asked in this survey concentrated on the issue of the U.S.-led war in Iraq. The findings show that 63 percent of Egyptians felt that the war with Iraq would bring less democracy and three-fourths (79 percent) say the war will bring less peace to the Middle East. In addition, 74 percent of the Egyptians surveyed believed that the war would cause more terrorism toward the U.S.[44] These findings show that the majority of Egyptians surveyed are pessimistic about the prospect of democracy and peace in the Middle East after the U.S.-led war in Iraq.

One drawback from Telhami's mass survey is indicative of the nature of close-ended questions. The kinds of questions chosen for the study provide preconceived categories to which each respondent must conform. They must also choose from the answers provided in the study, which may also lead them to consider options they may not have otherwise. When asked about the U.S.-led war in Iraq, for example, the option of "less democracy" may cause a respondent to consider that as a possible outcome of the war and may have influenced their answer. Also, the respondent does not have the ability to show to what extent they agree with the statement. As with all social science research, it is always a possibility that a respondent will not answer truthfully. The promise of confidentiality, however, most likely alleviates most fears associated with a repressive political environment.

Exploring the perceptions of educated individuals allows for a valuable comparison with data from this mass public opinion survey. The combination of both qualitative and quantitative

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[43] Ibid.
[44] Ibid.

analysis gives a holistic understanding of Egyptian public opinion, including both the masses and the educated elite. The research will provide valuable insights essential for those seeking to capture the hearts and minds of the peoples of the Middle East and reverse the rise of anti-American sentiment.

CHAPTER 2   LITERATURE REVIEW

The Importance of Political Culture

There have been various theoretical and empirical studies conducted on the significance

of political culture and public opinion. In *The Civic Culture* (1963), Gabriel Almond and Sidney

Verba were among the first to empirically study the affects of attitudes and beliefs of citizens on

the viability of democratic institutions. They theorized that peoples' belief in three main areas

comprise their civic culture; the ability to influence political decisions, feelings of positive affect

of the political system, and belief that other citizens are basically trustworthy. They took a

psychological and individualistic approach through survey research methods in a cross-national

context by examining the U.S., Great Britain, Germany, Italy, and Mexico.[45] *The Civic Culture*

described the term "parochial" as an individual who is more involved in his family or community

and expects very little from government.[46] Satisfaction would be a result of personal efforts or

because of another institution such as the family.

Almond and Verba found that countries with a high level of these civic culture attitudes

are more likely to adopt and sustain democracy over time than countries with low levels

regardless of socioeconomic factors. They concluded that, "Unless the political culture is able to

support a democratic system, the chances for the success of that system is slim."[47] These findings

have significantly contributed to the study of political culture by emphasizing the importance of a

society's normative evaluations of a political system.

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[45] Gabriel. A. Almond and Sidney Verba, eds., *The Civic Culture: Political Attitudes and Democracy in Five Nations* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1963), 46.
[46] Ibid., 17.
[47] Ibid.

Almond and Verba's work has a few shortcomings, however, due to its limited focus of traditional questions regarding democratic theory that reflect their bias in favor of stable democracies. Their view of political culture is quite simplistic by suggesting that a society is either conducive to democracy or not. They lack a nuanced approach that takes into account varying stages of political culture throughout the democratization process. To explain the complex nature of political culture they use overly simplistic categories including terms such as parochial, subject or participant.[48] This fails to take into account the possibility of distinct variations of political culture due to various sub-groups within society.

Later works such as *Political Culture and Political Development* (1965) provided a more nuanced approach to the study of political culture. Pye and Verba sought to go beyond the study of formal structures and institutions of politics and focus on the "beliefs that affect the ways in which people act with these political institutions."[49] Political beliefs both affect and are affected by the manner in which political structures operate. A nation's political culture is affected by the experiences that individuals have with the political process. This leads to the study of the learning experiences that allow political culture to be passed down from one generation to the next. This includes a nation's political history and how political beliefs are affected by the memories of political events.[50]

Sidney Verba explains how political events are perceived and interpreted by people who have previously held beliefs.[51] Political history is described as a series of events interpreted differently by different people depending on their beliefs. Political beliefs are based on general values, norms, emotional attachments which affect the manner in which individuals become involved in a political system. Both meaning and interpretation are critical to how a person

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[48] Ibid. 17-19.
[49] Sidney Verba ed., "Comparative Political Culture," in *Political Culture and Political Development,* ed. Lucian W. Pye (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1965), 514.
[50] Ibid., 515.
[51] Ibid.

perceives external political events. Political culture is a part of the larger culture of a society and includes general values not related to political life.[52]

Verba also introduces dimensions of how to analyze political culture on a national level. The first concerns the first and most basic issue, national identity, which is the extent to which an individual considers them self a member of a nation-state. If this sense of identity is strong, it legitimizes the activities of national leaders and makes it possible for them to mobilize the support of its followers. The second dimension is an individual's identification with fellow citizens, which is the sense of integration that a person has with others in the political system. A country in which individuals have confidence in other citizens as political actors is a critical aspect of a democratic political culture. Another dimension concerns beliefs about governmental output. This concerns a citizen's expectation of what the government ought to do for them. These expectations can range from absolutely no governmental expectations to the strong desirability of governmental activity. The last dimension concerns the process of making decisions. This is the beliefs about the way in which the government makes decisions. In some societies, citizens know very little about how decisions are made and have no desire to learn. In this situation they consider themselves "subjects of the government rather than participants with a legitimate voice in deciding what the government does."[53] These dimensions are a valuable foundation for future studies of political culture and will later be used to analyze this study's findings.

This study also focused on differences among groups within one national culture and the process of disaggregating the political culture of a society. They analyzed elites and masses separately in order to study the differences or similarities between them in each country. They examined the political culture of six countries: Turkey, India, England, Ethiopia, Egypt and Japan

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[52] Ibid.
[53] Ibid., 542.

and found multiple political cultures in each.[54] These findings have laid the foundation for later

empirical studies to compare political cultures of sub-groups including elites and masses using

behavioral approach. They emphasize the importance of statistically significant survey research

that adheres to strict methodological guidelines to produce quantifiable results. The intent is to

illuminate researcher personal bias and develop scientifically sound conclusions that can be

replicated and verified. The behavioral approach has considerable scientific merits especially

with regard to its methodological accuracy and generalizability. Nevertheless, behavioralism

alone can not fully capture the complexity of issues inherent in social science and political culture

in particular. Comprehensive qualitative and area studies approaches add the depth and rich

detail crucial to the study of a society as well as the political attitudes of individuals within that

society.

In *Political Culture and Political Development*, Leonard Binder examines the political

culture of Egypt after the 1952 National Revolution. In the early 1960s, during the Nasser

regime, Binder found that university graduates seemed to have a general liberal and parliamentary

attitude regarding politics.[55] Both the educated citizens and government leaders were attempting

to mix traditional Egyptian values with the values of the West. They sought to modernize

without sacrificing important social and personal values related to tradition.[56] The government

chose to sacrifice traditional values in order to face its problems and international environment.

That caused educated Egyptians to keep their traditional sentiments as private affairs and in areas

of their social life. Traditional values were not for public discussion or of concern of the

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[54] Ibid.
[55] Leonard Binder, "Egypt: The Integrative Revolution," in *Political Culture and Political Development,* eds. Lucian W. Pye and Sidney Verba (Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 1965), 442.
[56] Ibid., 403.

government. Demographic and economic problems facing the government as well as the dignity of the nation were of central importance, not the personal matters of the individual.[57]

The result was a political culture of educated Egyptians as one that did not identify with the acts of the government. The private lives of the educated were only minimally integrated with their political lives. Educated Egyptians perceived the government as "the private affair of President's Nasser's own inner circle"[58] making it nearly impossible to enter this inner circle of trusted advisors. That the individual must adjust to what the government decides to do even if considered unsatisfactory. Governmental decisions should be tolerated even if they are uncomfortable to the individual because it is most likely what is good for Egyptians.[59]

Binder also explained how Egyptians from the educated classes consider their government as a source of pride regarding its international accomplishments. They were quiet pleased with the increased influence of Egypt in international affairs. The fact that the great powers such as Britain and France took great interest in Egypt and rather concerned about the rest of the Middle East added to this sense of pride. Most importantly, they understood that the neighboring Arab states feared and respected Nasser as a leader in the Arab world.[60] The increased prominence of Egypt in the international arena delighted these citizens who were subjected to colonial rule for many years prior.

Nevertheless Binder maintains that the political culture of this sub-group of Egyptian society was largely based on the idea of disassociation with the political process. Political support for the Nasser regime was, for the most part, passive and lacking opportunities for participation rendering the government, "relatively distant, cold object hover much its leaders

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[57] Ibid.
[58] Ibid., 400.
[59] Ibid.
[60] Ibid.

may appear psychologically familiar and warm."[61] The educated individual cannot participate in

the Egyptian government as a member of a group offering an alternative policy. This is because

there is only one policy and everyone must conform to it. The only way special interests can be

pursued, is if an organization that represents those interests has the ability to penetrate the

exclusive administration of the government bureaucracy.[62] This created a situation in which the

educated in Egypt accommodated themselves to the policies of the government without

participating in the political process.

Binder also explained Egyptian political culture as an interactive mix of the distinctive

orientations of many groups such as the middle and lower class as well as the bureaucratic elite.

These findings provide evidence that sub-groups within a society may have different political

cultures and varying perceptions. This reiterates the importance of the present analysis that

explores the perceptions of members of distinct sub-group in Egypt. However, Binder's study is

quite outdated and does not account for recent changes in the international and domestic arena.

The current interview research explores whether the respondents still feel disconnected with their

government today and whether they continue to show signs of apathy towards the political

process.

Another more recent work was conducted by Joshua Stacher in the summer of 2001 in

The Arab Studies Quarterly. He examines the contemporary political culture in Egypt by

studying the political beliefs and values of two separate groups in society, the elites and the

masses. He defines the 'masses' with terms such as the "popular" sector, "man in the street", or

the "silent majority" and the elites as "intellectuals who are educated and frequently writing or

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[61] Ibid., 402.
[62] Ibid.

publicly commenting on political events or trends in contemporary Egypt."[63] His aim was to find the cause for the apathetic political culture often alienated from the political process during the current Mubarak presidency. His theory rests on the idea that Egyptian political culture is not conducive to democracy due to the repressive government that alienates the masses as well as the elite to prevent the development of grassroots movements for democracy. [64]

Stacher offers many reasons to account for the apathetic Egyptian society. He first identifies many tactics used by Egyptian political leadership to stifle democratic political culture among the masses often called the "silent majority."[65] The Egyptian government deters political participation through intense media campaigns that negatively depict members of civil society groups, especially in the area of human rights, often by referring to them to as immoral or thieves.[66] Fear of punishment is also used as a tool to keep people to stay away from non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and political activist groups.[67] This further suppresses any prospects for democratic political culture by deterring citizens from working with human rights activists or participating in pro-democracy groups. Other repressive government measures in Egypt are more direct. Teachers who have attempted to conduct workshops on the use democratic tools in the classroom, for example, have been detained for up to 24 hours and punished by taking 15 days of pay off their salaries.[68] Punishment is also used by the government to exclude and isolate members of society from politics and nongovernmental organizations.

This type of system has a devastating effect on a democratic political culture and on democracy as a whole. People who are attempting to participate in the politics through formal channels become frustrated and disenchanted by the entire political process. The results is that

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[63] Joshua A. Stacher, "A Democracy With Fangs and Claws and Its Effects on Egyptian Political Culture," in *Arab Studies Quarterly* 23, no. 3, (2001): 85, 83-99.
[64] Ibid.
[65] Ibid.
[66] Ibid.
[67] Ibid.
[68] Ibid.

accepting authoritarianism becomes and easier choice and therefore, emerges as the normal and acceptable behavior.[69] As a result, it is a common phenomenon in Egypt to be politically apathetic and personally uninterested in the state and its political activities.

Stacher's field research continues an analysis of Egyptian political culture by concentrating on a very significant group in society with regards to democratic ideals, the intellectuals. He suggests that since the 1952 national revolution, political and economic changes have affected Egyptian intellectual society. They have lacked a unified vision, which has reinforced the mass culture of political alienation and immobilization.[70] These intellectuals are divided and are unable to reach a consensus about what an acceptable government constitutes. This shows that there are indeed separate sub-groups within Egypt that may have a distinct political culture.

This study show that the divisions within Egyptian intellectual political culture lack direction and unity about how to lay the foundations of democracy and result in an inability to force the existing regime to make significant reforms. One branch of elites favors what he refers to as the "Arab Concept" of democracy instead of the Western approach, in which powerful ruling elite would have ability to mobilize the masses while not being susceptible to checks and balances like in many Western democracies. The lack of governmental checks and balances describes a system resembling an elitist form of democracy. Others believe that democracy requires a pan-Arab nation while another sect equates democracy with social justice. These substantial divisions in Egyptian intellectual circles have done very little to promote a unified voice for democratic progress or promote a democratic political culture among the masses.[71]

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[69] Ibid.
[70] Ibid., 90.
[71] Ibid.

Stacher sees the presidencies of Nassar, Sadat, and Mubarak as maintaining and strengthening authoritarianism after independence from colonialism and the establishment of an independent nation-state in 1952. He attributes their leadership as contributing to the present state of society saying that their reign:

> Helps explain the apathetic, alienated, and immobile mass political culture, in combination, with the ambivalent behavior and schizophrenic attitudes of the intellectual-elite sub-group who appear to become more entrenched in the system.[72]

Thus, he concludes accurately, that the lack of clear direction and aim of the Egyptian political culture allows the unrepresentative political system to prevail unchallenged. He believes that the widespread apathy among society is a consequence of historical and contemporary events that have affected their beliefs and values about democracy.

Stacher's work provides a comprehensive study of the political culture of Egyptian society. The apathetic nature among intellectuals can be seen as a consequence of historical and contemporary events that influence their beliefs and values about democracy. His study does not examine the possible effects of external events on political culture. These findings provide a valuable framework for even more current research of Egyptian society and political culture that takes into account perceptions of outside forces such as U.S. democratization policy.

Mass Public Opinion Surveys

Mass public opinion surveys have been conducted throughout the Middle East in order to examine the political culture of the general population. A large sample of respondents that is randomly selected allows for a valuable generalization to be made about the larger population. One public opinion poll found the Egyptian political culture to be apathetic in a 1995 study

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[72] Ibid., 92.

conducted by the Egyptian newspaper, *Al-Ahram Weekly*.[73] The poll sampled the views of 1,505 randomly chosen men and women from Cairo's two main railway stations in Ramses and Giza and assured of anonymity. Those surveyed varied in both age and education level. There were mixed results regarding domestic political issues and the Egyptian multi-party system. Support for the multi-party system was evident as 73 percent agreed that it was beneficial with only 14 percent disagreeing and 13 percent with no opinion. This contradicts the results of another question that asked if the current multi-party system under Mubarak was useful as only 36 percent agreed with that statement and the larger 46 percent replied that it was not. Political alienation was confirmed further when only 36 percent could identify a political party that represented them and 40 percent claimed that no political party represented them.[74] These answers are surprising given the fact that Egypt maintains that there are fourteen fully-functioning political parties. The reality, however, is that these parties are substantially ineffective because they do not represent the interests of many Egyptian citizens who feel completely disassociated with them and desire to remain outside of the political system.

Another opinion poll conducted by the *Group for Democratic Development* in October 1996 surveyed 5,100 respondents in seven electoral districts in Egypt by random sampling methods.[75] This survey found that 88 percent of those surveyed were not participating or affiliated with a political party and 94.32 percent were not participating or affiliated with a civil society organization.[76] These findings support the argument that the masses in Egypt are indeed apathetic and uninterested in changing in the political status quo.

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[73] Nader Fergany, "Yes to Pluralism, No To Violence," *Al-Ahram Weekly* (29 December 1994-4 January 1995).
[74] Ibid.
[75] Public Opinion Poll, The Group for Democratic Development, "Before Its Too Late; Field Study on Political Participation in Egypt," prepared by Hafez Abu Saada (Cairo, Egypt: 1997), 17.
[76] Ibid.

The findings in these polls show clearly that there is little of support for political parties in Egypt. The majority of citizens do not utilize political parties as a tool for meaningful participation. Stacher attributes this to society's general perception is that the political parties are as autocratic as the government and not representative of the diverse sectors of society.[77] He blames the Mubarak government for contributing to this gap by enacting restrictions and financial obstacles for opposition parties ultimately preventing them from mobilizing vital popular support.[78]

Recent studies of political culture and public opinion account for more recent global events like September 11th and the U.S.-led war in Iraq. Survey research shows that mass public opinion in the Arab world has become increasingly skeptical of American intentions in the region. One researched public opinion in 44 countries between July and October 2002. It was conducted by *The Pew Global Attitudes Project* is called "What the World Thinks in 2002: How Global Publics View Their Lives, Their Countries, The World, America."[79] It has contributed very significant findings about perceptions around the world. For the purpose of this study, only findings from Egypt are relevant and will be discussed.

Conducted in October 2002, this survey was conducted in Cairo and its surrounding areas. The questions were asked in face-to-face interviews spoken in the Arabic language with the respondents being adults between the ages of 18-60. The total sample size was 1,013 with a 3.1% margin of error.[80] Its results show that the great majority of Egyptians have an unfavorable view of the U.S. The results show that 69 percent had an unfavorable view and only 6 percent had a favorable view (compared to Telhami's survey that found 79 percent and 13 percent

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[77] Stacher, 88.
[78] Ibid., 95
[79] Public Opinion Poll, The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, "What the World Thinks in 2002: How Global Publics View Their Lives, Their Countries, The World, America," (Washington D.C.: 2002), 1-89.
[80] Ibid.

respectively). When compared to opinions about Americans, Egyptians surveyed showed views

nearly as negative with only 13 percent expressing a favorable view. The Pew Research Center

also found that in Egypt, Muslims are more likely to have an unfavorable view of the U.S. than

non-Muslims.[81] In regards to the U.S. foreign policy and specifically the war on terror, the results

are also significant. When asked if U.S. foreign policy considers others, only 17 percent of

Egyptians answered 'yes' and 66 percent answered 'no'. Egyptians surveyed had an even more

negative view of the U.S.-led war on terrorism with only 5 percent favoring it and 79 percent

opposing it.[82]

When asked about their view regarding the spread of American ideas and customs,

Egyptians surveyed gave some the most negative impressions of all the countries surveyed (only

Pakistan showed a less positive view). Only 6 percent of all Egyptian respondents felt that the

wide diffusion of U.S. ideas and customs was a good thing.[83] The question about U.S.-style

democracy was permitted in all countries surveyed except Egypt, which shows the censorship of

Egyptian government. Overall the Egyptians surveyed had some of the most negative views of

both U.S. policies and ideas. This leads one to believe that the Egyptian government's alliance

with the U.S. is not representative with the wishes of the majority of its people.

Other significant findings include the latest in a series of surveys by the *Pew Research*

Center for the People and the Press. It researched a wide variety of countries besides the U.S.

including European countries such as Great Britain, France, Germany, and Russia as well as

Turkey, Morocco, Jordan, and Pakistan from the greater Middle East and North Africa.[84]

Telephone interviews were conducted among adults (18 years or older) as a representative

nationwide sample of 1,000 in the U.S., 500 in Great Britain, 504 in France, and 500 in

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[81] Ibid., 57.
[82] Ibid., 59.
[83] Ibid.
[84] Public Opinion Poll, The Pew Research Center for the People and the Press, "A Year After Iraq War: Mistrusts of America in Europe Ever Higher, Muslim Anger Persists" (Washington D.C.: 2004).

Germany.[85] Face-to-face interviews were conducted from a representative nationwide sample of 1,000 adults in Jordan, 1,002 in Russia, and 1,017 in Turkey while the sample of 1,000 adults interviewed in Morocco was solely urban and in Pakistan, predominately urban.[86]

Conducted from February 19 to March 3, 2004, the survey showed discontent with America and its policies increasing even further since the war in Iraq in both Europe and the greater Middle East. Most respondents from countries other than the U.S. expressed significant skepticism of U.S. motives for its anti-terror campaign. The predominantly Muslim countries still remained angry toward the U.S. with majorities in all four countries doubting the sincerity of the war on terrorism saying that the policy is an effort to control oil in the Middle East and dominate the world. Oil is mentioned most often as a U.S. motive for the war on terror with a majority in seven of the nine countries making that claim.[87]

The survey also found that the majorities in five countries surveyed say that the U.S. war on terrorism has been enacted so that it can dominate the world including Jordan (61%), Turkey (61%), and Morocco (60%). Approximately half of the respondents from Muslim countries give two other ulterior motives for the American anti-terror campaign such as, "helping Israel and targeting unfriendly Muslim governments."[88] This shows that there has been little change in the opinions of respondents in these countries about the war in Iraq with opposition nearly universal.

Another interesting finding shows that Americans have a far different view of the impact of the war in Iraq than do all other people in the other surveyed countries. While Americans generally believed that the Iraq war has helped the fight on terrorism, there is a broad agreement among other countries that it actually hurt the anti-terror campaign.[89] Another point of divergence is the impact of the Iraq war on America's image in the world. The majority of

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[85] Ibid.
[86] Ibid.
[87] Ibid., 18.
[88] Ibid., 2.
[89] Ibid.

Americans felt that the war showed the power of the U.S. military and revealed their country as a trustworthy supporter of democracy around the world while at least half of the respondents in the eight other countries view the U.S. as less trustworthy and its military prowess generally not viewed in a positive light as a result of the war.[90] There is a wide gap of perceptions between many in the greater Middle East (and in Europe) and the majority of Americans.

Other interesting public opinion poll findings include research conducted by the *Gallup Poll* organization three months after the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks. Ten thousand residents of nine predominantly Muslim countries were interviewed face-to-face. The results show that 74% of respondents did not believe that the Arabs were involved with the September 11th terrorist attacks.[91] There was a great deal of skepticism among those surveyed about who were responsible for the attacks on the U.S. Egypt was not included in this particular survey making it unclear whether Egyptians would also fall into this category

Cameron Brown provides a thorough analysis of this Gallup Poll in the article, "Middle Eastern Anti-Americanism, September 11 and After." Three main events are explained to account for the anti-American sentiment among Arabs and Muslims: reactions to the September 11th terrorist attacks, U.S. invasion of Afghanistan, and 2003 Gulf war in Iraq.[92] This paper claims that reactions in the Middle East are distinct from those of the rest of the world for two reasons. The first is the idea that the majority of Middle Eastern reactions placed the blame primarily on mistaken U.S. foreign policy rather than on the mistaken doctrines of the terrorists.[93]

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[90] Ibid., 5.
[91] Public Opinion Poll, Gallup Poll Organization, "Poll of the Islamic World: Sept. 11 Morally Unjustifiable?" 5 March 2002, [database on-line] available from http://www.gallup.com/poll/tb/goverPubl/20020305b.asp (accessed 7 June 2004).
[92] Cameron Brown, "Middle Eastern Anti-Americanism, September 11 and After," in *Loathing America*, eds. Barry Rubin and Judy Colp Rubin (Israel: The Gloria Center, 2004), 95, 95-118.
[93] Ibid., 99.

Since U.S. foreign policy is perceived as the root cause of the attacks, they suggest that the U.S. should learn from this experience and change its disruptive policies in the region.[94]

The second feature that distinguishes the general reaction in the Middle East concerning the September 11th attacks deals with Arab self-conception. The majority of people in the region feel that they have been victims of aggression by various powers for many years. Although the region formally condemned the attacks and expressed regret for the loss of American life, Brown continues, the widespread notion was that the U.S. was experiencing only a small fraction of the pain that has been felt by Arabs for many years. He cites a widely circulated newspaper in Amman, Jordan called *Al-Ra'y*, described this sentiment by stating,

> Perhaps what happened in the United States yesterday should serve as a reminder of the ongoing acts of oppression, aggression, killing, suppression, and starvation in the land of Palestine.[95]

Other newspapers like *Al-Safir* in Beirut, Lebanon have also cited raids by American fighters in Iraq, Libya, and Lebanon as additional examples of how U.S. foreign policy has continuously victimized Arab people.[96]

The most significant contribution in Brown's work to the present study is the discussion of widespread conspiracy theories permeating throughout the entire region. Writers suggested various extraordinary schemes about concerning who was really responsible for the attacks. One conspiracy theory claimed that the attacks must have been orchestrated by someone within the insider knowledge of U.S. aviation and communication systems such as the U.S. government itself. While others claimed that the accuracy and preciseness of the attacks concluded that there

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[94] Ibid.

[95] *Al-Ra'y* (Jordan) 12 September 2001.

[96] *Al-Safir* (Lebanon) 15 September 2001.

must have been bombs strategically planted inside the buildings by domestic American extremists.[97]

The most repeated conspiracy theory in the region in the media and among average citizens deemed the Israelis as perpetrators of the attacks. The rationale behind the Israeli attack was perceived as a means to "push the American people, President Bush, and NATO to submit even more to the Jewish Zionist ideology…"[98] Some thought that even if the Arabs were responsible for the attacks, the Israeli intelligence agency *Mossad* was behind them. The motivation was described as follows, "The Israeli regime knows that only by inflicting such a wound and blaming it on 'Islamic terror' could it wipe out any dissent to current American policy."[99] The prevalence of these conspiracy theories continued in the region despite the 2001 *Al-Jazeera* broadcast of a videotape showing *Al-Qaeda* terrorist leader, Osama Bin Laden, gloating about the success of the attacks.[100]

Brown explains that while there may be a variety of competing theories and disagreements about who was responsible for the terrorist attacks, there seems to be widespread agreement in the region that the Arabs or the Muslims could not have been responsible. Many Middle Eastern writers and journalists claim that no one in the Arab world is skilled or capable enough to perform such a complex operation. This illustrates that Arab self-conception is that of being incompetent and incapable. [101]

While Brown's work provides an insightful analysis of conspiracy theories in the Middle East after September 11th, it neglects to provide a comprehensive analysis of what shapes their perceptions. She fails to give useful answers as to the reasons behind this self-conception of incompetence. By not thoroughly examining the reasons behind the conspiracy theories, Brown

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[97] Brown, 110.
[98] *Al-Dustur* (Jordan) 13 September 2001.
[99] *Jomhuri-ye Eslami* (Iran)*,* 13 September 2001.
[100] Brown, 112.
[101] Ibid., 113.

seemingly depicts Arabs as irrational and illogical. The present study seeks to fill these gaps by providing a thorough analysis of the perception of each respondent including how and why they were formed.

While these surveys provide valuable data as to 'what' the perceptions are of the general mass population, they fail to give sophisticated answers as to 'why' and 'to what extent'. They do not allow each respondent the freedom to use their own words to describe events, feelings, opinions, and interpretations. They must choose a close-ended answer that best describes their perception, in effect, not allowing a unique personal narrative to develop and standardizing the concept of perception.

<div align="center">Perspectives of Two Egyptian Intellectuals</div>

There have been interviews conducted with individual people in Egypt allowing them to express their unique perception of the U.S. and its foreign policies. A recent 2003 interview with one of Egypt's best known intellectuals, Ahmed Kamal Aboulmagd, in the *New York Times* clearly expresses the "Arab world's despair."[102] The former Senior Aid to former President Sadat and consultant to the United Nations and has spent more than twenty years working on projects aimed at promoting dialogue between Western and Arab civilizations. He claims that America's Arab friends have never felt so estranged from the United States. He says that "people in Egypt and many parts of the Arab world used to love America, and now they have a sense of being betrayed, misunderstood, and taken lightly."[103]

Like many Egyptian intellectuals of his generation, Aboulmagd has studied American democracy and political values and has long considered it a model to follow. His view seems to

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[102] Susan Sachs, "Egyptian Intellectual Speaks of Arab World's Despair," *New York Times*, 8 April 2003, sec. B.
[103] Ibid.

be rapidly changing as a reaction to current U.S. foreign policy. Aboulmagd claims that he can

no longer defend the U.S. in the present situation and says,

> To most people in this area, the United States is the source of evil on planet earth. And whether we like it or not, it is the Bush administration that is to blame.[104]

He claims that the U.S.-led war in Iraq is widely seen by the Arab world as an attack on all Arabs

and Muslims by President Bush and his fellow Christians. As an intellectual that has previously

pushed for American ideals, Aboulmagd says that he is unable to do so anymore because of the

widespread mistrust of the U.S. throughout the region.

Aboulmagd belongs to a sub-group of educated Egyptians that could serve as a pro-

democracy partner for the Bush administration's policy in the Arab world.[105] Such language from

a long-time moderate among the Egyptian elite can be seen as a warning sign of the deep distress

among many in the Arab world. Similar opinions are common among Arab businessmen,

university professors, and senior government officials. These are precisely the people that could

help the Bush administration's mission to bring democracy to the entire Middle East.[106] This

interview provides an in-depth view of one individual's perception and may be similar to others

in Egypt.

A similar 2004 article in the *Christian Science Monitor* presents the perception of Ahmed

Ibrahim, an Egyptian businessman of who also used to love America and had always dreamed of

living there.[107] In the past, he had always thought of the U.S. as a good model for Egypt to follow

and imagined similar freedoms for both himself and his family.

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[104] Ibid.
[105] Ibid.
[106] Ibid.
[107] Dan Murphy, "U.S. Standing With Arabs Hits a Low," *The Christian Science Monitor*, 2 September 2004.

Over the past year, Ibrahim says has changed his perspective calling the U.S. "an enemy of democracy in his region."[108] As a successful businessman in his mid-30s, he believes that the U.S. no longer stands for democracy. He points to previous U.S. policies as reasons for the change in his attitude. He describes how the U.S. once supported the Shah of Iran as the leader of the country before abandoning him. He makes a similar argument regarding the shift in U.S. policy towards Saddam Hussein. The Iraq example is used as an example of how the U.S. again betrayed its past alliance with Hussein by overthrowing his entire regime.[109] These contradictory U.S. policies are used as examples of hypocrisy and reasons of why not to trust America's intentions in the region today.

Ibrahim's stance is that the U.S. is not consistent between its rhetoric and its actions and therefore, he deduces, there must be other hidden motives. He claims that the U.S. may proclaim democracy, but its hidden agenda involves controlling the Arabs in the Middle East. He emphasizes his suspicion by saying, "now that I look back, we can see that the plan to control us has been there all along" and "they're just shuffling Arabs around like pieces on a game board."[110] He claims that anti-American opinions are so intense that they are actually becoming an all-encompassing worldview.[111] The idea that the U.S. has motives to control the Middle East has increasingly permeated throughout the region throughout the past few years and especially since the 2003 war in Iraq.

The article sites two U.S. policies as the main causes for Arab animosity towards the U.S. The policies towards the Palestinians and Iraq are causing the most frustration and anger in the Middle East. Ibrahim continues his argument by criticizing the present deteriorating situation of U.S. presence in Iraq. He claims that the U.S. does not intend to bring democracy to Iraq but

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[108] Ibid.
[109] Ibid.
[110] Ibid.
[111] Ibid.

rather is an effort to secure oil and assert its military dominance. "Now they say they're bringing democracy to Iraq, but it's just getting worse and worse."[112]

As part of Egypt's small middle class, Ibrahim would be an ideal partner for the U.S. who plans to foster democratic transformation in the region. He is not as subject to the lure of extremist religious ideologies and genuinely wants his government to institute reforms.[113] Although he is a moderate in the region, he clearly does not trust U.S. intentions as the champion of democracy. Losing credibility in the eyes of moderates like Ibrahim will damage U.S. interests in the region and possibly make their objectives in the region unachievable.[114] This is another individual interview that allows for an analysis of only one person's opinions and feelings about the U.S. and its policies. It does not allow for a valuable comparison with other moderates in Egypt. The study of perception and political culture requires various methods of analysis to fully capture its complexity.

The study of political culture has a history dating back to the l960s with work of Pye and Almond. It set the foundation for future works by highlighting the importance of psychological judgments for the political functioning of a society. Its findings were simplistic and assumed that the political culture with be uniform throughout society. Pye and Verba's study provided a more nuanced approach by taking into account that elites and masses would have different political cultures and examined a wider variety of countries. Sidney Verba has provided useful dimensions to analyze political culture. However, this study is quite outdated and does not account for current political culture.

Poll research conducted in the Middle East has shown to be a good indicator of perceptions of the masses in the relatively understudied region. It quantifies the findings of the

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[112] Ibid.
[113] Ibid.
[114] Ibid.

close-ended questions for a representative sample of the entire population. The interviews that have been cited above can be reduced to anecdotal evidence. The do not use systematic methodology among several cases. It is therefore incapable of method of comparison without the ability to find patterns among perspectives. One individual interview lacks the ability to consistently examining many subjects using the same questions. It does not provide meaningful data to be analyzed and will not contribute social science research more broadly.

Qualitative interviewing of individual educated Egyptians seeks to fill these gaps found in previous research. It highlights the importance of a comprehensive approach to political culture. The concept of democratization is explored through the eyes of members from the educated elite in Egyptian society. The interviews provide what poll research lacks; a nuanced and comprehensive approach to complex meanings and interpretations which are unique to personal narratives. This method provides answers to why opinions have been formed using the respondents' own words. It penetrates the mind of individuals within a vital group in a political culture model and provides a deeper understanding of the evaluative and normative aspects of their perceptions.

CHAPTER 3   A CONCISE HISTORICAL OVERVIEW

To truly understand Egyptian perceptions of U.S. foreign policy and democratization today, a special emphasis must be given to the historical events that have helped shape them throughout the years. These past experiences have influenced the way in which each respondent views the U.S. and democratization and the normative judgments that accompany them. Egyptians today are aware of past experiences of British colonialism and are significantly affected by the Arab-Israeli conflict and the U.S. role in the conflict as well as the second Gulf war in Iraq. Egyptian political culture cannot be examined until these events and their impacts on political beliefs have been addressed.

Egyptians today are well aware of their ancient civilization that thrived under the reign of the Pharaohs thousands of years ago. They are very proud of their long history and are described by Joseph Lorenz as people with "dignity and self-assurance" which is obvious by "the impression they give of knowing who they are and what their culture represents".[115] He claims that this comes from an identity that has been shaped by a variety of factors. Similar to that of other Middle Easterners, their identity is shaped partly by Islam, the connection with other Arabs, and the victory over colonialism.

In the case of Egyptian identity there is the added consciousness that their civilization flourished for thousands of years before the birth of Western civilization making it a unique case in point. Ancient Egyptian civilization is an underlining theme in every Egyptian's view of

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[115] Lorenz, 3.

themselves and the world.[116] National identity is very strong as most citizens considering

themselves distinctly Egyptian. One of the most significant factors that account for Egyptian

leadership in the Arab world is the state-of-mind of the Egyptians themselves. Collectively, they

have a great sense of national purpose that expects their government to assert its leadership

among the other Arab states.[117] They expect their regime to be involved in regional issues and

play an active role in relations between its neighbors.

Egypt has largely remained socially, politically, and culturally dominated by an elite

group since the ancient times. The era of European colonialism, for example, allowed the British

to control Egypt either directly or indirectly for over seventy years. Before the British occupation

in 1882, many in Egypt were headed toward constitutional rule and democracy including

measures to limit the powers of the autocratic khedive.[118] These moves toward democracy were

stifled when the British sought to rule over what they saw as inferior people. They reduced their

educational budget for fear that they would become aware of their inferior status and demand

nationalist ideals.[119]

Forty years of British colonial rule of Egypt (1882-1922) continued a pattern of elite

dominance in Egypt. The structures of government institutions were in place without any real

political power. Constitutional rule and meaningful political participation was subdued. The

transition toward a sustainable democracy was never encouraged and most of Egyptian society

largely left out of the political process. Egypt's experience with many years of colonialism has

contributed to the lack democratic and political development by creating a political system that

does not respond to the needs of its people. Even after British occupation formally came to an

end in 1922, Egypt's domestic affairs were still dominated by the colonial power. British forces

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[116] Ibid.
[117] Ibid., xiii.
[118] Rashid Khalidi, *Resurrecting Empire: Western Footprints and America's Perilous Path in the Middle East,* (Boston: Beacon Press, 2004), 19.
[119] Ibid., 18.

still retained its military bases in Egypt and controlled the Canal Zone as well as the country's foreign relations.[120] They continued to restrict Egypt's independence by interfering in domestic politics, which "in part prevented parliamentary government and its institutions from taking root in the political life of the country."[121]

The memories of colonial rule and the struggle for independence is still a very much alive in modern societies throughout the Middle East. Many older Egyptians remember the days of the colonial era when they had to struggle for liberation from Western powers. These lessons are communicated to younger generations through the national education curriculum, statues, museums, and other memorial tributes.[122] The constant reminders of colonialism keep the memories of Western cultural dominance alive in order to protect themselves from ever being treated as inferior again. The anti-colonial sentiment is crucial for understanding modern voices of opposition to Western powers. It provides a backdrop to how Egyptians perceive the actions by dominant powers of the West today.

The anti-colonialism sentiment drove the Egyptian revolution in 1952 with a military group called the Free Officers taking over the country. They were popular because of their nationalistic rhetoric that criticized the former ruling class for betraying the welfare of the country to foreign interests. They promised to rid the Egypt from these foreign influences and broaden economic opportunities for citizens. Since many of the Free Officers were not from the highest social classes, their rise to power altered the structure of wealth and distribution. All three Egyptian presidents, Gamal Abdul Nasser, Anwar Sadat, and Hosni Mubarak, were instrumental during this revolution. They were among the new elite who, despite their promises, maintained the huge gap between the elite and the masses. They maintained a similar political situation as

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[120] Khalidi, 20.
[121] P.J. Vatikiotis, *The History of Egypt from Muhammad Ali to Sadat,* 2d ed. (London: Weidenfeld and Nicolson, 1980)
[122] Khalidi, 30.

before national independence with a generally unresponsive government and a Parliament with very limited powers.

While European powers were viewed negatively during the early nineteenth century, the U.S. was mostly seen by Middle Easterners as a "beacon of hope for those aspiring to democracy and freedom from foreign control."[123] The U.S. was seen as having no imperialist plans in the region and representing compassionate activities such as education and health care. Even after becoming involved in World War II and establishing military bases in the region, the U.S. was still viewed positively as an anti-colonial power.[124]

U.S. support for the Zionist movement began to change its positive image in the eyes of Middle Easterners. As the Jewish nationalist movement, Zionism was an effort to create a nation-state for Jews from around the world in the land of Palestine. This strongly conflicted with the nationalistic aspirations of the Arab Palestinians. As the colonial power, the British created a mandate that supported the Zionist aspirations and granted them 55 percent of Palestine.[125] The Arabs rejected this situation based on principle and saw it as a new form of Western colonialism against them. This anti-colonial mindset is what makes the creation of Israel such a highly-charged issue for all Middle Easterners.

After World War II, the British decided to end the mandate and send the issue to the United Nations. The result was a formal recognition of the Jewish state of Israel in the land of Palestine on May of 1948. The U.S. was the first United Nations member to recognize Israel as a sovereign nation-state. No other event has impacted modern Egyptian and Arab perceptions than the establishment of Israel in what is seen as Arab land. The issue stems from the concept of

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[123] Khalidi, 31.
[124] Khalidi, 34.
[125] Stephen Zunes, *Tinderbox: U.S. Foreign Policy and the Roots of Terrorism* (Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press, 2003), 106.

identity for the collective consciousness of Middle Easterners.[126] At a time when the region was still recovering from the memories of Western colonialism, the establishment of a Jewish state in the Middle East was particularly sensitive issue. It went against the aspirations of those in the region and the plight of the Palestinians was seen as a human tragedy.[127] T

he following day, the armies of Egypt, Syria, Iraq, and Jordan invaded Israel in the name of the Palestinian cause. The outcome of the war added to their sense of humiliation as the collective Arab armies were defeated by a country they perceived to be a small temporary state.[128] This was the first of five wars fought by Egypt and its Arab allies against Israel, all which ended with the same outcome of defeat and further humiliation.

Throughout many years Egypt has had a unique relationship with Israel, which has resulted in distinct reactions among Egyptians distinguishing their attitudes from those of other Arabs. Since the 1930s, Egypt has committed the most effort and resources of all Arab states to resolve the Palestinian issue. The pro-Palestinian policy is based on the idea that it is morally right to defend the Palestinians against the loss of their homeland. That meant that for more than fifty years, Egypt lead the struggle on "behalf of the Palestinians which has translated into leadership in the Arab world."[129]

Egypt's first President after the national revolution laid the foundation for how the Arab-Israeli conflict would be perceived by Egyptian for generations to come. Nasser saw the conflict in Palestine within the framework of Western imperialism that sought to dominate Arabs. He expressed great empathy for the plight of the Palestinians and claimed that it was Egypt's duty to defend them. He often said that Palestine "is not only an Arab but an Egyptian

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[126] Shibley Telhami, *The Stakes: America and the Middle East: The Consequences of Power and the Choice for Peace* (Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 2003), 101.
[127] Ibid.
[128] Ibid.
[129] Lorenz, 20.

problem."[130] His anti-colonial statements were continuously made to all Egyptians blaming

Western colonialism for displacing the Palestinians.[131] This idea was entrenched in the minds

of all Egyptians who could still vividly remember their subjugation under colonialism.

Nasser also used anti-colonial rhetoric to distract Egyptians from more pressing domestic

problems such as the denial of human and democratic rights. By pointing outward, citizens did

not concentrate on the regime's "failure to bring about greater equality and prosperity."[132]

Egypt's domestic problems such as limited economic development, a growing gap between rich

and poor, high unemployment, and widespread corruption[133] continue to this day along with the

government's tendency to distract the public with injustices outside its borders especially relating

to the Arab-Israeli conflict.

Of all the wars fought with Israel, the June 1967 war or "Six Day War" has had the most

impact on the Egyptian collective psyche. The U.S. supported Israel's invasion of Egypt that

sought to bring about the overthrow of the Egypt's Nasser regime, curb Arab nationalism, and to

stop the Palestinian resistance movement.[134] The humiliating defeat in less than a week

devastated Egypt and cost thousands of casualties. Hundreds of thousands of Palestinians in the

territories of the West Bank and Gaza came under Israeli occupation.[135] The war ended hopes of

a pan-Arab movement and allowed Israel to occupy additional land in Egypt, Jordan, and Syria.

Egypt lost its land in the Sinai Desert and its citizens were devastated.

The humiliating defeat of 1967 was one of the most significant turning points in modern

Egyptian history. As a result, the Egyptian government completely lost its legitimacy in the eyes

of its citizens. Egypt's defeat and loss of territory was the main cause for the growth of

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[130] Ibid., 24.
[131] Lorenz, 24.
[132] Khalidi, 69.
[133] Ali Rahnema, ed., *Pioneers of Islamic Revival* (London: Zed Books, 1994).
[134] Timothy Mitchell, "American Power and Anti-Americanism in the Middle East," *Anti-Americanism,*
eds. Andrew Ross and Kristen Ross. (NY: New York University Press, 2004), 91.
[135] Telhami, *The Stakes,* 102.

religiously inspired political activism. Muslims began to view this humiliating experience as the culmination of 150 years of foreign intrusion in order to upset to their vision of a true Islamic community. They began to lose faith in their government seeing it as incapable of protecting Arab interests against dominant powers.

Another result of the 1967 war was an increased U.S. political and military role in the Middle East. The U.S. began supporting authoritarian governments as well as increasing its support for Israel who was seen as an enemy of the Arabs. After the war, for example, U.S. aid to Israel increased by 450 percent.[136] Resentment to various U.S. policies increased greatly because it, "went against the aspirations of many for a more unified and powerful Arab world, progressive governments, justice for the Palestinians, and reduced foreign influence."[137] Additionally, the supply of advanced military technology to Israel by the U.S. was seen as evidence of a U.S.-Israel alliance seeking to target the Arab world.

U.S. military support for Israel continued during the 1973 war launched by Egypt and Syria. The coordinated attack was weakening Israel by causing it to retreat from the Sinai territory. It was able to recapture the land and ultimately win the war because of U.S. massive airlift of military equipment that was sent to aid them. It is widely understood among Egyptians today that their 1973 loss against Israel was due to American military backing. Once again, Egypt was not able to claim victory on behalf of the Palestinians. The failure to recover Palestinian territories and allow Israel to continuously expand and control Jerusalem has underlined for many Muslims the fact that they are unable to protect their lands and their religion from repeated assaults of an imperial West."[138]

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[136] Stephen Zunes, *Tinderbox: U.S. Foreign Policy and the Roots of Terrorism* (Monroe, ME: Common Courage Press, 2003), 161.
[137] Telhami, *The Stakes*, 53.
[138] John Esposito, *Islam and Politics* 4th ed., (Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 1998), 11-24.

Under President Anwar Sadat, Egypt had no plans to be a leader of the pan-Arab cause.

Instead he endorsed an 'Egypt First' policy in which he would make decisions based only on the

national interests of Egypt. Egyptians embraced this nationalistic policy after years of Nasser's

pan-Arab policies which they saw as "producing more costs and fewer benefits."[139] In 1978,

Sadat's 'Egypt First' policy translated into a peace treaty with the Jewish state of Israel. His

decision to make peace with Israel in the Camp David Accords was based on what he saw as

Egyptian national interests. This was hardly reflective of Egyptian public opinion at the time. As

the first Arab state to make peace with the state of Israel, Egypt quickly a U.S ally receiving

billions of dollars of foreign aid every year. The peace treaty also caused Egypt's influence in the

Middle East to decline as it was expelled from the Arab League by other Arab member states who

felt betrayed by the act. Although the two countries are formally at peace, the great majority of

Egyptians today still do not agree with this policy. Sadat ultimately gave his life for this peace

treaty after he was assassinated in 1981 by Muslim extremists.

On the domestic front, Sadat continued the repressive domestic environment during a

September 1981 crackdown on approximately 1,500 Egyptians from all sectors of society

including both intellectuals and Islamists. He explained that citizens had to "understand that

democracy has its own teeth. The next time is going to be ten times as ruthless."[140]

Today both foreign policy and Egyptian political attitudes are identifying more with

broader Arab world. The increased identification with other Arabs in the region is based on

pragmatism rather than idealism. Arab unity is seen as beneficial for Egyptian political and

economic interests.[141] Egyptians are impacted by the Arab media that shows repeated images of

Israeli human rights violations against Palestinian cities and villages including military closures,

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[139] Ibrahim Karawan, "Identity and Foreign Policy: The Case of Egypt," in *Identity and Foreign Policy in the Middle East,* eds. Shibley Telhami and Michael Barnett (Ithaca, NY: Cornell University, 2002), 165.
[140] James A. Bill and Robert Springborg, eds., *Politics in the Middle East* 4th ed. (NY: Harper Collins Publishers, 1994), 224.
[141] Lorenz, 119.

roadblocks, Jewish-only housing settlements, and targeted assassinations that have led to a devastated economy.[142]

Under the reign of President Mubarak, Egypt can be defined as a "single-party bureaucratized state" where a single government party that dominates the political process.[143] Opposition parties are significantly restricted without the ability to effectively influence political decision-making. The constitution, however, refers to the country as a democratic and socialist Arab republic in which the president is supported by a National Assembly of at least 350 members. The National Assembly nominates the president whose name is added to a national referendum for the general population. To be declared president, the candidate must win a simple majority of votes. The original constitution regulated a president to two six-year terms until it was amended by Sadat. The amendment allows a president to be reelected for an unspecified number of terms. Mubarak has benefited from this amendment having been "elected" for a fourth six-year term since 1981.[144] This has led to the dominance of the executive and unchecked power of the state.

It is clear that modern perceptions in Egypt have grown out of 2,500 years of foreign rule. Every occupier had one characteristic in common; feelings of superiority toward the Egyptian people.[145] Political culture today is strongly rooted in the anti-colonial past with a resistance to foreign control.[146] After colonialism, Egypt's government has been remarkably stable allowing each individual leader to remain in power for decades. Consequently, political attitudes will stem from these historical factors shaping future perceptions regarding issues such as democratization.

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[142] Deborah J. Gerner and Jillian Schwedler, eds., *Understanding the Contemporary Middle East* 2d ed.*, (London: Lynn Rienner Publishers, 2004), 105.
[143] Ibid., 104.
[144] Ibid.
[145] Lorenz, 25.
[146] Khalidi, 29.

CHAPTER 4   RESULTS

Demographic Analysis of the Interviews

The first method will analyze the respondents' answers using demographic variables such as religion, political party affiliation, and whether a respondent has visited the U.S. Background and demographic questions identify the characteristics of the person and help the interviewer understand a respondent in relation to other people. Of the seven respondents, five were Muslim and two were Coptic Orthodox Christian. It is appropriate that the majority of respondents be Muslim because the great majority of Egyptians (approximately 90 percent) follow Islam. Nonetheless, it is important to examine the two Coptic respondents and to find whether they shared similar perspectives about democratization and the U.S. role in the process. Do the Coptic Christian respondents share a sharply different viewpoint than the other Muslim respondents?

There has been a great deal of literature on whether religion affects the political culture in the Middle East. Many scholars have concluded that Islam causes Middle Easterners to be anti-Western, anti-democratic and anti-modern. Simon Murden, for example, insists that Muslims need to synthesize with modernization that cannot be separated from Westernization in order to avoid what he deems as isolation and backwardness.[147] Other scholars have also claimed that Islam is inherently incompatible with the West and will always be in opposition to it. Feelings of anti-Americanism are seen as directly stemming from the Islamic faith. Various Middle East experts have repeatedly written about Islam and its inability to incorporate Western ideas and principles without conducting substantial field studies in the region.

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[147] Simon Murden, *Islam the Middle East and the New Global Hegemony* (Boulder, CO: Lynne Rienner Publishers, 2002), 181.

This study will deeply explore the political attitude of each participant to find whether religion is the driving force behind their opinion democratization. After each respondent answers each question, they were allowed sufficient time to elaborate on what factors shape their particular viewpoint. They had ample opportunity to explain the level of importance of their religious beliefs and personal values. Do the Muslim respondents cite their faith as a point of conflict with the U.S. and its policies? If not, what other factors accounts for their viewpoint? How does religion affect the perspectives of Coptic Christian respondents? Answers to the questions will be compared in order to search for similarities and differences among respondents of both faiths.

The hypothesis is that religion will not play a significant role when respondents' are asked to define of democracy. The lack of political and social freedoms in Egypt has created a situation in which the majority of citizens have been conditioned to be uninterested in politics and especially issues concerning democracy. Over time citizens have come to understand that it serves no purpose to discuss the subject of democracy. It is considered an idealistic notion that has no bearing on the struggles of daily life. In addition, issues pertaining to democratic theory or practices are not included in the general school curriculum. Teaching democratic tenets in the education system would reveal the undemocratic practices of the Egyptian government and cause widespread discontent. This would defeat an important goal of federal education, to protect the interests of the ruling regime. Even in social circles, discussing issues relating to politics and democracy are seen as pointless. Therefore, whether Coptic Christian or Muslim, the respondents will most likely have a limited scope of democracy.

Based on previous research and historical studies, the great majority of respondents will not be affiliated with a political party. While general apathy will probably be the main driving force, it is possible that religion will also have an effect on whether a respondent is involved in a political party. Government restrictions on religious political parties like the Muslim

Brotherhood, has created a situation in which all parties are secular and not based on religious beliefs. Secular parties would not be representative of a deeply religious person who believes that politics should be based on religious teachings.

Another hypothesis is that religion would not play a central role in how the respondents' view U.S. democratization policy in the Middle East. Their perceptions of 2003 War in Iraq and the Greater Middle East Initiative are expected to be based on ideas generally unrelated to their religious beliefs. Rather, they will express opinions and feelings based on how they perceive U.S. actions and intentions. Perceptions based on U.S. policies, makes it likely that Muslim and Coptic Christian respondents will have similar perceptions. This is based on the idea that both will likely draw on a common Egyptian or Middle Eastern identity when faced with issues relating to the U.S., as a Western power, and new ideas of democratization. U.S. foreign policies in the region especially in the Arab-Israeli conflict, 2003 War in Iraq, and 2002 invasion of Afghanistan will likely have the most negative influence on their perceptions.

Religion will mostly likely be a factor for Muslim respondents when asked about democratic reforms in their country. For those that are receptive to America's push for democracy in Egypt, they may also express a need to incorporate Islamic tenets in the reform process. Given the secular and unrepresentative Egyptian government, Muslim respondents may see democratization as an opportunity to create political institutions or processes that are more representative of their religious beliefs. Coptic Christian respondents, as small minority of the population, would object to a government based on Islamic tenets. They would prefer religious equality and representation in the political system without a monopoly of only one religion.

The results of the interviews show that all but one respondent used simple and concise descriptions with only a few characteristics to describe their definition of democracy. Neither Muslim nor Coptic respondents expressed an in-depth analysis of democratic processes or ideas.

This confirms the idea that regardless of faith, these respondents are not accustomed to discussing the concept of democracy.

The majority of respondents (five Muslims and one Coptic Christian) had very similar answers to all of the questions concerning the U.S. They all cited numerous past U.S. foreign policies and described them as contradictory and hypocritical. The policies were repeatedly used as reasons why they mistrust U.S. foreign policy in the Middle East today. The Coptic respondent expressed the same negative sentiment citing similar examples as all other Muslim respondents. He even articulates this idea saying, "This viewpoint has nothing to do with my religion. I am a Christian and will have the same opinion as a Muslim. It doesn't matter what religion you are." This undoubtedly shows that this respondent expects both Muslims and Coptic Christians in Egypt to relate to a common identity and hold the same opinions of the U.S. and its policies. This group of respondents falls in line with the hypothesis that Egyptians will share similar opinions of the U.S. and democratization regardless of their religion.

The hypothesis was not entirely correct, however. There was one deviant Coptic Christian respondent who will be referred to as "Mariam". Her general worldview is heavily guided by an anti-Islamic sentiment. Her words plainly expressed a great deal of animosity felt towards Muslims. While her mannerisms were stern and serious throughout much of the interview, she would get heavily agitated when discussing Islam. She explains that she has read the Q'uran (the Islamic Holy Scripture) three times and dislikes its teachings saying, "This is a religion? What a religion! God forgive them. They write about bad things, dirty ideas." This obvious abhorrence of the Islamic faith causes her to identify as a Christian rather than an Arab or Egyptian, which sets the backdrop for the rest of the interview.

She frequently mentions issues pertaining to religion and religious discrimination explaining that, "discrimination is terrible in Egypt. If a little Muslim boy sees me wearing a cross around my neck, he'll make a face or gesture at me" and "Muslims also burn churches and

beat up priests." Mariam's claims of religious discrimination imply that there is a significant lack of tolerance and pluralism in Egypt, which are necessary characteristics for a viable democracy.

When asked to define democracy, she briefly mentions freedom to write freely in the press. She then immediately begins criticizing the lack of free speech in Egypt, "They [Egyptian government] say that you can say what you want, but you really can't." She claims that the government shut down her newspaper company to emphasize the lack of freedoms in Egypt. She then tells another personal story of how she grieved when a journalist of the Al-Ahram newspaper disappeared. She explained about that he "spoke about what people want" and how she "cried so hard when he disappeared". Her personal stories of discrimination have made her feel disadvantaged in her country and it is clear that she is unhappy with the current status quo. Discrimination is clearly a very personal and sensitive issue for her that has influenced her perceptions regarding democratization.

Mariam's answers to the many of the questions regarding the U.S. continue to diverge considerably from the rest of the respondents. She is the only respondent with a positive opinion towards the U.S. government and the Bush Administration. She expresses unwavering support of the U.S. and its presence in the Middle East. This is partially based on her anti-Islam worldview and unhappiness with the domestic situation in Egypt. She blames the current domestic situation on Islam, "Egypt and the Middle East will always go backwards as long as Islam is dominant." When asked about why the U.S. has enacted a democratization policy in the Middle East, Mariam explains it as rhetoric by the Bush Administration in order to achieve other goals. She does not believe that the policy was put forth to promote democracy saying, "Bush pretends to care for them [Arabs] so that he can control them and bring them closer." Her view is similar to the rest of the respondents who also believe that the U.S. is deceiving Arabs. However, the difference in Mariam's reaction stems from a difference in identity. For the others, the perception that the U.S. is deceiving Arabs causes them to have negative opinions of the U.S. because they consider

themselves Arabs as well. In Mariam's case, she refers to Arabs as "them" as a group

disassociated from her own. Throughout the interview, her tone was overtly condescending when

describing Middle Easterners in relation to the U.S. It is clear that she identifies with the West, in

this case the U.S., rather than an Arab identity.

Mariam speaks of the U.S. in a tone that seems unapologetic and defensive. She supports

the U.S. saying plainly, "I love America" and citing various reasons for her positive view. She

feels that the U.S. respects animals, people and have contributed greatly to the world's

technology. Even though she believes that the U.S. policy is not sincere, she still supports the

U.S. and its invasion of Iraq saying, "I respect Bush because he's done nothing wrong. So the

military is there [Iraq]. What has he done wrong?" Her argument seems to blame the Iraqis by

explaining how the U.S. cannot possibly leave Iraq because of the violence and beheadings. She

sees the U.S. military as forced to stay in the country because of the violent situation.

Mariam's perception is obviously one that is highly driven by her personal anti-Muslim

feelings with her own words unmistakably confirming that. Her support of U.S. policy in the

Middle East is linked to her perception that the Bush Administration is against Islam, and

consequently, in line with her own personal views. In relation to U.S. policy, she bluntly says, "If

it's a war on Islam, then I agree!" The fact that she mentions the possibility that U.S. policy may

be a "war on Islam" is significant and relates to some of the other respondents who consider U.S.

policies as targeting Muslims.

Three Muslim respondents discussed religion throughout their interview.   When

"Ahmed" was asked to give reasons for his negative attitude of the U.S. is based on, he says

claims that it's based on U.S. policies and not because of religion:

> Religion doesn't guide my thinking. It doesn't matter what religion someone is. I have
> both Muslim and Christian friends. It doesn't matter.

However, later during this interview, he refers to the Q'uran claiming that it contains scriptures that predict a future U.S. invasion of Egypt. He then explains how all Egyptians would defend themselves in response to a U.S. attack, "be sure that the 70 million [Egyptians] who are not able to eat, will still hold weapons." His tone at this time was quiet angry and outwardly aggressive seemingly trying to show Egypt's strong national identity and willingness of the people to defend their homeland against outsiders. It was clear that this paranoia comes from deep-seated fear of U.S. aggression and foreign control more generally. He expresses this fear clearly when saying:

> We [Egyptians] leave Egypt because we are afraid of what will happen to Egypt. I have two children, a boy and a girl. I am afraid of what will happen to them. Not from Egypt, but from who will invade.

Ahmed is overtly worried about an invasion of his country and continues to give more reasons why that scenario is possible. He claims that the U.S. already occupies Egypt financially and politically giving it outdated technology to keep it from getting stronger. He also points to the 1967 June war as an example of how the U.S. and Israel will invade Egypt. His paranoid sentiment is also extreme in other respects. He says that he also respects or admires both Saddam Hussein and Osama Bin Laden who he sees as strong Arabs who had the courage to confront U.S. domination. His views are more in-line with extremists and not common among mainstream Egyptians.

In terms of religion, Ahmed's perspective shows somewhat of a contradiction. While he clearly states that religion is not an important factor to him personally, a brief reference is made to his interpretation of the Q'uran as evidence of a future U.S. invasion of Egypt. He also cites a number of past U.S. foreign policies to further establish his arguments. While he claims that religion does not influence his perception, he makes other references that prove otherwise. Religion plays a bigger role in his perspective than he would like to admit. Ahmad also says that "American democracy is not for Arabs", which is similar to the perspectives of next two respondents.

"Said" referred to Islam a few times when discussing a possible democracy in Egypt. He expresses interest in America's push for democracy in Egypt with what he calls "limits", which entail the incorporation of Islam, "Any changes must include religion. We are Muslim and religious. It is the most important thing. We can fight years for religion." It is clear that he considers it essential to base future political changes in Egypt on religion. He opposes the idea of a democracy in Egypt that is identical with that in the U.S. because of the nature of Egyptians who consider religion "the most important thing in life."

After making the case for the importance of Islam, Said then feels the need to justify his religion. This is partially due to his earlier comments about how Muslims can fight years for religion. He explains Islamic teachings by saying that "it says violence can be used only in self-defense, in the homeland." He also explains that Islam "can change over time" implying that Islam is not static and has the ability to adapt. He continues by stating that it is not synonymous with terrorism. He also feels as though the U.S. government does not make the distinction between Muslims and terrorists. He then calmly asks why the U.S. targets Islam over other Christian nations that have problems including wars and AIDS. Obviously, Said sees the need to defend Islam against stereotypes and polices that both categorize and target Islam.

Another Muslim respondent also perceives the U.S. invasion of Iraq because it is targeting Muslims. "Mohammed" says that in addition to other reasons,

> The war in Iraq is a war on Islam. It is like the Crusades. Now that the Soviet enemy is gone, the U.S. has made Islam the enemy.

He believes that U.S. government has considers Islam an enemy and the Iraqi war is a reflection of that. His belief that Islam is being targeted by the U.S. is almost identical to Said's.

Mohammed mentions Islam when discussing prospects for democratic reforms in Egypt. Like Said, Mohammed also emphasizes the importance of Islam in Egypt, "the belief in God here [Egypt] is very strong and cannot be ignored." He expresses his frustration the incorporation of

Islam in a reform process by saying that Egypt has no appropriate models to follow. He

expresses his frustration very calmly and logically when saying:

> There are some who say Islam is the way to rule the country. But there is still no good
> Islamic model to follow. Iran is a mess. Saudi Arabia is not even close. Turkey is not an
> Islamic country. It's totally secular. America is definitely not the model we will follow.
> We don't trust them or what they say.

He believes that Islam must be a part of any future reforms and does not know what direction

Egypt is to proceed with reforms. He is certain about one point however; that he does not trust

the U.S. and therefore, does not welcome an American-style democracy in Egypt.

Ahmed, Said, and Mohammed all consider U.S. democracy as not suitable for Egypt.

The central theme is that because religion is much more important for Egyptians, a completely

secular democracy would be incompatible with their Islamic values. They perceive U.S.

democracy with skepticism as foreign idea that is not reflective of their core beliefs.

Another demographic variable is political party affiliation. Membership in a political

party may cause the respondents to be more knowledgeable about the domestic political system

having been more exposed to it. Members of an opposition party would have more negative

views of the political system in Egypt due to the various obstacles created to restrict government

participation. They would be greater advocates for political reforms that will allow them more

access to the political process. Depending on their view of the U.S., they may also welcome

America's push for democratic reforms in Egypt. Those affiliated with the dominant ruling party

have a greater chance of being satisfied with the current political system in Egypt. They are a

part of the single most powerful body in the country with almost absolute power for the decision-

making. They would be weary of America's call for democratic reforms for fear of losing power.

Five respondents showed little interest or complete distain for the Egyptian political party

system with two who were affiliated with a political party. The respondent who was a member of

the *Wafd* opposition party did, indeed, have negative views of the domestic situation in Egypt and

welcomed the U.S. democratization policy in Egypt. This may be related to the lack of power of the political party and the restrictions enforced by the ruling party. It is unclear to what extent political party affiliation influenced this respondent's opinion about American calls for democracy.

The other respondent affiliated with a political party was a member of the ruling National Democratic Party. The findings show that being a member of the ruling political party did affect the way the respondent illustrated the political situation in Egypt. This respondent was unique in that he described Egypt's political situation as largely democratic and representative. He claimed that 70 percent of Egyptians, or 40 million people, voted during the last National Assembly elections. This is an extremely high participation rate and highly unlikely for Egypt that has been cited for its apathetic political culture and corrupt election process. His exaggerated numbers are used as an attempt to illustrate Egypt as a country that is already making significant democratic reforms. He also showed a great deal of optimism when describing Egypt's future. He predicts that Egypt will continue to implement democratic reforms because of the younger members of the National Assembly who have been recently elected.

His portrayal of the improving democratic situation in Egypt was a result of the fact that he is a part of the ruling political party. His motivation is to present the political situation positively in order to show that Egypt does not need outside assistance to enact democratic reforms. Although he claims to welcome American calls for democracy, he claims that there are limits to these reforms. This confirms the hypothesis that expected a member of the ruling party to be more satisfied with the present domestic situation in Egypt than those who are not.

Another demographic category used for data analysis is whether the participants' had visited the U.S. prior to the interview. Theoretically, those who have previously visited the U.S. may have a more positive opinion of the U.S. This may also translate into a more understanding view U.S. policy than those who have not visited the U.S. Assuming that their experience was a

positive one, it may allow them to have a better understanding of American ideas, people, and culture that can contribute to feelings of greater sympathy. Nevertheless, there is always the possibility that the exposure to the U.S. during a visit would have highlighted the cultural differences and affect the respondent the opposite way making them more hostile to American democratic values and ideals.

Of the seven respondents, only two had visited the U.S. many times prior to the interview. Mariam expresses a very favorable view of the U.S. admiring U.S. inventions and praising Americans because they "have respect for many things" and believe that "everything has value." Saad has similar positive views of the U.S. and explaining that he enjoys going to America for vacation because "the country itself has a lot to offer." Clearly, both respondents attribute positive characteristics to America and take pleasure in visiting there often.

Despite their similar positive perceptions of America, the perceptions of these two respondents differ sharply with regards to U.S. policy in the Middle East. Mariam supports the U.S. democratization policy in both Iraq and Egypt while Saad explains how the U.S. government is "immoral." He says that he liked the U.S. in the past when he thought it "represented good values." He has since changed his view, he explains, because of U.S. policies, "Now when I think of America, I think of selfishness, greed, control that is obvious through their policies."

Although both of these respondents had visited the U.S. many times, their opinions of the U.S. policies were very different. Their perceptions of the U.S. government and its policies in the Middle East were not significantly shaped by their personal experiences visiting the U.S. Therefore, each respondent based their political attitudes on factors independent from their exposure to U.S. values and culture.

General Patterns and Themes

The second method of data analysis will outline patterns and themes that emerge from the data collected. Similar concepts, interpretations, and meanings that were expressed by two respondents or more and are significant to the subject of political culture are outlined. The first issue deals with each respondent's definition of democracy.

The first question asks each respondent to describe their definition of democracy. The respondents will be allowed the opportunity to provide their unique description of what the term means to them. The manner in which each respondent defines and interprets democracy will set the stage for the rest of the interview dealing with democratization issues and policies. The most comprehensive response was given by the respondent who has a university degree in political science and is part of the ruling political party. The others named only a few characteristics to describe the concept. The most frequent characteristic of democracy was described as free speech as the right to voice their opinions.

The emphasis on freedom of speech presents a general pattern among the six of the seven interviews. Five of the respondents mentioned elections as part of democracy. This may seem surprising that when given an opportunity to describe the concept of democracy in their own words, more respondents would mention the right to speak openly than the right to choose their leaders. There are a number of reasons that may account for this discrepancy.

One reason that freedom of speech was mentioned most frequently is because is one of the partial freedoms granted in Egypt today. The increased ability to voice an opinion publicly is a change that is obvious to the public and affects the daily life of citizens. Most of these respondents are over the age of forty and remember much tighter restrictions on freedom of speech during the Nasser regime. At that time, if they spoke openly about politics or criticized the government they could be arrested or detained. This was a daily reminder of their oppressive

regime. The fact that this is no longer the case today alleviates their daily fears making them feel

as though they have true freedom.

Magued specifically discusses the restrictive measures imposed by Nasser saying, "We

were scared to talk politics in our home…There was just fear." He explains that Egyptians have

been granted the right to free speech by saying, "One day a person is cursing the president. The

other is cursing the government. I'll show you the newspapers today." He defines democracy

only in terms of freedom of speech to show that Egypt is in fact democratic. Since they have

been granted the freedom to discuss politics, there is already a democracy in Egypt which is not

in need of U.S. help to democratize. He specifically says, "We don't need someone from outside

to help us change here. We are not like the days of Nasser anymore." By defining democracy

only as freedom of speech, he was able to make the argument that Egypt was already democratic

and was not in need of U.S. assistance to politically reform.

Mariam also defined democracy only in terms of freedom of print to support her

argument as well. She made the opposite claim about the freedoms in Egypt with a completely

different view than Magued. Her definition of democracy was described with contempt, "That if

I write, they don't break my pencil." She explains her past experience with the government who

had stifled her freedom to write freely in an Egyptian newspaper. Her argument is that because of

the lack of freedom of speech in Egypt; the country is not democratic and therefore, in need of

political reforms. She is unhappy empty rhetoric of the Egyptian government that claims to allow

its citizens to speak and write freely without actually doing so. Her perspective is that without

freedom of speech, there is no democracy in Egypt making it badly in need of democratization.

Both Magued and Mariam described democracy only in terms of freedom of speech as a

means to describe their perception of the political situation in Egypt. Their approach was to use a

very simplistic definition in order to support their view. Magued described democracy as

freedom of speech to show that Egypt has already implemented democratic reforms while

Mariam used the same simple definition to prove that Egypt is not democratic. Neither respondent mentioned elections and are the only two that are part of the Coptic Christian minority in Egypt. They know that as members of the small religious minority in a predominantly Muslim country, they will most like be greatly disadvantaged in the event of an election. Minorities often feel as though their interests will not be adequately represented in a democratic electoral system.

There is a significant discrepancy among Magued and Mariam concerning freedom of speech and whether the Mubarak regime allows Egyptian citizens to express dissent with the government. There is also a disagreement among other respondents concerning their political rights and freedoms. Similar to Magued's stance, Saad asserts that newspapers are allowed the freedom to speak openly by saying plainly, "Mubarak allows freedom of speech in print." While Ahmed holds a completely different view regarding the right to speak openly in Egypt as he warns the researcher about the possible dangers associated with discussing political issues including arrest or detainment.

The obvious differences in how these respondents view their right to free speech are troublesome for democratization. Perceptions are based on personal experiences with the Egyptian government rather than on an undisputed legal document such as constitutional law. The disagreement suggests that an individual's rights are not widely understood among society, which allows the government to selectively enforce restrictions on free speech as they deem fit. The result is a partially free society where only views acceptable to the regime are openly expressed. Views considered threatening or intolerable to the regime are repressed. For example, the government allows constant anti-American, anti-Israeli, and anti-Semitic columns throughout state-owned newspapers. Criticism directly toward the U.S. and Israel allows citizens to continuously place the blame outward and distracts them from greater domestic ills.

Ahmed makes a significant comment that indicates the existence of government nepotism. After he warns the interviewer about a possible arrest by the Egyptian authorities, he

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gives a scenario as to how this could happen. He claims that turning someone in to the government would help someone who has personal aspirations to advance in the government bureaucracy. The notion that there is possibility for a person to gain greater accessibility to the Egyptian government gives an indication of nepotism and is a serious detriment to the concept of the rule of law.

In terms of a democratic transition, the fact that more respondents mentioned free public discourse than elections to describe democracy is not of great concern. Before elections can successfully take place, citizens must be informed and exposed to various political opinions and views. A political culture that encourages public discourse and political debate is more tolerant and accepting of competing viewpoints. Citizens will find peaceful ways to disagree as they are exposed to a wide array of ideas that accompany pluralism. A tolerant political culture must be established first before elections can take place. Otherwise, an election can destabilize an entire country by causing major conflict between people without a history of open and peaceful political dialogue. To encourage a tolerant political culture, President Mubarak should open the state-owned press to other voices throughout the country and tone down its anti-American and anti-Semitic rants.[148] Citizens will eventually begin discussing the injustices within the domestic state of Egypt rather than those outside their borders.

The next theme concerns the respondents' affiliation with a political party. They were asked if they are affiliated with a political party and to give reasons why or why not. They were given an opportunity to explain the reasons why they were not politically active.

The five respondents who were not involved with in a political party gave almost identical reasons as to why. Their lack of involvement stems from their perception of political parties as ineffective or the corruption of the political system as a whole. They claim that the

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[148] Zakaria, "Constitutional Liberalism," 6.

political party system was either inefficient or corrupt and saw no benefit in participating.

Ibrahim says that he does not like political parties because they do not have the power to change

anything:

> Nothing will change if I join them. They don't make a difference. They [Egyptian government] will do what they want and nothing will change that.

Similarly, Saad explains that Egyptian political parties are "all corrupt and ineffective" and that

he does not vote because "the ballot boxes are already full." He is implying that the elections in

Egypt are not free and fair and therefore, he has no motivation to participate in the election

process. Mohammed also mentions government corruption, "If you have lots of money, you can

buy your way into Parliamentary seats." The Egyptian National Assembly is seen as a corrupt

body that facilitates bribery.

Another respondent makes a significant point regarding the high personal cost of voting

and the lack of benefits associated with it:

> He also says that the government makes it too difficult to vote. You have to stand in line for hours in the heat...and then the outcome may not be counted right. So it's generally a waste of time.

All of these respondents feel that political participation will not change the situation in Egypt and

are therefore apathetic to the entire process. Their statements support the hypothesis that

Egyptian political culture, even among the educated elite, is largely apathetic and uninterested in

political participation. The apathy is conditioned by years of corruption, lack of accountability

and obstacles to meaningful political participation.

An apathetic and disinterested individual lacks a sense of empowerment required for

political participation. The perception that they do not have the ability to change anything

because their vote will not count creates a situation in which the citizens do not expect much from

the government. The government is seen as corrupt with no accountability or transparency in the

political process. Without free and fair elections, voting is considered irrelevant and ineffective.

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Additionally, two participants alluded to the idea that the poor economic situation in Egypt causes its citizens to be concerned with survival rather than political participation:

> The Egyptian government makes the people worry about food and survival so that they forget about the political process. They must eat before they can think about democracy.

The first respondent makes a very sobering claim about the Egyptian government. He claims that the regime benefits from the poor economic state of its citizens who are too concerned with daily survival to ask for more rights.

> Sixty percent of the population in Egypt is still illiterate and worried about surviving. They are too poor to think about the political process…The two main problems in Egypt are education and economic level. When those improve maybe we can think about democracy.

The fact that the majority of Egyptians are still concerned about meeting their basic survival needs suggests that the standard of living is not at a high enough for an interest in political participation. The high rate of illiteracy and lack of an adequate education create even more obstacles for a viable democracy. When people are well-educated with opportunities to obtain adequate employment they will no longer be concerned with survival. The emergence of a large middle class in Egypt would cause a greater demand for additional rights including greater political participation and meaningful elections.

The general acceptance of the status quo has a very negative effect on the prospects for democracy in Egypt. It widely known that the Egyptian government does not abide by the rule of law. The lack of faith in government leaders to abide by the law causes the regime to lose its legitimacy in the eyes of its citizenry. There is a crisis of national leadership when citizens cannot look to their government as the example of how to abide by the rule of law. If citizens choose to emulate the actions of their government or follow its example, they too, will engage in corruption and acts of bribery. Those who choose to follow the strict rule of law for fear of consequences of the strong state will feel completely disassociated from their government. Law-abiding citizens, who see that those in the government are above the law, will be feel resentment

and frustration. Anger about injustices combined with the feelings of powerlessness means that citizens are more susceptible to the lure of extremist ideologies, which often advocate the overthrow of the regime because it is seen as immoral.

The next open-ended question asked each respondent to describe their attitude towards about the United States. The interviewer gave the respondents the opportunity to give examples to support their view. Are their feelings based on values, the media, or U.S. policies? A pattern found in all but one case is that perceptions of the U.S. government and its policies are overwhelmingly negative. The general consensus is that the U.S. government and its intentions in the region cannot be trusted especially because of hypocritical American policies.

Four respondents cite what they perceive as hypocritical or contradictory U.S. policies as reasons for their mistrust. Mohammed says that the U.S. policies "say one thing and do another" and that Americans leaders are "allies with dictators and topple their regime." He argues that the U.S. has "no shame" in changing its policies "even in front of the whole world." Blatant contradictions in U.S. policy are seen as arrogant and show a lack of integrity on the part of U.S. government leaders.

Three respondents mention that the U.S. government has been friendly with dictators, including Saddam Hussein, only to later enact policies against them. Saad's comments serve as an example this view:

> They [U.S. government] say that they want to get rid of Saddam Hussein but they used to be friends with him. He used to be their playboy.

Another respondent mentions how the U.S. supplied him with weapons and technology during the Iran-Iraq war. Another mentions the concept of hypocrisy when discussing the subject of terrorism. He claims that the U.S. labels everything as terrorism while it commits acts of terrorism in Iraq and Afghanistan. He thinks that U.S. terrorism is "worse because it's

international terrorism." Another respondent mentions several U.S. explanations for going to war in Iraq by saying:

> Bush said first that the reason he is invading Iraq is for weapons of mass destruction. Now that they can't find any, he claims it is for democracy.

The sense of mistrust felt by the respondents is a result of perceived hypocritical U.S. policies used to prove that they should also not be trusted in the future.

One very important theme is the affect of the Arab-Israeli conflict on perceptions. Many of the respondents perceive U.S. policies toward the conflict as biased towards Israel. U.S. support for Israel is consistently repeated throughout many of the interviews as a reason not to trust the U.S. This is seen as another aspect of U.S. injustice and hypocrisy.

Two respondents mention identical points when discussing hypocritical U.S. policies regarding Israel and nuclear weapons. One explains how the U.S. prevents countries like Libya from producing nuclear weapons and allows Israel to have them. The same reference to injustice is expressed by another respondent who explains favorable treatment of Israel with regards to nuclear weapons. He asks why the U.S. considers it acceptable for Israel to have nuclear weapon capability and not for Libya and Iraq. Clearly, they perceive the difference in U.S. policy as unjust with favoritism towards Israel compared to other Arab countries.

Yet another respondent explains America's unequal treatment of its allies, Israel and Egypt, saying, "U.S. gives the most military aid to Israel and the leftover, old-fashioned technology to Egypt." This perception is that the U.S. purposely makes Israel stronger in relation to Egypt. The idea is that because it is an Arab country, Egypt cannot be a true ally of the U.S. like Israel. Aid is not considered a U.S. effort to sincerely help Egypt, but to maintain the strength of Israel in relation to it. The fact that they see U.S. aid as an arm of exploitation shows the level of mistrust they feel towards the U.S. An act by the U.S. that may be considered a help to Egypt, is seen as a means to control and subjugate Egypt to its will.

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Other respondents express their frustration about what they perceive as differential

treatment of Israel and injustice towards the Palestinians. One respondent explains this by

explaining a situation in which President George W. Bush endorses Palestinian rights disapproves

of Israel's actions with Egypt's President Mubarak. He claims that only two hours later, Bush

then gives the Israeli President approval to do "anything else they wanted with a guarantee that no

one will stand in their way." This depiction aims to show the level of hypocrisy of the U.S.

government and particularly that of President Bush, as one that is outwardly hypocritical and

purposely deceptive. The U.S. support for Palestinian rights is seen as a blatant lie told by Bush

only to appease Mubarak, ultimately showing a lack of respect for the Egyptian President. This

also shows the respondent's perception of Bush as lacking honesty and integrity.

One respondent says that democratization will not be possible as long as the Arab-Israeli

conflict continues because, "The U.S. has no credibility." Another respondent says that America

does not represent democratic ideals because, "it's all about supporting the Israelis." Since the

U.S. supports Israel to be an unjust occupying force over the Palestinians, it cannot possibly a

credible promoter of democracy. If the U.S. stood for democracy, the argument goes; it would

sincerely support the rights of the Palestinians and curb the undemocratic occupation of Israel.

The lack of support for democracy for the Palestinians, therefore, is thought to be an anti-Arab,

pro-Western stance to exploit the Middle East. Consequently, the U.S. is seen as representing

values of a neo-colonialist power seeking global hegemony, which inherently contradicts the

promotion of democratic ideals.

The perception of injustices related to the Arab-Israeli conflict has a great deal of

influence on their opinions of the U.S. as well as their general worldview. One respondent says

that he does not have a problem with Jewish people, but with Israeli President Sharon,

"controlling land and people" through the occupation of the Palestinian territories and claims that

this is the "number one reason for terrorism." Another describes another aspect of injustice

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relating to Western media coverage by saying, "One Israeli gets killed and it's shown all over the place [in the media]. One-hundred Palestinians get killed and no one shows anything." He claims that this injustice and unequal treatment creates hate.

Two respondents specifically make references to the suffering of Palestinians that they have seen in the media. One says that "Palestinian women are shown crying on television because their house is destroyed." The other mentions violence shown in the media by saying, "Sharon, Bush, I hate them. The boy that got shot in his father's arms in Palestine, do you remember that?" They are faced with what they perceive as injustice and feel as though they do not have the ability to change the situation. Their government is seen as ineffective in stopping the suffering of the Palestinians and has repeatedly failed to do so even after many wars with Israel and extensive diplomatic peace efforts.

The anger and frustration that they feel regarding the tragic situation of the Palestinians is fueled by media images that show their suffering. They see the conflict as a symbol of Western domination and exploitation of Arabs. The failure of the Arab regimes to counter the neo-colonialism renders them incapable of protecting Arabs against the many years of humiliation of a historically great people. They cannot rely on their government to change this situation and lack the ability to elect new government leaders. They are forced to accept the injustice they repeatedly see on their televisions every night while feeling powerless to change anything.

A related theme throughout many interviews is the reference the relationship between the U.S. and Jewish people. One respondent believes that, "Americans and Jews are full of corruption." The common perception is that the U.S. is so heavily influenced by the Jewish-American community that they have the ability to control the media. They use the media to influence both U.S. citizens and their politicians in power to be anti-Arab and anti-Islam. They see America as hijacked by the Jewish community in order to brainwash the American citizenry and create policies against the Arabs. There is a sense that the respondents see Israel is so

powerful that it can manipulate to U.S. government to enact policies against the interests of the Middle East.

All six respondents have made numerous references to the idea of the powerful Jewish communities both in the U.S. and Israel, representing a normative theme of helplessness or vulnerability perceiving Arabs as victims. The general consensus among these respondents is that Jewish people around the world are so powerful that they have the ability to control the world to target Arabs. This suggests that religion plays a more important role in influencing their perceptions than they may like to admit. For example, the respondent who claims that religion does not affect his attitude; he later says "Jewish people run the media in the U.S." Another respondent claims that, "We [Muslims] have no problem with Jews" and later contradicts this by saying that the Jewish lobby in the U.S. is, "all about their interests." They seem extremely concerned about the power of Jewish people in the U.S. to negatively influence policies to target the Middle East.

The opinions of six of the respondents toward President Bush are also decidedly negative. Two of the respondents refer to him as an "international terrorist" while two others say that he is the reason that they dislike the U.S. government even more than they already had. Another respondent says that Bush "does not negotiate or discuss" increasing terrorism because "the U.S. has taught the Arabs that the only way to get their attention is to use violence." This respondent claims that because that the U.S. only responds to violence and that President Bush does not engage in diplomacy. The perception is that the U.S. will not take notice of Arab concerns unless violence or terrorism is used to force Americans to take notice. This is a dangerous idea for the U.S. as it attempts to fight global terrorism and prevent violence on American soil.

After each interview, four respondents expressed great concern about the possibility that President Bush be re-elected the in the following U.S. election in November. They were

genuinely worried about the prospect of him getting elected, which means that they consider his reelection as having a direct negative bearing on their lives.

Six of the seven respondents express positive opinions of either America or its people. They have disassociated their negative opinions of the U.S. government and its policies from their perception of the American people and the country as a whole. For example, one respondent who had referred to U.S. action in Afghanistan as "international terrorism" later says, "My attitude towards the people [American citizens] is great. I love them and respect them." Another respondent says that U.S. policies are full of "selfishness, greed, and control" and later saying, "I like to visit American and go there often to vacation. The country itself has a lot to offer." While criticizing the U.S. government during the interview, two respondents briefly mention after the interview that they are awaiting a visa to immigrate to America.

One main reason they are able to separate their opinion the U.S. government from that of the American people is due to their own experience with government. Since they feel that their own government is not representative of their core values, they are largely disassociated with it. This makes it easy for them to envision the American people's beliefs as largely disassociated with that of the U.S government.

There is yet another more obvious reason that accounts for their ability to separate their feelings about the U.S. government from the American people; the belief American people are ignorant because they are controlled by a biased media. Four of the respondents of the respondents feel that Americans are not informed of the "truth" because the media is controlled by the Jewish population in the U.S. One respondent clearly states this by saying:

> What CNN shows Americans is not true. I don't blame American people, they don't know the truth. The Jewish people run the media in the U.S.

Another respondent mentions almost an identical point, "They [American citizens] don't know the reality because the media in the U.S. is controlled by people who do not deliver the truth" and

later explained the power of the Jewish lobby. Yet another respondent claims the U.S. is not

democratic, "It's like apartheid because the Jews rule all." By blaming Jewish-Americans for

controlling the minds of the American people through the media, they are able to disassociate

their negative opinions of the U.S. government from their positive view of the American people.

Another respondent says, "The American people cannot be blamed for the injustices their

government causes."   Overall they see the American people as uninformed and ignorant because

they are victims of Jewish domination.

One of the most obvious patterns found throughout all but one interview, is the belief that

the motivation for the U.S. invasion of Iraq was based on a quest for oil. The one respondent who

claims that the U.S. motivation was not for oil still expresses doubt about the sincerity of the

democratization policy, "Bush pretends to care for them [Arabs] so that he can control them and

bring them closer." The other six respondents claim that the U.S. invaded Iraq to acquire its oil

or control the Middle East either militarily or economically. Some of the responses are

summarized below:

> They [the US] invaded Iraq for oil and to help reconstruction companies. Dick Cheney [U.S. Vice President] helped Halliburton, his old company.

> He [President Bush] went to Iraq for oil and to put more military bases in the Middle East in order to control it.

> They [U.S. government] want control of Iraqi oil and more military bases throughout the Middle East.

It is clear that all of the respondents perceive that the U.S. invasion of Iraq to be motivated by

reasons other than democracy promotion. Not one single respondent expressed the belief that the

U.S. policy in Iraq was to create a democratic state.

These same six respondents believe that the Bush Administration should not be trusted.

Every single respondent expresses skepticism about the Bush administration's policy of

democratization in the Middle East by explaining it at a facade used to hide other hidden goals.

The following statements show the level of mistrust directly felt toward President Bush:

> Bush talks about democracy to justify what he is doing. Is it being done for our [Arabs] good? No.

> Bush said first that he reason he is invading Iraq is for weapons of mass destruction. Now that they can't find any, he claims it is for democracy.

> He's [Bush] a liar. He doesn't want democracy.

> He [Bush] says that but its only words… He put forth this policy because he thinks they [citizens of the Middle East] are stupid. He tells them that they need it and pretends that he is helping them. But really he's trying to fool them, tricking them. He actually wants to control the Middle East. He won't be able to do that without talking about other goals.

There is an obvious consensus that The Greater Middle East Initiative is a policy that has been enacted to achieve goals other than democratization. They do not trust President Bush or his democratization policy in the Middle East.

All seven respondents describe the chaotic situation and lack of democracy in Iraq is used to refute the U.S. intentions for democratization. The lack of freedoms in Iraq after the U.S. invasion is considered proof that the intent was completely unrelated to democracy. They believe that because of the increasingly violent situation in Iraq, the U.S. never intended to promote a democracy at all:

> Where is the democracy? Ayad Al Elaway who worked in the FBI, CIA in America, was picked by the U.S. and says the same things as Saddam when he came to power, 'We will destroy anyone in our way!'

Another respondent points to the Abu Ghraib prison scandal as a reason for skepticism about democracy. This refers to the worldwide broadcast of several American soldiers physically abusing Iraqi prisoners and sexually humiliating them. This brought worldwide attention to American treatment of Iraqis during the war:

> If they [U.S.] wanted democracy, they [U.S. soldiers] wouldn't have done that to the prisoners [Abu Ghraib prison abuse].

These respondents do not see any signs of democracy taking hold in the country and focus on issues of Iraqi violence and occupation. All the respondents agree that that the U.S. invaded Iraq and proclaimed it as a democratization policy in order to achieve economic and political aims for its own benefit. The invasion of Iraq is seen as a part of the U.S. imperialist strategy to control the region with Israel at the Arabs' expense.

All seven respondents also felt that the U.S. war in Iraq would cause terrorism to increase. Examples of the current Iraqi situation are used as evidence for the claims that there will be less democracy and more terrorism in Iraq. One respondent gives explanations for terrorism saying that it "stems from poverty and hopelessness" and that the U.S. is not "encouraging prosperity" in Iraq, but rather is "actually making the situation worse." Similarly, another respondent says, "If there was democracy and the Iraqi people could say their opinions, there wouldn't be any terrorism." They are clearly pessimistic about the American mission in Iraq believing that a democracy will not be established. They provide reasons for terrorism as a justification and claim that the U.S. is exacerbating the problem as an occupying force in Iraq.

Another pattern among three of the respondents interviewed questioned whether the September 11th terrorist attacks were committed by Arabs with each citing specific examples to support their argument. The first gave two reasons to support the idea that Jews were behind the terrorist attacks in the U.S. The first was the idea that all the Jewish people that worked in the World Trade Center did not attend work the day of the terrorist bombing attacks and, therefore, must have known about what was to happen ahead of time, "The Jews were not killed in the Twin Towers. They left the day before and took that day off work." This statement shows that the respondent's negative perception of Jewish people because of the great lengths they will go in order to reach a goal. The second reason given by this respondent was the only way that pictures would have been taken of the World Trade Center is if those taking the pictures knew that the attacks were going to take place. The following statement clearly illustrates this point:

> How did they take so many pictures of all the angles of the building [during the terrorist attacks]? They were ready to take the pictures.

He believes that the pictures taken of the buildings prove that someone knew ahead of time about the attacks. This respondent clearly articulates the fact that he believes that Jewish people played a role in these attacks. He explains the possibility that the Muslim extremist, Osama Bin Laden, may have actually carried out the attacks but did so only through the help of U.S. and the Jews by saying, "maybe the Arabs, maybe Bin Laden, but who makes them do it? The CIA, the U.S., the Jews." This respondent seems to be trying to find any reason to place the blame on U.S.-Jewish conspiracy. It should be noted that this respondent is Coptic Christian, not Muslim, and is therefore not protecting Islam from blame.

Another respondent attempts to use history as evidence for his claims about Jewish involvement in the September 11th terrorist attacks by claiming that in the past, Jews have often killed for a political goal, "The Messianic Jews have done it many times." He claims that Jews were responsible for the assassination of Archduke Ferdinand before World War I for political goals. Since this assassination was the event to trigger the start of the war, he is in effect, blaming the Jews for the start of World War I. His explanation of the present U.S.-Jewish conspiracy is described as follows,

> They are willing to even destroy something they own in order to generate reaction against their enemies to achieve a certain goal. September 11th allowed the U.S. to react against the Arabs for their own benefit.

Since post-September 11th policies are perceived as targeting Arabs, the U.S.-Jewish conspiracy must have motivated it. The ultimate goal of this U.S.-Jewish conspiracy is to justify future anti-Arab policies. This is based on a zero-sum theory; the Jewish-American gain is an Arab loss. Therefore by enacting policies that hurt Arabs, the U.S. and Israel will ultimately benefit from this loss.

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The third respondent to express skepticism about Arab involvement in the September 11th terrorist attacks uses yet another idea as evidence. He claims that the operation is too sophisticated to be conducted by Arabs, saying, "They do not have the expertise and the brains to conduct such as sophisticated operation." He claims that Arabs, "strap bombs and blow themselves up" and that they do not have enough "technology to fly planes and navigate it this way." Based on this he concludes that the attacks must have been a conspiracy between the CIA or FBI with "the Jews from Israel, of course." This conspiracy was in order to give the U.S. a reason "to change its foreign policy from supporting the Arab regimes like Saudi Arabia." Like the previous respondent, this respondent also believes that the ultimate goal of the U.S.-Jewish conspiracy is to ally against the Arabs.

There are many reasons that may account for their skepticism. The first is the high level of mistrust of the U.S. and Israel with the expectation that their goal is to target Arabs. These respondents feel that the U.S. and Israel would stage a large-scale terrorist operation in order to enact anti-Arab policies. They believe that the U.S.-Jewish conspiracy considers Arabs as their enemy and aims to frame them so that they would have an excuse to make Arabs suffer. The second is a notion of self-defense. They would rather place the blame on another group than to admit that the terrorists were Arabs from their part of the world. By deflecting the blame, they avoid addressing the idea that members from their own culture are violent extremists who are capable of causing the deaths of so many innocent people. Denial of the problem allows for complete avoidance of the situation. This perspective sees such large-scale terrorism as foreign to their people and more closely associated with the Americans or Jewish.

The third is their self perception about their people. They see Arabs as incapable of conducting a large-scale sophisticated operation that flies American airplanes into skyscrapers. The respondent is clearly saying that his own people are too simple-minded and technologically incompetent to be responsible for the attacks. The only agents capable of such an intricate and

evil operation, as the argument goes, are the Americans and Israelis. This implies that Arabs are incompetent while Americans and Jews are quiet capable.

Yet another respondent described President Bill Clinton's affair with Monica Lewinsky through the lens of a Jewish conspiracy to control of the U.S. He claimed that the reason behind her public confession was politically related to Israel. Because she was Jewish, his argument continued, she plotted against the President to prevent him from pressuring Israel. He uses the material evidence for the extra-marital affair in order to support his argument, saying "Why would she [Monica Lewinsky] hold on to that dress for three to four years?" This respondent is convinced that the reason for her public statement was because she is Jewish. His general viewpoint is that the Jewish community in the U.S. almost impeached President Clinton in order to protect Israel. This is clearly evident when he states, "Clinton was almost ousted because Jews didn't want pressure [from the U.S. government] on Israel." This respondent sees Clinton's personal scandal within the framework of Jewish domination. Jews are understood to be the cause of every conflict for Israel's benefit.

Another conspiracy was briefly mentioned by a fifth respondent concerning President George H. Bush. This respondent claimed that the President received millions of dollars from Kuwait for invading Iraq in the 1991 Gulf War. This view is related to the argument often used to describe U.S. involvement in the second Gulf War; that the U.S. acts militarily for an economic benefit. Based on this perception, U.S. policies cannot be trusted because their intentions are may be based on hidden economic reasons. This respondent also shows underlying feelings of mistrust that shape his perception about the U.S.

Another reason to account for the prevalence of conspiracy theories is the lack of information reaching Egyptian citizens. Without substantial facts and valid explanations of reality, people will often create theories to explain the world. Theories will stem from their feelings and emotions without any real evidence for their claims. Hazem Saghiya is an Arab

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intellectual who accurately describes the cause for widespread conspiracy theories in Egypt. He says that the Egyptian Ministry of Information and national press prevent competing ideas often by taking drastic measures such as shutting down independent journals all together. He considers this the main cause of conspiracy theories, "when the facts do not reach [the public], rumors, exaggerations, fantasies, and fears develop" and that "the regression in the role [of people in society] increases paranoia, rather than stimulating minds to think independently and freely."[149] Conspiracy theories are more likely to develop in an environment that does not promote a variety of ideas and discourages all criticism of the status quo. A free flow of information is required to encourage critical thinking and tolerance of competing views.

<div align="center">Comparison with Public Opinion Surveys</div>

The general political attitudes of the educated Alexandrians are consistent with those of the general mass population in Egypt. The views expressed by six of the seven respondents are similar to the answers in Shibley Telhami's 2003 survey. It showed that 13 percent of Egyptians surveyed had a favorable opinion (2 percent very favorable and 8 percent somewhat favorable) of the U.S. and 79 percent (58 percent very unfavorable and 20 percent somewhat unfavorable) showing an unfavorable view.[150] Similarly, the data collected from the interviews shows that only one respondent showed a favorable view of the U.S. The other six expressed a negative view of the U.S. government and its policies. Three of these six respondents, however, separated their negative view of the U.S. government from their positive view of the American people. By making this distinction, they would fall into the category of "somewhat unfavorable" views of the U.S.

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[149] Hazen Saghiya, *Al-Hayat,* (London-Beirut), 29 July 2001.
[150] Shibley, "Survey in Five Countries," 2003.

The survey also showed that almost half (46 percent) of Egyptians said that they based their attitude toward the U.S. on its policy in the Middle East. Overall the majority of respondents cited U.S. policies as reasons for their negative attitude toward the U.S. government including support for Israel in the Arab-Israeli conflict, past hypocritical policies, and the occupation of Iraq. The perception of American policies in the region played the central role in each of these respondents' negative perceptions. The survey also found that the remaining 43 percent of Egyptians based their negative attitude on their values. One respondent's positive view of the U.S. was certainly influenced by personal values related to Christianity. Three other respondents while emphasizing flawed U.S. policies also say that a U.S.-style democracy is incompatible with their core religious beliefs. It is not entirely clear which one of these categories they would belong to.

A third obvious similarity lies in the issue concerning U.S. intentions in Iraq. The survey showed that 77 percent of Egyptians surveyed felt that U.S. policy in Iraq was motivated by oil.[151] Once again, this is comparable to the answers given by the educated Egyptians interviewed in the qualitative study. The overwhelming majority of those interviewed (six of the seven) also mentioned oil as a main reason behind the U.S. invasion of Iraq. The survey showed that 66 percent of surveyed Egyptians named Israel as an important reason for the American policy in Iraq.[152] During the many of the interviews, the issue of U.S. support of Israel was also frequently mentioned as a motivation factor for U.S. actions in the region.

Yet a fourth similarity can be found in the perceptions about the prospects for democracy. Telhami's survey concludes that only 6 percent of the masses in Egypt felt that the war in Iraq would bring more democracy and the majority (63 percent) saying that it would not.[153] Every

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[151] Ibid.
[152] Ibid.
[153] Ibid.

single Egyptian respondent interviewed expressed pessimism about democracy in Iraq as well as the rest of the Middle East. All seven individuals share similar perceptions as the great majority of those surveyed expecting less democracy as outcome of the Iraqi war.

The results of the qualitative study converge considerably with those found one year earlier using a quantitative survey method. The great majority of these educated Alexandrians have similar perceptions as the mass population in Cairo. Neither education level nor residence in a historically liberal city caused them to have different interpretations of U.S. democratization policy. This indicates that there is considerable agreement that U.S. policies cannot be taken at face-value and are generally viewed with skepticism.

Summary of Findings

Over forty years ago, Leonard Binder described the political culture of the Egyptian educated class as accepting the notion that they "cannot relate to the government, cannot change anything, there is only one policy, and everyone must confirm to that policy".[154] The same statement can still be applied today to describe the perspective of the seven participants in this study. The great majority of respondents showed a great deal of apathy regarding political participation in political parties or the election process. For the most part, they are disassociated from their government leaders and entire political process as a whole. Political parties are seen as ineffective and corrupt bodies made up of members that are self-interested. Elections are viewed as futile because of widespread government corruption preventing a free and fair outcome.

There remains a large gap between the Egyptian regime and its citizens with very little meaningful dialogue between the two. Egyptians are generally uninformed about the country's political decision-making as well as their individual rights. It is accepted that the government is

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[154] Binder, 402.

unrepresentative personal interests and unresponsive to daily needs. Consequently, Egyptian

people have minimal expectations of governmental output and fail to exert pressure on their

leaders to provide more.

The Nasser's tactic of distracting citizens with injustices beyond Egypt's borders is also

still evident today in Mubarak's Egypt. Using a more subtle approach, Mubarak maintains the

same strategy by allowing citizens to focus on the injustice of Western dominance, in effect,

deferring blame. The Egyptian national press (and Arab news channels) continuously emphasizes

the suffering of Palestinians because of the brutal Israeli occupation backed by the U.S. The

Arab-Israeli conflict has continued to be seen as the symbol for Western neo-colonialism and the

exploitation of Arabs and Muslims. Egyptians are inundated daily with images that show what

they see as repeated injustices against Palestinians and Iraqis. The constant reminder of the

humiliation of Arab peoples is compounded with a sense of powerlessness. Citizens are aware

that they do not have the power to change anything or solve injustices against Arabs and

especially the Palestinians. Nor can they rely on their government, which has repeatedly failed to

defend Arab interests against Israel and the U.S. The feelings of vulnerability and helplessness as

well as anger and resentment fuel a perception nearly obsessed with the victimization of Arabs by

an all-powerful U.S.-Israel alliance. These respondents illustrate the depth of this perception as it

becomes an all-encompassing worldview.

The worldview maintains that the U.S. and Israel dominate the world and exploit the

Arab world in particular. They see Arabs as constantly victimized in relation to the U.S.-Israel

alliance as self-interested, violent aggressors. This worldview is partially the reason some believe

that it is unlikely that Arabs were the perpetrators of the terrorist attacks on September 11, 2001.

Lack of information in the repressed Egyptian society also contributes to the formulation of

alternative stories and explanations of reality.

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Six of the seven respondents (one Coptic Christian and five Muslims) cite various examples to describe what they see as injustice. The consensus is that U.S. policies are hypocritical and show unequal treatment of others with U.S. government leaders seen as dishonest and unethical. One respondent plainly explains that America no longer stands for democratic ideals and no longer be trusted. The idea is that if the U.S. is calling for democratic ideals, the actions of their representatives would be reflective of those principles. This unequal treatment is presented with the normative consideration that it is unjust.

The lack of trust in the U.S. is shown repetitively throughout six of the seven interviews. Reasons behind these feelings of mistrust are examples of U.S. policies, especially those related to the Arab-Israeli conflict. Since Israel is considered an enemy, the close U.S.-Israeli relationship is considered evidence that the U.S. is also an enemy. Since both their interests are so closely aligned, the hatred for the Arabs must also be shared, and therefore, neither country should be trusted by Middle Easterners. Any attempts by the U.S. to assist Arabs should be cautiously viewed with suspicion. They see America's first priority as protecting and maintaining relations with Israel, even at the detriment of all Arab peoples in the Middle East. As an enemy of Middle Easterners, U.S. policies toward the region will always aim to exploit Arabs for U.S.-Israeli interests. It is this framework that effects all other interpretations and meanings of the U.S. and its policies.

Viewed from this perspective, the second U.S. invasion of Iraq is also an attempt to serve U.S. interests at the expense of those in the region. While the U.S. explains the reasons to go to war as motivated by promoting democracy and liberating the Iraqi people, these respondents see ulterior motives. All of the respondents viewed the war as motivated by a U.S. quest for Iraqi oil or for control of the region. They viewed the U.S. as self-interested with no intentions of promoting democracy to help the Iraqis. Democratization, outlined by The Greater Middle East Initiative, is seen as a guise to meddle in the domestic affairs of Arab countries and to allow the

U.S. to have more power over the Arab peoples and their resources. Therefore, democratization

is not expected to be successful in Iraq or throughout the region.

U.S. justification for the *Greater Middle East Initiative* will never be accepted by those

who doubt Arab involvement for the attacks on September 11th. By denying the existence of

Arab violence towards the U.S., skeptics are able to challenge the motivations of democratization.

They dispute the very foundations of the policy often making it unjustifiable. The *Greater*

Middle East Initiative is not seen as a policy to counter extremism in the Middle East, but one

that is motivated by other hidden reasons. Alternative interpretations to explain these motivations

stem from the lack of trust in the U.S. as a neo-colonial power and the constant fear of

exploitation and humiliation.

CHAPTER 5   CONCLUSION

Implications for Democracy

These findings have various implications for the democratization process in Egypt.

Using Sidney Verba's framework of analysis, the four dimensions of political culture will be

examined. The first concerns the most basic issue of national identity. The distinct ancient

Egyptian history has led to a strong national consciousness of the people that consider themselves

distinctly Egyptian. Egyptian society is also the most ethnically and religiously homogeneous

societies in the Middle East. Therefore, there is a strong national identity in which Egyptians

consider themselves members of the nation-state. This is a positive sign for the prospects of

democracy giving the national leaders the ability to mobilize its citizens as one cohesive

citizenry.

The second dimension is an individual's identification with fellow citizens. A few

respondents mention their concern that an election would allow Islamic groups to come to power.

One respondent mentions his concern that if elections were held in Egypt, Islamists would win

saying, "In Alexandria, they [Islamists] won all local elections in the past, before they were

outlawed. That's what we're afraid of." This respondent is weary of reforms that would allow

Islamists to come to power causing what he perceives as even greater problems for Egypt. Others

claim that Egyptians are illiterate or too poor to participate in the political process. This shows a

lack of confidence in other citizens and a low level of interpersonal trust. There is little

confidence in their fellow Egyptian citizens which is a missing characteristic of a tolerant society

required for a successful transition to democracy.

The third dimension relates to beliefs about governmental output. All of the respondents have few expectations of the Egyptian government. Most also admit that their government is corrupt and ineffective and accept the status quo without question. Although they express dismay with the economic, educational, and societal ills of the country, they do not expect the government to change and provide more for them. This is also detrimental for the prospects of democracy because of the minimal view of what the government ought to do for them. They seem rather parochial because they expect to be satisfied from other institutions such as the family. The lack of desirability for governmental activity places no demands on the government and has significant negative implications on the emergence of an effective political system.

The last dimension concerns beliefs about how the government makes decisions. The respondents seem to know very little about how decisions are made. They are generally disinterested in political parties and show no desire to learn. The majority of the respondents does not see a need to be involved with a political party and are not active participants in the government. They do not feel that they have a role in the political process. There is also a disagreement about what freedoms are granted in Egypt. Two respondents claimed that they have freedom of speech in Egypt while two others say the exact opposite. The lack of consensus about their freedoms shows that the respondents are distant and disassociated from political system.

<div align="center">Future Research</div>

Additional interviews with educated Egyptians would provide a larger sample and a richer variety of perspectives.   Interviews conducted on a greater scale with more participants allows for additional data that is most useful in identifying patterns and themes. The greater number of respondents, the greater the chance that the perceptions exist in the general population. In addition, asking the same questions among the same educated elite in Alexandria, Egypt will show if perceptions have changed over time and why regarding issues pertaining to

democratization and the U.S. role in that process. However, qualitative interviewing is costly and time consuming making it contingent on both time and resources available to the researcher.

Further qualitative research should continue to complement mass opinion surveys in the Middle East. As shown in this study, the combination of both quantitative and qualitative methods in the study of political culture has many benefits. Qualitative interviews using similar questions as mass surveys will continue to provide a more complete in-depth analysis of political culture and show the complexity of perspectives. It also has the added value of either confirming data findings or pointing out divergent results, which can reflect error or bias in research instruments.[155]

Another option involves an approach that analyzes other sub-groups within a society. In Egypt, it would be significant to compare across various groups such as the rural and urban peasants, the governmental elites, and the wealthy upper class. Examining the worldview of Egyptians from all sectors of society will show whether and how socio-economic level influences political attitudes. There may either be a general consensus or sharp disagreement about the prospects for an Egyptian democracy. Huge discrepancies among perceptions indicate greater obstacles to the democratization process in Egypt.

Future qualitative interviews in the region should also take a cross-national approach and compare perceptions of individuals from two or more countries. Perceptions in Egypt, for example, compared with those in Morocco and Kuwait would provide insights from a country in each part of the greater Middle East; North Africa, the Middle East, and the Gulf. The wide demographic range makes comparison even more valuable. Do all respondents have the same opinions about U.S. democratization policy? Perhaps they all identify themselves as Arabs with the same concerns. On the other hand, there may be a sharp difference of perceptions of

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[155] Hilary Arksey and Peter Knight eds., *Interviewing for Social Scientists,* (London: Sage Publications, 1999), 28.

democratization, for example, because of their unique national histories. This comparison would be highly useful in identifying whether participants identify with a pan-Arab cultural interpretation or a more nationalistic perception.

It is clear that additional qualitative research is conducted in the Middle East to further explain its political culture and perceptions that are vital to understanding the Arab world. In an increasingly integrated world with the risks of global terrorism, it is imperative to conduct area studies in a region that is largely misunderstood by Westerners. Personal narratives provide a deeper analysis of the Arab worldview and leads to a comprehensive understanding of their deep fears and threats. This will help bridge the widening gap of perceptions between Middle Easterners and the West, ultimately contributing to the quest for a safer and more secure world order.

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX A: Interview Questions

1.   How do you define democracy?

2.   Are you part of an Egyptian political party? Why or Why not?

3.   What is your attitude towards the United States?

4.   President Bush has proclaimed the 'Greater Middle East Initiative' to democratize the
      Middle East from Morocco to Pakistan. Why do you think this policy has been put forth?
      Will it succeed? Why or why not?

5.   The Bush Administration is seeking to begin democratization in the Middle East with the
      removal of Saddam Hussein. Will the U.S.-Iraq war mean more democracy or less
      democracy in the Middle East? Why or Why not?

6.   The U.S. has been asking Egypt to 'show the way' for other Arab countries and lead
      democratic reform. Do you welcome America's call for democratic ideals in Egypt?
      Why or Why not?"

Date of Interview: June 3, 2004
Place of Interview: Luxor, Egypt (on a Nile Cruise Ship)
Demographic information:
Career: Entrepreneur who owns many businesses including the development of a German school in Alexandria.
Political Party: None.
Religion: Muslim.
Degree: Graduated with Bachelors in Faculty of Commerce from Alexandria University.
Residence: Alexandria, Egypt
Current Occupation: Manager of a Nile Cruise.
Age: 45
Visited the U.S.: No
Name: "Ahmed"

Q: How to you define "democracy"?
A: Free speech. To say my opinion as I want. Accurate information needs to reach an individual. Today's vision is not the same as 7,000 years ago [in Egypt]. We received zero votes for the World Cup. When the judges came to the country [before the voting] to see what we had to offer the world for the soccer match, we showed them the pyramids. What have we done presently? We showed him accomplishments of the past. And then he got mugged in our streets. Of course we didn't get any votes. Elections, to pick another choice. Someone who loves the country and who is capable. I travel a lot. And I see how people live. See how people live here. [as he points to the homes made out of clay]. His mannerisms show disgust and frustration.

Q: What is your attitude towards the U.S.?
A: I don't like it. I have had a visa for five years and have never been there. Jewish people run it [U.S.] Many people say that the Jews were responsible for September 11th. To hurt the Arabs [image]. 70 million Egyptians and me are being choked [by America]. If the U.S. wants to come into Egypt with soldiers [invasion], I will be the first in the face against U.S. soldiers [points his index finger straight ahead]. I hate Bush. I even like Putin more than Bush. Bush is bloody. *Becomes very aggressive and audibly louder.*

Q: What is this attitude based on?
A: My feelings are based on their policies. Not because of religion. Religion doesn't guide my thinking. It doesn't matter what religion someone is. I have both Muslim and Christian friends as well as American friends. It doesn't matter.

Q: How long have you had this view?
A: For a long time. At least for the last ten years.

Q: President Bush has proclaimed the 'Greater Middle East Initiative' to democratize the Middle East from Morocco to Palestine. Why do you think this policy has been put forth?
A: He's a liar. He doesn't want democracy. He wants to rule them in order to take their resources. Control their media. Economically, politically control them. He wants resources, oil. *Speaking very confidently, in a matter-of-fact way.*

Q: Will democratization succeed? Why or why not?
A: No, of course it won't. He will try, but the people will resist. They must want it [for themselves].

Q: The Bush Administration is seeking to begin democratization in the Middle East with the removal of Saddam Hussein. Why do you think this policy has been put forth?
A: Saddam is the only one I admire. He stood up to the U.S., the only one in the Arab world. He is strong. Not Mubarak, not the Saudis [stand up to the US]. When I saw the way he looked [on TV], I cried [when US captured Saddam]. I cried after he's gone. The only way they [US] took Baghdad is because they had a conspiracy with the guards, with money. It was too easy. What is happening today? They [U.S.] are getting beat up by loyalists [loyalists to Saddam]. U.S. went to Iraq for oil.

Q: Will the war in Iraq mean more or less terrorism in the Middle East? Why or Why not?
A: It [US invasion] will increase terrorism. Look at Saudi Arabia today, where Americans are being killed by terrorism. America is telling them to get out [of Saudi Arabia]. I even respect Bin Laden as well. The U.S. will not leave June 30. Going in the bathroom, isn't like leaving. [Egyptian saying]. If they wanted democracy, they [U.S. soldiers] won't have done that to the prisoners [Abu Ghraib]. It was not just a few soldiers it was politics. A general policy of the US. That's why Rumsfeld is not fired. What CNN shows Americans is not true. I don't blame American people, they don't know the truth. The Jewish people run the media in the US. US doesn't really want democracy [seems very serious and intense].

Q: The U.S. has been asking Egypt to 'show the way' for other Arab countries and lead democratic reform. Do you welcome America's call for democratic ideals in Egypt? Why or why not?
A: American democracy is not for Arabs. Even in the U.S., Arabs are not able to form groups because they will be deported or given problems. I do not welcome the U.S. because I don't trust them. Not 1 [person] out of the 70 million [in Egypt] or President Mubarak can trust Bush. If Mubarak goes to the US to talk to Bush its only to protect Egypt from the U.S., not because he trusts them [the US]. The problem is not just Bush; it's the US government in general. Bush says he's fighting terrorism, but he is the terrorist of the whole world, an international terrorist. We [Egyptians] leave Egypt because we are afraid of what will happen to Egypt. I have two kids, a boy and a girl. I am afraid of what will happen to them. Not from Egypt, but from who will invade. We are already occupied financially and politically. They [the U.S.] make Israel stronger and us [Egypt] weaker, so that they [the US and Israel] will invade, just like the 1967 Six Day War. The U.S. will invade, just like the Koran says. The U.S. gives the most military aid to Israel and the leftover, old-fashioned technology to Egypt. Be sure that the 70 million [Egyptians], who are not able to eat, will hold weapons [during a military invasion]. Sharon, Bush, I hate them. The boy that got shot in his father's arms in Palestine, do you remember that?"
(Yes)
Do you think CNN showed that [in America]? [Implying that it was not shown.] The 30 milliare debt everybody [in Egypt] shares. All Egyptians who have left Egypt and gone to the U.S., keep their money there. They don't give it back to Egypt because they are afraid of the external control over them. The Egyptian government makes the people worry about food and survival so that they forget about the political process. They must eat before they can think about democracy. At the end of the interview, he warns the interviewer about the dangers of interviewing in Egypt. He says that if someone wanted to have the interviewer arrested, they could easily do so by telling the government about the interviews.

Date of Interview: July, 27 2004
Place of Interview: The American Center in Alexandria, Egypt
Demographic information:
Career: Attorney.
Political Party: National Democratic Party.
Religion: Muslim.
Degree: Bachelors in Political Science from Alexandria University.
Residence: Alexandria, Egypt
Current Occupation: Journalist for an Egyptian newspaper.
Age: 30
Visited the U.S. No
Name: Said

Q: How to you define "democracy"?
A: When the government does not have control over its citizens. When citizens can say their honest opinion. When I have the right for a good quality of life. There is equal opportunity and where opportunities are available. Elections, with the right to vote for Congress and the President. Today in Egypt, newspapers can write anything. The law which allowed for their arrest is now gone. All people [in Egypt] can say what they want. Gara-im El Ri'ya, which is freedom of speech. Montesquieu says that the issue is not the approach the government takes, rather the most important issue is how a leader deals in matters. Accountability. That they [government leaders] can't do corrupt things, like change elections. Even if there are many choices for people, there can still be corruption. It's not the way you elect people, it's the outcome and transparency' [of the election process].

Q: Are you a part of an Egyptian political party? Why or Why not?
A: Yes, I am. I am a member of the *Hiyzb El Watany* [Mubarak's ruling political party]. I want to help my country improve for the future. My opinion is that in the future, Egypt will have a big role. There have been a lot of good changes. Last government Ministers [members of Egyptian Parliament] elected is very good. The old one ones were not re-elected because citizens didn't want them. We elect them every five years. *In a very persuasive manner.*

Q: What is your attitude towards the US? What is this attitude based on? How long have you had this view?
A: My attitude about the US is twofold. My attitude towards the people [Americans] is great. I love them and respect them. They are good and have contributed many things. Medical, technological [inventions], for the future. I have always had this opinion about them. They don't know the reality because the media in the U.S. is controlled by people who do not deliver the truth. The U.S. government only cares about themselves. They lobby for power [in the US]. They lobby for oil. The Jewish lobby. They are all about their interests. They [U.S. elected officials] need money for their campaigns and they are pressured by lobbyists. Clinton almost ousted because Jews didn't want pressure [from U.S. government] on Israel. 'Why would she [Monica Lewinsky] hold on to the dress [material evidence for extra-marital affair] for three to four years? She is Jewish." My attitude was not always so negative towards U.S. policies. They were better with Clinton. Jimmy Carter, I loved him. The Koran says that he, who kills one, is killing all humans and those who protect one, are protecting all people. Even if it is a Christian or

Jew, no killing anyone. Islam says we believe in both of them. We [Muslims] have no problem with Jews. Only problem is with controlling land and people, like Sharon [in Palestine]. They are religious like us. Sadat [former Egyptian president] said this in the Knesset [Israeli Parliament].

Q: President Bush has proclaimed the 'Greater Middle East Initiative' to democratize the Middle East from Morocco to Pakistan. Why do you think this policy has been put forth? Will democratization succeed? Why or why not?
A: Arab countries will not accept external pressures, they will refuse. Princes from Arab countries like Saudi Arabia, Kuwait and Oman will not allow elections to overcome the government. They want to make all the laws. They want to be royal, the whole family. Which prince will allow their control to be taken from them? We have groups internally, tribes and they do not get [understand] American ideas! They cannot accept only one law! Every country has its own thinking. Egypt is closer to American thinking because it has a republic with a President. Republics can agree, not like royal family. The citizens say no to the U.S., not the government.

Q: The Bush Administration is seeking to begin democratization in the Middle East with the removal of Saddam Hussein. Why do you think this policy has been put forth? Will the war in Iraq mean more or less democracy in the Middle East? Why or Why not?
A: Where is the democracy? Eaid Al Laway who worked in the FBI, CIA in America, was picked by the US and says the same things as Saddam when he came to power, 'We will destroy anyone in our way!' He [Bush] went to Iraq for oil. All over U.S., Europe, and Arab world people are saying 'No blood for oil'. Also, he [Bush] wants to monitor the whole world and Iraq is in the middle of the world and they [U.S. government] can monitor Russia, Arabs, and even Iran.

Q: Will the US-Iraq war mean more or less terrorism in the Middle East?
A: More terrorism, its obvious, isn't it? But in Iraq, that is not terrorism. They are freedom fighters. Just like during the U.S. revolution against Great Britain. That was not terrorism, they were fighting for there freedom. Everything against the US is labeled terrorism. When the US went to Iraq and Afghanistan and killed all of those people, wasn't that terrorism? That is worse because it's international terrorism. Where's terrorism? Who defines a terrorist? Palestine is the number one reason for terrorism.

Q: The U.S. has been asking Egypt to 'show the way' for other Arab countries and lead democratic reform. Do you welcome America's call for democratic ideals in Egypt? Why or why not?
A: The Egyptian Parliament, *Maglis Al Shaab*, chooses one person as a candidate and the people vote. The people vote 'yes' or 'no'. He [candidate] must have 50% to be elected. Parliament is also elected. They are representative.

Q: How many people vote?
A: 70% of those registered, about 40 million voted for Parliament seats. There are a lot of representatives from many political parties. The Muslim Brothers won 19 districts under a different name. They now form a group, a strong voice.

Q: Do you welcome America's call for democratic ideals in Egypt?
A: This is in our interest, my interest. Like the Marshall Plan after WWII. It is necessary for Egypt to be a leader for others. But there are limits. Any changes must include religion. We are Muslim and religious. It is the most important thing. We can fight years for religion. Islam can change over time. There are many Christian countries with wars, AIDS, and many problems.

Why target Islam? Islam does not mean terrorism. It says violence can be used only in self-defense, in the homeland. Respondent's demeanor remains the same throughout the entire interview – very optimistic and persuasive.

Date of Interview: July 5, 2004
Place of Interview: Alexandria, Egypt

Demographic information:
Career: Accountant.
Political Party: None.
Religion: Coptic Orthodox Christian.
Degree: Bachelors of Accounting from Alexandria University.
Residence: Alexandria, Egypt
Current Occupation: Manager of a car business.
Age: 45
Visited the U.S.: No
Name: "Magued"

Q: How to you define "democracy"?
A: To be able to say what you want. Freedom. When Nasser was in power, we were scared just
like Saddam's Iraq. We were scared to talk politics in our home. Our mom would tell us to shut
up in our own homes because they [Egyptian government] might hear us.

Q: Are you a part of an Egyptian political party? Why or Why not?
A: No, I don't have any political ambitions. I come from a culture that has made me not care
about politics. It makes no difference to me. I know that we can't change anything.

Q: What is your attitude towards the US? What is this attitude based on?
A: I don't like the US at all. I've never been there. It's because of their policies, of course, and
their values, their concepts. The government is always the same, no matter who is elected. They
are always with Israel. Each president may be a degree up or down, but generally they are all the
same. Their concepts [the US], the way they think, that they should take something over in order
to get something. Do whatever it takes to get what they want. Can you be sure who is
responsible for 9-11? The Jews were not killed in the Twin towers. They left the day before and
took that day off work. How did they take so many pictures of all the angles of the building?
They were ready to take the pictures. Maybe the Arabs, maybe Bin Laden, but who makes them
do it? The CIA, the U.S., the Jews. *Speaking in a matter-of-fact way.*

**Q: President Bush has proclaimed the 'Greater Middle East Initiative' to democratize the
Middle East from Morocco to Palestine. Why do you think this policy has been put forth?
Will democratization succeed? Why or why not?**
A: He [Bush] doesn't want democracy. He wants to put on a show that he is good. He is trying
to give justification for what he is doing. A plan to start with Iraq and extend throughout the
Middle East [sarcastically] and he wants to include Pakistan to prevent it from being only Arabs.
He is threatened by that. Has corrupted Iraq. They [U.S. soldiers] protected the oil and left the
museums to be robbed. An initiative? He can't. You can see the result in Iraq. Soon he'll invade
Syria. They [U.S.] inspect nuclear weapons in Iraq and Libya but its no problem for Israel to have
them. Why don't they care about if Israel has them? Why is it okay for them to have them?

Q: The Bush Administration is seeking to begin democratization in the Middle East with the removal of Saddam Hussein. Why do you think this policy has been put forth? Will the war in Iraq mean more or less democracy in the Middle East? Why or Why not?
A: First they [the US government] said the reason for invasion was for nukes and weapons. Then it was because of a link between Saddam and Al-Qaeda. He [Saddam] is a terrorist. These reasons are just not true. They were a justification for his [Bush] plan. There are no weapons or a relationship between Saddam and Al-Qaeda. Who made him [Saddam] anyway? The U.S. did. They gave him weapons and technology against Iran during the Iraq-Iran war. They [the US] invaded Iraq for oil and to help reconstruction companies. Dick Cheney [U.S. Vice President] helped Halliburton, his old company. Bush talks about democracy to justify what he is doing. Is it being done for our good? No.

Q: Will the US-Iraq war mean more or less terrorism in the Middle East?
A: More terrorism. Why? Because some people have beliefs. Americans and Jews are full of corruption. Palestinian women are shown crying on television because their house is destroyed. Why would they [terrorists] strap a bomb and blow themselves up? What would make them do that? He can't go to work; he's watched his mom, aunt, uncle die- his house devastated. They get stopped to go to work. All that puts pressure on people. There's no justice. Different treatment creates hate. One Israeli gets killed and its shown all over the place [in the media]. One-hundred Palestinians get killed and no one shows anything. Aren't they civilians? They [Israeli government] do not allow reporters in Palestinian villages after they massacre them. The Arabs have learned that the only way American listens, is by force, by killing Americans. The U.S. tries to distract the world about Bin Laden and terrorism. So that the world will not realize what they are doing in Iraq. But the world will know in time. Maybe not right away but they will know. The Bush Administration used 9-11 so that they could have a reason to go to Afghanistan and Iraq. 9-11 gave him [Pres. Bush] a reason to go to the Middle East.

Q: The US has been asking Egypt to 'show the way' for other Arab countries and lead democratic reform. Do you welcome America's call for democratic ideals in Egypt? Why or why not?
A: We don't need his [Bush] help. People here [in Egypt] can say what they want. One day a person is cursing the President. The other is cursing the government. I'll show you the newspapers today. We don't need someone from outside to help us change here. We are not like the days of Nasser anymore. We were scared to death to talk politics in our home. If you dared say something during that time, you may not come home that night. We would say [the expression], "they took him behind the sun." We would ask as kids, 'who would here?' No one knew. There was just fear. We were scared. It's not like that now. We can say what we want. We have political parties.

After the interview, he expressed great concern about the possibility of a re-election of George W. Bush, asking repeatedly about the probability of his being re-elected. This respondent seemed genuinely worried about the prospect. He also mentioned that he is waiting for a visa to the U.S. and hopes to immigrate soon.

"Ibrahim"
Date of Interview:: August 3, 2004
Place of Interview: Alexandria, Egypt
Demographic information:
Career: Owns an accounting firm.
Political party: None.
Religion: Muslim.
Degree: Bachelors of Accounting from Alexandria University.
Residence: Alexandria, Egypt
Current Occupation: Custom Clearance and Transportation officer.
Age: 50
Visited the U.S.: No

Q: How to you define "democracy"?
A: Freedom. To say my opinion without any control over it. Everyone is free to say their opinions. U.S. is supposed to be democratic but its not. It's like apartheid because the Jews rule all. Democracy is when one feels that he's being treated like a human being. Elections are a must. Citizens should have an opinion to pick their leader. Here [Egypt] we don't have that.

Q: Are you a part of an Egyptian political party? Why or Why not?
A: No, don't like them. Nothing will change if I join them. They don't make a difference. They [Egyptian government] will do what they want and nothing will change that.

Q: What is your attitude towards the US? What is this attitude based on? How long have you had this view?
A: America is a country where I have never been. From what I have heard, it is a good country. Israel tells the U.S. government what to do. In the U.S. the Jews are many and politicians are worried about elections and getting reelected. Hosni Mubarak has talked to Bush in meetings where Bush said that he would give Palestinians rights as a country, remove settlements and stop the wall they [Israeli government] is building. Two hours later, after Mubarak left, Bush met Sharon. He said the exact opposite and actually gave him the green light to do anything else they wanted with a guarantee that no one will stand in their way. Why? Because he [Bush] wants to be reelected. I don't like the US government and their policies. When Bush came, I began to hate the policies. Clinton was better. Bush Sr. got paid one milliare from Kuwait for the 1991 Gulf war. But, I like the country and have wanted to go there for a long time. He speaks in an overconfident manner; like he is privy to this information and is teaching the interviewer.

Q: President Bush has proclaimed the 'Greater Middle East Initiative' to democratize the Middle East from Morocco to Pakistan. Why do you think this policy has been put forth? Will democratization succeed? Why or why not?
A: He [Bush] says that but its only words. If he doesn't have it in his own country, how can he have it anywhere else? He put forth this policy because he thinks they [citizens of the Middle East] are stupid. He tells them that they need it and pretends that he is helping them. But really he's trying to fool them, tricking them. He actually wants to control the Middle East. He won't be able to do that without talking about other goals.

Q: The Bush Administration is seeking to begin democratization in the Middle East with the removal of Saddam Hussein. Why do you think this policy has been put forth? Will the war in Iraq mean more or less democracy in the Middle East? Why or Why not? Will the US-Iraq war mean more or less terrorism in the Middle East?

A: Less democracy. He [Bush] ruined the whole country. He say he wants democracy but he's occupying it. He hasn't brought democracy! Terrorism is greater because of the occupation. Why? People can't get their rights in their own government so they kill themselves. It's not right but it's because there's no democracy. If there was democracy and the Iraqi people could say their opinions there wouldn't be any terrorism. You can't fight terrorism because they have no country and no base. He [Bush] said there were weapons of mass destruction but there is none. He went to Iraq for oil and to put more military bases in the Middle East in order to control it.

Q: The US has been asking Egypt to 'show the way' for other Arab countries and lead democratic reform. Do you welcome America's call for democratic ideals in Egypt? Why or why not?

A: It [Egypt] is the biggest Arab country with the largest population. America always talks to Mubarak so that he will influence other Arabs. Ever since the October 6th war when Egypt won, whenever America wants something from other Arab countries they ask Egypt to listen. They give Egypt money and then they have control over our country, our education and even our curriculum. Put this here, put that there. I do not welcome the democratic influence from the U.S. They do not have democracy in the U.S. They [U.S. government] should worry about democracy in their own country before they worry about democracy in other countries. I heard that you can't even say what you want there anymore. The FBI will show up at your house. They are not democratic. I would welcome democracy but the US doesn't bring democracy.

After the interview, the respondent keeps referring to his worries about getting his visa to the U.S. because of the interview. He is concerned that I will be able to say something to prevent him from getting a visa. I keep reassuring him that I am not a part of the US government and that we have freedom of speech in America. He does not seem to be convinced that the U.S. is democratic.

"Mariam"
Date of Interview: August 10, 2004
Place of Interview: Alexandria, Egypt
Demographic information:
Career: Journalist and business owner.
Political Party: The *Wafd* Party.
Religion: Coptic Orthodox Christian.
Degree: Bachelors in Business from Alexandria University.
Residence: Alexandria, Egypt
Current Occupation: Attorney.
Age: 47
Visited the U.S. Yes

Q: How to you define "democracy"?
A: That if I write, they don't break my pencil. I can say what I want. They say that you can write what you want, but you really can't. What about Rida Halal? He used to write in newspapers, a journalist in Al-Ahram newspaper. Beautiful works. Where did he go? He disappeared. I cried so hard when he disappeared. He spoke of what the people want.

Q: Are you a part of an Egyptian political party? Why or Why not?
A: Yes, I am a member of the *Wafd* Party and so was my father. During the Sadat era, I was also one of six people to invest in a group that fosters religious dialogue between Christians and Muslims. This was also to help prevent Muslim discrimination against Christians. Discrimination is terrible in Egypt. If a little Muslim boy sees me wearing a cross around my neck, he'll make a face or gesture at me. Muslims also burn churches and beat up priests.

Q: What is your attitude towards the US? What is this attitude based on? How long have you had this view?
A: I love America. I have traveled everywhere. Why? Not because they are powerful, but because they have respect for many things. They respect people, animals and everything has a value. Also, the U.S. has contributed greatly to the world's technology. They [Americans] have invented many valuable things for the world today. For as long as I have lived I have had that view.

Q: President Bush has proclaimed the 'Greater Middle East Initiative' to democratize the Middle East from Morocco to Pakistan. Why do you think this policy has been put forth? Will democratization succeed? Why or why not?
A: "Bush pretends to care for them [Arabs] so that he can control them and bring them closer. People say it's a war on Islam. If it is then I agree!" I have read the Koran three times. The first time I skimmed through it, the second time I read it and the third time I really knew it. "This is a religion? What a religion! God forgive them. They write about bad things, dirty ideas. Egypt and the Middle East will always go backwards as long as Islam is dominant. Democracy cannot succeed when Islam is dominant. The whole Middle East is electrified and tense. Speaking dramatically and seriously with disgust.

Q: The Bush Administration is seeking to begin democratization in the Middle East with the removal of Saddam Hussein. Why do you think this policy has been put forth? Will the war in Iraq mean more or less democracy in the Middle East? Why or Why not?
A: I don't believe that the US went for oil and to control the world, like many people say. If the people in Iraq believed that the US was there for democracy, then it would happen. But they don't. There won't be democracy in Iraq. There will be more conflict and war. The Shites want power and will continue to struggle with many groups for power. They will keep killing each other, just like in Lebanon, until they are fed up with all the killings. Each group wants control.

Q: Will the US-Iraq war mean more or less terrorism in the Middle East?
A: I respect Bush because he's done nothing wrong. So the military is there. What has he done wrong? He can't leave. They are killing and beheading people right now, even with him there.

Q: The US has been asking Egypt to 'show the way' for other Arab countries and lead democratic reform. Do you welcome America's call for democratic ideals in Egypt? Why or why not?
A: They [US government] actually commanded them to do it. I welcome them greatly. I wish US would come back into Egypt like they were in the past. Egypt will go forward instead of backward. Egypt today is actually going backwards. This is because of the strong Muslim fundamentalism that is taking over the country. Omar Quadaffi [President of Libya] says he wants to learn from the US and that's why he's been cooperative lately. He actually sent the highest people to America to learn progressive ideas and gives them millions of dollars to reconstruct Libya. Egypt needs to also learn from the U.S. instead of trying to resist it.

"Mohammed"
Date of Interview: June 22, 2004
Place of Interview: Alexandria, Egypt
Demographic information:
Career: Civil Engineer.
Political Party: None.
Religion: Muslim.
Degree: Bachelors of Engineering from Alexandria University.
Residence: Alexandria, Egypt
Current Occupation: Owns Construction and Engineering business.
Age: 55
Visited the U.S.: No

Q: How to you define "democracy"?
A: When the decisions of the masses rule. When a state allows for collective decision-making. People must be able to have the ability to choose. Also, the freedom to express frustration, discontent or disapproval with the ruling government.

Q: Are you a part of an Egyptian political party? Why or Why not?
A: No, they are all vain. If you have a lot of money you can buy your way into the parliamentary seats. I don't vote for the seats because they make it too difficult to vote. You have to stand in line for hours in the heat. The personal cost is too high. And then the outcome may not even be counted right. So it's generally a waste time.

Q: What is your attitude towards the US? What is this attitude based on? How long have you had this view?
A: The policies of the U.S. are hypocritical. They say one thing and do another. They have no shame in changing their minds to suit their interests, even in front of the entire world. They are allies with dictators and then they topple their regime. America used to be a leader but now it is an international terrorist. The people of America do not know except what the government and special interests want them to know. The American people cannot be blamed for the injustices their government causes. I have never been there and don't really have a desire to go.

Q: President Bush has proclaimed the 'Greater Middle East Initiative' to democratize the Middle East from Morocco to Pakistan. Why do you think this policy has been put forth? Will democratization succeed? Why or why not?
A: They use the 'war on terror' as a reason for democracy in the Middle East. But they [U.S. government] were the ones responsible for September 11th with the Jews. Look at history. The Jews have often killed for a political goal. The Messianic Jews have done it many times. Look at when they had King Ferdinand killed before World War II. And that's when Hitler punished them. They are willing to even destroy something they own to generate a reaction against their enemies to achieve a certain goal. September 11th allowed the U.S. to react against the Arabs for their own benefit. They have control of Iraqi oil and more military bases throughout the Middle East. No, it [democratization] won't be possible. Not as long as the Arab-Israeli conflict continues. The U.S. has no credibility.

Q: The Bush Administration is seeking to begin democratization in the Middle East with the removal of Saddam Hussein. Why do you think this policy has been put forth?
A: Bush said first that he reason he is invading Iraq is for weapons of mass destruction. Now that they can't find any, he claims it is for democracy. It doesn't look good for the U.S. when they change their reasons for going to war. The entire international community knows that the reasons initially given by the Bush administration are false and that there are other reasons. Other than oil, of course, the war in Iraq is a war on Islam. It is like the Crusades. Now that the Soviet enemy is gone, the U.S. has made Islam the enemy.

Q: Will the US-Iraq war mean more or less terrorism in the Middle East?
A: Terrorism will definitely increase. Saddam Hussein kept the Sunni, Shite, and Kurds under control. The country needs someone to prevent conflict between these groups. The Shites are known for being extremely aggressive and violent people. And they are aligning with terrorists from other countries now. Terrorism for the entire Middle East will increase because Iraq is and will be so chaotic, it will provide a place for terrorists to operate.

Q: Will the war in Iraq mean more or less democracy in the Middle East? Why or Why not?
A: If the U.S. leaves Iraq there will not be democracy. There will be a great deal of conflict between groups. The U.S. does not have the capability to democratize the entire Middle East. The war in Iraq is a mess and will cause more violence and terrorism because no one can control all of those groups. The belief in God here is very strong and cannot be ignored. The Islamic parties are the most organized of all the parties. They would definitely win elections in the Middle East if they were allowed to participate. Then they would be against the U.S. The U.S would never want that, so they can't really be serious about democracy.

Q: The US has been asking Egypt to 'show the way' for other Arab countries and lead democratic reform. Do you welcome America's call for democratic ideals in Egypt? Why or why not?
A: No, I don't welcome America's push for democracy in Egypt. If we want democracy, it will come from within the country not from outside. Here [Egypt] the military gets everything. All the big homes and money. We used to believe that America was about democratic ideals and that was something to emulate. Now we know that that's not true. Its [U.S. government] all about supporting the Israelis. There is no good democratic model to follow. There are some who say that Islam is the way to rule the country. But still there is no good Islamic model to follow. Iran is a mess. Saudi Arabia is not even close. Turkey is not an Islamic country. It's totally secular. America is definitely not the model that we will follow. We don't trust them or what they say. During the entire interview his mannerisms were very serious with a stern look on his face.

Expressed concerns after the interview about the possibility of Bush being reelected. He asked about the chance of that occurring and seemed extremely worried about the outcome.

APPENDIX H: Interview Seven Data

"Saad"
Date of Interview: June 27, 2004
Place of Interview: Alexandria, Egypt
Demographic information:
Career: Physician of Gynecology.
Political Party: None
Religion: Muslim
Degree: Medical degree from the University of Alexandria.
Residence: Alexandria, Egypt
Current Occupation: Owner of a private Outpatient Center/Specialist Hospital.
Age: 54
Visited the U.S. Yes

Q: How to you define "democracy"?
A: The ability for citizens to choose their leader. When people have the opportunities for a good quality of life. Jobs that will allow people to improve their lives.

Q: Are you a part of an Egyptian political party? Why or Why not?
A: No. They are all corrupt and ineffective. Their votes don't even count. "I don't even get involved in voting for seats in the Parliament because I know my vote won't count. The ballot boxes are already full before people vote. The decision is already made before the election takes place. The voting process itself is corrupt." Before 1952, people in Egypt were very politically active and involved. Something happened in the Nasser era and people stopped being politically active. It was probably the American influence on Egypt. The Wafd party is still around and has newspapers with free speech. Mubarak allows freedom of speech in print. He monitors the Muslim Brothers and all religious groups.

Q: What is your attitude towards the US? What is this attitude based on? How long have you had this view?
A: America's influence on Egypt has been negative. They give us aid but it helps our government and military control the country. Their policies are self-interested and do not help anyone. I used to like America when I thought it represented good values. Now when I think of America, I think of selfishness, greed and control that are obvious through their policies. I am referring to their policies. I like to visit America and go there often to vacation. The country itself has a lot to offer. But the government is immoral.

Q: President Bush has proclaimed the 'Greater Middle East Initiative' to democratize the Middle East from Morocco to Pakistan. Why do you think this policy has been put forth? Will democratization succeed? Why or why not?
A: The democracy excuse it used to meddle in Arab countries' affairs after September 11th. First you must ask who is responsible for 9-11? Do you really think the Arabs did it? No. They do not have the expertise and the brains to conduct such a sophisticated operation. The Arabs strap bombs and blow themselves up. They do not have the technology to fly planes and navigate it this way.

Q: Who does?
A: Probably the CIA or FBI with the Jews from Israel, of course. The US wants to be able to have an excuse to change its foreign policy from supporting the Arab regimes like Saudi Arabia. The Madrid bombing, yes, that was the Arabs who were responsible. But 9-11, no. It will not succeed. Bush will not be able to. Let's say, for a moment, that I agree for the U.S. to get rid of Saddam Hussein. Now, if they [U.S.] invade Syria next, for example, the Arab communities [in Syria] will welcome them to get rid of the Assad government and once they do, they will turn on the Americans and fight them. The U.S. has taught the Arabs that the only way to get their attention is to use violence. The Arabs think that the only way to get the US to listen to them is to kill them. Bush does not negotiate or discuss. Just like in Beirut and Saudi Arabia and today in Iraq. When Americans are killed, they are forced to action.

Q: The Bush Administration is seeking to begin democratization in the Middle East with the removal of Saddam Hussein. Why do you think this policy has been put forth?
A: The reason was purely economic, for oil. They [U.S. government] say that they want to get rid of Saddam Hussein but they used to be friends with him. He used to be their playboy. It will not mean democracy in Iraq. There are no signs of democracy. Saddam Hussein used to kill the Shites, now the U.S. kills the Shites. So nothing has changed. The Shites are so violent that the only way to control them is through violence and killing.

Q: Will the US-Iraq war mean more or less terrorism in the Middle East? Why or Why not?
A: Terrorism is and will continue to increase. It stems from poverty and hopelessness. People look to religion for a safe haven. When there is prosperity, terrorism will not be used as a viable method. The U.S. is not encouraging prosperity, its actually making the situation worse.

Q: The US has been asking Egypt to 'show the way' for other Arab countries and lead democratic reform. Do you welcome America's call for democratic ideals in Egypt? Why or why not?
A: We are not ready for democracy. And no, I don't welcome America's call for democracy. America does not even have a true democracy. Neither does Great Britain. They manipulate the people to think a certain way. Sixty percent of the population in Egypt is still illiterate and worried about surviving. They are too poor to think about the political process. Even if you sit with the youth in Egypt today, they have no interest in politics because they can't say anything. And even if we were to have elections today, the Islamic party would rule. In Alexandria, they one all local elections in the past before they were outlawed. That's what we are afraid of. The two main problems in Egypt are education and economic level. When those improve maybe we can think about democracy. This is not Egypt. You must walk through the city streets to see the real Egypt. Also if you look at history, Egyptians are always looking for one person to lead them, since the time of the Pharaohs. *Mannerisms during the interview consisted of speaking calmly in an articulate and intellectual way.*

After the interview, asked about the possibility of George Bush being reelected. He expressed hope that he would not be reelected.