

## Author



# Politics and Perseverance of Leftist Youth in Cairo

**Timna Medovoy**

*Political Science*

After traveling twice to study in Cairo, Egypt, Timna Medovoy became inspired by the young people she met—their passion for political causes and their love for their country. She approached Professor Lynch about turning that inspiration into a research project, and started focusing on the questions she wanted to ask. Timna received the 2015 Chancellor's Award for Excellence in Undergraduate Research for the School of Social Sciences in recognition of her passionate dedication to her project. Now based in Jerusalem, Timna serves as the Middle East Program Coordinator for the Olive Tree Initiative and is pursuing a Master's Degree at Hebrew University in Conflict Research, Management and Resolution.

## Key Terms

- ◆ Leftist
- ◆ Liberal
- ◆ Muslim Brotherhood
- ◆ New Left Youth
- ◆ Youth

## Abstract

Since the 2011 revolution in Egypt, much political discourse has centered on an Islamist versus non-Islamist dichotomy, leaving leftist youth an under-examined subset of the non-Islamist umbrella. In this research, I focused on educated leftist youth in Cairo to provide more insight into the shifting political profile of this subset of the Egyptian populace. This study combined qualitative research of Egypt's modern political history and in-depth assessment of political analysis produced since the 2011 revolution, with interviews of leftist youth and political analysts in Cairo. Findings indicate that leftist youth are decidedly heterogeneous, with a diverse demographic composition and a discordant set of views on Egypt's future and their role in it. There are, however, clear and unifying trends in the evolution of their political views. In the years since the uprising, respondents expressed a radical increase in anti-military and anti-Muslim Brotherhood sentiments. The majority has abandoned political parties and protest movements, with many shifting their efforts to civil society and other forms of activism. The majority also view leftist youth, on the whole, as largely disillusioned and disengaged. Still, many have persisted in their political involvement. Therefore, it is important to analyze both their internal trends and divisions to provide insight into their role in Egypt's tumultuous political environment.

## Faculty Mentor



Timna Medovoy's research is a terrific example of a dedicated researcher getting (as much as possible) to the bottom of a puzzling and very timely question of international importance. Timna had traveled to Egypt before working on this paper, and she really wanted to understand what was going on with youth in the aftermath of the Arab Spring and the subsequent coup in Egypt. She is an incredibly independent young scholar who pursued interviews doggedly, traveled several times to the region, and consistently came back to discuss with me whether and how her initial assumptions had altered, how to refine her methodological choices (including her categories of interlocutors) and to get support as she sifted through and refined her analysis. She did a superb job throughout the research process, and it was a pleasure to work with her.

**Cecelia M. Lynch**  
*School of Social Sciences*

## Introduction<sup>1</sup>

Dubbed “*Om el Dunya*” (Arabic for “*Mother of the World*”) by much of the Arab world, Egypt’s revolution was a watershed in the historic “Arab Spring.”<sup>2</sup> In the most populous country in the Middle East and North Africa, the January 25 revolution and its successful ouster of then President, Hosni Mubarak, created a paradigm shift in the way Arab populations viewed their relationship to authority, emboldening a wave of uprisings across the region. However, after more than four years of political upheaval, Egypt’s political future remains woefully uncertain. What started in Egypt’s public squares as a united movement with concrete demands for bread, freedom and social justice, has since been obscured beyond recognition. Marred by political and religious fragmentation, rapid political turnover, and increasing authoritarianism, many today wonder if Egypt’s revolution has indeed failed, and where the youth are that once carried it.<sup>3</sup> With young people making up the majority of Egypt’s population, the revolution’s early impetus was thought by many to be partially credited to widespread mobilization of what has come to be called Egypt’s “New Left youth,” or the rising youth generation of leftists (Cole 487). Juan Cole, a leading American scholar and prominent historian of the modern Middle East describes how it was groups such as “April 6, Kifaya and other New Left groups [that] had pioneered a successful set of repertoires of collective action,” culminating in the ouster of Mubarak on February 11 (489).

In the political transition that followed, Egypt’s array of revolutionary youth movements received very little representation in the political process. Still, youth remained heavily engaged in politics in the public sphere, crafting their campaigns to respond to the rapidly shifting political landscape. More than two years after the revolution began, liberal and leftist youth movements were once again at the forefront of Egyptian politics, leading nationwide campaigns calling for the ouster of Egypt’s first democratically elected president, Mohammed Morsi. Today however,

Egypt’s youth is not only conspicuously absent from the political sphere, it has also largely vanished from the public sphere as well. Mustafa Hashem, an Egyptian journalist specializing in protest movements and political Islam notes that much of Egyptian “youth are losing their faith in the political process, and their participation rates are plunging” (2014). While much of the country has been swept up in a fervor of fiercely anti-Islamist, military populism, it is unclear how Egypt’s New Left youth will fit into the current political situation. What is clear, however, is that in a country where youth make up the largest portion of the population, their political perceptions are a crucial indicator of what Egypt’s political future has in store (Allam 2014). While Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood and Islamist youth will likely continue to be marginalized, at least in the near future, Egypt’s New Left youth could be an important factor in deciding the direction of Egypt’s political transition. The critical question thus emerges: What will that direction be? In an attempt to begin answering this seminal question, I explored the social make-up and sociopolitical perceptions of this dynamic subset of the Egyptian populace, seeking to identify what, if any, major political shifts may have occurred over the last several years, focusing in particular on Cairo’s educated, leftist youth. Secondly, I explored what some of the major causes of those changes in sociopolitical perceptions have been, and what the potential implications of these changes might be.

Many have written about the struggles facing democratic reform in Egypt over the last couple of years, providing insights on Egypt’s political institutions, prominent political figures, and general political overtones of the population. Few, however, have focused exclusively on the New Left youth. Particularly in light of their largely informal role in state politics, coupled with sporadic increases in political action, there have yet to be conclusive studies on their behavior. Yet it is not difficult to see the empirical significance of this research topic. Beyond its implications for understanding the leftist youth role in Egypt’s political transition, this research provides insight on ideological shifts taking place in one of the Arab world’s most influential states. An understanding of the political perceptions of this young generation of leftists has the potential not only to provide practical insights into the political direction of Egypt’s transition, but also that of its neighboring Arab countries. We have seen in the past that much of the Arab world looked to Egypt as a cultural and political model, as was arguably still the case during the “Arab Spring.” With Egypt’s broad transnational influence, it is even more crucial that we develop a nuanced understanding of Egypt’s leftist youth.

1. This paper was completed in the winter of 2014. Therefore, references to the political landscape, particularly as it relates to the Muslim Brotherhood’s influence, are reflective of that time frame. Since then, the Muslim Brotherhood’s influence has declined dramatically.

2. For the purposes of this paper I use the term “revolution” to refer to the social movement that resulted in the downfall of then President Hosni Mubarak in early 2011. Many prefer the term “uprising” due to perceived failures of the revolution and allegations of external influences. However, one of their primary goals of the revolution was achieved and it is still early. Historically, revolutions have taken many years to succeed. It is, therefore, premature to judge its success. I use the term “uprising” to refer specifically to the political activity leading up to the revolution.

3. Youth in reference to Egyptian politics is typically a broad and fluid concept that usually includes teenagers and young adults as old as 30.

Although political trends are rapidly shifting in the midst of so much turmoil, this research provides a window into the perspectives of a distinct segment of Egyptian society and how their role in Egypt's transition process will continue to impact Egypt's political future while informing our broader understanding of the leftist social movements taking place across the Arab world. Additionally, in analyzing the causes of major sociopolitical shifts, this research allows us to predict how these sociopolitical perceptions may continue to change in response to causal factors.

## Methods

For this research, I used a mixed method approach, in two phases. The first phase included qualitative research about modern Egyptian political history and an in-depth assessment of recent political changes. Credible statistics about the Egyptian populace and their political views are unfortunately difficult to come across as a result of governmental restrictions imposed upon internal research institutions. Therefore, my assessments of political trends are largely qualitative. It is important to analyze the most recent work available on the topic. Therefore, in addition to formal academic literature, I used news articles, opinion pieces, NGO reports, policy briefs, and analytical articles from a combination of international and Egyptian writers to supplement my research. Increasing state repression may limit the free expression of many of Egypt's writers today, so this likely had an impact on the works available to me. Furthermore, while some of the pieces I use have been translated from Arabic, my research is restricted to sources that are either written originally in English, or have been translated for distribution to an English speaking audience, which may also have impacted the scope of my research. Given the range of Egyptian English language news papers and institutions, and access to English translation services, I do not predict that this had a major impact on the Egyptian academic work that I had access to, though it did have a greater impact on the Egyptian journalistic work I had access to. The purpose of this first phase is primarily to accurately analyze and contextualize the findings of phase 2.

For the second phase of my research design, I conducted a series of qualitative interviews in Cairo that comprised two study groups. The first study group was a sample of leftist, educated, Egyptian youth, ranging from 18 to 30 years of age. Subjects needed to have completed high school, have participated in some form of political engagement since the beginning of the uprising in 2011, be unaffiliated with any Islamist organizations, hold Egyptian citizenship, have spent at least half of their life living in Egypt, and self

identify as leftist. The second study group was a small sample of scholars and analysts who have either followed or participated in Egyptian politics over the last four years, are unaffiliated with any Islamist organizations and can speak to the trends my research focuses on.

In the six months I spent living in Cairo prior to this research, I witnessed significant political changes in Egypt's overall political transition, but also among my Egyptian peers' views. President Morsi was overthrown during my second visit. During such rapid political turnover, I was surprised by how quickly alliances seemed to shift causing virulent cleavages to emerge amid the chaos. The dynamism and complexity of the political situation, and the impassioned commitment of so many of the youth activists I met spurred my desire to pursue this research.

My field research was conducted over a two-month period (July to August of 2014), and interviews were conducted via snowball sampling. Due to the crackdown on political dissent, I maintained the anonymity of all interviewees from the youth sample. As for the political analysts I interviewed, however, I did include names, with their permission, as their opinions are regularly published. Using a semi-structured qualitative interview format, interviews ranged from 45 minutes to two hours and typically took place in public cafes. Interviews were based on a set of questions and topics with one set for the youth subjects, and another for the analysts. All, however, centered on the four major categories listed above: demographics, shifts in political beliefs, political involvement, and views on Egypt's political future. Upon completing the interviews and transcribing them, I charted the responses to every major question, looking for trends across demographic groups, and within answer sets. There are 20 interviews altogether, with 17 youth respondents and three political analysts: Timothy Kaldas, Wael Eskandar and Amro Ali.

While I was able to recruit a diverse set of interviewees, there are a number of sampling biases that should be considered. For example, a number of the requirements for subjects of this study are based on self-reporting, including identifying as leftist, socioeconomic status and having been politically active in the years following 2010. Therefore, there is likely to be variation in how subjects gauged their responses. Additionally, the small size of my sample renders statistical analysis an impractical form of measurement. Consequently, trends discussed are not proven to be statistically significant. It should also be considered that the educated class of Cairo, while diverse, will not represent the full economic spectrum of Egyptian society, and may

therefore exclude the views of Egypt's most impoverished. Finally, women are underrepresented in this sample. While young men are often afforded more freedom than their female counterparts, and thus are more able to participate in public politics, women have played a crucial role in Egyptian politics, particularly over the last several years. While no relationship appeared to exist between gender and responses, it may have impacted the results. In spite of these considerations, I believe the results of this study are significant and represent a critical start to what will hopefully be an increasing body of research on this group.

## Background

From the birth of Egypt's republic in 1952, the relationships between the state, military and Muslim Brotherhood have all been deeply interrelated and have arguably represented the three primary pillars of Egyptian politics. Understanding these relationships is essential to understanding Egypt's current political landscape. At the outset of the 1952 revolution, a group of military officers, known as the Free Officers, overthrew King Farouk with the assistance of the Muslim Brotherhood, a transnational Islamist organization founded in Egypt, which by that point, had already existed in Egypt for more than two decades (Soage 2010). This appeared to be a strategic relationship, gaining the Free Officers the moral backing of one of Egypt's largest Islamist organizations, while the Muslim Brotherhood sought to benefit from aligning itself with Egypt's new rulers with a direct line of influence to begin implementing Islamic law and establishing a more traditionally Islamic society (Soage 2010). This alliance quickly deteriorated, however, as the newly installed government reneged on many of its promises to Brotherhood leadership who were quick to become a formidable opposition. The Brotherhood would soon pay a heavy price for its political dissent, which resulted in a massive and violent crackdown. These events are characteristic of the cyclical and volatile political relationship the Muslim Brotherhood has maintained with the state and military power elites ever since (Soage 2010). Over the years, the Brotherhood garnered massive popular support through their charity work, religious zeal, support for the Palestinian cause, and appeal to lower and middle class Egyptians whose struggles went largely unaddressed by the national government. As a result, the Brotherhood came to represent a major threat to the state's political legitimacy, as well as a broad constituency that the state was eager to co-opt. Thus, each of Egypt's past presidents periodically decided to appease Brotherhood leadership to varying degrees in order to quiet opposition, appeal to the more Islamist segments of Egyptian society and maintain strate-

gic political alliances (Moneim 1982). Interspersed between each period of improved relations, however, were periods of extensive, violent state crackdowns and political repression of the Muslim Brotherhood leaders and its members. These crackdowns included violent clashes, sweeping arrests, torture of prisoners, and even death sentences of select Brotherhood leaders. These campaigns were typically conducted alongside a wave of demonizing anti-Islamist rhetoric, creating within the Brotherhood a hardened experience of relentless political repression.

In spite of its precarious position in state politics, the Muslim Brotherhood continued to be the state's largest and most well organized political opposition, maintaining significant popular support. Meanwhile, the role of the military was far more consistent in Egypt, with one of the closest civil-military relationships in the region. As Bassma Kodmani describes it, the military's role over the last forty years has been "that of a kingmaker" (Kodmani 3). While the Egyptian government is technically a civil government, each president has hailed directly from the military, the minister of defense is required to be a military official, and military spending is kept private and is in no way subject to legislative or civilian oversight of any kind (Frisch 2-13, 193). Additionally, the military is deeply involved in the country's economic affairs (Albrecht 2). It has been estimated that the military owns anywhere from ten to forty percent of the Egyptian economy (Fleishman 2012). It also benefits from broad public support. Largely as a result of the Arab-Israeli wars, the military has shored up massive nationalistic support, and has long been the cornerstone of Egyptian national pride (Anderson 2011).

Under Mubarak, a number of changes took place that facilitated the 2011 revolution and the political alliances that were established in its wake. Mubarak reduced political repression against the Brotherhood, allowing them to expand their role as a prominent political actor, largely through union leadership positions (Soage 2010). Although this changed with yet another severe crackdown in 2010, the years of capacity building that preceded this crackdown were fundamental in propelling it to the power position it had after the revolution. At the same time, President Mubarak was largely believed to be grooming his son, Gamal, to succeed him as president (Barany 28). Gamal would have been the first president without a military background; instead, he was a young businessman whose economic ideologies presented a serious threat to the military's various economic monopolies. This infuriated the military's elite Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), and equally infuriated the Egyptian people who saw this as a

complete abrogation of their political process. As a possible result of the increased strain on the president's relationship to the military, Mubarak began working more closely with the security apparatus, further alienating and infuriating SCAF who, historically, had always been the most privileged institution among Egypt's power elites (Barany 28). These affronts to their power undoubtedly played into the military's eventual decision to back the anti-Mubarak protestors in February 2011. Meanwhile, Mubarak's perceived disregard for the political process served as a major rallying point for the newly formed liberal and leftist youth groups such as the April 6 Movement and Kefaya (Cole 489).

In the years that followed Egypt's 2011 revolution, various informal political partnerships were forged and dismantled, yet all were primarily to the exclusion of those liberal and leftist youth movements that were so central to the uprising's initial outbreak. As these movements became increasingly alienated from the political process, their perceptions of the political actors in power inevitably shifted over time. When SCAF originally took over as the interim government after Mubarak's ouster, the majority of Egypt's New Left youth were fairly supportive, viewing SCAF as party to the revolutionary cause. One of the most common chants to be heard at the time was "*eid maheda*" meaning *one hand*; short for *the military and the people are one hand* (Asad 275). However, those sentiments rapidly declined as it became more apparent that SCAF had formed an informal alliance with the Muslim Brotherhood to their exclusion (Tadros 24). The two most powerful institutions in the country had effectively come together for a power sharing agreement. This move enraged young liberal and leftist activists who felt not only excluded from the political process, but also betrayed by the blatant opportunism of both the military and the Muslim Brotherhood. During SCAF's rule, which lasted a year longer than it had initially promised, increasing social unrest, protests and state violence further solidified the tensions between SCAF and the New Left youth.

Egypt's first democratic elections following the revolution had a similar disillusioning effect on leftist youth groups. The Muslim Brotherhood's political wing, the Freedom and Justice Party, selected Mohammed Morsi as their presidential candidate. The Morsi campaign did significant outreach to youth groups, seeking to ensure his victory over his opponent, Ahmed Shafik, a former member of Mubarak's regime. While many were apprehensive about the prospects of an Islamist president, they were willing to support him in order to prevent a candidate with such strong ties to the recently overthrown regime from coming back into power. Thus, many liberal and leftist groups became party to the

Fairmont Group (Tadros 24). This was a coalition between many of the liberal, leftist and Islamist groups with the Muslim Brotherhood based on the agreement that these groups would support Morsi's candidacy in exchange for which Morsi would establish a national salvation government with representatives from each group. This coalition with the new Muslim Brotherhood leadership rapidly collapsed. After helping to win Morsi's election, the Fairmont Group was largely cast aside as Morsi's administration successfully pushed a constitution through that was largely viewed as serving an Islamist agenda, followed by a constitutional decree granting Morsi sweeping powers. These actions led to the dissolution of the Fairmont Agreement, which was followed then by growing nationwide protests. The "battles of Ittihadiya" was seen as another crucial turning point, where anti-Morsi protestors staged a sit-in in front of the Presidential palace and were met by armed "Muslim Brotherhood militias" (Amar 37). These rounds of protests grew tremendously, carried largely by a grassroots movement called Tamarod, (*Rebel* in Arabic) and culminating in the July 3 military overthrow of Egypt's first democratically elected president and the violent dispersals of pro-Morsi sit-ins resulting in the deaths of nearly one thousand Morsi supporters (Auf, 2013).

The events that transpired following July 3 have resulted in some of the worst internal divisions Egypt has seen. The majority of Egyptians, however, expressed overwhelming support for the military takeover, led by Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, who would be elected president in 2014. While the leftist youth largely favored the ouster of Mohammed Morsi, many still vividly remembered the state violence perpetrated against them under SCAF's rule in 2012 (Eskandar 2014).

With widespread resentment of the Brotherhood at its peak, many supported the violent dispersals of the Pro-Morsi sit-ins as well the state's ongoing crackdown against the Muslim Brotherhood (Auf 2013). However, the current Sisi regime's crackdown has expanded far beyond the Brotherhood, targeting many of the most prominent activists from the leftist youth movements as well as journalists, academics, students and essentially anyone deemed as potentially in opposition to the state (Kingsley 2014). In the midst of so much turmoil and a growing fear of voicing any opposition, the voice of the leftist youth, once chanting for revolutionary changes, seems largely drowned out.

## Literature Review

The purpose of this literature review is to do a broad survey analysis of perceived trends in leftist youth politics in recent

literature, and in doing so, provide a nuanced context for the results of my study. For the study of such fluid trends, context provides necessary insight into the environment from which those trends emerged, what societal factors may have influenced those trends, and in turn, what role such trends may have on the broader society.

In my exploration of existing literature on post-revolution leftism, I quickly discovered a confounding phenomenon. Very often, the sources that dealt with leftism had conflated leftism with liberalism, or at the very least, dealt with the two political identities in tandem, while failing to qualify their analyses with any coherent distinction between the two. While this trend does lead to an unfortunate lack of nuance, there are a number of reasons why such a conflation may have come about.

The two ideologies do overlap on some of the core issues. Theoretically, both emphasize a commitment to human rights, civil liberties, democratic governance and rule of law (Dunne 2013). Particularly in Egypt, they also both tend to favor secularization of the state, at least in theory (Kandil 2011). Additionally, neither have been static concepts in Egypt's political sphere. Political Sociologist Dr. Hazem Kandil explains how older generations of leftists frequently joined the liberal ruling elites as a necessary partnership against Islamization (2011). Thus, you have generations in which the two groups did effectively act as one. Furthermore, if one considers the role of "revolutionary youth," as many academics and writers did in the years following 2011, then the most frequent distinction made was between Islamist and non-Islamist revolutionary youth, and in that more common binary, leftists and liberals indeed fit together under the non-Islamist banner. Still, there are important ideological linchpins that distinguish the two concepts. Leftism typically suggests a stronger emphasis on social and economic justice, a rejection of capitalism and neoliberal economic policies, and a commitment to representing the interests of the poor and working classes. Leftism prioritizes the collective welfare and tends to seek more radical political change. On the other hand, liberalism favors free trade, and in Egypt's case, reducing trade barriers to allow more trade with the Western world. Additionally, liberalism promotes individual rights above collective welfare and views pragmatic and incremental change more favorably than rapid change. Despite these important distinctions, because this conflation permeates the discourse on Egyptian politics, the majority of this literature review reflects this phenomenon. In this part of the paper alone, I will be using the terms "leftism" and "liberalism" in tandem. While this certainly complicates my topic, it also sheds

light on the unfortunate lack of attention paid to leftists as their own separate political identity in Egypt today.

As a result of this ideological conflation, I have divided the review into three sections: literature that broadly addresses current liberal and leftist politics in Egypt, then more specifically, literature that addresses liberal and leftist youth politics in Egypt, and finally, literature that explicitly addresses leftist youth politics. In this way, initial observations can be drawn both from the literature itself, and from a comparison of the different approaches.

### *Literature Addressing Liberal/Leftist Politics – Of All Age Groups*

In the first and broadest section of literature, there was an overwhelming consensus that the majority of liberals/leftists had embraced a political outlook defined by extreme nationalism, militarism and fascism. As the Egyptian political scene became increasingly characterized by strict binaries and extreme polarization following the ouster of President Mohammed Morsi, liberals and leftists focused increasingly on the secularization of Egyptian public life. According to these writers, this position left them diametrically opposed to the Muslim Brotherhood, and thus by default, squarely in the pro-military camp (Asad 2013). Presented with the ostensible choice of secular authoritarianism or the Muslim Brotherhood's Islamic republic, this literature describes a "crisis of Egyptian liberalism" in which the majority of liberals and leftists ceded their progressive values in favor of Abdel Fattah el-Sisi's leadership (Kingsley 2014; Asad 2013; Hellyer 2014; Bitar 2014). The literature further suggests that liberals and leftists have abandoned their support for human rights in what many are describing as a growing normalization of state violence (Hellyer 2014; Tadros 2014). As a result of the liberals'/leftists' support for now President Sisi, this literature suggests that there will be no public pressure for any political reconciliation, but rather an increasingly brutal crackdown on any alleged dissenters (Tadros 2014; Bitar 2014). While some of the literature acknowledges that small fringes of the liberal and leftist camps may have remained true to their values, it suggests that these individuals are both disillusioned and inactive.

### *Literature Addressing Liberal/Leftist Youth Politics*

Contrary to this first set of writers who suggest that military populism continues to be the prevailing sentiment across the spectrum of the liberal and leftist Egyptian populace, several authors who specifically address the youth segment of liberal/leftist Egyptian society generally suggest the opposite. Of the youth generation, these authors suggest that the majority adamantly oppose the current government

despite the dangers of doing so publically (Antoun 2013; Fadl 2013; Soueif 2014,). This stark difference between the two sections seems to reflect significant divergences between the older and youth generations. Many people today argue that the older generation, raised with fervent military populism and eager for stability, represents the bulk of the support for the military and for President Sisi (Antoun 2013; Soueif 2014). Meanwhile, they see a more globalized and interconnected youth as less trusting of the state and more passionate about reform and revolution (Fadl 2013; Kirkpatrick 2014). Interestingly, this issue of a generation gap is written about extensively in the youth-focused literature, yet entirely absent in the first section of literature.

While these writers attest to greater levels of continued activism than the first set of writers, they agree that the majority of leftist and liberal youth have indeed become disillusioned and relatively inactive (Fadl 2013; Hashem 2014; King 2014). There are numerous factors cited as contributing to this disillusionment, including a lack of support from the older generation, their own political failures, and their increasingly negative perception of the military as an overwhelming obstacle to democracy (Cole 2012; King 2014; Kirkpatrick 2014). Their inability to form durable coalitions has continued to plague liberal and leftist youth, while the on-going military crackdown, often targeting youth activists, has been a major deterrent to vocal opposition (Fadl 2013; Kirkpatrick 2014). Though some of the writers predict that this lull in participation may lead to a permanent hiatus from political involvement, others warn that the current suppression of dissent is creating a hotbed of rebellion among the youth that may soon culminate in nationwide political chaos (Fadl 2013; Kouddous 2013).

### *Literature Addressing Leftist Youth Politics*

Finally, in the literature that addressed leftist youth specifically, we see a more in-depth assessment of how the conditions under the current regime have severely impacted their political participation. As in the previous sections, the literature discussed leftist youths' inability to mobilize effectively due to weak coalition building, impatience with low-performing parties, and splitting from older more experienced parties (Choucri 2011; Samak 2011). However, their struggles intensified following the July 3 overthrow of Mohammed Morsi. According to these writers, many leftist parties were split between those who opted to support the military and those who remained resolute in their leftist values and have since been increasingly marginalized (Acconcia and Beinun 2013; Michaelson 2014). This marginalization has come with mass arrests, prison sentences based on fab-

ricated charges, a law banning unlicensed protests, police brutality, and claims of enforced disappearances (Abaza 2015; Charbel 2014; Michaelson 2014). As a result, the literature concludes that fear and disillusionment have indeed become rampant among leftist youth and are the primary causes of decreased political participation (Charbel 2014; Michaelson 2014). Many of those still involved now are forced to focus their efforts on campaigning for the release of imprisoned colleagues, while others believe they should turn their efforts inwards, being active members of their communities and regaining some public support (Charbel 2014; Michaelson 2014).

The overall sequence of this literature review reveals some preliminary observations about leftist youth and their political perspectives. As the sections become increasingly specific, we see a clear shift towards viewing them as largely oppositional to the current regime and a highly marginalized opposition at that. Additionally we see a decreasing emphasis on "otherizing" the Muslim Brotherhood, an increasing emphasis on a generation gap and a rise in negative sentiments towards the military. On a broader scale there seem to be three general competing conclusions that emerge regarding leftist youths' role in Egyptian politics: 1) they have abandoned their leftist values adopting a nationalist support for both the military and the current regime; 2) they have become so disillusioned and disempowered that they have retreated from political participation entirely; or 3) that continued activism and festering dissent is growing under the weight of political suppression, and that it may soon lead to large scale political action. With these vague and contradicting conclusions as a backdrop, my research attempts to add clarity and find out first-hand how leftist youth self-describe their political role in Egypt today.

## Results and Analysis

### *Demographics*

The two primary pieces of demographic information I observed were socioeconomic status and religiosity. What is apparent from these figures is the significant demographic diversity present in such a small and narrow group. Socioeconomic status was self reported and divided into three classifications: lower to lower middle class, middle class, and upper middle to upper class. My subject pool was almost evenly distributed between the three, with six in the first classification, six in the second classification and five in the third. This distribution was conducive to analyzing the role of socioeconomics in determining political perspectives. Given Egypt's vast economic gap between its upper and lower classes, I predicted that class would play a

significant role. The data, however, showed something else. Respondents were asked to describe their political perceptions of major political actors prior to the revolution and today. Looking at these responses alone, there appears to be no correlation between socioeconomics and general political perceptions, either prior to or post revolution.

Despite the numbers, the interviewees themselves seem to tell a different story. Out of the 12 interviewees who identified as lower to middle class, two-thirds of them brought up the issue of class and frustrations with their upper class counterparts, while none of the five who identified as upper middle to upper class mentioned class at all. Additionally, there are specific instances where socioeconomic status does appear to play a more evident role in the data that will be addressed later in the results.

Similarly, the results do not indicate any connection between religiosity and general political perceptions. Using their own terms, two respondents identified as “religious,” three as “moderate,” two as “non-practicing,” five as “secular” and one as “atheist.” Egypt is one of the most religious countries in the Middle East; therefore such a diverse distribution is uncommon for most segments of society. However, regardless of religiosity, adherents of leftist political ideology advocate for secularization of the state. It is not surprising, therefore, that in this case there appear to be neither statistical nor qualitative outcomes that suggest any correlation between religiosity and political views.<sup>4</sup>

### *Shifts in Political Beliefs*

The clearest conclusion of this study is the dramatic rise in resentment towards key players in the Egyptian political system. While leftists are known to be largely against the two strongest pillars of Egypt’s political system, the military and the Muslim Brotherhood, I did not predict such a definitive consensus. While only six people recalled having any negative sentiments towards the military prior to the revolution, 16 of the 17 respondents expressed strong negative sentiments towards the military today. The sole respondent who did not espouse negative sentiments towards the military stipulated that she favored a civil state and did not believe the military was properly equipped to rule the country. Similarly, the number of respondents espousing negative sentiments towards the Muslim Brotherhood rose from seven prior to the revolution to the entire pool of 17 today.

Negative sentiments towards both the Muslim Brotherhood and the military increased by approximately 150%.

While statistically very close in nature, initial perceptions of the Muslim Brotherhood and the military differed significantly. As one respondent explains it, “we didn’t realize how much the army really controlled the state. They were just kind of an abstract concept.” Ninety percent of those who did not espouse anti-military sentiments prior to the revolution said they recalled having very little understanding of the military’s role as a result of a lack of public awareness. Egypt analyst and political science professor Timothy Kaldas explains that, “people had very little interest in a system they had no say over.” On the other hand, 50% of those who did not express any anti-Muslim Brotherhood sentiments prior to the revolution actually held relatively positive views of them, while the other 50% had no opinion. This highlights the lack of understanding and transparency surrounding Egypt’s civil military relationship and the role it had on political perceptions prior to the revolution.

To understand the nature of such radical changes in leftist youths’ political perspectives, I explore what may have catalyzed some of these shifts. While there are certainly other factors that could be measured, I chose to focus on political events. I asked each interviewee to list the political events that had the greatest personal and political impact on them since the initial uprising started in 2010 and why. It is important to note that every event listed was a negative event, or one that increased interviewees’ negative sentiments towards either the military or the Muslim Brotherhood. The most prominently cited events included the 2013 dispersals of the Muslim Brotherhood sit-ins at Rabaa and Nahda squares, the 2011 Mohammed Mahmoud clashes, Morsi’s 2012 constitutional declaration and the 2011 Maspero clashes. Interestingly, while almost all respondents reported feeling both anti-military and anti-Muslim Brotherhood, 70% of all the events listed were carried out by the military. The remaining 30% were actions taken by the Muslim Brotherhood and Mohammed Morsi.

Quantitatively, we see that events that negatively portrayed the military are cited at a much greater frequency as having seriously impacted the respondents. Qualitatively, an even deeper disparity arises. While many subjects complained of the Muslim Brotherhood’s corruption, intolerance, and betrayal of revolutionary values, they accused the military of far more heinous crimes. As result, negative sentiments towards the military appear to be of greater intensity. One subject demonstrated this disparity, explaining, “I have very big problems with the military because during the

4. It should be noted that religion itself was not a focus of this study. Coptic-Muslim relations, in particular, play an important role in Egyptian society, and although my study does include one secular Copt, it was not enough to measure differences. These relations involve a complex history that I felt would have distracted from the main focus of the study, particularly in analyzing a political group that is theoretically devoid of any explicit religious ties.

protests they treated us very badly and tortured and killed so many people, including some of my friends. With the Brotherhood I disagree with their ideology, but I have nothing against their individual members.” What is particularly striking about this quote is the context in which it was said. Following the overthrow of President Morsi, there had been a significant escalation in anti-Muslim Brotherhood rhetoric across Egypt’s political spectrum, including the liberal and leftist camps. However, as Kaldas explains, “despite leftists’ historical conflict with the Muslim Brotherhood, the younger generation of leftists are looking at it more pragmatically in terms of the revolution and that tempers their hatred.”

Feelings around the events involving military actions seem less likely to be tempered. Discussing her reaction to the violent dispersals of the Rabaa sit-in, one interviewee described how not only her view of the military changed, but also that of her fellow citizens and her role as an activist:

We entered a period where the value of human life is contingent on political allegiance. That, coupled with pro-Sisi protesters justifying the Rabaa massacre and chanting “the police, the military and the people are one hand,” drastically changed my view over how effective I can be, and how much there's a space for me [...] The stakes of being politically active for a leftist are very high. You can be branded a “terrorist” or “foreign agent” just for standing against the merciless killing of almost a thousand people. Rabaa was really the breaking point in my political activism, and it's when I started realizing that I ought to retreat in my political activism. Emotions are very high, and the image of charred corpses never escapes my memory, so it's safe to say that it was at that point that I grew frightened and lost confidence in what I was doing.

While similar sentiments were expressed by a majority of the respondents, it does not represent them all equally. As Kaldas points out, “the more you get into the working class and lower class, the more Rabaa was a turning point. Because they know people who were imprisoned and killed and brutalized during those events and even if they don't like the brotherhood, they don't want their neighbor or their cousin to get killed.” Sure enough, five of the seven individuals who listed the Rabaa dispersal were middle to lower class, demonstrating one of the ways socioeconomic factors can impact an individual's political experience. There are countless documented incidents of heinous violence being employed by Muslim Brotherhood members as well, as was noted by three of the interviewees; however, these incidents

tended to be of a smaller scale and were clearly less impactful on the majority of respondents.

What we can infer from this sample is that over the past several years, leftist youth have increasingly identified as both strongly anti-military and anti-Muslim Brotherhood. This identity has been reinforced time and again by the violent, authoritarian and corrupt behavior of these two prominent political forces. Finally, as the widespread military crackdown continues to target both the Muslim Brotherhood and leftist youth activists alike, it is not surprising that leftist youth today appear to have developed a more profound hostility towards the military.

### *Political Involvement*

The results of this study suggest that among Cairo's leftist youth, substantial variation exists both in their individual political participation and in their perception of the group's overall participation. I examined the time of their initial involvement, the forms of activism they took part in, the percentage of those still politically active today and their perceptions of collective leftist youth participation.

Looking back at their initial involvement in political action, over half of the respondents were involved in activism prior to the revolution. While most of them described themselves as less politically educated at the time, and unaware of the nature of Egypt's civil-military relationship, those who were involved focused primarily on small-scale reform campaigns. The respondents who were not involved prior to the revolution began their activism at the onset of the revolution in 2010 or early 2011. Those who were involved before the revolution, however, generally described their earlier activism as largely symbolic without much hope of success. It was not until late 2010 that political activism began to take a more meaningful role in their lives.

For a society with such limited political freedom, even after Mubarak's ouster, the breadth of their political activism appears rather impressive. Every respondent participated in at least two different forms of activism, with some participating in as many as four or five. Protests were the most frequently mentioned form of activism. The second most popular was working with civil society organizations. Although Mubarak had loosened some of the restrictions on civil society during his rule, they operated with very little security and have continued to be targeted in the last several years. Still, over one third of respondents worked with civil society organizations. Other forms of involvement included online activism, election monitoring, canvassing and political party leadership.

Participation in many of these forms of activism has dwindled. Today, only one of the five respondents involved in party leadership continues to hold their position while the other four all cite a lack of effective cooperation as their reason for leaving. Many respondents were members of political parties over the years. Today, however, 13 of 17 respondents have no party affiliations while three have weak affiliations. Furthermore, of the 16 respondents who participated in protests, only one still believes protests are practical. Today, approximately 60% of respondents remain politically active, while 40% have completely retreated from the political scene. Additionally, 60% of those still active noted a moderate to substantial decrease in their level of participation.

This decrease in participation does lend some credibility to the conclusions found in the literature review, though respondents did not agree with all of them. Very few respondents agreed with the first conclusion that most leftists had become nationalists in allegiance with the military and current regime. None believed it was primary cause of decreased participation, and less than 25% of them believed it played any role at all. Thus, the most prominent conclusion of the writers addressing both liberals and leftists of all ages was largely rejected. Wael Eskandar, a Cairo based journalist and Egypt analyst explains why this discrepancy exists: “after June 3, older leftists and those close to the regime switched to nationalists, but the majority of younger real leftists were immediately against the army.”

Respondents were largely in agreement with the second conclusion that leftist youth had become inactive as a result of an overwhelming disillusionment. About 40% of respondents believed the role of leftist youth in Egypt today could be characterized completely by this one conclusion, while approximately another 25% felt it was a significant factor. Therefore, approximately 65% felt that this conclusion was either completely or partially descriptive of the broader condition of leftist youth. Throughout the interviews, it was apparent that many of the interviewees related to this conclusion, whether they were no longer politically active or simply less active. As one respondent described it, “my opinions have become very bleak. Most of us are very depressed or apathetic because of how things are now. It’s always a choice between freedom and security, and people have chosen security, but in the meantime we have neither.” All three of the analysts interviewed believed this second conclusion is most likely to describe a majority of leftist youth in Cairo today.

Finally, the third conclusion featured in the literature review, which suggested there is continued activism as well as some nondescript impending political uprising, received meager support among the respondents. Approximately 12% of respondents felt it was completely accurate, while approximately 6% felt it was partially accurate. Thus, only approximately 18% believed it to be partially or entirely reflective of the state of leftist youth today. Interestingly, while all three analysts vouched for the second conclusion, all three also indicated that another political upheaval in the near future might not be that unlikely. “There needs to be certain conditions and variables to make the climate ripe for an uprising,” Ali explained. “If anything, the actions of the regime are helping to expedite the road to these conditions.”

In response to these three conclusions established in the literature review, two respondents felt that such complex political conditions could not be broken into these three conclusions, while another believed an additional conclusion should be added—one suggesting activism has largely shifted to civil society work.

#### *Views on Egypt’s Political Future*

While views on Egypt’s political future were also wrought with dissonance, there is a striking perseverance among respondents in what is generally a dismal and discouraging political atmosphere for Egypt’s leftist youth. In order to understand their views on Egypt’s political future, respondents addressed a range of topics from their outlook on the generation gap to their hopes for Egypt’s future, the future of leftist youth activism, and their own futures in Egypt.

Views on the generation gap are essential in understanding the estimations of leftist youth on how political conditions may change as their generation comes into power. Over 75% percent of respondents believe the generation gap is a significant force impacting politics today. Of those who do not believe the generation gap plays a significant role in Egypt’s current political landscape, 50% believe it only exists because youth have failed to convince enough of the older generation, while the other 50% believe it is a popularized idea meant to distract from the more problematic clash of classes. They also suggest that this idea has gained traction as a way for leftist youth to avoid taking responsibility for their failures.

Still, the majority of respondents appear to find the generation gap to be a compelling factor. As one respondent puts it, “the older generations still think in this patriarchal way, as if Sisi is this father figure who is going to hug the Egyptian people into forgetting their problems.” He goes

to say that “there is a certain generation that needs to die, certain generations even, before we can really progress.” While some may see this as scapegoating, it does shed light on what leftist youth believe Egypt’s prospects are and what kind of role they believe they will play in changing the current political reality. Another respondent explains that “in my view, the older generation somewhat hijacked our January 25 revolution. They clapped from afar, telling us ‘bravo, good work. Now step aside children. You’re not equipped to run the country.’” This illustrates the growing animosity many leftist youth feel towards the older generation. Kaldas explains that despite the youths’ leading role in the revolution, it quickly became an “old man’s game.” Ali further expounds some of this animosity, explaining that the state’s negative rhetoric about youth, particularly leftist youth, has trickled into the media and fueled anti-youth sentiments in the older generations. “The regime has realized that it will not be able to gain but a fraction of this pseudo-age category on its side,” he explained. “So it will wage a war against it.”

Issues of political inclusivity and reconciliation will also play an important role in dictating Egypt’s political trajectory, particularly under a regime so bent on suppressing the Muslim Brotherhood. When asked whether they would support reconciliation and eventual inclusion of the Muslim Brotherhood’s political wing in Egypt’s political system, approximately 40% said yes, approximately 40% were unsure, and 20% said no. With twice as many respondents supporting it as opposing it, many expressed their support in rather practical terms. While they each undoubtedly identify as anti-Muslim Brotherhood, one respondent explains “you cannot have a stable country when you have a large part of the population that is alienated, marginalized and then possibly radicalized. Without some kind of reconciliation, Egypt will never be stable.” Another respondent added, “The Muslim Brotherhood should be involved in politics. The military is not a political party. The Muslim Brotherhood is.”

While these comments seem to indicate a rather conciliatory approach, the 20% opposed to reconciliation were resolute in their positions. While one declared that the Muslim Brotherhood would have to radically change before it should be allowed back into the political system and “that it would never really change,” another respondent remarked, “I don’t want to kill them, but I want them to die. They were like a virus in Egypt, really. They would turn it into an Islamic dictatorship. I had friends in the Brotherhood who were killed. It was terrible. But mostly, they are so evil. They should not be included.” While these comments are

indeed compelling, they represent a minority. Kaldas and Eskandar reiterate that while many of the older leftists have supported the crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood, young leftists have been largely pragmatic in prioritizing democratic values.

Next, I asked respondents to explain whether or not they felt hopeful about Egypt’s political future. Earlier results indicated that 65% percent of respondents believed leftist youth felt disillusioned and discouraged. In spite of this seemingly high number, approximately 60% of respondents reported feeling personally hopeful about Egypt’s political future. Given leftist youths’ failure, thus far, to bring about any significant political change of their liking, 60% may sound quite high. Yet many have continued to be optimistic. One respondent explains why he remains hopeful: “the revolution, in my perspective, is a change in the society’s mind. And that happened. When Mubarak was in power, we thought of him like a father we had to obey. We downed this idea. And then we downed the idea of religious control. This revolution will continue,” he expressed with conviction. Others were more cautious. One respondent, who had been tortured twice during SCAF’s rule and has remained active in political party leadership spoke about a slightly different kind of hope. “I don’t see anything happening soon,” he explained, “but those of us still working see this as our duty and we will continue working for as long as it takes.”

An interesting trend emerged when comparing the political involvement of respondents who were hopeful versus those who were not. Those who said they remained hopeful had been involved in significantly more diversified political action than those who were no longer hopeful. Additionally, 70% of respondents who remained hopeful had been involved in working with civil society actors, while none of unhopeful respondents had any experience with civil society. While it is possible that those who are more hopeful simply had a larger appetite for different kinds of political activism, these trends may suggest that the type of political action respondents were involved in could influence whether they remain hopeful in the future.

In order to better understand what political outcomes they prioritized, I asked respondents to discuss what they most hoped would change in Egyptian politics. The three most common things they hoped for were social justice, getting the military out of government, and true democracy. The fact that democracy was so prominent surprised me. It is often said that Western media exaggerates the desire for democracy in Egypt. The concept had also hardly been mentioned by any of the respondents before this question.

Other changes respondents hope for included a more inclusive political scene, friends being released from jail, more respect for human rights, election transparency, and gender equality. While diversity still exists among these answers, the hope for a civil, democratic and just state appears quite consistent.

On a more individualistic level, I asked respondents to discuss whether they hoped to remain in Egypt in the future. The results revealed a number of important trends. While approximately 60% said they wanted to stay, half as many, approximately 30%, wanted to leave. The remaining 10% were unsure. As you can see, the percentage of those who are hopeful and those who wish to stay in Egypt are about equal. Additionally, those who wished to leave tended to be less politically involved, less hopeful about Egypt's political future, and were of a slightly higher average economic class, while those who wished to stay were concentrated in the middle and lower classes, the majority of whom were still politically active and generally more hopeful about the future. As Kaldas points out, "self interest drives political practice for a lot of people, unfortunately, and ideologically kind of stops when there are direct consequences." Therefore, it is not surprising that those of a higher economic standing may have risked less to be politically vocal and be more keen to leave Egypt's instability behind.

Finally, when it came to the respondents' views on what the leftist youth should be doing collectively now, there was a plethora of ideas with no prevailing consensus. The most popular answer, with a little over one-third of the respondents, was redirecting efforts to civil society. Two respondents expressed that this was one of the only remaining ways to be active that was not blatantly against the law and had a better chance at making incremental changes. As another respondent notes, however, "this shift away from revolutionary change to small reforms is significant as it is very much the mentality we had pre-January 2011." Other suggestions included organizing through parties, raising awareness about political issues, working in local government, collaborating with other non-Islamist youth, redirecting to social media activism, campaigning for the release of prisoners, resolving internal disputes, and capacity building, while support for protesting has all but disappeared. Major disagreements still exist on core political strategy: whether to get involved in government or to reject it as illegitimate, to take a cautious or activist role in politics, to push for incremental reforms or massive political change, to build coalitions or to stand alone. These questions have all yet to be resolved.

Interestingly, amid these many complex ideas, the only two respondents who articulated a thought-out strategy had essentially come to the same simple conclusion Kaldas and other analysts have suggested. The key to mobilizing support, Kaldas explains, is "to mobilize support for the communities in need and tie that to your ideology"—becoming active members of the community. With very few resources, both of these respondents had developed ways to start doing exactly that. Both were still hopeful, politically active and of lower socioeconomic status. As one declared, "Will we give up? For sure not. It is not an option." This respondent went on to describe how he and his friends have organized in their communities to each provide a free service and give back. Having learned English, he teaches English to children in the community for free while his friends tutor in math, babysit, etc. "We must show the people that they can trust us," he explained. "We must show them that we are doing something, not just yelling in the street. We must be a resource for our community." He further explained that the Muslim Brotherhood and the military have both been able to maintain such popular support because of the resources they were able to provide, and that leftist youth must find a way to provide an alternative to that. "To begin," he explained "I have friends all over Alexandria and Upper Egypt and we are all doing the same thing." The second respondent added that the goal must be to address the needs of the people. "Rather than trying to tell people what the solution is, we should reach out to people and listen to their needs, provide them with answers and alternative solutions. That way, leftist youth may finally begin regaining public support." Whether this strategy will be effective on a large scale may be questionable. But as far as I can tell, these two interviewees, with limited resources and a seemingly simple strategy, appeared to be, by far, the most proactive, both in their activism and in their communities.

## Conclusion

This study is only the beginning of what will hopefully be a growing body of work on Egypt's leftist youth. Using broad and in-depth interviews, this study chronicles the political shifts that have happened within Cairo's leftist youth population since the revolution, and provides insights about the scope and trajectory of their role in the Egyptian political sphere.

The results of this study illustrate leftist youths' drastic increase of distrust and disdain for Egypt's current leadership, the military and the Muslim Brotherhood as well. Beyond their perceptions of Egypt's political elite, the study also reveals the growing tension between Egypt's

leftist youth and the older generation as a result of a perceived generation gap, fueled, at least in part, by the current regime's continued targeting. The ongoing state crackdown has continued to demonize leftist youth, render most forms of political action unsafe, and has resulted in killings and mass imprisonment of young leftist activists. Meanwhile, leftist youth continue to struggle with their own internal cleavages, some of which may result from the wide socio-economic diversity that this study discovered within the population.

With the odds stacked against them, it is no surprise that respondents characterized themselves collectively as largely disillusioned and inactive. Yet in spite of such dire circumstances, the study reveals an incredible aptitude for perseverance in leftist youth, showing that the majority of respondents remain both hopeful and committed to continued political action, despite the incredible risks it may carry.

While some limited writing has been done about leftist youth, most of it is outdated, focusing on specific news stories and broad generalities. This research goes beyond the stereotypes and assumptions, examining the intricate political dynamics of the leftist youth population through first-hand accounts. In doing so, a more nuanced narrative of this population emerges, providing a level of insight not previously available. While leftist youth may have a limited role in Egypt's current political scene, leftists have historically been an important part of the Egyptian political spectrum, and with such tremendous political changes underway, they are a crucial political actor to further study and understand.

One of the challenges of this research was the reliance on self-reporting. This left numerous variables too widely defined. In future research projects on this subject, I would advise using a coding scheme to standardize responses for demographic questions, as well as for measuring more accurately the scale of political shifts and the degree of change in participation levels. Additionally, while my interviewees all spoke English, some were limited in the amount of depth they could discuss certain topics in English. Future studies would certainly benefit from the use of a translator. Another important limitation on this study was its sample size. Although a diverse set of 20 interviews was a sound starting point, the potential influence of outliers is too great to draw definitive conclusions. Many of the conclusions in this paper ought to be reexamined with a larger sample size to confirm the trends identified above. Some of the questions that remain unanswered include the definitive role of socioeconomic status in political perceptions of

leftist youth, the degree to which specific forms of political participation may be tied to a continuation of individual activism, and what factors may contribute to the kind of perseverance demonstrated by so many of the participants in this study. While much work remains to be done on this subject, this study should serve as a solid foundation for future studies to build upon.

## Acknowledgments

I would like to thank Dr. Cecelia Lynch, my faculty advisor, for her mentorship and support, as well as Said Shokair, Director of the Undergraduate Research Opportunities Program (UROP), for his guidance and encouragement. I would also like to acknowledge the generous support of UROP in helping to fund this research study. Finally, I would like to express my tremendous gratitude to each of the interviewees for their generosity with their time and their openness in sharing their stories and perspectives.

## Works Cited

- Abaza, Jihad. "Clear Escalation in Enforced Disappearances: Activists." *Daily News Egypt*. 5 June 2015 <<http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2015/06/05/clear-escalation-in-enforced-disappearances-activists/>>.
- Acconcia, Giuseppe, and Joel Beinin. "Egypt's New Interim Government is Not a Leftist Coalition." *Open Democracy*. July 2011 <<https://www.opendemocracy.net/giuseppe-acconcia-joel-beinin/egypt%E2%80%99s-new-interim-government-is-not-leftist-coalition>>.
- Albrecht, Holger, and Dina Bishara. (2011). "Back on Horseback: The Military and Political Transformation in Egypt." *Middle East Law and Governance*. 3.1–2 (2011):13–23.
- Allam, Rana. (March 17, 2014). "Al-Sisi's Austerity Request." *Daily News Egypt*. 17 Mar. 2014 <<http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2014/03/17/al-sisis-austerity-request/>>.
- Ali, Amro. Email interview. Aug. 2014.
- Aly, Abd al-Monein Said, and Wenner, Manfred. "Modern Islamic Reform Movements: The Muslim Brotherhood in Contemporary Egypt." *The Middle East Journal*. 36.3 (1 Jan. 1982): 336–361.

- Amar, Paul. "Egypt." Dispatches from the Arab Spring: Understanding the New Middle East. Paul Amar and Vijay Prashad. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2013. 24–62.
- Anderson, Lisa. (June 1, 2011). "Demystifying the Arab Spring— Parsing the Differences between Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya." The New Arab Revolt. Foreign Affairs, 1 June 2011. <<https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/libya/2011-04-03/demystifying-arab-spring>>.
- Antoun, Naira. "Less-Than-Defined National Salvation Front Faces a Murky Path." Egypt Independent. 9 Feb. 2013 <<http://www.egyptindependent.com/news/less-defined-national-salvation-front-faces-murky-path>>.
- Asad, Talal. "Fear and the Ruptured State: Reflections on Egypt after Mubarak." Social Research. 79.2 (2012): 271–298.
- Asad, Talal. "Neither Heroes, Nor Villains: A Conversation with Talal Asad on Egypt after Morsi." Jadaliyya. 2013 <<http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/13129/neither-heroes-nor-villains-a-conversation-with-ta>>.
- Auf, Yusef. "Transitional Justice Elusive in Egypt." Sada. 6 Dec. 2013 <<http://carnegieendowment.org/sada/2013/12/06/transitional-justice-elusive-in-egypt/gvi0>>.
- Barany, Zoltan. "The Role of the Military." Journal of Democracy 22. 4 (2011): 24-35 < <http://www.journalofdemocracy.org/sites/default/files/Barany-22-4.pdf>>.
- Bitar, Karim. "The Dilemmas of Arab Liberalism." Your Middle East. 2014 <[http://www.yourmiddleeast.com/opinion/the-dilemmas-of-arab-liberalism\\_22184](http://www.yourmiddleeast.com/opinion/the-dilemmas-of-arab-liberalism_22184)>.
- Charbel, Jano. "The left of the Arab world: The Region's Leftists Meet in Tunis to Share Concerns, Hopes." Mada Masr. Oct. 2014 <<http://www.madamasr.com/sections/politics/left-arab-world>>.
- Choucri, Mai. "The Left in Post-Jan. 25- Egypt." Rosa Luxemburg Foundation in Egypt. Oct. 2011 <[http://www.palestine.rosalux.org/publication/37879/the-left-in-post-jan-25-egypt.html#\\_ftnref1](http://www.palestine.rosalux.org/publication/37879/the-left-in-post-jan-25-egypt.html#_ftnref1)>.
- Cole, Juan. "Egypt's New Left Versus the Military Junta." Social Research 79.2 (2012): 487–510.
- Dunne, Michele, and Tarek Radwan, T. (2013). "Egypt: Why Liberalism Still Matters." Journal of Democracy. 24.1 (2013) <<http://www.journalofdemocracy.org/article/egypt-why-liberalism-still-matters>>.
- Eskandar, Wael. Personal Interview. Aug. 2014.
- Fadl, Belal. "Rebels on Demand." Al-Fanar Media. 17 Dec. 2013 <<http://www.al-fanarmedia.org/2013/12/belal-fadl-rebels-on-demand/>>.
- Frisch, Hillel. "The Egyptian Army and Egypt's 'Spring.'" Journal of Strategic Studies, 36.2 (2013): 180–204.
- Hashem, Mostafa. (Mar. 6, 2014). "The Dangers of Alienating Egypt's Youth." Sada. 6 Mar. 2-14 <<http://carnegieendowment.org/sada/2014/03/06/dangers-of-alienating-egypt-s-youth/h2l2>>.
- Hellyer, H.A. Lessons from a Lost Revolution: Egypt's Fate Still Hangs in the Balance. Salon. 11 Feb. 2014 <[http://www.salon.com/2014/02/11/lessons\\_from\\_a\\_lost\\_revolution\\_egypts\\_fate\\_still\\_hangs\\_in\\_the\\_balance/](http://www.salon.com/2014/02/11/lessons_from_a_lost_revolution_egypts_fate_still_hangs_in_the_balance/)>.
- International Crisis Group. (2013), "Marching in Circles Egypt's Dangerous Second Transition: Middle East/North Africa Briefing N35." International Crisis Group. 2013 <[http://www.crisisgroup.org/~media/Files/Middle%20East%20North%20Africa/North%20Africa/Egypt/b035-marching-in-circles-egypts-dangerous-second-transition](http://www.crisisgroup.org/~/media/Files/Middle%20East%20North%20Africa/North%20Africa/Egypt/b035-marching-in-circles-egypts-dangerous-second-transition)>.
- Ibrahim, Ekram. "Egyptian Left Rising: First Post-Revolution Leftist Party Marches to Legality." Ahram Online. Sept. 2011 <<http://english.ahram.org/NewsContent/1/64/22776/Egypt/Politics-/Egyptian-Left-rising-first-postrevolution-leftist.aspx>>.
- Kaldas, Timothy. Personal Interview. July 2014.
- Kandil, Hazem. "Revolt in Egypt." New Left Review. 68 (2011) <<http://newleftreview.org/II/68/hazem-kandil-revolt-in-egypt>>.
- King, Laura. "Egypt Remains Deeply Divided as Anniversary of Mubarak's Fall Nears." Los Angeles Times. 22 Jan. 2014 <<http://www.latimes.com/world/worldnow/la-fg-wn-egypt-anniversary-mubarak-divided-20140122,0,6422380.story#axzz2w-1ZQPGUh>>.

- Kingsley, Patrick. "Egyptian Uprising Three Years On: More Violence, Fewer Liberal Voices." The Guardian. 24 Jan. 2014 <<http://www.theguardian.com/world/2014/jan/24/liberals-marginalised-egypt-stability-revolution>>.
- Kirkpatrick, David and Mayy El Sheikh, M. "In Egypt, a Chasm Grows Between Young and Old." The New York Times. 16 Feb. 2014 <[http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/17/world/middleeast/a-chasm-grows-between-young-and-old-in-egypt.html?emc=edit\\_th\\_20140217&nl=todaysheadlines&nid=68570409&\\_r=0](http://www.nytimes.com/2014/02/17/world/middleeast/a-chasm-grows-between-young-and-old-in-egypt.html?emc=edit_th_20140217&nl=todaysheadlines&nid=68570409&_r=0)>.
- Kodmani, Bassma. "The Middle East in the Aftermath of the Revolutions in Egypt and Tunisia (US/ME Policy brief)." U.S./Middle East Project. 2011 <<http://www.usmep.us/usmep/wp-content/uploads/2011-17-USMEPolicy-Brief.pdf>>.
- Kouddous, Sharif Abdel. "What Happened to Egypt's Liberals after the Coup?." The Nation. 1 Oct. 2013 <<http://www.thenation.com/article/176445/what-happened-egypts-liberals-after-coup>>.
- Marks, Monica. "Convince, Coerce, or Compromise? Ennahda's Approach to Tunisia's Constitution." Brookings Doha Center Publications 30 (2014) <[http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2014/02/10\\_ennahda\\_tunisia\\_constitution\\_marks/ennahda\\_approach\\_tunisia\\_constitution\\_english.pdf](http://www.brookings.edu/~media/research/files/papers/2014/02/10_ennahda_tunisia_constitution_marks/ennahda_approach_tunisia_constitution_english.pdf)>.
- Michaelson, Ruth. "In Egypt, the Left is Struggling Against Apathy and Fear." NewStatesman. 2014 <<http://www.newstatesman.com/politics/2015/05/egypt-left-struggling-against-apathy-and-fear>>.
- Samak, Dina. "Egypt's Left Front, Will it Survive?" Ahram Online. May 2011 <<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/11968/Egypt/Politics-/Egypts-leftist-front,-will-it-survive.aspx>>.
- Soage, Ana Belen, and Franganillo, Jorge Fuentelsaz. (2010). "The Muslim Brothers in Egypt." In B. Rubin (Ed.), The Muslim Brotherhood: The Organization and Policies of a Global Islamist Movement. New York, NY: Palgrave Macmillan. 39-55.
- Soueif, Ahdaf. "In Egypt, We Thought Democracy Was Enough. It was Not." The Guardian. 1 July 2013 <<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2013/jul/01/egypt-thought-democracy-enough-morsi>>.
- Soueif, Ahdaf. "Egypt After Revolution: Curfew Days." The Guardian. 23 Aug. 2013 <<http://www.theguardian.com/books/2013/aug/23/egypt-after-revolution-curfew-days>>.
- Soueif, Ahdaf. "Egypt Must Learn from the Mistakes of the Revolution." The Guardian. 20 Jan. 2014 <<http://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2014/jan/20/egypt-learn-mistakes-revolution>>.
- Tadros, Mariz. (2014). "Settling After the Revolts? Egypt's Political Settlements and Violent Transition." England: Institute of Development Studies. 2014 <<http://opendocs.ids.ac.uk/opendocs/bitstream/handle/123456789/3545/ER57%20Settling%20After%20the%20Revolts%20Egypt%E2%80%99s%20Political%20Settlements%20and%20Violent%20Transition.pdf?sequence=1>>.
- Williamson, Scott. "A Preliminary Overview of Egypt's 2014 Constitutional Referendum." Carnegie Endowment for International Peace. Jan. 2014 <<http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2014/01/17/a-preliminary-overview-of-egypt%E2%80%99s-2014-constitutional-referendum>>.

