

**AN ANALYSIS OF LAW ENFORCEMENT  
REFORM IN POST-ARAB SPRING EGYPT**

by

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A thesis submitted to the Faculty of the University of Delaware in partial fulfillment of the requirements for the Bachelor of Arts in Criminal Justice with Distinction

Spring 2014

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## **ACKNOWLEDGMENTS**

First and foremost I would like to thank my thesis committee for their support and encouragement throughout the entire thesis-writing process. In particular, I would like to extend my thanks to my Thesis Director, Dr. Ivan Sun, for his commitment to challenge me to find a topic I was truly interested in and for his guidance in creating a proper Senior Thesis. I've learned a tremendous amount through both the research and writing processes, and I've been fortunate enough to study a subject that combines many interests of mine. I would also like to extend my thanks to the helpful people at Office of Undergraduate Research, without whom I would not have been able to successfully complete and format my work. Lastly, I would like to thank my friends and family for their love and support through my long and challenging process of producing this thesis.

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## **ABSTRACT**

The goal of this research was to examine the current status of Egypt as it pertains to the present transitional government, and specifically the prospect of law enforcement reform in the near future.

The Arab Spring and its after-effects are still felt to this day in Egypt, and both domestic residents and international observers alike continue to speculate as to the possible future outcomes for this North African country. Law enforcement has always played a pivotal role in contemporary Egyptian society, and with any future changes in the country, it is imperative to examine the possibility for police reform as well. In particular, this study will examine and evaluate the possibility for Egyptian people and their government to transition its law enforcement structures to more democratic ones.

## **Chapter 1**

### **INTRODUCTION AND RESEARCH METHODS**

Beginning in 2011, the revolutionary movement in the Middle East known as the Arab Spring began to take root in Arab countries and fundamentally challenged entrenched social values and governance styles. Egypt, in particular, bore a tremendous amount of this pressure for social change, and was the scene for widespread riots and protests alike, ultimately ending with the collapse of the regime under Hosni Mubarak in February 2011. The government, as well as legislation and ideologies, changed with the advent of newly democratic elections and the inauguration of President Mohammad Morsi. On June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013, however, Egypt witnessed another forcible government overhaul, wherein Morsi was ousted and replaced with a military junta.

Police under Mubarak carried with them a reputation for employing brutal tactics, especially during the demonstrations in 2011, and Egyptians were valid in their fears of these officials. But a drastic change in government would require first and foremost a transformation of the basic principles, structures, and operations of law enforcement agencies to ensure that the country may progress without fear of rampant crime or disorder. Democratic policing is a key component and even a prerequisite to any successful emerging democracy, and a proper balance must be struck between the concern about domestic security and the protection of people's liberties (Bayley,

2005). For such a potentially budding democracy as Egypt, this notion holds markedly true.

My goal in this thesis is to try and find out if and how this sort of necessary change in Egypt will take place. This case study of the Egyptian police is particularly interesting and important for three reasons. First, this research assesses whether relevant concepts and theories of policing developed by Western scholars can be applied to the Egyptian context. Specifically, this project examines the relevance of “high policing” (i.e., a police force that primarily benefits the interests of the government) and “low policing” (i.e., a force that focuses on protecting the population as a whole) (Brodeur, 1983) in explaining the evolution of Egyptian policing. In addition, I will study how these societies can make this transition towards a lower, more “democratic” style of policing and what role internal and external actors may play. Second, the study examines how Islamic values, norms and ideals may shape the transformation, if any, of the Egyptian police force. Scholars have suggested that Muslims may have a very different idea of what constitutes freedom and justice than those in Western democracies (Lewis, 2005). Similarly, a study of policing cannot ignore the influences of broader historical backgrounds and social developments. This study thus will shed light on the critical role of cultural, historical and social factors in policing Islamic societies. Lastly, the study bears important implications for policy and practice. The Egyptian police are likely to face difficulties transitioning out of an era where their power was unmatched by the civilian populace, and with a people still fearful of violence, reconciling past action will prove difficult for Egyptian law enforcement. Findings of this study will render policy makers, public officials and

police administrators' clear directions to implement policies and programs that can enhance the likelihood of successful police reform.

The study is guided by the key research question: can Egypt move from a higher style of policing, where interests of the few are protected, to a lower style of policing, where more democratic ideals are employed in law enforcement tactics, given the social, cultural, and historic constraints in Egypt? In this thesis, I will first describe the methodology of my research, including data sources, collection and procedures. Second, I plan on providing relevant historical background information on policing before discussing the literature in attempt to better understand the question of this essay. Third, I will analyze literature on both the police theory in question and literature on the cultural, historical, and social aspects of Arab justice. Finally, I will attempt to sum up my findings as best I can, keeping in mind the ongoing and volatile nature of the current situation in Egypt.

### **Research Methods**

Data used in this thesis was collected mainly through extensive searching and critical reviewing of the existing literature in several areas, including police theory (with specific concentration on transitions to democratic policing), Arab and Islamic customs and norms with regards to legislature and police, and the after-effects of the recent Egyptian revolutions. I first discussed my research interests with several professors who offered valuable information on some relevant publications. After a preliminary review of these publications, a list of key words was developed to guide the search of relevant literature. Some of these keywords included, but were not limited to: 'Egypt,' 'Egypt police,' 'Policing Islamic countries,' 'Arab Spring,'

‘Islamic law enforcement,’ ‘high policing,’ ‘justice in Middle East,’ and ‘freedom in Middle East.’

Using these keywords, I performed a thorough search on several online databases, including JSTOR, Oxford Journals, Criminal Justice Abstracts, and WorldCat. Through keyword searches, I identified over 20 different sources consisting of articles in databases and published books. In determining the utility of the articles I was selecting, I considered not only topical relevance, but also how recent and up-to-date an article was.

These sources range topically from articles and scholarly journals dealing with the police theory relevant to the idea I am trying to apply in this thesis to literature dealing with Egyptian, Arab, and Islamic life and customs in general. I then carefully read and analyzed these articles and books, which further yielded some additional references that seemed to be relevant to my study. I located and examined these studies and incorporated them into my research wherever they were proper. Through these methods, I was able to find all of my relevant literature needed to compose my work for this thesis.

## **Chapter 2**

### **A HISTORICAL CONTEXT OF LAW ENFORCEMENT IN THE ARAB REPUBLIC OF EGYPT**

Before delving into a discussion of current regime changes and potential implications for Egyptian police forces, it is first important to look back at the history of law enforcement in the country. The modern-day Egyptian territory is a location that has been highly contested by many different occupying forces for many millennia. By solidifying an understanding of how police power has shifted in Egypt through regime changes, we will not only be able to better understand possible reasons behind current struggles in Egypt, but also be able to predict the future direction of Egyptian law enforcement as well as the country as a whole.

#### **Colonial Era**

Although forces like the Ottoman Turks and the French had occupied Egypt before the turn of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the advent of what would be considered a modern law enforcement system did not arrive in Egypt until the colonization of the country by British forces. Before British occupation, much of the law enforcement in the region was less organized. Previously, common perceptions of crime and retribution were largely influenced by cultural ideals, but the new British system provided a more rigid structure of law enforcement in the country. As described by a scholar:

The common Egyptian's interpersonal relations were governed by the concepts of personal and family honor, implied in which were retaliation and vengeance.

Violence, although formally condemned by the Koran, was condoned when it took the accepted form of vindication of honor. Retaliation for murder, rape, adultery or crop burning was customary. Even violence against the police or government officials was acceptable if seen as a reprisal for injustice. (Kurian, 1989, p. 102)

The righting of wrongs in Egyptian society was previously seen as a personal or family matter, one that could be handled swiftly and discreetly, without necessary intervention from any higher authority. Contact between citizens and Egyptian law enforcement officials was theretofore minimal, usually only for tax purposes or conscription for the army. Egyptian citizens, and the *fellahin* (Arabic for peasants or agricultural laborers) in particular, as such had a very strained relationship with law enforcement authorities at the time. The police were seen as a tool for those in power to maintain authority, and were regarded very poorly amongst the Egyptian populous. The arrival of a more powerful, centralized British police force only seemed to exacerbate these tensions. Farrukh B. Hakeem addresses this transition in his *Policing Muslim Communities: Comparative International Context* by drawing comparisons to British colonial practice in their other territories around the globe. Indeed, as suggested by Quassini and Verma (2012, p. 102), “Similar to the British colonization of Ireland and India, the British colonial police in Egypt developed a military model of policing that protected the status quo and suppressed any uprisings against the British colonial administration.” Although the British colonial forces were intent on changing the structure of the law enforcement in colonial Egypt, one factor that they did stress was utilizing native Egyptians to serve in the ranks (Tollefson, 1999, p. 4). Furthermore, the new British police force was much more liberal with the use of force

against violent protests and uprisings common amongst the *fellahin* who experienced perceived injustices. Not surprisingly, this increase in crackdowns on protests only exacerbated the struggle between the Egyptian people and the government and police authorities. To make matters worse, although the British forces excelled at quelling protests, they failed to respond as a cohesive unit to ordinary, everyday crime, resulting in an Egyptian society with a fairly high rate of petty crime and a police force whose main focus was suppressing protests from citizens affected by these crimes. This bizarre combination led to a particularly volatile culture of law enforcement through the first half of the 20<sup>th</sup> century.

### **Independence & Regime Change Through the 20<sup>th</sup> Century**

In the 1952 Revolution in Egypt, Egyptian general Gamal Abdel Nasser led a coup of free officers against the constitutional monarchy under King Farouk that was overseen by British occupying forces. The coup ended with British withdrawal, the dissolution of the constitutional monarchy, and the eventual assumption of Nasser as the president of the republic of Egypt. The previous British colony transitioned from a constitutional monarchy towards a new republic, and this process brought with it serious change to the law enforcement structure as well.

On one hand, aspects of the national law enforcement structure were streamlined to create a more solidified body. Previously, many different departments and ministries shared responsibilities and often times created corruption and low morale. With Nasser's reorganization of law enforcement agencies, all police functions were moved to the Ministry of the Interior, and an increase in productivity followed shortly after (Kurian, 1989, p. 102). Unfortunately, in addition to the

consolidation of police responsibilities into one single department, more power was also given to the relatively small amount of law enforcement officials in this ministry, which caused Egypt to edge closer to becoming a police state. An organization that already garnered resentment from the large portion of the Egyptian people was then given more control over them, leading to an even more despised law enforcement apparatus.

Upon Gamal Abdel Nasser's death in 1970, relative reformist Anwar Sadat took over the presidency of Egypt and made some significant changes in law enforcement bodies. Sadat's assumption of power marked a significant philosophical change in the direction of Egyptian policing (Quassini & Verma, 2012). Whereas under Nasser, the police model followed closely the ideologically authoritarian manner of the Soviet Union, Sadat made the transition towards modeling Egypt's police force after a more Western style, exemplified by the United States. In an effort to improve police accountability and performance, new reforms under Sadat also included one of Egypt's first reporting systems on the caliber of work done by police officers. However, as important as these changes were given the failures of Egyptian law enforcement in preceding decades, the country's law enforcement was still incomplete in areas such as public responsiveness. Public relations still left much to be desired, and as such, overall police effectiveness stumbled.

Anwar Sadat's assassination in 1981 marked the end of a relative step forward in Egyptian policing. Following his death, Sadat was replaced by president Hosni Mubarak, who ruled until his forceful overthrow in 2011. This change signified a transition backwards towards law enforcement policies reminiscent of Nasser's regime as opposed to some of the changes made during Sadat's term. Due to the nature of

Sadat's death, Mubarak was able to reintroduce so-called "emergency laws" into Egypt, which significantly restricted citizens' rights granted by the constitution and extended the powers of the police. In about 50 years between 1951 and 2006, the number of employees in the Egyptian Ministry of the Interior grew from 124,000 to 800,000, with the largest spike in growth happening during Mubarak's presidency (Brumberg & Sallam, 2012, p. 6). Moreover, Mubarak was able to suppress almost all forms of dissent, political and otherwise, and almost nobody opposed him in his three decade-long rule. According to Quassini & Verma (2012, p. 103), "The declaration of war by radical Islamic groups in the early 1990s put an end to any discussion by reformists on repealing the emergency laws as the Mubarak regime gained international support for its uncompromising iron-fisted approach to counterterrorism." During this period of time, the anti-terror sentiment was strong throughout the rest of the world that Mubarak's crackdown on fundamentalist terrorism in Egypt garnered much support globally, and particularly in the Western community. This sentiment persisted for a long time during Mubarak's regime, and although Mubarak continued to expand these emergency laws, most developed powers were willing to overlook this extension of control over the Egyptian state in the name of combating terrorism. These tendencies continued until the end of his regime in the early 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **The Arab Spring & Recent Developments**

On January 25<sup>th</sup>, 2011, demonstrations were mobilized across Egypt. Protestors concentrated in Tahrir Square in the heart of Cairo were dedicated to the overthrow of Hosni Mubarak as president of Egypt. The opposition to the government came from a

wide range of Egyptian citizens, from Islamists to liberals, and they called for the addressing of grievances held by civilians. Protestors requested an end to state emergency laws enacted under Mubarak and an end to the increased police brutality seen in the first decade of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. The poor performance of the Egyptian economy was also a contributing factor in the anger of the citizens and the restriction of free speech in the country fueled these protests. Police violence and protest continued interchangeably in Egypt until the announcement of presidential victory by Islamist Mohammed Morsi in late June 2012. It seemed as if progress was being made after the unprecedented scale of the Arab Spring revolutions, until Egyptian protestors again took to the streets on the one-year anniversary of Morsi's inauguration as Egypt's president on June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2013. Arguments against Morsi's rule included claims that he was solely concerned with furthering an Islamist agenda and suppressed secular and other opposition groups. Similarly to the first Egyptian revolution, the police response to these protests was considerably harsh. On July 3<sup>rd</sup>, the head of the Egyptian Army, General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi announced the removal of president Mohammed Morsi as well as his replacement with interim leader and previous head of the constitutional court Adly Mansour. The after effects of this coup d'état still remain to be seen, and the situation continues to develop daily.

## **Chapter 3**

### **LITERATURE REVIEW**

#### **Police Theory**

In this first section of my literature review, I plan on discussing and evaluating the criminal justice and sociological theories behind policing, and in particular, how law enforcement organizations transform and meet challenges of implementing democratic ideals. I will address the needs of a police force, as well as the different means by which those needs can be achieved.

Primarily, I will focus on Jean-Paul Brodeur's opposing theories of high and low policing. In his attempt to qualify what he discusses as "political policing," Brodeur chooses to redefine what is understood as the qualities of democratic and nondemocratic policing. In order to do so, he posits that, "...it constitutes a general paradigm for policing or, in other words, a definite pattern of relations between a set of goals and the means to achieve them," (Brodeur, 1983, p. 512). Instead of relying on defining specifically what qualities must be present for these two policing dichotomies to be understood, he simplifies the question down into two parts: what the police force intends to achieve or accomplish, and what way they plan on doing so.

Brodeur chooses to further highlight this difference through a historical observation of what he sees as two prime examples of the "paradigm." The first deals

with what he, from this point on, chooses to call “low policing.” He exemplifies this new term by using what is perhaps the most frequently considered example of the first form of modern policing in history: Sir Robert Peel’s “preventative police” force during the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Its main function was that of a deterrent, meaning that instead of simply responding and reacting to an already completed crime, the law enforcement forces would serve to dissuade any potential offenders from committing a crime in the future. Moreover, this police force was the first of its kind to serve as a viable alternative to the previous norm, which was judicially mandated punishment by the courts in England (p. 512). The other historical observation that Brodeur cites is used to understand the converse of the “low policing” he describes, fittingly called “high policing.” In this historical example, he points to another early example of a modern police force: the organization created by French King Louis XIV in the 17<sup>th</sup> century. Quite unlike Sir Robert Peel’s police force, this law enforcement body was utilized almost exclusively to serve the authority of the monarch and his associates in all manners (p.512). It did not expressly concern itself with preventing or deterring crime for the advancement of the society, but rather dealt with crime in an attempt to bolster the authority of the ruling elite.

Through these examples, we are able to see prime historical examples of Brodeur’s two models of policing in action in past contexts. Following the definition of his paradigm as the interaction of the goals and means of a police force, we are able to further break down the thinking behind these two types of policing. In the first example, Peel’s police force is primarily concerned with ensuring that crime is stopped before it even happens, by deterring would-be criminals from following through on their criminal actions and by portraying crime as inherently ineffective in a

cost-benefit analysis for a potential offender. The means by which they do this: increased public awareness through campaigns, interactions with law enforcement officials, etc. are much different than the means by which criminals had been dealt with until this point. Conversely, Brodeur's example for high policing yields quite different results when analyzing the goals and means of Louis XIV's royal police force. Instead of preventing crime as a means of improving the quality of the community as a whole, this law enforcement force is at its core *subversive*. Its chief concern is to root out any dissent to the status quo, political or otherwise, in an attempt to preserve the ruling body. As a result, this police force was given almost complete immunity to succeed in its endeavor. In *The Policing Web*, Brodeur describes that this French system of high policing in the 17<sup>th</sup> century had four primary means of achieving the goal of crime prevention to maintain royal authority: leniency towards nonpenal actions, root cause prevention of idleness through unemployment, surveillance of the people to dissuade deviance, and control of public opinion to prevent collective action (Brodeur, 2010, p. 56-57). Through these underhanded means, the "high policing" authorities were able to successfully maintain the power distribution in 17<sup>th</sup> century France.

In order to achieve an even better understanding of the qualities of a high policing force in general, Brodeur breaks down the concept into four main components:

**"High policing is first of all absorbent policing."** (Brodeur, 1983, p. 513): This first characteristic of high policing speaks to the scope of the police force in such a system. Quite simply, a high police force's power extends far beyond the limits of a standard, lower police force. It concerns itself in almost all aspects of society to

achieve a better understanding of all potential dissenting opinions. Moreover, to keep track of all of the information regarding its populous, an “absorbent” police force must take part in extensive intelligence gathering and storing. Police records are kept to track not only physical action taken by criminals, but also words and thoughts of dissidents that may endanger the authority of the ruling elites.

**“High policing is not uniquely bound to enforce the law and regulations as they are made by an independent legislator.”** (p. 513): Law enforcement in high policing structures is first and foremost aligned with the ruling elite, or executive branch, in the country. Such law enforcement officials may take on roles that are traditionally reserved for legislative or judicial bodies in low policing communities, such as defining terms for sentencing criminals and carrying out the sentencing themselves.

**“Protecting the community from law violators is not an end in itself for high policing;”** (p. 513): Unlike in low policing communities, police in high policing areas are not primarily concerned with stopping or preventing crime for its face value. Because the sole focus of these police officials is to serve established rulers, crime may in fact be *used* in certain instances to bolster these rulers. Using criminals to quell dissenting opinions is a possibility for law enforcement bodies to maintain order. Thusly, the oversight and even management of these illicit activities takes precedent over their prevention.

**“High policing not only makes extensive use of undercover agents as paid informers, but it also acknowledges its willingness to do so.”** (p. 514): The implications of this characteristic are twofold: the high policing authorities not only make use of clandestine actors to work on their behalf, but use them to strike fear into

the heart of the people. The undercover agents work partly to serve the “absorbent” aspect of high policing mentioned in the first component, but also to scare potential dissenters into believing that there is an even larger policing presence than there actually is, which serves to further prevent potential actions against the oligarchy.

The above criteria provide a solid structure for Brodeur’s theory of high policing as a whole: these characteristics describe the connection between the channels through which high policing authorities operate (leniency towards nonpenal actions, root cause prevention of idleness through unemployment, surveillance of the people to dissuade deviance, and control of public opinion to prevent collective action) and the end goals these law enforcement forces hope to achieve (preservation of power in the ruling elites).

By considering the above qualities of a “high police” force, it is also fairly simple to reach the logical conclusion of what would constitute a “low police” force. Quite simply, the converses of most of high policing’s characteristics would hold true for low policing. While a lower police force would certainly use its legal powers to construct social order and prevent crime, we would certainly not see the intrusive nature of intelligence collecting seen in high policing. Whereas high police forces do not regard the laws as their highest priority in everyday actions, it would stand to reason that a lower police force does consider the legislation passed by an impartial body as its code of conduct in law enforcement. In addition, low policing communities would see the protection of the community from crime and criminals (through deterrent measures) as its top priority. Lastly, low policing groups would hesitate away from using undercover agents to illicitly gather intelligence on its

citizens, and if it did, it would not do so in a way that struck fear and panic into the hearts of its populace.

Brodeur's distinction between these two opposing theories of police is an important one, and it provides a spectrum upon which we can place almost any law enforcement force in the world. And while it is illogical to think that there are "perfect" examples of each type of policing, it does appear that, for the sake of argument, many Western countries (Western Europe, Canada, the United States, Japan) fit more towards the "low policing" end of the spectrum, and countries with a more authoritarian style of leadership (Middle Eastern countries, post-Soviet Bloc states, Southeast Asian states following the Cold War) tend to fall more in the "high policing" category. It stands to reason that a country could move along this spectrum of law enforcement classifications, but to do so, there would have to be a noticeable change in the criteria laid out by Brodeur of high and low policing communities.

The process of achieving this change in law enforcement structure is by no means an easy transition, and likely will require a great deal of resources and dedication by both lawmakers inside the country as well as some outside actors. One scholar emphasizes that this change is not an overnight occurrence, and cannot be characterized by a sudden "spiritual transformation" (Fichtelberg, 2013, p. 15). It requires effort from not only the government and their law enforcement forces to limit their police powers, but also effort from society at large to remain watchful should those institutions slip back to their nondemocratic ways. Fichtelberg describes a variety of options for how a transitioning society can meet these requirements for their law enforcement structures. One includes the application of policies such as problem-oriented policing and community policing, wherein law enforcement officials are

required to interact with its constituents on a more personal level so that police responsiveness to public needs is improved (2013, p. 13). Another option is the decentralization of police structures by spreading out offices and distributing authority to lower levels of policing (city, county, etc.). Fichtelberg observes that a key characteristic of undemocratic policing is an inherently *centralized* police force that holds a monopoly on the use of force against its citizens, and by decentralizing that police power, law enforcement forces become less able to use that force to threaten democratic progress (2013, p. 14).

However, the adoption and implementation of these policies not only require the commitment of the government and the police, but also a great deal of capital to ensure a smooth transition. On this topic, Fichtelberg writes, "...if a government lacks the resources to effectively train, equip, pay, and monitor police officers, these officers are much less likely to meet the complex demands of democratic policing" (2013, p. 15). The dedication to transitioning towards a democratic style of policing requires a monetary commitment to ensure that law enforcement officials can carry out their duties and be fair and responsive to their society. One solution to this potential problem is to involve outside actors in the transition towards a more democratic style of policing. While this likely will not result in complete involvement from outside governments in this transition, Fichtelberg outlines a few examples of how institutions outside the country in question can aid in the democratic process. With the advent of modern technology, outside organizations can observe and monitor police behavior in this country and make these findings known to the outside world, who can further scrutinize any fault in their application of democratic police tactics (2013, p. 16). Outside institutions can also provide input to the governments of these countries in

transition and suggest policy changes. By having an onlooker who is not caught up in the same bureaucratic “red tape” as the transitional government, it is possible to, “...enhance and limit the ability of the police to maintain order in ways that are appropriate for democracy” (2013, p.17). These outside organizations can aid police with information on crime in their communities as well as exposing undemocratic police actions should they occur. International actors can also help to cultivate a more democratic atmosphere in these countries by instilling a more professional, democratic standard amongst law enforcement officers in the country. Fichtelberg writes that, “This can include inculcating officers with a sense of duty and public service as well as a tolerance for the messiness and procedural frustrations that are in many ways the spiritual core of democratic policing” (2013, p. 20). By educating law enforcement officials in transitioning countries, democratic ideals are more likely to take root and flourish in these new environments. Moreover, these international organizations can take it one step further, and directly influence the crafting and implementation of democratic policy. Developing laws that protect the rights of citizens and restrict the scope of police power are crucial to any democratic police force, and outside organizations are able to consult with legislators to help implement these concepts. It is important to keep in mind the delicate balance that must be struck between outside actors genuinely aiding in the transition towards democratic policing and taking on a role of building a new state in their image. A truly authentic democratic law enforcement structure can only be achieved through sincere commitment to change from a combination of both internal and external forces, as well as a compromise between the interests of both actors.

## **Justice in the Arab Context**

In this second part of the literature, I plan to review the relevant publications that deal with how the ideas of freedom and liberty are understood in Middle Eastern Arabic society. In addition, I will also consider how these concepts have evolved over the years and continue to evolve in this setting. By understanding how, if at all, these fairly “Western” concepts play into political or legislative thought in the Middle East, and Egypt in general, we can better predict the future course of political action for the region.

To begin to address this question, it is important yet again to look back at the history of Egypt to determine when these ideas first emerged. Even before British colonial forces arrived in North Africa, French Revolutionary forces (headed by then-General Napoleon Bonaparte) occupied the territory of modern-day Egypt in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century. Upon their arrival, Bonaparte declared his arrival, “...in the name of the French Republic, founded on the principles of liberty and equality” (Lewis, 2005, p. 39).

This announcement had two parts to it: liberty and equality. Equality was not a foreign concept to Egyptians, as it was a premise of Arabic and Islamic culture in general that had been prevalent in the region since the rise of Islam in the 7<sup>th</sup> century. Lewis writes,

Islam really did insist on equality and achieved a high measure of success in enforcing it. Obviously, the facts of life created inequalities – primarily social and economic, sometimes also ethnic and racial – but these were in defiance of Islamic principles and never reached the levels of the Western world (2005, p. 39).

Specifically, alms-giving (Arabic: *zakat*) is one of the five main tenants of Islam, and carries with it the directive that members of the religion must provide aid to those less fortunate than them in the hopes of raising them to their level as equals. Arab equality also excluded women and slaves in society, but at the time of Bonaparte's arrival, this was not unheard of in Western society. The important thing to note is that equality amongst the men in society was an inherent characteristic that Egyptians could understand.

Liberty, or freedom (Arabic: *hurriyya*), however, was a term not easily understood by Egyptians when it was paired with equality. For centuries, to be "free" in the context of Arabic culture denoted only one's position as either a slave or a free citizen. Lewis (2005, p. 40) expands on this idea, writing: "To be liberated, or freed, meant to be manumitted, and in the Islamic world, unlike in the Western world, 'slavery' and 'freedom' were not until recently used as metaphors for bad and good government." Egyptians originally struggled to make the connection between politics and one's place as a slave or free citizen, as slaves in Arabic society previously had nothing to do with political endeavors. It took about a half century for Egyptian scholars to fully realize that the closest translation of "freedom" described by Bonaparte and the French was the Islamic idea of "justice," specifically justice in the eyes of God and his laws (Arabic: *sharia*). This notion of strict adherence to the justness of God's will (and the converse, disobeying it being inherently *unjust*) was also a notion that dates back in Arabic timelines to the creation of Islam by the Prophet Muhammad in the 7<sup>th</sup> century. The main reason for the Prophet's migration (Arabic: *hijra*) from the city of Mecca to the city of Medina was that Muhammad saw the rulers of Mecca and their laws as inherently unjust according to the Qur'an. In

moving himself and his followers to a new city to create new laws and regulations, the Prophet exhibits the first easily identifiable instance of exercising Islamic “justice” against existing power structures in Arab history. This makes for a fairly simple means of identifying the “justness” of a ruler or regime in this framework: “...he [the ruler] must have acquired power rightfully, and he must exercise it rightfully. In other words, he must be neither a usurper nor a tyrant” (Lewis, 2005, p. 41). While this definition seems easy enough to comprehend and follow, paired with different passages of the Qur’an, it becomes harder to define the actual duties associated with achieving justice in this context. One excerpt, in particular, reads: “O you who have believed, obey Allah and obey the Messenger and those in authority among you” (The Qur’an, 4:59). This seems to link obedience to a position of authority to piety, that God would wish for citizens to be obedient to figures in power. In contrast, another *hadith* (tradition or saying attributed to the Prophet Muhammad) reads, “When he is commanded with sin, there is no hearing or obeying” (2005, p. 42). Whereas the first verse suggested a strict adherence to authority, the second verse reads as if there is a duty *not* to obey when there is a ruler in defiance of God. Regarding this topic, Lewis suggests, “This is more than the right of revolution that appears in Western political thought. It is a duty of revolution, or at least of disobedience and opposition to authority.” (2005, p. 42). Due to the diametric nature of these two passages and their instructions contained within, disagreements have arisen dating back to the founding years of Islam over the true will of God regarding His followers’ obedience. One school of thought favors the first aforementioned verse, and sees an ideal society with civilians who are completely obedient to their leaders. The other school of thought, following the second verse, values a society where members do not hesitate to remove

unjust or unholy rulers from office if need be. Both ideas *technically* can find basis in scripture, and along this line of thinking, the ideas can be argued into law in Islamic society. Over the centuries following the Prophet Muhammad's death, however, the former school of thought took hold over most of the Arab world, and was hard to remove due to its justification in holy text. Lewis describes how such authorities stress the need for order and its achievement through strict autocracy and obedience. They used platitudes such as "sedition" (Arabic: *fitna*) and the idea of potential anarchy to scare the people away from the idea of a political system without rigid order and authority (Lewis, 2005, p. 43). In doing so, these theological scholars have not only paved the way for the consolidation and preservation of power in the hands of the few in many countries across the Middle East for centuries to come, but also ensured that this status quo is maintained through a strong, often "authoritarian" law enforcement model.

Given this trend of political structure, does it seem feasible to change the governing style of such Middle Eastern governments? A first glance would suggest not, as there are many hurdles to overcome for change to take place. The consolidation of power in the hands of these few rulers through a conventional interpretation of the Qur'an created centuries of precedent that worked strongly against any who wished to incite change in these communities. Habits formed in these societies and change was shunned, creating a cycle of autocrats begetting autocrats. The introduction of colonial occupying powers did little to help this situation at first, and even worsened some aspects of this ruling style. These European occupants were understandably conservative in their ruling of Arabs, so as not to lose control over these societies, and this conservative style pervaded the regimes of future Arab rulers in these countries.

The modernization that came with colonial occupation brought with it improvements in communication and security, which allowed for far more facilitated state-lead repression of dissidents (2005, p. 45). Moreover, this modernization that strengthened the autocratic governments also brought with it the ability for these autocrats to eliminate the middle or merchant class in these societies. As their own power was bolstered and maintained through their monopoly on police forces, slowly the intermediate class was chipped away, and the meager checks and balances that this class had on the centralized governments were eliminated as well, exponentially increasing the rate of power consolidation for these governments (2005, p. 46). Another obstacle standing between the transition away from despotic rule in these societies is the vacancy of civilian political engagement on the scale seen in most Western countries. On this topic, Lewis writes:

This notion [citizenship], with roots going back to the Greek *polites*, a member of the polis, has been central in Western civilization from antiquity to the present day. It, and the idea of the people participating not just in the choice of a ruler but in the conduct of government, is not part of traditional Islam (2005, p. 48).

These two components are crucial in the existence of Western, democratic political structure: not only selecting a leader as a community, but also in *how* that elected official should act. Because this key element has never been present in Islamic societies, it is incrementally harder to change government without it.

So is there any possibility for the growth of democracy in these countries? The answer, despite the looming, aforementioned obstacles, is yes. There

are criteria that need be met in order for this change to happen, and Lewis outlines the ones he sees as the most important:

**Continued rejection of despotic rulers and civilian participation in government** (2005, p. 49): Although it has been identified as an element notably lacking in the past government practice in these societies, the notion of civilians calling for a smaller government that is responsible to its people is gaining more traction in modern Middle Eastern political discourse. This rejection of corrupt rulers (Arabic: *istibdad*) is becoming more prevalent amongst Arab citizens, and is being used in protests against such rulers. Lewis articulates: “Europe may have disseminated the ideology of dictatorship, but it also spread the corresponding ideology of popular revolt against dictatorship,” (2005, p. 49). By having more active citizens who adhere to the Islamic tradition of opposing corrupt governments, change may take hold in these societies.

**Adoption of modern communication technologies** (2005, p. 49): The introduction and initial development of communication technologies in the Middle East were originally seen to have a negative effect on the transition towards democratic government styles. Inventions like printing press, television, and radio allowed autocratic heads of state to exert even more control over their subjects. Because the governments held a monopoly on those technologies for a long time, it was easy to create national media network consisting of almost exclusively government propaganda that served to maintain the consolidation of power in the autocrats. However, it became apparent that eventually, this structure would have to succumb to outside pressures. Lewis provides an apt example of such a change using the history of communication developments from another part of the world. He writes,

It is becoming increasingly clear that one of the main reasons for the collapse of the Soviet Union was the information revolution. The old Soviet system depended in large measure on control of the production, distribution, and exchange of information and ideas; as modern communications developed, this became no longer possible (2005, p. 49-50).

While the ideal scenario for authoritarian Middle Eastern governments (and, in Lewis' example, the Soviet Union) would be a permanent maintenance of a monopoly on media outlets in the country, the advent of powerful new technologies eventually guaranteed the fact that this could not happen. It seems unlikely that Egypt can continue to hoard these technologies for themselves, and will ultimately have to concede to changing the ways they approach how they apply technologies to their regimes. A prime example of a possible change would be how technologies that might have facilitated authoritarian policing in the past (by giving them "tools" to suppress Egyptians) could in fact be used to change the way law enforcement officers interact with civilians (such as decreasing response times or increasing police accountability in their neighborhoods). The invention of the Internet, cellular technology, and social media outlets have opened up new channels of global communication that were never before possible. With the exception of an outlier like North Korea, no government can hope to maintain a national media atmosphere that consists exclusively of internal, handpicked content; modern communication mediums can provide almost any news form to almost any part of the globe with the capable technology. The takeaway from this is that any government that continues to oppose this trend is likely fighting a losing battle. As Lewis writes, "The information revolution posed the same dilemma

for the Soviet Union as the Industrial Revolution did for the Ottoman and other Islamic empires: either accept it and cease to exist in the same manner or reject it and fall increasingly behind the rest of the world” (2005, p. 50). Muslim autocrats appear to face the same ultimatum: give in to the path forward led by open channels of communication and global connectivity or degenerate as a society while other nations prosper.

**Use of national revenues on infrastructure and education** (2005, p. 51):

The allocation and use of national funds towards things that benefit everyone in the country, such as quality schooling and improved roads and bridges, is another factor that helps a country to move towards a more democratic government type. For this criterion, Lewis uses the example of Iraq in the mid 2000s to illustrate his point. Funds collected from oil (a natural resource abundant in Iraq as well as many other Middle Eastern countries) was used by pre-Saddam Hussein Iraqi leaders to improve infrastructure and education in the country, and Iraq surpassed almost all regional competitors in terms of quality of education and transportation. Education is always a valuable tool in transitioning a country towards a more democratic style of government, and Iraq not only improved the quality of its schools, but also instilled in its people recognition of the values of education for their children. Even following the reign of Hussein, the commitment to strive for education is still apparent in the Iraqi people (2005, p. 51).

**Improve the status of women** (2005, p. 51): This is potentially one of the harder criterion to follow, as there is a noticeable deficit in women’s rights in many Middle Eastern countries. Although, as Lewis illustrates through another example using Iraq, it is not so much the *rights* of women (as the term “rights” does not have a

clear meaning in the Middle Eastern context), but moreover equal access and opportunity for women to the same things in society as men (2005, p. 51). Building off of the 3<sup>rd</sup> criterion, providing equal access to education, as well as job opportunities, can help a country in its transition towards a more democratic style of government. Lewis again cites the freedom of women in the West compared to other countries around the globe as an indication of women's contribution to a more democratic society.

These four criteria provide a basic prescription for a budding democracy to follow on its path to establishing a more democratic form of government. Achieving them can increase the chances not only of democracy's introduction into a country, but also its maintenance over an extended period of time.

However, despite the significant potential to make great strides towards developing a Middle Eastern country down the path of democracy, there are other hindrances in addition to long standing rulers unwilling to give in to change. The most basic premise of the aforementioned criteria of democratic change is that the people in the country are *willing* to concede to its terms. As stated previously, many of these concepts are heretofore foreign in many parts of the region, and moreover, there are groups actively working to prevent the acceptance of these concepts. In particular, Lewis identifies the "Islamic fundamentalists" as one of the most prominent obstacles in this problem (2005, p. 52). They see the West and the reforms and modernizations they brought to the Middle East as inherently sinful, insidious, and alien to their way of life, and often urge against modernization or Westernization in any form. For decades, such fundamentalists have opposed almost all forms of Western intrusion into Middle Eastern governments, and actively campaigned to remove its influence

from their governments. Perhaps the biggest challenges when dealing with Islamic fundamentalists are the numerous advantages they have over more democratic alternatives in Middle Eastern countries. First and foremost, the fundamentalists have the advantage of being able to speak the native language of a Middle Eastern country's people. Most proponents of Western style democracy not only couldn't speak Arabic with the same proficiency as native speakers, but many of their philosophical concepts either didn't exist in the language or were lost amongst the street vernacular of everyday people in these countries. Furthermore, Islamic fundamentalists were able to connect with the common people in a way that any outside actors weren't: through imams at the mosques across the country (2005, p. 54-55). Fundamentalist Muslims had a clear avenue through which they could reach almost all of a country's populous, and no other political actors had a medium that was nearly as effective at influencing citizens. Perhaps most troubling, Islamic fundamentalists were not bound to the same rules that democratic actors were: whereas by their very nature, proponents of democracy were ideologically required to allow the free action of opposing ideas (namely, fundamentalism), the fundamentalists did not share the same need to allow democratic parties the ability to act in their country (2005, p. 55). Thus, suppression of ideas opposing fundamentalism became a large part of their agenda, and it became increasingly more difficult for democratic ideals to prosper where fundamentalism exists.

Even with these potential challenges for democracy in these contexts, the fight is by no means over for the transition away from autocratic governments to democratic ones. There are signs that certain citizens in Middle Eastern countries are willing to make their voice heard that they want democracy, despite opposing actors.

Lewis again uses the Iraqi example to illustrate the fact that although fundamentalists may oppose the embrace of democratic ideals, Iraqi citizens continue to participate in fairer elections than ever before, despite threats from fundamentalist enemies of the democratic process (2005, p. 55). In addition, some scholars suggest that many organizations thought to have been highly fundamentalist may be more open to compromise than previously thought. Egypt's Islamist group in particular, the Muslim Brotherhood, could be more open to working with other opposition groups to end military occupation. As one scholar points out, all types of groups, not just fundamentalist ones, are more vulnerable to government crackdown during a national crisis and become more active in their opposition (Wickham, 2011, p. 95). Also, a group like the Muslim Brotherhood knows that their best chance for a significant showing in future elections comes from participating with a smooth transitional government until future electoral plans can be laid out. Moreover, even an organization like the Brotherhood has factions of its own, with some being more liberal than others. These reformist factions carry with them the potential to sway future group agenda towards incorporating policies more palatable to the country as a whole. Since its founding, a historically fundamentalist group like the Muslim Brotherhood has shown its ability to change, adapt, and evolve to fit new circumstances in a country like Egypt, and it stands to reason that it can continue to do so with an increase in talks with democratic forces. There already appears to be a deterioration of differences between these two opposites in the context of a country like Egypt. As one scholar writes,

Already, most mainstream Islamists have significant overlapping interests with the United States, such as seeing al Qaeda dismantled, policing terrorism, improving

living standards and economic conditions across the Arab world, and consolidating democratic governance (Hamid, 2011, p. 368).

This goes to further show that common ground can be found between what used to be opposing groups, and suggests a potential for continued positive discourse in the future to reach a mutually satisfactory conclusion. Hamid continues to assert that it is important to maintain dialogue between these groups as well as draw upon these similar interests to be able to come to some semblance of an agreement amongst them (2011, p. 368). By relying on the inherent pragmatism of both groups of actors – a wish to see their country prosper – the hope for middle ground agreements is sustained.

## Chapter 4

### FINDINGS AND CONCLUSION

Following the completion of the Literature Review, it is now imperative to attempt to answer the overlying question of this thesis with regards to the two major theories: namely, can Bernard Lewis' interpretation of democracy within the context of Arab countries be squared with Jean Paul Brodeur's requirements for a country's law enforcement structure to be "high," "low," or transitioning between the two?

When addressing this question, the first task is to ascertain whether Egypt's policing authorities fit into Brodeur's requirements for a high policing authority. The first requirement (being an "absorbent" police force) seems to be quite clearly met: shortly after Mubarak's assumption of power, Egypt's "emergency laws" were extended (Quassini & Verma, 2012, p. 103), which not only gave the presidency far more power than previously (Goldberg, 2011, p. 111), but also extended the powers of law enforcement authorities, which Mubarak used to investigate, crack down on, and restrict all opposition. The example of the extension of emergency powers can also be used to fulfill Brodeur's second point (that law enforcement officials are not bound to enforce national law): because of the expanded police powers, they were no longer restricted to following the rules created by the Egyptian Parliament, but could instead serve the interests of maintaining power in Mubarak's presidency. With regards to Brodeur's third component, that community protection is not a police force's main goal, the Egyptian police also did not make protecting

Egyptian citizens its top priority. The most fitting example of this is during the 2011 Revolution, when police officers would use violence from criminal gangs against civilian protestors. One scholar writes:

The disappearance of police officers on January 29, leaving the neighborhoods to criminal elements and neighborhood watch groups, and their reappearance 24 hours later suggest they were acting on orders, rather than haphazardly dispersing and returning (Stacher, 2011, p. 99).

Evidence suggests that the Mubarak regime would, in fact, utilize these criminal groups in an attempt to break up protests led by everyday citizens such as students and workers. Most troubling is Egypt's fulfillment of Brodeur's fourth criteria, wherein they utilize undercover agents to carry out their will. Stacher writes, "Beginning on February 2, plain-clothes officers posing as Mubarak supporters...carried whips and sticks to intimidate and injure those protesting against the system," (2011, p. 99). Law enforcement officials, acting under the instructions of President Mubarak, disguised themselves as ordinary citizens in order to achieve the questionable goals of the presidency. It is quite clear that according to the criteria laid out by Brodeur for high police, the Egyptian law enforcement under President Mubarak certainly fit the description.

Next, it is necessary to consider whether the cultural constraints laid out by Lewis for an autocratic government's transition to a democracy in general can be applicable to law enforcement reform, and in particular the transition from a high to a low style of policing, and in this case it is apparent that it can. By understanding the qualities of "low" policing to be logically opposite of Brodeur's "high" policing

qualities, it is possible to ascertain that low policing: may collect information (but not in an absorbent fashion that restricts the rights of its citizens), frame all of its actions within the confines of national law, concern itself foremost with protecting the rights of its citizens from all crime, and do not use covert informants to strike fear into the citizens of its jurisdiction. All of these components of a lower style of policing certainly fit into the democracy Bernard Lewis describes when he addresses the cultural constraints of achieving it, so it is natural to assume that similar obstacles would be present in a transition of Egypt's law enforcement to this lower style of policing. In addition, many of the criteria laid out by Lewis for a country to shift towards a democratic *government* echo the requirements discussed by Fichtelberg for the shift towards democratic *policing*.

Similarly, it would also hold that because there were obstacles present in the transition between autocracy and democracy, the same obstacles would persist for a change from high to low policing. Consequently, to answer the overlying question of this thesis, one needs to only look to if and how Egypt can overcome these obstacles to reform its law enforcement reform. Hence, to answer the question of whether Egypt can move from a higher style of policing to a lower style of policing given cultural and religious constraints, the answer appears to be a qualified yes. It is quite clear that Egypt, even after two revolutions over the course of 2.5 years has not made it all the way to a fully low state of law enforcement. But it has made some strides, and if it continues to improve, and eventually fulfills Lewis' criteria, it is absolutely possible that a lower policing style can be achieved. In regards to these criteria, one must examine the progress that has been made, and the progress that remains to be made:

### **Continued rejection of despotic rulers and civilian participation in**

**government:** Fortunately, it appears that Egypt has already made some strides in this component in its potential move forward towards a lower style of policing. First and foremost, it is quite clear that they have embraced the storied Islamic “instruction” of rejecting despots. The Egyptian people’s recognition of Hosni Mubarak’s authoritarian tactics and their movements to remove him from office certainly constitute this rejection, and the people’s continued vigilance to the potential resumption of such a ruler indicate they can at least identify and reject a corrupt ruler. However, as far as taking on roles of active citizens, it seems as if the Egyptian people have much progress to make. One scholar comments on this phenomenon, writing: “It may be premature to push the transitional justice agenda when its principal precondition, political will, is absent,” (Abou-El-Fadl, 2012, p. 329-330). While it is important to identify corrupt leaders and make it known that their removal from office is demanded, it is also crucial to follow through on these demands through political action. What is troubling is that in the 2012 presidential election following the 2011 Revolution, polling observers projected a turnout rate of about 15% of the voting age population due to the lack of voters in polling places (Beach, 2012). While the official number ended up being in the 40-50% range, it is still troubling due to the Egyptian people’s dedication to show up at a rate of almost 60% in the 2012 parliamentary elections (International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance). The low voter turnout is problematic in any context, given that in previous elections, turnout had been at “normal” levels. In all reality, the election abnormality was likely due to a combination of factors. Some blamed the lack of voter turnout on the scorching, 40° Celsius (104° Fahrenheit) heat on the Election Day, causing some voters to not want to

travel to polling places at all (Beach, 2012). Some consider the fact that the two major candidates, Muhammad Morsi and Ahmed Shafik, both had ties to the military, which could have led to questionable election practices. Beach also cites the distressing amount of voters who, dissatisfied with both choices for president, decided to “nullify” their vote, which essentially eliminated their votes from the count. While there was likely no one reason for the low voter turnout, the accumulation of many reasons most logically would have led to it. Regardless, if Egyptians wish to see true law enforcement change, which can only come from a fairly-elected legislature that provides laws for a low style of police to follow, then Egyptians must be more politically active, despite any outside factors that would prevent them from otherwise.

**Adoption of modern communication technologies:** This is another area where Egyptian citizens did make some effort during the 2011 Revolution to make improvements. Much of the revolution, as well as other Arab Spring movements across North Africa, relied on the ability for protestors to gather and plan their actions for protests. On this issue, two scholars write: “Social media introduced a novel resource that provided swiftness in receiving and disseminating information; helped build and strengthen ties among activists; and increased interaction among protestors and between protestors and the rest of the world,” (Eltantawy & Wiest, 2012, p. 1218). It is clear that the improvements in technology over the past decade alone have opened up new opportunities for political activists in Egypt. The technology that once allowed state-run oppression can now be used to pursue more democratic forms of government. The use of modern communication technologies was one of the key factors in the success of the 2011 Revolution, and its continued use can only help Egypt’s transition forward to a lower style of policing. For example, as Fichtelberg discussed,

improvements in communication technologies can allow states to adopt forms of community policing and allow law enforcement to better respond to the needs of their people (2013, p. 13).

**Use of national revenues on infrastructure and education:** This component as one that requires attention from the Egyptian people if they wish to progress towards a lower, democratic style of policing. As of 2008, the CIA World Factbook reported that Egypt had only a 73.9% literacy rate, which is alarmingly low. In addition, Egypt spent only 3.8% of its GDP on education (ranked 117<sup>th</sup> in the world), which is truly indicative of the fact that quality education has not been a top priority in the allocation of Egypt's funds. If Egyptian citizens wish to move forward and eventually achieve comprehensive law enforcement reform, they must invest in quality education for their children, which will go a long way in improving the overall political atmosphere of their country.

**Improve the status of women:** This is an area that is in need for improvement if Egypt wishes to move forward towards a lower style of policing. The rights of Egyptian women still remain feeble, and recent constitutions have not done much to improve their status. Discrimination amongst women is common, including in the workplace and in education opportunities. Accounts of violence, and in particular, sexual violence, against women have seen an increase since the beginning of the 2011 Revolution (Boros, 2012). In addition, a 2012 UNICEF study showed that 91% of Egyptian women aged 15-49 years old have undergone female genital mutilation (FGM). These striking statistics show that Egypt still has a long way to go to reach gender equality, and if it hopes to truly reach productive law enforcement reform

through legislative action, including all members of its society will help it tremendously.

In order to successfully transition towards a lower style of law enforcement, Egypt will likely have to make significant strides in all of the above categories. While progress has been made in some areas, the country has noticeable gaps in others. True law enforcement reform will come about when more of these growing problems have been met.

### **Conclusion**

The 2011 Egyptian Revolution, its short stint of elected presidency, and the subsequent 2013 Revolution have been interesting times for the development of the country. Egypt is in the process in moving away from a decades-long autocratic regime headed by President Hosni Mubarak, and it currently in a state of limbo between military occupation and complete acceptance of democratic means of selecting a government. It is difficult to predict what will happen in the coming months and years for Egypt's government, and in particular its law enforcement structure. Not many could have predicted the dramatic swings the government and security forces have taken in the last two years alone. As such, the purpose of this thesis was not to predict *when* such change would happen, but rather, if it happens, *how* it will happen. And given both the definition of "high" and "low" policing from Jean Paul Brodeur and the ethno-cultural restraints on Arab democracy as described by Bernard Lewis, it is apparent that there *is* a way that Egypt can achieve that lower style of policing. If it makes strides in areas like political participation, women's rights, education, and continue to utilize modern communications, more democratic

ideals of policing have the chance to take root in what until now was a haven for autocratic government and a high style of police. One cannot say with absolute certainty that Egypt will change in this manner in the upcoming years, but if it does change towards a lower style of policing, this will likely be how it accomplishes that feat.

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