Revolution & Democratization: Can Egypt Transition to a Modern Day Democracy?

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Introduction

• January 25, 2011
• Mubarak gone, military in charge
• Can Egypt make the transition from an authoritarian regime to a democracy?
Road to Revolution

• Mubarak became President in 1981
• Declared state of emergency
  - Emergency Law:
    -- legalized censorship
    -- detain citizens without charging them
    -- banned non-approved political organizations
Road to Revolution

• Growing gap between the rich and poor

• High unemployment

• Corruption
Road to Revolution

• Murder of Khaled Said
• Police brutality
  - unlawful arrests/detention
  - torture during interrogation
• Mubarak trying to transfer power to son
• Tunisia
Revolution

• Protests began Jan 25, 2011
• Police could no longer control situation, army deployed
• Mubarak attempted to appease protestors
• Mubarak lost hold on power
• Feb 11, 2011
Is Democracy Possible?

- Indonesia
  - Civil unrest due to financial crisis, etc.
  - Protests started by young people
  - Military turn against regime, not people
  - Timeline
Political Institutions

- Democratic political history
  - 1882 Constitution
  - 1923 Constitution
- 1971 Constitution
  - strong executive
  - bicameral legislature
  - independent judiciary
Executive

• 1971 Constitution
  -- President selected by 2/3 majority of Parliament and popular referendum
  -- President had power to appoint VP, PM, and cabinet
  -- Chair of National Security Council
  -- Gives PM power in domestic policy arena
Executive

• Problems under Mubarak
  --Rigged elections
  --Persecuting those who posed a threat
  --VP never appointed
  --Control over cabinet
Executive

• Reforms
  --Referendum
    -Presidential term
    -Easier to become Presidential candidate
Legislative

• Bicameral legislature

• People’s Assembly (1971)
  - draft laws
  - approve budget
  - eighteen standing committees

• Shura Council (1971)
  - matters related to amendments to the Constitution
  - any business referred by the President
Judicial

• Judicial system based on French legal concepts and influence by Sharia law

• Supreme Constitutional Court
  - decide questions related to constitutionality of laws and regulations
  - settle disputes between other courts
  - interpret laws issued by Parliament
Judicial

• Problems under Mubarak
  - Courts became puppets of the regime
  - Judges corrupted/not allowed to apply law

• Reforms
  - Independent judiciary
  - Laws need to be applied fairly
  - Check on Executive/Legislative power
Role of Military

• 1952 Coup d’état

• Presidents from upper echelon of the military

• Military closely tied to politics and business

• Running country since February 2011
Economy & Development

• Human Development Index scores increasing over the last 20 years
• Development linked to democratization
  - “Modernization Theory”
• Economy
  - lower middle income country
  - economic reforms
    -- 2004 Parliament reforms
  - Need to diversify
  - Corruption
Political Parties

• Emergence of Four Main Blocs
  1. Democratic Alliance
  2. Egypt Bloc
  3. Islamist Alliance
  4. “Completing the Revolution” Alliance

• Social Movements
Conclusions