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The purpose of this study is to analyze the events that occurred throughout the Egyptian Revolution from January 2010 to February 2010 through pragmatic humanism. Tweets will be looked at from the book *Tweets from Tahrir* to show how the process unfolded. Building on the previous research, the tweets will be looked at through the lens of pragmatic humanism. The study will show how individuals can better the world they live in by experimenting with different methods and adapting to any failures they may encounter. The study will also show how the reach of the individual has become faster and further than previously possible. The elements of pragmatic humanism will be broken down into five main tenets. The study will take a thematic approach in analyzing the tweets through the perspective of the particular tenet. The study will also show the power of individual desires when they are able to combine with the social context of the time. The advent of Twitter has allowed individuals to test and experiment with hypotheses much quicker than before and allows them to make monumental changes to their reality in a much shorter period of time.

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Pragmatic Humanism: Through the Eyes of Egypt

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I understand that my thesis will become part of the permanent collection of Oregon State University libraries. My signature below authorizes release of my thesis to the reader upon request.

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Chapter 1: Introduction

On January 25, 2011, Cairo became the center of the ongoing revolutions that were spreading throughout the Middle East. The overall cause of these revolutions was the desire for sweeping reform and institutional change throughout the country among a majority of the population. The best way they saw to achieve this was through massive, peaceful demonstrations. Thus, on January 25, the protestors marched on downtown Cairo to voice their grievances. While the protests started off peacefully, they quickly took a violent turn when the pro-government forces opened fire on the protestors shooting tear gas and water cannons at them. The tension had been growing for many years and this incident was the powder keg that was set off that would lead to the eventual demise of the Mubarak regime.

The revolution in Egypt was part of a larger social movement known as the Arab Spring. While Egypt is the main focus of this thesis, it is important to get an idea of what happened in Tunisia because it provided the impetus for the Egyptian people to act. This movement began in Tunisia. Unlike other revolutions before this, there was no iconic leader, a Martin Luther King Jr. or Nelson Mandela pushing the movement forward. This was a movement started by common men and women and carried out in an effort to make their lives better. The citizens of Tunisia were able to get their message out using a vast array of social media outlets. They put out videos and messages detailing the atrocities they felt were being committed by the government. Their goal was, by and large, not to engage in violence but to organize peacefully and effectively enact a change in their nation. They had been angered by

the selfish way that their leader Ben Ali had been living at the citizen's expense.

According to a *Time* article by Vivienne Walt:

The greed and corruption of the First Family were now intolerable. Protesters lambasted Ben Ali's second wife Leila Trabelsi, accumulated vast wealth as First Lady and bestowed lavish gifts on her numerous relatives; about half of Tunisia's businesses--including a bank, hotels, a property-development firm and the two biggest newspaper companies--are in the names of the extended family. (Walt, 24)

While this displays the general corruption of the government, it does not explain what triggered the revolution. The Tunisian ruler was in power for many years and people were well aware of the atrocities he committed and the corruption that he partook in. Thus, something had to trigger the start of the revolution in Tunisia.

The trigger was Mohammed Bouazizi, a fruit vendor in Tunisia who was the victim of police corruption and brutality. The police would act with impunity and fine the vendors for no reason, take their fruit without paying, and subject them to many other deplorable acts. Bouazizi was subjected to this one morning and he complained to the chief of police. After the chief of police reprimanded the police officer, the officer went to exact revenge on Bouazizi. She beat him with a baton, pushed over his cart, and slapped him in front of the other vendors. Bouazizi was deeply hurt by this treatment. This set the stage for what would be the literal trigger of the revolution. Bouazizi, in order to make a point, lit himself on fire in front of the municipal

building. This sacrifice was to be a symbolic gesture against the Ben Ali regime. The article stated that, "The Bouazizi family has no money, no car, no electricity, but it was not poverty that made her son sacrifice himself, she said. It was his quest for dignity" (Fisher, 2011). Although the Ben Ali regime tried damage control, people had already posted the video to Facebook. Once the video got out, it became the rallying cry for Tunisians to overthrow their government. The Tunisians accomplished their goal by having Ben Ali resign on January 14, 2011. Tunisia became the first revolution in the Arab Spring, but Bouazizi became a rallying cry for every oppressed citizen in the region.

While all of this was occurring in Tunisia, people in Egypt were taking notice and began to plan their own demonstrations. They echoed some of the same sentiments that were being voiced in Tunisia. The main reason that the Egyptians were revolting pertained to massive unemployment. As the amount of jobs available decreased, the price of living continued to rise, which the people blamed on the Mubarak regime. The Egyptian people wanted freedom and they wanted the opportunity to have a voice in determining their government. At one of the protests:

35-year-old Safar Attiya, a mother of four, is asking questions that have gone unspoken for three decades. "What did the president ever do for us?" she demands. "Nothing! Nothing! He didn't do anything for us. We can't even find work." Between her part-time job cleaning houses and her husband's job as a day laborer, they earn about \$60 a month. "We see videos of rich people's mansions and villas on TV," says Attiya. "And we are beaten out of the street."

(Dickey 23).

Attiya's rhetoric suggests many people have held these beliefs for a long time, but were afraid to come forward with them. However, the events in Tunisia provided a framework for the Egyptians to follow. They would be able to organize and gather in a way that they had never been able to do before. This would allow them an opportunity to effectively demand changes. Sentiments like Attiya's were reiterated both on the message boards and social media websites. One man said he had graduated from college four years ago, but has not worked a day since. He has been in the streets since Tuesday protesting. This reinforced the point that had been expressed by many Egyptians. The Mubarak regime had failed to provide its citizens with the proper employment and financial opportunities. Meanwhile, the citizens continually saw their leaders leading lavish lives.

Once the revolutions began on January 25, they continued to occur in some form over the next 18 days. The protestors were faced with violence, repression, and government measures intended to curtail the movement. Nonetheless, the protestors were able to adapt to the ever-changing landscape in an effort to keep morale high and continue the fight for a better Egypt. The primary spot of the protesting was Tahrir Square, although it began to shift to other parts of the city as the number of protestors continued to expand. The mass protests that rocked Cairo eventually led to the downfall of Hosni Mubarak on February 11, 2011. The actions of the revolutionaries provided an immense demonstration of human power and determination in shaping the world.

The success of the movement in Egypt depended upon social media such as Twitter. Twitter was a new form of social media that allowed citizens to communicate with each other in a way that made it possible to quickly organize mass protests. Twitter also showed the rapid rise of individual influence on events like this. The individual was able to get out ideas and plans in a way that they had not been able to before. Jack Dorsey, Noah Glass, Biz Stone, and Evan Williams created it in the summer of 2006. Twitter provided a new avenue for people to communicate instantaneously. While it can be used for a variety of reasons, over the last few years it has been a major aid in enacting and organizing social change. The tweets that were posted during the revolution reflect the way in which the population responded to the political landscape and created a new political reality. This process was consistent with what the social theorist F.C.S. Schiller (1864-1937) described as pragmatic humanism. By using pragmatic humanism, the tweets show how individual desires can combine with the social context to change the reality that people live in. The change in the social reality of the people in Egypt during the time period shows the power of the individual in enacting changes through tweets and actions while also illustrating how the idea of pragmatic humanism can be used to analyze world events today.

Schiller created the method of pragmatic humanism in the early part of the 20th century. It essentially encompassed a few main tenets. First and foremost, individuals can have a role in molding the world to their wishes. By attempting different means, they may be able to successfully accomplish their ends. One of the major tenets of pragmatic humanism pertains to experimentation. Many different hypotheses may fail

in attempting to accomplish a goal. However, one cannot merely give up at a failure but must continue to try by other means until he or she is able to find a successful route to their best possible reality. They would do this in order to guard against evils that they were facing. These could range from an authoritarian regime to an unfair system. The applicability of pragmatic humanism can be used to look at many different facets of life. Another significant element of pragmatic humanism was people should be able to have free will, freedom, and self-determination in their lives. This directly ties back into how they should experiment with different means in order to either attain or protect these freedoms. All of the major tenets of pragmatic humanism are interconnected and provide a method for attaining change. This is especially relevant in considering the Egyptian case because this was a country in which people had their freedoms denied for so long. They finally decided that enough was enough and through trying different methods and experiments to overcome the oppression, they were able to defeat the regime.

The primary artifact of study for this analysis is the book Tweets from Tahrir. Twitter is a new form of social media that has not been studied extensively. Twitter will be a vital resource when studying revolutions and other social movement. Many of the events that happened in the Arab Spring have been referred to as the “Twitter Revolution”. The invention of Twitter provided a way for the protestors to get information out about the events occurring within Cairo instantaneously. It allowed them to mobilize efficiently and effectively in a way that had not been possible before. The tweets provided the opportunity to look at this specific social movement through

pragmatic humanism. Twitter is only in its infancy and has already helped to spur two successful revolutions in the Arab Spring, Egypt and Tunisia. As more and more people flock to this form of social media, its ability to fuel social change is likely to grow.

Chapter 2: Literature Review

The events that transpired in Egypt throughout 2011 were an attempt by the people to both revolt against the authoritarian regime and to attain a more democratic form of government. There have been revolutions that have occurred over the last 40 years that suggest different reasons for its success or failure. The revolutions have specific triggers and are looked at through different lenses. There are certain ideas that allow one revolution to be successful while another fails. Sometimes revolutions that succeed have similar characteristics while others are successful for wildly different reasons. Many countries revolt in an attempt to democratize and gain more freedoms. The purpose of the literature review is to introduce revolutions and the subsequent goal of democratization. Revolutions occur because of many different factors. There also are many different kinds of revolutions depending on the events occurring in the country. After discussing the factors that lead to a successful or unsuccessful revolution, the review will turn to the factors that make democratization possible within a country that has just overthrown their government. This will also touch on democratization in Muslim countries, as it is a new phenomenon over the last decade. Before one can look at this though, they must come to an understanding of the shift that has occurred in governments across the world, and the revolutions that have contributed to that shift.

Over the last forty years, many countries have shifted from an authoritarian regime to a more democratic regime. Throughout the 1970s and 1980s, the Third Wave of Democracy was occurring throughout the world. The Third Wave was a

period when many authoritarian governments were overthrown and replaced with democracies. Samuel Huntington's *The Third Wave* provided an analysis of why so many countries were shifting towards democratization through revolutions and rebellions. During this period, there were five main reasons as to why there were so many new democracies emerging (Huntington, 1992). The first of these had to do with legitimacy problems emerging in the authoritarian regimes. Democracy was beginning to become a value that was widely accepted across the world. The citizens began to lose faith in what these authoritarian rulers could do for them and began to challenge the status quo. Consequently, the global economic growth that occurred throughout the 1960s provided better living standards, increased education, and expanded the middle class in many countries. As the middle class began to rise, they demanded more of a say in their government. The rise of the middle class frequently contributed to a change in government during the Third Wave. Third, the Catholic Church came out with Vatican II, which shifted the status quo from defenders of authoritarianism to advocates for social and political reform. Fourth, external actors began to have a bigger influence in spreading democracy and ousting dictators in foreign countries. Some of these actors included the EU and the United States. Finally, a snowball effect began to occur where new means of international communication could spread the ideas of democracy throughout neighboring countries (Huntington). The reason these causes are important to the study of democracy is because many of them can still be used today in order to understand why a revolution

occurred. Although the Third Wave is over, its effects can still be seen throughout the events occurring in the Arab Spring.

Revolutions

Revolutions tend to be of three types: popular revolutions, peripheral insurgencies, and social revolutions. When a revolution occurs, if it does not end quickly, it can develop into a civil war. James Fearon discussed the causes for this and discussed why some revolutions last far longer than others. Fearon described different kinds of revolution and rebellions that tended to be short and others that tended to be long. This would explain why a revolution in Egypt lasted a month while the rebellion in Chechnya has been going on for years. Civil conflicts that arise out of coup attempts and popular revolutions tend to be shorter. These uprisings tend to be crushed quickly by the government or the rebels are able to overthrow the government quickly and seize power. Egypt is an example of this civil conflict. However, “peripheral” insurgencies tend to go on for many years. These insurgencies involve guerilla rebels operating near the states borders. The longstanding conflict in Chechnya would fall under a “peripheral” insurgency. Another form of peripheral rebellion that tended to last a long time was what Fearon referred to as “Sons of the Soil” dynamics. These rebellions tended to last longer than 20 years and are when an ethnic minority and the state clash over land or natural resources. Civil wars fought over other factors tended to last about 5 years on average. An outlier to this class of rebellions lasting for a long time was what occurred throughout the Soviet Union when it dissolved. The civil wars and revolutions that occurred in Eastern Europe

following the fall of the Soviet Union were shorter than any other region in the world (Fearon, 281). This research helps to provide an indicator of how long a revolution in a particular area will probably last. Based on the elements described in the article, the Arab Spring revolutions would fall under the popular revolution/civil conflict category and would tend to last for a shorter period of time.

The 3rd type is the social revolution. The Iranian revolution was one of the most complex revolutions of the 20th century (Aminah and Eisenstadt, 130). The Iranian revolution was a complex restructuring of politics and society and shared many common characteristics with the other great revolutions that have occurred throughout human history such as Russia and France. Many basic characteristics describe a revolution: “new principles of political legitimization, changes in class structures, closely connected within new modes of political economy, the promulgation of a distinct cosmology, and the concomitant establishment of its ‘modern’ institutional regime” (135). This last one plays an important and distinct role in the Iranian evolution. One part of the society wanted to modernize their government by removing the Shah and replace it with a parliament and/or presidency. This was a completely new idea in Islamic society because it emphasized such things as equality and the general public having an opportunity to participate in the government. Democracy was a foreign idea to this part of the world and provided a stark change from the decades of colonial and monarchical rule that preceded it. Another faction sought a return to traditional social and religious values. It would also provide a precursor to successful and unsuccessful revolutions that would follow

throughout the Islamic world as its roots were in ideology, social class, and the economy. One of the biggest methods that emerged through this particular revolution had to do with violence against the state. The revolutionaries perpetrated many acts of civil disobedience in an effort to disrupt the power of the Shah. While the Egyptian revolution took a lot of its ideas from the Iranian Revolution, it did not reach such levels of violence.

The types of conflict that occur are important to the duration of the struggle. Nonetheless, there are many factors that affect their outcome. Violence in a revolution, on the part of the government or opposition, can lead to massive civilian casualties. In Iran, there was guerilla warfare. Nonetheless, Abrahamian (32) described how a crowd of protestors plays a major role in revolutions. This is especially true if they are able to remain non-violent. Even when revolutions turn violent, it is important for the protestors to target property as opposed to people. When violence breaks out against people, it gives the authoritarian regime more leeway to use repressive force. Another important thing in staging mass non-violent protests to try and overthrow a government is to have all sorts of different population groups represented. In the Iranian revolution, the opposition was represented by people organizing at schools, mosques, and other places of social gathering around the country. The reason this informal gathering of protestors is important is that the organization comes from the ground up, and not the top down (Abrahamian, 32). This way the revolution remains a revolution of the common people.

The armed forces also play a huge role in whether or not a revolution succeeds or fails. Samuel Huntington wrote in his book *The Third Wave* that, “the military are the ultimate support of regimes. If they withdraw their support, if they carry out a coup against the regime, or if they refuse to use force against those who threaten to overthrow the regime, then the regime falls” (144). When the military sides with the regime, they are usually able to crush the opposition quickly. Some notable examples occurred in Greece in 1973, Burma in 1988, and most notably, China in 1989.

Even if a citizen feels aggrieved and repressed by the government, the everyday citizens are unlikely to partake in the demonstrations if they feel that the state will violently suppress their protests (Mason, 163). The Tiananmen Square protests of 1989 were a result of everyday citizens looking at the past results of civil disobedience. In protests that occurred in 1978 and 1986, the government response had been fairly mild. This set the stage for a large number of protests to organize in 1989 across the entire country. The protests reached over 1 million people in Tiananmen Square by May 18th and 19th of 1989 (Wudan, 1989). A few weeks later, the People’s Liberation Army entered the square and began to forcibly remove the protestors. It was estimated that 2600 people were killed and countless others injured, maimed, and arrested. The drastic and vicious response by the PLA caught the participants in the rallies off guard and the revolution that they had hoped to incite peacefully had quickly been crushed. This analysis by Wudan goes to illustrate an important point. If a revolution is well organized and participated in by around a million people, it still can fall victim to the powers of the military. In today’s society,

the military would have to act quickly to quell such acts of protest because the response of the international community would be much faster than it was in 1989. The response of the PLA also quelled any major protest from happening for the next decade. This showed that a proper use of force, albeit tragic and violent, could crush even a demonstration as large as the one that took place in 1989.

The attempted Syrian revolution has run into a similar problem that plagued the failed Chinese Revolution of 1989. The Syrian government responded in full force and has participated in the torture of Syrian citizens. While this was done in Egypt to some extent, the Syrian government has been able to do it in a way that was far more ruthless and effective in curtailing the popular uprising. Outside nations have condemned the use of violence in Syria but the government is unmoved by the appeals of other nations. By being able to keep tabs on its citizens, the Syrian government is able to repress the revolution attempts. In an article in *The New Yorker*, Jon Anderson said, "The Baath Party has held power since 1963, in large part by maintaining aggressive domestic surveillance.. Syria is one of the most insidious police states in the world, modeled on the old East Germany, with a pervasive network of informants" (2011). Thus, even if revolutionaries are able to organize and protest, the government may be much more skilled in the art of keeping its citizens under its power through a gamut of different methods such as torture, violence, and surveillance.

There have been many revolutions that have occurred in post-Soviet bloc countries since its demise in the early 90s. Some were successful, while others were unable to successfully overthrow the ruling party. A particularly interesting case study

is Azerbaijan, which failed to democratize. Michael McFaul asked the question, what made Azerbaijan unsuccessful? He pointed out that there are six factors that lead to a successful revolution:

- A semi-autocratic rather than fully autocratic regime
- An unpopular incumbent.
- A united, organized opposition.
- The ability of independent media to quickly drive home the point that voting results were falsified.
- A political opposition capable of mobilizing thousands of citizens to protest electoral fraud.
- Divisions among the regime's coercive forces. (McFaul, 2005).

McFaul described how this related to the situation in Azerbaijan. They did not meet many of these requirements. While the incumbent was unpopular, there were many fragmented groups fighting amongst each other. However, the biggest factor in preventing a revolution from occurring is if the population has a general indifference for who controls power. The people of Azerbaijan believed that the opposition parties would be no better than the current parties and only wanted to gain power so they could control the countries rich oil reserves. Thus, they were not able to rally to a common cause and plans for a revolution fizzled.

There have been general theories about why revolutions have occurred over the years and people have attempted to theorize why this is the case. A common sentiment that was argued was that if people are living in misery, it will breed revolt.

However, (Gurr, 1968) discussed how high levels of oppression and misery can be accepted if they are expected as one's natural lot of life. These would be more common in civilizations that do not have access to other cultural and economic opportunities. However, once they come in contact with other societies or experience rapid economic growth, the political foundation begins to crumble. Once people see that they can have greater political participation, they will demand it. If this participation is denied, it could lead to revolutions and revolts. This was demonstrated in both the French and American Revolutions. Gurr described that some revolutions do not occur simply because the people cannot conceive of anything different. This is becoming less and less frequent as the world continues to globalize and technology advances.

It is important to take into account more than just the government when looking at why a revolution occurs. While the government plays an integral role in the society, there are other factors that could cause citizens to plan a revolution. There have been two causes of revolutions that have appeared over and over again in an urban setting. These are the cost of food, and the availability of employment (Goldstone, 1999). These things occur when there is an influx in population. Thus, when the government is viewed as not being able to accommodate the needs of its citizens, civil unrest begins to foment and the seeds of revolution start to grow. However, it is important to note that the urban riots and revolts cannot make a revolution; it needs to spread out into the rural areas of the country as well and encompass all aspects of a society in order to be successful. Now that the causes of

the revolutions have been looked at it, the focus shifts to the democratization effort and what makes a country successful at achieving it. The people have overthrown the current government. They now want a say in it.

Religion and Muslim Democracies

Whenever a new democracy is founded, religion often plays some role in process. While in the United States, there is a separation of church and state, religion still pervades politics frequently. In other countries, religion plays an even larger role in democratic regimes. Alfred Stepan (2000) delved into the effects religion has played in democracies throughout the world in his article “Religion, Democracy, and the Twin Tolerations”. The twin tolerations are defined as the minimal boundaries of freedom of action that must somehow be crafted for political institutions with religion authorities and for religious individuals and groups with political institutions. There have been many religious based democratic parties that have ruled in Western European countries over the last century. This is not an issue solely related to non-Western countries. It has remained a conflict in all countries of what the role of religion in the polity should be. Stepan uses examples of situations where Muslim democracies have been successful. Taiwan and South Korea have used aspects of Confucianism to deepen democracy throughout their respective countries. It has been a common sentiment echoed throughout the academic community that Islamic countries would be unable to foster a democracy with their deeply held religious beliefs. Stepan argued to the contrary. He discussed how there are examples of Islamic countries being able to find a balance between the two. His primary example

is that of Indonesia. In Indonesia, Muslim identities are often moderate, syncretic, and pluralistic. In addition, women have a lot of personal freedoms as well. This counters the idea that democracy cannot be sustained in Islamic countries because fundamentalist groups will win the elections and undermine the process. Historically speaking, the fundamentalist parties have tended to do poorly in democratic elections in Muslim countries.

Throughout history, democracy has been considered incompatible with Muslim societies. Filali-Ansary (1999) touches on this when he discussed the history of Muslim societies. The past most relevant in Muslim society is the 19th century encounter of Muslims with the modernizing West. The common view gained during this time was of “Muslim Exceptionalism”, which is based on two assumptions. First, the past is ever present and is much more determining than present-day conditions. Second, the character of Muslim societies has been determined by a specific and remote period in their past during which their social and political order that continues to guide them was established. Muslim societies viewed democracy as a strictly Western idea and therefore rejected it. There was opposition in the minds of Muslims between the system of belief and the social order that they inherited and lived in, and on the other, the secularist alternative adopted by the Europeans. By adopting this secularist belief, it was believed to be abandoning Islam as a whole. Thus, the popular belief in the academic community was that Muslim societies believed they could either partake in Islam or democracy but not both. This is why Islam has proved to be the religion most opposed to not only secularization, but also modernity in general.

This begs the question as to why there has been this polarization between Islam and democracy in the academic community for so many years. Filali-Ansary states that it rests on two main prejudices: First, Islam is a system and should be treated as a structure of rules. The second is based on a confusion of Islam as a religion and Islam as a civilization. Islam has been seen as a set of eternal rules, standing over society and history, to be used as a standard for judging reality and behavior. Thus, there is no need for democracy in these societies. Nonetheless, secularization has been occurring in Muslim societies. The attitudes towards democracy have been shifting. A contemporary philosopher, Mohamed Abed Jabri stated, “that democracy is the only principle of political legitimacy which is acceptable in Muslim societies.” The general idea that is being made is that this newfound support for democracy in Muslim societies is changing as the world changes. Thus, Muslim societies are much more adaptive than the academic community originally thought. People in these societies are beginning to see a realistic recognition that democracy responds to the needs of Muslim societies and it is the only alternative that makes possible the peaceful and rational handling of public affairs.

It is clear that a shift is being made towards Muslim democratic societies. However, this leaves a lot of unanswered questions as to what this means. Vali Nasr (2005) described what has been occurring throughout Muslim democratic countries. Since the early 90s, political openings have emerged in Muslim dominated countries that have resulted in a democratic process. This has led to an array of different parties forming in order to gain power democratically. One such type of party is the Muslim

Democrats. They view political life with a pragmatic eye and have begun the integration of Muslim religious values into their political platforms. On the other side of the coin, remains the Islamist groups who view democracy as a tool or tactic that can be used in the formation of an Islamist state. An example of one of these groups is the Muslim Brotherhood who has remained active in many countries throughout the Arab Spring. These groups tend to be overly repressive of civil liberties and freedoms. In the successful Muslim democracies that Nasr studied, the winning parties tended to be groups in between these two. Successful parties will be those that integrate Muslim values and moderate Islamic politics that go beyond religious concerns. In many Muslim societies, there are both secular and Christian minorities that need their concerns heard and dealt with. Thus, the parties that avoid alienating different groups of the population tend to be the most successful over time. Parties must make compromises and pragmatic decisions to maximize their own and their constituents' interest under democratic rules.

Nasr also points out that there were still many Muslim countries that do not partake in democracy. He discussed three interconnected factors that needed to be in place to allow democracy to occur in a Muslim society. This occurred in societies in which the military remained a powerful player, the private sector has been developed and matters, and there is a healthy competition over votes. Muslim democracy provides a model for pragmatic change. This change will bring about more liberal Islamic thought and practice.

Conditions Favorable and Unfavorable to Democracy

Democracies in their infancies face a lot of risks as they are attempting to establish their legitimacy. The choices that they make early in the process will go a long way in establishing a system that can not only be sustainable, but stay close to its democratic values. However, a problem has been emerging the last few decades that has infringed on democracy without getting rid of it as a whole. Steven Levitsky and Lucan Way (2002) refer to this problem as “Competitive Authoritarianism.” The definition that they provide for competitive authoritarianism is: democratic institutions are widely viewed as the principal means of obtaining and exercising authority yet people in power fail to meet the minimum standards for democracy. Thus, the regime is both a diminished form of democracy and a diminished form of authoritarianism. The democratic violations are serious enough and frequent enough to create an uneven playing field between the government and opposition. Nonetheless, they are unable to make the shift to complete authoritarianism, as they can manipulate democratic rules, but are unable to get rid of them entirely. There are many regimes throughout the world that partake in this form of government, Iran and pre-revolution Egypt to name a few. The main point that the two authors make is that the removal of an autocratic ruler creates an opportunity for change; it does not ensure the change. Many fledgling democracies have run into this scenario and have failed in their initial democratic experiments.

Democracy is a form of government that many countries attempt to accomplish. However, there are a lot of differences between democratic countries.

This stark contrast is seen between Western and non-Western democratic countries. Russell Bova (1997) posits that this has to do with a cultural connection. The connection between democracy and human rights and liberties constitutes the most powerful argument in favor of a democratic government. Nonetheless, as the number of democratic countries continues to rise around the world, the amount of freedom in the world is deteriorating. This suggests that a lot of the democracies that are being formed lack the human rights and liberties that are supposed to be synonymous with a democratic society. Bova states that to truly be a democratic country, they must meet two conditions: contestation and participation. Contestation assumes that significant political decision makers are elected via competition among multiple candidates and parties that allows for some meaningful degree of voter choice. Meanwhile, participation assumes that all adult members of the political community have rights to participate in the political process. There are many “democratic” countries in the world that take liberties with these two conditions and have been considered “illiberal democracies.” As democracy increases throughout the world, the gap between rights in western countries and non-western countries has only grown. The countries with the best human rights records are not only disproportionately Western but also disproportionately wealthy. The crucial intervening variable in all of this tends to be culture as it pertains to human rights. The Western democracies tend to have a higher standard of human rights while the poorer, non-Western democracies tend to not only violate more human rights, but also be newly developed democracies.

Countries have attempted to democratize for numerous years. However, some are more successful than others. Adam Przeworski (1996) has done a lot of research into what conditions need to be present in order for democracy to both emerge and take hold. Countries looking to democratize within a year should have these conditions present already: affluence, growing with moderate inflation, declining inequality, a favorable international climate, and parliamentary institutions. The greater a country's per capita income, the greater the chances of democracy succeeding are. Affluence is directly tied to a country's ability to democratize. Thus, as long as the economy is rapidly improving, democracy can succeed in poor countries. Larry Diamond (1990) discussed that in order for democracy to be successful; the income inequality must decline over time. Many revolutions occur because of economic problems, but they will not succeed without a plan to deal with the current problems.

Diamond (1990) also discussed factors that make democracies endure. Democracy is often the most widely admired form of government. Thus, it tends to be what a large percentage of revolutionaries attempt to instill. Nonetheless, it is the hardest to maintain and that is where problems emerge. It requires a minimum amount of coercion and the maximum amount of consent. This is a complete turnaround from the majority of regimes that rule before the revolutions and provides a completely different set of problems. Diamond posits that democracy requires conflict, but not too much. There must be competition but only within carefully defined and universally accepted boundaries. Thus, the revolutionaries who attempt to gain control need to pursue policies that are consistent and pragmatic to the population. The skill through

which policies are implemented become much more important than what kind of government is in effect. This becomes increasingly important for countries that shifted from authoritarianism to democracy, as the infancy stages need to be carefully handled. Diamond also discusses four principal mechanisms for managing ethnicity politically within a democratic framework: federalism, proportionality in the distribution of resources and power, minority rights, and sharing or rotation of power. Many groups may unite to a common cause of overthrowing the authoritarian ruler, but these groups may splinter once they have accomplished their goal. A balancing act is essential to leading to a successful democracy.

It is important to know how to build a democracy that can include so many different ethnicities and social groups. Arend Lijphart (2004) provides an excellent guide for how one can do this in his article “Constitutional Design for Divided Societies”. If handled incorrectly, deep societal divisions can prove to be fatal to democracies. In a divided society, it is crucial to have a broadly representative legislature so one group does not dominate the process. In a parliamentary system, it also eliminates the need for a president. In newly formed democracies, a president can wield too much power and the risk is much higher of falling back into authoritarianism. Thus, it is essential that broad representation of communal groups be in both politics, and all other aspects of society.

Conclusion

The amount of research done on both revolutions and the subsequent democratization process has been extensive. The primary focus of most research

involves large structural, political, and societal questions about why revolutions were successful and what can lead to a successful democracy. Nonetheless, there has been little to no research done on looking at a democratic revolution through the lens of pragmatic humanism. A democratic revolution is only as strong as the people within it and pragmatic humanism emphasizes the power that people can have. By looking at it through this lens, it will provide a new way to look at democratic revolutions and how they are able to occur. This research will provide valuable insight into how revolutionaries must go through many different methods before they are able to successfully accomplish what they want. Overthrowing a government and installing a form of government that is completely alien to its citizenry is no easy task. Thus, the contributions made by different individuals and groups prove to be at the center of whether or not they are successfully able to accomplish it. It is with the previous research in mind that the Egyptian democratic revolution must be looked at through pragmatic humanism.

Chapter 3: Pragmatic Humanism

Our Human Truths was a collection of essays published by Schiller's wife after he had died. It contained many published and unpublished works. One of his essays in that book, "The Humanistic View of Life" (1935) stated an idea that was paramount to his overall idea of pragmatism: "Common sense has always realized that man's essential business is to effect the best possible adjustment to guard against the evils that beset him; and we are fully entitled to experiment with any hypothesis that looks likely to be effective" (Schiller, 20). These essays helped to give an idea of what pragmatic humanism was. In laymen's terms, it would be to experiment until one goes about accomplishing the best possible reality for oneself. He discussed pragmatic humanism throughout his works to show how it could actually be used as a method. Pragmatism needed to consist of actions, not only discussion. His pragmatic humanism was a larger application of the ideas that were being discussed about pragmatism at the time. Schiller was beginning to delve into some pragmatic ideas in the earlier part of his career with his book, *Riddles of the Sphinx*. In this book, he argued that the "world can only be properly understood if we regard it as if process of evolution. And its evolution takes place in a finite period of time; i.e., the world must have had a beginning and will have an end. The goal of this process, which will some day be reached, is a perfect society of perfect individuals" (Waterlow, 107). One can see the beginning of his idea of human beings attaining greater good through an experimental process in this work.

Nonetheless, it was not until he seriously read William James that he began to use the pragmatism and humanism labels. In order to get a solid foundation, it is important to discuss some of James' ideas that influenced Schiller. One of James' most famous works is "The Will to Believe" (1897). The author stated, "We do not know if there is any right one (choice). What must we do? Be strong and of good courage. Act for the best, hope for the best and take what comes" (James 208). The reason James made this observation was to show how people cannot chide someone for having a different belief from them. They must make sure that they make a decision that they believe to be the most practical. Even if they end up being incorrect, it is better than having made no decision at all. In James' writing, one can see some of the ideas that would lead Schiller to his pragmatic humanism. James was advocating for people trying to make the most practical decision even if ended up being wrong. Schiller would later continue off of this and say that if the decision was wrong, then the person should experiment with all available methods until they can come to a satisfactory result.

Schiller wanted to expand past the idea that truths merely have to have practical consequences. Schiller showed that a definition of what pragmatism was did not have to be concrete. Schiller viewed truth as an evolving concern subject to new information and action. Schiller viewed pragmatism more as a method as opposed to a metaphysic, meaning that it is a "conscious application to epistemology of a teleological psychology" (Abel, 10). This gets at a point that was quite radical at the time. Men like Schiller and James were putting out ideas that opposed the thoughts of

the philosophical community. The primary group that Schiller was arguing against was a group of philosophers known as Absolute Idealists. One Absolute Idealist whom the pragmatists took umbrage with was F.H. Bradley. In his essay, “The General Nature of Reality” (1891), Bradley described reality as experience, and that this experience can only be gained by sentient beings. He described the absolute as something that is theoretically harmonious and thus its elements must not collide. A particular example that Bradley gave in his essay was the issue of pain. Bradley mentioned that even something as pain fit harmoniously into the absolute. However, if everything in the absolute was said to be harmonious, how could it possibly account for human beings who are known to do things that inflict pain, despair, and other actions that look to disrupt that harmony.

Schiller begins to discuss how individual desires can be constructed in reality in his “Axioms as Postulates” (1902). This article was written as a reply to Dickinson Miller who had in turn responded to an article written by William James. The philosophers of the time were known to challenge each other’s arguments and put forth new ideas through academic journals. In this particular article Schiller stated, “We must assume that we can obtain what we want, if only we try skillfully enough. A failure only proves that the obstacles would not yield to the method employed: it cannot extinguish the hope that by *trying again* by other methods, they could finally be overcome” (61). This was one of Schiller’s earliest and most famous works in regard to proto-pragmatism. This was where he began discussing aspects of what eventually became his pragmatic humanism. In discussing the extent of the world’s

plasticity, Schiller stated, “it is not known a priori, but must be found out by trying. Now in trying we can never start with recognition of rigid limits and insuperable obstacles. For if we believed them such, it would be no use in trying” (61). The idea that Schiller stated was that the only way one can find out if an idea will work is through testing it and attempting to determine if it can be used in a way that is beneficial to the individual.

Schiller admitted that there are pre-existing facts in reality separate from the individual. However, the point that Schiller was trying to make was that human beings are constantly changing and developing meaning for those facts. He stated, “The growth of experience is continually transfiguring our ‘facts’ for us, and it is only by an ex post facto fiction that we declare them to be all along what they have *come to mean for us*” (Schiller 62). Schiller also described this idea of facts in his work a few years later when he stated in ‘In Defence of Humanism’ (1904) “Fact will be plastic, and responsive to our will” (531). The “fact” that he reiterates this point throughout his different works emphasizes how important the idea of humans molding the reality they desire is to Schiller’s pragmatic humanism.

When discussing how one can mold their reality, Schiller ties it in with the making of truth. He published *Studies in Humanism*, which included essays that had been previously released in various journals. In his essay “The Making of Reality” (1906) he stated, “It follows that the making of truth is also in a very real sense a making of reality. In validating our claims to truth we really discover realities. And we really transform them by our cognitive efforts thereby proving our desires and ideas to

be real forces in shaping our world” (425). The individual must attempt to create such a reality in order to improve their lives and shape the reality they want. This goes to show that applying pragmatic humanism is not merely something that is black or white, good or bad. It varies based on each individual’s conception of what the best possible reality for him or her is. Schiller gets at this idea in his essay “The Making of Truth” (1906) when he discussed that:

Thus we become and more clearly conscious of our ends and more and more definite in referring our goods to them. But this reference is rarely or never carried through completely because our nature is never fully harmonized. And so our desires may continue to hanker after goods, which our reason cannot sanction as conducive to our ends, or our intelligence may fail to find the good means to our ends, and be deceived by current valuations of goods which are really evils. (191)

Reuben Abel, who wrote *The Pragmatic Humanism of F.C.S. Schiller* discussed Schiller’s humanism and related it to how Schiller viewed the world. Abel summed up Schiller’s core beliefs when he wrote; “Schiller’s core belief is the conviction that acts and thoughts are irreducibly the products of individual human beings and are therefore inescapably colored by the needs, desires, and purposes of men” (Abel, 8). The point that he was making is that our knowledge is evolutionary and predicated on advancing our interests. Truth is determined through our experience. Our experience is changing our knowledge based on what the best possible outcome will be. This illustrates how important this philosophy is in viewing the situation in

world events because it shows the power that individuals can possess if they try to change a situation to better suit their reality.

These considerations allow a lot of room for gray area within Schiller's pragmatic humanism. A person may think that if they believe their ends are justified, they will attempt to get there by any means necessary. By doing this, the application of pragmatic humanism can be used as an excuse to do terrible things, i.e. the Holocaust or the genocide in the Sudan. Even within F.C.S Schiller's life, he advocated eugenics under the principles of his pragmatic humanism. It is important to note here that Schiller's pragmatic humanism and Schiller himself are two different entities. Schiller was a proponent of using the best possible information at the time. Thus, in the 1930s and 1940s, a person could make a compelling argument that eugenics was justifiable through pragmatic humanism. While some people today may still hold to this view, the eugenic movement lost its mass support because people determined that its main truths of racial dominance and forced sterilization were devalued over time. The value of these truths was shown to be not good enough, and thus the movement lost support. Following in James' lead, Schiller mentioned how one cannot merely will something into existence, it has to be tested and confirmed based on subsequent experience and on interaction with others in the social realm. It is important to realize that human beings are unpredictable creatures and may attempt to make an ideal reality that is good for them but a great burden for everyone else. Although Schiller advocated for eugenics, and it attained some success in the early

part of the 20th century, it eventually was repudiated within the social realm. Eugenics was shown to be bad through a consequence of its testing.

Hosni Mubarak also assumed that the reality he was creating for Egypt was a good one but as was shown throughout the revolution, many people disagreed with his interpretation of the best possible reality. Mubarak failed to adapt and this led to his downfall. While the protestors used the new technology to rally around each other and get out information, Mubarak relied on the same methods that had kept him in power for three decades, violence and corruption. Thus, as the protestors continued to adapt, Mubarak did not and the protestors were able to eventually overthrow him. To be fair, their ability to overthrow him guarantees nothing. However, they have reshuffled the deck that had been stacked against them for over half a century and now have an opportunity to create a better future. There are still many challenges that remain. Since the overthrow of Mubarak, the Egyptians have broken down across political, social, cultural, and religious lines. Thus, they must continue to experiment and try different hypotheses in order to accomplish the goals of more freedoms that many of the protestors were calling for throughout the period of study in this thesis.

The normative goal of freedom is an essential aspect of pragmatic humanism. Free will is often referred to in a metaphysical sense but in many cases it is one human denying the other human that freedom. Schiller stated in his essay “Freedom” (1906) in *Studies in Humanism*, “We shall do well not to think too meanly of our powers, but to reflect rather on the responsibilities involved even in our most trivial choices. If we can really make our ‘fate’ and remake our world, it behooves us to make sure that

they shall not be made amiss” (412). Schiller gets at the idea of morality here within his pragmatic humanism. Any person can attempt to remake their reality at the cost of denying numerous others’ free will, but that is not what Schiller advocated. He advocated for the individual to be responsible in their decisions and choices in an effort to not go amiss in their better reality. On the surface, pragmatic humanism looks as though it could justify anything if the individual wanted it. As mentioned previously, Schiller supported eugenics, which denied many people basic freedoms. There are also many countries in Africa who have been ruled by repressive dictators for many years. The consequences of their actions for themselves are good. They are able to remain in power. However, the rest of the country falls under the shroud of a repressive dictator and are denied many liberties and freedoms.

Egypt and Tunisia are examples of success, but sometimes actions by authoritarian dictators goes unpunished for many years. When one digs deeper though, he or she can see that pragmatic humanism advocated responsibility in this remolding of reality, which helps to guard against the claim that pragmatic humanism is morally ambiguous. Mubarak and the protestors were trying to create, or in Mubarak’s case, continue, the best possible reality. However, the goal of the Egyptian people was to gain the opportunity for a better future through experimentation. Meanwhile, Mubarak wanted to remain in power for his own selfish means. This begs the question of what is right and wrong. It is unfair to say that Mubarak was wrong and the protestors were wrong in the absolute sense. Thus, when one looks at the difference between right and wrong, it must be looked at as a matter of degrees. The

protestors' overall goals were far more on the right side of the spectrum than Mubarak's. However, Mubarak's regime did keep the country relatively stable and preserved a peace with Israel. Thus, one must walk a moral tightrope when delineating between good and bad, right and wrong.

The idea that one could overthrow a dictator was not a revolutionary idea. Many countries have succeeded and others still have failed in the past. However, each country is its own entity. Certain factors made the people of the Arab Spring decide that 2011 was the right set of circumstances to take the ideas, and turn them into action. The advent of Facebook and Twitter allowed enough individuals to see that they were not alone in their desires and goals. Thus, these individuals' ideas rose to the socially accepted truths for Egypt in the early part of 2011. The Egyptian citizens decided that the risks were no longer greater than the rewards. Once they came to this realization, they were able to act and show how pragmatic humanism can be applied today in both an individual and a social context.

Critiques of Pragmatic Humanism

While Schiller's primary works describing his views on pragmatic humanism are important, it is equally important to see how other scholars of the time viewed his work. Some of the most vocal people on Schiller's pragmatic humanism were some of the American pragmatists he had gotten close to over the years. Charles Peirce and William James understood Schiller and respected his pragmatic humanism but did have different opinions on its place. Peirce wrote, "The brilliant and marvelous human thinker (Schiller) who extends to the philosophic world a cup of nectar

stimulant in his beautiful humanism, seems to occupy a ground of his own” (Abel, 9). While complimentary of Schiller, it is clear that Schiller’s take does have stark differences from the ideas of Peirce. Peirce wrote an article entitled, “What Pragmatism Is”. In the article he begins to get at some of his discrepancies and issues with Schiller. He stated,

Much as the writer has gained from the perusal of what other pragmatists have written, he still thinks there is a decisive advantage in his original conception of the doctrine. From this original form every truth that follows from any of the other forms can be deduced, while some errors can be avoided into which other pragmatists have fallen. The original view appears, too, to be a more compact and unitary conception than the others. But its capital merit, in the writer's eyes, is that it more readily connects itself with a critical proof of its truth (Peirce, 1905).

Peirce’s comments show that while he views Schiller’s pragmatic humanism as a different variety, he does not see it as an advanced form of either his or James’ work.

There were some flaws that critics pointed out in Schiller’s pragmatic humanism. One of the strongest critiques put forth was that Schiller did not take into account the social aspects of reality and relied solely on the individual. Francis Herbert Bradley said in *On Truth and Copying* (1907) that, “In the process of humanity, we have to inquire how the individuals stand to the whole. Have both sides of the process equal reality, or if this is not so, what is the alternative? If this individuals are the final realities, what are we to say of the “together” and of the whole

process” (Bradley, 180). Bradley suggested that if each person was striving for the best possible reality, it would conflict with the collective reality. He wanted Schiller to be more specific in this regard. While this is a fair concern, it glosses over the fact that Schiller is saying that individuals can change the reality they live in, not that the collective reality is unimportant and takes a back seat. The social context comes together with individual desires in an attempt to improve one’s reality.

The second main issue pertained to what Schiller’s definition of truth actually was. James continues on discussing the idea of pragmatism as it relates to humanism in follow-up piece entitled “Humanism and Truth Once More”. Schiller discussed how people could mold their reality and truth into the most useful and beneficial situation. Other scholars like Bradley challenged Schiller’s use of the word truth in this context because they thought that truth had no place in this method. If each person were trying to mold his or her reality and truth, then what would really be true? Bradley thought that there was no clear definition of what truth was within Schiller’s method. However, James provided an explanation that dealt with the concern:

Humanism agrees to this: it is only a manner of calling truth an ideal. But humanism explicates the summarizing word 'ought ' into a mass of pragmatic motives from the midst of which our critics think that truth itself takes flight. Truth is a name of double meaning. It stands now for an abstract something defined only as that to which our thought ought to conform; and again it stands for the concrete propositions within which we believe that conformity already reigns-they being so many 'truths' (James, 1905, p. 191-92).

This idea that James posited is vital to understanding Schiller's pragmatic humanism. Different ideals of what truth is can conflict with each other and lead to revolutions, and war, as Schiller himself mentions in his work. However, James described Schiller's idea of truth and helps to give it further context. A common idea mentioned is that truth itself takes flight in pragmatic humanism. With so many different conceptions of what the ideal truth is, can there actually be one ultimate Truth? However, these critics have a very concrete and narrow definition of truth that does not encompass things such as ideals that make up a large portion of why humans act the way that they do. This is why Schiller's pragmatic humanism is a much better methodology to use to analyze the actions in Egypt because it can encompass far more things than the narrow definition of truth and pragmatism could hope to. This gets back to the point made earlier of what truth is, and what is right and wrong. In pragmatic humanism, truth is verified and tested in social contexts and are determined to be truths, half-truths, or outright lies.

Dickinson Miller also viewed Schiller's conception of truth, and pragmatism as being inconsistent. In his written correspondence with Schiller in *The Journal of Philosophy*, Miller stated,

"the empirical consequences of a belief were needed to ratify it and decided upon its value." But these words admit that the belief must already have been adopted in advance of the ratification, and that it should or may be so adopted is the doctrine of the will to believe. If he prefers to say that the proposition should be adopted, not as a belief, but as a hypothesis awaiting "the pragmatic

test," then the word "belief" in this sentence is out of place and he is not talking of the will to believe at all, but of the will to adopt and test hypotheses (Miller, 1927).

Many scholars who critiqued Schiller's work also noted what Miller said and mentioned how Schiller tended to not answer people's complaints of pragmatic humanism but bring up other issues or arguments. These critiques may have played a role on the enduring impact of Schiller's pragmatic humanism.

Source Materials

The primary source of information is tweets compiled in the book, *Tweets from Tahrir*. Some news articles are also used. The reason for using tweets is stated in the introduction of the book, "They provide a first-hand, real-time accounts of events, and as testimony to the significant role that Twitter and other social media played in our events" (14). As our society gets more and more globalized, Twitter will provide the avenue for our primary accounts of these historic events and this is the primary reason why they will be used in the analysis of both the events that took place in Egypt, and their correlation to pragmatic humanism. It can also be used as a powerful weapon in social movements to get information out to the public and express ideas and strategies on a larger scale. This is why the object of study is Twitter and how it was part of the effort to make change.

Twitter is a rather new invention but it already provides many advantages over normal news coverage. The benefit of Twitter is that, "Twitter works best in situations where the story is changing so fast that the mainstream media cannot

assemble all the facts at once” (Farhi, 2009). It can also provide access to areas where western journalists cannot go. During the Egyptian revolution, foreign journalists were being beaten and attacked if they went out in the streets. Thus, the role of Twitter proved to be a safer way of receiving information about the events that occurred. Twitter is immensely important because it allows people to get primary sources on an event that is occurring. Instead of having a Western Journalist tell one about what they are seeing, the reader is getting it first hand from the person participating in the event. This primary connection can help to create a sense of community. If a user sees that there are many protestors in the square from a tweet, they are more likely to go down and participate with the rest of the community. Twitter helped build this community throughout Egypt and was one of the reason why the number of protestors grew so large.

There were so many different tweets that came out throughout the revolution that it must be limited it to the ones found throughout *Tweets from Tahrir*. While every tweet does not correlate with the tenets of pragmatic humanism, a majority of them do. The tweets used will be from the time period of days before the revolution started, to its culmination when Mubarak officially resigned the presidency. All of the tweets are from Egyptians inside Cairo during the events. They are also only the tweets that are in English. They did not include the Arabic tweets in the book. However, many people tweeted in English within the city and were able to provide a narrative of the events as they unfolded. The tweets chosen to be used in the analysis provide a very diverse set of people. One person was an established journalist, while

another a blogger. Some were men, and some were women. Although they are connected by the fact that they all tweeted in English, they come from many different backgrounds. Many of them were described, as social revolutionaries while some were journalists who have written books. A brief description will be given of the more prominent tweeters used in this analysis. The individual is crucial to pragmatic humanism and this is why more than just a Twitter handle should describe them. This time period provides a glimpse at how quickly (less than a month) that the Egyptians were able to completely change the reality of both their country and the region by their desire for a better life.

Twitter is an immensely important source in regards to how news and information is transmitted today. The use of Twitter alone did not provide a successful revolution for the Egyptian people. Nonetheless, it provided one of the biggest aids in ensuring that it stood a chance of success. While other news sources could only file reports on the events that occurred, Twitter provided a personal, first hand experience of the things that were going on throughout the streets. Blake Hounshell stated in his article, *The Revolution will be Tweeted*,

Already, Twitter has become an essential -- no, the essential -- tool for following and understanding the momentous changes sweeping the Arab region. It's surprisingly smart and fast -- if sometimes a little too quick on the draw -- and human where other sources feel impersonal. "I think of it as a giant speech bubble for what's happening in the world," says Riyaad Minty, head of social media at Al Jazeera (Hounshell, 2011).

The advent of an instantaneous way to get out information provided an outlet for not only the revolutionaries to express disdain for the current regime, but also effectively strategize ways to bring it down. The use of Twitter ties back into pragmatic humanism because it is this new technological advance that helps to show the world as plastic. By being able to reach other citizens so quickly, they could now act on their common cause in a way that was not possible before. Thus, the invention of Twitter has given rise for pragmatic humanism to be looked at through a new lens then it ever has been before. The method of using Twitter during this revolution shows the evolutionary aspect of pragmatic humanism. The good eventually won out against the Mubarak system because they found the best possible method for accomplishing the means to overthrow the government. Twitter was not the first method that the Egyptians tried as they had been under authoritarian rule for many decades, but it provided a new way for good to eventually win out and allow the potential of the Egyptian people to finally be allowed to grow.

Chapter 4: Analysis

The events that transpired in Egypt in the early part of 2011 paint a powerful picture of how much influence individuals can have on changing the political landscape of a country. The success of the Egyptian revolution could be attributed to many different factors that have been previous measuring sticks for achievements in past revolutions. However, the purpose of this analysis is to look at the events that transpired in Egypt through the lens of pragmatic humanism. Through looking at the major tenets of pragmatic humanism and examining them via tweets submitted at the time of upheaval in Egypt, the analysis shows that when individual desires and social context come together, they could change the reality that exists.

Tenet 1

The first major tenet of pragmatic humanism involves one's ability to change one's circumstance. As Schiller stated, *"The world is plastic and may be moulded by our wishes, if only we are determined to give effect to them."*

Schiller first brings up this idea of the world's plasticity in his "Axioms as Postulates" (1902). The idea that the world is plastic plays an important role in the pragmatic humanism of Schiller. This idea meshes with the Egyptian citizenry's attempt to remold their world into what they want it to be. They want a world where they are no longer ruled over by an authoritarian government. They have a desire for change in the way the government is run in Egypt and also in the way people in power treat them. The access to Twitter has opened up possibilities for the Egyptians that were not possible in the past. This is why a common theme amongst the tweets was

about how they would persevere in the face of adversity. The revolution would be what the citizens make of it. A tweet that exemplifies this point stated:

- Gsquare86 1/25/11 Tomorrow will be what we make it to be, so let's make it an up-rise the police cant forget #Jan25.

Gsquare86's real name is Gigi Ibrahim. She was one of the most prominent female tweeters during the revolution. She runs a blog called the angry Egyptian and is a self-proclaimed revolutionary socialist. Her activity throughout the revolution and beyond shows how women are having an enormous impact in a society that has long restricted their rights. The idea that she is putting forth is that the Egyptian people can no longer be passive in the events that occur in their country. The general population can participate in this uprising and have it make a dramatic impact on the landscape of their country. By actively engaging the current regime, they are getting the message out there that they will be the ones remolding Egypt. It will no longer be in the hands of a few elites. Even when the protestors were faced with violence, they still discussed how they would persevere through it:

- Travellerw 1/25/11: *Police throw rocks @ demonstrtrrs while we raised our arms. We're unarmed; they're in full gear. We are strong. They're weak.*
#Jan25 #Egypt

The government forces were attempting to break the revolutionaries resolve in an attempt to disperse the protest. However, they were willing to endure this in an effort to get the current government out of power. Many obstacles emerged throughout the period of protests but as Schiller stated, "Now in trying we can never

start with a recognition of rigid limits and insuperable obstacles. Hence we must assume we can obtain what we want, if only we try skillfully and perseveringly enough” (62). The Egyptians had endured 30 years of harsh rule by Mubarak when they began to take to the streets and protest. They went in it with the attitude that they would continue on until they got what they wanted. The protestors kept up this idea of persistence and perseverance over Twitter as well. In addition to the ideas that the tweet puts forth, it is also important to look at some of the Twitter names. The man below, Sandmonkey is trying to evoke a reaction within the context of his Twitter handle. Sandmonkey would seem to be a derogatory term for an Arab person. His real name is Mahmoud Salem and he is a journalist for the Daily News of Egypt. It is Egypt’s only independently run English newspaper.

- Sandmonkey: 1/26/11: Please remember, it took a month of protests 4 Tunis revolution to succeed. Persistence is everything #Jan25.

Egyptians came in with the understanding that overthrowing a government of 30 years would not be an easy task. They had to be willing to deal with the hardships, violence, and the attempts of the government to intimidate them. This is why they were preaching these ideas over Twitter. Even when things got bleak, the protestors needed to keep their feelings of hope strong and to reiterate their “wishes”. They can succeed if only they continued to fight for freedom and try different methods. In keeping with this idea, it was important for the Egyptians to realize that one day of mass protests would not be enough to overthrow the regime. They would need to continue their demonstrations and gatherings over a prolonged period. As they

continued demonstrations, the government began to make more and more concessions until Mubarak finally stepped down. They were able to keep their activities going throughout Cairo even when there was not a massive protest scheduled. The tweets that follow are examples of how people began to see at the beginning of the revolution the real possibility of being able to mold Egypt.

- Sandmonkey 1/26/11: The revolt continues. Egypt won't stop, won't give in. This isn't a one day event. It's a wave. It won't stop. #jan25 (51)
- Gsquare88 1/26/11: Revolution is keeping me sleepless thinking, anticipating, dreaming and reflecting, I want to wake up to a better and free #Egypt (52)

Many Egyptians had held grievances against the Mubarak government for years. Nonetheless, they feared what would happen if they tried to revolt against the regime. The Mubarak regime was well known for both its oppression and its ability to instill fear in the population. The social context that made up the Arab Spring made its way from Tunisia into Egypt. This idea allowed the people of Egypt to fight for something that they had wanted for a long time and achieve the opportunity to pursue a democratic state. These previous tweets show a sense of optimism that had been absent throughout the streets of Cairo for a long time.

Tenet 2

“Common Sense has always realized that man's essential business is to effect the best possible adjustment to guard against the evils that beset him; and we are fully entitled to experiment with any hypothesis that looks likely to be effective”.

Schiller put forth this idea in an essay entitled “The Humanistic View of Life”. Schiller said that wishes are not enough to change one’s reality. They only provide the starting point. One must actually act on these beliefs in order to change the reality they live in. This excerpt is one of the most crucial aspects in understanding what Schiller’s pragmatic humanism entails. It follows from the previous tenet regarding wishes and determination to mold the “plastic” world. In laymen’s terms, he said that humans should try different methods in order to guard against things we view as evil, and experiment with as many different ideas that may help us in achieving these results. This is reflected in the Egyptian case. The protestors, via Twitter, tweeted numerous different ideas about how to combat the regime in an effort to spread the message that the time was now to stand up against the the Mubarak regime. Unlike any other revolution before it, it was written in the words of the people participating in it simultaneously as the revolution occurred. Twitter was used as a medium to show that many individuals shared similar desires and when this was able to mix with the social context, they were able to remake their reality. The tweets that relate to this tenet of pragmatic humanism will show the different hypotheses that the revolutionaries tried in an effort to bring about this new reality.

- GSquare86 1/17/11: A MAN IN EGYPT SET HIMSELF ON FIRE
CHANTING AGAINST STATE SECURITY IN FRONT OF PARLIAMENT
AT 9:00 AM TODAY #Sidibouزيد #Revolution Attempt? (28)

The reason this man was willing to light himself on fire was to highlight the injustices of the current government. Before he set himself ablaze, he chanted slogans

against state security. He followed in the lead of the Tunisian street vendor who had also set himself ablaze and proved to be the spark that ignited the successful Tunisian revolution. The strategy worked in Tunisia, and the Egyptians who lit themselves on fire were attempting to accomplish that same spark. These events led to more and more people publicly voicing their grievances against the Mubarak regime.

Eventually, this led the citizenry to organize collectively and participate in a “Day of Rage” that would demonstrate how powerful the average citizen could be. The Day of Rage was the official start of the mass protests in Egypt. This sentiment was repeated across Twitter.

- Traveller W 1/25/11: Our strength is in our collective action. Egyptians, Believe in yourselves. BELIEVE IN US. #jan25 #Egypt

The idea that there were so many individuals throughout Egypt who supported the ideals of the protest was aided by the messages on Twitter. In order to accomplish success, the people of Egypt must remain strong within their collective group. Their strength is that they are all fighting for the reality of a better Egypt. Their hypothesis was that if they stay together in their protests, the government would not be able to silence them any longer. The technological advance of Twitter helped the collective groups stay connected and plan new strategies even when they are not physically together.

The idea of unity was something that reverberated throughout the entire revolution. A united Egyptian front was a rare occurrence over the last sixty years. Egyptians had often lived in a class-dominated society that divided the population.

The protesting was used as a bridge to bring all groups of the Egyptian populous together in an attempt to accomplish a similar goal of democracy and freedom. They still had many differences but realized that they needed to come together in an attempt to make a better Egypt. As the protests grew, more and more people of different backgrounds began protesting as one. Lower class and upper class, Muslims and Christians, all took part in the demonstrations together. Eventually, the Egyptian people and the army began to coexist in a way that allowed the two groups to be in the same area without violence erupting. The tweets were able to demonstrate how the different groups were coming together in order to make a new Egypt.

- Sandmonkey 1/30/11: in Tahrir now, everyone here, ppl of ALL classes, army letting us in, v peaceful #jan25 (79)
- Beleidy 1/30/11: Tahrir square is happening! People are gathering there, morale is high, army is friendly, and letting people in #jan25 Egypt (79)

This was a big step for the revolutionaries and other members supporting the cause because they were able to bring together so many different viewpoints on what should be done in an attempt to accomplish the general goal of overthrowing the regime. Schiller stated in “The Definition of Pragmatism and Humanism” that “No two men ever really think (and still less feel) alike, even when they profess allegiance to the self-same formulas...In short, despite all bigotry, a philosophy is always in the last resort of *a* life, and not life in general or in the abstract (18). Yet, the invention of Twitter began to show that regardless if one was a Christian fruit cart vendor, or was a Muslim, middle class doctor, people began to hold similar beliefs against the Mubarak

regime. This was something that would not have been able to occur 10 years earlier because the ability to communicate throughout the general population as easily and efficiently did not exist yet. Therefore, the protestors being able to come together despite class, religion, occupation, etc, proved to be a huge step in the right direction for the movement and began to show signs of a united front.

The soldiers and the general population also had a very tenuous relationship in the past. Many Egyptians viewed the soldiers as an extension of Mubarak's regime and held ill will towards them. After protesting in the streets and clamoring for change, the military and soldiers decided to side with the citizens and were attempting to protect them. The only way they were going to succeed in accomplishing their best possible adjustment was through working together and experimenting with different hypotheses in an effort to accomplish this goal.

- Beleidy 1/30/11: There were chants: The Army and people are on hand, and Peaceful Peaceful! Tahrir Square #jan25 Egypt

The idea of the Army and people becoming united would have been unheard of before the revolution occurred. The relationship with the two had been dominated by disagreements, mistrust, and violence that permeated throughout the country. This show of unity proved to be one of the most important demonstrations of the entire revolution. It allowed the protestors to know that the military would not engage the protestors in a violent effort to crush them.

Schiller posited that people should experiment with methods to guard against the evils that beset them. The evil in the eyes of the Egyptian protestors was the Mubarak

government. The Mubarak government was a system that had denied the individual Egyptian the potential to advance in his or her life. Thus, regardless if the Mubarak regime would have been successful or not, it would have still been a bad government for denying the potential of the individual. The beauty of a free society is that it allows its citizens to develop and grow stronger. This was an idea Schiller advocated in his discussions of free will and freedom. Thus, they engaged in many different actions in an effort to accomplish this. Some of these were violent while others were peaceful. It is important to note though that when they did turn violent, it tended to be directed against symbols as opposed to people. These following tweets are a few examples of some of the hypotheses they put forward in an effort to reshape their reality.

- Mosaaberizing 1/25/11: Amazing Scene at Mostafa Mahmoud. Thousands marching with Egypt flag. #Jan25

People throughout the country began waving this flag to show that they were the real Egypt. The people in the government positions did not know what it meant to be a true Egyptian, as they had grown disconnected over their thirty-year rule. 3arabawy is named Hossam and is the editor of a website called revsoc, which he publishes in Arabic.

- 3arabawy 1/25/11: Protestors in Shubra are trying to head to Tahrir Square. Protestors in downtown Cairo climb firetruck and destroy water cannon. #Jan25

By doing this, the protestors are able to inflict damage on the regime without aiming it at a particular person. This form of civil disobedience shows that the Egyptian

protestors are attempting to wreak havoc in an effort to promote their cause. They are using this as a tactic in order to gain concessions from the Mubarak regime.

- Sandmonkey 1/25/11: Charging my phone and getting water and supplies to Tahrir peeps. Do the same. Support your people. #Jan25

This support network would prove to be very beneficial and a smart tactical edge for the protestors. By having people who would be willing to help the other revolutionaries, it helped to ease the burden on the individual and allow them to protest without worrying about having to get water and supplies because other members of the group would provide them. This support network would prove vital once the revolutionaries ran into some resistance from the government.

The revolutionaries were attempting these different methods from marching in the street, to destroying water cannons on a fire truck, to getting supplies to fellow protestors for the same reason, to ensure a better Egypt. The idea that Schiller puts forth is that the world is plastic and can be molded to our desires. Thus, all of these different people are attempting to mold Egypt into the Egypt that they want it to be through different methods. Some may work, some may not work but the only way to find out is by trying.

Tenet 3

“We must assume that we can obtain what we want, if only we try skillfully enough. A failure only proves that the obstacles would not yield to the method employed: it cannot extinguish the hope that by *trying again* by other methods, they could finally be overcome.”

This tenet from Schiller's "Axioms as Postulates" begins to get at a very important part of the Egyptian revolution. The Egyptians were forced to deal with some failures and problems that required them to adapt and try other methods. The first major problem was how to deal with the violence brought on by the government. The second pertained to how Mubarak's decision to not seek re-election later in the year created a divide in the protestor's camp. Finally, the protestors had to deal with the confusion and division resulting from these new developments.

Throughout the month of the demonstrations, the Egyptian people dealt with government-sanctioned violence, both in the media and in the streets, to attempt to derail their attempt. However, one of the reasons the protestors were eventually successful was that they were able to adapt to the situation and try something else if one of their methods failed. On the first day of protesting, they were able to keep things relatively peaceful. However, as the protests continued, the pro-government supporters began to use violence as a way to intimidate the protestors and get them to flee. While the revolutionaries wanted to maintain a non-violent approach, they had to adapt in order to protect their fellow protestors and themselves. They saw that if they just protested without protecting themselves that they would be wounded and killed so they adapted and began to take some preventative measures to try and ensure success:

- Sandmonkey 1/29/11: street war in action. On nuzha street with 200 people protecting the streets from drive-by shooters. It's same all over Cairo #Jan25

- Sandmonkey 1/29/11: women carry sticks and join volunteer protection committees on the streets of Heliopolis. Ppl saluting army. It's great. #Jan25 (74)
- Beleidy 1/29/11: I'm feeling better now after seeing the response of the people on the street and their weapons #Jan25 (74)

Four days after the revolution had officially started, the protestors saw that they would need some form of protection. This led to the formation of both an armed militia described in the tweet above, and also volunteer protection committees. The government had removed the police from the streets in an attempt to cause chaos and have the protestors beg the government for a return to order. This did not happen though because of groups of protestors protecting the general population and discipline by a large majority of the people on the streets. While some people did engage in looting and crime, it was far less than the government had hoped for. Had the protestors not shifted their strategy in an attempt to stem violence against them, the government may have gotten what they wanted and it would have uprooted the first four days of success.

As Schiller mentions, people must always continue to learn from their experiences if they are going to be able to mold the plasticity of their world into their desires. Many acts of violence were perpetrated against the Egyptian people in an effort to break them. However, the majority of them stuck together in an attempt to continue to mold the changes of the political landscape within their country. When participating in protests and demonstrations, one of the most powerful weapons in maintaining hope

and determination is through the morale of the other people in the crowd. The Egyptian people were able to rebound from deaths, violence, and intimidation tactics to do this and keep morale high. Tweets from around the square made mention to the positive morale of the people even with the recent uptick in violence.

- Monasosh 2/3/11: the regime is trying all dirty tricks, arresting honest people, sexually harassing girls, setting off their thugs, and we r becoming stronger #jan25 (127)
- 3arabawy 2/3/11: this is people's power. This democracy from below. This is the most beautiful thing I have even seen in my life. (127)
- alaa 2/3/11: amazing atmosphere at Tahrir, the joy is back in the square. Massive crowd singing dancing we cannot be defeated #jan25 (127).

Although Schiller does not directly use the word resiliency, he gets at the core idea of it when he discusses how one must try again by different means if one hypothesis is not successful. This gets to one of the strongest attributes of the Egyptian people, their resiliency. This was able to allow them to remain strong and united until they have molded this new Mubarak-less Egypt into a democratic nation with freedoms and civil liberties that have been denied to them for so long. Schiller wrote, "Thus it is a methodological necessity to assume that the world is wholly plastic, i.e. to act as though we believed this, and will yield us what we want, if we persevere in wanting it" (Axioms, 61). A large portion of the protestors displayed this perseverance throughout the entire revolution

On February 2nd, the Mubarak regime unleashed one of the most violent attacks of the 18 days. The next day, the damage of the previous night's violence became clear. 10 were dead and over 1000 wounded. This required the brave Egyptians in the streets to try new methods and strategies in order to protect their fellow freedom fighters and also continue the push for a real and lasting democracy. These following tweets described how individuals took it upon themselves in an effort to guard against the "evils" that were accosting the larger population through violence and intimidation. Ashraf Kahlil is an established journalist who has been published in *Foreign Policy* and other reputable news sources. He has also published a book entitled *Liberation Square*.

- Ashrafkhalil 2/3/11: #jan25 just made narrow escape from mob in dokki. A soldier saved us (123)
- 3arabawy 2/3/11: barricades are up around the square, watchmen bang on iron bars whenever thugs approach to alert protestors (124)
- Ashrafkhalil 2/3/11: #jan25 soldier who saved us from crowd now keeping us in walled courtyard for safety. Found crew of other journo also hiding here (124)
- Nevinezaki 2/3/11: A pic I took yesterday of Christians protecting Muslims during their prayers #jan25 (124)

These excerpts describe scenes that would have seemed impossible prior to the revolution. Christians and Muslims had been fighting in Egypt for a long period of time and now they had come together and put aside their differences. They did this in

order to protect the nation against what they viewed as a far greater problem, the Mubarak regime.

On February 1st, Mubarak gave a speech announcing he would be appointing a new vice-president and also stepping down from the presidency in September. The armor that had guarded the regime for thirty years had begun to crack due to the methods that the protestors were employing. While this had little impact on the current situation, it was a sign that Mubarak was beginning to admit the protests were having an effect. Once they saw that Mubarak was starting to cave, they knew they must continue on until he left office immediately. While the concession Mubarak made was a start, the general populous had seen enough over the last three decades to know that anything other than an immediate removal of Mubarak from power would not be the best possible adjustment for a free Egypt. Many Egyptians flocked to Twitter to voice their plans to keep pushing until they had accomplished what they had set out to do. Thus, the tweets that followed the speech expressed happiness that some changes were being made, but remained resolute in their attempt to remove the regime that had plagued their country for so long.

- Sandmonkey 2/1/11: He's trying to leave with his dignity intact by finishing the term but people won't accept this #jan25 (98)
- Ashrafkhalil 2/1/11: #jan25 With each new Mubarak half-concession, the crowd gets more motivated and more pissed off (98).
- Tarekshalaby: 2/2/11: Internet's back in #Egypt. I have been camping out in Tahrir for 4 days n will remain until #Mubarak leaves #jan25 (102)

Thus, the protestors have come to a fork in the road where they can accept Mubarak's concession and hope that he honors his promise to step down in September, or they can continue to fight against the evil, and continue to employ different methods of protest in an attempt to accomplish their original goal of a Mubarak-less Egypt. This led to some dissension amongst the protestors. Some viewed this as a worthy enough concession to stop, while others believed they needed to push forward. Mubarak's announcement worked as an obstacle meant to derail the cohesion of the previously united protestors. While there were divisions amongst the protestors that came after Mubarak announced he would not seek re-elections, they were able to move beyond those and continue on in their goals.

On the same day as Mubarak's announcement, the protestors partook in one of their biggest dilemmas since starting their movement. Mubarak sent in hired thugs to beat the people into submission and wreak havoc on the streets. In order to overcome this, people took to Twitter to ask more people to come down to help and also to get the truth out about the violence that was occurring. The goal of this was twofold. First, the protestors needed more manpower in an attempt to stem the tide of the violence, and secondly, they wanted people all around the world to know that they were being savagely attacked even though they had been engaged in a relatively non-violent protest. In this sense, Twitter was used as a weapon and a way to shift their method in an attempt to combat the violence with words opposed to guns. The tweets that were sent out described a perilous scene and sought help to restore some kind of order to the previously peaceful protests.

- Gsquare86 2/2/11: The Tahrir liberators are way less in numbers than the Mubarak thugs if this continues more people will die! Mubarak out now! (110)
- Monasosh 2/2/11: Every1 who is in other areas should take to the streets and protest! Ppl in Tahrir cannot hold their ground agnst all thugs of Egypt! (110)
- MohammedY 2/2/11: 100's injured in Tahrir in Egypt and at least 2 dead. Pro-Mubarak thugs r throwing Molotoves and huge slabs from rooftops on protestors #jan25

Without using Twitter as a medium to communicate and organize, the protestors would not have been able to get the right amount of people to rush to the square in an effort to protect the wounded, aid them medically, and establish some kind of counter against the violent pro-government group. Nonetheless, as the pro-Mubarak supporters increased their violence, the resolve of some of the protestors began to fail. It seemed that there were many protestors who thought that Mubarak's concession of stepping down from power later in the year was good enough. They did not want to keep on protesting with such a risk of violence. As their resolve began to weaken, the cohesion between all of the revolutionaries began to erode. Some revolutionaries accused others of losing faith in their goals while other went so far as to accuse other Egyptians of betrayal. These sentiments of frustration and anger showed through in the tweets.

- Sandmonkey 2/2/11: The mood in Egypt today is different. Too many people still beholden to the mentality of slaves. This is so frustrating. #jan25 (103)

- 3arabawy 2/2/11: We are at very critical stage. The counterrevolution is out in full steam (103)
- 3arabawy 2/2/11 You will collect our dead bodies from garbage bins if we don't win. (103)

As the Egyptians faced more and more resistance from the pro-Mubarak forces, it became clear that it would test the strong bond between all Egyptians that had developed over the first week of the protest. It was a lot easier to remain united when they were not being beaten by clubs and attacked in the streets. The togetherness that was seen in the first week of the tweets began to fray. Protestors began to call out other protestors as the demonstrations became more difficult to maintain.

- Beleidy 2/2/11: The country seems to be splitting apart, fissures in my own family have already started (103)
- Sandmonkey 2/2/11: We have fought for you, for accountability and change, and now that we are a hair away from victory, u betray us. #jan 25 (103)

These tweets paint a stark contrast from what was going on just a day before with Egyptians rallying other citizens to the streets to help the wounded and the sick.

While some of these criticisms may be unfair, they go back to Schiller's idea that not every experiment (method) will always work. He went on to say in "Axioms as Postulates" "To what extent our assumption is true in the fullest sense, i.e. to what extent it will work in practice, time and trial will show. But our faith is confirmed whenever, by acting on it, we obtain anything we want; it is checked, but not uprooted, whenever an experiment fails" (61). In the week since the revolution officially started,

the revolutionaries have had their faith confirmed in their goals. They obtained concessions by Mubarak and also had a strong show of support by many members of the population joining the cause. However, their faith has been temporarily checked by this uptick in violence against them and Mubarak's offer to resign. This could have uprooted the entire revolution and crushed the progress that had been made. As the tweets suggested, some were getting frustrated.

- Sandmonkey 2/2/11: A lot of people talking on the street, saying that this is good enough & we shouldn't forget what Mubarak did for us. The Irony baffles me. (103)

Soon, however, the revolutionaries were able to get beyond this small fissure and continue on in an effort to obtain the freedom they so desperately had been fighting for. Every revolution has its ups and downs and these few days provided trying times for the Egyptian revolutionaries in their attempt to mold their new reality.

As some of the protestors resolve was wavering, the movement needed something to reignite their passions and get hundreds of thousands of people back into the streets. The tactic that many of the protestors used was latching on to a specific person and using them as a rallying cry for the revolution. The spark that provided this injection of energy and hope was the release of Wael Ghonim. He provided an irritation to the government that proved to be just as powerful a method as the use of Twitter. He was a Google Marketing executive who played a major role in organizing the revolution through Facebook. However, he had been arrested by the police and not seen or heard from for 12 days (BBC). When he was finally released, he

conducted a television interview where he deflected the praise that was being heaped on him of that of a hero. He delivered a passionate address to the Egyptian people that reenergized the protestors and helped bring many over to the cause who had been on the fence. The article from the BBC wrote about one family who was moved by the interview, “Fifi Shawqi, a 33-year-old upper-class housewife, said she had come to the square with her three daughters and sister for the first time after seeing the interview with Mr Ghonim, whom she had never heard of before the TV appearance” (BBC). Ghonim was able to reinvigorate the nationwide desire to accomplish their goals of attaining freedom and this was evidenced throughout Twitter following his interview.

- Sandmonkey: MILLIONS WILL GO TO TAHRIR TOMORROW!
MILLIONS! #JAN25 (172)
- ManarMohsen 2/7/11: Egyptians everywhere are crying with/for Wael and Egypt. Show that you care, that the current state is not acceptable. Tahrir tomorrow! (172)
- TravellerW: The Wael @Ghonim interview will probably be the inspiration this revolution seemed to be losing. Bless you friend. #Egypt #Jan25 (173)
- Etharkamal 2/8/11: Tomorrow, millions will come to #Tahrir. Tomorrow, things will happen and things will change. Tomorrow might just be the end #Jan25 (174)

While the day following the interview was not the end of the Mubarak regime, the 18-day process culminated with Mubarak’s resignation on February 11. Clearly, the interview played an immense role in rallying the population around not just a

figure, but also an idea of a better Egypt. His humbleness was displayed through a quote he gave discussing the real heroes of the revolution, “The heroes, they're the ones who were in the street, who took part in the demonstrations, sacrificed their lives, were beaten, arrested and exposed to danger” (BBC). For the protestors who could not see the interview on TV, they could find excerpts of it on Twitter and this proved to be a valuable weapon against the regime. In hindsight, the regime probably wished they did not release him because of his ability to inspire the people of Egypt to continue to act.

On February 6, the government tried a new method in an attempt to undermine the protestors. Prior to this, the foreign press had been covering the events closely, people had not been going to work and many places had been closed. The government wanted to get things back to normal in an effort to shift attention away from the protests. They reopened the banks, reinstituted other businesses, the foreign media began to leave, and people started to go back to work. If the government was able to isolate the protestors to just the square, their hope was that they would lose all of the momentum they had gained and eventually would “fizzle out”. It would have been easy for many of the protestors to give up and admit defeat. The government’s strategy seemed to be shifting focus away from the cause. The protestors knew that this would not be the end though.

When some people returned back to work, it had the unintended consequence of giving them the opportunity to talk about their experiences and collaborate with their co-workers and plan their next steps. This led to work stoppages and strikes and

allowed more people to join the movement. They remained resolute and doubled their efforts to get people out to the streets to protest. When the government tried to isolate the revolutionaries in Tahrir Square, the protestors branched out and started protests at many different locations. The efforts of the individuals who pleaded for more people to come out and organized protests over Twitter and Facebook proved to have an enormous impact on combating the government's strategy.

Another tactic that the Egyptians tried involved labor strikes. They thought that if they could shut down the country's economy, the government would give into demands. In order to keep the pressure on the government, and continue to mold Egypt into the reality that they thought they deserved, the protestors began to get out the idea for people in different labor sectors to strike. By doing this, they would hopefully cripple the government's ability to remain in control. By getting members of different labor sectors to join the revolution, it added a large amount of people who would prove to be major forces in the eventual resignation of Mubarak. Some of the tweets from a few days before Mubarak's resignation got at how the revolutionaries were able to learn from their experience. They came to the realization that by enacting strikes across the country, it would put the government in an unfavorable position and they would have to start to give in to more of the protestors' demands.

- Gsquare86 2/9/11: Strike strike strike...strike for the revolution! (188)
- Alaa 2/9/11: In case you didn't get it organized, labour joined the revolution, wave of strikes sweeping country #jan25 (189)
- 3arabawy 2/9/11: thousands of oil workers r now protesting in front of the oil

ministry #jan25 (189)

- 3arabawy 2/9/11: at least 2 military factors in Welwyn are on strike #jan25 (189)
- 3arabawy 2/9/11: the railway technicians in Bani Suweif r on strike #jan25 (189)

This uptick in labor strikes began to occur just 2 days before Mubarak stepped down. An article in the *New York Times* described the scene, “Labor strikes and worker protests that flared across Egypt on Wednesday affected post offices, textile factories and even the government’s flagship newspaper, providing a burst of momentum to protesters demanding the resignation of President Hosni Mubarak” (NY Times). While the protestors were able to chip away at the regime’s armor, the addition of the laborers proved to be a major deathblow in the hopes of the regime to remain in power. The plasticity of Egypt was demonstrated here again by the abilities of a group of individuals to play a very large role in the shaping of their reality.

The protests that occurred on February 8 restored the momentum to the revolution and were aided by many workers participating in a strike in solidarity with the cause. The tweets that emerged that day gave proof to the resiliency of the Egyptian people, their willingness to adapt, and also their ability to succeed in accomplishing their goals.

- 3arabawy 2/8/11: telecom workers in cairo r on strike #egyworkers (179)
- 3arabawy 2/8/11: around 1000 workers in Lavarge Suez co r on strike. Among their demands: forming union, supporting revolution (179)

The adaptations employed by the revolutionaries had a direct impact on Egyptian life. The workers who struck in the Suez Canal had the capability to bring the transportation of oil to a halt. About 1 million barrels of oil travel through the canal daily (Seattle Times). The workers of the canal had the potential to be major power players in the revolution by forcing the government's hand to agree to the revolutionaries' demands in an effort to make sure the transportation of oil remained consistent through the canal. The Egyptian people saw that the government was trying to restrain them to the square, so they acted quickly and intelligently in changing the scope of the protests.

Tenet 4

All beliefs about the past have a *present value*...derived from past *testing*...all history must be such that the acknowledged present facts can be derived from it. Every historical truth continues to have consequences which may be used to test it...*for our knowledge* the past is no more rigid than the future.... though the truth is *about* the past, its verification, like that of any other truth, is by its *future* consequences.

This tenet was from Schiller's response to Max Eastman in an article in the *Journal of Philosophy*. With the advent of Twitter, the Egyptians are now able to test their hypotheses at a much quicker rate, which allows them to adapt to the situation at hand. This was one of the main reasons why the revolution lasted only 18 days, while in the past it may have lasted much longer. This tenet is important to keep in mind when looking at the Egyptian revolution because the beliefs that the Egyptians have been fostering for 30 years have shaped the way they act in the present. All of their

actions derive from testing they have done throughout the last fifty years. They have come to know exactly what the nature of the Mubarak government is. When they are protesting in the street, they are referencing the past injustices that had been committed against them by the regime. They do this to both support their current cause and use the past as a rallying cry for a brighter future. They are claiming that the past truth was not a truth that they wanted to live under any more so they would use it in an attempt to build a stronger and freer Egypt in the future. The protestors had a set of demands.

- Gsquare86 1/29/11: Demands are: 1) MUBARAK OUT! 2) Dismissal of gov and parliament 3) Provisional government until free and fair elections>>4m the Egyptian people! (69)

The regime had the perception that their truth was in the best interest of Egypt. They were able to keep this up, but lava was boiling under the surface until it finally erupted when these protests began. The tweets that came from Egypt brought the demands of the people to the forefront and showed how what had happened in the past would not work in the future. Thus changes must be made.

- 3arabawy 1/30/11: WE NOT WANT THE ARMY! THE ARMY HAS BEEN RULING SINCE 1952. THEY R NOT NEUTRAL PLAYERS (80)

The grievances that the people of Egypt continued to make show how they have learned from their complacency in the past. The testing that they have done throughout the revolution and before has determined what they want and also what they do not want. They have viewed the military as an extension of the Mubarak

regime and they do not want to be subjected to the military having control over the government or the same government remaining in any form. Eventually Mubarak resigned, but their other wishes were not met.

When Mubarak resigned, it provided a glorious period of jubilation for the people who had worked so hard to accomplish this. Nonetheless, many people still remained hesitant because they were worried that another authoritarian rule might fall into Mubarak's place. They have seen the historical truths of how a dictator can maintain a powerful hand over every aspect of a country. Thus, they need to determine the value of the present by looking at the past. While a positive step forward, the Egyptians continued to express vigilance over social media in an effort to not fall into the trap of complacency.

- Norashalaby 2/12/11: have to say, not so happy w army's statement. Y r they keeping the old gov. in place? (227)
- Sharifkouddous 2/12/11: People debating whether to leave #Tahrir following military announcement that Mubarak cabinet staying place #Egypt (227).

While the citizens' relationship with the military has always been tenuous, one of the most important events of the revolution occurred when the military announced that they would no longer fire on protesters and engage in violence towards them. The protestors came to the conclusion from what they had seen in the past that they would not be able to succeed without either the military's support, or the military removing itself from taking sides in the matter. This was a learned behavior that they had come to know through years of interaction with the military. Once the military made this

announcement, it allowed the protestors to accomplish their goals much more efficiently and without the military impediment. Nonetheless, the military did not ease any fears by saying that the old government would remain in place after Mubarak's resignation. Thus, the relationship between the two still remains shaky. The people had seen the past value of the government over the previous decades and knew that to give up now would be to agree to those half concessions that they were unwilling to accept from Mubarak earlier in the revolution. The revolutionaries fell back into complacency a bit and that has led to a lot of the issues that have occurred post revolution. These range from the military playing an active role in the formation of the new government to fringe parties having a large influence over the elections, to increased sectarian violence between Coptic Christians and Muslims. Thus, the path towards freedom extends far beyond the revolution and the people of Egypt need to continually look at the past for help on how to make a brighter future.

In addition, the protestors had to decide whether or not they would take foreign aid from supportive countries. The issue of foreign aid provided another example of when present value was determined by past testing. They had seen that people that had taken foreign aid in the past to help them in their revolutions oftentimes fell into turmoil once the influx of foreign aid stopped. One of the most impressive aspects of the revolution was the fact that the Egyptian people were able to do it by themselves. They did not ask for money from other countries because they wanted it to be about the Egyptian people taking a stand to overthrow this regime. In their minds, the acceptance of foreign money would taint the efforts made by the many brave men and

women. The tweets went to address this issue.

- Sandmonkey 2/6/11: I got many calls and emails from people living abroad who want to help this uprising by sending donations. This is not a good idea #jan25 (162)
- Sandmonkey 2/6/11: The revolution has to be pure, and receiving outside funding would be use to tarnish or attack it. There is a better idea. #jan25 (162)

The Egyptian people would take care of the Egyptian people and that was how the revolution would be successful. This was how the Egyptian protestors planned to overthrow the government and mold Egypt into this free state. The tweets that emerged around this time showcased not only the desire to do this on their own, but also the selflessness of the Egyptian people in accomplishing this goal.

- Sandmonkey 2/6/11: Create a fund for the families of the victims of the government crackdown on the #jan25 revolution instead, 2 help them recover later #jan25 (162)
- Sandmonkey 2/6/11: The protestors are behaving with utter selflessness: people donating money, goods, medicine and time. Every1 looking out 4 each other #jan25 (184)

These actions demonstrate that the revolutionaries have learned through the first week of experience that they must depend on each other in order to accomplish their goals. The individual desire of the protestors has fit into the larger social context of Egypt at this time.

The other issue that the protestors had to deal with was how to move forward when Mubarak did resign. They had many years of past testing to see what would not work, but they had to make sure that what they did in the future would follow along the ideals of what the revolution was grounded in. As the protests continued, division began to emerge within the Mubarak camp. Some people resigned from their posts and it became even clearer that the protestors were moving closer and closer to accomplishing their goal. However, they needed to start to plan for the future. They did not have a definite plan for how to set up the government post-Mubarak. While they believed they were close to removing Mubarak from power, it would not do any good if there were not a direction forward. Egypt would be at risk of falling into anarchy without some form of government ready to step in. Thus, in concurrence with Schiller's philosophy on experiencing with different hypotheses in order to find out which would be more effective, people flocked to Twitter to post their ideas.

- Sandmonkey 2/5/11: Many people are asking me for the way forward, and so far we seem to have 2 options: 1) remain as is, & 2) the wisemen's council #jan25 (156)
- Sandmonkey 2/5/11: The wisemen's council is respectable but am not sure what leverage they got on either side. (156)
- Sandmonkey 2/5/11: But the status quo won't due. This lack of action and organization will be used against us in every way possible jan25 (156)

It was important that the Egyptian people were starting to think about a way forward. Often, one dictator replaces the other because there was no viable plan on

what to do once the ruler is overthrown. While the tweets gave some options about potential paths forward, there were also other plans being circulated amongst the protestors within Tahrir Square. There were a lot of different ideas about what would be the best path forward. Experimenting with the different ideas was important to the process of preventing the same repressive scenario that had beset the country for three decades from returning.

Tenet 5

In his book, *The Pragmatic Humanism of F.C.S. Schiller*, Reuben Abel stated, “Schiller is, in a sense, logically committed to the reality of freedom because of his assumption that human action makes a genuine difference to the system of truth and to the world of reality” (134).

Some of the most influential rhetoric that Schiller put forward with regard to pragmatic humanism was in regards to freedom. The idea Abel mentions in his book on Schiller stated that the “tonic and invigorating effect contained in his emphasis on the role of men on remolding the universe. Nowhere is this more convincing than in his demonstration of the reality of human freedom” (Abel 139). This tenet shifts away from the previous four tenets into more of a normative idea. It is saying what ought to be. Without the goal of freedom, any kind of action can be justified through pragmatic humanism. Schiller, and to a lesser extent Abel, was saying that there needs to be a moral purpose behind the actions taken. Through these actions, the Egyptians always had the goal of attaining a level of freedom. The means in the process were to have free will in order to accomplish their ends of freedom. This “free will” had been

denied to the Egyptian people over many decades. When one is participating in molding their own reality, they always need to be cognizant of what it is that they want. The Egyptians eventually overthrew Mubarak but the question remains as to whether or not the value of freedom has been satisfied.

Schiller discussed pragmatic humanism in his essay entitled “Freedom”. He says, “Humanism, therefore, has to defend and establish the reality of this indetermination, and so to conceive it that it ceases to conflict with the postulates of science, and fit harmoniously into its own conception of existence” (Abel 96). This is advocating again how important free will is to the idea of pragmatic humanism. Schiller was talking about free will in regards to all human life. The idea of freedom is so integral to Schiller’s pragmatic humanism that he goes on to state that, “We shall do well not to think too meanly of our powers, but to reflect rather on the responsibilities involved even in our most trivial choices. If we can really make our ‘fate’ and remake our world, it behooves us to make sure that they shall not be made amiss” (Abel 115). Here he makes the point that if a person can remake the world, they must do it well and in a way that will not be wrong.

The quest for freedom and the ability to make decisions proved to be one of the biggest rallying cries of the revolution. Many of their political and social freedoms had been stripped away by years of oppressive rule by the Mubarak regime. Once they saw what occurred in Tunisia, they believed that they would be able to get Mubarak out of power, remake their world, and start to get basic rights that had been denied to them for so long. The pragmatic humanism that was showcased had to do with the

ability of the people to fight back and bring about change. They were not waiting for a powerful leader to step up and give them freedoms. The social context had finally corresponded with the individual desire and the desire of the protestors was similar enough to form a powerful, and vocal opposition. These are some of the tweets that surfaced near the start of the protests that demonstrated the everyday people of Egypt making a difference.

- ManarMohsen 1/27/11: One of the best things about this uprising is that it's from and for the people, not the parties, not ElBaradei. Keep it that way.

#Jan25 (56)

The people of Egypt had resisted the urge to take foreign aid and also did not let ex-leaders get involved in championing their cause. They did it from the ground up and it truly was a grassroots movement.

- Mohaamed 1/27/11: I keep hoping this will spread to more and more countries. I'm sick of waiting for democracy from the West, its time we TAKE IT! (57)
- Gsquare86 1/29/11: IT WAS RAINING U.S.-MADE TEARGAS ON PEACEFUL EGPYTIAN PROTESTORS CUZ THEY'RE DEMANDING DIGNITY, JUSTICE, & FREEDOM MR. OBAMA, R U LISTENING? (68)

These anti-Western sentiments demonstrated that the freedom that they are after will not be handed to them, they have to actively go after it. They are also displeased with the West's tacit approval of the Mubarak regime. One of the reasons that the protestors were unhappy with the United States was that they had supported the Mubarak regime that had denied the Egyptian people so many freedoms for so long.

- Gsquare86 2/2/11: I WILL NOT LEAVE TAHRIR TONIGHT so stop telling me to do so! We need more people in TAHRIR NOW!! Get here for our freedom!!!! #Egypt (113)
- MohammedY 2/4/11: Ppl chanting “Stay strong oh my country! Freedom is being born” #Jan25 (140)

Between the protests and the tweets being sent out to other people within Egypt, the sentiment of actually being able to attain freedom was growing. People had been passively hoping that a Western country would give their freedom to them eventually. Once they dropped this attitude, they were able to see that the most effective way to gain that freedom was to take it. In relation to Schiller’s ideas on indetermination, the Mubarak regime was the puppet master in this society. They were telling the people what they could and could not do, crippling the voice of the people. These protests were a sign that the time had come to remake the world of Egypt and build it in an image of freedom and human rights.

After Mubarak’s resignation, the streets erupted with jubilation and celebration. The average Egyptians had played a huge role in reshaping their country and bringing about freedom. This was never a revolution simply about removing Mubarak from power. It was a revolution about how big of a role individuals can have in shaping their reality. When the vice-president announced on state TV that Mubarak was stepping down from the presidency, the tweets that came out showcased the passion and strength of the Egyptian people.

- Packafy 2/11/11: YAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAAY

#Jan25 #Freedom (214)

- TravellerW 2/11/11: Egypt, the Middle East, the World will never be the same. From #Tahrir Square- CONGRATULATIONS, FREE #EGYPT #Jan25 (215)
- Reem_Ahmed 2/11/11: Oh God !! deep breathe !!! Freedom :)))) #Tahrir #Jan 25 #Egypt, we have made it. Thanks God :) (215)
- Ghonim 2/11/11: They lie at us. Told us Egypt died 30 years ago, but millions of Egyptians decided to search and they found their country in 18 days #Jan25 (218).

The goal had been accomplished and now the reconstruction process has to begin. The Egyptians would face another hard task in deciding how to set up their new government. The military would assume temporary control until such decisions could be made. A lot of the discussion on the day following the resignation focused on how they should continue the movement, and what they should to rebuild Egypt. The protests had taken a massive toll on the economy and a strong economy has been shown to be a crucial factor in a high level of freedom in a nation. Small cracks also began to show between the groups of protestors. They all had a similar goal of overthrowing Mubarak, but now their conception of how to put this newly found freedom into action would differ since they were no longer united by a common cause. The tweets from the day after began to illustrate planning for the future, and the possibility for conflicts between the different groups down the road.

- Norashalaby 2/12/11: We want to form a Tahrir committee—to clean it up, to redesign it & set up a memorial for the martyrs #jan25 (226)

- 3arabawy 2/12/11: While middle class activists here on Twitter r urging Egyptians to return to work, the work class strikes and protests continue #jan25 (226)

These sentiments echo Schiller's idea that shaping our reality is a continual process. In order to keep this newly found freedom, the Egyptians are going to have to continue to experiment with different methods in order to find out which one may work. They may fail a few more times before they succeed but it is important that they continue trying and follow the same path that led them to overthrow the Mubarak regime. The study of this will remain ongoing as new developments occur throughout the country. This analysis provided the snapshot of the 2 months that changed Egypt and allowed their citizens to overthrow a government.

Overall, it can be argued that Twitter was one of the most important tools in the Egyptian revolution. It not only allowed for them to communicate quickly and effectively, but it also allowed them to reach people and spread the belief that this revolution had a very good chance at succeeding. Oftentimes, citizens do not want to participate in a revolution or protests because they fear the government's response. The tweets demonstrated how the individual could play an integral role in the remaking of ones reality. While Schiller did not live in the time of Twitter, he would be able to see his core ideas in the examples of the tweets that the Egyptian people sent out.

Chapter 5: Conclusion

The people of Egypt played a major role in remaking their reality. At the start of 2011, the people of Egypt were under the rule of a dictatorship that denied them many freedoms. However, through experimentation and employing different methods, they were able to launch a successful revolution and depose Hosni Mubarak and his regime in a mere 18 days. The fact that Tunisia and Egypt were able to accomplish this overthrow in such a short period of time shows that as the world is becoming more globalized, the social context of a country is now able to merge with individual desires more seamlessly and efficiently.

Implications

The result of this study should provide hope for people living in similar situations. By believing one has the power to mold their reality and also act as an agent for change, they can begin to view the world as plastic. A country, such as Egypt or Libya, may be in a dire situation, but the people ultimately hold the power. It was once said that the people should not be afraid of their government, the government should be afraid of their people. Actions such as what occurred in the Arab Spring should give other tyrannical dictators cause for concern. Eventually, the people will revolt if one does not provide them with basic freedoms and rights. There are some situations that occur where the government responds with an inordinate amount of violence to squash the revolution. Examples of this include Libya and Syria. Even though these countries have been fighting for freedom a lot longer than Egypt and Tunisia, the people are still trying. Syria has proven to be one of the most

violent acts of repression by a government in a long time. However, the government is starting to show signs of weakness and there are hints of change on the horizon. Nonetheless, the Syrian revolution has gone on for much longer and much more violently than the Tunisian or Egyptian Revolutions. Thus, Schiller's pragmatic humanism can be expanded to all of the revolutions in the Arab Spring. The people of Libya and Syria had more failures than the people of Tunisia and Egypt, but they have not given up. They continued to fight against the injustices being committed against them and employ different methods in order to be successful. The Arab Spring has provided experiences for other countries to follow in. One of the most important parts of Schiller's pragmatic humanism was that we could succeed in constructing a reality in the way that we want if only we try hard enough. While some might doubt the validity of this claim, it has proven to be the case in regards to the revolutionaries throughout the Middle East.

Future Research

The effects of social media are new phenomena that have not been researched in great detail. Over time, Twitter will continue to be a very important source of information, and it will continue to be used as a weapon against tyranny. In using Twitter and pragmatic humanism, the results of the research would vary depending on the country studied. Nonetheless, it is important to continually study revolutions through the idea of pragmatic humanism because it helps to demonstrate the power of the people in their country. There are many other political science theories that have been used to examine revolutions that were discussed in the literature review.

However, the end result of a revolution can be something as simple as the actions of an everyday shop owner, a baker, or the Google executive who can play an integral role in the process.

Another limit of the analysis of the Egyptian revolution through the lens of pragmatic humanism is the fact that these events happened so recently. It is possible that a year from now, the political and social makeup could have changed again and have had a great impact on the direction of the Egyptian country. When studying an event such as this, it is important to keep in mind that it will always be a continual process. The analysis within this paper provides only a snapshot of an amazing 18 days where the people of Egypt were able to rally together and change the reality that they had been subjected to over the last three decades. Nonetheless, with this hesitancy, there remains hope that the people of Egypt will continue to fight for the eventual freedoms that they have tried so hard to attain. Thus, future research must continue to be done on the progress that the Egyptian people make over the years. There will be ups and downs, jubilation and dejection, but they must always remember to keep experimenting, and keep trying until they are able to accomplish the democracy that so many of them have been striving for.

Epilogue

Since the overthrow of Hosni Mubarak, the struggle to set up an Egyptian democracy has proven to be difficult. There have been fundamentalist Islamists who have attempted to come to power through democracy. While their participation is part of a democratic state, some of their intentions are to use their role in the government to

put forth non-democratic ideals. In the most recent democratic election, the Muslim Brotherhood won the presidency. The problem that some Egyptians have with this result was that a lot of the prominent members of the Muslim Brotherhood stayed on the sidelines during the Egyptian revolution because they had been an enemy of Mubarak for a long time. Their plan was to wait and see what happened, and then take their opportunities when it presented itself. While the Muslim Brotherhood and other fringe parties have every right to run for election in a democratic Egypt, some of their more radical members may threaten the success of future democracy in Egypt. With this being said, there are members within the Muslim Brotherhood who are trying to craft a path that takes into account Islam and the rights of the people. It remains to be seen which sect of these parties will eventually win out and play an integral role in crafting Egyptian politics and freedoms for the future. It is also important to note that many democracies have failed once before they succeeded. Everyone was able to come together around the idea of getting Mubarak out of power. However, as mentioned in the literature on revolutions, once they accomplished this goal, they know longer have a common cause to rally around. The people on the fringe, or traditionalists want one thing, the moderates another, and this ultimately leads to clashes that could cripple the hopes for a better reality that they fought so hard for.

This is one of the limits of pragmatic humanism in its relation to studying revolutions and potential democracies. The revolutionaries in Egypt have now splintered off into many different groups and have their own ideas now about how to form the ideal reality within Egypt. Democracy is a completely new idea in this part

of the world and it would not be out of the question for it to be unsuccessful. If the military holds on to their authoritarian role into 2012-2013, their legitimacy could decline. It may very well lead to another attempt to democratize the country. With the current actions of the military and some fundamentalists, it remains unclear that a democracy will be able to take hold in Egypt unless significant changes occur.

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