

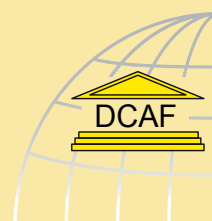
Understanding Shifts in Egyptian Civil-Military Relations

Lessons from the Past and Present

Egypt Civil-Military Relations Conference Paper Series
Paper 2



Risa Brooks



DCAF

a centre for security,
development and
the rule of law

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

Understanding power and influence shifts in Egypt's civil-military relations requires an analysis of societal dynamics and of loyalties in the officer corps. The ability to build and demonstrate support from a societal constituency, or an important faction in the officer corps, is a source of leverage for both political and military leaders. Powers of appointment and dismissal are also pivotal in shaping power relations between political and military leaders. When enjoyed by a political leader, these prerogatives reflect and promote control of the armed forces. Conversely, the inability to appoint and

dismiss officers both reflects a political leader's weakness and serves more broadly to degrade control of the armed forces. The centrality of these aspects is evident during critical episodes of civil-military relations in Egypt. These factors, in turn, have important bearing in assessing the prospects for future developments in the country's civil-military relations.

Keywords: Egypt, Civil-military relations, Prerogatives of appointment, societal pressure, Egyptian Armed Forces (EAF), military factions, civilian control of the armed forces

1. INTRODUCTION

The Free Officers' coup to remove King Farouk from office in July 1952 marked the beginning of six decades of authoritarian rule in which the Egyptian armed forces would play a central role in the country's politics. There have been numerous studies about the Egyptian military.¹ However, the issue of how civil-military relations have evolved over those decades is less frequently analysed.

Civil-military relations have varied considerably in the contemporary history of Egypt, with significant fluctuations in the political control exercised by its presidents. Arguably the strongest and most charismatic leader in Egypt's modern history, Gamal Abdel Nasser, lost control of the military in the mid-1960s to his commander in chief, Abdel Hakim Amer. In contrast and despite his apparent weakness when he took over the presidency, Anwar Sadat would exercise remarkable political control over the armed forces. More recently, Egypt under Hosni Mubarak exhibited considerable stability in civil-military relations for three decades. The president's political control of the armed forces seemed assured until it was lost in a matter of days during the 2011 uprising.

What factors explain why and when Egypt's presidents have been able to control their armed forces, and when that control has faltered? The answers have important implications for understanding the future of Egypt's civil-military relations. The current state of Egyptian politics may render it difficult to conceive that the country would embark on a road towards democratic reform of the armed forces in the near future. Yet, understanding the factors that have allowed presidents to assert control over

the military in the past may provide the key for anticipating when civilian control — and potentially democratic control — can be established.

"Political control," in this paper, refers to a president's ability to structure relations with the military in a way that gives him final authority over national security matters as well as strategic, policy and institutional issues related to the armed forces. Political control is hence absent when military leaders can successfully challenge or resist presidential decisions, and instead advance their own preferred strategies, policies, or institutions.

This paper focuses on two sets of factors that influence Egypt's civil-military relations. The first is the ability of military and political leaders to draw on supporters from within societal constituencies and the masses, or from within the officer corps, to bolster their power in relations with each other. The second relates to the ability of these leaders to employ institutional prerogatives, especially the power of appointment, promotion, and dismissal, to control the armed forces. The analysis demonstrates the enduring importance of these factors for a president's ability to advance political control of the armed forces.

Specifically, the following questions are of importance:

- What factors affect the relative power of political and military leaders and who exercises control of the armed forces?
- How does support or opposition from societal constituencies, or factions within the armed forces, affect the power of the political leadership vis-à-vis the armed forces?

1. Studies of Egyptian politics and society have, since the republic's inception, included regular references to the armed forces. Classic works on the subject include: Anouar Abdel-Malek, *Egypt: Military Society* New York: Random House, 1968; Elizer Be'eri, *Army Officers in Arab Politics and Society*, London: Praeger-Pall Mall, 1970; John Waterbury, *The Egypt of Nasser and Sadat*, Princeton University Press, 1983; Amos Perlmutter, *Egypt the Praetorian State* New Brunswick, N.J. Transaction Books, 1974; P.J. Vatikiotis (ed.), *The Egyptian Army in Politics*, Bloomington Indiana University Press, 1961.

- How do institutional prerogatives, such as those related to the power of appointments, promotions, and dismissals, affect whether or not there is political control of the armed forces?

The analysis includes discussions of key episodes in Egypt's civil-military relations during the following eras:

- The presidencies of Naguib, Nasser, Sadat and Mubarak, 1952-2011
- The post-Mubarak, SCAF-led transition
- The presidency of Mohammed Morsi, June 2012-July 2013
- The Interim presidency of Adly Mansour
- The period following President Sisi's election in May 2014

1.1 SOCIETAL AND MILITARY CONSTITUENCIES

Since the Free Officers' coup in 1952, the balance of power in Egypt between political and military leaders has often depended on the president's ability to establish and maintain a base of support both within and beyond the armed forces. The following factors have influenced this base:

1. whether political or military leaders have cultivated a network of supporters within the officer corps whose loyalty rests directly with the respective, individual leader, as opposed to the broader institutions of the military; and
2. whether the military and political leaders are able to mobilize and demonstrate support within constituencies at large, in order to generate pressure on their respective counterparts.

The first source of support originates from within the armed forces. A political leader may be able to draw on the broad allegiance of the officer corps across services and administrative divisions, or enjoy heightened support within particular cohorts of officers or services. Alternatively, a military leader may develop his own personal network within the armed forces in the form of a faction. Evidence of splits within the armed forces can indicate that there are groupings and factions present who have mixed allegiances, with some committed to the president and others committed to a particular officer or military leader. These military leaders may hold distinctive policy preferences regarding the administration of the armed forces and affairs of the state, and may seek to challenge a political leader's control over the armed forces. It is for this reason that Egyptian presidents have often been cautious about allowing charismatic military leaders to build up power centres that could be used to exert

pressure on the political leadership.

Secondly, Egypt's presidents have continuously sought to build constituencies within the elite and influential social groups to establish support for their rule. The salient actors and groupings in these coalitions have varied over time. During the 1960s, President Gamal Abdel Nasser drew support from a base of workers and the middle class, after nationalizations and other measures had weakened the aristocracy. In more recent times, President Hosni Mubarak ruled with the support of the country's dominant political party, the National Democratic Party (NDP), and with support from parts of the state structure, notably the Ministry of Interior (Moi). The ability to sustain these societal and non-military coalitions has historically been a source of power for a political leader in their relations with the armed forces.²

The general population has also affected the balance of civil-military relations. This may be puzzling given that the Egyptian authoritarian government structure did not provide for free and fair elections. Political and military leaders, nevertheless, have at critical moments sought to harness demonstrations of popular support to marginalize their counterparts, or exert pressure on them. At times, they have deliberately aimed to mobilize (and occasionally engineer) demonstrations and bring supporters into the street as a form of political pressure and expression of power. This is not only intended to foster a personality cult and popular legitimacy, but to strengthen the respective leader in negotiations with military leaders.

Mass demonstrations of support are especially important in moments of crisis, when there is uncertainty about

2. See Risa Brooks, *Shaping Strategy: The Civil-Military Politics of Strategic Assessment*, Princeton University Press, 2008, p. 32; Risa Brooks, *Political-Military Relations and the Stability of Arab Regimes*, International Institute for Strategic Studies (London, U.K.), 1998.

the future of the country and dissention between political and military leaders. The ability to mobilize people and draw them into the street clarifies the “mandate” that a political leader, or military chiefs, have from a section of the population.³ Demonstrations of support, however, should not be automatically interpreted as endorsements of support from society at large, even if political and military leaders suggest as much.

The importance of social protest and its implications for military defection from political control are commonly observed in analyses of the 2011 revolution and President Mubarak’s removal from office at the behest of the armed forces. The protests by Egyptian citizens provided the military with a popular basis for its actions and shifted the locus of power from President Mubarak to the armed forces.⁴ The impact of mass demonstrations on civil-military relations, however, is not a new phenomenon. Mass demonstrations of social support or opposition for the military or political leadership have been integral in shaping Egyptian civil-military relations during the past six decades.

3. On this dynamic, more broadly, see Karen Remmer, *Military Rule in Latin America*, Boston: Unwin Hyman, 1989, p. 430.

4. For a central work on the impact of the social protests on Egypt’s military see Eva Bellin, “Reconsidering the Robustness of Authoritarianism: Lessons from the Arab Spring,” *Comparative Politics*, Vol. 44, No. 2 (2012), pp. 127-149.

1.2 THE POWER OF APPOINTMENT, PROMOTION, AND DISMISSAL

A second factor that has affected civil-military relations is the ability to affect the composition of the armed forces. Especially important is whether political or military leaders control powers of appointment, promotion, and dismissal so that they can influence the composition of the armed forces, prevent the emergence of factions, and advance civilian control.

The ability to fire and hire at will is critical for a political leader's long-term ability to retain control over the armed forces for two reasons. First, these prerogatives allow the removal or marginalization of military leaders whose personal stature and influence may be growing within the officer corps, thus forestalling the emergence of military challengers.

Second, the prerogatives allow a president to affect the overall preferences and perspectives of officers within the armed forces. A political leader can extend influence by appointing individuals who support his own views on the administration of the armed forces, defence policies, strategic military issues, and the role of the armed forces in relation to the rest of the state structure. This eases control and creates structures that afford the president a final authority over the armed forces.

For these reasons, a core indication of civilian control of the armed forces is the ability of civilian leaders to appoint senior officials in charge of the armed forces, such as the Minister of Defence, and promote military officers to key positions.⁵ The power of appointment, promotion, and dismissal is however both a result of the actual influence of the political and military leadership, and a source of that influence. As political leaders gain leverage, they are better positioned to ensure their candidates accede to top positions in the military; once in those

positions, they can then shape the officer corps via promotions and other methods in ways that reinforce their influence.

A second set of prerogatives is equally integral to advancing civilian supremacy over the armed forces. These involve decision-making over strategic issues, defence planning, and budgeting. Control in this domain may be expressed in the composition and rules governing formal deliberative and policy-making entities. This is evident, for example, in the attention paid to the mandate and composition of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) and the National Defence Council (NDC) in both the 2012 and the 2014 constitution. The NDC was granted oversight powers of the armed forces in both constitutions, and was also given decision-making power over issues such as the deployment of forces and the declaration of war.

Power relations also become evident in actual practices or informal patterns of interaction (e.g. how decisions are routinely or customarily made, irrespective of formal rules). Although there are obstacles to knowing what happens in meetings and consultations between the Egyptian armed forces and presidents, knowledgeable analysts can often draw inferences about how and who is exercising power by analysing what does reach the press, and observing strategic and policy outcomes. Such nuances are critical to assessing the realities of political control in Egypt.

Focusing on the aforementioned aspects of power relations — the ability to build and demonstrate societal and intra-military support and control of prerogatives, such as powers of appointment — illuminates several key phases and transition moments in Egyptian civil-military relations.

5. "Security Sector Governance in Egypt: Civil-Military Relations in Focus," Conference Report, DCAF International Expert Conference, Montreux, Switzerland 2-4 April 2014, p. 7.

2. CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS 1952-2011

This chapter examines civil-military relations from Egypt's first president after the July 1952 coup, General Mohammed Naguib, to the presidency of Hosni Mubarak. The analysis underscores the importance of building support, both

within society at large and within the officer corps, as critical determinants of power relations. It also underscores the importance of the power of appointment to advancing civilian control of the armed forces.

2.1 COLONEL NASSER AND GENERAL NAGUIB

The relations between General Naguib and Colonel Nasser in the years after the 1952 Free Officers' coup against King Farouk illustrate the central role social mobilization and groupings within the officer corps play in shaping Egypt's civil-military relations. Colonel Nasser had been the leader of the Free Officers movement. He and his fellow officers, however, chose the more senior General Naguib to lead the regime after the coup, believing his stature would allow him to command public respect.⁶ When the Egyptian Republic was declared in June 1953, General Naguib became its first president.

In the two years following the coup, a split between President Naguib and Nasser emerged. Conflicts had emerged within the Revolutionary Command Council (the governing council established by the Free Officers) over the reestablishment of parliamentary elections, and the armed forces' role within the new state. President Naguib had supported early moves to dissolve parliamentary parties and remove what was perceived as corrupt elements of the old structure. Nevertheless, in the months following the coup, he began to voice support for a return of the military to the barracks

and the restoration of parliamentary institutions and party politics (although not necessarily of full-blown democracy).⁷ President Naguib, who remained the influential and popular symbolic head of the state, started to make speeches in January 1953 outlining the need to return to democracy. Nasser, in contrast, sided with those in the military and emerging security edifice who were reluctant to cede power to parliament. They argued that society could be transformed at the hands of a military vanguard that would continue to rule.⁸

President Naguib's position was bolstered by support from officers within the artillery and cavalry. Beginning in late 1952, officers within the artillery started to agitate in support of Naguib and the reestablishment of parliamentary democracy. The officers apparently believed it would be best for the military's professional interests if they did not rule the country.⁹ After the arrest of several dozen officers, several hundred additional artillery officers met in protest. The incipient mutiny was diffused, but a split within the officer corps persisted. In part angered by the treatment of their counterparts in the artillery, factions of cavalry officers who supported President

6. Kirk Beattie, *Egypt during the Nasser Years*, Boulder, CO, Westview Press, 1994, p. 68. Nasser remained de facto head of the RCC, assumed the post of Prime Minister in September 1942 and held the post of Minister of Interior until October 1953.

7. A comprehensive account of these events, based on Arabic sources, appears in Beattie, *Egypt during the Nasser Years*, pp. 85-103. See especially pages 89, 92-97. Also see, Hazem Kandil, *Soldiers, Spies and Statesmen, Egypt's Road to Revolt*, Verso Books, 2013.

8. Hazem Kandil, *Soldiers, Spies and Statesmen, Egypt's Road to Revolt*, Verso Books, 2013.

9. On their preferences see Beattie, *Egypt during the Nasser Years*, p. 92; Kandil, *Soldiers, Spies and Statesmen*, p. 30.

Naguib rebelled in February 1953. The officers threatened to move against the RCC, with the effect that pro-RCC elements in the armed forces rallied to the support of the Council. A vast popular revolt ensued;¹⁰ pro-Naguib demonstrators poured into the streets along with leaders of several parties and civilian groups. The rebellion was neutralized, but Colonel Nasser was forced into a (temporary) retreat. Efforts to side-line President Naguib were complicated by opposition both within the armed forces and by his popularity and ability to draw Egypt's population into the street.

President Naguib had however already made the fateful decision to promote and appoint General Abdel Hakim Amer to the position of Commander-in-Chief. In doing so, Naguib surrendered his powers of appointment to General Amer and had little means of expanding his support within the military beyond sympathizers in the artillery and cavalry.¹¹ Naguib eventually realized his error and tried to reclaim appointment prerogatives from the battalion commanders level on up. He was, however, unsuccessful.¹² This episode underscores the importance placed on appointments by Egypt's presidents in shaping loyalties and preferences within the officer corps.

Nasser, in turn, sought to mobilize his own base of support. As one analyst describes it, "the lesson in 'street power' was not lost on Nasser."¹³ Central to Nasser's efforts was the negotiation of a pact with the leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood (MB). The MB leadership subsequently sided with Nasser and made statements about the need to prevent the

re-emergence of a corrupt parliamentary system. In late March 1954, the anti-parliamentary forces forged alliances with workers groups, and massive demonstrations were held in Cairo.¹⁴ This was a turning point in civil-military relations. Although Naguib would remain president in name for two years until 1956, when he was succeeded by Nasser with the passage of the 1956 constitution, he would wield little influence.

These events demonstrate the importance of factions and the ability to draw on social supporters to shape civil-military relations. President Naguib's popularity and ability to mobilize his supporters in the military and society at first proved a major obstacle for Nasser and his allies. Nasser's success in side-lining President Naguib ultimately hinged on his ability to marginalize the president's supporters within the officer corps and to mobilize his own social base to counter the president.

10. Kandil, *Soldiers, Spies and Statesmen*, p. 32.

11. Kandil, *Soldiers, Spies and Statesmen*, p. 29.

12. Jesse Ferris, *Nasser's Gamble: How Intervention in Yemen Caused the Six-Day War and the decline of Egyptian Power*, Princeton University Press, 2013, p. 48.

13. Beattie, *Egypt During the Nasser Years*, p. 94.

14. Muslim Brotherhood leaders initially sided with President Nasser only to turn against him when tensions became acute under his rule. Nasser subsequently repressed the MB. These dynamics resonate strikingly with what occurred between the Egyptian armed forces and the Muslim Brotherhood under President Morsi. On this point see Kandil, *Soldiers, Spies and Statesmen*, pp. 15-42.

2.2 PRESIDENT NASSER AND FIELD MARSHAL ABDEL HAKIM AMER

Relations between President Nasser and his military chief, Field Marshal Abdel Hakim Amer, in the 1960s similarly demonstrate the impact that social support (from within the armed forces and the population at large) and the prerogative of appointment (and how this power affects loyalties within the officers corps) have on civil-military relations.¹⁵ When General Amer was appointed commander of the military in 1953, he and Nasser were close friends and confidantes. With the conflict between Nasser and Naguib settled in 1954, and Amer's command of the military secured, Nasser turned his focus to managing politics. By the early 1960s he was focused on advancing the regime's "revolutionary" program. He established a coalition of urban workers and the rural middle class, pursued policies related to land tenure and workers' rights, and created subsidies favouring these social classes. In doing so, he provided a social base and support for his presidency.¹⁶

General Amer, in contrast, focused on the military. As Commander-in-Chief, he steadily began to win favour within the officer corps by allocating special perquisites to loyal subordinates. Over time, Amer's patronage network allowed him to advance his influence over the military at Nasser's expense. For his part, President Nasser maintained allies among the Free Officers and built up support within the emerging security and intelligence services.¹⁷ Both powerful in their own spheres, by the early 1960s relations between the two men had devolved into competition for control of the armed forces.

The relationship between Nasser and Amer illustrates the pivotal role of military appointments and promotion prerogatives in shaping civil-military relations. Nasser as president enjoyed the title of Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces and formally controlled powers of appointment for senior officers above the rank of battalion commander.¹⁸ Amer, however, wielded the control of appointments, promotions and dismissals in practice. This authority, along with his provision of special benefits to favoured officers, proved central to his ability to establish a power centre within the armed forces. Nasser, in turn, recognized the significance of these prerogatives and sought to reclaim control of them. One notable example of his efforts is the September 1962 reorganization of the government into a Presidential Council.¹⁹ The Council was ostensibly formed to provide a new, collective executive structure for the state. In reality, it was a guise to regain control of the armed forces from Amer. The president first sought to persuade the military chief that his membership in the Council required that he step down from his position as Commander-in-Chief. Nasser then also sought to reallocate powers of appointments and promotions to the newly established Council. Amer initially seemed to accede to these changes; he submitted his resignation in late September 1962. He then, however, disappeared from view, raising questions about whether he would in the end agree to being removed from control of the armed forces.

15. For a comprehensive account of civil-military relations under both Nasser and Sadat, see Risa Brooks, *Shaping Strategy: The Civil-Military Politics of Strategic Assessment*, Princeton University Press, 2008.

16. Baker, *Egypt's Uncertain Revolution Under Nasser and Sadat*, Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1978.

17. Kandil, *Soldiers, Spies and Statesmen*, p. 20-21.

18. Jesse Ferris, *Nasser's Gamble: How Intervention in Yemen Caused the Six-Day War and the Decline of Egyptian Power*, Princeton University Press, 2013.

19. The best account of the council appears in Ferris, *Nasser's Gamble*, pp. 37-49, 61-69. The Presidential Council lapsed into inaction and was eventually replaced by the National Assembly. See Ferris p. 68, nt. 140.

In an apparent effort to win Amer's agreement to give up his direct control of the armed forces, Nasser then offered to appoint him to a new position as Deputy Supreme Commander of the Armed Forces (a position with unclear powers and responsibilities). Presumably, the Presidential Council would remain in charge of promotions and appointments. In an act that demonstrated his own tactical adroitness, Amer then issued a resignation letter that called for Egypt to be returned to democracy, which was largely an indictment of the current state structure.²⁰ News surfaced that Amer's trusted cohort of officers were organizing against the change in Amer's position. When the President met with his military chief in December 1962 to resolve the matter, they agreed that Amer would retain the title of Deputy Supreme Commander, but that a new Commander-in-Chief would in the near future be appointed. This, however, never occurred, and Amer maintained his position and dominance of the military.

The resolution of the rivalry between Nasser and Amer would occur only in the aftermath of Egypt's devastating loss in the 1967 war with Israel. The politicization of the military under Amer's leadership had severely degraded its professional abilities; the training and leadership of the armed forces were abysmal and it performed poorly in the war. This was a clear case of the armed forces not being able to focus on its core mandate and instead being tied up in political manoeuvring. The military consequently bore the brunt of society's disillusionment with Egypt's humiliating war-losses in the war, and the social esteem of the military suffered considerably. These societal dynamics, in turn, laid the groundwork for a fundamental shift in the balance of power in civil-military relations in Egypt.

Showing his strategic acumen, just days following Egypt's devastating and humiliating loss in the war, President Nasser announced his resignation.²¹ The resignation elicited mass demonstrations. Some of these were likely orchestrated by the Arab Socialist Union, which had been established by Nasser in 1962 and was then the country's sole political party. Regardless, Egypt's citizens poured into the streets demanding that Nasser stay in office. Nasser consequently stayed on as president, newly empowered by this popular mandate. Two months later, President Nasser made a final move against Amer, who was arrested and (apparently) committed suicide. Power relations hence shifted considerably in favour of the political leadership. In his final three years as president until his death in 1970, President Nasser reclaimed the effective powers of appointment, promotion, and dismissal. He appointed new military leaders and purged the officer corps by retiring large numbers of officers.

These historical events illustrate the pivotal role of appointment prerogatives in shaping civil-military relations: Amer's control of promotions and appointments led to the emergence of a faction within the officer corps personally allegiant to the Field Marshal, which allowed Amer to challenge President Nasser's broader authority over the armed forces. In turn, Nasser's reclamation of appointment, promotion and dismissal prerogatives after Amer's death allowed him to purge and reconfigure the officer corps, which paved the way for his assertion of broader control over the armed forces after the 1967 war and until his death in 1970.

20. Ferris, *Nasser's Gamble*, p. 66.

21. See Said Aburish, *Nasser: The Last Arab*, Thomas Dunne Books, 2004.

2.3 PRESIDENT SADAT AND THE OFFICERS CORPS

Sadat's relations with the military cannot be understood without reference to the final years of Nasser's rule and the changes it brought. Specifically, President Sadat's relations with the military highlight three recurrent themes in Egypt's civil-military relations:

- the importance of the absence of antagonistic factions within the armed forces in sustaining political control;
- the ability of a president to use appointment prerogatives to preclude the emergence of military challengers and to maintain an officer corps that complied with presidential decisions; and
- the use of appointments to position officers with specific conceptions of their appropriate roles as military officers and the effect these officers can have on the officer corps overall.

Although initially chosen after Nasser's death by the political elite because of, rather than despite, his perceived political weaknesses, Sadat was able to capitalize on the power changes in civil-military relations that had occurred after the 1967 war. Sadat, in addition, proved an able tactician. In May 1971, Sadat dismissed and marginalized several powerful opponents in the pro-Nasser leftist political elite and security edifice. In addition, as part of what was termed the "corrective revolution," Sadat was able to push aside his military chief, General Mohammed Fawzi, who had sided with this faction of the elite.²² This left him in clear control of a military that lacked charismatic leaders and powerful factions.

President Sadat used his powers of appointment to great effect, both for

domestic and international purposes. In addition to ensuring that an influential challenger to his position did not emerge, Sadat ensured that his controversial strategy for the 1973 war (and subsequent peace negotiations) with Israel would not face opposition from military leaders. To secure this latitude, and critical of both corruption and the dissolution of the officer corps under Amer's leadership in the early and mid-1960s, Sadat chose officers focused on their professional responsibilities.

The military's focus on addressing the external challenge posed by the loss of territory was significant. Sadat was also fortunate in the sense that, from the perspective of the Egyptian Armed Forces, the country faced a paramount military challenge,²³ manifested in Israel's occupation of the Sinai Peninsula and its fortifications along the Suez Canal.

Moreover, Sadat sought officers who professed a personal commitment to non-intervention in politics, as in the case of General Gamasy.²⁴ Although his own memoirs underscore his disillusionment with Sadat's policies and decisions before, during, and after the war, General Gamasy nevertheless complied with those decisions.²⁵ Gamasy seemed to think of himself as a "professional officer" whose appropriate role was to defer to the political leadership in matters of policy.

Sadat was strategic in his use of appointments, regularly appointing rivals to key posts and then moving them out of those positions when he anticipated opposition from them.²⁶ He also asserted

22. Raymond Hinnebusch, *Egyptian Politics Under Sadat*, Cambridge University Press, 1985, pp. 43-44; Kirk Beattie, *Egypt during the Sadat Years*, London: Palgrave, 2000, pp. 62-76.

23. On the influence of international threats on civil-military relations see Michael C. Desch, *Civilian Control of the Military: The Changing Security Environment*, Johns Hopkins U Press 1999.

24. See Mohamed Abdel Ghani El Gamasy, *The October War: Memoirs of Field Marshal El Gamasy of Egypt*, Cairo, American University Press in Cairo Press.

25. Mohamed Abdel Ghani El Gamasy, *The October War: Memoirs of Field Marshal El Gamasy of Egypt*, Cairo, American University Press in Cairo Press.

26. Brooks, *Shaping Strategy*, pp. 132-137.

control over decision-making, sometimes side-lining his military leaders from deliberations over major strategic and policy issues, and overruling their command decisions directly during the October 1973 war. His control of decision-making and appointment prerogatives, in turn, allowed him to plan and execute the October war in accordance with his own conception of a limited war, aimed at catalysing negotiations with Israel over the countries' territorial disputes. He pursued this limited war strategy despite the sometimes vehement opposition within the military chain of command both before and during the war.

Sadat also used his powers of appointment to ensure his military leaders would comply with the concessions he granted during the negotiations of the Camp David Accords, and in the subsequent peace treaty with Israel. The peace process had serious implications for the military's professional interests. It created uncertainty and delay in the supply of weapons as the country transitioned from the Soviet Union to the United States as its principal arms supplier. The terms of the treaty itself also required the near total demilitarization of the Sinai Peninsula. Still, Sadat was able to use his powers of appointment strategically to side-line dissenters before they could mobilize challenges to his initiatives in the 1970s. Unlike Nasser's experience with Amer in the 1960s, there was no faction in the military that could organize a direct challenge to Sadat's authority and decision-making prerogatives.

2.4 PRESIDENT MUBARAK, DEFENCE MINISTER GHAZALA, AND GENERAL TANTAWI

Like his predecessors, President Mubarak's ability to hire and fire his military leaders proved central to curbing potential challenges over control of the armed forces. This is for example evident in Mubarak's relations with his Minister of Defence Abu Ghazala in the 1980s. While Abu Ghazala maintained that he lacked political ambition, he was nonetheless a highly popular and influential military leader.²⁷ Mubarak's fear, as it was commonly interpreted, was that Abu Ghazala would be able to marshal supporters directly loyal to himself, not to the president, and therefore present a potential threat to presidential supremacy. After a period of intrigue, Mubarak succeeded in removing Abu Ghazala from his position as Minister of Defence. After the dismissal of Abu Ghazala, Mubarak eventually settled on General Tantawi as Minister of Defence. Long disparaged as Mubarak's lackey, Tantawi seemingly lacked the charisma and political skill that would allow him to build an independent power centre within the armed forces.

The relationship between Mubarak and his military leaders hinged on an implicit commitment that the latter would support him in office, and cede governance of the broader state apparatus to the president. In exchange, the armed forces would receive corporate economic benefits, and private benefits for the senior officers in the form of special compensation and perquisites.

Under Mubarak, the military benefited from the growth of military-controlled enterprises aimed at the civilian market. The origins of these enterprises can be traced to the Sadat era and the establishment of the Arab Organization for Industrialization (AOI) in 1975 (ostensibly as a means to provide arms manufacturing capability

to its members) as well as the National Services Product Organization (NSPO) in 1979 to allow the military self-sufficiency in the production of vital goods. Under Mubarak, these entities, along with enterprises under the Ministry of Military Production, ensured that the military was able not only to produce equipment and services essential to the armed forces, but that it controlled enterprises involved in everything from agricultural production, to manufacturing, to the provisions of a wealth of services in the Egyptian economy. In addition, these activities would benefit from the supply of virtually free labour in the form of conscripts, and subsidized inputs such as energy. Military owned enterprises also did not pay taxes to the state, and were not subject to parliamentary oversight.

The Mubarak-era practice of providing well-paying sinecures to retired generals within the civil and economic state-bureaucracy provided another means of ensuring political control. Upon retirement, senior officers could expect positions in the civil service, on boards of state enterprises, utilities and holding companies, and within ministries, including those concerned with real estate, housing, construction, agricultural development and land reclamation.²⁸ This practice also included appointments of retired military officers as regional governors and as governorate staff. According to a study by Hicham Bou Nassif, during Mubarak's tenure as president, retired military officers occupied over 2,000 posts in local governments. They also held 63 of 156 governorships; even where the governor was not a retired officer, key positions on his staff were often held by former military personnel.²⁹

27. Robert Springborg, "The Field Marshal and the President: Civil-military relations in Egypt Today" MERIP (July -Aug 1987)

28. Sayigh, *Above the State*, pp. 16-17. Zeinab Abdul-Magd, "The Egyptian Republic of Retired Officers," Foreignpolicy.com May 8, 2012.

29. Hicham Bou Nassif. *Wedded to Mubarak: The Second Careers and Financial Rewards of Egypt's Military Elite, 1981-2011*, Middle East Journal, 67, no. 4, 2013; Sayigh, Yezid, *Above the State: the Officers Republic in Egypt*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, August 2012.

This had two important implications. First, it meant that military officers, both active and retired, held leadership positions in many areas of the state – with the exception of the country’s dominant political party, the NDP – and (most) ministerial positions. While the military leadership was reportedly contemptuous of the growing influence of the Ministry of Interior in the final decade of Mubarak’s rule, as discussed below, it is important to bear in mind that the military was far from marginalized: military officers permeated the state, and were critical in extending state control through their role in local government.³⁰ Second, the appointment of retired officers allowed for an important mechanism of transmitting and maintaining political control, via the leadership of senior officers, throughout the armed forces. The main recipients of special perquisites and positions within economic enterprises and the civil bureaucracy were senior officers and retired senior officers. Hence, through the promise of a well-paid position upon retirement and other perquisites during active duty, mid-level officers could be expected to remain loyal to the presidency as they worked their way up the chain of command.³¹

Two other aspects of Mubarak’s relation with the armed forces warrant discussion. First, under Mubarak the military was ceded significant administrative autonomy. Partly as a result, the military played a strong role in defining its own mandate to not include domestic policing, or for example, battling the insurgency in Upper Egypt during the 1990s. This created some inherent tensions for an officer corps that saw its principal role as preparing for war; it lacked a clear external adversary, in part given the existence of a peace treaty with Israel. Second, the military’s lack of a domestic policing role had the consequence of shifting resources and power to the Ministry of Interior, whose

security forces would be responsible for policing and rooting out potential opposition to the state (as well as fighting the insurgency in Upper Egypt during the 1990s). In addition, especially in the last decade of his rule, Mubarak would allocate significant resources to the MoI. This was seen by many analysts as an effort to build up an alternative power base to the armed forces.³² The absolute resources of the military, nonetheless, remained substantial, and its role within the state significant. Mubarak’s perceived tilt towards the MoI is however important in understanding the grievances held by senior officers on the eve of the January 2011 revolution.

Over time, despite the largely privileged position of the Egyptian military provided by Mubarak’s regime, tensions emerged between the president and military officers. This included the military’s reported antipathy towards President Mubarak’s son Gamal and opposition to his possible succession to the presidency. In addition to not having a career in the military, Gamal was the head of an influential cohort of business elite within the National Democratic Party whose liberalization schemes threatened to enrich the business class at the expense of the military’s economic interests.³³ Finally, it is worth noting that Egypt had experienced strikes and other manifestations of unrest and popular dissatisfaction in the years leading up to the uprising. The protests exposed the vulnerability and lack of popular underpinnings for Mubarak’s state.

In short, the military held a relatively privileged position under President Mubarak. Nonetheless, by the time that protests against Mubarak began in January 2011, there were some significant tensions in Egyptian civil-military relations.

30. This is the core argument in Sayigh, *Above the State*.

31. Sayigh, *Above the State*, p. 5.

32. For details on the rise of the MoI see Kandil, *Soldiers, Spies and Statesmen*.

33. Shana Marshall and Joshua Stacher, “Egypt’s Generals and Transnational Capital,” MERIP, Mer262.

During the protests, the locus of decision-making shifted to the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), and its leaders began to issue communications and statements directly to the public about its intentions during the protests. This shift was further demonstrated by the meeting held by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) the day before military leaders secured Mubarak's departure from office. Mubarak himself did not attend this meeting, although, as president, he was formally the head of the SCAF.

Understanding why President Mubarak effectively lost control over the military requires attention to the impact of social support in shaping Egypt's civil-military relations. After the initial protest on January 25, the protests rapidly spread, coming to represent a cross-section of social classes and groups spanning cities across Egypt. The military represented the last line of defence for the regime after the failure of the police to repress the protests, and their disappearance from the streets on January 28. Despite its initial ambivalence toward the protests, the SCAF embraced the mandate presented by Egypt's citizens, announcing on January 31 that the armed forces would not fire on the demonstrators and stating that they would protect the people's interests.³⁴

The uprising allowed the military to reassert its pre-eminence after a decade that saw the rising influence of the NDP and the Mol. The generals seemed to embrace their resurgent position. Yet, they also retained a substantial interest in maintaining the state's autocratic form, given that the corporate interests and private wellbeing of military officers depended on its maintenance.

Whether the military leadership ever contemplated defending Mubarak by using force to disperse the protests is not known (and may never be known, given the secrecy surrounding deliberations within the SCAF and military networks). Regardless, even if it had favoured the use of force against demonstrators, the military leadership may have been unable to defend Mubarak without a severe risk to the cohesion of the armed forces.³⁵ Externally, during the 2011 revolution, the armed forces appeared as a cohesive unit and discipline seemed intact. Yet, there were rumours after the ouster of Mubarak that junior officers were disenchanted with the old-guard leadership under Marshal Tantawi.³⁶ Had the armed forces been tested with orders to fire on protesters, it is unclear what might have occurred.

In this regard, Mubarak's experience illustrates a potential danger, or trade-off in using powers of appointment to ensure that challengers do not emerge from within the armed forces. Mubarak may have successfully ensured that no threat would emerge from the leadership of the armed forces by relying on a cohort from an old and trusted generation. However, in so doing he also created the basis for potential dissent in the ranks that would ultimately hinder the leadership's ability to defend him during the 2011 revolution. Had the military leadership under Marshal Tantawi contemplated using force at some point, the threat to military cohesion and possible mutiny would have been great. If the younger officers would have resisted such orders, it would have been a significant constraint on the armed forces ability to defend Mubarak's presidency.³⁷

34. David Kirkpatrick "Egyptians Defiant as Military does little to quash protests." *New York Times*, January 29, 2011; "Egypt protests: Army rules out the use of force," *BBC News*, January 31, 2011.

35. Derek Lutterbeck, "Arab Uprisings and Armed Forces," Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of the Armed Forces, October 2011.

36. Patrick Galey, "Why the Egyptian Military Fears a Captain's Revolt," ForeignPolicy.com, February 16, 2012.

37. Bou Nassif, "Wedded to Mubarak."

3. THE SCAF'S ROLE DURING THE POST-MUBARAK PERIOD

Social support and the power of appointments continued to influence civil-military relations in Egypt during the transition period after President Mubarak's departure from office on February 11, 2011. The SCAF quickly moved to seize control of the transition: a constitutional referendum was held in March 2011, followed by a constitutional declaration issued by SCAF on March 30. These documents provided the initial interim constitutional framework during the transition. Parliamentary elections were then held, prior to the election of a president and the drafting

of a constitution.³⁸ The period of SCAF control of the Executive continued until Mohamed Morsi's election as president and inauguration on June 30, 2012. The ensuing year of Morsi's tenure in office proved tumultuous and on July 3, 2013 the SCAF removed him from office. The head of the Supreme Constitutional Court, Adly Mansour, was appointed interim president, until Abdel Fatah Al Sisi prevailed in presidential elections in May 2014. Civil-military relations and how they evolved during this period are discussed below.

3.1 POST-MUBARAK SCAF RULE

Table 2. Key Events in the SCAF-led Transition and Morsi Presidency

2011	
<i>February 11</i>	President Mubarak resigns from office under SCAF pressure.
<i>February 13</i>	SCAF dissolves parliament and suspends 1971 Constitution.
<i>March 19</i>	Egyptians vote in a referendum to approve several amendments to the 1971 Constitution, which will act as an interim charter during the transition.
<i>March 30</i>	SCAF unilaterally and inexplicably issues its own Constitutional Declaration; includes articles not in March 19 referendum. Among its articles is language (contrary to referendum) that allows for a constitution to be written prior to the election of a president.
<i>Mid-November</i>	SCAF floats the "Selmi document"; it proposes supra-constitutional principles granting powers to the military to oversee its own affairs. After massive protests in response, the military abandons the initiative.
<i>November 28-29</i>	First round of parliamentary elections are held.
2012	
<i>January 3-4</i>	After the final round of parliamentary elections, results are announced in which the Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) and the Salafist Al Nour party receive seventy per cent of seats in the People's Assembly
<i>April 10</i>	The Constitutional Assembly (CA), formed in March, is dissolved after massive defections from non-Islamist members.

<i>April 14</i>	The Presidential Election Commission rules several candidates ineligible for the election, including FJP candidate Khairat Al Shater. Mohamed Morsi then becomes the FJP candidate.
<i>May 23-24</i>	First round of presidential elections is held.
<i>June 12</i>	A new constitutional assembly is seated after military pressure results in agreement among political factions about new rules for its membership.
<i>June 14</i>	After the judiciary rules that one third of parliamentary seats have been elected illegally, SCAF dissolves parliament.
<i>June 17-18</i>	Run-off election between Morsi and establishment candidate, Ahmed Shafiq.
<i>June 17</i>	Military issues sweeping constitutional declaration that grants the SCAF legislative powers, authority over the CA and significantly limits presidential prerogatives over military affairs.
<i>June 30</i>	Morsi is inaugurated in front of Supreme Constitutional Court.
<i>July 8</i>	Morsi attempts to recall parliament; he calls off the effort after the court and SCAF oppose the measure.
<i>August 6</i>	Military attack in Sinai results in the shocking death of 16 soldiers
<i>August 8</i>	Morsi fires Mol and chiefs of Military Police and Presidential Guard.
<i>August 12</i>	Morsi fires Defence Minister Tantawi, Chief of Staff Anan and other officials. General Abdel Fatah Al Sisi appointed Defence Minister. Morsi also cancels SCAF's June 17 Constitutional Declaration
<i>November 22</i>	Morsi issues a short decree placing the presidency and CA beyond judicial control.
<i>November 30</i>	Draft constitution is completed despite defections from secular and liberal members from the CA. This and the November 22 decree spark protests and mark the start of growing opposition to his rule by non-Islamists.
<i>December 15</i>	Constitution is passed in referendum. It significantly enhances military prerogatives.
2013	
<i>January 25</i>	On anniversary of revolution, anti-Morsi protesters gather at Tahrir square.
<i>February & March</i>	Anti-Morsi protests spread.
<i>April</i>	Tamarod movement announces signature campaign aimed at winning new presidential elections.
<i>May 7</i>	Morsi shuffles cabinet, adding more MB members

June 17	Morsi appoints several MB members as new regional governors
June 23	General Sissi issues statement warning that the military will not allow Egypt “to slip down a tunnel of darkness” and calling on political factions to settle their differences.
June 30	Massive anti-Morsi protests are held in Tahir square and countered by pro Morsi demonstrations centered on Rabaa Al Adawiya Mosque in Nasr city.
July 1	SCAF issues ultimatum to Morsi, warning that the president has 48 hours to resolve the crisis, or it will impose its own “roadmap for the future”
July 3	Morsi is arrested by the military. The constitution is once again suspended and interim president Adly Mansour is appointed.

From the start, the SCAF seemed poorly prepared to manage the transition; its decisions seemed reactive and its tactics incoherent. Nevertheless, examination of the post-Mubarak period reveals a possible purpose behind the SCAF’s actions in managing the transition: the military leadership sought to ensure that it would have influence over the content of a future constitution. This would allow it to safeguard prerogatives and institutional autonomy under a future president. For sixteen months following Mubarak’s ouster, the SCAF remained in control of the Executive.³⁹ The SCAF aimed to retain oversight and influence over the constitution drafting process.

This is a complex period in Egypt’s recent history marked by moves and countermoves by the SCAF, the large and well organized Muslim Brotherhood, and the activists and parties representing secular constituencies. Many analysts suggested, at least in the initial period of the transition, that there

was a tacit accommodation, if not overt deal between the military and the Muslim Brotherhood.⁴⁰ Especially in the immediate transition period, a number of SCAF actions suggested such an accommodation with the MB was in place, most notably its support for quickly holding parliamentary elections, which the less well organized secular parties opposed.

Regardless of the precise parameters of any “deal” with the MB, the SCAF was clearly fixated on controlling the drafting of a new constitution. In particular it sought to ensure that the constitution was written before presidential elections would be held. This was evident in how it managed the March 19, 2011 referendum on the 1971 constitution, in which Egyptians were presented with amendments aimed at providing a constitutional framework for the transition period. Inexplicably, after the referendum passed on March 30, the SCAF unilaterally presented its own Constitutional Declaration. Among the

38. Parliamentary elections were held from November 2011 to January 2012. The results highly favored the Muslim Brotherhood’s Freedom and Justice Party and the Salafist part, Al Nour. Together they would hold seventy percent of the seats in the People’s Assembly. The parliament was, however, dissolved by the SCAF during the June 2012 presidential election after the Supreme Constitutional Court declared components of the election law illegal. Parliament was dissolved by the SCAF on June 14, 2012.

39. As discussed below, SCAF would also dominate it for the first six weeks after President Mohamed Morsi’s inauguration on June 30, 2011

40. See, for example, Sherif Tarek, “Egypt’s Muslim Brotherhood and ruling military: Deal or No Deal?” Ahram online, Sept. 28, 2011.

declaration's key provisions was language revised from the March 19 referendum that dictated that the SCAF would convene parliament (not a newly elected president) in order for it to elect a 100 person Constituent Assembly. According to legal expert Kristen Stilt, this process negated the prospect of electing a president before the constitution was written.⁴¹

Months later, in November 2011, the SCAF would float what would come to be known as the Selmi document, after its author, Vice Prime Minister Ali Al Selmi.⁴² The Selmi document proposed that a range of formal powers and prerogatives related to control of the military be ceded to the armed forces.⁴³ The military was forced to backtrack and abandon the proposal after it sparked massive and deadly demonstrations. This failure increased the constitution's importance to the SCAF. When the Constituent Assembly was dissolved by

the judiciary in April 2012, the military stepped in to negotiate the creation of a new body.⁴⁴ At the time, the military even proposed delaying presidential elections, scheduled to begin in May, until the constitution was written.⁴⁵

Most importantly, on the eve of the runoff presidential election in June 2012 between Air Force General Ahmed Shafiq and the Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party candidate, Mohammed Morsi, the SCAF issued a sweeping Constitutional Declaration. The June 17th decree not only granted clear authority to the SCAF to oversee the military's own affairs,⁴⁶ but also allocated legislative powers to the military and granted it an effective veto over the actions of the Constituent Assembly.⁴⁷ When Morsi took office on June 30, he did so with his presidential powers limited by the military's declaration.

Table 1. The SCAF's June 17, 2012 Constitutional Declaration

Article 53 Article 53/1	SCAF decides on "all issues" related to the armed forces. President can only declare war with SCAF approval.
Article 56B	SCAF assumes all legislative powers until new parliament is elected.
Article 60B	If Constituent Assembly (CA) encounters "an obstacle," SCAF will form a new CA.
Article 60B1	If the SCAF, Judiciary, Prime Minister, or the President dispute an article in the proposed constitution, and are unable to resolve the disagreement, the matter is referred to the Supreme Constitutional Court to decide the outcome.

41. Kristen A. Stilt, "The End of 'One Hand': The Egyptian Constitutional Declaration and the Rift Between the 'People' and the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces," Northwestern University School of Law Scholarly Commons, Faculty Working Papers, Paper 208, (2012).

42. Nathan Brown, "Landmines in Egypt's Constitutional Roadmap," Carnegie Endowment, December 20, 2011.

43. Evan Hill, "Background: SCAFs last minute power grab," Al Jazeera, June 18, 2012.

44. Marina Ottaway, "Egypt: Death of the Constituent Assembly," Carneigeendowment.org, June 13, 2012.

45. Ammar Ali Hasan, "Hard to see positive result in murky Egyptian election," Al-Monitor <http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/politics/2012/04/where-is-egypt-heading.html> posted April 25, 2012

46. Parliament had been dissolved by the SCAF on June 14th after part of its election law was deemed illegal by the courts.

47. Evan Hill. "Background: SCAF's last minute power grab" Al Jazeera. 18, June 2012.

3.2 PRESIDENT MORSI AND THE SCAF

The importance of mass support and using appointments to attempt to secure the loyalty of the military are once again apparent under President Morsi. Six weeks after taking office, he dismissed a large number of senior officials in the armed forces and the Ministry of Interior. The pretext for the dismissals was the killing of 16 officers at a military checkpoint at Rafah on August 6, 2012. Two days after the massacre, Morsi removed the chief of military intelligence and other key officials of the Ministry of Interior. Then, on August 12, he shocked observers by announcing the dismissal of the head of the SCAF, Field Marshal Hussein Tantawi, and the Chief of Staff of the Armed Forces, General Sami Anan. Several other officials, including the service commanders, would be replaced as well. As new Minister of Defence, Morsi appointed General Abdel Fatah Al Sisi. In addition, and especially important, Morsi also cancelled the SCAF's June 17th Constitutional Declaration.

At the time, this was interpreted as a dramatic assertion of civilian control by President Morsi. The act of removing senior SCAF leaders suggested that Morsi had seized powers of appointment and was advancing his control over the armed forces. The reality proved more complex. Morsi likely appointed General Sisi as Minister of Defence because of Sisi's reputation for piety and cordial relations with the Muslim Brotherhood as its former military liaison officer. This illustrates the goal of many political leaders to ensure the military is run by what they anticipate will be loyal and likeminded military officers. Moreover, Morsi's success in replacing the senior leadership was likely a reflection, at least in part, of Tantawi's questionable standing within the junior officer corps.⁴⁸

In retrospect, the dismissal of the senior officers does not appear to be an expression of genuine civilian dominance

over the armed forces. Instead, Morsi's actions appear more likely to be the result of a new accommodation of the political leadership with the military, under the leadership of General Sisi. General Sisi had been Head of Military Intelligence and was at the time the SCAF's youngest member. Sisi may have been consulted by Morsi before the personnel changes. In addition, the fact that all involved went along without any signs of dissent suggests that Morsi's moves were not controversial within the armed forces. Regardless of the extent of consultations prior to the changes, Sisi swiftly moved to make a broad range of changes in the membership of the SCAF, as well as to oversee the retirement of 70 generals.⁴⁹ That the above mentioned political manoeuvrings, moreover, occurred without any visible break in internal military cohesion underscores the subtlety of these dynamics and requires fine grained analysis of military leaders and their respective spheres of influence.

It is also important to emphasize that the SCAF let stand Morsi's cancellation of its June 17th constitutional declaration, and hence effectively claiming his presidential powers. This is striking because the SCAF under Tantawi's leadership had often intervened in the transition, including the issuance of the June 17th constitutional declaration itself. In this context, the fact that General Sisi went along with the cancellation of the June declaration suggests the military approved of Morsi's actions.

There were clear benefits for the military in allowing Morsi to claim his powers as president. In exchange, the military got to return to the barracks and retreat from the overt political rule that had proven to be damaging to its reputation and standing within the Egyptian population. In addition, presumably, the military

48. See Omar Ashour, "Ballots Versus Bullets: The Crisis of Civil-military relations in Egypt," Brookings Institution, September 3, 2013.

49. Ahmed Aboul Enein, "El Sisi conducts wide scale SCAF reshuffle," Daily News Egypt 15 Aug 2012.

was promised that the constitution that was being drafted would reflect military priorities and protect its prerogatives. The terms of the November 30th draft constitution, which was passed in a referendum on 15 December 2012, certainly reflected military interests.

The prerogatives of the armed forces in the 2012 constitution were enhanced from those enjoyed in the 1971 version. The new constitution included explicit language that granted the National Defence Council (NDC) oversight of the military budget and required it be consulted if the armed forces were to be deployed, or war declared. The deliberations of the 15 NDC members were also likely to be heavily influenced, if not outright dominated by the armed forces. In addition, the constitution now explicitly required that the Minister of Defence be a military officer, foreclosing the possibility that a civilian could be appointed to the position.⁵⁰

In short, the above indications and ensuing interpretation of Morsi's tenure in office suggests that he sought a tacit alliance with the military, securing his rule by forsaking formal control over the military. Rather than conceding to his secular opponents, President Morsi relied on the security apparatus and the state to remain complicit in maintaining him in power. Given that the military appeared to have achieved its primary goal of protecting its privileges in the new constitution, why did its leaders eventually turn against Morsi? What went wrong in President Morsi's relationship with the military under General Sisi's leadership?

Two factors are essential to understanding what occurred. First, many of Morsi's actions

as president increased polarization in the country, enraged the secular opposition, and resulted in demonstrations and protests against his rule. Notably, he issued a decree on November 22, 2012 in which he placed himself above judicial accountability. Many Egyptians viewed this measure as overtly dictatorial. Hence, if one rationale for the military to return to the barracks in August 2012 was that a civilian president could provide a measure of stability, its hopes were not fulfilled. Not only was such disorder unsettling to the armed forces, its effects on the country's economy also threatened the military's economic interests. The importance of social demonstrations in shaping civil-military relations once again emerges as a central theme in Morsi's fate as president.

Second, Morsi took several steps that challenged the corporate interests of the military. These included incursions into decision-making about foreign policy, such as statements made about the Syrian civil war; controversies about Morsi's approach to militants located in Sinai; and recordings of political deliberations over a potential Ethiopian dam on the Nile, in which a range of aggressive (and reckless) intelligence and foreign policy actions were discussed.⁵¹ Added to these offenses came symbolic affronts, such as Morsi's invitation to relatives of the assassins that murdered President Sadat in 1981 to a commemoration of the October 1973 war.⁵² Other issues sparked conflict as well. For example, rumours circulated that the Muslim Brotherhood was trying to "infiltrate" the ranks of the military; indeed, so persistent was this rumour that General Sisi was prompted to rebut it on February 14.⁵³ In June 2013, Morsi also appointed several members of the Muslim Brotherhood as regional governors, despite the aforementioned

50. For a more specific discussion on this topic, please see; Hanssen, Måns (ed.) (2014) *Security Sector Governance in Egypt: Civil-Military Relations in Focus*. Conference Report, the Geneva Centre for the Democratic Control of Armed Forces (DCAF), Geneva.

51. Liam Stack, "With cameras rolling, Egypt's politicians threaten Ethiopian over dam," *New York Times*, June 6, 2013.

52. "Sadat family angry over Tarek al-Zomor's attendance of war ceremony," *Egypt Independent*, October 8, 2012.

53. Hicham Mourad, "Why Egypt's Army Overthrew Morsi," *Al Jazeera* 13 July 2013. <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContentP/4/76375/Opinion/Why-Egypt%E2%80%99s-army-overthrew-Morsi.aspx>

Table 3. Comparison of Egypt's 1971, 2012 and 2014 Constitutions

	1971 Constitution	Dec. 2012 Constitution	Jan. 2014 Constitution plus February 2014 Presidential Decrees *
National Defence Council (NDC)	<p>NDC has a vague mandate. It is presided over by President and examines matters related to "safety and security" of country.</p> <p>[established by President Sadat, but largely defunct until military's June 2012 Constitutional Declaration]</p>	<p>Military strongly represented on NDC, with potential for military dominance. It has 15 members: President, Prime Minister, Speakers of Upper & Lower chambers, Ministers of Foreign Affairs, Interior, Defence, Chief of General Intelligence, Chief of Staff, Service Commanders, Chief of Operations for Armed forces and Head of Military Intelligence.</p> <p>NDC oversees the military budget. President cannot commit forces without first "consulting" the NDC and getting approval of the People's Assembly.</p>	<p>NDC is clearly military dominated. It now has 14 members; the same membership as in 2012 constitution, except without the speaker of the upper house (which has been eliminated in 2014 constitution).</p> <p>NDC oversees the military budget. NDC must be consulted and has oversight over issues related to the administration of the armed forces, and decisions related to national security, including declaring war and committing forces abroad.</p>
Supreme Council of Armed Forces (SCAF)	SCAF headed by the president.	SCAF headed by the president.	SCAF membership is expanded to twenty three members of the military, security and intelligence institutions. It is now headed by the Defence Minister.
National Security Council (NSC)		Civilian dominated, but no defined power: "adopts strategies for establishing national security."	Civilian dominated, but no defined power: "adopts strategies for establishing national security."
Defence Minister	Appointed by President	Appointed by President, but must be a military officer.	Appointed by SCAF for next two terms (8 years); must be general officer with five years of service in a major military branch.
Military trials of civilians		Allows for military trials of civilians for offenses against the armed forces	Allows for military trials of civilians, but specifies broadly the offenses that qualify

*In February 2014, President Mansour issued several presidential decrees pertaining to the roles and membership of the SCAF and NDC.

importance of those positions as a vehicle for military compensation and influence.⁵⁴

Why Morsi took these actions that antagonized the military is not fully clear. They are sometimes attributed to pressures from the leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood, to his poor skills as a politician, or to miscalculations about the true extent of his social support. Morsi also had incentives to expand his power base in Egypt's civil bureaucracy and in the state, in order to bolster his presidency, which may also have motivated his actions.

To say that the removal of President Morsi from power was controversial in Egypt is an understatement. To his supporters, the military removed a democratically elected president with a sizable mandate to govern from office. From the perspective of those who supported action against the president, he had proven a poor leader; rather than address the fundamental social and economic problems facing the country, he had acted in a dictatorial fashion, proving impervious to compromise with the secular opposition. The result was massive unrest and political polarization. Publicly, this unrest and unwillingness to compromise provided the military with a rationale to remove President Morsi from office on July 3, 2013. As discussed above, however, the armed forces also had their own grievances against President Morsi. In this context, it seems clear that the armed forces exploited what was a convenient opportunity to dispose the president

under cover of political support from the demonstrators who were disenchanted with Morsi's governance.

What is distinctive about these events is the degree to which the military and Morsi seemed to explicitly promote social mobilization as political tools to legitimate their actions.⁵⁵ Opposition and protests against Morsi intensified. On June 30, 2013, the anti-Morsi Tamarod movement organised a massive demonstration against the president. The military quite explicitly sought to exploit the mandate of the protest.⁵⁶ In fact, both the president and the SCAF sought to demonstrate they had social backing for their positions. At the time of the June protests, for example, Morsi was reported to be checking cell phone usage and viewing images on Google Earth to measure the size of demonstrations in his support; he may also have miscalculated the magnitude of his support and believed his supporters' demonstrations were larger than those organized by his opponents.⁵⁷ The military used anti-Morsi demonstrations in its propaganda, resorting to posting footage of the protests on YouTube.⁵⁸ Ultimately, the size of the anti-Morsi protests were seen by the military leadership as a sort of "plebiscite" approving the removal of the president from office. These events offer an explicit example of the importance placed by political and military leaders on demonstrating social support as a way of enhancing their political leverage in relations with each other.

54. Patrick Kingsley, "Egypt's Morsi appoints hardline Islamist to govern Luxor," *The Guardian*, June 13, 2013.

55. "New Leaks allege UAE involvement in Egyptian military fund," *Daily News Egypt*, March 2, 2015.

56. It may have gone even farther, offering logistical and financial support to the movement. "New Leaks allege UAE involvement in Egyptian military fund," *Daily News Egypt*, March 2, 2015.

57. This led to a rather unusual press release issued by Google, stating that Google Earth was not equipped for crowdsizing. "Google Official: Google Earth cannot count the number of protesters," *Egypt Independent*, July 28, 2013.

58. See the Associated Press footage posted on YouTube, "Egypt Military Releases New Protest Video." <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1VrWRkhtjTk>

3.3 THE SCAF AND INTERIM PRESIDENT MANSOUR

With the end of Morsi's tenure as president, the military suspended the 2012 constitution and set up an interim government under the head of the chief of the Supreme Constitutional Court, Adly Mansour. Soon after assuming office, on July 8, President Mansour issued a Constitutional Declaration providing a roadmap for the transition and establishing a new 50 member constitutional committee to oversee the drafting of a new constitution.

Mansour's appointment as interim president was a notable contrast from the decision in February 2011 by the SCAF to rule directly after President Mubarak's departure from office. By pointing to the fact that none of them assumed political office directly or received a promotion upon Morsi's ouster, the generals may have been trying to distance themselves from accusations that they had engaged in a *coup d'état* against President Morsi.⁵⁹ Nevertheless, Interim President Mansour lacked the mandate of a democratically elected president, with a sizable social base, which Morsi had been able to claim. Mansour was a non-threatening choice as President for the SCAF. The Supreme Constitutional Court was staffed with Mubarak-era appointees, and although independent, the judiciary had often sided with the military, regularly issuing decisions that served to control and limit the Muslim Brotherhood's power and influence during the SCAF transition and Morsi's presidency.

During Mansour's tenure in office, final authority resided with the SCAF. The military's dominance of the state

was reflected, for example, in the constitution completed in December 2013 and approved in the January 2014 referendum. The 2014 constitution expanded military prerogatives, which were further enhanced by several decrees issued by President Mansour in February and March relating, among other issues, to the organization of the SCAF and National Defence Council.⁶⁰

Two features of the 2014 constitution and President Mansour's decrees are especially significant. First, they institutionalized the military as the dominant decision-maker in national security affairs, budgetary, and policy matters related to the armed forces. This underscores the importance of decision-making prerogatives once again as both a reflection, and source, of political control. For example, the constitution designated the Minister of Defence, not the president as in the past, as the actor in charge of the expanded 23-person Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF). The authority granted to the National Defence Council was also enhanced. While the 2012 constitution required that the NDC be consulted in matters related to the deployment of forces and declaration of war, the NDC was now deemed the primary authority in all areas related to the armed forces. The NDC controls the defence budget as well, ensuring that control of military economic enterprises is beyond parliamentary and presidential control and oversight. In addition, with the abolition of the upper house of parliament, the Shura Council, in the constitution,⁶² the NDC membership shrunk from 15 to 14, with military

59. See, for example, the argument that General Wafsy makes to a news reporter, which appears in a YouTube clip. See <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GN8wNx8JfN4>

60. Ahmed Eleiba, "Analysis: New Laws Reorganize Egypt's Security Affairs," March 9, 2014, Ahram Online. On earlier changes in the SCAF see Ahmed Aboul Enein, Daily News Egypt, September 3, 2012.

61. "Egypt parliament upper house eliminated in draft constitution," November 7, 2013, Ahram Online. <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/85903/Egypt/Politics-/Egypt-parliament-upper-house-eliminated-in-draft-c.aspx>

62. The National Security Council was retained from the 2012 constitution. Its domain and range of responsibilities, however, are ill-defined; it includes the Prime Minister and other civilians, but the Council has little statutory power to impact strategy or policy outcomes.

members clearly outnumbering their civilian counterparts.⁶³

Second, the constitution assured that the Minister of Defence would be wholly independent from the president. The rules governing the appointment, responsibilities, and qualifications of the Minister are key in this regard. The constitution specifies that the SCAF needs to approve the appointment of the Minister for the next two presidential terms (each term is 4 years). The Minister of Defence must be a military officer who has held the rank of General for at least five years and served in a major branch of the armed forces. This means that the Minister of Defence must be someone who has worked his way through the military ranks and will likely therefore represent its core interests.⁶³ These rules make it difficult for the political leadership to appoint a Minister of Defence that is directly loyal to the Presidency. This is perhaps among the most significant, if subtle, change in the 2014 constitution. Without the power to appoint the Minister of Defence, the president lacks a key tool of control over the military by placing an ally or likeminded officer into that central position.

In addition to trying to ensure that its power and influence were enshrined in written rules and processes, the military also sought to consolidate a social base for its rule prior to the 2014 presidential election. Under General Sisi's lead, the military made a concerted effort to gain the support of the social groups that had opposed Morsi's government, or were disenchanted with the period of instability and economic difficulty that ensued after the 2011 revolution. In a manner somewhat reminiscent of President Nasser, in which the military leadership presented itself as the vanguard of reform in the aftermath of the removal of corrupt and ineffectual political leadership, now Field Marshal Sisi announced several development projects aimed at conveying the military's capacity to solve endemic social and economic problems. Much like Nasser, Field Marshal Sisi seemed focused on building a social base to legitimate the military's ongoing state influence. The SCAF and the government under Interim President Mansour also sought to resurrect the Egyptian "state," including some of the civilian elite prominent under Mubarak. With the election of Sisi to the presidency, many of these endeavours have continued.

63. Since only males are allowed to serve in the armed forces, this also means that the Minister of Defence may not be a woman. This goes against Article 11 of the 2014 constitution that ensures women the right to serve in all public posts and entities without discrimination.

3.4 CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS UNDER PRESIDENT SISI

When Sisi resigned from the position as Minister of Defence in March 2014 and declared himself a candidate in the presidential elections, it seemed like the military dominance of the state was close to assured. After all, the military's most prominent leader was soon to be moving relatively seamlessly into the presidency after an election with no real competitor to challenge him.

The reality, however, is more complex. Sisi's election and the military's influence on the state did not usher in the end of civil-military relations, but rather a more complex and subtle phase. First, his military experience and ties aside, it should be noted that as president, Sisi is formally a civilian leader. He is no longer a serving officer and must rely on his colleagues in the military for access to information and deliberations within the institution. In addition, while President Sisi, like President Mubarak, may be trusted by the military as a result of his years of service and accomplishments, as a political leader he must manage a broader array of responsibilities beyond safeguarding the military's corporate interests.

Sisi, moreover, is at a considerable disadvantage in relations to the military compared with President Mubarak. He lacks the power to appoint his own Minister of Defence and must vet and win approval of decisions related to the armed forces by the military dominated National Defence Council. As long as the preferences of his chiefs and his align in national security matters, these institutional details may be of little consequence. Should differences emerge, however, he could face opposition to his decisions within the NDC. In order to assure himself of a military leadership that shares his preferences and will not challenge

his authority, he will have to rely on the power of appointment, which the president still enjoys according to the constitution. In fact, there is clear evidence that Sisi is fully aware of this imperative. He has already used his power of appointment to ensure that likeminded officers occupy key positions, including several significant retirements and promotions in the aftermath of the August 2012 dismissals of Marshal Tantawi and General Anan. In addition, prior to resigning as Minister of Defence, Sisi made other notable changes in the command structure. These included replacing charismatic General Ahmed Wafsy as commander of the Second Army.⁶⁴

President Sisi's limited power over the military becomes more consequential in light of the massive economic and security challenges that Egypt is facing.⁶⁵ As noted above, the military has taken on a range of large-scale development projects with external funding provided by Gulf allies.⁶⁶ Egypt will likely depend on such handouts until, and unless, President Sisi can implement a significant economic reform program, which he must presumably do without harming the military's economic interests. Political stability is at present guaranteed, in large part by repression of all and any potential opposition. President Sisi has deemed the Muslim Brotherhood and its supporters to be the country's principal adversary, and imprisoned or repressed secular opponents to the state. How much the military has successfully established a social base for its rule among those that initially supported Morsi's removal is in question; little can be known with any certainty about popular views in light of the repressive security environment and suppression of any potential opposition to the state.

64. "Al-Sisi reshuffles army commanders," Middle East Monitor, March 18, 2014.

65. Ben W. Heineman, Jr., "General Sisi's Greatest Enemy: The Egyptian Economy," The Atlantic, March 27, 2014; Marina Ottaway, "Egyptians uncertain about Future under President Sisi," BBC News, July 2, 2014.

66. Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates have been the principal benefactors. In March 2015 President Sisi, for example, received an additional sizable promises of funding from his Gulf allies.

In addition, Egypt is battling a growing insurgency on the Sinai Peninsula, which the military has appeared ill-equipped to confront. Its efforts to date have involved tactics, including steamrolling homes in Sinai adjacent to Gaza, which threaten to alienate Egyptians and intensify the insurgency. Sisi, in short, faces significant obstacles to stabilizing Egypt in the long term. Addressing them may require challenging the military's corporate and professional interests — something it is not clear that he is in a position to do.

4. CONCLUSIONS: MOVEMENT TOWARDS DEMOCRATIC CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS?

The above analysis suggests several possible pathways which the advancement of democratic civil-military relations could take.

A first possibility is that the impetus for reform could come from within the military itself. This would need to involve the emergence of influential leaders within the military that see professionalism and fulfilment of their core mandate as more important than political participation. The fact that some officers under Naguib appeared to favour withdrawing to the barracks (in part to protect their professional abilities) means there is an historical precedent for such a possibility. Also relevant are the lessons drawn by many of Egypt's prominent generals in the aftermath of the 1967 war who witnessed the devastating results of Field Marshal Amer's politicization and gross mismanagement of the armed forces.

One way to encourage change from within the military institution, therefore, is to advance the argument that the best way to protect the military is to relinquish control of prerogatives to a legitimate democratically elected leader. Of course, advancing such an argument may prove challenging. One way of spreading it would be for the international community (including foreign militaries, diplomats, contacts between the military and international organizations) to articulate how democracy improves and protects the military organization, and ensures it can focus on its core external mandate and professional responsibilities. This is a distinct argument from saying that civilian or democratic control is "good"

and normatively appropriate. Rather, it appeals to the organizational interests of the military leadership.

In addition, such an argument is distinct from simply encouraging the armed forces to safeguard their "professionalism." As those who study Latin American militaries of the 1960s and 1970s are aware, where professionalism accompanies a "guardianship" mentality or doctrine, a mandate to protect the state can in fact motivate intervention and expansion of military political prerogatives.⁶⁷ In these circumstances, military leaders may intervene to remove a political leader perceived as corrupt or incompetent in order to safeguard the security of the state. They, in turn, justify their control over significant prerogatives on the grounds that they are the ultimate protectors of the state. What this suggests is that it is not professionalism alone that is important in understanding military compliance with civilian authority. Rather, as demonstrated by the Tunisian military, whose officers are not just professionals but express a normative commitment to constitutionalism and republican government, the specific conception of the military's appropriate role in the state is essential in determining its readiness to submit to democratic control.⁶⁸

In this light, what may be needed to ensure democratic civil-military relations are military officers committed to ensuring and protecting the integrity of the military institution and who define their mandate narrowly as protecting the security of the state from external military challenges. These officers would see involvement in politics as a corrupting influence, and

67. The classic formulation of this argument appears in Alfred Stepan, *Authoritarian Brazil*, New Haven: Yale University Press, 1973. Other analysts who question the link between military professionalization and subordination to civilian rule include David Pion Berlin, "Military Autonomy and Emerging Democracies in South America," *Comparative Politics* 25, no. 1, 1992, pp. 83-102; and Mehran Kamrava, "Military Professionalization and Civil-Military Relations in the Middle East," *Political Science Quarterly*, 115, no. 1 (2000)

68. For discussion of the concept of role beliefs in the armed forces see Samuel J. Fitch, *The Armed Forces and Democracy in Latin America*, Johns Hopkins, 1998; Brian Taylor, *Politics and the Russian Army: Civil-military Relations 1689-2000*, Cambridge University Press, 2003.

detrimental to the long term health of the military and the state which it serves. Rather, these officers would see the interests of the military best safeguarded by the establishment of a stable and economically viable democratic state.

A second possibility is that change could come from a reform-minded president, especially one that could use his powers of appointment to position like-minded officers in key leadership positions. Similarly, a president could capitalize on splits or dissent within the armed forces. These may indicate differences of opinion about the military's role in the state and provide opportunities for the president to form alliances with those officers who may be receptive to change. In this way, the president may be able to exploit cleavages within the officer corps to promote change from within the military. This could pave the way for the president to appoint officers who see non-intervention in politics, and the advancement of democratic control, as the best way to secure the corporate interests of the organization in the long term. Admittedly, the corporate and private benefits that accrue to senior officers in the current environment constitute a significant obstacle to the emergence of such a perspective. The fact, however, that there have been officers in the past who have explicitly rejected a role for the armed forces beyond a narrowly defined protection of national security, provides some basis for optimism that such sentiments could once again re-emerge in the officer corps.

A third possibility is that pressure from society provides the impetus for reform. For this to happen, it is critical that there is a potential for societal mobilization that could empower a future reform-minded president. Such a mandate could provide the president with leverage to appoint and advance reform-minded officers within the military hierarchy. It is also possible that factions within the officer corps may themselves build bridges with societal constituencies as a way of enhancing their positions and gaining leverage within the armed forces. As lessons from "pacted" transitions in other regions of the world suggest, alliances between military leaders open to reform and societal constituencies can often pave the way for democratization, and potentially advancement of democratic control of the armed forces.⁶⁹

All of these pathways to reform and change in Egyptian civil-military relations may seem remote possibilities in the current climate. Lessons from other cases (and from Egypt itself), nonetheless, suggest that transitions and openings can emerge without notice and surprise even the most informed observers. For this reason, analysts should be especially attentive to nuances and subtle signs of change in Egyptian civil-military relations, and in Egyptian society, that could eventually provide a pathway to democratic reform.

69. For a classical treatment of pacted democracy see Guillermo O'Donnell and Philippe Schmitter, *Transitions from Authoritarian Rule: Tentative Conclusions about Uncertain Democracies*, Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press, 1986.

5. RECOMMENDATIONS

Based on the analysis and conclusions, the following recommendations are made for how to best support a movement towards democratic reform and transparency in the Egyptian armed forces, leading to more democratic and balanced civil-military relations in Egypt:

Analysts of the Egyptian armed forces must observe subtle nuances in civil-military relations, beyond examining constitutional rules, formal institutions and public actions by military and political leaders. Despite the barriers to arriving at firm conclusions about what occurs behind-the-scenes, such nuances are essential for detecting internal debates and evaluating how power is actually being exercised in civil-military relations.

Analysts must be alert to signs of divisions within the military that could signal the emergence of leaders or groupings receptive to change. While the Egyptian military remains opaque to outsiders, observers should nonetheless be prepared to recognize any potential signs of such splits or pro-reform sentiments within the officer corps.

Whenever possible, diplomats, international organizations and other interlocutors with the Egyptian armed forces should stress the benefits of adopting an impartial and noninterventionist role in politics to the armed forces. This requires stressing the benefits of operating within a democratic structure to Egypt's armed forces. Historic examples of Egypt's own civil-military relations should be employed in this regard.

DCAF and other policy-oriented and academic organizations should continue to educate Egypt's politicians, activists, and citizens about the fundamental aspects of democratic control of the armed forces. Preparing Egypt's civilians is vital in the event that new opportunities for social mobilization occur. The potential that reformist factions within the military might coalesce with societal constituencies to promote change is a proven pathway for democratic change that has occurred in countries around the world.

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Shifts in Egyptian Civil-Military Relations:

Lessons from the Past and Present

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