

Comparing Two Egyptian Revolutions: 1952 vs. 2011

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Introduction

The so-called Arab Revolution – the ongoing series of Arab revolutions¹, have produced numerous martyrs and an enduring will for change, even in countries where the rulers managed to suppress the revolts. As a starting point for discussion, we may ask why these protests broke out first in Tunisia and Egypt, and then, why they both achieved their shared initial goal of toppling a longstanding dictator. The success of these two revolutions was no accident – it was an inevitable result of their two specific historical backgrounds and related factors.

Tunisia and Egypt were well known for having governments that sought to play a historic, guiding role in modernization and local history. Each of the two nations had faced a 19th century struggle to establish a new constitutional order as an active response to a growing “Western impact”². The modernizing common denominator of their recent parallel revolutions is readily apparent in the high percentage of participation by women, among other factors³. Problematic neoliberal economic reforms that were under way in both countries have been cited as direct catalysts for the revolutions. Critics would argue, however, that despite favorable economic growth, political repression was increasing and government corruption was worsening. But in general, economic liberalization is not necessarily linked in any way to the suppression or corruption.

It is widely accepted that the neoliberal economic reforms in the two countries failed,

1 This paper has been translated and edited from an original article in Japanese, “Futatsu no Ejiputo Kakumei [Two Egyptian Revolutions],” in *Kokusai Mondai* [International Affairs], No. 605, October 2011. The author wrote the original Japanese text in the middle of August 2011.

2 In Tunisia, Ahmad Bey of the Husayn Dynasty promulgated the 1861 Constitution (suspended in 1864). The National Party (al-Hizb al-Watani) codified a Constitution and obtained its approval by the Khedive (viceroy) in 1881, during the ‘Urabi movement in Egypt. In the Tunisian case, see Tarek Chehidi, “The Road to the Construction of the Modern State of Tunisia,” in Tsugitaka Sato ed., *Development of Parliamentarism in the Modern Islamic World*, Tokyo: Toyo Bunko (Oriental Library), 2009.

3 In Tunisia, the female labor participation rate is 37.5%, and 22.7% of the members of parliament (2007), 31% of the lawyers (2007), 40% of the professors in universities (2004/05) are women, for example. Mieko Miyaji, “Chuto Sekai no Chikaku Hendo: Chunijia niokeru Minshu Kakumei eno Ugoki [‘Crustal Change’ in the Middle East: The Movement to People’s Revolution in Tunisia],” *Gendai Shiso* [Contemporary Thought] Vol.39 No.4, April 2011. (in Japanese)

despite the fact that those policies were heavily praised by the IMF and the World Bank⁴. Like its Open-Door Policy started by Sadat in the mid-1970s, Egypt's 1960s model for the reforms of Arab Socialism led by Nasser had a great influence on the rest of the Arab world⁵. That influence was not limited only to republican states such as Syria, but also affected monarchic oil states that had to deal with the Egyptian impact locally. The Egyptian Revolution of July 23rd, 1952 (the July Revolution) seeded storms of republican revolution in all Arab states, spinning off from the ideological motive force of Arab Nationalism.

What new revolutionary models have the recent Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions offered the Arab world? In preparing to assess that question, we must first assess the 2011 Egyptian Revolution by way of historical comparison. Needless to say, the situation remains fluid and any analysis attempted here with limited sources and in the face of obvious obstacles might have only limited applicability... certainly not qualifying as any kind of a final assessment.

1. *The Role of the Army in Egypt's Two Revolutions*

This paper seeks to assess Egypt's most recent revolution in comparison with its 1952 July Revolution. It is no wonder that some might question the usefulness of comparing today's events with a revolution of 60 years ago. But we can clearly trace the roots of the current Egyptian revolution to a historic drive to change the political-economic regime established in 1952. The current revolution should therefore not be seen as arriving without warning, but instead as a gradual product of local engagement in challenging the regime created 60 years ago.

The roots of today's Egyptian democracy movement can be traced, as many writers have pointed out⁶, to the student protests of February 1968. Those 'angry young men' had focused on the question of responsibility for Egypt's defeat by Israel in the 1967 Six-Day War, and quickly then spawned a movement openly critical of the 1952 July Revolution regime⁷. Even though that movement was suppressed via even greater oppression, accumulated experience in such movements (and in surviving the resulting suppression) helped shape the Kifaya

4 Foreign economists have praised the economic reforms in Egypt as a "poster child for the IMF" or "a laboratory of neoliberalism" (El-Mahdi, Rabab and Philip Marfleet eds., *Egypt, The Moment of Change*, London: Zed Books, 2009, pp.2-3). Evaluating as excellent the economic performance and political stability of Tunisia, the Japanese Government held the Second Japan-Arab Economic Forum from December 11-12, 2010 in Tunis, just prior to the outbreak of the protest movement.

5 It was Tunisian President Habib Bourgiba who advocated the Open Door (Infitah) economic policy in the late 1960s, prior to Egyptian President Anwar Sadat launching such a program in 1974. But Sadat's program became more famous and influential among Arab countries.

6 Muhammad al-Sayyid Sa'īd, *al-intiqāl al-dīmuqrāṭiyya al-muhtajar fī misr*, 2006, Cairo: Merit, pp.5-6; 'Alī al-Dīn Hilāl ed., *tajriba al-dīmuqrāṭiyya fī misr 1970-1980*, Cairo: al-Markaz al-'Arabī lil-Baḥth wa al-Nashr, 1982, p.49; Tāriq al-Bishrī, *al-dīmuqrāṭiyya wa nizām 23 yūliyū 1952-1970*, Cairo: Dār al-Hilāl, 1991, p.359.

7 See Ahmed Abdullah, *The Student Movement and National Politics in Egypt, 1923-73*, London: Al Saqi Books, 1985.

("Enough") Movement in 2004 that opposed President Hosni Mubarak's anticipated fifth presidency with the slogan: "Enough. No more Mubarak!"

Some might argue that the 1952 July Revolution was no revolution at all – merely a military coup. Indeed, self-proclaimed revolutionary forces such as the Islamists and communists saw it merely as a revolution that failed when it was hijacked by the military. However, even though Gamal Abdel Nasser's 1952 July Revolution produced neither an Islamic state, nor true socialism, it can still be compared to Muhammad 'Ali's reforms in early 19th-century Egypt. The political elites changed, the systems were reformed, and the resulting post-revolutionary state adopted a strikingly nationalist economic policy. But it remains unclear whether current events will eventually congeal into any real revolution that generates a model of a new system with potential application in other Arab countries.

Another key justification for taking a comparative approach is based on the historical similarity in development, backgrounds, and main actors in these two revolutions, even though they took place 60 years apart. This essay is thus an attempt to compare the two revolutions at a level that, while reflecting some similarities, will also most surely expose undeniable differences.

Each revolution evolved out of military intervention to break up a sudden surge in popular political movements. On the eve of the 1952 July Revolution, demand grew for "complete independence" – the complete withdrawal of the British Army from the Suez Canal Zone. In the fall of 1951, the Egyptian government tried to back out of a 1936 treaty with Britain, coupling that move with intensified anti-British guerilla activities. On January 25, 1952, scores of Egyptian policemen were killed in Ismailia in a battle with the British Army, leading, the next day, to a massive anti-foreigner riot locally known as the 'Arson in Cairo' or 'Black Saturday.' The royal government could not contain the disorder, and the Cabinet was sacked and replaced three times.

Nasser and his fellow young officers rose up to completely reform a political system that was in turmoil amid mudslinging between the king and the main political parties. In 1952, the soldiers first aimed merely at restoring order, not at abolishing the monarchy, nor at establishing a republic. That represents a marked difference from the recent-day events in Egypt, which began with the clear goal of overthrowing the government⁸.

The ongoing 2011 January Revolution saw the Army march in on January 29 to maintain order in Tahrir Square. By February 11, when President Hosni Mubarak moved out of his palace, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) had already assumed the status of a transitional caretaker government. "The Army is administering the state, but that does not mean that the Army rules this state," was the explanation. Just as with two historic riots

8 On this point, the 1952 Egyptian July Revolution differed from the 1958 Iraq July Revolution that aimed from the start to destroy the monarchy. As mentioned before, the Egyptian revolution became a model of republican revolutions for other Arab countries as seen in the 1969 Libyan Revolution.

previously suppressed by the Army (the 1977 Bread Riot and the 1986 Central Security Police Revolt), the Army again said it would soon withdraw from its governmental functions. But this time, the Army said it would not run a presidential candidate... in a clear distinction from the Free Officers group of the 1952 July Revolution.

However, the SCAF is today very different from the “Free Officers” who led the 1952 July Revolution. In the current revolution, the Army has shown unity, although one cannot rule out a split between the top-ranking officers and the younger officers. The critical moment following the earlier revolution was the 1954 March Crisis – the confrontation between Nasser and Muhammad Naguib. When the Muslim Brotherhood tried to use President Naguib to counter Nasser, many officers openly sided with President Naguib and even some of the Free Officers sympathized with him. Nasser and his group overcame the crisis, banning members of the Muslim Brotherhood from the Army. Later, after the assassination of Nasser’s successor, President Anwar Sadat, by the Jihad Group in October 1981, the military conducted similar purges of Islamists. That does not mean that there was a complete de-politicization of the Egyptian army, nor the establishment of any kind of guardian body to maintain secularism – as with the Turkish armed forces. At present, the principle of civilian control of the army is one of the most important issues of public debate in the post-revolutionary constitutional reform process.

In the case of the 1952 July Revolution, the Free Officers themselves joined the Cabinet, quitting their military posts to enter the bureaucracy and to assume the most important functions. However, after the Sadat era, the military elite strayed from the Cabinet, increasingly choosing to enter private business to capitalize on the privileges of military power. The army still holds a privileged position today, for example, in the military production sector, controlling not just weapons production, but also civilian industrial products such as consumer electronics. Military intervention in the current revolution has therefore not led to any new rights or expanded interests for the already dominant military. But the military is targeting and locking up bloggers and critical journalists, indicating that tensions are continuing. The situation is fluid.

The army is serving as a “neutral” intermediary to help build a transitional government while controlling the development of the revolution by releasing “Constitutional Declarations” to be discussed later in this paper. A Constitutional Declaration issued on March 30 contains a clause supporting worker and peasant involvement in parliamentary elections, maintaining the Arab Socialist principle that more than half of the parliament should be composed of workers and peasants. In other words, the Army, which has long been pushing the 1952 July Revolution agenda, might now seek to act as a brake on the current revolution, if it deviates too much from that path.

2. *Relations with the United States*

Unlike Tunisian President Ben 'Ali who won asylum in Saudi Arabia, President Mubarak held out in his second residence in Egypt. Pressed by voices demanding an investigation of orders to shoot demonstrators and of longstanding corruption, in the beginning of August, half a year after his resignation, Mubarak was brought to public trial. In contrast, in the 1952 July Revolution, King Farouk was dethroned and forced to abdicate in favor of his son, subsequently getting a courteous expulsion from the country. A U.S. Navy warship even guarded the royal yacht as it sailed for Naples. How did that happen? It happened because the Free Officers gave notice of their coup to the U.S. Embassy, which gave prior U.S. consent.

Among the many factors involved in Mubarak's resignation, one well-known fact is that Defense Minister Muhammad Husayn Tantawi (who later became SCAF chairman) and Chief of Staff Lt. Gen. Sami Hafez 'Anan remained in close contact with the Pentagon throughout the transition.

Starting in the 1970s, the sourcing of Egyptian arms switched from the USSR to the United States. The amount of U.S. military aid to Egypt since 1979 totals 36 billion U.S. dollars. Egypt joined the coalition led by the United States in the 1991 Gulf War against Iraq and has participated in the "Bright Star" military exercises led by the United States since 1980, greatly expanding bilateral military cooperation.

In the early stages of the current revolution, U.S. officials appeared embarrassed, but soon came to define the events as a step forward for "democratization," which they encouraged with promises of economic aid. In the 1952 July Revolution, U.S. officials expected social reform from the Egyptian military regime to serve as an effective anti-communist policy in the early Cold War. They therefore supported the Agrarian Reform of September 1952. But when the prime minister, a member of the old political elite, criticized it and resigned, the United States intervened in planned personnel changes. Judge 'Abd al-Razzaq al-Sanhuri, a legal scholar, known as the 'Father of the Arab Civil Code,' was then appointed prime minister by the Free Officers. However, the United States later denounced him for supporting the 1951 Stockholm Appeal against nuclear weapons⁹. By August 1953, just a year after Egypt's July Revolution, the CIA overthrew the Mosaddeq government of Iran, leaving Nasser extremely wary of potential U.S. intervention in Egypt¹⁰. Even though the Iranian Revolution in 1979 and later the 9-11 attacks on the United States in 2001 shocked the U.S. establishment and finally it went to war against Iraq in 2003, relations between the United States and the Middle East are far more balanced than when U.S. intervention was routine and easy in the early days in the

9 Joel Goldman, *Nasser's Blessed Movement, Egypt's Free Officers and the July Revolution*, Cairo: American University Press, 1996, p.67.

10 Owen L. Sirrs, *A History of the Egyptian Intelligence Service, A History of the Mukhabarat, 1910-2009*, London: Routledge, 2010, p.56.

Cold War Era.

In the course of Egypt's 2011 January Revolution, the Obama Administration officially disclosed that it had made contact with the Muslim Brotherhood, which became a topic of discussion. But even at the time of the 1952 July Revolution, the Muslim Brotherhood had kept in touch with the U.S. Embassy, and regardless of the changes in world politics since then, the contact has been maintained.

3. The Muslim Brotherhood

The two revolutions look alike if we compare their main players. Among all the involved parties, the Muslim Brotherhood has been playing a chief role along with the Army in the current revolution, just as it did in the last. But, as was the case in 1952, the Brotherhood is still troubled within by the threat of a split (and the ever-present danger of open strife). When the 1952 July Revolution broke out, the Brotherhood was facing a crisis of unity after the assassination of its founder, Hasan al-Banna, in 1949. The conflict over selecting a successor to the Murshid (Supreme Guide) escalated to the point of involving Egypt's semi-military Secret Apparatus (*al-Jihāz al-Sirrī*). Such internal discord gave Nasser the advantage he needed to suppress the organization.

What has characterized the Brotherhood's internal conflict this time around is the natural generation gap within an organization with a 70-year history. A generational conflict was already tangible as early as the 1990s, when some young activists formed the alternative Wasat Party. During the recent revolution, young activists claiming to be Brotherhood Youth (*Shabāb al-Ikhwān*) took active part in the resistance to the authorities at Tahrir Square, fighting side-by-side with liberals and leftist forces. There is a serious gap between such youth and the old, conservative leadership in terms of political ideology. Among those who support the youth are moderate ex-leaders of the organization who were expelled by the conservatives. As a result, the current conservative leadership set up the Freedom and Justice Party, while the youth and various forces from other organizations formed separate political parties of their own. In this way, at least five parties affiliated with the Brotherhood have come into being.

The issue of establishing a single political party backed by the Brotherhood, and the general issue of relations between the Brotherhood and related political parties has been a problem for the Brotherhood that has been linked to internal conflict within the organization in both revolutions. In September 1952, barely two months after the start of the July Revolution, the Free Officers proclaimed a Party Reorganizing Law to take control over the old political parties. In response, the Brotherhood announced at first that it was not a political party, but it soon after tried to register as a party. Ultimately, it reversed course and canceled its own

political registration in favor of getting approval as a religious organization¹¹. This is how the Brotherhood was able to remain intact, evading the pressures of January 1953, when there was an effort by the Army to disband the organization completely. However, there was heated internal criticism of the organization's leadership over its delay in coming to a final decision on political status after a long and turbulent debate. At present, while some members insist that the organization should seek registration as an NGO or corporate legal body, others seek to focus on building relations between the Brotherhood and political parties. In other words, there are a number of fundamental organizational issues still under continuous debate within the Brotherhood itself.

4. Political Parties and Other Political Forces

Immediately before both revolutions, there was a similar structure of political parties in place in Egypt, namely, a strong ruling party and weak opposition parties. The respective historical two ruling parties were the Wafd Party prior to the 1952 July Revolution and the National Democratic Party of President Mubarak before the current revolution. But those two parties differ fundamentally in nature. The Wafd Party was a nationalist party with a long and distinguished history of having inherited the leadership of the 1919 Revolution that sought Egyptian independence from Britain after World War One. That is why the Free Officers, fearing the Brotherhood's influence among the general public, targeted the group for their first purge. On the other hand, the recent-day National Democratic Party was, so to speak, a government-initiated political party, whose forerunner was the Arab Socialist Union, a national mobilization organization formed in the 1960s. Though it was a party that held an overwhelming number of the seats in parliament for more than three decades, its headquarters in Cairo and local branch offices were set aflame in the course of the 2011 revolution. Finally, through an Administrative Court decision, the party was speedily dissolved in April 2011.

In the course of Egypt's current revolution, there has been a flood of public calls for full investigation of corruption involving President Mubarak and his former ruling elite. There was a similar issue of corruption underlying the 1952 July Revolution. The Free Officers dealt with the issue through a so-called Treason Court in December 1952, and a Revolutionary Court in September 1953, under the pretext of eradicating and punishing corruption, but actually eliminating the top leadership of the Wafd Party, one by one. One of the important aims of the officers' Agrarian Reform was to topple the old elite, whose source of power was the large landowner class. The Wafd Party only came back into existence – as the New Wafd Party – in 1983, thirty years after being shut down. The new party, even though it obtained status as the first official opposition party, has never regained the influence of its predecessor.

11 Goldman, *op. cit.* pp.100-01.

Contrary to the case of the Wafd Party, none of the liberal parties of the old political elites, such as the Liberal Constitutionalist Party or the Saadist Party formed after the 1919 Revolution, had any direct successors after 1952. The Socialist Labor Party could be called a pseudo-successor of Young Egypt, a nationalist organization that had the motto 'direct action.' Socialist Labor Party was registered during the Sadat era, but merely served as a vehicle for the Muslim Brotherhood to make inroads in parliament. However, even that party was eventually suppressed and lost all influence. Ayman Nur ran for president in 2005 for the Gad (Tomorrow) Party, a new party that resembled a faction of the old Wafd Party, but his new party suffered from its lack of the popular base that defined the Wafd Party. This lack of a popular foundation also undermined the legitimacy of the National Democratic Party, as well as that of the Tagammu' (Gathering) Party, a coalition of leftists reconstituted from parts of the dissolved Arab Socialist Union. Some socialists and communists also joined the Tagammu' Party. The Communist Party dissolved itself in 1965, when its members joined the Arab Socialist Union to support Nasser. The Egyptian Communist Party was reconstructed soon after, but it no longer boasts the kind of efficient, powerful organization that the Muslim Brotherhood enjoyed at the time of the 1952 July Revolution.

In addition to other existing minor opposition parties, which have become easy to register due to amendments to the law on political parties, new political parties have been springing up as unofficial affiliates of the Muslim Brotherhood since the call of a parliamentary election for early autumn 2011 (which was later postponed to November). At the time of the 1952 July Revolution, the Muslim Brotherhood was the only political organization on the scene. Now, the Islamic Group (*al-Jamā'a al-Islāmiyya*), which abandoned its armed struggle (terrorism), is involved in mainstream party politics, and Salafist groups (Islamists coming in from the political wilderness) are making a strong showing. The Salafists have been drawing attention through high-profile attacks against minority Coptic Christians, in apparent response to the U.S. assassination of Osama Bin Laden in May 2011.

Al-Azhar, the highest authority of Sunni Islam, has been sending out messages different from those of the 1952 July Revolution. As the supreme center of traditional Islam, it has been criticizing the Salafist ideals, releasing statements calling for the new Egyptian state system to not be a religious state (*al-dawla al-dīniyya*) like the Islamic state system of contemporary Iran, but instead a civic state (*al-dawla al-madaniyya*) system. It would be safe to say that many of Al-Azhar's ulama expect to be freed from the state controls that were established during the Nasser era.

So too, are the Christian Copts emerging as a self-assertive player, seeking to act with clearer political objectives and policies than they had at the time of the 1952 July Revolution. As early as the beginning of January 2011, immediately before the start of the current revolution, a suicide-bombing terror attack targeted a church in Alexandria where Copts were celebrating their Christmas. Further religious conflict between Muslims and Copts followed,

symbolically breaking the 1952 revolutionary promise of national unity. Three sects of Coptic Christians subsequently strengthened their solidarity, and at the same time demonstrated an aspiration to amend the law that limits the building of churches (among other issues) as well as Article No. 2 of the Constitution (which declares Islam the state religion). Noteworthy among the leading Christian activists is Naguib Sawiris, a wealthy Copt who serves as the CEO of Orascom Telecom Holding (Mobinil), one of the two major Egyptian cellular phone companies. He was present at Tahrir Square in the early stages of the revolution, playing an active role in trying to reduce confusion as a member of the so-called committee of “Wise Men.” He subsequently founded the Free Egyptians Party, drawing in part on a base of former supporters of the National Democratic Party. Sawiris quickly became a target of criticism and of threats from Islamist forces, including the Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafists.

5. Constitutional Amendments: A Path to a Second Republic

One of the most significant differences that appears when one compares the two revolutions is the manner of addressing the issue of constitutional change. If we call the political system formed from the 1952 July Revolution the First Republic, is the new system that is now taking shape something that could be called the Second Republic? An answer to that question can be found by studying the ongoing process of adopting a new Constitution.

In the July Revolution, the Free Officers pledged shortly after their coup d'état that they would act based on Egypt's then Constitution, (known as the 1923 Constitution), declaring an interest in preserving the constitutional monarchy and rejecting the registration of any 'republican' political party despite attempts to modify the law on political parties. But before long, such conservative positions were abandoned as the Free Officers moved to abolish the 1923 Constitution itself in December 1952, just five months after their coup. In January 1953, they ordered the dissolution of all parties and lurched forward into one-party dictatorial rule after creating their own official group, the Liberation Rally, to serve as revolutionary Egypt's new mass-movement organization.

The complexity of the maneuvers by the Free Officers was reflected in the attitude they presented that same month of January, when they formed a Constitutional Drafting Committee to approve what looked like it might turn out to be a liberal Constitution. In selecting the committee members, they included specialists on the old political parties, as well as members of the Brotherhood. It is said that an advanced, progressive Constitution based on the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights was eventually sketched out, but the Command Committee of the Revolution, which was set up at the start of 1953, preempted the move, announced a 'Provisional Constitution' in February, then declared the abolition of the monarchy, and had by June proclaimed Egypt a republic. In the end, an early 1954 draft document that was drawn up by the Constitutional Drafting Committee was hushed up. When

that draft text created by the committee subsequently made its way into public view, the officers managed to get through the resulting 1954 March Crisis by focusing on consolidating their new state. The Nasser regime tirelessly suppressed the Muslim Brotherhood and pushed ahead with the establishment of an authoritarian state.

Their new system was eventually formalized in Egypt's 1956 Constitution. Administrative executive power, concentrated in the hands of the president, was thus rigidly reinforced. The essence of that political order was then passed on to the Constitution of the United Arab Republic, which merged Egypt and Syria into a single state two years later, in March 1958. After Egypt's subsequent separation from Syria and its adoption of its 1964 Provisional Constitution, President Anwar Sadat carried over the same concentration of power into Egypt's 1971 'Permanent' Constitution. Although that 1971 Constitution was amended in 1980 (to designate Islamic law as the principal source of legislation) and further amended in 2005 and 2007 (to change presidential election rules) there was no change in the basic legal framework of the system produced from the 1952 July Revolution.

Over the past year however, fundamentally amending Egypt's Constitution has been a key issue from the earliest stages of the developing revolution. On February 7, 2011, President Mubarak called for changes, setting up a Committee for the Amendment of the Constitution the very next day and announcing a constitutional reform agenda on February 9. But the announcement downplayed any major changes beyond the 2007 revisions, instead proposing the equivalent of a "first aid" solution focused on reviewing the rules for the election of the president. Mubarak's half-step was insufficient to shore up his crumbling regime and the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) met without him as its chairman on February 10, effectively converting itself from a consultative body under the president into a governing institution that now communicates directly with the public. Mubarak resigned the next day. Two days later, on February 13, the SCAF released its first Constitutional Declaration, which incorporated an effective suspension of the 1971 'Permanent' Constitution. On February 15, the SCAF established the New Committee for the Amendment of the Constitution, which released a proposed set of amendments on February 26. The most important part of its amendment plan was to revise the rules for electing the Egyptian president, as previously suggested by the outgoing regime. On March 19, a national referendum that was carried out in a remarkably fair manner adopted the functional amendment package.

However, the revolutionary youth and the liberal forces that played a central role in the revolution initiated a campaign to oppose the constitutional amendments. They argued that the amendments would allow the old political forces to remain in competition in parliamentary elections scheduled for September, and they argued that the revolution could only be consolidated through the prior adoption of a new Constitution.

Coming out against that 'Constitution First' campaign, the Muslim Brotherhood insisted that the most urgent strategic goal was to make a transition from military government to

civilian rule, demanding a national referendum on such a move.

Despite that strategic goal, the Brotherhood also recognized the legitimacy it would gain by participating in the scheduled fall parliamentary elections, in which it stood to win most of the seats. Covering both of its options, the Brotherhood also sought to influence future political structures by participating in the Committee for Establishing a New Constitution – which was to be composed of newly elected parliamentarians and legal specialists.

In Tahrir Square, where revolutionary enthusiasm still dominated even after the national referendum, the ‘Constitution First’ movement appeared to be gaining momentum from June into July. Under pressure from the youth movement, the SCAF issued a Paper on Government Principles. The contents of that Paper reflect the military establishment’s aim of seeking a compromise between the liberal forces and the Islamist forces, pushing for a civic state (not a religious state) while at the same maintaining the enshrinement of Islam as the national religion (carried over from Article 2 of the old Constitution). In addition, according to an SCAF Constitutional Declaration issued on March 30, various other content from the 1971 Constitution (such as the above-mentioned ‘Rule of the Workers and Peasants’) was retained. Critics of the Constitutional Declaration accused the SCAF of seeking to maintain the Mubarak regime, just without Mubarak.

In contrast to the 1952 July Revolution, the leading army officers have been playing a passive role in response to demands from the revolutionary forces, declining to play a guiding role in any reforms. Especially when assessing events linked to the SCAF’s Constitutional Declarations, it seems that the Army is trying to rein in the revolution’s development.

6. Essential Differences Between the Two Revolutions: Forms and Nature

As mentioned earlier, both the 1952 July Revolution and the 2011 January Revolution can be described as involving a process of Army intervention to restore order in a crisis created by broad-based popular support for revolutionary upheaval. However, the current revolution differs greatly from the revolution of 60 years ago in terms of the quality and composition of the popular movement. In the 1952 July Revolution, the Free Officers staged their coup in direct response to the arson in Cairo in January 1952. The arson was alleged, in some circles, to have been a plot by members of a political organization (Young Egypt), but it is more likely that the arson truly did result from a spontaneous popular riot. In this sense, the arson attack shared some characteristics with the 1977 Bread Riot (a rebellion against a cut in food subsidies), and the 1986 Central Security Police Riot (against wretched wage conditions), that both shook the rule of Nasser’s successors, Sadat and Mubarak. Although their inceptions and their backgrounds differed, both of those riots grew out of popular movements to manifest themselves as uncontrolled violent mobs.

In contrast to the process of setting up an authoritarian regime from the 1952 July

Revolution, those two historical riots did not resemble either a mass movement of Nasserite-type mobilization, nor the youth movement that symbolizes the current revolution. What ruled the political processes in the time of those riots was 'street politics,' which activists from that era called 'competition in the streets.' Nasser confronted the Muslim Brotherhood, which knew how to mobilize masses of people effectively, only after eliminating mainstream competition by banning the Wafd Party, a long-established major political force. To enter Egypt's political playing field, Nasser formed his own organization for mass mobilization, the Liberation Rally (the forerunner of the Arab Socialist Union), to contest the control of the streets by the Brotherhood and various communist movements. There were a series of battles between Brotherhood-linked activists and groups tied to Nasser's official Liberation Rally. In the end, mobilizing the labor movement was the key to Nasser being able to dominate Egyptian street politics. Despite communist infiltration of the labor movement, Nasser won by making use of his main ideological weapon, Arab Nationalism. The workers, who fought for Nasser, also got benefits, including guaranteed employment (at the cost of the right to strike) within Nasser's Arab Socialist system.

However, the current-day liberal-youth movement appears to be fundamentally different in nature from the past popular movements that grew up around the 1952 July Revolution. The essence of the difference is that the current movement was not created or manipulated by any existing Egyptian political force. Despite not featuring a charismatic leader, the liberal-youth movement has been demonstrating extremely effective group control. One of the best examples of its organizational strength was the orderly behavior seen in Tahrir Square in the form of self-controlled activity. It was also very impressive to see how 'people's committees' were organized in each ward of the capital to maintain local security when all the policemen disappeared from view to evade possible confrontations with the people. One media report at the time described the situation as "orderly disorder."

Immediately after the resignation of President Mubarak, there was an eruption of demonstrations and strikers making various demands in every part of Egypt. But when the Army issued an order prohibiting strikes and warning of possible economic damage, the people simply obeyed, without any serious resistance. We can contrast this situation with the Kafr el-Dawwar incident, which occurred one month after the start of the 1952 July Revolution. In the case of that strike in Kafr el-Dawwar, an industrial center of the cotton industry in the Nile Delta, the military regime harshly suppressed the strike and executed the leaders.

The resilience of the current youth movement further shows that they are not playing a minor or merely supporting role, but that they are maintaining their status as new leading actors in society. Through direct action such as sit-ins and demonstrations, they have systematically laid claim to the revolution in a manner that has seen the Army assume the role of gradually implementing their demands. Examples of the movement's successes include influencing a reform of the State Security Investigation Services (Mubāhith Amn al-Dawla) in

March, the dissolution of the former ruling National Democratic Party in April, the dissolution of municipal assemblies in June, the large-scale shake-up of executive officials at the Ministry of the Interior in July, and the subsequent opening of the trial of Mubarak.

In response to the liberal-youth movement's 'Constitution First' campaign, the Army leadership has postponed Egypt's presidential election by a year, and attempted to find a compromise with the activists by announcing its Paper on the Principle of Constitutions. However, amid tensions between the army and the youth activists, there was an open clash with the Military Police, and the executive officers of the Army subsequently accused the youth movement (specifically the April 6 Youth Movement) of taking financial aid from abroad (the United States) thereby raising the significance of the conflict. Accusing opponents of being controlled via funding from "foreign forces" was a standard tactic of the old regime, but this time, the leadership of the Muslim Brotherhood has also taken the same position in condemning the youth movement.

Conclusion: Future Prospects

It is becoming clear that the three main actors (the liberal-youth movement, the Muslim Brotherhood and the Army) are increasingly at odds at this stage in Egypt's current revolution. The force led by the youth is a new element that has broadened the range of conflict and of options. The presence of this movement is a major new variable beyond the two forces at play in the 1952 July Revolution: the Army and the Brotherhood. In the current struggle, the most actively 'revolutionary' side appears to be comprised of the youth, liberals and leftwing forces, with their competition for power coming from the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamist forces (the Islamic Group, the Salafists and so on). The Army, while maintaining its administrative authority and physical power, has not been a primary force for change. We can expect to see various maneuvers, including alliances among these main three main forces, as well as a possible resurgence among members of the dissolved National Democratic Party (the former ruling party), members of opposition parties, traditional religious forces (the al-Azhar and Sufi orders), and the Coptic Christians. Political change may follow a framework decided upon by the main political forces, in the form of a parliamentary election, the amendment of the Constitution, a presidential election, and so forth. In such a scenario, particularly with respect to dealing with the practical matters of economy and business, the role to be played by judicial persons and legal experts could be expected to rise in importance.

It is particularly interesting to note that in relation to the interaction among the three main forces (the Army, the Brotherhood, and the liberal-youth movement) there has been a growing level of cooperation between the formerly rival Army and the Brotherhood, prompted by the referendum passed on March 19, 2011 to make functional amendments to the Constitution. Both the Brotherhood and the Army see tactical advantage in solidifying their positions prior

to any major constitutional change. However, secularists and liberal intellectuals have warned the Brotherhood not to make the same error it did in the 1952 July Revolution, cautioning the group that the military will eventually betray and oppress it regardless of any prior agreements. Indeed, there is a real risk of antagonism between the Army and the Islamists if they reach a deadlock on specific key issues as they did over the civil war in Algeria in the 1990s, leading to a serious crisis.

But, in this observer's view, there is limited risk of any immediate reactionary trend. In other words, it is extremely unlikely that there could be any return to the old authoritarian regime due to a worsening of relations among the current three main forces.

It is instructive to study some of the crucial differences between the current events in Egypt and those of the 1952 July Revolution. It was Nasser's strengthening of the state security apparatus and his domination of the mass media that ultimately led to his victory in the streets. Referring to the security apparatus, while the 1952 July Revolution opened the way for a police state, the current revolution specifically seeks the dismantlement of the oppressive state system. Reforms have since been promised, starting with symbolic name changes such as that of the State Security Investigation Services, a secret police organization, to the National Security Investigation Services. Likewise, the minister of communications has declared the end of wiretapping, a halt to the surveillance of universities by police and so on... We continue to see rapid changes in many related areas.

As to the media's coverage of revolutionary developments, the 1952 July Revolution led to the banning of all the official media organs of the old political parties. To justify that prohibition, the incoming 1952 regime ran a campaign to expose corruption among the newspapers and publishers (i.e. documenting their acceptance of bribes and financial aid from the old monarchy). The same kind of media corruption is now being exposed in the current revolution, but the investigation has taken a totally different focus.

The 1952 July Revolution led to a purge of officials at the Journalist Association, a direct nationalization of the main newspapers, as well as of the main magazines, including "Al-Ahram," "al-Akhbar," "al-Gumhuriya," and the complete suppression of the Wafdist "al-Misri," which was the largest daily newspaper in Egypt at that time.

Similarly, the current revolution has led to a series of culls of the editors of governmental newspapers and magazines, and the Ministry of Information, which used to be the headquarters of the state's control over information, was simply abolished in March. Now, there are an increasing number of loud voices being heard, coupled with a rapid increase in the publication of independent newspapers, which symbolize the revolution (while state-owned media tumble into business collapse). However, we must temper these developments with some pessimism about how far the liberalization of the media might progress, as the Army is reported to be keeping a number of journalists in custody. At the very least, we can safely say that the current revolution, despite the continuing turbulence coming from within the police-state system, has

surely and steadily opened up new ground for political activity in Egypt. These new political circumstances, which have attracted worldwide attention, include the politically empowering effects of the IT (information technology) era, namely, the use of social network media such as facebook to circumvent restrictions on mass communication and collaboration.

The analysis that has been presented herein is merely a tentative attempt to compare the development processes, the international conditions, and the changes of composition and personalities among the players involved in the two key revolutions in modern Egypt: the 1952 July Revolution and the 2011 January Revolution. Needless to say, it will take some time to obtain sufficient information and material evidence to make a more detailed and definitive study of the long-term significance of the current revolution and its results.

(Translated by Misako NAGASAWA)