

P R E F A C E



IN 2012, EVENTS IN THE ARAB WORLD ARE RAPIDLY UNFOLDING. PRESIDENT HUSNI Mubarak of Egypt has resigned and the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces, the military, has assumed power. Citizens are jubilant that a dictator of thirty years has been asked to step down—an outcome once considered unimaginable. Sticking to their protests in the face of threat and repression, the citizens of Egypt sent a sign that the ongoing living conditions—both economically and politically—were unacceptable. With a growing income gap, unemployment rates skyrocketing, and a youth population that knew nothing but Mubarak’s rule, the population said *kifayeh* (enough)!

Yet what type of regime will replace Mubarak after (and if) the military steps down? This is the question that will occupy the minds of analysts, scholars, academics, and students of comparative and Middle East politics. Is Mubarak’s exit the first stage of a democratic transition? Is it a final stage to military rule? Will there be substantial reforms? What will become of Egypt’s notorious Emergency Laws? What role will the Muslim Brotherhood play? What will happen to the peace treaty with Israel? And will ties to the United States remain close? There are some glaringly clear reminders that the future of Egypt is of vital importance not only to the citizens of Egypt but also to regional and international actors as well.

As the events of the Arab Spring unfolded, it became increasingly clear that while the average citizen on the ground was demanding more democracy, more accountability, better economic opportunities, transparency, and a better life, the international order—chiefly that of the United States—was concerned about an Egyptian government that it could continue to work with. The international order had and has clear geostrategic interests in the area. The United States, through military and diplomatic channels, sent a message to Egyptians, including citizens, opposition movements, the regime in power, and to the regime yet to emerge: it is invested (and hopeful) in seeing a partner at the helm in Egypt.

What does this mean, however, for the future of democracy in Egypt? How do these geostrategic realities shape the ways in which citizens think about regime stability and democracy, and the role of the United States in their societies? And further, what do these negotiations mean for the future of democratic consolidation in Egypt and the Arab world more broadly?

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This book addresses these questions by introducing the ways in which geostrategic, patron-client relations shape domestic-level negotiations about regime stability and prospects for democratization. While building on existing democratization theories and approaches, this book attempts to refine some of our understandings about democracy by linking the realities of the international order to domestic-level societal developments.