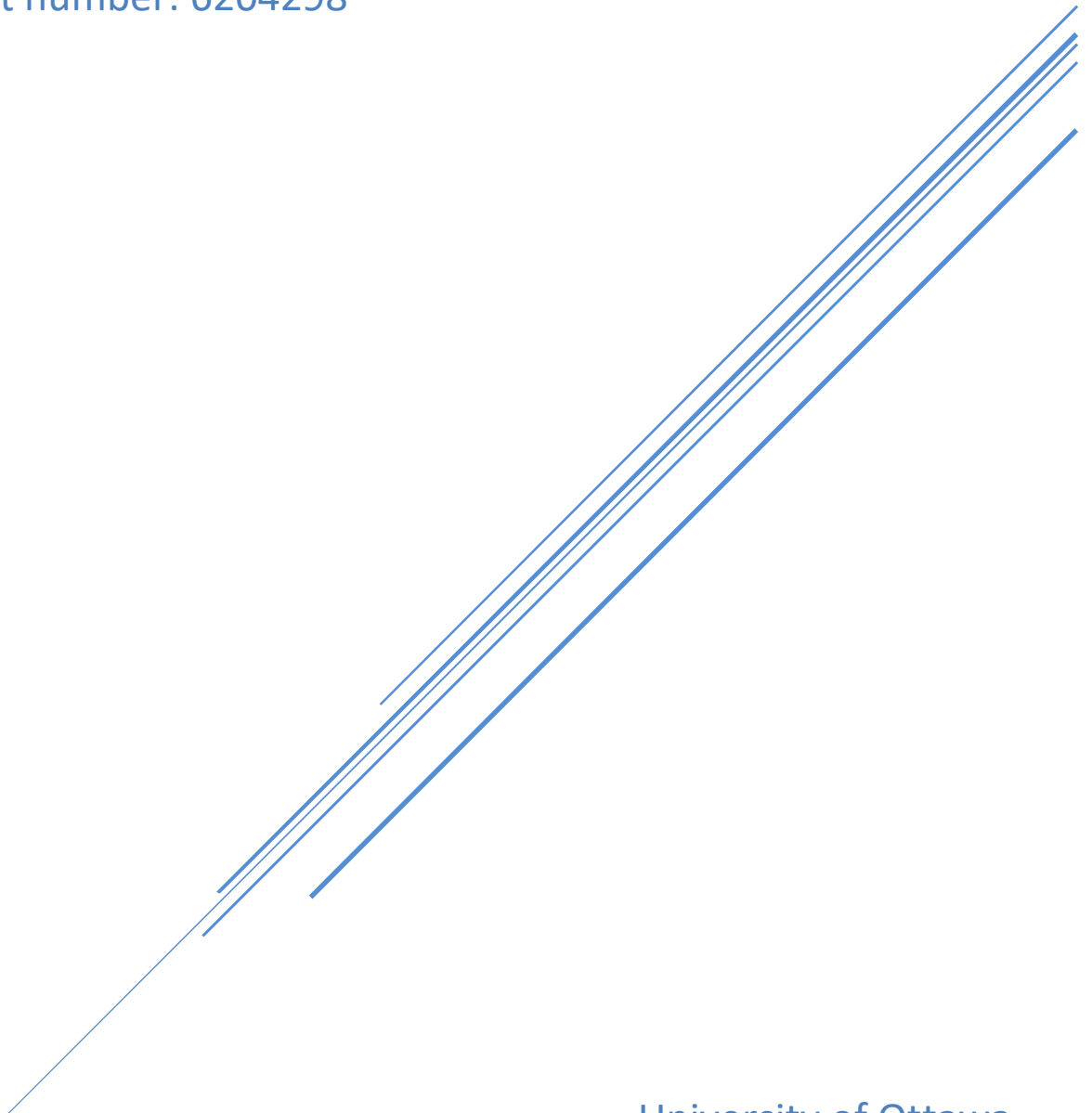


# A COMPARATIVE ANALYSIS OF TUNISIA AND EGYPT'S TRANSITIONS TO DEMOCRACY

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# Table of Contents

<b>Introduction</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>The Concept of Democracy and Democratic Theory</b>	<b>4</b>
Theoretical Framework of Democratization	4
Democratization Catalysts	6
Key Concepts of Democratic Theory	8
The Role of Democratic Institutions in the Democratization Process	11
The Relationship between Democracy and Economic Development	12
<b>Key Theoretical Perspectives on Democratization</b>	<b>13</b>
Modernization theory	13
Transitology theory	15
Political Culture theory	16
Institutional theory	17
Critiques of theoretical perspectives on democratization	19
<b>Key Elements of Democratization Framework</b>	<b>19</b>
Political Elements	20
Economic Elements	21
Social Elements	23
<b>Factors Influencing Democratization Process</b>	<b>25</b>
Internal Factors	26
External Factors	28
<b>An Ideal Universal Democratization Framework</b>	<b>31</b>
<b>Case Study: Egypt</b>	<b>34</b>
Historical overview of democracy in Egypt prior to Arab Spring	34
Background of democratization process in Egypt	35
Key elements of democratization in Egypt during the Arab Spring	37
Factors influencing democratization process in Egypt	39
The Arab Spring and democratization in Egypt	42
Analysis of democratization process in Egypt	43
<b>Case Study: Tunisia</b>	<b>44</b>
Historical overview of democracy in Tunisia prior to Arab Spring	45
Background of democratization process in Tunisia after the Arab Spring	46
Key elements of democratization in Tunisia	48
Factors influencing democratization process in Tunisia during the Arab Spring	49
Analysis of democratization process in Tunisia	51
<b>Comparative Analysis of Egypt and Tunisia's Democratization Processes</b>	<b>52</b>
Similarities and differences in the democratization processes	53
Tunisia in the democratization framework	55
Egypt in the democratization Framework	56
<b>Conclusion</b>	<b>58</b>
<b>Bibliography</b>	<b>60</b>

Democratization is a complex and multi-faceted process that involves a shift from an authoritarian political system to a democratic one. Many countries have undergone democratization over the years, but the process is often challenging and prone to setbacks. The Arab Spring has pushed democratisation to the forefront of global politics in recent years, with Tunisia and Egypt being two of the most prominent nations to go through such a transformation. The Arab Spring, a series of upheavals in the Middle East and North Africa (MENA) area, began as a hopeful movement for democracy, but quickly descended into civil war, sectarian disputes, tribal rivalries, and the growth of neotraditional and Islamist groups throughout the region. Tunisia managed to maintain democratic development for a decade before falling to a democratic backslide. Egypt, on the other hand, was unable to continue the transition, and by 2013, a military coup had restored an authoritarian rule more dictatorial than Mubarak's. The selection of the two nations is based on their apparent resemblances, yet significant fundamental differences that exist between them. Both countries started their democratisation processes in the same way and with the same supporting factors, but the outcomes were very different. Egypt appeared to possess favourable conditions for a transition towards democratic governance, owing to the presence of robust governmental institutions and a thriving civil society. Contrary to popular belief, a military administration gained power and the process was halted. Tunisia, on the other hand, had a few successful elections, overcame a political divide, and adopted a new constitution. This research paper seeks to examine the democratization processes in Tunisia and Egypt and analyze the internal and external factors using democratization theory in order to understand why did the Tunisians succeed for a decade when Egypt failed?

A theoretical democratization framework will be tested on Tunisia and Egypt to further understand the similarities and the differences in their transitions.

The paper begins with an overview of democratic theory and the relevance of the democratization process in contemporary society. It then discusses the key elements of the democratization framework, including political, economic, and social elements, as well as the factors that influence the democratization process, such as internal and external factors.

The research then delves into two case studies, Egypt and Tunisia, to analyze the democratization processes in these countries. For each case study, the paper provides a historical overview of democracy, background of democratization process, key elements, and factors influencing the

democratization process. Additionally, the research will analyze the democratization process in both countries and examine the role of political and civil society actors.

The paper concludes with a summary of the key findings and argues that while a universal framework for democratization can be a useful guide for transitioning countries, it must be adapted to each country's unique political, social, and cultural contexts. The study emphasizes that successful democratization requires a deep understanding of the historical, cultural, and political factors that influence the transition process, as well as the ability to identify and address specific challenges.

## **Introduction**

### Background of democratic theory and democratization process

Democracy is a political system that emphasizes the importance of citizens' participation in decision-making processes. It is an old complex concept that has been studied by scholars across various disciplines, including political science, philosophy, sociology, and economics.

The definition of democracy has been the subject of extensive debate among scholars. Some define democracy in terms of its procedural elements, such as free and fair elections, while others emphasize substantive elements such as equality, freedom, and justice. According to Dahl (1971), democracy is a system in which citizens are able to participate equally in the decision-making process, and in which rulers are held accountable through free and fair elections. This definition emphasizes the importance of popular sovereignty, or the idea that power should reside with the people.

Democratic theory provides a framework for understanding the fundamental principles of democracy and the processes that promote and sustain democratic governance, while Democratization involves the establishment of democratic institutions and the extension of political rights and freedoms to citizens. Over the past few decades, democratization has been a major trend around the world, as many countries have transitioned from authoritarian regimes to democratic systems.

The concept of democratization refers to the process of transitioning from non-democratic forms of government to democratic ones. According to Huntington (1991), democratization involves the establishment of democratic institutions, the extension of political rights and freedoms to citizens,

and the creation of a democratic political culture. Scholars have identified various factors that can facilitate or impede the process of democratization. Scholars have identified a number of variables that can facilitate or impede democratization, including economic development, civil society, international actors, and historical legacies (Diamond, 2010). Empirical studies have also highlighted the importance of different types of institutions for democratization, such as elections, political parties, and the rule of law (Przeworski et al., 2000).

The transition to democracy took place in over 30 nations in southern Europe, Latin America, Asia, Eastern Europe, and Africa between 1974 and 1990, virtually tripling the number of democratic governments in the globe.

Trends in seven separate regions collided in the latter quarter of the twentieth century to reshape the global political landscape: 1) the fall of right-wing authoritarian regimes in Southern Europe in the mid-1970s; 2) the replacement of military dictatorships in Latin America by elected civilian governments from the late 1970s to the late 1980s; 3) the decline of authoritarian rule in parts of East and South Asia beginning in the mid-1980s; 4) the collapse of communist regimes in Eastern Europe at the end of the 1980s; and 5) the dissolution of the Soviet Union and the establishment of 15 post-Soviet states (Carothers, 2002). In 1989-1990, the collapse of the Soviet Union caused an eruption in a democratization wave in Eastern Europe which was considered a dramatic political change towards democracy and freedom at the time. Freedom House, a think tank, has studied these countries over the past 30 years and found that some are democratic while others are stuck in autocratic regimes or even regressing (NPR, 2022).

In 2011 antigovernment demonstrations, revolutions, and armed rebellions were growing throughout the MENA, resulting in the "Arab Spring". Due to the Arab Spring, four leaders of the region's authoritarian governments have fallen: Ben Ali in Tunisia, Mubarak in Egypt, Qadhafi in Libya, and Saleh in Yemen. From Yemen to Syria to Morocco and Bahrain, contentious politics and protest movements have spread across the Arab world (Korany and El-Mahdi, 2012).

### **Theoretical Framework of Democratization**

#### The Concept of Democracy and Democratic Theory

Democracy is a political system that has been embraced by many countries around the world. It is a system of government that is based on the principle of popular sovereignty, where the people are the source of political power (Dahl 1998). It provides a mechanism for citizens to participate in

the decision-making process and hold their leaders accountable. It also promotes the protection of individual rights and freedoms, which are essential for human development and the advancement of society.

Concept of democracy has evolved over time, with various scholars and philosophers developing different theories and models of democracy, such as direct democracy, representative democracy, deliberative democracy, and consensus democracy (Held, 2006).

Direct democracy, which allows citizens to participate directly in decision-making processes, is still used in some countries such as Switzerland (Dryzek, 2010). This model involves citizens voting on policies and legislation directly, rather than through representatives (Pitkin, 1967). Direct democracy promotes transparency and accountability as citizens have direct control over decisions that affect them (Dryzek, 2010).

Representative democracy, where citizens elect representatives to make decisions on their behalf, is the most prevalent model of democracy worldwide (Held, 2006). This model emphasizes the importance of regular elections and popular participation in the decision-making process (Dahl, 1971) and it allows for efficient decision-making as representatives have the time, resources, and expertise to make informed decisions (Held, 2006). However, representative democracy may lead to a lack of citizen participation and accountability.

Deliberative democracy emphasizes informed debate and discussion in the decision-making process promoting civic engagement and ensuring that decisions are made based on reasoned and informed arguments (Dryzek, 2010). This model emphasizes the need for citizens to engage in informed and respectful debate when making decisions (Gutmann & Thompson, 2004). Participatory democracy emphasizes the importance of active participation by citizens in all aspects of governance. This model emphasizes the need for citizens to be involved in decision-making at all levels of government, including budgeting and policy formulation (Fung & Wright, 2003).

Each model of democracy has its strengths and weaknesses, and the choice of model depends on the specific political and social context in which it is being implemented (Held, 2006).

In the contemporary world, different models of democracy are applied in various political systems. For example, the United States of America is a representative democracy, where citizens elect representatives to make decisions on their behalf. Similarly, the United Kingdom is also a representative democracy, but with a parliamentary system.

In contrast, Switzerland is a direct democracy, where citizens have a direct say in policymaking through regular referendums (Kriesi, 2010). In Brazil, participatory democracy is emphasized at the local level, where citizens are involved in budgeting and policy formulation through participatory budgeting (Avritzer, 2002).

Deliberative democracy is also gaining traction in many countries, with the increasing importance of public consultations and citizen assemblies. For instance, in Ireland, citizen assemblies have been used to discuss constitutional reform, and similar initiatives have been introduced in various other countries (Fishkin, 2009).

### Democratization Catalysts

Scholars have identified various factors that can trigger and sustain democratization processes. One of the most common triggers of democratization is political crisis. Political crises such as civil wars, authoritarian rule, and economic downturns can create an environment that encourages democratic movements to emerge. For example, the collapse of the Soviet Union in the early 1990s led to democratization movements in many former Soviet republics, as people sought to establish democratic governments after years of authoritarian rule. Similarly, the Arab Spring in 2011 was triggered by political crises and economic stagnation, leading to widespread protests and demands for democratization in countries such as Tunisia, Egypt, and Syria (Hassan, 2012).

Another trigger of democratization is social mobilization. Social movements such as labor strikes, student protests, and grassroots activism can galvanize democratic demands and create public pressure for change. For example, the Solidarity movement in Poland, which emerged in the 1980s, was a powerful social movement that demanded democratic reforms and eventually led to the establishment of democratic institutions in the country (Wolchik, 2002). Similarly, the student-led pro-democracy movement in South Korea in the 1980s helped bring about democratization in the country after decades of authoritarian rule (Ha, 2003).

International pressure is another important trigger of democratization. Foreign governments, NGOs, and international organizations can exert pressure on governments to democratize or offer support for democratization efforts. For example, the European Union has been an important actor in promoting democratization in countries such as Poland, Hungary, and Romania, by providing economic incentives and political support for democratic reforms (Schimmelfennig & Sedelmeier,

2005). Similarly, the United States has played a significant role in promoting democracy worldwide, through various aid programs and diplomatic initiatives.

Economic liberalization is also a trigger for democratization. The process of opening up the economy can create new social groups with an interest in democratic institutions and political reforms. For example, in Taiwan and South Korea, the rapid economic growth in the 1980s created a new middle class that demanded democratic reforms and helped bring about democratization in both countries (Diamond, 1999).

Lastly, media and information technology can also be important triggers of democratization. Access to information, social media, and other communication technologies can empower citizens, catalyze the spread of ideas, and facilitate mass mobilization and coordination for democratic change. For example, social media played a crucial role in the Arab Spring protests, by allowing citizens to organize and coordinate protests, share information, and challenge government propaganda (Howard & Hussain, 2013).

In his seminal work, *The Third Wave: Democratization in the Late Twentieth Century*, Samuel Huntington argues that democratization is a global phenomenon that occurs in waves and is influenced by historical, economic, and cultural factors (Huntington 1991). Huntington proposes two main theories of democratization: "Change from Above" and "Change from Below."

"Change from Above" refers to a top-down approach to democratization that is initiated by the ruling elites who are willing to relinquish power and establish democratic institutions. This approach assumes that the existing elites have the capacity to implement democratic reforms and that they can control the pace and scope of democratization. Examples of "Change from Above" include the transition from authoritarianism to democracy in Spain in the 1970s and the peaceful end of apartheid in South Africa in the 1990s (O'Donnell and Schmitter 1986).

On the other hand, "Change from Below" refers to a bottom-up approach to democratization that is initiated by popular mobilization and mass protest. This approach assumes that the masses have the power to challenge and overthrow authoritarian regimes and that they can create new democratic institutions from the bottom up. Examples of "Change from Below" include the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991 (Huntington 1991).

Huntington's theories are relevant in understanding the democratization triggers discussed above (Huntington, 1991).

For instance, change from above can be observed in some cases where economic liberalization policies implemented by authoritarian regimes have led to democratization. As noted earlier, economic liberalization can create new social groups with an interest in democratic institutions and political reforms. This can lead to an increase in demands for democratization and ultimately force the regime to undertake democratic reforms as a way of maintaining its legitimacy (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2006).

On the other hand, change from below can also be observed in cases where social mobilization and grassroots activism have catalyzed democratization. In these cases, civil society groups, opposition movements, and other actors outside the state have demanded democratic reforms, put pressure on authoritarian regimes, and played a crucial role in establishing democratic institutions. Huntington's theory of change from below has also been complemented by studies that highlight the role of international actors, such as international organizations and foreign governments, in supporting democratization movements (Carothers, 2002). These studies suggest that external actors can provide crucial resources, such as funding, training, and technical assistance, to civil society groups and opposition movements that are seeking democratic change.

It is important to note that these two theories are not mutually exclusive, and democratization often involves a combination of both "Change from Above" and "Change from Below".

While democratization triggers can vary in their origins and timing, the process of democratization itself is not necessarily a linear or predictable one. The path to democracy can be long and fraught with setbacks and obstacles, and it often requires sustained efforts by a range of actors, both domestic and international, to establish and consolidate democratic institutions.

## Key Concepts of Democratic Theory

Democratic theory, at its core, is concerned with identifying the key concepts and principles that underpin democratic systems and exploring how they can be applied to promote greater political equality, freedom, and justice. The key concepts include popular sovereignty, representation, majority rule, rule of law, civil liberties and human rights, political participation and equality, and deliberation and public debate.

### Popular Sovereignty

Popular sovereignty is the cornerstone of democratic theory, representing the idea that ultimate political power rests with the people as a whole (Dahl, 2000). This concept is often traced back to the Enlightenment period, where it was championed by thinkers such as Jean-Jacques Rousseau and John Locke. In practice, popular sovereignty is embodied through mechanisms such as elections, referenda, and other forms of direct or indirect participation that allow citizens to exercise control over their government (Bohman, 1996). By placing power in the hands of the people, democratic systems seek to ensure that government is responsive to the needs and desires of its citizens. However, there are also challenges associated with ensuring that all citizens have equal access to these mechanisms of participation, such as addressing issues of voter suppression and ensuring that marginalized groups are represented in the political process (Mansbridge, 1999).

### Representation

Representation is a key concept of democratic theory, which emphasizes the idea that elected officials are accountable to and should act on behalf of their constituents (Pitkin, 1967). In representative democracies, citizens elect representatives who are charged with making decisions on their behalf. The concept of representation has its roots in ancient Greece, where the polis emphasized the importance of citizen participation in political decision-making (Manin, 1997). Representation has been a central feature of democratic governance since the founding of modern democratic states in the 18th and 19th centuries (Rousseau, 1762).

### Majority Rule

Majority rule is a central principle of democratic theory, which asserts that decisions should be made by a vote of the majority, while protecting the rights and interests of minority groups (Mill, 1861). The principle of majority rule is based on the belief that the will of the majority should prevail in democratic decision-making. However, it is also tempered by the need to protect the rights and interests of minority groups, who may be marginalized or oppressed by the majority. As a result, democratic systems seek to balance the principle of majority rule with the protection of minority rights, through mechanisms such as constitutional guarantees, judicial review, and other forms of checks and balances (Dahl, 1956).

### Rule of Law

The rule of law is a fundamental concept of democratic theory, reflecting the idea that laws should apply equally to all citizens and that no one is above the law, including those in positions of power (Dicey, 1885). This principle is based on the belief that government power should be limited and that citizens should have legal protections against abuses of power. The concept of the rule of law has its origins in ancient Greece and Rome, where the idea of legal equality was central to the functioning of the state (Figgis, 1906). In modern democracies, the rule of law is embodied through institutions such as an independent judiciary, a written constitution, and legal protections for individual rights (Bickel, 1986).

### Civil Liberties and Human Rights

Civil liberties and human rights are fundamental concepts in democratic theory, as they aim to protect citizens from arbitrary government actions and ensure that individuals have certain inalienable rights that must be respected by the state (Rawls, 1993). The concept is based on the belief that freedom of expression, religion, assembly, and the press are essential to democratic governance, as these allow individuals to voice their opinions and participate in political processes (Dahl, 1971). In addition, democratic systems seek to protect individual rights such as the right to a fair trial, protection from arbitrary imprisonment, and the right to privacy (Mill, 1859). However, there can also be challenges associated with balancing these individual rights with the broader needs of society, such as in cases where individual rights conflict with public safety or national security interests.

### Political Participation and Equality

Political participation and equality are fundamental concepts of democratic theory, based on the belief that all citizens should have equal access to political decision-making processes and that participation in these processes should be open to all (Schumpeter, 1942). The idea is that democratic governance requires active citizen participation and that all citizens have a right to participate in the political process. In practice, this can take the form of mechanisms such as voting, citizen initiatives, and public hearings (Dahl, 1989). The goal of political participation and equality is to ensure that everyone has an equal voice in the political process, regardless of their social status or economic power (Habermas, 1996)

## Deliberation and Public Debate

Democratic ideology emphasises free and informed debate and deliberation (Bohman, 1996). This idea holds that citizens must be able to rationally and respectfully discuss government policy to make informed judgements. Public forums, town hall gatherings, and other methods can let residents communicate with one other and their elected officials. Many democratic theorists argue that debate is essential to a functioning democracy (Dryzek, 2010; Fishkin, 2009). Deliberation and public debate enable educated and polite interaction between voters and their elected officials (Bohman, 1996). Access, disinformation, and polarisation may make it difficult to make these procedures inclusive and successful.

## The Role of Democratic Institutions in the Democratization Process

Democratic institutions are the formal and informal mechanisms that are established to ensure that the democratic process is upheld and the key concepts and principles that underpin democratic systems are adhered to. Those institutions facilitate democracy, ensuring that the government remains accountable to the people (Diamond 2010). These institutions include the executive branch, legislative branch, judicial branch, independent media, civil society organizations, electoral management bodies, and other institutions that work to promote democracy (United Nations, 2019).

Democratic institutions are characterized by several essential features, including free and fair elections, the rule of law, an independent judiciary, a free press, and the protection of human rights. According to Held (2006), these features are fundamental to the functioning of democratic institutions and ensure that the government remains accountable to the people (p. 32). These institutions create a space for citizens to voice their opinions and preferences, ensuring that the government is responsive to the needs of the people. As Diamond (2002) notes, "democracy is not simply about electing leaders; it is about empowering citizens to participate in the governance of their country."

Another important function of democratic institutions is to ensure that government officials are accountable to the people they serve. This is achieved through mechanisms such as the separation of powers, an independent judiciary, and a free press. These institutions act as a check on the power of the government, ensuring that officials are held to account for their actions and decisions. As O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986) argue, "accountability is a fundamental principle of democratic

governance, and democratic institutions are designed to ensure that those in power are answerable to the people" (p. 5).

The safeguarding of civil liberties and human rights constitutes another crucial role for democratic institutions. In essence, these institutions champion the values of freedom of expression, minority rights protection, and promotion of the rule of law. Through these functions, democratic institutions serve as a bulwark against the tyranny of government power, guaranteeing citizens the right to pursue their interests without fear of oppression. Huntington (1991) recognizes the significance of democratic institutions, stating that they are indispensable in protecting individual liberties and ensuring the government's compliance with the rule of law.

Examples of the role of democratic institutions in the democratization process can be seen in various countries around the world. For instance, in South Africa, the establishment of democratic institutions such as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission and the Constitutional Court played a critical role in the country's transition from apartheid to democracy. These institutions helped to address past injustices and ensure that the new democratic government was accountable to its citizens (Mandela, 1994). Similarly, in Poland, the establishment of democratic institutions such as an independent judiciary and a free press were crucial in the country's transition from communism to democracy. These institutions helped to ensure that the government was held accountable and that civil liberties were protected, despite challenges from authoritarian elements (Szczerbiak & Taggart, 2008).

### The Relationship between Democracy and Economic Development

The relationship between democracy and economic development has been a source of debate in political and economic circles. Democracy is often linked to economic progress, but the interplay between the two is intricate and multilayered (Gerring, Thacker, & Moreno, 2005). While democracy can bolster economic growth through political stability, rule of law, and protection of property rights, economic development can also fuel democracy by creating a more enlightened and politically engaged populace (Cheibub, 2010). However, democracy can also lead to policies that impede economic growth, as democratic governments may prioritize short-term gains over long-term development (Diamond, 2010).

Additionally, research has shown that contextual factors, such as a country's history, culture, and level of development, can influence the relationship between democracy and economic

development. For example, some scholars argue that democracy may be more effective at promoting economic growth in countries with higher levels of human and social capital, as these countries may have a stronger civil society and greater institutional trust (Przeworski et al., 2000). External factors, such as globalization and international trade, may also impact the relationship between democracy and economic development. For instance, Rodrik and Wacziarg (2005) found that "international trade is associated with higher levels of economic growth in democracies compared to non-democracies".

The quality of democracy may also influence the impact of democracy on economic development. Some scholars contend that the relationship between democracy and economic development may be more robust in countries with high-quality democracies, characterized by strong institutions, rule of law, and effective governance (Cheibub, 2010). Finally, natural resources, geography, and access to capital may also shape the relationship between democracy and economic development. These factors may mediate the impact of democracy on economic development or interact with democracy in intricate ways (Gerring, Thacker, & Moreno, 2005).

### **Key Theoretical Perspectives on Democratization**

Theories of democratization attempt to explain the factors that contribute to this transformation and how it occurs. A comprehensive understanding of democratization requires an interdisciplinary approach that takes into account economic, social, cultural, and institutional factors, all of which have been explored in the previous sections. There are many theoretical perspectives on democratization, each with its own strengths and weaknesses. Modernization theory emphasizes the role of economic development in democratization, transitology focuses on the transition period from authoritarianism to democracy, and political culture theory emphasizes the importance of cultural values and beliefs. While each of these perspectives offers important insights into the democratization process, none of them alone can fully explain it.

#### **Modernization theory**

Modernization theory is a significant theoretical perspective on democratization that highlights the link between economic development and democratic governance (Przeworski et al., 2000). This theory asserts that economic development is a necessary condition for democratic governance

because it leads to increased levels of education, urbanization, and a growing middle class, which creates a demand for political rights and accountability (Lipset, 1959).

Empirical research has provided some evidence supporting modernization theory, as several studies have indicated a positive correlation between economic development and democratic governance (Huntington, 1991; Przeworski et al., 2000). For instance, Huntington (1991) discovered that countries with higher levels of economic development were more likely to be democratic than less developed countries. Similarly, Przeworski et al. (2000) demonstrated that democracies are more likely to emerge and persist in countries with higher levels of economic development.

However, critics of modernization theory contend that the relationship between economic development and democracy is not as straightforward as proposed by the theory. Some scholars have argued that economic growth can sometimes reinforce authoritarian regimes by providing them with resources and strengthening their control over society (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2006). Others have argued that the effects of economic development on democratic governance are highly dependent on other factors, such as the historical legacy of colonialism, the distribution of wealth and power, and the nature of political institutions (Diamond, 1999).

Furthermore, modernization theory overlooks the role of agency and politics in the democratization process. While economic development may create a demand for political rights and accountability, the actions of political elites and civil society ultimately determine whether democracy will be established and sustained (Linz & Stepan, 1996).

Moreover, modernization theory does not account for the possibility of democratic backsliding, which occurs when a country that has previously experienced democratic governance reverts back to authoritarianism (Levitsky & Ziblatt, 2018). This can happen even in countries that have undergone significant economic development, such as Hungary and Turkey in recent years where factors such as the erosion of democratic institutions, the rise of populist leaders, and the polarization of society can threaten the stability of democratic governance (Levitsky & Ziblatt, 2018).

### Transitology theory

Transitology theory, also referred to as the "third wave" theory, emerged in the 1980s and 1990s as a prominent perspective on democratization (Huntington, 1991). This theory posits that

democratization occurs in waves, with periods of authoritarianism followed by bursts of democratization (Huntington, 1991). The theory identifies three main stages of democratization: opening, breakthrough, and consolidation (O'Donnell & Schmitter, 1986). The opening stage involves the loosening of authoritarian controls and the emergence of a new political culture that demands greater political freedoms. During this stage, civil society organizations and opposition groups begin to mobilize and press for political change. The breakthrough stage involves the actual overthrow of the authoritarian regime and the establishment of democratic governance. This stage is characterized by mass protests, strikes, and other forms of civil resistance that challenge the legitimacy of the ruling regime. Finally, the consolidation stage involves the stabilization of democratic institutions and the consolidation of democratic governance. This stage is marked by the establishment of new democratic institutions, such as free and fair elections, an independent judiciary, and a free press (O'Donnell & Schmitter, 1986).

Empirical research has supported the transitology theory by identifying the "third wave" of democratization, which started in the mid-1970s and continued through the 1990s, as a period characterized by the emergence of democratic movements in many countries around the world (Huntington, 1991). During this period, many countries that were previously under authoritarian rule transitioned to democratic governance, including Spain, Portugal, and South Korea (Huntington, 1991). These countries underwent the three stages of democratization proposed by transitology theory. However, it is important to note that not all examples of Democratization follow the same route or experience all three stages of the process. Certain phases may be skipped or experienced in a different order in other nations (O'Donnell & Schmitter, 1986).

Transitology theory has also been instrumental in guiding policy decisions and international efforts to promote democracy in transitional societies, as organizations such as the United Nations and the European Union have used transitology theory to inform their efforts (Diamond, 1999). However, critics of transitology theory argue that it oversimplifies the democratization process and overlooks complex historical, cultural, and institutional factors that shape democratization (Diamond, 1999).

Critics have also pointed out that transitology theory neglects the role of political elites and institutional arrangements such as the rule of law and checks and balances in ensuring the consolidation of democratic governance (Linz & Stepan, 1996). Moreover, transitology theory

does not fully account for the possibility of democratic backsliding, as demonstrated in recent cases of democratic erosion in Hungary and Poland (Levitsky & Ziblatt, 2018).

Transitology theory also tends to assume a universalistic approach to democratization, which may not be applicable to all contexts (Linz & Stepan, 1996). For instance, some scholars argue that the experience of democratization in East Asia challenges the assumptions of transitology theory, as countries such as South Korea and Taiwan achieved democratic governance without following the prescribed path of social mobilization and liberalization (Haggard & Kaufman, 1995). Furthermore, transitology theory fails to consider the role of external factors, such as global economic and political trends, in shaping the democratization process (O'Donnell, 1994). Despite these limits, transitology theory has shown the role of political agency, social mobilization, and historical and institutional factors in democratization. Its emphasis on civil society has also inspired social capital theory (Putnam, 1993).

### Political culture theory

Political culture theory focuses on the role of culture and values in shaping political attitudes and behaviors. According to this theory, a society with a strong democratic political culture is more likely to sustain democratic governance, while a society with a weak or nonexistent democratic political culture is more likely to experience challenges and setbacks in democratization. For instance, countries with a history of colonialism or authoritarianism often have a greater emphasis on obedience and deference to authority. This makes it challenging for democratic values to take root. On the other hand, countries with a tradition of civic engagement and social mobilization have a more favorable environment for the development of democratic institutions (Huntington, 1991).

One of the key scholars who developed political culture theory is Gabriel Almond, who argued that a democratic political culture is characterized by certain attitudes and beliefs, including a commitment to popular sovereignty, equality, and the rule of law (Almond & Verba, 1963). Almond identified several factors that contribute to the development of a democratic political culture, including education, mass media, and socialization.

One of the strengths of political culture theory is that it acknowledges the complex and varied factors that shape democratization, including historical, cultural, and institutional factors (Almond & Verba, 1963). It also recognizes that democratization is a gradual and ongoing process, rather

than a fixed endpoint that can be achieved through a single election or constitutional reform (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005). Moreover, political culture theory offers a useful framework for understanding the challenges and opportunities that arise during the process of democratization, and for identifying strategies to promote democratic values and institutions (Putnam, 1993).

Studies have found that countries with a strong democratic political culture are more likely to successfully transition to democratic governance (Inglehart & Welzel, 2005). Other studies have found that political culture can also help to explain variations in democratic performance among countries with similar levels of economic development (Norris, 2011).

Scholars have also criticised political culture theory for being too deterministic and essentialist, reducing complex social and political processes to basic cultural factors. They also argue that political culture theory neglects the role of power and interests in shaping political outcomes, and that it can obscure the agency of political actors and social movements in bringing about political change (Bunce, 2000; Robinson, 1997). Critics have pointed out that political culture is not a static or fixed concept, but rather is constantly evolving and changing over time. Additionally, political culture is influenced by a wide range of social, economic, and political factors, including historical legacies, institutional structures, and international relations (Huntington, 1991).

### Institutional Theory

The institutional theory posits that democratization is influenced by the design and functioning of political institutions. The theory suggests that democracies are more likely to emerge and be sustained in societies that have strong and effective political institutions, such as an independent judiciary, a free press, and competitive political parties (Przeworski et al., 2000). In this view, democratization is not a natural outcome of economic development, social mobilization, or cultural factors, but rather a result of the creation and maintenance of strong political institutions.

Institutional theory argues that strong and effective political institutions are a prerequisite for democratization to take root and be sustained (Skocpol and Somers 1980). According to this perspective, political institutions such as an independent judiciary, a free press, and competitive political parties provide a framework for peaceful resolution of conflicts and effective representation of citizens' interests. These institutions also serve as a check on the arbitrary exercise of power by those in positions of authority (Przeworski 1991). By fostering

accountability, transparency, and legitimacy, institutional arrangements can contribute to the consolidation of democratic governance (Levitsky & Way, 2010).

Institutional theory acknowledges the significant influence of historical and cultural factors on the development and operation of political institutions (Hall & Taylor, 1996). In many countries, the legacy of colonialism or authoritarianism has resulted in institutions that are not conducive to democratic governance. These institutions may lack the necessary checks and balances to prevent the concentration of power or may be heavily influenced by particular interest groups (Acemoglu & Robinson, 2012). In such cases, democratization may necessitate a process of institutional reform or the creation of new institutions that can support democratic norms and values (Carothers, 2002).

According to institutional theory, a critical challenge is how to create or reform political institutions, which requires significant political will and resources (Thelen, 1999). For example, establishing an independent judiciary may require investing resources in the training of judges, ensuring judicial autonomy, and promoting the rule of law (Ginsburg, 2008). In the same way, creating a free press necessitates loosening restrictions on media and safeguarding journalists from intimidation or violence (Sen, 2001).

Institutional theory faces another challenge in explaining how social mobilization and cultural factors can shape political institutions (Putnam, 1993). In societies where citizens have a strong sense of civic duty and participate actively in political life, strong and effective political institutions are more likely to emerge (Almond & Verba, 1963). Cultural factors such as trust and social capital can also contribute to the development of institutions that are responsive to citizens' needs (Fukuyama, 1995).

By recognizing the importance of institutional design and function, institutional theory offers valuable insights into the conditions necessary for democracy to take root and thrive (Levitsky and Way 2010).

#### Critiques of theoretical perspectives on democratization

The four perspectives detailed above, offer different explanations for democratization. Modernization theory posits that economic development is the key to democratization, while transitology focuses on the process of transitioning from authoritarianism to democracy. Political culture theory emphasizes the importance of cultural values in promoting democratization, and

institutional theoretical perspective highlights the role of political institutions in shaping the democratization process.

However, each theory has its limitations as briefly discussed above. Critics of modernization theory argue that it fails to account for cultural and political differences among countries. Transitology is criticized for being too focused on the process of democratization and not accounting for external factors that shape the process. Political culture theory is criticized for not accounting for the role of institutions in shaping political culture, and institutional theory is criticized for not accounting for the role of external factors in shaping political institutions.

Cultural explanations, post-colonialism issues, and globalization issues are essential for understanding democratization theories and evaluating their strengths and limitations" (Choudhary & Gaur, 2015, p. 41). Each theory on democratization has a different perspective on how cultural explanations, post-colonialism issues, and globalization issues affect the democratization process. Modernization theory and transitology do not provide a comprehensive analysis of how these issues impact democratization, while political culture theory and institutional theoretical perspective provide a more nuanced analysis" (Choudhary & Gaur, 2015, p. 41).

These factors highlight the complex and dynamic nature of democratic development, and the need for a multidisciplinary and contextualized approach to democratization research and practice.

### **Key Elements of Democratization Framework**

Democratization frameworks aim to provide a roadmap for transitioning from authoritarianism or other non-democratic systems to democratic governance. Several scholars have identified the key elements of a democratization framework. For example, Diamond (1999) argues that democratization requires the establishment of institutions that provide political freedoms, such as the freedom of expression and association. He also highlights the importance of civil society in promoting democratic values and the rule of law.

Similarly, Przeworski (1991) identifies economic factors as essential for democratization. He argues that economic growth and development are necessary to support democracy, as citizens are more likely to support democratic institutions if they see tangible benefits from them. Przeworski also notes that economic inequality can undermine democracy, as it creates a sense of unfairness and can lead to social unrest.

Finally, social elements such as gender equality, empowerment of marginalized groups, and the promotion of pluralism are essential for democratization. These elements ensure that all members of society have a voice in the political process and that diverse perspectives are represented (Haerpfer et al., 2009).

Each of these categories includes a set of specific factors that are essential for the democratization process. They work together to create a system that is fair, just, and inclusive. In addition, the successful implementation of these elements requires the participation and support of citizens, civil society organizations, political parties, and government institutions.

### Political Elements

Political elements play a crucial role in a democratization framework as they determine the extent to which democratic principles and practices can be established in a society.

The first political element of a democratization framework is the establishment of a democratic constitution and legal framework. A democratic constitution provides the legal basis for democracy by establishing the principles of popular sovereignty, political pluralism, and the rule of law. It also establishes the separation of powers and guarantees basic rights and freedoms such as freedom of speech, assembly, and association. A democratic legal framework ensures that these principles are enforced and that institutions such as the judiciary, electoral commission, and media are independent and impartial. A strong legal framework is essential to protect citizens' rights and ensure accountability and transparency in the democratic process (Dahl, 1998; Diamond & Morlino, 2005).

The second political element of a democratization framework is the establishment of democratic institutions and practices. Democratic institutions such as parliaments, political parties, and civil society organizations provide the means for citizens to participate in the political process, express their views, and hold their leaders accountable. The establishment of a free and independent media is also critical to ensure that citizens have access to information and can make informed decisions. Democratic practices such as free and fair elections, peaceful transfer of power, and respect for human rights are essential to ensure that democracy is sustained and that citizens have confidence in the democratic process (Diamond, 1999; O'Donnell & Schmitter, 1986).

The third political element of a democratization framework is the promotion of democratic culture and values. Democracy is not only a set of institutional arrangements but also a culture that values

equality, tolerance, and respect for diversity. A democratic culture is essential to ensure that citizens understand and appreciate democratic principles and practices and are willing to defend them. This involves promoting civic education, encouraging civic engagement, and promoting democratic values through cultural and social initiatives (Putnam, 1993; Inglehart & Welzel, 2005).

The fourth political element of a democratization framework is the promotion of regional and international cooperation. Regional and international cooperation can provide support and assistance to countries in their democratization efforts. This can involve providing technical assistance, financial support, and sharing of best practices. Regional and international organizations such as the European Union, the African Union, and the United Nations can play a crucial role in supporting democratization efforts and promoting democratic norms and values globally (Muller, 1997; Moravcsik, 1998).

These elements are interdependent and must be implemented in a coordinated and comprehensive approach to ensure the establishment and sustainability of democracy (Diamond, 1999; O'Donnell & Schmitter, 1986). For example, a democratic constitution and legal framework may not be effective without the establishment of independent and impartial institutions that can enforce democratic principles and practices. Likewise, the promotion of democratic culture and values may not be effective without the establishment of democratic institutions that provide citizens with the means to participate in the political process and hold their leaders accountable.

### Economic Elements

Economic elements are important in the democratization process since they may either help or impede the creation of democratic rule.

#### *Economic Growth and Democratization*

Economic growth is an essential component of a democratic system. According to Przeworski and Limongi (1997), nations with higher levels of economic growth are more likely to become democracies. Economic growth gives the resources required to build democratic institutions such as a free press, an independent court, and a functional public service. Furthermore, economic development can create a middle class, which can act as a catalyst for Democratization by pressing the government for greater political participation and accountability (Lipset, 1959).

The link between economic progress and Democratization, however, is not linear. Economic development can sometimes generate unfavorable conditions for Democratization. Rapid economic development, for example, can result in the concentration of wealth and power in the hands of a few, establishing an economic elite resistant to political reform (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2001). Furthermore, economic development can produce a strong state capable of suppressing dissent and maintaining power through coercion (Huntington, 1968).

### *Democratization and Inequality*

Inequality is another significant economic aspect that might have an impact on Democratization. According to research, large levels of economic inequality are related with a reduced chance of Democratization (Boix, 2003). Inequality may cause social and economic differences, making it difficult for democratic institutions to establish themselves. Furthermore, inequality can result in the concentration of power and wealth in the hands of a few, creating an economic elite resistant to political change (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2001). The link between inequality and Democratization, on the other hand, is complicated. In other circumstances, inequality can serve as a catalyst for Democratization by inspiring social movements and political resistance (Tilly, 1978). Furthermore, some studies have suggested that moderate levels of inequality can benefit Democratization by fostering a more robust civil society and increased political competition (Persson and Tabellini, 1994).

### *International Players and Democracy*

International players, such as foreign governments and international organizations, can also help to promote democracy. Foreign aid, in particular, may offer the resources needed to develop democratic institutions and promote civil and political rights. Studies have demonstrated that foreign aid may be beneficial in encouraging Democratization, particularly when targeted at specific sectors such as the media or civil society organisations (Finkel and Pérez-Lián, 2001).

However, the role of international actors in promoting democracy is also debatable. Some opponents claim that foreign aid might be harmful if utilized to prop up authoritarian governments or develop reliance on foreign donors (Moyo, 2009).

Economic growth offers the resources required for building democratic institutions and can help to produce a middle class that expects more political engagement and responsibility from the government. Economic development, on the other hand, can produce unfavorable conditions for Democratization, such as a concentration of wealth and power in the hands of a few or a powerful

state that suppresses opposition. Overall, a thorough Democratization framework must take into account the process's economic elements, such as economic development, inequality, and the influence of foreign players.

### Social Elements

While political and economic factors are crucial for the democratization process, the social factors are equally important, if not more. Civil society, political culture, media, education, and social capital all play critical roles in creating a democratic society. These social elements create a space for citizens to participate in the political process, express their opinions, and hold the government accountable. Without these social elements, democracy cannot thrive.

#### *Civil Society*

Civil society constitutes a crucial social component within a democratization framework. The term "civil society" pertains to the assemblage of civic organizations, social movements, and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) that operate autonomously from the government. According to Fukuyama (1995), civil society serves as a medium for citizens to engage in the political process, voice their perspectives, and hold the government accountable. It also fosters the development of social capital and serves as a mechanism to counterbalance the state's power concentration. It serves as a watchdog to make sure the government defends the rights of the populace and maintains the law.

#### *Political Culture*

Another critical social element of a democratization framework is political culture. Political culture refers to the beliefs, values, and attitudes that people hold about politics and government. A democratic political culture is characterized by a commitment to democracy, a belief in the rule of law, and a respect for individual rights and freedoms. Political culture is important because it shapes how people behave in a democracy. According to Diamond (1999), a democratic political culture is necessary for the success of democracy because it creates a sense of shared values and norms that guide political behavior.

#### *Media*

The media plays a pivotal role in the social aspect of a framework for democratization. According to Przeworski (1991), the media serves an essential part in communicating political developments, exposing cases of misconduct, and providing a platform for public discussion. The existence of an

independent and unbridled media is essential for the operation of a democratic framework, as it acts as a vigilant watchdog and enables the implementation of governmental accountability.

### *Education*

Education is another important social element of a democratization framework. Education provides citizens with the skills and knowledge necessary to participate in the political process, engage in public debate, and hold the government accountable. Education also helps to promote a democratic political culture by fostering critical thinking, tolerance, and respect for diversity. According to Huntington (1991), education is a critical element of democratization because it creates a more informed and engaged citizenry, which is necessary for the success of democracy.

### *Social Capital*

Social capital refers to the networks of social relationships, norms, and trust that exist within a society. The role of social capital is important for democratization due to its capacity to create a sense of community and helps to build trust between citizens and the government. Social capital also helps to promote cooperation and collective action, which are essential for the success of democracy. The concept of social capital is instrumental in promoting collaboration and communal efforts, stimulating civic engagement, and expediting the establishment of confidence in democratic establishments, all of which are pivotal to the advancement of democratic communities (Putnam, 1993).

It's important to note that each country's unique social, political, and economic context will require a tailored approach to democratization. The need for a tailored approach to democratization based on a country's unique context has been noted by scholars such as Diamond (1999) and Huntington (1991). For example, the role of civil society may be more or less prominent depending on the level of government repression and citizen mobilization (Diamond, 1999). Similarly, the media landscape may vary widely depending on factors such as government regulation and ownership structures (Huntington, 1991).

The interdependence of the social elements of a democratization framework has also been highlighted by scholars such as Fukuyama (1995) and Putnam (1993).

The dynamic nature of the social elements of a democratization framework has been noted by scholars such as Przeworski (1991). Przeworski's research demonstrates that market reforms can play a crucial role in the democratization process. However, the specific reforms needed to promote democratization can vary depending on a country's unique context and circumstances.

Therefore, any democratization framework must be flexible and adaptable to changing circumstances in order to promote long-term democratic sustainability (Przeworski, 1991).

### **Factors Influencing Democratization Process**

The outcome of transitions towards democratization is shaped by a multitude of factors, both internal and external in nature. Internal factors such as political leadership, civil-military relations, civil society, elite bargaining, culture, religion, and historical context are crucial in their potential impact on the process of democratization. External factors such as international/foreign interference, international organizations, foreign aid, and regional cooperation can exert an influence on the process of democratization. According to Schmitter (1986), the transition from authoritarian rule is primarily influenced by national dynamics and internal factors, while external factors have a minimal impact. The limitations of democratic theory in comprehensively elucidating, evaluating, and assigning accountability for external factors in democratic transitions can be attributed to the intricate nature of international relations and the extensive array of external factors that impede the assessment of their influence and significance (Pridham et al., 1994). The process of democratization involves complex interactions between internal factors and external forces. These variables frequently intersect and influence one another in noteworthy manners. While external factors alone are not enough for a successful democratic transition, they can support and enhance the democratizing effects of favorable internal conditions (Kummel, 1998). On the other hand, strong internal factors can lead to successful democratization even in the presence of challenging external conditions, however, the international dimension does play a significant role in democratization, with developments in the global economy and politics, changes in relationships between countries, and the presence of international institutions all influencing the process (Kummel, 1998).

#### Internal Factors

##### *Civil-military relations*

The significance of civil-military relations in democratization theory has been widely recognized in the academic literature (Linz & Stepan, 1996). The military often plays a crucial role in the transition from authoritarianism to democracy. In many countries, military regimes have ruled for

extended periods, and democratization can only be achieved by bringing the military under civilian control (Snyder, 1998).

Recent research has established that civil-military relations can influence the success or failure of democratization efforts. A strong military that is not under civilian control can resist democratization and even launch coups to overthrow civilian governments. In contrast, a military that is subordinate to civilian authority and committed to democratic principles can help facilitate the transition to democracy by providing security and stability during the transition period (O'Donnell, 1993). Moreover, civil-military relations can affect the quality of democracy that emerges after a transition. If the military remains a dominant force in politics even after democratization, it can undermine democratic institutions and restrict civil liberties. Conversely, if the military is reformed and depoliticized, it can help build a strong and stable democracy (Huntington, 1991).

Promoting civilian control over the military and ensuring that the military is committed to democratic values are critical steps in the democratization process. This requires building democratic institutions that can effectively regulate and oversee the military's activities, such as parliamentary oversight committees, independent judiciaries, and civilian defense ministries (Wong, 2004). In addition, the role of the military in democratization processes can depend on contextual factors such as the country's history, culture, and political environment. In some countries, the military has played a crucial role in national identity and state-building, and in such cases, the military may be more resistant to democratization efforts as it perceives itself as the guardian of the nation's values and interests (Bruneau, 2000).

Furthermore, research has demonstrated that the level of institutionalization of the military can also impact democratization processes. Institutionalized militaries, characterized by clear chains of command, rules, and regulations, are more likely to accept civilian control and democratic norms. On the other hand, non-institutionalized militaries, characterized by weak institutional structures, informal networks, and personal loyalties, may be more resistant to democratization and civilian control (Hendrickson, 2016).

A successful democratization process often depends on the relationship between the military and civil society, particularly in the context of the transition from authoritarian rule. Military support for democratic institutions and processes, such as providing security during elections, ensuring a peaceful transfer of power, and protecting human rights, can contribute to creating an environment

in which democracy can thrive (Huntington, 1991). In addition, the military can help to facilitate the process of democratic consolidation by promoting accountability, transparency, and good governance, and by serving as a model for democratic governance (Hendrickson, 2016).

Moreover, the military can act as a mediator between different political actors, helping to prevent conflict and promote democratic stability. In cases of political crisis or instability, the military can use its institutional legitimacy to broker a peaceful resolution to the conflict and facilitate democratic processes (Huntington, 1991). In some cases, the military may even be a crucial actor by providing necessary security and stability to support a transition to democracy. For example, in countries like South Korea and Taiwan, the military played a critical role in the democratic transitions of the 1980s by supporting civilian-led democratic movements and allowing free and fair elections to take place (Snyder, 1998). Moreover, the success of the democratization process is not only dependent on the role of the military but also on the role of civil society that serve as watchdogs, monitoring the military's behavior and holding it accountable to democratic standards. However, it is essential to note that the impact of civil-military relations on democratization is not straightforward and may vary across different contexts. The relationship between the military and civilian authorities is complex, and there may be tensions and conflicts between the two groups, which can impact democratization processes. Additionally, the military may have different priorities and interests than civilian authorities, which can create challenges in achieving a smooth transition to democracy.

#### *Political leadership*

Political leadership plays a critical role in democratization. Leaders can either promote or undermine democratic transition through their actions and policies. According to Przeworski et al. (2000), political leaders' commitment to democracy and their willingness to share power are essential for successful democratization. Leaders who prioritize democratic institutions and practices, such as free and fair elections, an independent judiciary, and a free press, are more likely to promote successful democratization. On the other hand, leaders who resist democratic reforms or engage in authoritarian practices can hinder the democratization process

#### *Civil society*

Civil society is another critical internal factor that can impact democratization. According to Diamond (1994), civil society provides the necessary social capital for democratic governance. Civil society organizations, such as NGOs, trade unions, and grassroots movements, can mobilize

citizens to demand accountability and participate in the democratization process. A vibrant civil society can also serve as a check on the power of the state and promote transparency and good governance. Therefore, a strong civil society can promote successful democratization.

#### *Elite bargaining*

Elite bargaining refers to the negotiations and compromises among the ruling elites during the democratization process. According to O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986), elite bargaining is necessary for successful democratization because it can lead to a peaceful transfer of power and prevent violence. However, elite bargaining can also become a source of conflict and delay the democratization process if the elites are unwilling to compromise.

#### Culture, religion, historical context

Culture, religion, and historical context are other internal factors that can influence democratization. According to Huntington (1991), cultural and religious factors can affect the attitudes and values of citizens towards democracy. For example, societies that prioritize individual rights and freedoms are more likely to embrace democratic values. Historical context can also shape democratization by creating opportunities or obstacles for democratic reforms. For instance, countries that have experienced a long history of authoritarian rule may find it challenging to transition to democracy.

#### External Factors

##### *International or foreign influences*

The term "international factors" refers to a range of entities including foreign governments, international organizations, institutions, and transnational actors that have distinct missions and mandates that may overlap and even conflict with one another. (Vučetić, 2004). According to Huntington (1991), Western nations have played a pivotal role in advancing democratization on a global scale, often motivated by their own values and strategic objectives. However, it is important to note that international influences are not always coming from the west (Vučetić, 2004). In the case of the Arab Spring, some of the influence was coming from neighboring Arab countries such as the United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia (Joffé, 2019). The degree of international influence and support during the democratization process can exhibit notable variations across diverse nations that are undergoing democratization. This variation can be attributed to various factors, including but not limited to strategic significance, regional dynamics, and historical associations.

According to Carothers (2006), influential nations may offer aid and support to facilitate the democratization procedures in such regions to protect their interests or manipulate the political environment in accordance with their goals.

Scholars have conducted comparative analyses of democratization processes across various countries with the objective of establishing a shared comprehension of the factors that impact international interventions, including both supportive and obstructive measures, during a transition period.

Linz and Stepan (1996) examined three aspects of external factors in their comparative research of democratization in Southern Europe, South America, and Eastern Europe: foreign policy, zeitgeist, and diffusion effects. Foreign policy covers the effects of other states' foreign policies on democratization processes; zeitgeist--the spirit of the times--applies to long-term, dominant international ideologies and normative frameworks, whereas diffusion effects eventually result from short-term and recent events.

While Kummel (1998) broadens the category to include five kinds of dynamic rather than static external elements:

1. The international security order: This involves questions of war and peace and refers to the geopolitical and geostrategic or alliance constellation in the world and region, as well as the location of the country in which relevant social groups are willing to liberalize and democratize it. These variables may suggest whether democratization will be favored or opposed.
2. The world politico-ideological order: this refers to the country's place within the pattern of global and regional political disputes. Regardless of whether democratization supports or contradicts the interests of powerful governments, transitions to democracy may be more difficult in times of significant ideological struggle than in periods when liberalism does not have a major challenger.
3. The international economic and monetary order: In a world monetary system and world market dominated by capitalist production modes and trading patterns, as reflected in international economic and monetary institutions such as the IMF and the World Bank, economic relations are frequently characterized by asymmetry or even dependency. It typically matters whether a nation is industrialized or reliant on raw material exports, whether there is a focus on one or a few economic partners or a larger spread of commerce and finance.

4. The international communication order: Technological innovation and progress have enabled the media to generate global news dissemination and, as a result, global information synchrony. This component is much more important today than it was when Kummel published the findings. Individuals may now voice their thoughts, engage in political debates, and mobilize collective action on a previously unheard-of scale thanks to social media platforms. Individuals and organizations now have unparalleled access to information, communication, and organization allowing them to question established power structures, voice alternative views, and campaign for democratic changes (Howard and Hussain, 2013).
5. Time: According to Kummel, the date at which liberalization and democratization occur or are initiated is fundamental and decisive for success or failure. Chances of democratization are greater when the balance of external factors in the international security political, politico-ideological, economic/monetary, and communication dimension or issue area is favorable, as opposed to when it is unfavorable.

External variables influence internal actors, shaping the outcome of the democratization process. These players' reactions to external influences are based on their own interpretation, which may differ between nations, meaning that there is no universal framework for evaluating international elements; rather, individual examination is necessary (Kummel 1998). This also suggests that, although some external variables have an obvious and direct influence, others operate as influencing factors, the impact of which is decided by how the country reacts and responds internally.

However, comparative research gives important insights into how the effect of international players varies from one country to the next and how external and internal variables interact. In his comparison of the democratization processes in Southeastern Europe and Southern Europe, Vučetić (2004) finds that the motivations and effects of international actors are complex, and the promotion of democracy is frequently at odds with the promotion of trade and investment or stability and security. In certain instances, international interventions can be unequivocal and resolute, as exemplified by the prerequisite of meeting the criteria for accession to the European Union (EU), which fostered a variety of democratic practices and constitutes the primary impetus for all international influences in the Balkans, given the aspiration to become EU members (Vučetić, 2004).

Through foreign aid, international actions can also have a noticeable and direct contribution. Aid is frequently dependent on political outcomes, such as the adoption of democratic reforms, which encourages the democratization process (Dreher et al., 2017). Foreign aid's effect on democratization depends on the environment and can be either beneficial or detrimental. When recipient nations depend too heavily on foreign aid to meet their development needs, it can weaken domestic institutions and accountability systems because local elites may put rent-seeking and corruption above other ethical considerations in order to obtain and maintain foreign aid (Easterly, 2006).

As previously stated, the influence of external factors may depend on the interpretation of internal actors in certain situations. For example, the contrast between economic reforms in southern Europe and Eastern Europe is evident. In Southern Europe, the implementation of economic reforms was deferred until the completion of democratic reforms, allowing the state to undertake sequential rather than simultaneous reforms (Vučetić, 2004). Conversely, in Eastern Europe, political and economic reforms were being carried out concurrently. The success of democratization in Southern Europe can be attributed, in part, to the sequential approach taken by the state in implementing reforms, however, the adoption of a neoliberal economic agenda for reform exacerbated pre-existing social issues and gave rise to new ones, ultimately hindering the transition process in Eastern Europe (Vučetić, 2004).

Military aid is yet another illustration of foreign influence. Egypt is a classic illustration of how US financial military backing indirectly assisted a transition backslide when the armed forces ousted a democratically elected president in an organized coup. This will be examined more in Egypt's case study.

### **An Ideal Universal Democratization Framework**

The successful transition from an authoritarian regime to a democratic system involves a multifaceted and intricate process that demands meticulous planning and execution. To this end, pertinent scholarly works, as well as research findings from the above section on key democratization theories, components of democratization, and factors that affect the democratization process, were utilized in formulating the following framework. This framework aims to provide a comprehensive and adaptable steps to democratization that is applicable to a broad spectrum of political contexts.

The first essential step towards democratization is elite consensus. The establishment of elite consensus is critical as it helps overcome resistance to democratic change by key figures within the authoritarian regime. As Przeworski (1991) notes, democratization requires the support of key political and economic elites who are willing to share power and support democratic reforms. Without elite support, the transition to democracy is likely to be tumultuous and unstable. Therefore, building consensus among elites and convincing them to support democratic change is a crucial step towards democratization.

The second essential step towards democratization is political opening. This involves the loosening of political controls and allowing greater participation by civil society actors. According to O'Donnell and Schmitter (1986), a critical aspect of democratization is the creation of an "enabling environment" that allows for the development of a pluralistic political system. This may involve the release of political prisoners, the establishment of independent media, and the lifting of restrictions on civil society organizations. In addition, the authoritarian regime must be willing to engage in dialogue with opposition groups and civil society actors, and to allow for the peaceful expression of dissent.

The third essential step towards democratization is constitutional reform. An important aspect of democratization is the establishment of a new or revised constitution that enshrines democratic principles and provides a framework for democratic governance. This may involve the establishment of a separation of powers, defining the role of the judiciary, and protecting individual rights and freedoms. As Dahl (1971) notes, a democratic constitution must be designed to promote popular sovereignty and protect against abuses of power.

The fourth essential step towards democratization is free and fair elections. Free and fair elections are a cornerstone of democratic governance, as they allow citizens to choose their leaders and hold them accountable. This requires a transparent and inclusive electoral process, with appropriate safeguards against electoral fraud and manipulation. As Diamond and Plattner (2016) note, free and fair elections are a critical component of democratic governance, and a successful transition to democracy requires a commitment to electoral integrity.

The fifth essential step towards democratization is building democratic institutions. A successful transition to democracy requires the establishment of democratic institutions that are transparent, accountable, and capable of delivering public services. This includes a functioning parliament, an independent judiciary, and an effective civil service. As Linz and Stepan (1996) note, democratic

institutions must be designed to promote accountability, transparency, and responsiveness to citizens' needs.

The sixth essential step towards democratization is the protection of individual rights and freedoms. In a democratic society, individual rights and freedoms must be protected, including freedom of expression, assembly, and association. This requires an independent judiciary, a free and independent media, and laws that protect citizens from abuses of state power. As Shugart and Mainwaring (1997) note, a commitment to individual rights and freedoms is a critical component of democratic governance, and a successful transition to democracy requires the protection of these rights.

The seventh essential step towards democratization is economic reform. A successful transition to democracy requires economic reforms that promote sustainable economic growth, reduce poverty and inequality, and improve the living standards of citizens. This may involve restructuring the economy to promote greater competition, reducing corruption, and promoting investment in human capital. As Przeworski and Limongi (1997) note, economic performance is closely linked to democratic stability, and a successful transition to democracy requires a commitment to economic reform.

The eighth and final essential step towards democratization is international support.

International support is critical for a successful transition to democracy. This may involve diplomatic support, economic assistance, and technical assistance. As Carothers (2002) notes, international support can help to provide resources and legitimacy for democratic reforms, and can also help to pressure authoritarian regimes to undertake democratic reforms. However, international support must be carefully managed to avoid interference in domestic affairs or the perception of outside influence.

These steps must be carefully planned and executed to ensure a peaceful and stable transition to democracy. It is important to note that each country's path towards democratization is unique, and the specific steps required for a successful transition may vary depending on the context. Nonetheless, the essential steps outlined in this section provide a useful framework for understanding the complex process of democratization.

## Case Study: Egypt

Egypt, a country with a rich historical and cultural heritage, has undergone significant political transformation in recent decades. From the 1952 coup that overthrew the monarchy and established a republic, to the Arab Spring of 2011 that resulted in the fall of long-serving President Hosni Mubarak, Egypt has experienced a complex and multifaceted democratization process. This case study aims to explore the democratization process in Egypt, focusing on the historical context, key elements, and factors that have influenced the process. It will also examine the impact of the Arab Spring on the democratization process in Egypt and conduct an analysis of the current state of democratization in the country.

### Historical overview of democracy in Egypt prior to Arab Spring

Egypt has a long and complex history of political development, with a variety of political systems and movements shaping the country's political landscape over time. While Egypt's democratic experiment in the early 20th century was short-lived, the country's experience with democracy has played a significant role in shaping the country's political culture and institutions.

Egypt's first democratic experiment came in 1922, when the country gained independence from British colonial rule. In 1923, Egypt established its first constitution, which provided for a parliamentary system and the protection of individual liberties (El-Ghobashy, 2012). Under the leadership of Saad Zaghlul, the Wafd Party emerged as a popular nationalist movement and won a majority in the first parliamentary elections held in 1924 (Vatikiotis, 1991). However, the Wafd government's inability to meet the high expectations of the Egyptian people, combined with a series of economic and social crises, led to the downfall of the democratic experiment. This initial period of constitutionalism was short-lived, as the country was soon plunged into a period of authoritarian rule under King Farouk, who ruled from 1936 until his overthrow in 1952.

The 1952 coup, led by a group of military officers known as the Free Officers, brought an end to the monarchy and established a republic in Egypt. The new regime, led by Colonel Gamal Abdel Nasser, promised to establish a democratic and socialist state that would prioritize the welfare of the Egyptian people (Said, 2013). In 1956, a new constitution was introduced that provided for a strong presidency, a unicameral parliament, and the protection of civil liberties. Until the 1970s

Egypt was ruled by a series of military regimes, led by Gamal Abdel Nasser and later Anwar Sadat. While these regimes espoused a socialist and nationalist ideology, they were characterized by authoritarianism, censorship, and repression of opposition groups (Hamzawy, 2005). During this period, political opposition was systematically repressed, civil society was weakened, and the media was tightly controlled (Ibrahim, 2011). Mubarak came to office after the assassination of the former president, Anwar al-Sadat, in 1981. Initially, Mubarak sought to pacify the people by releasing political prisoners and encouraging parliamentary elections. When he took office for a second term in 1987, he refused to alter the constitution, instead extending the state of emergency, excluding opposition parties from serving on local councils, and tightening control over parliament by his party, the National Democratic Party (NDP) (Lesch, 2012).

By the 1990s, Egypt had become a classic case of an "electoral authoritarian" regime, where elections were held regularly but were characterized by fraud, intimidation, and violence against opposition candidates and their supporters (Schedler, 2002). Mubarak was able to hold multiparty elections while keeping control and power through using single-party institutional legacies and new sources of patronage made feasible by the privatization of state-owned corporations and property. Despite this, opposition groups continued to emerge and organize, leading to a wave of protests and demonstrations in the lead-up to the Arab Spring.

In the 21st century, Egypt's democratization process was further complicated by the rise of Islamist movements, which posed a challenge to the traditional secular nationalist parties that had dominated the political landscape (Brownlee, Masoud, & Reynolds, 2015).

#### Background of democratization process in Egypt

In Egypt, the Arab Spring began on January 25, 2011, with a peaceful demonstration in Cairo's Tahrir Square, calling for political change and an end to the authoritarian rule of President Hosni Mubarak. The protest was organized by a group of young activists who had been inspired by the uprisings in Tunisia and were using social media platforms such as Facebook and Twitter to mobilize support for their cause (Ghonim, 2012).

The protest quickly spread across the country, with hundreds of thousands of Egyptians taking to the streets to demand political change. The protest was met with a violent response from the security forces, who used tear gas, water cannons, and rubber bullets to disperse the crowds.

Despite the repression, the protesters remained defiant and continued to demand the overthrow of the Mubarak regime.

The protest movement was organized around a set of demands, including the removal of Mubarak from power, the establishment of a democratic system, and the protection of human rights and civil liberties (Bayat, 2012). The movement also included a broad range of political groups, including liberals, Islamists, and youth activists, who came together to oppose the regime and demand political change.

As the scale and intensity of the protests grew, Mubarak was forced to make a number of concessions, including the dismissal of his cabinet and the appointment of a new vice-president. Despite these steps, protesters continued to clamour for his resignation. According to Abou-El-Fadl (2012), Mubarak abandoned his 30-year reign on February 11, 2011, after an 18-day period of protests and large rallies. Economic stagnation, poverty, inequality, corruption, and unemployment were cited as primary causes of the riots. However, a large elite dispute played a vital role in the Egyptian Revolution's triumph. This battle, which is a necessary component of successful revolutions, was especially essential in this case since it featured the military and economic elite, as well as a group of renowned Egyptian businesspeople led by Mubarak's son (Goldstone et al.2022).

Following the ousting of Mubarak, a transitional government was established to oversee the democratization process in Egypt. Mohammad Morsi, a member of the Muslim Brotherhood, was elected as a president. He gently restructured Mubarak era political and economic institutions and military, corporate elite, and US relations were mostly unaffected (Holmes, 2019). Morsi faced enormous expectations but accomplished little to help poor and middle-class Egyptians deal with their crushing economic woes, instead he focused on "Brotherhoodization" of the state, appointing Brotherhood members to important government positions (Holmes, 2019).

In 2013 that overthrew the democratically elected government of Mohamed Morsi. The coup led to a period of political instability and violence, with thousands of people killed and many more arrested or detained (Makdisi, 2013).

Following the coup, the military installed an interim government led by General Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, who was later elected president in 2014. The coup was promoted by the United Arab Emirates (UAE) through funding the Tamarroud Movement, which was the vehicle through which the Egyptian army ousted the Morsi government (Joffé, 2019). The new government launched a

crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood and other opposition groups, arresting thousands of people and imposing harsh prison sentences on many of them (Amnesty International, 2016). The crackdown also extended to civil society organizations and human rights activists, who were accused of promoting unrest and destabilizing the country.

The government's heavy-handed approach towards dissent and opposition led to widespread human rights abuses, including extrajudicial killings, torture, and forced disappearances (Human Rights Watch, 2021). The government also imposed restrictions on the media and civil society, with many journalists and activists facing harassment, intimidation, and imprisonment.

Overall, the period following the ousting of Mohamed Morsi has been marked by significant challenges and setbacks for democratization in Egypt. The new government under Sisi is described as a modernized version of the Mubarak regime with a more comprehensive and effective security apparatus to control succession (Holmes, 2019).

#### Key elements of democratization in Egypt during the Arab Spring

Scholars have identified several key elements of democratization during this period, including mass mobilization, the use of social media, unity among different groups, non-violent protests, international pressure, military neutrality, and free and fair elections.

The mass mobilization of Egyptians during the Arab Spring was a critical factor in the success of the uprising. As noted by Ahmed and Meyer (2015), the protests were largely driven by young, educated, and middle-class Egyptians who took to the streets in massive numbers to demand political change. The authors argue that the protesters' sense of social injustice and their desire for political and economic reform fueled their determination to bring about change.

The use of social media platforms such as Facebook, Twitter, and YouTube played a significant role in organizing and mobilizing protesters during the Arab Spring in Egypt. According to Tufekci and Wilson (2012), social media enabled protesters to coordinate their actions and disseminate information about the protests to a wider audience, including international media outlets. The authors note that social media allowed for the rapid spread of information and the creation of virtual communities of protesters.

Unity among different groups was also a critical factor in the success of the democratization process during the Arab Spring in Egypt. As noted by Tessler (2015), the protests were not led by any particular group or political party but were a collective effort of various groups and individuals,

including secularists, Islamists, labor unions, and human rights activists. The author argues that the diverse nature of the protesters' demands and the absence of a single leadership structure made it difficult for the regime to suppress the uprising.

Non-violent protests were another key element of democratization during the Arab Spring in Egypt. According to Chenoweth and Stephan (2011), non-violent resistance was more effective than violent resistance in achieving political change during the Arab Spring. The authors argue that non-violent protests, such as sit-ins, marches, and demonstrations, helped to increase the number of participants in the protests and gain the support of the international community.

International pressure was also a critical factor in the democratization process during the Arab Spring in Egypt. As noted by Tessler (2015), the international community, including the United States, played a significant role in pressuring the Mubarak regime to step down and support the transition to democracy. The author argues that the international community's support for the protesters and their demands for political change helped to legitimize the uprising and create momentum for democratic reform.

Military neutrality was another critical factor in the success of the democratization process during the Arab Spring in Egypt. According to El-Ghobashy and Roessler (2015), the neutrality of the military during the protests and their refusal to crack down on protesters was a critical factor in the success of the uprising. This military behaviour was influenced by the intra-elite conflict that erupted between the military and economic elites (headed by Mubarak's son), as a result of which the military elite decided to use popular protests to eliminate its main opponent, and refused to suppress protests, ensuring their unexpected and rapid "success" (Goldstone, et al, 2022).

Finally, free and fair elections were a critical element of democratization during the Arab Spring in Egypt. After the fall of Mubarak, free and fair elections were held in Egypt for the first time in decades, leading to the election of Islamist candidate Mohammed Morsi as president in 2012. As noted by Tessler (2015), the election of Morsi represented a significant step forward for democratic governance in Egypt, despite the subsequent challenges to democratic rule that have emerged in the years since.

In addition to the aforementioned key elements, there were other factors that contributed to the democratization process during the Arab Spring in Egypt. These include the role of civil society organizations, the mobilization of women, and the emergence of alternative media outlets.

Civil society organizations played a vital role in the democratization process in Egypt. According to Wollter (2016), these organizations helped to promote civic engagement, create a sense of community, and mobilize citizens to participate in the protests. The author notes that civil society organizations played a key role in promoting democratic values and human rights, which helped to establish a framework for democratic governance in Egypt.

The emergence of alternative media outlets was another critical factor in the democratization process during the Arab Spring in Egypt. According to Aouragh and Alexander (2011), alternative media outlets, including citizen journalism and blogs, played a vital role in disseminating information about the protests and challenging the government's monopoly on the media. The authors note that alternative media outlets provided a platform for citizen journalists to report on the protests and share their perspectives with a global audience.

#### Factors influencing democratization process in Egypt

The democratization process in Egypt during the Arab Spring was influenced by various internal and external factors. One of the key internal factors was the widespread dissatisfaction of the Egyptian people with the authoritarian rule, lack of political freedom, and economic inequality. This led to the formation of the pro-democracy movement, which aimed to bring about political change and social justice in the country (Bassiouny, 2015; Skocpol, 2013).

#### Internal Factors

**Civil-military relations:** Civil-military relations were also a significant factor in the democratization process in Egypt. The military, which had a significant presence in the country, played a crucial role in the transition from Mubarak's regime to a democratic system. Initially, the military sided with the protesters and their intervention played a decisive role in the ousting of Mubarak. However, in the aftermath, the military sought to maintain its influence and power, leading to tensions between the military and civilian leadership (Yom & Gause, 2012).

**Political and economic instability:** Following the death of President Hosni Mubarak, the financial outlook deteriorated, and by 2015, the jobless rate was 12.9 percent, with youth unemployment at 35 percent (Khan and Miller, 2016). The administration of President Morsi inherited a shaky economy. During its first year in office, the Morsi government failed to address economic

difficulties, and Morsi failed to deliver the majority of his campaign promises (Khan and Miller, 2016). While the administration dealt with the numerous political difficulties, the economy was put on hold.

**Military intervention:** The military's intervention in politics and the country's governance played a significant role in shaping the democratization process in Egypt. The military has historically played a dominant role in the country's politics, and this was evident during the Arab Spring and the post-revolutionary period. The military's intervention and involvement in politics have limited the democratization process in Egypt (Gohar & Yom, 2014).

**The Muslim Brotherhood:** The rise of the Muslim Brotherhood to power following the Arab Spring had both positive and negative impacts on the democratization process. On the one hand, the Muslim Brotherhood's election to power was an important milestone in Egypt's democratization process. On the other hand, their rule was criticized for its authoritarian tendencies and exclusionary policies towards other political groups (Hinnebusch, 2013).

**Civil society:** Civil society organizations played a critical role in Egypt's democratization process, but they were also subjected to government repression. Despite the risks, civil society organizations continued to play an active role in advocating for democratic reform in Egypt (Sabry, 2018).

**Youth activism:** Young people played a significant role in the Arab Spring protests, and their demands for democracy were central to the democratization process in Egypt. However, the lack of clear leadership among youth activists and their fragmentation into different groups and factions limited their ability to push for meaningful reforms (El-Bendary, 2015).

**External factors:**

**International interventions:** International interventions had both positive and negative effects on the process. Western countries supported the pro-democracy movement in Egypt and pressured Mubarak's regime to reform. However, their support for the military's role in the transition to democracy was controversial. Some argued that the Western powers were more interested in maintaining stability in the region and protecting their interests rather than promoting democracy in Egypt (Lynch, 2012). Moreover, the international interventions had mixed outcomes on the democratization process. While international powers supported the democratization of Egypt, they

also contributed to the strengthening of the military's position, which had implications for the democratic transition. The role of the United States in shaping the democratization process in Egypt was critical. The Obama administration's decision to support the pro-democracy movement and pressure Mubarak to reform was a significant factor in the success of the revolution (Hinnebusch & Ehteshami, 2012). However, the U.S. government's decision to support the military's role in the transition to democracy was controversial and drew criticism from human rights organizations and pro-democracy activists (Schraeder, 2013). The U.S. gives Egypt \$1.5 billion in aid each year, with \$1.3 billion going to the Egyptian military (Collins and Rothe 2014). The military's intervention in Egypt played a critical role in ousting Mubarak. However, it also aimed to preserve its authority and impact in the emerging political structure. In 2013, with the support of the United Arab Emirates, the military successfully overthrew Morsi. International influences in Egypt from 2011 to 2013 were instrumental in starting the revolution, shaping the process and influencing the outcome. Egypt's revolution was a snowball effect from Tunisia's experience, the developments after 2011 were influenced by international pressures especially through affecting economic reforms or the military, and it finally influences the outcome when the UAE supported the coup against Morsi.

**Regional instability:** Egypt is located in a region that has experienced significant political instability, including the Syrian Civil War, the Libyan crisis, and the Israeli-Palestinian conflict. This regional instability has affected Egypt's democratization process, particularly in terms of security concerns and the country's foreign policy orientation (Nassar, 2016).

**International pressure:** The international community, particularly the United States and the European Union, played a critical role in shaping the democratization process in Egypt. The international community pressured the Egyptian government to undertake democratic reforms and to respect human rights. However, this pressure was also criticized for being inconsistent and selective (Brownlee, 2013).

**Economic support:** The international community provided economic support to Egypt to help stabilize the country after the Arab Spring. This economic assistance was critical to supporting Egypt's transition to democracy, but it was also criticized for its lack of transparency and potential for corruption (Ali, 2016).

**Security concerns:** The international community was concerned about the security implications of political instability in Egypt, particularly given the country's strategic location and the threat of

terrorism. These security concerns influenced the democratization process in Egypt, as the government prioritized stability over democratic reforms (Zahran, 2017).

Regional politics: The democratization process in Egypt was also influenced by regional politics, particularly the rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Qatar. These countries supported different political factions in Egypt, which exacerbated political polar

Social media and communication technologies played an instrumental role in organizing and mobilizing protesters, allowing them to bypass traditional media channels controlled by the regime and reach a wider audience both domestically and internationally (Tufekci & Wilson, 2012). The use of social media facilitated the coordination and mobilization of protests on a massive scale and enabled the dissemination of information about the protests and the regime's response to them.

### The Arab Spring and democratization in Egypt

Egypt was one of the countries that was most significantly impacted by the Arab Spring events, with the country experiencing significant political, economic, and social changes in the aftermath. One of the most significant changes in Egypt was the political upheaval that led to the overthrow of longtime authoritarian leader Hosni Mubarak. According to political scientist Steven Cook, "Mubarak's fall was a seismic event in Egyptian history and represented a dramatic shift in the country's political landscape" (Cook, 2018,). However, the subsequent period of political instability and a series of military coups raised concerns about the country's ability to transition to a more democratic form of governance.

The economic impact of the Arab Spring in Egypt has also been significant. The country has faced a number of economic challenges in the aftermath, including high inflation, high unemployment rates, and declining foreign investment. According to economist Ishac Diwan, "the Arab Spring has had a profound effect on the Egyptian economy, with the country experiencing significant economic dislocation and a lack of clear direction" (Diwan, 2014).

Social tensions have also been a significant issue in Egypt in the aftermath of the Arab Spring. While the events of 2011 were driven in part by a desire for greater social and economic justice, these aspirations have largely gone unfulfilled. The country continues to face significant social tensions, including a growing wealth gap and high levels of poverty (Diwan, 2014).

The government's response to the events of the Arab Spring has also had a significant impact on Egypt. The government has increased security measures, cracking down on political dissidents and

restricting freedom of speech and assembly. This has led to concerns about human rights abuses and a lack of transparency in government operations (Human Rights Watch, 2020).

The Arab Spring has had a complex and ongoing impact on Egypt, with significant political, economic, and social implications. While the overthrow of Mubarak represented a significant moment of change, the country continues to face a number of challenges as it seeks to navigate its future.

### Analysis of democratization process in Egypt

The democratization transition in Egypt after the Arab Spring can be analyzed using various theoretical perspectives, including modernization theory, transitology theory, political culture theory, and institutional theory. Modernization theory posits that economic and social modernization is a prerequisite for democratic consolidation (Lipset, 1959). In the case of Egypt, modernization theory would argue that the country's increasing urbanization and education levels could provide the basis for a democratic transition. However, despite economic and social modernization in Egypt, democratic reforms have been lacking, indicating that modernization theory is insufficient in explaining the democratization transition in Egypt.

Transitology theory, on the other hand, emphasizes the process of democratic transition and argues that democratization is a gradual process that involves political liberalization, political participation, and institutionalization (O'Donnell, Schmitter, & Whitehead, 1986). In Egypt, the democratization transition was characterized by a lack of political liberalization and the suppression of civil society and the media. The military played a dominant role in the transition, which suggests that transitology theory is also insufficient in explaining the democratization transition in Egypt.

Political culture theory highlights the importance of values, beliefs, and norms in shaping democratic institutions (Almond & Verba, 1963). According to this perspective, democratic values and norms must be internalized by citizens for democratic consolidation to take place. In Egypt, the democratization transition was hampered by a culture of authoritarianism, which was reinforced by the Mubarak regime's repression of dissent. The lack of democratic values and norms among citizens and political elites also hindered the democratization process in Egypt.

Institutional theory focuses on the importance of formal and informal institutions in shaping democratic consolidation (Diamond, 1999). According to this perspective, democratic institutions,

such as an independent judiciary and a free press, are essential for democratic consolidation. In Egypt, the democratization transition was characterized by weak institutions and a lack of institutionalization. The judiciary and the media were not independent, and the military remained a dominant force in the country's politics.

Assessing Egypt's democratization against the key elements of democratization, we can see that the country has made limited progress in political, economic, and social democratization. Politically, the country has held several elections, but they have been marred by irregularities, and political opposition has been suppressed. Economically, the country has undergone structural reforms, but these reforms have been accompanied by growing inequality and corruption. Socially, the country has seen some improvements in human rights, but the situation remains far from ideal, with the government frequently cracking down on dissent and limiting civil liberties.

The democratization transition in Egypt after the Arab Spring can be analyzed using various theoretical perspectives, including modernization theory, transitology theory, political culture theory, and institutional theory. While each perspective provides a different lens through which to understand the democratization transition, none of these theories are sufficient in fully explaining the complexities of the situation in Egypt.

### **Case Study: Tunisia**

Tunisia is an exceptional example of a transition from authoritarian rule to democratic governance due to its ability to sustain its infant democracy for a decade. Democracy indices such as Freedom House, V-dem, and Polity VI have ranked Tunisia as 'free' and a 'democracy' for a decade (Souilmi, 2023), sometimes at the same level or higher than some of the earliest established western democracies. Tunisia has made significant progress in establishing a functional democratic system, including holding a number of successful elections, crafting a new constitution, and fostering a vibrant civil society. There has been a significant shift in terms of social justice, with the media working without censorship, individual liberty being expanded, and civil society functioning without limitation or intervention under constitutional protections (Joffé, 2013). Tunisia's transition in the years following the Arab Spring was complicated and ongoing, with various obstacles including prolonged instability near its borders with Libya and Algeria, limited economic development, and a high level of unemployment. By 2019, these issues, along with the primarily

polarized secular-religious divide party system, led to a lack of social trust, resulting in the election of a populist president and the suspension of Tunisian democracy (Hubber and Pisciotta, 2022). This case study aims to give an examination of Tunisia's democratization process, exploring the important elements that drove its success for a decade before the democratic backslide.

### Historical overview of democracy in Tunisia prior to Arab Spring

The Arab Spring, which took place in 2011, marked a significant turning point in Tunisia's history, leading to a transition to democracy. However, Tunisia's journey towards democracy began long before the Arab Spring.

Following Tunisia's independence from France in 1956, Habib Bourguiba became the country's first president. Bourguiba was a strong advocate for democracy and sought to establish a system of government based on the principles of constitutional democracy. In 1959, he introduced a constitution that enshrined individual freedoms, civil rights, and the rule of law (Tucker, 2014). Despite Bourguiba's commitment to democratic principles, his regime sought to consolidate power and limit opposition, leading to the suppression of political dissent and the establishment of a one-party state (Anderson & Stansfield, 2013).

In the late 1970s, opposition to Bourguiba's regime began to emerge, with protests and strikes becoming more frequent. The Islamist movement, in particular, gained momentum, with groups like Ennahda calling for a more Islamic-based government (Wickham, 2013). Bourguiba responded with harsh measures, including the arrest and imprisonment of political opponents. However, as pressure mounted both domestically and internationally, Bourguiba was forced to make concessions. In 1981, he lifted the ban on political parties, and a new constitution was introduced in 1988 that guaranteed freedom of expression and association (Cavatorta, 2013).

In 1987, Bourguiba was removed from power in a bloodless coup led by his prime minister, Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. Ben Ali presented himself as a reformer and promised to uphold the principles of democracy and human rights. However, his regime quickly became known for its repressive tactics, including the torture and imprisonment of political dissidents (Migdalovitz, 2013). Furthermore, Ben Ali's fraudulent election process is also noted by several scholars as an attempt to maintain the veneer of legitimacy (Anderson & Stansfield, 2013; Brownlee et al., 2015).

In December 2010, protests erupted across Tunisia, sparked by the self-immolation of a young street vendor in the town of Sidi Bouzid. The protests quickly spread, with demonstrators calling

for an end to Ben Ali's regime and demanding greater political freedoms. In January 2011, Ben Ali fled the country, and a transitional government was established, marking the beginning of a new era in Tunisian politics (Brownlee, Masoud, & Reynolds, 2015).

### Background of democratization process in Tunisia after the Arab Spring

The Arab Spring uprisings began as a response to the political, economic, and social grievances of citizens in several countries in the Middle East and North Africa region. These grievances included corruption, unemployment, inequality, and lack of political representation (Gelvin, 2012). Tunisia was one of the countries that experienced significant political change during this period. The authoritarian regime of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, who had ruled the country for over two decades, was overthrown in January 2011, after weeks of mass protests and civil unrest (Lutterbeck, 2014).

The democratization process in Tunisia began soon after Ben Ali's departure. The country established a transitional government, which was tasked with drafting a new constitution and organizing free and fair elections (Klein, 2015). In October 2011, the country held its first post-revolution elections for a Constituent Assembly. The Ennahda Movement, an Islamic political party, won the largest share of the vote and formed a coalition government (Kraetzschmar, 2015). Tunisia continued to make progress towards democratization. The country's Constituent Assembly adopted a new constitution in January 2014, which established a parliamentary system of government with a strong presidency (Klein, 2015). In December of that year, the country held its first presidential elections since the revolution, and Beji Caid Essebsi, the founder of the secularist and centrist political party Nidaa Tounes, was elected as the country's new president (Kraetzschmar, 2015).

One of the significant factors that contributed to Tunisia's success in its democratization process was the role of civil society. Civil society organizations played a critical role in mobilizing citizens during the revolution and advocating for democratic reform during the transitional period (Tlemcani, 2017). These organizations provided a platform for citizens to voice their concerns and demand accountability from the government. They also monitored the government's actions and held it accountable for its commitments to democracy and human rights.

Another factor that contributed to Tunisia's success was the country's history of secularism. Tunisia's first president, Habib Bourguiba, had implemented policies that aimed to create a modern, secular state. These policies included the promotion of women's rights and the abolition of polygamy (Klein, 2015). This legacy of secularism helped to mitigate concerns about the role of religion in politics and facilitated the transition to a democratic system of government. Ennahda and Nidaa Tounes are the main political parties that have different ideologies and backgrounds. The new government faced several challenges, including economic problems and social unrest. The country's economy had been struggling even before the revolution, and the political instability caused by the uprising worsened the situation. High unemployment, particularly among young people, was a significant concern (Lutterbeck, 2014). Additionally, there were concerns about the role of religion in the new political order. While Ennahda supported a democratic system of government, some secular groups feared that the party had a hidden agenda to establish an Islamic state (Kraetzschmar, 2015).

Tunisia still faces challenges in its democratization process. The country's economy continues to struggle, and unemployment remains high, particularly among young people (Tlemcani, 2017). There are also concerns about the country's security situation, with the threat of terrorism remaining a significant challenge (Klein, 2015). The country's democratic institutions are still developing, and there are concerns about the role of money in politics and the independence of the judiciary (Tlemcani, 2017).

Tunisia has undergone significant changes in its democratic transition since 2019, when President Saied achieved a resounding victory in the presidential election as an independent candidate, basing his campaign on anti-corruption measures and economic reform (Mekki, 2021). Following his inauguration, President Saied has implemented several notable modifications to the country's political landscape. The COVID-19 crisis further aggravated the socio-economic and political tensions within Tunisia, starting in 2020. During this time, the president intensified his visits to military bases, openly criticized the government, prime minister, and parliament, and declined to endorse the constitutional court (Souilmi, 2023). In July 2021, Prime Minister was dismissed, and parliament was suspended (Mekki, 2021). According to Freedom House, Tunisia was ranked as a free country with a score of 71/100 in 2021, but in 2022, it transitioned to a partly free status with a score of 64/100.

## Key elements of democratization in Tunisia

The democratization of Tunisia during the Arab Spring was a significant political development in the region. According to Tarek Masoud, the Tunisian case was "the only genuine democratizing experience of the Arab Spring" (Masoud, 2015). In this process, several key elements played crucial roles in facilitating the transition to democracy.

One of the primary factors was the mass mobilization of Tunisians. Protests that started in December 2010 sparked a chain of events that ultimately led to the ouster of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in January 2011. These protests were largely nonviolent and were led by a coalition of civil society groups, labor unions, and political parties (Al-Natour, 2015). The mobilization of Tunisians in the streets was an essential element of the democratization process, as it demonstrated the people's commitment to political reform and their willingness to hold their leaders accountable.

Another key element of democratization in Tunisia was political reform. In response to the protests, the Tunisian government passed a new constitution in January 2014 that guaranteed fundamental rights and freedoms, including freedom of expression, assembly, and association. The constitution also established a presidential system with checks and balances to prevent the abuse of power. This reform was an essential step towards building a democratic state, as it ensured that citizens' rights were protected, and political power was appropriately distributed.

Free and fair elections were also a crucial element of the democratization process in Tunisia. In October 2011, Tunisia held its first democratic elections, which were widely regarded as free and fair (Beardsley, 2014). The elections resulted in the formation of a coalition government led by the Islamist Ennahda party. The successful conduct of these elections was a significant milestone in the democratization process, as it demonstrated that Tunisians could participate in a democratic process and that power could be peacefully transferred from one government to another.

Civil society engagement was also a critical factor in the democratization of Tunisia. Civil society played a vital role in advocating for political reform, monitoring elections, and holding the government accountable (Martinez et al., 2018). The Tunisian General Labor Union was particularly influential in organizing protests and negotiating with the government. The active engagement of civil society in the democratization process was a crucial element in ensuring that the government was responsive to the needs of its citizens.

Finally, international support played a significant role in the democratization of Tunisia. The United States and the European Union provided technical assistance and financial aid to support the democratization process (Duvall & Mazzoleni, 2015,). This support was crucial in helping Tunisia build democratic institutions and promote the rule of law.

### Factors influencing democratization process in Tunisia during the Arab Spring

The democratization process in Tunisia after the Arab Spring was influenced by a range of internal and external factors.

#### Internal Factors

**Civil-military relations:** Civil-military relations were critical in Tunisia's democratization process. During the revolution, the military played a key role in ousting Ben Ali, but instead of taking control of the government, the military leadership demonstrated a commitment to democratic principles and refused to intervene in the political process. The military played a stabilizing role during the transition period, which helped to prevent further violence and paved the way for free and fair elections (Migdalovitz, 2012).

**Political and Economic Marginalization:** The Tunisian people had long been subjected to political and economic marginalization under the authoritarian regime of former President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali. This led to widespread dissatisfaction and unrest (Gherissi, 2014). The lack of political representation and the concentration of power in the hands of a small elite contributed to a sense of exclusion and injustice among the population. Economic marginalization, particularly high levels of unemployment and poverty, further exacerbated this situation (El-Said & Harrigan, 2018).

**Youth Unemployment:** High youth unemployment was a significant issue in Tunisia, with young people feeling disenfranchised and excluded from the political and economic system (Kaplan, 2014). According to the World Bank, youth unemployment in Tunisia reached 36.5% in 2019 (World Bank, 2020). This created a sense of hopelessness and frustration among young people, who played a crucial role in the revolution (Boukhars, 2016).

**Social Media and Technology:** Social media and technology played a critical role in the Arab Spring uprisings, and Tunisia was no exception. Social media allowed Tunisians to connect with

each other, share information and organize protests (Stromseth, 2015). The use of social media and technology was instrumental in mobilizing people and spreading awareness about the issues facing the country (Brynen et al., 2014).

**Civil Society:** Tunisia had a relatively robust civil society, with various NGOs, trade unions, and professional associations, which helped mobilize people and advocate for change (Bachmann, 2014). Civil society played a crucial role in the democratization process by promoting transparency, accountability, and citizen participation (Al-Ali & Kraidy, 2014).

**Islamism:** Tunisia has a long history of moderate Islamism, and this played a role in shaping the post-revolutionary political landscape. The Islamist party Ennahda emerged as a significant political force, and its role in the transitional process was the subject of much debate and controversy (Hamzawy, 2014). Ennahda's political influence was seen by some as a threat to the country's secular traditions, while others saw it as a legitimate expression of popular will (Noueihed & Warren, 2016).

#### External Factors

**International intervention:** The international community played a crucial role in supporting Tunisia's democratization process. Western governments, in particular, provided financial assistance and technical support to help build democratic institutions (Hughes & Tripp, 2015). The European Union, the United States, and other international organizations provided significant financial support to Tunisia, with the aim of promoting democracy and stability (Bergan & Masiero, 2016).

Conversely, regional powers such as Saudi Arabia and UAE did not allocate substantial resources towards Tunisia. Nonetheless, due to Tunisia's exemplary status, critics of the Nidaa party levied allegations that it received considerable backing from these nations. These detractors further claimed that the party was part of a meticulously planned and well-financed scheme to maintain the former regime's status quo and reinstate it to power (Matthiesen, 2022).

**Regional Instability:** The ongoing instability in the region, including in Libya and Egypt, had an impact on Tunisia's transition. The spillover effects of conflicts in neighboring countries increased security concerns and created economic challenges (Saidi & Zouari, 2016). The refugee crisis and the rise of extremist groups in the region also had an impact on Tunisia's political and social stability (Bachmann, 2016).

Geopolitical Factors: Tunisia's strategic location and its close ties with Europe made it a focus of geopolitical attention during its democratization process. The country's transition to democracy was seen as a significant achievement, particularly in the context of the wider region, and was thus supported by various actors for geopolitical reasons (Miltgen & Zito, 2015). The success of Tunisia's democratization process was seen as a potential model for other countries in the region, making it an important strategic ally for Western governments (Brynen et al., 2014).

#### Analysis of democratization process in Tunisia

The democratization transition in Tunisia after the Arab Spring has been analyzed from various theoretical democratization perspectives. According to modernization theory that economic development leads to democratization (Lipset, 1959). In Tunisia's case, the country had experienced steady economic growth in the years leading up to the Arab Spring, with an average annual GDP growth rate of 4.4% between 2000 and 2010 (World Bank, 2021). However, the country's democratization transition cannot be entirely explained by modernization theory, as economic growth alone did not guarantee democratic reforms. In fact, economic inequality and corruption were among the grievances that fueled the protests that led to the overthrow of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in 2011 (Vandewalle, 2013).

Transitology theory emphasizes the role of transitions in democratization, including the transition from authoritarianism to democracy (O'Donnell & Schmitter, 1986). In Tunisia's case, the overthrow of Ben Ali marked a crucial transition point. However, the transition process was not smooth, and challenges such as political instability and economic inequality persisted (Linz & Stepan, 1996).

Political culture theory highlights the role of citizens' attitudes and beliefs in shaping democratic outcomes (Almond & Verba, 1963). In Tunisia, the protests that sparked the Arab Spring were driven by a desire for political freedoms and an end to corruption (Gallagher & Lust-Okar, 2012). This suggests that citizens' political culture played a role in driving the democratization transition. Institutional theory emphasizes the importance of formal and informal institutions in shaping democratic outcomes (March & Olsen, 1984). In Tunisia, the new government created a new constitution and electoral laws, among other reforms (Ouerfelli & Zribi, 2017). However, the implementation of these reforms has been uneven, and institutional weaknesses have posed significant challenges to democratic consolidation (Salloukh & Richter, 2016).

Assessing Tunisia's democratization against the key elements of democratization, including political, economic, and social factors, the country has made some progress but still faces significant challenges.

On the political front, Tunisia has made strides toward democratization, including the adoption of a new constitution, holding of free and fair elections, and the establishment of democratic institutions (Freedom House, 2021). Tunisia's constitution-drafting process was transparent and inclusive, with civil society organisations able to watch the process and organize demonstrations outside the parliament building if anything was believed undemocratic (Mannheimer, 2014). However, political instability and polarization, as well as the influence of powerful interest groups, continue to threaten democratic consolidation (Charrad, 2019).

Economically, Tunisia's growth has slowed in recent years, and the country continues to face high levels of unemployment, particularly among youth (International Labour Organization, 2021). Economic inequality and corruption also persist, posing challenges to economic democratization (World Bank, 2019). The Tunisian government managed to push through a tax increase in 2018, despite massive protests, but was unable to follow through on the salary freeze for civil servants in the face of resistance from a powerful trade union federation in 2019 (Weipert-Fenne, 2023).

On the social front, Tunisia has made progress in expanding civil liberties, including women's rights and freedom of expression (Amnesty International, 2020). However, social divisions and the persistence of social hierarchies continue to pose challenges to social democratization (Becker, 2016).

Tunisia has made progress in consolidating democracy across political, economic, and social dimensions, challenges remain in terms of political instability, economic inequality, and social divisions. Tunisia regressed democratically by 2021. With military help, President Kais Saied fired the prime minister and suspended Parliament. The process of a democratically elected president acquiring exceptional powers and utilizing populist rhetoric to denounce the political establishment and assert a state of national emergency bears resemblance to the methods employed by other elected populist leaders in the previous decade to erode and subvert democratic institutions (Diamond, 2022).

### **Comparative Analysis of Egypt and Tunisia's Democratization Processes**

## Similarities and differences in the democratization processes

After the Arab Spring, Tunisia and Egypt emerged as two countries that experienced democratization processes, although with significant differences in their paths.

Both Tunisia and Egypt faced authoritarian regimes that led to social, political, and economic challenges. In both countries, the process of democratization was triggered by popular uprisings against the ruling regimes, leading to the overthrow of Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in Tunisia in 2011 and Hosni Mubarak in Egypt in the same year. The revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt were characterized by the mobilization of youth, civil society groups, and opposition parties to demand political reforms and an end to authoritarian rule.

Additionally, both countries faced a similar challenge of transitioning from an authoritarian system to a democratic one. Both Tunisia and Egypt adopted new constitutions that aimed to create a more democratic and inclusive political system. In addition, both countries had to deal with economic challenges, high youth unemployment, and corruption, which were some of the key drivers of the uprisings (Khalil, 2021).

Despite the similarities, Egypt and Tunisia's democratization processes took different paths. The role of the military in Egypt and Tunisia during their democratization processes differed significantly, with implications for their respective democratization outcomes.

In Tunisia, the military played a neutral role in the democratization process, allowing civil society and political parties to drive the process forward. As argued by Khalil (2021), the Tunisian military remained largely outside of political affairs, which facilitated the country's democratization process. Following the fall of President Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in 2011, the military played a crucial role in maintaining order and facilitating the transition to democracy. However, the military leadership did not seek to dominate politics and remained committed to the democratic process. The military worked closely with the interim government to organize free and fair elections, ensuring that the democratic process was transparent and inclusive.

In contrast, the military played a more dominant role in Egypt's democratization process. After the popular uprising that led to the fall of Hosni Mubarak in 2011, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces took power and ruled the country until the election of Mohamed Morsi in 2012. The military then ousted Morsi in a coup in 2013, and the military's leader, Abdel Fattah el-Sisi, became president in 2014 (Tawil-Souri, 2021).

Furthermore, the differences in civil-military relations between Egypt and Tunisia can be attributed to the historical role of the military in each country. In Egypt, the military has played a dominant role in politics since the 1952 Revolution, and it has been a key pillar of the state's stability and power (Makary, 2018). In contrast, the Tunisian military has traditionally been subordinate to civilian authorities and has not played a significant role in politics until recently (Zghal & Charrad, 2016).

The differences in civil-military relations between Egypt and Tunisia can also be attributed to the political and economic systems in each country. In Egypt, the military has had significant economic interests, and it has been involved in various economic sectors, such as construction, tourism, and manufacturing (Cook, 2011). As a result, the military has a vested interest in maintaining the status quo and avoiding any significant political or economic changes that could threaten its interests. In contrast, Tunisia's military has not been involved in economic activities, and its interests have been limited to national security and defense (Zghal & Charrad, 2016).

Further differences between the democratization processes in Egypt and Tunisia can be observed in the international community's response to the democratization processes in Egypt and Tunisia differed significantly. In Tunisia, the international community was largely supportive of the democratic transition and provided substantial financial and technical assistance to support the process. Tunisia received significant support from the European Union and the United States, which helped to strengthen the country's democratic institutions and support civil society (Teti, 2016). The European Union's support for democratization was largely influenced by its own strategic interests where significant support was provided to Tunisia's democratization process because it viewed the country as a strategic partner in the region, with strong potential for economic and political cooperation (Wolff, 2016). Saudi Arabia and UAE did not have initial influence in Tunisia, as it was not seen as a threat until a domino effect of uprisings spilled across the region. Following the demise of Ben Ali in exile, Saudi Arabia and the UAE actively intervened by providing support to select political parties and extending financial aid in Tunisia, with the aim of constraining any potential transitions (Matthiesen, 2022).

In contrast, Egypt faced a more complicated situation. While some countries expressed support for the democratization process, others were less supportive and even endorsed the military coup that overthrew Morsi such as Saudi Arabia and the United Arab Emirates (Tawil-Souri, 2021). The European Union's support for Egypt's process was more limited, due to concerns about the

military's dominance and lack of progress towards democracy (Wolff, 2016). The international community's response to the democratization process in Egypt was also largely influenced by geopolitical considerations, particularly the country's strategic location and its peace treaty with Israel (Ali, 2017).

### Tunisia in the democratization framework

Tunisia's experience in transitioning from an authoritarian regime to democracy is an interesting case study that sheds light on the essential steps necessary for a successful transition. The Tunisian experience illustrates how a successful transition requires a combination of political, institutional, economic, and social reforms, as well as the commitment of political elites and civil society actors to a democratic transition process.

**Elite consensus:** Tunisia's transition was facilitated by the willingness of some members of the political elite to support democratic change. For example, several high-ranking members of Ben Ali's regime defected and joined the opposition, providing critical support for the transition to democracy. However, elite consensus was not always easy to achieve, and the political elite was often divided and resistant to change.

**Political opening:** Tunisia has made some significant progress since the fall of the Ben Ali regime. Political prisoners were released, and restrictions on civil society organizations were lifted. However, the government has also been criticized for cracking down on dissent and limiting freedom of expression, especially in recent years. The government's actions have raised concerns about the pace and extent of political opening in Tunisia.

**Constitutional reform:** Tunisia's experience has been largely positive. The country adopted a new constitution in 2014 that enshrines democratic principles and provides a framework for democratic governance. The constitution includes provisions for the separation of powers, protects individual rights and freedoms, and defines the role of the judiciary. The adoption of a new constitution was a critical step towards democratization in Tunisia.

**Free and fair elections:** Tunisia has held several successful elections since the fall of the Ben Ali regime. These elections have been praised for their transparency and inclusivity, and have helped to establish democratic legitimacy in Tunisia. However, there have also been concerns about

electoral fraud and manipulation, and some opposition parties have accused the government of using state resources to support its electoral campaigns.

**Building democratic institutions:** Tunisia has made some significant progress since the fall of the Ben Ali regime. The country has established a functioning parliament, an independent judiciary, and an effective civil service. However, there are concerns about corruption and inefficiency in some of these institutions, and some have argued that more needs to be done to strengthen democratic governance in Tunisia.

**Protection of individual rights and freedoms:** Tunisia has made some progress, but there are also concerns about the government's record in this area. The country has a relatively free and independent media, and freedom of expression is generally respected. However, there have been concerns about restrictions on freedom of assembly and association, and the government has been criticized for cracking down on dissent.

**Economic reform:** Tunisia has struggled to achieve sustainable economic growth and reduce poverty and inequality. The country has faced significant economic challenges, including high unemployment, low investment, and a lack of economic diversification. However, the government has also made some efforts to promote economic reform and attract foreign investment, and there have been some positive signs of economic growth in recent years.

**International support:** Tunisia has received significant support from the international community since the fall of the Ben Ali regime. This support has included financial resources, technical assistance, and diplomatic support. International support has helped to strengthen democratic institutions and support civil society actors in Tunisia.

## Egypt in the democratization Framework

Egypt's process has been characterized by setbacks, challenges, and political turmoil. Here is an overview of how Egypt's democratization process has fit within each step of the framework outlined earlier:

**Elite consensus:** In Egypt, the initial stages of the transition were characterized by a broad-based movement that included diverse segments of society. However, after the removal of Mubarak, the military took control of the government and the transition process. This created a polarization between the Islamist forces represented by the Muslim Brotherhood and the secular forces

represented by the military and other groups, which resulted in a lack of elite consensus and political fragmentation (Masoud, 2012).

**Political opening:** The revolution in Egypt led to a significant political opening, which allowed for the creation of new political parties and civic groups. However, this opening was not fully realized as the military took over the government, dissolved the parliament, and restricted the freedom of the press and other civil liberties (Gerges, 2013).

**Constitutional reform:** In March 2011, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) appointed a committee to amend the 1971 constitution. A new constitution was drafted, and a referendum was held in 2012. However, the drafting process was not fully participatory and was criticized for being heavily influenced by the military (Kandil, 2012).

**Free and fair elections:** Egypt held parliamentary elections in 2011-2012, which were considered by international observers to be relatively free and fair. However, the elections were marred by allegations of fraud and vote rigging. In 2012, the country held presidential elections, which were won by Mohamed Morsi, a member of the Muslim Brotherhood (Lust-Okar & Jamal, 2012).

**Building democratic institutions:** Despite the initial steps taken towards building democratic institutions, the process was hindered by the military's continued dominance over the political system. This led to a lack of institutional independence and accountability, which contributed to the erosion of public trust in the democratic process (Gerges, 2013).

**Protection of individual rights and freedoms:** Egypt has a long history of human rights abuses, and the democratization process has not brought significant improvements in this regard. The military has been criticized for cracking down on political opposition, restricting freedom of the press and assembly, and committing human rights violations (Human Rights Watch, 2021).

**Economic reform:** Economic reform has been a significant challenge in Egypt, and the democratization process has not brought significant economic improvements. The country has struggled with high unemployment, poverty, and economic inequality, which have contributed to social and political instability (Tessler, 2015).

**International support:** Egypt has received significant international support from various countries and international organizations, including the United States and the European Union. However, international support has been criticized for being inconsistent and focused on security and stability rather than democracy and human rights (Witte, 2017).

## **Conclusion**

This research paper discusses the main theories of democratization and the factors that are essential for successful democratization. The theories discussed in this research include Modernization, transitology theory, institutional theory, and political culture theory. The research highlights that political, economic, and social elements are crucial for democratization. Furthermore, it also identifies civil-military relations and international interference as critical factors that can impact the success of democratization.

The political culture theory is considered the best perspective for understanding the events of the Arab Spring. This theory suggests that democratization is influenced by the political culture prevailing in a society, including the norms, values, and beliefs of its citizens. However, the research indicates that no single theory can fully explain the complexities of democratization, and a combination of perspectives is necessary for a comprehensive understanding of the democratization process.

In addition to the contextual factors, the process of democratization is also influenced by the actors involved in the transition. Political leaders, civil society organizations, and international actors play critical roles in promoting and sustaining democratization. Leaders must be committed to the transition to democracy and willing to make difficult decisions to promote reform. Civil society organizations, including media outlets, NGOs, and interest groups, can provide a crucial check on the government and help promote transparency and accountability. International actors, such as the United Nations, regional organizations, and foreign governments, can provide financial and technical assistance, promote good governance and human rights, and provide a forum for dialogue and cooperation among stakeholders.

However, international actors must also be cautious not to interfere in the domestic politics of transitioning countries, which can lead to unintended consequences and undermine the credibility of the transition process. International actors must also be sensitive to the unique historical and cultural contexts of each country and work with local stakeholders to identify and address specific challenges.

The research proposes a universal framework for democratization consisting of eight essential steps, including elite consensus, political opening, constitutional reform, free and fair elections, building democratic institutions, protection of individual rights and freedoms, economic reform, and international support. While the framework can provide a general roadmap for countries to

follow, it is important to note that the process of democratization is highly context-specific. Different countries face different challenges and obstacles to democratization, and the steps that are necessary for success may vary depending on the specific political and social conditions of the country.

The case studies of Egypt and Tunisia illustrate the need for a nuanced understanding of the local context when implementing the framework for democratization. The research highlights that the specific solutions required were context-specific, as the countries faced different challenges during their transition. The military's continued influence in Egypt and the balance of religious identity and democratic governance in Tunisia required different approaches to institution-building. Therefore, while the framework for democratization can serve as a useful guide, it must be adapted to the specific circumstances of each country.

The Arab Spring gave Arab countries optimism for political transformation and a genuine opportunity at democracy. Ten years after the Arab Spring, Tunisia had a rise and a fall, Egypt's attempt was short-lived, Syria suffered a catastrophic civil war, and Assad was welcomed back into the Arab League with open arms. In most of the region, authoritarian government has re-established itself. Corruption, economic suffering, restricted prospects, and a lack of political voice and responsibility have largely gone unaddressed, leaving one to question if the populace can unite once again, or the unfolding of Arab Spring seems to have killed any hope for a true democracy..

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