UNIVERSITI PUTRA MALAYSIA

ARAB SPRING AND EGYPT-UNITED STATES OF AMERICA'S RELATIONS IN POST-REVOLUTION ERA

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By

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Egypt was selected as a country that has experienced drastic changes in government recently; due to a revolution in 2011 in the chain of the Arab Spring revolutions. The advent of the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP), and later the Muslim Brotherhood after the Egyptian revolution in 2011 has had effects on Egypt- United States relationships. Studying these changes can lead to more research on revolutions caused by the Arab Spring in other countries. It can also explain the hegemonic conduct of the United States in Egypt and determine the elements which were effective in the process of the Egyptian revolution. To this end, the researcher made use of qualitative content analysis and studied scholarly published documents and other relevant official news resources that were published on the relationship between Egypt and the United States after the 2011 revolution. In addition to these secondary resources, 12 key informants (ethnic, academic, and administrative elites) were interviewed. To frame the study, the researcher made use of power transition theory and sought the role of domestic and international variables on the Egypt-United States relationship and the United States' attempts to maintain its hegemony in Egypt. The results with a focus on both Obama's administration and Trumps' Administration revealed that several developments had affected the United States' hegemony in Egypt. Among these factors, 1) End of Unique Alliance with the United States, 2) Egypt's cold relationships with Israel, 3) Egypt's reestablishment of relationships with Iran, 4) Suspension of war on terror, 6) the United States' new policy, 7) Egypt's anti-western agenda, 8) military and security factors, and 9) cultural and social factors can be highlighted. Later, the United States' main strategies in maintaining its hegemony in Egypt were discussed. Among these factors, 1) the United States' aid policy, 2) the United States' tolerance policy, 3) aborting FJP, 4) imposing a western culture, and 4) the United States' support of street protests can be mentioned. In conclusion, it can be stated that the relationship between the United States and Egypt was greatly affected by the Egyptian revolution in 2011. However, the United States has tackled this problem through its political decisions and has maintained its hegemony in Egypt. Areas for further research are discussed at the end of the study.

Abstrak tesis yang dikemukakan kepada Senat Universiti Putra Malaysia sebagai memenuhi keperluan untuk ijazah Doktor Falsafah

HUBUNGAN ARAB SPRING DAN MESIR-AMERIKA SYARIKAT DI ERA PASKA-REVOLUSI

Oleh

HOSSEIN TAGHDAR

November 2019

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Mesir dipilih sebagai negara yang telah mengalami perubahan drastik dalam kerajaan baru-baru ini yang disebabkan oleh revolusi pada tahun 2011 dalam rangkaian revolusi Arab Spring. Kemunculan Parti Kebebasan dan Keadilan (FJP), dan kemudian Ikhwanul Muslimin selepas revolusi Mesir pada tahun 2011 telah mempengaruhi hubungan terhadap Mesir-Amerika Syarikat. Perubahan ini menyebabkan lebih banyak penyelidikan mengenai revolusi yang disebabkan oleh Arab Spring di negara-negara lain dan juga menerangkan tingkah laku hegemonik Amerika Syarikat di Mesir. Ia juga dapat menentukan unsur-unsur yang berkesan dalam proses revolusi Mesir. Untuk tujuan ini, penyelidik menggunakan analisis kandungan kualitatif dan mengkaji dokumen ilmiah dan sumber berita rasmi lain yang diterbitkan mengenai hubungan antara Mesir dan Amerika Syarikat selepas revolusi 2011. Sebagai tambahan kepada sumber-sumber sekunder ini, 12 orang informan utama (etnik, akademik dan pentadbiran elit) ditemubual. Untuk merangka kajian ini, penyelidik menggunakan teori peralihan kuasa dan menentukan peranan pembolehubah domestik dan antarabangsa mengenai hubungan Mesir-Amerika Syarikat dan usaha Amerika untuk mengekalkan hegemoni di Mesir. Hasil dari fokus pada pentadbiran Obama dan Pentadbiran Trumps menunjukkan beberapa perkembangan telah mempengaruhi hegemoni Amerika Syarikat di Mesir. Antara faktor-faktor ini adalah;, 1) Tamat Perikatan Unik dengan Amerika Syarikat, 2) Hubungan dingin Mesir dengan Israel, 3) Pembentukan semula hubungan antara Mesir dengan Iran, 4) Penggantungan perang terhadap keganasan, 6) dasar baru Amerika Syarikat, 7) Agenda anti-barat Mesir, 8) faktor ketenteraan dan keselamatan, dan 9) faktor kebudayaan dan sosial boleh diketengahkan. Kemudian, strategi utama Amerika Syarikat dalam mengekalkan hegemoni di Mesir telah dibincangkan. Antara faktor-faktor ini adalah, 1) dasar bantuan Amerika Syarikat, 2) dasar toleransi Amerika Syarikat, 3) memansuhkan FJP, 4) Mengenakan budaya barat, dan 5) sokongan Amerika Syarikat terhadap protes jalanan dapat dilihat. Sebagai kesimpulan, hubungan antara Amerika Syarikat dan Mesir sangat dipengaruhi oleh revolusi Mesir pada tahun 2011. Walau

bagaimanapun, Amerika Syarikat, sebagai hegemon yang telah wujud di Mesir selama kira-kira setengah abad telah menangani masalah ini melalui keputusan politiknya dan telah mengekalkan hegemoni di Mesir. Penyelidikan selanjutnya dibincangkan pada akhir kajian.

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vi

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vii

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

xi

LIST OF FIGURES

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.1   Introduction

This chapter begins with an overview of the Egypt- United States political background. This overview leads to the identification of the research problem, which forms the rationale for this study. As stating the objectives of the study is in no uncertain terms important, it is indicated along with the significance and scope of the study in this chapter. Finally, the chapter ends with a brief note on the organization of the thesis and the conclusion.

1.1.1   Egypt-US Relationships: A Brief Background

Historically, Egypt and the United States have had military and economic relations; due to the significance of Egypt's geopolitical position in the region (Jadallah, 2014). Egypt's geopolitical location can provide the United States national security interests (Shannon & Cummins, 2014). Most of the economic and military relationships between Egypt and the United States can be traced back in the 1970s, after signing the Camp David Treaty with Israel, the United States provided Egypt with assistance in economic and military terms (Burns, 1985). Indeed, Egypt has attempted to work as the provider of stability, an issue which was marked by the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty in 1979 (Rabinovich, 2009). Before reaching this agreement with Israel, Egypt had fought with Israel several times, i.e., 1948, 1956, 1967, and 1973 (almost once every decade). Therefore, the Egyptian – Israel Treaty was a significant achievement for the United States, which broke the war cycle between the United States allies, i.e., Israel, and Egypt. A vital aspect of this treaty is the United States' interest and help in achieving this agreement (Rabinovich, 2009).

During Hosni Mubarak's presidential rule, Egypt had been receiving large amounts of help from the United States. Indeed, Egypt was the second-largest recipient of the United States' donations (Jadallah, 2014). The country is also known as the main importer of grains, such as wheat from the United States (Hassan, 2011). The donation of the US to Egypt has not been without reason. Egypt has a regional weight from political and cultural perspectives. Another reason why the United States is interested in maintaining its relationship with Egypt is its interest in oil and protection of Israel (Hassan, 2011).

Also, the United States has shown interest in maintaining its relationship with Egypt to have access to the Suez Canal. The Suez Canal is significant both for trade and military reasons (Stumpo, 2006). Egypt has received other forms of a donation from the United States. For example, all Egypt's debts between the period of 1991 and 1997 were forgiven by the United States (Momani, 2004). The reason was the significant

role Egypt played in the first war in Iraq (Walt, 2011). Egypt responded to the goodwill and interest in helping the United States on some occasions. For example, Egypt passed a legislation that was beneficial to foreigners in return. In 1996, under Prime Minister Kamal Ganzouri, Egypt allowed running businesses and owning properties to foreigners for the first time (Abul-Magd, 2017). However, and as stated by Sharp (2014), the relationship between Egypt and the United States has not always been smooth and without challenge. The United States was for stepping down Hosni Mubarak, former Egypt's president, in 2011. The reason, as stated by the government of the United States, was a violation of human rights by Hosni Mubarak. Therefore, Obama's administration suspended and later recast relations with Egypt.

Thus, the Egyptian revolution in 2011 can be marked as the beginning of a new era in Egypt-United States relationships. After the United States established relationships with Egypt in 1952 and until the last autocrat (President Mubarak) held power in 2011, the two countries maintained relatively good relationships. These bilateral relationships were in turmoil tremendously by the one-year presidency of the Muslim Brotherhood's Muhammad Morsi, from June 2012 to July 2013, and were changed afterward. As can be understood from the background of the bilateral relationships between the two countries, at the end of the Mubarak era and the beginning of the Egyptian revolution in 2011 (Morsi's presidency), the relationship between these two countries was tense.

Anderson (2011) remarks that the Egyptian crisis with the United States grew at the time of Egypt's revolution in 2011. The Arab Spring caused tension between these two countries; however, several issues between Egypt and the United States had been controversial in the years before the 2011 revolution, to the extent that Obama had identified Hosni Mubarak as an autocrat and advised him to resign several times (Arena, 2017). As determining these aspects can have an impact on the relationship between the two countries after the Egyptian's 2011revolution, this study is set out to have an in-depth look at this issue.

It should be mentioned that the United States' hegemonic conduct towards different nations is not identical. It would not be possible to understand the political conduct of the United States unless it is subject to an intensive study in the very particular region it is present and by considering unique geopolitical features of that region. This issue can justify why the United States' approach to Iran, for example, is different from the one observed in Egypt. These reasons led the researcher to study the effects of the Arab Spring on Egypt on The United States-Egypt relationships.

1.1.2   The United States' Hegemony

Probably, the most significant issue that should be dealt with at the beginning of the study is to know why the United States and its relationships with Egypt have been subject to investigation. Therefore, before presenting a brief history of hegemons of the world, it should be mentioned that several wars and historical incidents have

caused the United States to become a country seeking supremacy. World Wars I and II not only weakened other hegemons such as Great Britain, Japan, and Germany but also strengthened the United States' economy to the extent that the United States became the most potent hegemon of the 20th century (Sader, 2012). Thus, as noted by Sader (2012), the United States practices in other countries is an attempt to establish its hegemony rather than excelling the life of people in that particular country. This issue is also mentioned by Jadallah (2014) when she describes the United States' activities as 'marketing democracy' to achieve its hegemonic goals.

Moreover, the United States has experienced a shift in hegemonic codes from continentalism to regionalism (Modelski, 1987). As a result, it wished to expand its power in countries with unique geopolitical positions. Egypt has always been in the list of desired countries for the United States, due to several significant issues. Firstly, the location of the Suez Canal in Egypt that connects the red sea to the Mediterranean Sea. The Suez Canal plays a substantial role in providing security to Israel, and access over this canal can secure the United States' transportation of petroleum from the Middle East (Jadallah, 2014). Hegemony over Egypt is also essential to the United States; due to the role Egypt plays in the Arab League. The United States has attempted to maintain Israel's security and discuss this issue with other Arab countries by using Egypt.

Having discussed the significance of Egypt to the United States, the researcher deals with the concept of hegemony in this section. The period between rising and falling of a hegemon has been defined as a "Long Cycle" by Modelski (1987). It is essential to know that the United States is among the latest hegemons in the world, and historically, other countries had the hegemonic power in the world. Taylor and Flint (2000) assumed that Britain and the United States enacted as hegemonic world powers since 1815. However, the advent of Germany as a continental power in the 1870s reduced Britain's influence in Europe, and Britain continued to maintain its control in other parts of the world. Britain's dominance over the world was also endangered by two international powers, i.e., Japan and the United States, which caused a decline in Britain's hegemonic power. The period between World War I and World War II was an opportunity for the United States to enhance its global role and set its global agenda (Lundberg, 1984).

Many international agendas, such as the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) and the United Nations (UN), which are being implemented today, were proposed by the United States. This process was accelerated, as the United States felt the growing power of its rival, i.e., the Soviet Union (Flint, 2006). Put simply, although the 18th and 19th centuries were known as Britain's Long cycle, it is the United States which holds recent global power. Modelski (1987) opined that the new era is the time of the United States hegemony, and its main rivals in this regard are Russia and China. The United States has been involved in several wars in recent years, including the Afghanistan and Iraq war, which for many, e.g., Layne (2006), is a political game of hegemony. This brief background and also a rivalry with Russia and China can, per

3

se, explain why the United States is continuously looking for allies to strengthen its position as a hegemon.

1.1.3   The Arab Spring

Studying Egypt's 2011 revolution in isolation seems to be redundant. Many scholars (e.g., Friedman, 2012; Sader, 2012; Stepanova, 2011) have asserted that the Egyptian revolution is related to awareness of Arabic countries of the autocracy and dictatorship they were tolerating and reacting to the tense situation they were experiencing. The chain of these movements is 'The Arab Spring.' To many scholars, the revolutionary movement in Arabic countries is the result of awareness among Arabs towards dictatorship, which awakens one country after the other.

The movement 'Arab Spring' refers to a series of revolutions in South West Asia and North African countries from 2010 so far (Zubaida, 2015). As a result of Arab spring rulers in Tunisia, Egypt, Libya, and Yemen have been shot down of power. The civil uprising has erupted in Bahrain and Syria. Massive protests have spread in Algeria, Iraq, Jordan, Kuwait, Morocco, and Sudan, and minor protests have happened in Lebanon, Mauritania, Oman, and Saudi Arabia.

The inception of the events in Arab spring is easy to recognize. The series of events began on 17 December 2007, when a street vendor in Tunisia set himself on fire at a protest against the confiscation of his wares by the police and local officials. This situation ended in tremendous demonstrations in the streets of Tunisia two days afterward (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2016).

Ben Ali, the former leader of Tunisia, attempted to fight the outrageous public. However, his incapability to control the violence around the country resulted in him fleeing to Saudi Arabia. This sudden shift in political trends and shift in power was later observed in other Muslim countries in the region. After Tunisia, Algeria experience this shift in January 2011 when after about two months of the demonstration, a state of emergency was lifted. It is a familiar device in repressive regimes for a state of emergency, put in place at the start of the regime, to remain forever unrepeated, greatly simplifying control of the population (Anderson, 2011).

The other countries after Tunisia and Algeria were Jordan, Egypt, Yemen, Bahrain, Kuwait, Libya, Morocco, Lebanon, and finally Syria. As for Egypt, protests began in January 2011. There were protests against Hosni Mubarak, the ruler of Egypt, who had been in power for 30 years. The protests started on the 25th of January- the national holiday police day. As a result of the demonstration, the National Democratic Party lost power by Hosni Mobarak's resignation in February 2011.

4

The change in power in Egypt has been reviewed analytically by scholars and well-known newspapers and media. Although Hosni Mubarak lost control so quickly, a few efforts were made by him and his party to maintain power. Reviewing Mubarak's reactions to the Arab Spring shows that he attempted to suppress the crowd by force at the beginning; however, as he realized the severity of the situation, he turned his policy to a more flexible one (Marfleet, 2013).

According to Sharp (2014), the Egyptians' protests against the government in Cairo, Alexandria, and some other cities were first faced with the military response from Hosni Mubarak. In addition to that, advocators of Hosni Mubarak began fighting against the protesters. However, the street demonstrations which had already grown to a national movement seemed impossible to stop. Later, Egypt's government tried to break down protesters' connections by shutting down internet and phone lines, which were of no use as people gathered in predetermined areas in the city such as Cairo's central Tahrir square.

Mubarak attempted to make changes in the conditions to control the uprising. As the army decided not to meddle in Mubarak's affair, he began a series of changes to convince the protesters, such as appointing Omar Suleiman as vice president or installing the new cabinet on the 31st of January, 2011. All these attempts failed to satisfy the protesters, and The Supreme Council of Armed Forces (SCAF) headed by Tantawi took over control of Egypt and later dissolved the legislature and suspended the constitution (Korany & El-Mahdi, 2012). Therefore, the Arab Spring also affected and changed the political trends in Egypt.

1.1.4 Egypt's Revolution in 2011

The Egyptian revolution of 2011 can be marked as a transition point in Egypt and its foreign policy (Encyclopedia Britannica, 2016). The main reason is that the Muslim Brotherhood, an underground movement that was pronounced illegal by Hosni Mubarak, gained grounds and overtook the country after a short duration of turmoil. As the Muslim Brotherhood's ideology was in sharp contrast with Hosni Mubarak's administration, their prospect in maintaining relationships with the United States also differed vastly (Korotayev & Zinkina, 2011). Before discussing the difference in the views, it is of prime significance to discuss the revolution in Egypt in a few paragraphs to make the picture clear to the readership.

Many scholars, e.g., Chebib and Sohail (2011), assumed that the Egyptian revolution was under the influence of the Tunisian revolution. A similar coincidence (brutality towards civilians) took place in Tunisia in 2006, when two police officers beat a bus driver, video recorded him and uploaded it to the internet (Human Rights, 2007). Mubarak's government also suppressed the bloggers who uploaded the incident. Therefore, one of the apparent reasons people of Egypt were fed up with Mubarak's government was the corruption of the police (El-Bendary, 2013). The United States

did not show a particular reaction to Egypt's ruler diplomacy in Egypt until 2011when the revolution was about to take place.

Among the significant reasons why the revolution in Egypt took place was the politicians' concern about Gamal Mubarak (Hosni Mubarak's son) in ruling the country after his father (Al-A'sar, 2006). The transfer of power from Hafez al-Assad to Bashar Al-Asad and the series of events that took place in Syria, raised debates in the press about the possible consequences and similar incidents happening in Egypt (Al-A'sar, 2006).

Such problems in the Egyptian society provoked millions of people in Cairo to protest against Mubarak's rule. Many online activities were conducted, such as calling for protests and organizing the crowd; therefore, the internet and telephone lines were shut down by Mubarak's administration. In a series of violent clashes that occurred between protesters and security forces, at least 846 people were killed, and over 6000 people were severely injured (BBC News, 2011). Protestors burnt over 90 police stations, and other major protests took place in Alexandria (Egypt Independence, 2012). France 24 international news broadcast (2011) announced the reasons for the protests as follows:

a) Police brutality,
b) State-of-emergency laws,
c) Abandoning free elections and freedom of speech,
d) Corruption,
e) High unemployment, food-price inflation
f) Low wages.

Finally, the labor union added to the pressure of the protests, and Mubarak stepped down in January 2011. It should be mentioned that Mubarak attempted to harm civilians by hiring police forces in civilian clothes who entered neighborhoods, damaged houses, and injured people; however, many civilians formed watchmen groups who observed neighborhoods and attempted to stop them (Chebib & Sohail, 2011).

Undoubtedly, the series of events that took place in Egypt had effects on the relationship between Egypt and the United States. The Muslim Brotherhood was in sharp conflict with Mubarak, and the transition of power to an opposing party also caused a change in the foreign policy of the country. Of interest to the researcher in this study was to find out how such changes have affected the relationships between Egypt and the United States.

1.1.5 Egypt's Revolution and International Reactions

International reactions to Egypt's revolution varied among Western societies and governments. Many Western nations condoned peaceful protests; however, they expressed concerns about the issue of stability in Egypt in the first place, and the region in the second place (Vesperini, 2011). On the one hand, the lack of a government in Egypt could result in internal conflicts between groups. Previously, by Al-Baradei taking power in Egypt, it was observed that opposing powers can be successful in establishing power. On the other hand, a series of countries were influenced by the revolutions in Tunisia and Egypt, i.e., Yemen, Bahrain, Jordan, Syria, and Libya. This issue was also of concern to Western powers.

Great powers of the world showed their reaction to the Egyptian revolution both before and after the revolution. The African Union (AU) believed that Mubarak should respond to the widespread protests in Cairo. AU asked Mubarak for a reform to settle the unrest (Vesperini, 2011). Arab League also showed a reaction to the situation in Egypt. Amr Moussa, the head of the Arab League, suggested a multi-party democracy, a suggestion that was not welcomed by Mubarak (Weir, 2011), as he was not willing to give up power to other parties and aimed at amending the situation.

The European Union foreign policy chief Catherine Ashton asked the authorities in Egypt to hear people's voices instead of attempting to maintain power at any cost. She also stated that people have the right to demonstrate and should not be suppressed (France 24 international news broadcast, 2011).

The United Nations general secretary, Ban Ki-Moon- called the protestors' needs in Egypt "legitimate concerns." He also urged the authorities in Egypt to refrain from any sort of brutality and violence towards the civilians. In addition, the Higher Commissioner for Human Rights, Navi Pillay, believed the cause for the frustration in Egypt was the emergency laws, considering that when there is no room for peaceful assembly and expression, it turns into frustration. (Weir, 2011).

Contrary to peaceful and bilateral relationships between Egypt and the United States in the previous years; especially after 1979 and Camp David Treaty, the United States criticized Egypt and blames Egyptian government for violation of human rights. Indeed, the United States and Obama's administration were among the countries which showed the harshest reaction to the situation in Egypt and urged Mubarak to step down (Jadallah, 2014). Contrary to the long-lasting peaceful relationships between Egypt and the United States, the revolution in 2011 can be marked as a turnover in the bilateral relationships of the two countries and, therefore, worthy of investigation.

Bansaada (2011) posits that the story of the Arab Spring is not as it seems, and the United States has a vital role in the series of revolutions. To him, Arab Spring is the United States' version of implementing democracy in the world, which eventually leads to turning enemies into allies. Therefore, the United States should not only agree

with this situation but also be contempt with revolution. Although this claim has been rejected by media related to the United States' authorities, he mentioned four main reasons for this claim. First of all, he believes that a revolution cannot be spontaneous and should be carefully tailored. Secondly, the autocratic power, which is replaced with the reviled power, opposes the United States' hegemony; however, the United States remains in power in that country. Thirdly, all protests had disregarded the United States' sentiment over the issue of Palestine and Iraq. Finally, the instigators of the revolution in all cases were educated people from middle-class society in the country. Many of these people vanished after the revolution. Another issue is that the greatest powers in the world, such as Germany, Britain, and other Western countries, were against the brutality enacted against people of Egypt and protestors. These findings show that the Egyptian revolution and the United States hegemony should not only be studied from an international perspective, but also from a domestic and national point of view.

1.2   Statement of the Problem

There are numerous reasons which indicate that the change in Egyptian government must have had effects on its foreign policy with the United States. Indeed, due to the domino of Arab spring, which began in Tunisia and later stretched to Egypt, many economic, political, and social changes have occurred in Egypt. Gaining power by an Islamist party (Muslim Brotherhood) that considered the Arab Spring an opportunity to support democracy was among the main changes. This issue has had an impact on the hegemony of the United States, as the Muslim Brotherhood grew an obsession with the relations with Western countries and their allies (Hamid, 2015).

Although some pieces of news and academic articles have attempted to cover this aspect of the Egyptian revolution, there is a need for a comprehensive study which considers all aspects of this multifarious phenomenon. Research in this area should come to understand why Egypt-United States' relationship was affected by the Arab Spring rather than a descriptive account of what has happened between the two countries. However, this issue is, to a considerable extent, understudied. This is the first reason that the researcher considers conducting this study significant.

Undoubtedly, the advent of the Arab Spring in Egypt has resulted in new developments. Many of these developments, such as the transition of secular political power to an Islamic religious one, or Egypt's closeness with Iran, has sure affected Egypt-United States relationships. Such developments can be understood by not only studying the published documents with regard to Egypt's developments after 2011 but also by listening to the administrative, academic, and ethnic elites who have had an active role in either making these decisions or interpreting the events. However, previous studies have mostly dealt with published data and have ignored the primary data. This is the second reason the researcher believes the Egypt-United States relationships after the 2011 revolution should be subject to a comprehensive study from different perspectives.

8

The relationship between Egypt and the United States is a complicated one. Understanding the impact of new developments on the relationship between these two countries does not lead to a comprehensive understanding with regard to the status quo of Egypt-United States' relationship after the Egyptian revolution in 2011. To many political scholars, this is an important issue, as it can determine how successful the United States has been in maintaining its hegemony and protecting its achievements in Egypt. This can even lead to patterns concerning the United States' behavior with geopolitical countries, which were once its ally but seek independence. Although the political issues between the two countries are very frequently reported in the media, the answer to the question of how the United States has maintained its hegemony in Egypt is obscure. This leads to the second question, which is how the United States has attempted to maintain its hegemony in Egypt.

Ignorance towards such significant issues results not only in an incomplete understanding of the Egyptian revolution in the first place, but also hinders understanding of Egypt-United States' relationships. Such unknown aspects of Egypt-United States' relationship in the post-revolution era after 2011 has motivated the researcher to conduct this study.

1.3   Research Questions

In line with the main concerns in this study, the following research questions were proposed for this study:

Q1: How have the political developments in Egypt after the Egyptian revolution in 2011 (known as Arab Spring) affected Egypt's political relations with the United States?

Q2: How has the United States attempted to maintain its hegemony in Egypt after the Egyptian revolution in 2011 (known as the Arab Spring)?

1.4   Research Objectives

This study had two main objectives, which were stated in the research questions. The objectives of the study are as follows:

1)   To evaluate the effect of the Arab Spring on Egypt-United States relationship in the post-revolution era.
2)   To study the United States' attempts to maintain its hegemony in Egypt after the Egyptian revolution in 2011.

9

1.5   Significance of the Study

The results gained from this study can increase the depth and breadth of the readerships' understanding of the Arab Spring. Indeed, it is important to know how the Arab Spring affects Arabic countries and how these countries manage to survive after the revolution. Understanding Egypt's Status after the Arab Spring is only one example; however, when compared to other countries in which the Arab Spring has resulted in a revolution, it leads to a broader understanding of the Arab Spring. Thus, not only does this study clarify the relationship between Egypt and the United States, but it also increases knowledge of the Arab Spring.

Secondly, apart from having a political shift in government and power, several economic and social changes have occurred in Egypt, which can be directly related to the Egypt-United States relationship. Therefore, understanding the relationship between the status of Egypt and the United States can help determine what political and social changes have occurred in Egypt and how they have affected the country.

Moreover, the revolutions which occurred in the chain of Arab Spring revolutions have, in many cases, affected the country's international relationships. Exploring how the United States has attempted to maintain its hegemony in Egypt can lead to patterns in understanding how revolutions in other countries are affected by the revolution caused by the Arab Spring.

It is significant to know which factors have played a role in the hegemony of the United States in Egypt and how the recent developments affected these factors. Egypt has had a shift in trends after the 2011 revolution in terms of international relationships. Barack Obama was not for supporting Egypt, and the two countries' long-lasting relations were affected. It is essential to know if this change, along with other developments, has affected the United States' hegemony in Egypt.

Besides, the pivotal role of Egypt in the region, and the significance of its relationships with Israel, which is among the United States' most important allies, perpetuate the significance of understanding the extent to which the United States has maintained its hegemonic power in Egypt. Needless to mention that this study has pedagogical implications for scholars in the field. Many of the databases which have discussed the United States hegemony in Egypt are solely based on news, and scholarly articles in this regard are scant. Therefore, by using data from various sources, not only this study provides professional readership with an academic account of the issue, but also it shed light on some of the most ambiguous problems about the Egypt-United States relationships.

10

1.6 Conceptual Definition

Arab Spring

Arab Spring is the term used to refer to a series of conflicts that majorly occurred in the Middle East and North Africa (Al-Masmari, 2011). Arab Spring is a chain of interconnected events that affected one country after another. Arab Spring was begun in Tunisia in 2007 and affected Egypt in 2011. In this study, it was hypothesized that the United States hegemony might have been affected as a result of the Arab Spring. This idea is also supported through previous research by Eligati (2013).

Hegemony

Hegemony is usually referred to as not only the political but also the economic, or military predominance or control of one country over other countries (Nye, 1990). The stem of the word is Greek. It refers to the politico-military dominance of a geographical location over another place. In this study, the hegemony of the United States was under investigation. Believing that both domestic and international factors affect the United States hegemony in Egypt, among many hegemonic theories and schools, power transition theory was selected to explain the hegemony of the United States in Egypt.

1.7 Scope of the Study

Hegemonic cycles and theories vary. They refer to various eras in history and multiple schools of thought. Considering all these political and hegemonic schools in the analysis would have been impossible; therefore, the researcher had its focus only on the post-revolution era (after 2011) in Egypt. Certainly, Egypt-United States relationships had experienced drastic changes at this point, and this issue seemed to be worthy of comprehensive attention. The political change in Egypt has resulted in several social and economic changes that are understudied yet. On the other hand, the review of related literature reveals that the relationships between Egypt and the United States had relatively been constant for decades before the Egyptian revolution in 2011. Therefore, the researcher selected this particular period to delve into.

Secondly, this study wished to find out how recent developments in Egypt have affected the United States hegemony in this country and how has the United States attempted to maintain its hegemony after 2011. The researcher followed traces of these developments and included them in the study in case they affected the analysis of data and results.

Thirdly, it might have been appropriate to look at the Egypt-United States' relationship over a more extended period; however, the researcher decided to have a more in-depth look at the relationships of the country which required considering a shorter period.

11

1.8　　　　Organization of the Thesis

The content of this study is revealed in 5 chapters. The first chapter is a brief background of the relationships between the United States and Egypt. Also, the United States hegemony in the world, and in Egypt is introduced. The rationale of the study is presented in the form of a problem statement. Next, the objectives and significance of the study are discussed. In addition to that, the researcher has discussed the limitations and delimitations of the study to arrive at a narrow and workable theoretical framework.

The second chapter expands on the concept of hegemony and Egypt's political development. The researcher introduced these hegemonic schools to justify why The Power Transition Theory was selected.

Along with the introduction to hegemonic schools, concepts such as The Arab Spring, the United States hegemony in Egypt, the Egyptian revolution of 2011 were discussed from a critical perspective. In addition, several studies that were conducted concerning the United States' hegemony in Egypt and other Arabic countries were discussed.

Chapter 3 deals with the design of the study, the conceptual framework of the study, the data collection procedure, the key informants who participated in the study, and the documents used in this study. Content analysis has been introduced as the main procedure for data analysis in this study, and the reasons for selecting this approach are explained in Chapter 3. Issues such as data analysis during data collection and data analysis after data collection, along with the reliability of the data, are discussed in this chapter.

Chapter 4 deals with the analysis of the selected data. The answer to the research questions is mainly sought in this chapter. In this chapter, the researcher determines the new developments in Egypt after the revolution in 2011, and how Egypt-United States' relationships have been affected by the Arab Spring.

Chapter 5 is a conclusion of the study. A summary of the study and the answers are depicted in Chapter 5. In addition, the researcher discusses the areas for further research in this chapter.

1.9   Conclusion

Egypt is an important country in the region and among Arabic countries. The Arab Spring has also touched this significant geopolitical country, and its political trends have been changed. This issue has affected the United States' hegemony in the country, as the bilateral relationships between the two countries have been subject to change. The ideology in the Egyptian revolution was to stand against the hegemonic powers of the West. This ideology has affected Egypt- United States relationships; however, the depth and breadth of this change are not fully understood yet. Therefore the researcher was motivated to conduct this study. After an intensive review of the literature from various sources, a few important questions were opened concerning the Egyptian revolution, i.e., how have the recent political developments in Egypt affected its relationship with the United States and how has this issue affected the United States' hegemony in this country. Finding the answer to these questions can help understand the future of the hegemony in Egypt and might lead to patterns for analyzing hegemony of the United States in other countries.

13

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