Bates College
SCARAB

Honors Theses | Capstone Projects

Spring 5-2014

The Anthropology of Think Tanks: Democracy Promotion in Egypt after the 2011 Uprisings

Sabina Erika Lee Frizell
Bates College, sfrizell@bates.edu

Follow this and additional works at: http://scarab.bates.edu/honorstheses

Recommended Citation
Frizell, Sabina Erika Lee, "The Anthropology of Think Tanks: Democracy Promotion in Egypt after the 2011 Uprisings" (2014). *Honors Theses*. 95.
http://scarab.bates.edu/honorstheses/95

This Open Access is brought to you for free and open access by the Capstone Projects at SCARAB. It has been accepted for inclusion in Honors Theses by an authorized administrator of SCARAB. For more information, please contact batesscarab@bates.edu.

The Anthropology of Think Tanks: Democracy Promotion in Egypt after the 2011 Uprisings

An Honors Thesis
Presented to

The Faculty of the Department of Anthropology
Bates College

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the
Degree of Bachelor of Arts

by
Sabina Erika Lee Frizell
Lewiston, Maine
March 21, 2014

Acknowledgements

I would first like to thank my family for always striking the perfect balance between encouraging me and challenging me to question further. Thank you Sam for being a wonderful role model.

To my friends at Bates and fellow thesis writers, both sharing ideas and commiserating over the stress made research and writing, which can be so solitary, a more communal process. Thank you Ali, doing so much of this alongside one another was crucial and you kept me sane.

To everyone from home who was so far removed from this project but constantly cheered me on anyway, thank you.

Finally, thank you Professor Danforth for everything. Your role in this thesis long precedes senior year. The passion you have for anthropology has changed the way I think, and this endeavor would not have been possible for me without the support and care you have provided over the last three years.

Table of Contents

Introduction

"Are you *free*?"

My group sat in silence for a few moments, considering the question posed to us. It was so straightforward, so direct, but it gave us all pause. We had come together for the evening at a beach just outside Dharan on the eastern coast of the Arabian Peninsula. Some of us were students from Bates College, others were Saudi university students. We separated into groups and were given topics or questions to discuss, spurring conversation that would simultaneously kindle connections among us and reveal differences in perspectives.

All six students in my group came to the same conclusion: Yes, we were free. Two students, including myself, were American; four were Saudi. We had grown up in societies that seemed completely different from one another, under governments structured according to entirely different principles. Yet, we all had in common the sense that we were free.

Driving back to our hotel that night, an American friend and I admitted our surprise at the group's unanimously affirmative response to the question, "are you free?" There seemed to be so many constraints on a young Saudi's freedom. They could not practice any religion. The women could not drive, nor travel without the consent of their male guardian. These limitations seemed unchangeable since they did not live in a democracy, and were unable to vote. So how could Saudis be free? Not only did I intuitively equate elections with freedom and rights, I also assumed that an American or western democratic system was the sole form of governance that provided freedom. I failed to recognize that Saudis may have different expectations of their governments and

entirely different political values—perhaps even a different conception of the word "freedom."

My reaction to the Saudi students' response to the question, "Are you free?" exposed western, ethnocentric ideas about the role of government in protecting individual freedoms, as well as my attachment to and idealization of democracy. The trust I placed in democracy reflects a broader discourse on democratization. The latter half of the 20th century has been marked by a dominant assumption of the primacy of democracy. Democracy is a system that has largely remained unchallenged by western media, politicians, and scholars, and upheld "as a global model and ideal of governance" (Diamond and Plattner 2001:ix). This assumption is strongly held in the United States and Western Europe, and also hegemonically accepted by others around the world. Transitions to democracy in the third world during the 1970s and 1980s were met with enthusiasm and support from western governments (Paley 2002:469). In the 1990s, a trend of supporting democratic transitions emerged among international aid agencies, beginning with the United States Agency for International Development's implementation of a "Democracy Initiative" ("Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance Strategy" July 15, 2013). These programs were rooted in ideologies of democracy as an unassailably valid, desirable, and even universally needed form of 'good governance' (Ingelhart and Welzel 2005:1).

Democracy Promotion and Anthropological Scholarship

In this thesis, I seek to understand *how* democracy is supported and what underlying theories and assumptions govern approaches to democracy promotion. Specifically, I investigate the extent to which western institutions can support democratic

transitions without remaining attached to an ethnocentric discourse on the legitimacy of a monolithic model of democracy.

Anthropological work on democratization eschews these ethnocentric notions. An "attention to alternative worldviews has led [anthropologists] to look beyond official political transitions to the local meanings, circulating discourses, [and] multiple contestations" of regime transition, thus contributing localized familiarity to literature on democracy (Paley 2002: 470). I analyze how, and to what extent, these understandings are implemented in the efforts of two think tanks to support democratic transitions.

I chose think tanks in particular as a category of western institutions because they claim to bridge the gap between scholarship and policy (McGann 2012). Think tanks attempt to condense academic expert knowledge and make it more accessible in order to both inform policymakers on crucial issues and offer specific policy recommendations (McGann 2012). The following diagram represents the ideal functioning of a think tank, showing flows of influence.

This thesis includes two case studies. I analyze and compare the reports of two think tanks, the International Crisis Group (ICG) and the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP), or the German Institute for International and Security Affairs. I focus on reports written by the think tanks that deal with Egypt since the 2011 uprisings. I chose this focus largely due to my longstanding interest in the Middle East. Additionally, Egypt

has the largest population of any Arab country, and is one of the highest recipients of United States aid ("Net official development assistance and official aid received (current US$)" 2014). Egypt has therefore also received a great deal of international attention and media coverage since the 2011 revolution, since it is perceived as an important player in the region. As a result, both ICG and SWP have published many reports addressing political transition in Egypt.

My research attempts to provide an answer to the following question: are anthropological contributions to understandings of democracy incorporated in ICG and SWP's policy recommendations for Egyptian and western actors?

Background: Egypt's 2011 Revolution

On January 25th, 2011, millions of Egyptians began taking to the streets in cities across the country, declaring discontent with President Hosni Mubarak's regime. Protestors came from a variety of political, economic, and religious backgrounds, and initially formed a united front. Cairo's Tahrir Square became a symbol of the cooperation among protestors. Many groups overcame differences in pursuit of a common, though short term and general goal: overthrowing Mubarak. While the demonstrations were inspired by the self-immolation of Tunisian fruit vendor Muhammad Bouazizi, a long history of conditions of police brutality, states of emergency laws, political censorship, widespread corruption, high unemployment and low minimum wages all provided impetus for the revolution (Gelvin 2012).

Egypt was the first country in the Middle East to adopt neoliberal economic policies recommended by western institutions such as the International Monetary Fund, which dramatically exacerbated the divide between rich and poor. While a small group of

businessmen, referred to as the "whales of the Nile," grew incredibly wealthy and built gated communities in the desert, in late 2010 around forty percent of Egypt's population lived on the equivalent of approximately two dollars a day (Henry, 1996). Unemployment rates soared to approximately nine percent of the country's total population. Among Egyptian youth, unemployment was almost twice as high. Egypt's population was marked by a demographic youth bulge; almost thirty percent of Egyptians were between fifteen and twenty-nine years old, the age at which people tend to enter the job market. Additionally, more Egyptian youth were going on to college, but unemployment rates were higher among those with college degrees. These demographics, along with a population that was overqualified and underemployed, produced an environment of frustration and discontent.

Furthermore, Egyptians' ability to express economic and political grievances was tightly controlled by Mubarak's regime. Since the early twentieth century, Egypt enjoyed a great deal of autonomy from the Ottoman Empire, and later from Britain. In an attempt to protect their autonomy from Europe, local rulers adopted institutions and methods of governance modeled on those of European states. This history of state building created a strong national identity, as well as a stable government administration (Gelvin 2012:36). Stability coincided with authoritarianism, as Gamal Abdel Nasser abolished the relatively liberal parliamentary monarchy in 1952 and became the first president of Egypt. The nation saw a series of presidents that served for approximately ten to twenty years, each supposedly 'reelected' for each term. However, the Egyptian constitution created crushing obstacles for any rival candidates (Gelvin 2012:38).

Mubarak's tactics for maintaining power revealed a flagrant disregard for citizens' rights and oppositional political participation. He created a strong 'security apparatus' designed to monitor, intimidate, and repress the Egyptian population. This involved the complicity of ministry officials, politicians, and businessmen, who hired policemen as well as local criminals to terrorize neighborhoods and repress political opponents by breaking up strikes and demonstrations. Individuals who attempted to publicize the government's involvement in these often violent forms of oppression were subject to police brutality (Gelvin 2012:40). Additionally, the Egyptian press was closely monitored. Corruption was rampant under Mubarak; the president himself managed to accumulate an estimated several billion dollars in theft, and high-level politicians were granted monopolies to the country's most lucrative industries, such as steel and tourism (Gelvin 2012:41).

The initial leaders of the 2011 uprising represented a variety of groups, including youth wings of secular political parties, as well as the Islamist Muslim Brotherhood. They used social media, especially Facebook, to organize demonstrations and maintain communication among these previously disparate groups. One primary demand was for Mubarak to resign, and "calls for democracy and human rights became the core political demands of the protests" (Gelvin, 2012:28). Protestors listed freedom of assembly, freedom from torture, and a revised constitution allowing the participation of opposition parties as the priorities of the revolution.

Mubarak agreed to make concessions and promised to allow for "free and fair" elections, but protests continued. Finally, in February of 2011, Mubarak stepped down. The Supreme Council of Armed Forces (SCAF), the Egyptian military, assumed

temporary power, and after efforts to organize a constitutional assembly, presidential elections were held. In June of 2012, Muslim Brotherhood candidate Mohamed Morsi was elected. The Muslim Brotherhood, as the most organized contingent of the revolution, had an advantage over many secular opposition leaders.

Over the course of the following year, polarization grew between Islamist Morsi supporters and those who opposed Morsi, including liberal secularists as well as religious minorities. President Morsi sought to establish Sharia law in the country's new constitution. However, under the Morsi administration, impingements on freedom of expression and free press continued, as well as reports of police brutality. During the summer of 2013, demonstrations began again, this time without the wide collaboration that characterized Egypt's 2011 revolution. Unity gave way to polarization and violence, as protestors clashed with Muslim Brotherhood members and Morsi supporters. Tensions heightened, and Morsi instigated bloody crackdowns on demonstrations. In July, the Egyptian military, which maintained independence from the regime in power, issued an ultimatum for Morsi to step down within forty-eight hours. To date, the secular SCAF maintains primary control in Egypt.[1]

Theoretical Framework: Modernities and Democracies

Contesting theories of modernization provide a framework within which to understand approaches to democratization. The debates and contradicting assumptions that emerge in literature on modernization are echoed in methods of studying democracy.

[1] This summary of the 2011 uprisings and revolution in Egypt is based primarily on historian James Gelvin's book, *The Arab Uprisings*. The following collection of essays provides further reading on the details of Egypt's political transition: *Egypt's Tahrir Revolution* edited by Dan Tschirgi, Walid Kazziha, and Sean F. McMahon

I distinguish between two broad trends in modernization theory. The first hinges on a conception of a single model of modernity, which became prevalent in the 1950s and emerged from the "classical" sociological analyses of Marx, Durkheim, and Weber (Eisenstadt 2000:1). These early, but still influential theories of modernization assumed that the "cultural program of modernity as it developed in modern Europe and the basic institutional constellations that emerged there would ultimately take over in all modernizing and modern societies…they would prevail throughout the world" (Eisenstadt 2000: 1). According to this singular model of modernity, all societies are on a unilinear path toward a common destination. European civilization and culture is understood as the standard toward which all other cultures will progress.

In *Modernization, Cultural Change, and Democracy: The Human Development Sequence*, political scientists Ronald Inglehart and Christian Welzel found their theory of democratization on this "classical" approach to modernity. Just as there can only be one model of modernity, Inglehart and Welzel assume that there is a single form of democracy. Although they allow for variety in institutions and structures, all forms they consider legitimate emerge from western democratic traditions. Further, Inglehart and Welzel explicitly associate modernity with democracy. They define modernization as "a process of human development, in which economic development gives rise to cultural changes that make individual autonomy, gender equality, and democracy increasingly likely" (Inglehart and Welzel 2005:1). The scholars establish a formulaic sequence of developments that occur everywhere in the world, arguing that, "(1) socioeconomic modernization, (2) a cultural shift toward rising emphasis on self-expression values, and (3) democratization are all components of a single underlying process: human

development" (Inglehart and Welzel 2005: 2). Inglehart and Welzel believe that democracy is an inevitable product of modernization, and envision a unilinear model of democratization. They imply that democracy is intrinsically linked to western cultural values such as individualism and self-expression, or the European "cultural program of modernity" (Eisenstadt 2000:1). Democracy is presented as monolithic.

More recent trends in modernization theory reject the ethnocentrism of "classical" modernization theory. S.N. Eisenstadt, in his article "Multiple Modernities," argues, "actual developments in modernizing societies have refuted the homogenizing and hegemonic assumptions of this western program of modernity" (Eisenstadt 2000:1). Although "the original Western project constituted the crucial (and usually ambivalent) reference point" for "alternative" global modernities, non-western societies have not emulated European and American cultures but rather incorporated western elements and selectively merged them with local cultures. As a result, "unique expressions of modernity are realized" and development gives rise to "multiple institutional and ideological patterns" (Eisenstadt 2000:2).

Similarly, in *Anthropology, Development, and Modernities: Exploring Discourses, Counterdiscourses, and Violence,* Alberto Arce and Norman Long argue, "the creative destruction, or deconstruction, of the idea of a singular, western modernity by people with different, localized values and knowledge underlines the fact that the spread of modernity has resulted in a plethora of modernities" (Arce and Long 2000:21-22). Arce and Long highlight the importance of "looking to ethnography" and counterdiscourses in arriving at this relativistic conception of modernities.

The relativism at the core of this alternative theory of modernization is reflected in the revised, pluralistic conception of democracy. Bayat's perspective on democratization, like Ace and Long's understanding of modernization, emerges from an emphasis on cultural specifics of a given case. He addresses the ethnocentrism that often underlies "international solidarity and support (whether from foreign states or civil society organizations) for a project of political change," but does not categorically dismiss these efforts. Bayat supports international or western democracy promotion "when it is initiated in association with endogenous pro-democracy movements in the region" (Bayat 2005:1233). Millions of Egyptians demanded democracy in 2011. Therefore, international support for democratization in Egypt is legitimate according to Bayat's argument.

As Arce and Long's emphasis on the connection between ethnography and a pluralistic definition of modernities suggests, anthropologists tend to understand democracies as flexible and disposed to multiple interpretations rather than monolithic. Many anthropologists adopt a pluralistic conception of democracy and contend that democracy is a flexible form of governance that can be adapted to the culture in which it is implemented. In my thesis, I compare anthropological scholarship on democratization with ICG and SWP reports that promote democracy in Egypt after 2011. I investigate where these two think tanks both align with and diverge from the nascent body of anthropological literature on democratization. My thesis investigates the extent to which think tanks, as institutions that intend to serve as "bridge[s] between the academic and policymaking communities," incorporate anthropologists' contributions and insights into their reports that support the democratic movement in Egypt (McGann 2012).

In Chapter One, I present a general discussion of think tanks and their role in politics and scholarship, as well as specific ethnographies of ICG and SWP. The ethnography presents the institutions' funding, structure, and self-promotion as background for analysis of the think tanks' reports. I also compare the genre conventions of think tank reports and anthropological scholarship. In Chapters Two, Three, and Four, I closely analyze ICG and SWP reports alongside anthropologists' work on democratic transitions. Chapter Two focuses on how anthropologists and both think tanks define and understand democracy in relation to their methodology. In Chapter Three, I analyze the approaches adopted by anthropologists and think tanks to studying formal institutions and processes, focusing on elections and multiparty systems. I also consider the ways that anthropologists, ICG and SWP perceive the relationship between Islam and a democratic party system. Chapter Four examines how anthropologists and think tanks discuss informal politics including civil society organizations and popular mobilization, or 'street' politics, focusing on their particular attention to the process of institutionalization, or a transition from informal to formal politics.

Chapter 1: Ethnography of Think Tanks; SWP and ICG

I: Think Tanks Defined

In the 2013 Global Go To Think Tank Report, released by the International Relations Department at the University of Pennsylvania, a think tank is defined as an organization that ideally acts as "a bridge between the academic and policymaking communities" (McGann 2012:22). Scholars and regional experts "generate policy-oriented research, analysis, and advice on domestic and international issues," translating their specialized knowledge and research into "a language and form that is understandable, reliable, and accessible for policymakers and the public" (McGann 2012:22). This information is delivered in a variety of media. Think tanks produce books, reports, and policy briefs; they organize conferences, seminars, and discussions with government officials. For my thesis, I focus solely on ICG and SWP's reports. The reports are all published online and updated frequently, and were therefore easily available to me. While both International Crisis Group (ICG) and Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP) advertise their access to policymakers and frequent meetings with government officials and other political actors, I of course could not participate in those meetings or gain access to notes taken at similar fora that I could not attend.

Ideally, think tanks or public policy research institutions "serve the public interest as an independent voice" (McGann 2012:22). However, think tanks may be affiliated with political parties, governments, interest groups, or private cooperation, which can potentially influence the nature of the think tanks' topics of research or conclusions. Depending on the nature of these affiliations, including factors such as funding and

whether they have a number of separate affiliations or are supported by only one group, researchers may be beholden to the interests of the organizations, parties or companies that support them. Depending on the nature of their affiliations, think tanks vary in their "aspirations to attain academic standards of objectivity and completeness in research" (McGann 2012:22).

Think tanks also vary in their foci. For instance, some are dedicated to foreign policy, others domestic economic growth, and still others education reform. The scope of their research may be international or domestically localized.

In this thesis I focus on the relationship between the think tank and academic scholarship, specifically looking at anthropological scholarship.

II: International Crisis Group

The International Crisis Group defines itself as an "independent, non-profit, non-governmental organisation committed to preventing and resolving deadly conflict" ("About Crisis Group" 2014). It combines "field-based analysis, practical policy prescriptions, and high-level advocacy" with the aim of supporting international peace and security. ICG has focused on issues such as terrorism, nuclear proliferation, arms and drug trafficking, and international crimes. It conducts research on conflict situations all around the globe. Though headquartered in Brussels, ICG has major offices in New York, Washington D.C., London, and Moscow as well as smaller offices in 29 other locations. It also covers events with the help of ICG analysts operating out of field bases or consultants in about 70 locations in Africa, Europe, Asia, the Middle East, Latin America, and the Caribbean ("About Crisis Group" 2014).

ICG receives its funding from a wide array of sources. Forty-nine percent of its funds come from governments, thirty-one percent from foundations, and twenty percent from the private sector, including both individuals and corporations. Most of the nineteen government donors are EU countries, with the exception of the United States, Turkey, New Zealand, Canada, and Australia. The European Union is also listed as a government donor. Fifteen foundations, mostly American, support ICG, along with a number of corporations and individuals, which are listed according to the amount of money donated. Some examples include The Open Societies Foundation, The Carnegie Foundation of New York, and British Petroleum (BP).

Because ICG is financially supported almost entirely by European and North American governments, institutions, and individuals, many of their recommendations are directed towards western governments. However, I speculate that the large number of donors indicates that, to an extent, ICG's research is "independent" (International Crisis Group "We are the International Crisis Group"). It is funded by a large range of donors that presumably have separate or conflicting sets of interests. Therefore, although ICG reports are undoubtedly colored by an obligation to western governments and non-governmental donors, ICG is not a podium for any single government or group.

The structure and organization of ICG's most senior and powerful staff and trustees certainly represents European and North American countries more heavily than non-western countries. The president and CEO of ICG is Louise Arbour, previously the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights. The chair and vice chair of the board of trustees are European or American former heads of states or ambassadors. Members of the board, however, hail from countries in Africa, the Middle East, Latin

America, and Asia. Staff in the five main offices, as well, represent a wide range of nationalities. In each regional program, there are staff members from that particular region. The staff's professional background is varied; some have experience in academia, others in journalism, law, or the public sector. Some have worked as activists with smaller, more specialized NGOs.

ICG's main output is reports and briefings, which are located on the website according to region and country. Its other main methods of influence are advocacy meetings with policymakers, as well as journalistic opinion pieces, over half of which, ICG's website notes, are in languages other than English. The emphasis on producing articles in multiple languages, as well as the prominently advertised fifty languages spoken by staff members from fifty-three countries indicates that ICG is concerned with accessing a diverse audience and incorporating multiple perspectives. ICG claims to be informed by local insights.

In a promotional video entitled "We are the International Crisis Group," staff members underscore both proximity to conflicts on the local level and close relationships with influential policymakers. Program directors and analysts use language indicating their presence at all levels. ICG is "in the field" and "embedded in the community," staff can "see, hear, and feel changes on the ground" and "get their side of the story firsthand." The chairman of the board claims that ICG has a "constant series of contacts" with "top policymakers," and quotes influential politicians such as Bill Clinton praising Crisis Group. This language is a rhetorical strategy ICG uses to gain "authorial authority" (Clifford 1983:120). Anthropologist James Clifford coined the term "authoritative authority" to refer to ways in which anthropologists traditionally convey themselves the

sole representers of indigenous cultures, and as reliable sources of information (Clifford 1983:120). Similarly, ICG assumes a position of authority and establishes its analysis as authentic and dependable by highlighting its access to both indigenous communities and prominent policymakers.

The imagery in the video also conveys ICG's "on the ground" connections. Video clips capture scenes such as protests, voting at ballots, young men playing soccer, local community meetings, and soldier camps in various locations. Often, an ICG staff member is present among the locals, clearly identifiable due to more western style dress or an "EU" emblazoned vest. ICG casts itself a sort of mediator, acting as a purveyor of information between those who are afflicted by conflict and those who, ostensibly, have the power to help resolve those conflicts.

The video is, of course, blatantly self-promotional. The staff's comments are set over uplifting, hopeful music that reaches crescendo at the end of the three and a half minutes, clearly meant to impart optimism. ICG President Louise Arbour confidently declares, "We have helped change the story in these countries from one of violence and despair, to one of hope" (International Crisis Group "We are the International Crisis Group"). In her idealized representation of the organization's work, instances of stasis or continuing conflict despite International Crisis Group's efforts are wiped off the record. Analysts and regional program directors claim to "gather the *facts*" and craft policies that "have real impact" (International Crisis Group "We are the International Crisis Group"). These claims are unrealistic and ignore certain important complications of representation. "Facts" are never objective, but rather are colored by the representer's positionality. The ICG staff members say that they explain the situation on the ground "as it is," thus

denying that their reports are necessarily influenced by their western perspective. (International Crisis Group "We are the International Crisis Group").

Nevertheless, I chose ICG as one of my case studies because of their highly detailed analysis, as well as their consideration of and extensive research on local perspectives. The promotional video's claims to "on the ground" connections are substantiated in reports that reference and quote a broad range of internal actors. Additionally, ICG's close relationship with the European Union and United Nations, as is clear from their list of supporters and the former positions of those most senior in the organization, suggests that their reports are indeed influential. The way that they report and analyze a particular issue may direct powerful policymakers' understandings of it, and their policy recommendations are likely to be taken seriously. For instance, ICG's recommendation that western governments maintain a "peripheral role" in the conflict in Egypt was heeded by the United States, as is evident in President Obama's hesitancy to call the 2013 military takeover a coup. (International Crisis Group February 2011) (Gordon R. et al. 2013) I am interested in how academic knowledge, insights, and theories are translated into the more applied world of advocacy and policy, I wanted to examine think tanks whose approach to democratization is likely to manifest itself on a practical level.

As its name suggests, the International Crisis Group focuses on crises and emergency conflicts ("About Crisis Group" 2014). The organization's aim is to help promote stability in areas of conflict and minimize violence. This narrow focus on emergency circumstances therefore may seem an unsuitable choice for studying democratization efforts. In the case of uprisings in Egypt, however, the questions of crisis

management and democratic transition are closely linked. Though the revolution in Egypt was caused by a number of factors, as well a coincidental sequence of events that inspired Egyptians to take to the streets, the protests can be characterized by a demand for democratic reforms (Gelvin 2012). Thus, in their reports on Egypt since 2011, ICG has attended to the question of how the country can democratize. The "Executive Summary" of each report introduces the challenge of democratization, and recommendations for how the "democratic movement" in Egypt may be "served" (International Crisis Group February 2013:iii). Despite the organization's larger aims and focus on resolving conflict, in their research on the Egyptian protests instability in recent years ICG is preoccupied with developing policy to enable a democratic transition.

III: Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (German Institute for International and Security Affairs)

SWP is a German institution that researches foreign policy issues. It was founded in 1962 primarily to deal with issues of disarmament, but now addresses a broad range of security policy concerns ("About the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik" 2014). Though SWP has close ties with the EU and NATO and maintains an office in Brussels, it is based in Berlin and a large portion of its funding comes from a combination of the German government and German institutions. SWP also receives support from foreign European institutions and one Japanese institution, as well as international corporations ("Friends and Partners" 2014). The SWP website does not specify amounts or percentages of funding received from each contributor or sector. Although the think tank is funded by only one government, while ICG is funded by many, it still has a large and

varied set of supporters. Additionally, though the German government is SWP's largest contributor, it is German ministries rather than partisan groups that underwrite many of the think tank's projects. Therefore, SWP is not likely to be completely beholden to any one party's interests, although it inevitably reflects German interests more generally. Moreover, I identify SWP research and analysis as somewhat independent.

Many of the characteristics SWP uses to define itself are similar to those ICG's website emphasizes. Like ICG, SWP boasts a close relationship to decision makers, while "maintaining independence in selecting its focus area" ("About the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik" 2014). The institution presents itself as a purveyor of knowledge and expertise. On the SWP website, director Volker Perthes writes that SWP is a "forum for ideas and communication," it is "a calm location…where decision makers can come together with researchers…" ("About the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik" 2014). In addition to meetings with policy makers, SWP produces a number of different publications, including short journalistic style opinion pieces called "Point of View," full length reports called "Research Papers," and abbreviated reports called "SWP Comments."

While ICG distinguishes itself from other research institutions by its local presence and "on the ground" engagement and knowledge, SWP claims to "stand out in relation to other bodies giving political advice…[because it] relies on the informed analytical expertise of its own researchers" ("About the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik" 2014). ICG and many other think tanks also employ their own researchers, but SWP differs from ICG in that its executive board members and researchers tend to have more experience in academia rather than politics. Much of the staff is temporary;

academics spend a year or so as fellows, working on a particular SWP project. Almost all executive board directors had careers as professors, rather than politicians, before working at ICG. Reports and briefings are much shorter than those produced by ICG. The middle length "SWP Comments" reports are typically around ten pages while ICG reports are closer to twenty-five. Additionally, SWP publishes only in German and English, indicating a narrower intended audience.

SWP divides its publications both by "Research Divisions" and by "Projects." Research Divisions are mostly linked with particular regions, but several are more specific and obviously reflective of German interests, such as "EU Integration" and "EU External Relations." Projects usually address timely concerns and are implemented in reaction to developing international issues and conflicts. Each project lasts approximately two to six years, is led by several project directors and coordinators, and grants fellowships to academic with expertise on the project's focus.

For my thesis I analyze an SWP project scheduled for 2012 to 2015 that is entitled "Elite Change and New Social Mobilization in the Arab World," which was developed in response to the 2011 Arab uprisings and subsequent upheaval and regime transitions in the Middle East and North Africa. The project "explores whether the recent change of leadership in a string of Arab countries actually constitutes a fundamental political transformation, to what extent comprehensive elite change is occurring, and who the new political and societal actors are" ("Elite Change and New Social Mobilization in the Arab World: Introduction" 2012). The central question the project is organized around is "in what way, if any, can external actors such as Germany and the EU provide constructive

support for the transformation processes in the region?" ("Elite Change and New Social Mobilization in the Arab World: Introduction" 2012)

The project "Elite Change and New Social Mobilization in the Arab World" is funded by the German Foreign Office, as well as several German institutions. The fellows contributing to the project all specialize in Middle Eastern affairs, and their website biographies provide specific information about their dissertation or other major academic research and publications. Additionally, a majority of the researchers have either studied at universities in the Middle East or performed extensive fieldwork and research in the region.

Several important differences between SWP and ICG allow me to compare their approaches with one another. First, SWP is smaller than ICG, and it is a German as opposed to international research institution. Additionally, as indicated by the academic background of many directors and research fellows, SWP is more strongly rooted in the scholarly world than ICG. Finally, SWP's mission is more general than ICG's. As revealed by its name, SWP addresses all "International and Security Affairs," as opposed to focusing specifically on instances of crisis and conflict. The aims of the particular SWP project I examine, however, are much narrower, and well suited to my focus on western advocacy for democratic transitions.

Both of these case studies are western think tanks, and despite ICG's emphatically advertised connections with local communities and SWP research fellows' academic expertise on the region, the institutions' research and analysis are colored by a Euro-American perspective of Middle Eastern societies. ICG and SWP are funded by western governments, institutions, and corporations, and are, to different extents, oriented toward

a western audience. Therefore, although I deem ICG and SWP somewhat "independent" with regard to particular interest groups or organizations, this characterization does not mean that ICG and SWP conduct research and analysis that are free from more broadly western interests or western ideology. The organizations emerge from in a western perspective, and this is a concern that my next three chapters will explore. First, however, it is important to acknowledge that this perspective is influenced by an unequal power relationship between the west and the Middle East, and a history of imperial domination.

As Said argues, a colonial past has distorted the lens through which westerners perceive the Middle East, and the resulting Orientalist misperceptions have "proliferated out [from] geopolitical awareness into aesthetic, scholarly, economic, [and] historical…texts" and even infiltrated a the "Western consciousness" (Said, 1978:12, 6). Said is dubious of any claim to objectivity, and argues that neocolonial, paternalist assumptions and flawed western perceptions of the Middle East bias all accounts of the region.

Further, Said wrote that the, "knowledge of subject races" is part of a "dialectic of information and control…[that] gives power, more power requires more knowledge, and so on in an increasingly profitable dialectic of information and control" (Said, 1978:36). Both think tanks fill the role of collecting information on regions around the world, and in this case the Middle East. Said would argue that this information puts ICG and SWP in a position of power over Egypt. This perspective helps to place the think tank reports in a larger context that gives the western institutions a privileged position in relation to Middle Eastern actors.

IV: Genre Conventions: Think Tanks and Anthropologists Compared

Think tank reports and anthropological scholarship are fundamentally different in that that they are guided by different goals. Think tank authors are concerned with practical outcomes; they intend to either "inform" western and Egyptian actors, or recommend specific policies. Meanwhile, anthropologists are guided by intellectual rather than practical pursuits. They aim to come to a deeper understanding of how democracy exists in different contexts, by describing and analyzing observations gathered during ethnographic fieldwork. Anthropologists' primary intended audience tends to be other scholars. The genre conventions of think tanks and scholars, including structure, writing style, and language, reflect these different intents of research.

Think tank reports tend to be short, and begin with a summary. While SWP's summaries are about one paragraph long and closely resemble an abstract, ICG begins its reports with an "Executive Summary" that is several pages long. The Executive Summaries are organized into bullets and outline the report's main points of analysis as well as its conclusions. The body of think tank reports consists of many short sections, each of which bears a descriptive label. Sometimes these sections are broken into subsections, which are headed with questions. This segmented format allows the presumably busy intended audience of western policymakers to take in the information quickly and with minimal effort. Both SWP and ICG reports end with conclusions that not only analyze the research but also provide recommendations, usually directed toward European or American policymakers.

Scholarly anthropological works are usually longer, whether the publication is an article or a book. They begin with either an abstract or an introductory chapter that lays

out the important themes in the body of the work, as think tank introductions might. Anthropologists, however, almost always organize their writing into full paragraphs rather than distilling ideas into an accessible bullet form. Additionally, sections of an anthropological article or book are longer. This is partially a function of the entire publication being longer, but also indicates that the material is not formatted to be quickly and easily skimmed and processed in the same way that a think tank report is. If the job of think tanks is to inform and guide, anthropologists intend to provoke thought and advance scholarly knowledge in the field. Finally, anthropologists, like think tanks, have a final section for conclusions and drawing together the most significant insights of their analysis. However, conclusions typically do not include direct, specific recommendations. Any reforms suggested tend to be directed toward other scholars or casual readers, and intend to inform the way that their audience thinks and views the world.

In multiple ways, think tanks and anthropologists employ markedly different language in their writing that reveals their divergent goals and perspectives. First, while think tanks use prescriptive language, anthropologists are descriptive. For example, in "Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East (I): Egypt Victorious?" ICG titles the last section, "Conclusion: What Way Forward?" One subsection is titled "The need for broad participation," and another, "Immediate steps" (International Crisis Group February 2011). ICG adopts a tone of authority, and these headings suggest that the report will prescribe concrete and specific recommendations. It advocates for "several core principles" that it suggests will "help steer the transition." For example, ICG writes that the military "will need either to share power with representative civilian forces…or

to ensure decisions are made transparently after broad consultation" (International Crisis Group February 2011:ii). Within the Executive Summary, ICG goes on to recommend "immediate measures" such as "lifting the state of emergency, releasing prisoners…[and] respecting basic rights, including freedom of speech, association and assembly" (International Crisis Group February 2011:iii).

SWP authors, too, assertively supply prescriptions. Nadine Abdulla, in her report entitled "Egypt's Revolutionary Youth: From Street Politics to Party Politics," writes, "finding a proper balance between decentralization and internal cohesion through structured patterns of communication is direly required" (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik March 2013:6). She later argues that, "the [Strong Egypt] party will have to get a grip on its internal structures" (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik March 2013:6). Words such as "required," "have to," "need," "steer," and "immediate" establish the think tanks as figures of authority, with the influence to direct both Egyptian and foreign actors' decisions.

Meanwhile, recent trends in anthropology have attempted to avoid writing with an authoritative voice (Clifford, 1983:118). For example, in his article on Buganda, Karlström describes local responses to his questions on the meaning and functions of democracy. He does not advocate for any particular reforms on the part of the Ganda community members or western governments or institutions, but rather concludes by analyzing his detailed descriptions and suggesting new ways of thinking about democracy's variability among contexts.

In addition to prescriptive versus descriptive and analytical language, think tanks and anthropologists diverge in how they use western political terminology, or whether

they use it at all. SWP authors employ various terms such as "political parties," "student movement," and "fundraising strategy" that are typically used to describe western democracies, thus embedding thinking about Egyptian politics within a western framework (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik March 2013:2, 4, 5). In this article, Abdalla ignores the complications of applying terms from one political culture in a foreign context. She assumes that these terms are transferable and relate to Egyptian politics, while scholars such as Diane Singerman and Mikael Karlström define emic political terms and consider how they relate to western concepts. For example, Karlström breaks down the etymology of the Lugandan word for 'democracy,' explaining how its meaning and connotations differ from the Greek derived English word. Karlström analyzes the transformation terms undergo as they travel across cultures, while think tanks assume the universality of western terms.

The tenses in which think tanks and anthropologists write also stem from their differing incentives and goals for researching and writing. Think tanks write not only in the present, but also in the future tense. For instance, in "Egypt Victorious?" ICG asserts that the protestors' "principal assets could *become* liabilities," and that the ambivalence and changeability of "public opinion…*will* impact the coming period" (International Crisis Group February 2011:ii). Later, ICG writes, "the challenge *will* [emphasis added] be to combine functioning, stable institutions with a genuine process of political and socio-economic transformation" (International Crisis Group February 2011:ii). By employing this language, the think tank further establishes itself as having the *authority to predict* what will happen in the future. This kind of authority is different from the anthropologists' *authority to understand* what occurs in the present and has occurred in

the past. A purported ability to predict future developments lends credence to the think tanks' recommendations. For instance, in SWP's "Egypt's Revolutionary Youth," Abdalla declares, "the decision of the Constitution Party and the Popular Current Party to boycott the upcoming elections…*will* [emphasis added] influence the future shape of those organizations." She then writes, "boycotting the election would be a missed opportunity for the Constitution Party" (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik March 2013:8). By first indicating that she can foresee the effects of the youth parties' decisions, she strengthens her recommendation—to participate in elections.

Additionally, Edward Said criticizes western scholars for portraying the 'Orient' as timeless and unchanging. ICG and SWP certainly don't re-Orientalize Egypt by depicting it as a society that is forever stuck in a primordial, primitive, or mythical time period. On the contrary, the intent of the reports is to track, predict, and promote change. However, the authority that both ICG and SWP assume in making predictions regarding Egypt's future exemplifies the western "dialectic of information and control" and "position of strength" that Said identifies (Said, 1978:36, 40).

Finally, anthropologists differ from think tanks in their inclusion of a reflexive sensitivity to examining democracy. The think tanks only mention western democracy in the context of serving as an example for Egyptian democratization. In "Egypt's Revolutionary Youth," SWP's Abdalla writes, "European civil society organizations should offer Egyptian youth leaders technical knowledge regarding the structuring and management of democratic parties" (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik March 2013:8). She recommends that Egyptian civil society emulate European groups, thus assuming not

only that Europe's methods are universally applicable, but also that they are ideal and successful.

Anthropologists often take the opposite approach. John and Jean Comaroff, as well as Karlström, mention the failures and inadequacies of western democracies. The Comaroffs argue that by confronting "African counter-discourse on democratization…a native political anthropology…[that offers] a critique of conventional Western political theory and practice… we stand not merely to understand African politics better than we do now...We might also arrive at a more other-centered, critical appreciation of our own received political forms" (Comaroff et al. 1997:127). Similarly, Karlström concludes his article by contemplating whether, "In a time of apathy and disillusionment in many older democracies, perhaps it is only mildly quixotic to suggest that African political ingenuity may help us re-ignite our own democratic imaginations" (Karlström, 1996:500-501). This reflexivity is absent in think tank reports.

The effect of these anthropologists' reflexivity is twofold. First, it can destabilize the assumption that it is to all societies' benefit to seek democracy, since it is an imperfect form of government. Second, it suggests that non-westerners should tailor western-derived democratic practices to local contexts, and in doing so can improve democratic ideology and practice to the extent that it may provide a model for western governments to look to.

Think tanks and anthropologists write according to distinct genre conventions and writing styles. They differ in their structure, language use, and incorporation of a reflexive and critical consideration of western democracy. These differences emerge from pragmatic policy-driven goals versus the intellectual pursuit of more nuanced cultural

understandings. The divergent approaches and aims detailed in this chapter are fundamental to understanding how think tanks and anthropologists conceive of democracy, and to examining how anthropological insights are or are not implemented in think tank policy reports.

Chapter 2: Inclusion of Local Perspectives in Defining Democracy

I: Western Political Science Definition of Democracy

According to traditional western thought, democracy is "a political system…that manifests in its institutions and procedures a conception of its members as free and equal and thus owed equal respect" (Duncan 2010:357). The Greek root of the word democracy is *demokratia. Demos* refers to the people, and *kratos* means power or rule, therefore democracy is founded on the idea of the people's power to participate in governance. Democratic decision-making has been deemed valuable because it intends to force decision makers "to take into account the interests of the many as opposed to the few" (Duncan 2012:358). A central component of western democracy is electoral competition between political parties (Duncan 2010:359). Other components include widespread suffrage and a free press. These elements are valued because they are credited with forcing "elites and politicians to pay attention to more than simply narrow sectional interests" (Duncan 2010:358).

Democracy has been defended on the grounds that it is the only system of political arrangement that "can deliver equal respect, and thus nondemocratic systems…are inherently unjust" (Duncan 2010:358). Furthermore, contemporary political theorists have linked both political and economic stability with democracy, arguing that democracies have "distinct advantage" over other systems in that they "tend to be more stable and prosperous over the long term" (Duncan 2010:358). [2]

[2] Some of these definitions and perspectives of democracy have been challenged by recent political science scholarship. However, they maintain substantial influence over prevailing conceptions of democracy in international, and especially American politics.

Though I use this summary to characterize western democracy, I recognize that there are a variety of democratic forms that exist in the west. For example, western states may be organized into presidential or parliamentary systems, and voting systems include majoritarian and proportional representation. However, in this thesis I use the singular to refer to the range of western systems of democracy for two reasons. First, all of these variations emerge from western contexts and histories of political development and therefore, simply selecting methods of democratization for other cultures from a set of predetermined styles of democracy is an example of imposing western systems of rule. Second, many non-western forms of government and understandings of democracy differ from western democracies to a much larger extent than various western forms of democracy differ from one another. So in relation to the huge variety of understandings of democracy that exists in local contexts, and because my thesis does not focus on how democracy functions in western societies, I determine an attachment to the multiple variations of democracy as they exist in the west to be a singular, monolithic approach to democracy.

II: Anthropologists on Local Perspectives in Defining and Understanding 'Democracy'

Marvin Harris first applied the terms etic and emic to cultural anthropology. He defines the term etic as involving analysis of cultural phenomena from the perspective of one who does not participate in the culture being studied. Conversely, emic approaches to studying culture involve analysis from the perspective of those who participate in the culture being studied, and description in terms of its "internal" elements rather than any

external framework or theory (Harris 1988). Most contemporary cultural anthropology focuses on emic perspectives. Anthropological methods of ethnography and extended participant observation, in Clifford Geertz's words, "bring us into touch with the lives of strangers" (Geertz 1973:16). It is this proximity and detailed knowledge of local circumstances and points of view that cultural anthropology contributes to understandings of democratic transitions. Anthropologists writing about democratization tend to prioritize emic voices and perspectives over etic, universalizing statements. This approach shapes how anthropologists conceive of and define 'democracy.'

Andrew Apter conveys the merits of an emic approach by contrasting his own method for studying the violent responses to 1983 elections in Nigeria with other, etic "western accounts" of "the breakdown of democracy" (Apter 1987:489). In 1983, rigged elections in the Ondo state of Nigeria favored a National Party of Nigeria (N.P.N) candidate, though an overwhelming majority of Ondo supported the Unity Party of Nigeria (U.P.N). When the election results were announced, it immediately became clear that the electoral process was fraudulent and the "myth of democracy…was fundamentally shattered" (Apter 1987:499). Violent mobs of Yoruba U.P.N supporters turned against member of their own community, beating and killing both N.P.N representatives and supporters. Apter's ethnography focuses specifically on the protests in Akeke, a town in Ondo State.

Apter characterizes previous studies of these events as being "from the westerner's 'bird's eye' view" (Apter 1987:491). He argues that accounts of Nigerian politics, as well as those of "the breakdown of democracy" in other African countries, "so often associated with primordialism, tribalism, and class conflict in plural societies,

seldom grasp experiences of the breakdown [of democracy] itself" (Apter 1987:489). Further, he writes that from "external perspectives of national integration and voting behavior, popular violence involving mobs and crowds is characterized as affective, 'irrational' action, in contrast to the 'rational' norms of institutionalized democracy." According to an etic approach of Nigerian politics, therefore, "democracy has had a broken career" (Apter, 1987:489, 491).

Alternatively, Apter adopts an insider's view that he labels a "more internal, phenomenological perspective" (Apter 1987:489). Though the protests were incredibly destructive, Apter contests the idea that they were baseless and ineffective, by contextualizing the violence within an understanding of the complicated relationships between remote and local "political horizons," as well as between religious ritual power and local political participation. He argues that Yoruba turned against their own innocent neighbors rather than the corrupt federal government because the "remote national state" had become conflated with the "immediate parochial town" (Apter 1987:490). In a context where the conception of political unity follows traditional ritual idioms and can therefore be ensured through "collective purification," Akeke was a "symbolic terrain" and the destruction purged and purified the town of N.P.N. corruption. The local town acted as a microcosm of the Yoruba cosmic world during religious rituals.

Apter, however, concludes that the 'purification' was not just symbolic but also politically effective; where electoral techniques had failed, "ritual techniques and violent persecution 'neutralised' the N.P.N." (Apter 1987:503). In contrast to the conclusions reached by previous scholars, Apter contends that the Yoruba protests, when "seen from *within* one local community" and with "a more indigenous understanding of Nigerian

democracy", were in fact rational (Apter 1987:490). Apter's study of elections in Nigeria serves as an example of how an emic approach to studying democratization, as opposed to a typically etic political science approach, produces locally informed understandings of how democracies function and what constitutes a "breakdown of democracy" in a particular context.

As a result of implementing in-depth local knowledge as Apter's article suggests, anthropologists studying democratic transitions tend to conceive of 'democracy' as a multivalent term, whose meaning may differ cross-culturally. Many anthropologists eschew the assumption that democracy can be concretely and precisely defined as a single set of institutions, practices and values. Instead they view any supposedly universally applicable definition as an impossibility. Robert Hefner, Mikael Karlstrom, Jean and John Comaroff, and Harry G. West and Scott Kloeck-Jenson, based on their familiarity with the societies they study, all contend that democracy is a flexible concept that can and should be implemented in a multitude of forms depending on cultural context. Moreover, they consider there to be multiple democracies, rather than one single democracy.

In his 2000 book, *Civil Islam: Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia*, Robert W. Hefner presents a history of democratic reforms in Indonesia beginning in the 1950s, examining the possibility for successful democracy and challenging the misconception that Islam is inherently incompatible with democracy. In his conclusion, Hefner defines democracy, and discusses its transportability as a system of government. He writes, "there is not one-size-fits-all democracy but a variety of forms linked by family resemblances. Democracy's values of freedom, equality, and tolerance-in-pluralism do

not come with unbending instructions for all places and times. The general values take their practical cues from the particularities of the place in which they would work" (Hefner 2000:216). While Hefner names several core values that must be present within any democratic society, he argues that specific institutions and processes, the "practical" aspects of democracy, will vary according to local contexts. He goes on to argue that even democracy's core values will appear in varied forms and degrees. Hefner writes that, "freedom, equality, and pluralism are highly generalized values" that are not realized in full in any society. Further, "the practice of democracy requires a balance among its core values, and that balance inevitably varies over time and place" (Hefner 2000:216). So, both institutional implementations of democracy's core values, as well as the balance and prioritization among those values, will be manifested differently from one culture to another. According to Hefner, democracy is not a single structure for "mechanical replication," but rather a set of "related and flexible forms" (Hefner 2000:216). Hefner has a culturally relativistic and pluralistic understanding of democracy as having multiple forms. He believes that it is a universally desirable system of governance, but argues that it must be substantially adapted to the culture in which it is implemented (Hefner 2000:219).

Comaroff and Comaroff draw similar conclusions regarding democracy's malleability through the process of contextual transfer in their article, "Postcolonial Politics and Discourses of Democracy in Southern Africa: An Anthropological Reflection on African Political Modernities." They focus on democratization in Botswana, which is widely considered a 'model' democracy, in order to "reflect on the export of democracy from Europe and America to Africa," and more specifically to investigate how

democracies in postcolonial Africa "engage with vernacular cultures of participatory politics" (Comaroff et al. 1997:123).

The Comaroffs critique a global fixation on democratization, arguing that the "heroic liberal myth" of democracy has been hegemonically accepted by societies around the world. They paraphrase Ugandan scholar Mahmood Mamdani's arguments, agreeing that, "the cultural transitivity of the concept of democracy itself is deeply problematic" (Comaroff et al. 1997:126). Given the concept's ambiguity even in Western contexts, its meaning is likely to become dangerously "murky" in Africa where cultures retain their own political practices and theories (Comaroff et al. 1997:127). Comaroff and Comaroff are slightly more skeptical of democracy's exportability than Hefner.

However, Comaroff and Comaroff do not indiscriminately reject all efforts at building democracy, rather, they warn against the "decontextualized transfer of the Idea of Democracy," which "leaves Africans with a dangerous dilemma: to accept either (1) a highly un-African model of nation-state, wherein the body politic is composed of autonomous, individualized, right-bearing citizens or (2) an antimodern, ethnically based, pluralist political community in which people enjoy (or are denied) entitlements by virtue of putatively primordial characteristics" (Comaroff et al. 1997:127). The Comaroffs imply that a unitary standard, inflexible form of western democracy is incongruous in African cultures, but also that alternative, postcolonial forms of government are no better. They touch on the idea that, for democratic processes to take root, notions of citizenship and individualism must be imbedded in a population. However, in Botswana, Comaroff and Comaroff describe native modes of civil society that enable robust participatory politics although they do not conform to a 'standard' western mode of procedural

democracy (Comaroff et al. 1997:141). Like Hefner, Comaroff and Comaroff conclude that wide-ranging iterations of democracy are suitable in different cultures; democracy cannot be simply exported around the world as an unchanged formula.

In "Imagining Democracy: Political Culture and Democratisation in Buganda", Mikael Karlström voices a similar sentiment regarding the consideration of local cultures of participatory politics, rather than solely Western models of participation, as a precondition for democracy. He writes, "whereas much academic analysis pins its hopes of democratisation in Africa to the emergence of Western-style institutions of civil society and an attendant Western-style democratic culture, equal attention, at the very least, should be paid to the compatibility of democratic reforms with existing political cultures" (Karlström, 1996:500). Karlström's methodology in Buganda, a state within Uganda, reflects this emphasis on local political life.

Like Hefner and Comaroff and Comaroff, Karlström rejects any singular definition of democracy. Instead he attempts to understand how the word 'democracy' is received and defined in a Baganda context. Karlström examines the Luganda[3] translation of "democracy," breaking the word down to its roots in order to understand its specific connotations. Key differences exist between these meanings and the meaning of the word in English, as defined by Schmitter and Karl. The composites of the Luganda word, *eddembe ery'obuntu*, roughly translate to "civil liberty", a significant departure from democracy's original Greek meaning, "rule of the people" (Karlström 1996:485). Further, the Luganda root for "civil" refers to upright conduct, or a kind of public morality. Therefore, the term *eddembe ery'obuntu* "establishes 'civil' limits not only on the

[3] Luganda is the language spoken in Buganda.

exercise of authority but also on the exercise of liberties themselves" (Karlström 1996:486). The Luganda translation of 'civil liberty', or 'democracy', emphasizes responsibility "at the level of individual conduct" as well as on the part of leaders, contrasting with the western term's emphasis on 'the people's' freedoms" (Karlström, 1996:486). Moreover, Baganda notions of the role of individual and society contrasts sharply with a western approach, as is evident in the etymology of 'democracy.'

Karlström asserts that the "semantic shift" involved in translating 'democracy' from English, and its Greek roots into Luganda, "both effects and reflects the assimilation of the imported notion of 'democracy' to an historically anchored local constellation of conceptions of authority and the proper relationship between rulers and subjects" (Karlström 1996:486). Karlström adopts an additional method that illustrates this statement; he interviews citizens of Buganda and asks them an array of questions about how they conceptualize the meaning of *eddembe ery'obuntu*. Responses to questions regarding freedom of speech revealed a conceptualization of speech as being on the part of subjects directed toward their ruler. According to the locals Karlström interviews, freedom of speech exists when power-holders are willing to hear and consider the voices of their 'subjects.' Even the idea of a population of 'subjects' departs from a Western conception that freedom of speech applies to a "general audience of equals" (Karlström 1996:487).

Another notable divergence from western democracy is the absence of references to elections, political parties, or representative government in Ganda's characterizations of *eddembe ery'obuntu.* Institutions rarely figure in to these 'alternate' definitions that Gandas provide. Karlström uses interviews and linguistic analysis to show that, in

Buganda, "elements of Western and global democratic discourse and practice have been *selectively assimilated* [emphasis added] to an existing political cosmology", thus substantiating the theory that multiple democracies may exist, and will be transformed by the cultures in which the democracy operates (Karlström 1996:485).

Karlström identifies *eddembe ery'obuntu* as the Baganda interpretation of democracy. This represents a relativistic attempt to widen the definition of democracy so that it includes political systems different from those dominant in the west, though certain quotes from Karlström's "informants" seem to describe what westerners might call a benevolent dictatorship. Rather than rejecting and devaluing the Baganda political system by declaring it undemocratic, Karlström argues that democracy is a flexible term. However, perhaps Karlström's reluctance to classify the Baganda government as distinct from democracy in fact reveals an ethnocentric tendency to equate democracy with good governance, and therefore in this case to overstretch the meaning of democracy. I argue that the Ganda people have simply adopted the term democracy rather than the idea; they have loosely translated 'democracy' to mean good and fair governance, and applied their own historically Buganda local values to the term.

Karlström argues against the idea that "…the countries of the [sub-Saharan African] subcontinent…seem destined to remain relatively undemocratic" (Karlström 1996:500). He claims, "such a conclusion rests on an untenably universalist conception of democracy…the West…can claim no monopoly of its current and future forms or definitions" (Karlström 1996:500). However, I propose that it is not just the western monopolization of democracy that is problematic. While Karlström respects Baganda

forms of government, his attachment to the idea of these systems as being democratic adheres to a western assumption that legitimate, fair governance must be democratic.

In "Betwixt and Between: 'Traditional Authority' and Democratic Decentralization in Post-War Mozambique", Harry G. West and Scott Kloeck-Jenson examine attempts to incorporate "traditional authorities" into local governance in newly democratized Mozambique. They focus on the USAID project "Democratic Development in Mozambique", which included an agenda called "Decentralization/Traditional Authorities Component" (DTA). Individuals working on DTA met with and attempted to identify legitimate leaders of 'traditional authority', thought to represent "a genuinely African form of local governance," so that these leaders could potentially be elected to local office thereby "repairing the divide between 'traditional' and modern forms of authority" (West et al. 1999:46).

West and Kloeck-Jenson's case study seemingly represents an example of the approach to democratization that Apter, Hefner, and Comaroff and Comaroff encourage. USAID's meetings with local authorities indicate an attention to local context and perspectives that Apter's work both exemplifies and promote. The DTA attempts to tailor elections to integrate preexisting systems of governance. Like Hefner and Comaroff and Comaroff, the DTA recognized that the "practical cues" of democracy should "engage with vernacular cultures of participatory politics" (Hefner 2000:216) (Comaroff et al. 1997:127).

However, West and Kloeck-Jenson fault DTA for failing to recognize the complexity of locating and empowering 'traditional authorities'; they claim that many of the local authorities DTA venerated as "genuinely African," and thus suitable power

holders and representatives, were in fact shaped and sometimes corrupted by involvement with colonial administration (West et al. 1999:455). There existed tremendous diversity among 'traditional authorities,' many had limited responsibility until the Portuguese invaded, and were only dubbed 'authorities' during the colonial period. Their role was to "meet the needs of [Portuguese] administrators who could not, themselves alone, collect taxes, recruit labour for colonial economic concerns, and discipline subject populations" (West et al. 1999:470). While there were authorities who refused to fully cooperate with the colonial project and thus were not corrupted by their "role as intermediaries to the colonial system", in general, the most powerful chiefs were closely associated with Portuguese "violent conquest and exploitative rule" (West et al. 1999:472, 475).

As a result of the DTA's oversight, the workshops they staged with local authorities went awry. Authorities interpreted these workshops as automatic mandates for power, and began demanding taxes from their "subject" populations, carrying out arrests, and judging both civil and criminal cases. In one case, a man who had been designated a 'traditional authority' "bound and beat people accused of criminal or 'political' infractions, or merely of 'indiscipline'" (West et al. 1999:466). The authority figure, when questioned regarding the torture, reported that "the DTA workshop handbook…catalogued his responsibilities" (West et al. 1999:466).

'Traditional' holders of authority became accustomed to the colonial regime, and had learned their methods of rule under unjust and violent Portuguese rule. Therefore, by empowering 'traditional authorities', USAID inadvertently enabled the continuation of a colonial-style brutal and oppressive government. Thus, West and Kloeck-Jenson's study of Western-led democratization efforts in Mozambique contribute an emphasis on the

nuances of employing emic perspectives in democratic transitions; their case study communicates the importance of taking into account local histories. Their conclusions do not stand in opposition to Apter, Hefner, Comaroff and Comaroff, and Karlström's theory that democracy cannot be defined as a unitary and unchangeable system; they agree that democracy must bend according to local cultures. Rather, West and Kloeck-Jenson urge that efforts to merge democratic institutions with local ones must fully investigate the complexities of indigenous power structures.

III: Think Tank's Inclusion of Local Perspectives

To differing degrees, International Crisis Group (ICG) and Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik (SWP) reports recall anthropologists' emphasis on incorporating local perspectives into analyses of democratization. Just as anthropologists' methodology of participant observation fieldwork influences their scholarship, and allows for local particularities and perspectives to constitute a major part of their research, think tanks' methods of research dictate the extent to which local perspectives are included in their reports. In this chapter I observe that ICG reports more thoroughly attend to emic perspectives than SWP reports. In Chapters Three and Four I analyze how the think tanks' inclusions of these perspectives inform their definitions of democracy as either multivalent or unitary.

ICG uses footnotes throughout their reports, citing personal interviews as well as Egyptian news sources and online web pages that act as platforms of expression for various Egyptian groups and individuals. The authors of the 2011 ICG report, "Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East (I): Egypt Victorious?" use quotes throughout the body of the report. There are footnotes that cite the source of these quotes,

as well as footnotes that include additional quotes and information from ICG's personal interactions with Egyptians. These quotes come from a range of actors occupying various positions in society.

In the first section of the report, ICG lays out the "Origins and Background" of the Egyptian uprisings. The authors attempt to provide an explanation for the timing of the protests; why, after years of low wages and rising prices, a crooked relationship between the government and businesses, and a corrupt government, did the protests occur when they did? ICG cites an Egyptian diplomat's explanation that the November 2010 elections, which were fraudulent and involved "rigging, thuggery, and subsequent boycotts" played a significant role (International Crisis Group February 2011:2). The diplomat told ICG, "The elections showed an enormous regression, not progress. They seemed to definitively close the door on any opening of the system" (International Crisis Group Febrary 2011:2). The unnamed diplomat believed that, "the situation could have been contained if the past months hadn't been so badly mismanaged. When you force the opposition—all the opposition—onto the streets, that's where they will act" (International Crisis Group February 2011:2). ICG heeds the analysis of an individual within the Egyptian government, embedding his emic knowledge of the events preceding the revolution in their own analysis of the movement's ascent.

Within the same section, ICG names the self-immolation of Tunisian street vendor Mohammed Bouazizi, and President Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali's surrender of power, as another series of events that triggered the protests. Though Bouazizi's role in inciting the Arab Uprisings was already widely recognized and accepted, ICG conducted interviews with Cairo natives before substantiating this conviction (International Crisis

Group February 2011:2). ICG writes that over the days following Ben Ali's departure, "many [Egyptians] appeared newly empowered, asking themselves why the same scenario could not occur in their country" (International Crisis Group February 2011:2). In a footnote, ICG quotes a woman who said, "we are 80 million. Why can we not do what they have done in Tunisia?" (International Crisis Group February 2011:2) In the same footnote, ICG quotes an informant asking, "If the police take me, how will my family survive?", representing the range of responses to the revolution in Tunisia. These interviews were conducted with "grocers, taxi drivers, merchants, waiters, [and] bank employees" from Cairo. This section of "Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East (I): Egypt Victorious?" is an example of ICG's incorporation of direct interviews with a wide range of Egyptians, from high-level government bureaucrats to working class Cairo residents, in their analysis of Egypt's revolution.

In addition to interviews, ICG's research methodology includes examining local Egyptian online sources. The report's list of demands from the original April 6 protestors, "the resignation of Habib Al-Adli, then interior minister, a fair minimum wage; the end of the Emergency Law [which human rights groups claim has been used to suppress peaceful political dissent]; and a two-term limit on the presidency", is footnoted as coming from a Facebook "event" page (International Crisis Group February 2011:3). ICG authors quote a young protestor's explanation that "we have to go down [into the streets]…[to] demand our fundamental rights," citing a YouTube video uploaded by activist Asmaa Mahfouz (International Crisis Group February 2011:3). To understand the Muslim Brotherhood's role in the early stages of the uprising, ICG looked at the opposition group's official web page. It cites an article declaring that the young

Brotherhood activists who joined protests would hold to the organization's regulations, such as the respect for property and the use of only peaceful methods (International Crisis Group February 2011:3).

In their examination of the military's span of influence, ICG discusses the "military's business empire" (International Crisis Group February 2011:16). Their coverage on the extent of its patronage and network includes the citation of an article titled "Q&A: Military production still prevalent in civil sector, says Sayed Meshaal". This article was published in *Al-Masry Al-Youm*, a local newspaper written in Arabic that calls itself "the country's flagship independent paper" ("About Egypt Independent" 2014).

This extensive inclusion of local perspective is typical of ICG publications. In a 2013 "Policy Briefing" which is much more condensed than a full report such as "Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East (I): Egypt Victorious?", the authors still incorporated a range of Egyptian perspectives. The briefing, titled "Marching in Circles: Egypt's Dangerous Second Transition", covers Egypt after President Morsi's overthrow. In their discussion of reconciliation between Islamists and secularists, ICG authors quote a former brotherhood member, as well as a Salafi from a Cairo suburb, each voice contributing to the argument that Islamists see vying for power as an "existential fight" which could "take us back to the dark days of imprisonment and torture" (International Crisis Group August 2013:12).

The anthropologists studying democratization define narrow scopes for their research; their case studies tend to be very specific. Only Hefner, who wrote an entire book on democratic reforms in Indonesia, attempted to study an entire country (Hefner

2000). Many other anthropologists confine their case studies to much smaller focuses. For instance, Apter studies one particular town in Ondo State of Nigeria, while West and Kloeck-Jenson examine a single project for democratic reform led by USAID. Though both these scholars include countrywide research and come to conclusions that they carefully generalize to broader contexts, their ethnography is extremely focused. Meanwhile, in "Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East (I): Egypt Victorious?" ICG attempts to distill all the significant circumstances as well as predictions and recommendations for the Egyptian revolution into thirty-one pages.

The difference between the anthropologists' scopes, and that of ICG, is an important factor in explaining the divergence in their methodologies, and thus, their mode of including indigenous perspectives. Anthropologists rely largely on fieldwork, basing studies on their own interviews and observations. An anthropologist might have focused on just young Muslim Brotherhood members involved in the Tahrir Square protests, or bureaucrats' analysis and response to the revolution. However, in ICG's endeavor to represent Egypt's uprising in its entirety, it both conducts shortened versions of anthropology-style research and uses various secondary sources that allow insight into the perspectives of a wider range of local actors. Facebook pages and opposition groups' public web pages serve as purveyors of emic detailed information where personal interviews are not possible given the limitations inherent in undertaking so broad a scope.

In comparison to ICG, SWP's inclusion of local Egyptian voices is less extensive and less easily identifiable. Nadine Abdalla, the author of "Egypt's Revolutionary Youth: From Street Politics to Party Politics", uses very few quotes, but does include specific information on small Egyptian parties and their agendas. Abdalla does not use footnotes

in this report, therefore the readers must speculate as to how she conducted her research. However, the level of detail in "Egypt's Revolutionary Youth" indicates that Abdalla likely used some fieldwork research methods similar to those of ICG researchers.

In the section entitled, "The second wave of youth parties", Abdalla details the platforms and goals of three political parties. Of the Constitution Party, she writes, "The party claims to be a social liberal or social democratic party", and goes on to outline the "three main stances" of its "socio-political and socio-economic agenda" (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik March 2013:3). Abdulla also mentions Constitution Party leader Mohamed El-Baradei, who is "considered by many youths to be the "godfather" of the revolution" (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik March 2013:3). She later writes that, "according to the party's youth leaders, establishing an office in a certain area is crucial for building the party's support in that area" (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik March 2013:6). Such detailed information about small, emerging political parties was likely gathered from either interviews or the parties' own promotion. Abdalla's language, such as "according to" and "the party claims", suggests that the details to follow derive from party leaders and members, and are not the author's own analyses or conclusions. Moreover, though SWP reports tend to include fewer quotes and direct voices of Egyptians than ICG, both think tanks do, to some extent, incorporate local perspectives in their reports on Egypt's democratic transition.

IV: Conclusions

Anthropologists studying democratic reforms arrive at a conception of 'democracy' that is clearly informed by extensive fieldwork and a focus on indigenous

histories, political cultures, and perspectives. Despite varying cases studies, anthropologists of democratization characterize democracy as subject to alternative iterations, as myriad meanings are attributed to the word in various contexts. Both International Crisis Group and Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik conduct fieldwork and build local Egyptian circumstances and voices into their reports but ICG does so more extensively.

The more a think tank incorporates local perspectives, the more likely it is to adopt an anthropological understanding of multiple democracies. The differences between ICG and SWP's analyses and conclusions reflect this relationship. Chapters Three and Four will show that SWP authors, to a much greater extent than ICG authors, conclude reports with recommendations that essentially encourage Egypt to adopt reforms that mirror western democratic practices. Emic perspectives are included, but not deeply considered. They fit within a western 'definition' of democracy and merely color, rather than inform, prescriptions that are based on an assumption of a single design of democracy.

Chapter 3: Formal Democratic Processes: Elections and Political Parties

Anthropologists studying democratization, as well as the International Crisis Group and Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, distinguish between formal democratic institutions, such as constitutions and elections, and informal political practices. The latter category includes both relatively unorganized expressions of political demands or values, as well as civil society organizations and networks. The anthropologists and the think tanks diverge both in the importance they place on institutions as a necessary part of democratic transition, as well as in their understanding of the relationship between institutions and informal practices in a democracy. In this chapter, I compare anthropologists' approach to formal democratic institutions, especially elections and multiparty systems, with the approaches of SWP and ICG. I also discuss the ways in which anthropologists and think tanks perceive the compatibility of Islamism and democratic electoral systems. Chapter Four will analyze the approaches of anthropologists and think tanks to informal politics, and their focus on the ways in which informal politics and formal politics interact.

In analyzing the distinction that anthropologists and think tanks make between formal and informal political practices, it is necessary to recognize that non-western societies have political systems with formal institutions. I do not categorically equate formal politics with the west, and informal politics with non-western cultures. However, in the case of Egypt, elite formal institutions are modeled after western institutions. In the early 20th century, Egyptian rulers adopted European methods of governance in an attempt to maintain independence in a region that was almost entirely colonized by European powers. These institutions became entrenched in Egypt, and regimes

consolidated their power with repressive authoritarian tactics (Gelvin 2012:36). Therefore, in discussing Egypt I understand informal processes as more closely reflecting local political values than established, western formal institutions.

The anthropologists' pluralist definition of democracy dictates their analysis of the relationship between democratic institutions and values. The attention to local political values leads to a questioning of "democratic" processes that emerge from western systems and definitions. Anthropologists are skeptical of attempts to "mechanical[ly] replicate" democracies by exporting institutions from their Western contexts and applying them in new contexts without alteration (Hefner 2000:216). As Katherine Verdery writes in her article on citizenship and globalization in Eastern Europe, "constitutions and elections have traveled transnationally…[with] unanticipated effects" (Verdery 1998: 105 as cited in Paley 2002: 475).

In contrast, SWP emphasizes the importance of formal democratic institutions. Despite including indigenous perspectives, its recommendations tend to privilege western reforms and the implementation of western institutions, indicating a unitary and inflexible conception of democracy. Meanwhile, ICG conveys skepticism of institutions similar to that of the anthropologists, writing both that they need to be constructed carefully and that they do not necessarily yield democracy. However, both ICG and SWP ultimately uphold such western institutions as being a critical factor in ensuring a democratic transition in Egypt.

I: Anthropologists' Terminology for Formal Political Processes

The anthropologists and think tanks use a variety of terms to discuss the same basic idea: the relationship between democratic institutions and democratic concepts.

Both think tanks and anthropologists use the words "institutions" and "formal practices" to refer to political procedures or entities that are formally implemented and legitimated, such as elections, constitutions, parliaments, or courts. SWP writer Nadine Abdalla also uses the terms "formal politics," "conventional politics," and "party politics." Anthropologists and think tanks alike also refer to the same kinds of political procedures as "policies" and "reforms."

Karlström uses the word "concepts" to describe local Ganda understandings and definitions of democracy. "Concept" refers to the features of government and political leadership that Ganda value. ICG also uses "concepts," as well as "popular opinion" and "popular mobilization" in reference to the political demands of Egyptian protestors in Tahrir Square. SWP's Nadine Abdalla labels youth movements in Egypt "street politics." I link discussions of democratic "concepts" or "values" with "informal" political networks and processes, such as those described by Diane Singerman. Both denote emic, informal perceptions and expressions of political values.

Hefner, meanwhile, distinguishes between "institutions" and "core values" as partner aspects of democracy. He uses the word "institutions" in roughly the same way that the other anthropologists and think tanks do. However, his discussion of 'core values' refers to the "general values" that are common to any democracy, regardless of context. Though he writes that these values "take their practical cues from the particularities of the place in which they would work," this second, non-institutional aspect of democracy is not intrinsically tied to local perspectives (Hefner 2000:216).

This chapter will focus on the anthropological critique of formal institutions, especially the electoral system, and contrast their perspectives with the think tank's recommendations.

II: Anthropologists on Electoral Systems

Comaroff and Comaroff employ the terms 'procedural democracy' and 'substantive democracy' (Comaroff et al. 1997:126). In a procedural democracy, only basic democratic structures and institutions are in place. Voters do elect representatives in free elections, but citizens have limited consistent influence and voice in the government. The theory of procedural democracy was developed by economist Joseph Schumpeter, who defined democracy as "a method for arriving at collective decisions by means of a competitive struggle for the people's votes" (Smith 1995:1256). Schumpeter's definition was purely functional; he intentionally stripped the term of "all abstract notions such as human rights" in order to reduce democracy to its "bare essentials: electoral politics, pure and simple" (Smith 1995:1256). While this simplification may be considered a strategic advantage, it is also "austere and indifferent to the whole range of democratic values without which competitive elections would be meaningless" (Smith 1995:1256).

A substantive democracy is an ideal form of governance in which the people's political participation extends beyond elections. It functions in the interest of the citizens; the general population is able to exert influence in government affairs. It means "rule by, and policies benefiting, the masses" (Meyer 1995:753). The Comaroffs' distinction describes a tension between institutions and values similar to the other anthropologists, but situates these components of democracy in predefined government types. Additionally, their terms focus specifically on electoral institutions.

In their article on discourses of democracy in Southern Africa, specifically Botswana, the Comaroffs critique U.S. foreign aid and Western governments in general for simplistically identifying democracy with the presence of "democratic institutions," which are equated to "regular elections" (Comaroff et al. 1997:125). Furthermore, they argue that the link between democracy and free market capitalism is analogous to the link between democracy and electoral choice. Just as capitalism "does not require democracy," elections can exist without democracy (Comaroff et al. 1997:125). According to the Comaroffs, both free market and free will have been hegemonically associated with democratization; both are "regimes of consumption underpinned by the same mode of ideological" righteousness and a fixation on democracy. Comaroff and Comaroff cite an example from local television in South Africa to convey how elections have become a form of capitalist consumption. During vote counting after the first elections in 1994, the news was interrupted to broadcast the message, "ADVERTISING: THE RIGHT TO CHOOSE" (Comaroff et al. 1997:126). This blatant hucksterism reveals how democratic institutions can be reduced to products; elections are emptied of their promise of 'free will' and the line between ideological and material is blurred.

The Comaroffs argue that these blurred distinctions contribute to the reduction of democracy "throughout much of the world…from the substantive to the procedural, from social movement to electoral process" (Comaroff et al. 1997:126). Democracy in most contexts has "come to connote little more than the rightful exercise of choice" (Comaroff et al. 1997:126). The Comaroffs strip democracy of its valorized emancipatory implications, contending that undue focus on institutions and procedures make it "more

likely to bring with it Kentucky Fried Chicken and McDonald's than an amelioration of the human condition" (Comaroff et al. 1997:126). In arguing that the "Idea of Democracy" has been reduced "to a procedure for the exercise of choice," the Comaroffs devalue elections as a democratic institution, meanwhile lauding African scholars such as Mahmood Mamdani and thus attributing value to African counter-discourses of democratization, or democratic "concepts" and "values" (Comaroff et al. 1997:126).

In their ethnography, the Comaroffs focus on the democratization process in Botswana during the 1970s, and investigate how a system of multiple parties was abandoned. They conclude that the call for a one-party state was not a rejection of democracy, but rather an argument against procedural democracy (Comaroff et al. 1997:140). The preferred single-party form of government emerged from widely held political convictions valuing deliberative processes over policy matters and discourses of accountability by those who govern (Comaroff et al. 1997:139).

In "Imagining Democracy: Political Culture and Democratisation in Buganda," Karlström, like the Comaroffs, doubts the efficacy of regular elections. He writes, "if democracy based on periodic elections contested by political parties is unlikely to take root…in Uganda and perhaps elsewhere in sub-Saharan Africa as well, the countries of the subcontinent may seem destined to remain relatively undemocratic. But such a conclusion rests on an untenably universalist conception of democracy" (Karlström 1996: 500). Karlström links the western "universalist" definition of democracy that anthropologists tend to reject with a trust in formal western-style institutions. He argues that countries can democratize without implementing western political practices such as elections.

Karlström again aligns with the Comaroffs in his attention to local values and concepts. Just as the Comaroffs point to Mamdani as a purveyor of African "intellectual" and "every-person" thought that has the potential to adapt and improve governments to better suit local contexts, Karlström's fieldwork attends to rural Ganda political concepts (Comaroff et al. 1997:126). In his conclusion, Karlström considers the relationship between these concepts and formalized political practices. He writes, "While the *concept* of democracy has been largely assimilated to local conceptions…there is also evidence that recent experience with democratic *practice,* particularly democratic elections, is beginning to challenge and change some of those conceptions" (Karlström 1996:500).

A democratic electoral system is intended to guarantee formal political representation for the various constituencies and interests in a nation. A mass electorate is therefore organized by political parties. A democratic legislature is "distinguished from legislatures in dictatorships by the fact that their members are selected in competition between candidates of two or more political parties" (Loewenberg 1995:739). Parties "[link] groups of like-minded members with their voters" thus providing "the key link between citizens and policymakers" (Loewenberg 1995:739, 457). In an "idealized" system of democracy, there would be "congruence between the views of constituents and those of their representatives" who act as "trustees of the interests of their voters" (Loewenberg 1995:740). It is assumed that political parties are necessary to achieve a pluralist democracy, and a multiparty system over a two-party system offers "a wider range of choices for voters, explicit representation of social and political factions, and more inclusiveness in policy making" (Powell 1995:457).

However, several anthropologists observe unintended effects of establishing political parties that are adverse to the aim of facilitating stability and pluralist democracy. Rather than allowing for the representation of distinct interests and voices within a population, the Comaroffs, Apter, and Karlström suggest that parties can entrench, or even create, divisions within a society.

Karlström derived his discussion of political parties from local Ganda opinions. His interviewees were unanimously against parties; Karlström writes, "virtually every informant who offered me an explanation of Uganda's troubles since independence blamed them primarily on political parties" (Karlström 1996:494). In their experience, political parties only served to divide local communities. One man said, "Political parties brought divisions among us, so that children differed from their fathers, and relatives parted ways over parties" (Karlström 1996:494). A young trader observed that party members "have a political greediness;" another agreed, saying, "What every party member wants is only for his own party leader to be President" (Karlström 1996:495). Karlström couches these perspectives in Uganda's history since independence, characterized by "a tendency for parties to exploit religious and ethnic antagonisms" (Karlström 1996:494).

Karlström outlines how the National Resistance Movement (NRM), which came to power in 1986, organized a non-party political structure. It was based on the Luganda translation of 'democracy', *eddembe ery'obuntu*, and can thus be characterized as a locally informed, emic system of government. The NRM instituted a Resistance Council (RC), which was constituted of five councils at varying levels of locality. For instance, an RC1 was composed at the village level, with the entire adult population electing nine

executives to run local affairs. Each higher RC was elected by the executives of a more localized council. Candidacies for the RCs were based "strictly on individual merit and repute—not on affiliation with the suspended political parties" (Karlström 1996:496). Most of the locals Karlström interviewed praised the RC system and considered it democratic; they supported an electoral system without political parties (Karlström 1996: 496). Karlström deems this an "assimilation of democratic practices to existing conceptions of legitimate governance" and local political values of "communication, justice, and hierarchical civility" (Karlström 1996:497).

Similarly, the Comaroffs examine the emergence of a single party system in Botswana. They argue that a rejection of multiparty system is not a dismissal of democracy, but rather reflects local political values that call for substantive, rather than procedural, democracy. The Comaroffs describe a conviction that discourses on policy must be the product of "deliberative processes, not of partisan interest" (Comaroff et al. 1997:139).

According to Apter's "Things Fall Apart? Yoruba Responses to the 1983 Elections," political parties produced a similar outcome in Nigeria. The violence that erupted in the wake of elections was not rooted in ancestral ties and divisions, but rather, in Akeke, "the fissure was created by the political parties themselves" (Apter 1987:502). Loyalty to the National Party of Nigeria (NPN) was not based on pre-existing factions; their core constituency included Muslims and Christians, 'indigenes' and 'strangers, and rich and poor. Apter concludes, "it was precisely the cleavage of partisan politics which transcended all others, turning friends, neighbours, and kinsmen against each other" (Apter 1987:502).

Karlström, Apter, and the Comaroffs all present examples in which establishing political parties had the effect of fragmenting communities rather than providing voices for diverse interest groups. In Buganda, Nigeria, and Botswana, parties created or emphasized divisions, while single party systems were successful both in garnering approval from citizens, and in maintaining stability. The anthropologists champion these single party systems as governments that emerge from local contexts and values, thus exemplifying the anthropological definition of democracy as flexible and adaptable to the particularities of various cultures.

III: SWP on Electoral Systems

While the Comaroffs privilege African democratic "concepts" over the democratic "institution" of elections, SWP's Nadine Abdalla, in her report entitled "Egypt's Revolutionary Youth: From Street Politics to Party Politics," envisions the electoral process as a vital hallmark of democracy. As the title of her report indicates, Abdalla promotes a shift from "street" to "conventional," "formal," or "party" politics. She focuses on "the youth that had triggered and led the events of the January 25 revolution," and who after Mubarak's resignation "attempted to safeguard the aims of the revolution" by either joining pre-existing parties or by forming "networks that continue to engage in street politics" (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik March 2013:1). Abdalla briefly covers a number of such youth networks, as well as political youth parties, and provides an analysis of each as well as an explanation for their failure to "build structures" and "institutionalize" in order to "effectively participate in and influence the formal political process" (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik March 2013:1, 2). Implicit

in Abdalla's report is the *necessity* of the process of institutionalization; unlike Comaroff and Comaroff, her focus is on formal institutions of democracy.

For instance, Abdalla's prioritization of electoral practices is evident in her discussion of the Coalition of Revolutionary Youth, the first youth organization that was formed, which included a broad range of movements and voices from diverse perspectives. She writes that, "mobilizing people and organizing demonstrations was their primary approach for nearly a year and a half…its exclusive focus on street politics was a missed opportunity in terms of building the social base necessary to fare well in elections" (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik March 2013:2). This statement conveys that for Abdalla the expression of ideas and opinions through protests and demonstrations is less important than garnering electoral support. She does not completely dismiss the role of "street" politics, mentioning that a major challenge for Egyptian youths is "achieving a balance between conventional and street politics" (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik 2013:3). However, the prescriptive, institutions-focused nature of the report clearly instructs both Egyptians and European governments to prioritize the institutionalization of popular protests.

Later, Abdalla writes that the El-Adl centrist youth party failed at "performing effectively" because the "revolutionary, idealistic youth who formed the base were unable to submit to hierarchical decisions derived from more politically compromising positions" (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik 2013:2). Abdalla seems to narrowly define effectiveness as participating in and winning elections. Not only does she diverge from the Comaroffs' skepticism of the electoral process, she in fact endorses elections as the primary tool of the revolutionary youths. While acknowledging the compromises

involved in a transition from "street" to "party" politics, her language conveys that the youths' unwillingness to make any ideological concessions in order to conform to formal processes is a weakness.

It is true that unpragmatic idealism has hindered many leading Tahrir Square protestors from gaining power in the government after Mubarak's resignation. I do not disagree with Abdalla's analysis on this point. However, her emphasis on the transition from 'street' politics to inclusion in the formal political process not only depreciates the value of informal political expression, but also assumes that one must give way to the other; informal politics are a temporary form of democracy that eventually require institutionalization. Again, her argument is not baseless. Access to governmental institutions can be an avenue to power. However, Abdalla's focus and implicit faith in democratic institutions contrasts with anthropologists Comaroff and Comaroff's critique of the way such institutions have functioned.

Furthermore, Abdalla's report exemplifies a trend the Comaroffs' point out, of democracy turning from substantive to procedural. Abdulla envisions a progression from informal or "street" politics to "party" politics, which she believes will secure the interests of the protestors. The Comaroffs write, "democracy throughout most of the world has increasingly been reduced from the substantive to the procedural, from social movement to electoral process" (Comaroff et al. 1997:126). So according to the Comaroffs, as the formal procedural democracy is attained, substantive democracy is often lost. Implicit is the suggestion that the procedural, formal democracy that Abdulla champions is perhaps not a worthy target for societies undergoing transitions in governance.

While an emphasis on the electoral process does not necessarily indicate that Abdalla promotes procedural democracy as defined by Schumpeter, she fails to recognize that inclusion in elections may, according to anthropologists such as the Comaroffs, prove meaningless. Additionally, her regard of informal politics as unimportant in relation to institutionalization indicates that Abdalla's recommendations are not directed towards the attainment of substantive democracy.

Substantive democracy, however, is an ideal form of government, and the aims of anthropologists and think tanks dictate the ways in which they do or do not discuss this ideal. While anthropologists seek to better understand how democratic institutions and values travel transnationally, think tanks aim to inform policy directly. Given this basic difference in the purposes for research and writing, it logically follows that think tanks may not consider a theoretical, almost utopian government as deeply as anthropologists might. While the Comaroffs' conclusion includes insights about their case study as well as statements regarding the complicated process of democratization and its effects, Abdalla's conclusion is comprised of recommendations for how Egyptian youths should move forward.

Abdulla's objectives necessitate a plan and a coherent model to work towards. She therefore endorses specific institutional procedures and outlines steps to facilitate them. Her pragmatic, policy-driven goals lead her to envision a future for Egyptian youth groups that exists with a pre-established, western-based, but flawed political framework. The Comaroffs recognize the flaws of this established western framework and argue that in Africa, and particularly Botswana, a form of governance that deviates somewhat from western forms is preferable. They show how democratic institutions often fail to entrench

democratic ideas and values. However, they do not go so far as to create a new, improved political framework that could replace those they criticize. This is beyond the scope of their work. They analyze the system that has emerged in Botswana and praise it as an example of how divergent democracies that do not closely adhere to western standards can succeed by adapting to their new contexts.

Moreover, while Abdalla's report encourages Egypt to adopt institutional procedures that essentially replicate western political institutions, the Comaroffs advocate for a transition that does not seek to mirror the procedures of western democracies. Abdulla advises European Civil Society organizations to train Egyptian youth leaders and "offer technical knowledge regarding the structuring and management of democratic parties" (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik March 2013:8). By suggesting that Egyptian youth groups structure themselves as European groups do, SWP holds to the notion that democracy in Egypt must adhere to western forms. In contrast, the Comaroffs skepticism of western institutions enforces the anthropological conception of democracy as pluralist and adaptable to specific contexts.

These fundamental differences between how think tank reports and anthropologists define democracy emerge largely from their different goals. Furthermore, given their distinct aims, it would be difficult for the think tanks to adopt the anthropologists' definition of democracy. To investigate why SWP and anthropologists diverge in their perspective on formal western democratic institutions, several questions must be considered. First, are the anthropologists' insights too nebulous and imprecise to be translated into applied policy recommendations? The anthropologists criticize attempts of westerners to promote democratization, but they do not suggest alternatives. Instead,

they discuss positive examples of locally informed democracies that diverge from western definitions.

Is SWP perhaps unable to recommend specific policies, and steps or reforms for both Egyptians and European governments that do not replicate western forms? If it is difficult for a western think tank to provide recommendations that emerge from local cultural contexts rather than a western perspective of democracy, then is the very concept of such an organization promoting particular reforms in a third world context flawed? Does it inherently contradict anthropologists' conviction that government systems should articulate local political values? ICG presents an alternative to SWP's approach that I believe marks a middle ground, combining advocacy with anthropological sensitivity.

IV: ICG on Electoral Systems

In its report entitled, "Marching in Circles: Egypt's Second Dangerous Transition," ICG echoes the Comaroff's concerns regarding elections, though to a lesser extent. In contrast with SWP's Nadine Abdalla who suggests that participation in elections will facilitate democracy, the ICG authors acknowledge that elections often have unforeseen consequences, and can in fact limit rather than further a democratic transition. Writing in August of 2013, they first analyze the development of the Egyptian revolution and the resulting government. ICG authors write that, "Morsi's administration and the Muslim Brotherhood treated…electoral results as dispositive in a country where public sentiment is fickle and trust in the ballot box scant" (International Crisis Group August 2013:15). ICG recognizes the flaws of the 2012 elections. Lack of trust in the electoral process reduces the significance of elections, and thus Morsi's electoral success was not conclusive or even particularly meaningful where a large contingent of the

population did not support his administration. The authors write that, "in 2011 and 2012, poorly planned elections…were undone by court decisions and, ultimately, mass protest and the military's overthrow of Morsi" (International Crisis Group August 2013:17). ICG's critique of the electoral process in 2012 and 2012 reveals that it sees the potential weaknesses of elections; ICG does not fall into the trap that the Comaroffs discuss of simplistically equating elections with democracy.

Following Morsi's overthrow, ICG finds again that both Egyptians and foreigners place too much trust in the effectiveness of elections, as well as other institutions such as constitutions. It contends that in the face of polarization and uprisings with violent crackdowns, "procedural solutions—whether regarding the precise electoral sequencing or the naming of experts to amend the constitutions—wholly miss the point" (International Crisis Group August 2013:15). Instead, ICG recommends "simultaneous measures to end the violence, reintegrate the Brotherhood in the political arena and define a more consensual roadmap" (International Crisis Group August 2013:15). Specifically, these measures, which are all meant to facilitate greater inclusiveness, include the release of Islamist protestors taken as prisoners, restricting but not banning protests, and "curbing incendiary rhetoric" (International Crisis Group August 2013:16). These recommendations are vague; ICG does not specify, for instance, how civilians' rhetoric might be tempered, nor what it means to "restrict" protests without entirely banning them. However, ICG does recognize the complications of the electoral system and present alternative priorities.

Despite its skepticism, ICG still portrays elections as an eventual necessity. The authors write, "New elections need to take place, but a rushed schedule in a fraught

context could add to the problems rather than mitigate them" (International Crisis Group August 2013:17). They conclude that "elections are neither a substitute for, nor indeed a step that ought to precede, a negotiated political settlement and minimal consensus on core issues" (International Crisis Group August 2013:17). Elections are presented as a required component of the transition, but one that needs careful implementation regarding timing and context.

In an April 2012 report, entitled "Lost in Transition: The World According to Egypt's SCAF," ICG again addresses the unpredictable effects of democratic institutions. It argues there is a risk that "the transitional process, despite having checked all the boxes (parliamentary and presidential elections and a new constitution), will end up doing so in ways that undermine the new institutions' legitimacy, yield an unstable political system and fail to resolve any of Egypt's many questions" (International Crisis Group April 2012:ii). ICG questions the suitability of democratic institutions in this context, and implies that perhaps these institutions are incapable of addressing the core issue of stability in Egypt. In several of its reports, ICG acknowledges the shortcomings of the electoral system as well as constitutions in a time of crisis, thus aligning with the Comaroffs' analysis of institutions more closely than SWP's "Egypt's Revolutionary Youth."

V: Scholars on Islam and Multiparty Democracies

From a western perspective, elections and the establishment of political parties are necessary democratic institutions and serve to ensure broad representation of a population's interests. However, in Egypt, these interest groups include a large constituency of Islamic political groups. A prevailing assumption in Western media and

certain political spheres is that authoritarian governments have maintained power in the Middle East due to a strong presence of Islam and Islamism. Democratic and Muslim values are seen as inherently at odds (Bayat 2007:5). Therefore, the western tendency to prioritize broad inclusion through a multiparty electoral system, combined with the assumption that Islam and democracy are incompatible, poses a conundrum: can Islamic parties participate in a democratic system?

The preoccupation with the link between Islam and democracy is rooted in an Orientalist perception of the Middle East. It exemplifies Edward Said's claim that Europeans and Americans envision the region as static and unchanging (Said 1978:40). If the west links democracy with modernity, and the Middle East "doesn't develop…[and is] eternally backwards," then the "Muslim world' is considered hostile ground for democracy.

Asaf Bayat, a sociologist specializing in religion and politics in the Middle East, argues that merely questioning a majority Muslim nation's 'ability' to democratize is steeped in a simplified, generalized representation of the "Orient." In, *Making Islam Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn*, Bayat suggests that by asking whether 'Muslim societies' can democratize, we are "re-Orientalizing," or continuing to Orientalize, the Middle East by employing a broad, overly general stereotype that robs the region and the religion of its internal diversity and complexity (Bayat 2007:2). Islam, from an anthropological perspective, is not an indelible and concrete higher truth, but rather a set of beliefs and customs shared among a family, community, or society. Bayat does not concern himself with the question of whether the Quran in its "truest" or most "authentic" state is compatible with democratic values. Each religious school may

interpret the Quran differently. Thus, it is Muslims as social agents who do or do not make Islam and democracy compatible (Bayat 2007:4). Bayat argues, "Nothing intrinsic to Islam—or, for that matter, to any other religion—makes it *inherently* democratic or undemocratic" (Bayat 2007:4).

Bayat goes on to differentiate between two categories of political Islam: Islamism and post-Islamism. Islamism, he argues, "emerged as the language of self-assertion" for those who had been marginalized by a "perceived failure of both capitalist modernity and socialist utopia" (Bayat 2007:6). A politically oppressive and economically deprived environment made religion "a substitute for politics" (Bayat 2007:6). Islamism identified itself partially in opposition to "Western domination" in both the political and cultural realms. It was "the Muslim middle-class way of saying no to what they considered their excluders—their national elites, secular governments, and those governments' Western allies" (Bayat 2007:6). Bayat implies that certain forms of Islamism oppose democratization, since democracy is seen as a western imported form of governance.

However, a newer wave of Muslim politics that Bayat terms post-Islamism "strives to marry Islam with individual choice and freedom, with democracy and modernity…" (Bayat 2007:11). Post-Islamism emphasizes religion and rights where Islamism emphasizes religion and duties. It embraces pluralism along with faith, and rejects the Islamist "dichotomy of a 'national' self versus the 'Western' other." The significant differences between these two forms of Islamism support Bayat's claim that Islam, like any religion, can be interpreted both in ways that align with democratic values and in ways that oppose them. In *Civil Islam*, Robert Hefner argues that Muslim religious

groups in Indonesia should be considered civil society organizations, which help to facilitate democracy.

Both Bayat and Hefner's research demonstrates that Islam can be compatible with democracy. Their conclusion implies that in a state where a multiparty electoral system is in place, Islamists should be free to participate and be represented in government.

VI: Think Tanks on Islam and Political Inclusion

ICG and SWP align with the anthropological perspective that Islam and democracy can coexist. The reports of both think tanks discuss Islamist groups in Egypt (especially the Muslim Brotherhood) as crucial actors in the current transition. Additionally, ICG and SWP's conclusion sections either explicitly or implicitly recommend that Islamist groups be permitted to fully participate in government, and that western nations establish positive relationships with these constituencies.

In "Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East (I): Egypt Victorious?" ICG dedicates an entire section to "The Question of the Muslim Brotherhood." ICG authors record the Brotherhood's presence at Cairo protests in relation to protests in other more rural regions. Footnotes include quotes from secular and leftist protestors expressing concern over the "unenlightened" Brotherhood's involvement in the revolution, but ICG also includes interview with Brotherhood leaders. ICG writes that the Brotherhood "focused on…issues of democracy and social justice," and quote a Brotherhood leader claiming, "we seek comprehensive reform in the political, social, economic, educational, and scientific [spheres]…[as well as] a civil state and an Islamic democracy" (International Crisis Group February 2011:24-25). ICG's analysis that "the Muslim Brotherhood have clearly evolved over time…[and] espoused principles such

as…democratic governance" clearly presents the Islamist party as capable of participation in a democratic electoral process (International Crisis Group February 2011: 25).

Additionally, throughout all of its reports on Egypt since the 2011 Uprisings, ICG has emphasized "inclusion." In the Executive Summary of "Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East (I): Egypt Victorious?" the authors write, "The democratic movement would be well served by continued coordination and consensus…[and] forming an inclusive and diverse" interim governing body (International Crisis Group February 2011:iii). They later advise western governments to convey to Egypt "broad principles" such as "support for inclusive, democratic systems" (International Crisis Group February 2011:26). ICG's recommendations for diverse democratic inclusion in a majority Muslim society with well-organized Islamist groups indicate that ICG, like most anthropologists, believes that Islam can coincide with and adopt to democracy.

SWP's Nagwan El Ashwal wrote a report specifically on Salafi movements. Salafism is an Islamist movement with a strict and puritanical approach to Islam and Sharia law. In the report, entitled "Egyptian Salafism between Religious Movement and Realpolitik: Adapting to the Demands of the Political Game," El Ashwal describes a number of prominent Salafi groups, focusing on the Salafi Call movement and its more formal political arm, the Nour Party. At the end of the report, El Ashwal writes, "Despite reservations about the extent of their commitment to democracy and liberal values, Europe should open direct channels of dialog with Salafi movements," indicating that she is unsure of this particular conservative Islamist strand's compatibility with democracy (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik August 2013:9). However, conforming to Bayat's

assertion that Islamist movements are changeable and can evolve and become more liberal over time, El Ashwal argues that, "all parties are in a process of adapting, mostly by trial and error, to the new rules of the game" (SWP Egyptian Salafism, 9). She concludes that "it is crucial that Europe insist that Islamists be included [in] the political process in Egypt" (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik August 2013:9).

SWP, like ICG, recognizes religion's prominent role in Egyptian politics. Additionally, both think tanks adopt perspectives similar to that of many anthropologists with regard to Islam and democracy. The reports imply that these religious and political values aren't necessarily at odds, and therefore Islamists parties should be involved in future democratic governments.

VII: Conclusions

Both think tanks align with anthropologists in their assertion that Islam is compatible with a democratic electoral system. ICG also agrees with most anthropologists in its perspective on formal politics. Anthropologists stress that electoral institutions can in fact have consequences that hinder democratization, especially when exported from western countries and applied in foreign contexts without being adapted to local political cultures. Though ICG considers elections an eventual necessity in Egypt's democratization process, its reports recall the skepticism many anthropologists feel toward institutions and acknowledge the flaws of electoral systems. Meanwhile, SWP diverges from many anthropologists' perspectives in its approach to formal democratic institutions. It advocates strongly for the implementation of institutions such as elections in Egypt, presenting them as certain harbingers of democracy.

However, the role of formal democratic institutions, such as electoral systems and multiple political parties, must be considered as intrinsically linked to informal politics. The value and legitimacy of institutions depends on the extent to which they reflect perspectives and priorities expressed within the sphere of informal political activities.

Chapter 4: Informal Politics and Popular Mobilization

"Informal politics" is a category that encompasses "street politics" and "popular mobilization" such as protests, as well as civil society organizations. These political processes have in common a direct link to locals, and often classes who are in one way or another excluded from participation in elite institutions. They tend to operate on a smaller, more localized scale than formal politics. Civil society organizations are somewhat more formal and structured than "street politics," and ideally serve as a mediator between formal political institutions and "street politics." All these informal political practices and organizations express emic values and interests, due to their close relationship with locals.

Anthropologists tend to emphasize the importance of informal political practices as vital counterparts to formal politics. SWP places greater value on formal processes, advising that informally organized groups institutionalize. While ICG also promotes that Egyptian "street politics" institutionalize, they take into account several complications and nuances that the anthropologists raise.

I: Anthropologists on Informal Politics

Diane Singerman, Robert Hefner, Asef Bayat, and Maxwell Owusu all research the interplay between formal institutions and informal institutions, explaining that both work in concert as vital parts of a nation's political participation. All four anthropologists emphasize the role of informal institutions and political participation. They argue that local level, "street politics" are essential for scholars to understand, and that such grassroots mobilization is fundamental to democracy.

In *Avenues of Participation: Family, Politics, and Networks in Urban Quarters of Cairo*, Diane Singerman investigates how both men and women in the Cairo *sha'b,* or lower class, develop individual and group strategies of allocation, distribution, and decision-making to realize shared goals. Singerman reveals a political life that exists quietly, and is often overlooked by foreigners and political scientists, but that she argues is just as significant as elite politics.

Singerman is a political scientist by training, but can easily be discussed alongside anthropologists. Her methods are anthropological and she describes her work as participant/observation (Singerman 1995: 17). She lived for several years with a family in a small community in Central Cairo, and her book is highly descriptive and detailed. In her introduction, Singerman cites Clifford Geertz as she discusses her methodology (Singerman 1995:18). Singerman's "interpretive rather than predictive" approach and method of participant observation places her work in an interdisciplinary category that is heavily influenced by anthropology (Singerman 1995:16).

Singerman establishes that the informal politics she studies must be understood as existing within an oppressive political context. She notes that in Egypt, it is illegal to hold a meeting with a group that is not registered by the Ministry of Information. However, while Egyptian elites, "may succeed in excluding [popular classes] from the formal political arena through repression or co-optation, they often fail to stop them from forming alternative, informal political interests to further their interests" (Singerman 1995:3). She defines these informal interests as "those that escape licensing, regulation, and even enumeration by the state and thus have an illegal or quasi-legal status"

(Singerman 1995:3). Exclusion from formal recognition, according to Singerman, does not weaken the efficacy of these networks and processes.

Singerman makes explicit that she "does not argue, naively, that popular classes are somehow more important or powerful than formal elite institutions and the state" (Singerman 1995:4). She understands how popular classes carry out collective action that is "of equal importance" to elite, "visible collective institutions" (Singerman 1995:9). Unlike Comaroff and Comaroff, Singerman does not focus her study on the weaknesses of formal democratic institutions, but rather the strength of informal politics. Formal and informal politics work in concert as modes by which various contingents of the population achieve their interests. However, informal discourses are often overlooked by "scholars or politicians who are more interested in the powerful and schooled in the political dynamics and traditions of their own societies" (Singerman 1995:9). Just as many anthropologists reject unitary, western definitions of democracy, Singerman rejects limited western conceptions of what constitutes as political activity.

Avenues of Participation, however, is not about democracy per se. The political networks Singerman examines are not directed toward bringing about democratic transition, and Singerman does not label the networks democratic. The social groups Singerman studies are not the same as those that spearheaded protests in 2011. The central Cairo communities she studied are generally poorer and less educated than the organizers in Tahrir Square, and Singerman conducted her fieldwork more than fifteen years before the protests began. The political activity Singerman studied operates on a local scale, and were focused on more immediate pragmatic needs rather than ideals.

They were designed to "promote economic well-being…and to encourage the political, social, and cultural norms of the community" (Singerman 1995:14).

However, despite the localized intentions of these discourses, their efforts extend to larger national levels. Singerman argued that, "individual strategies to accumulate savings, provide an education for a child, or migrate abroad, when repeated thousands of times, influence the macro allocation and distribution of scarce resources and public goods, as well as political and economic phenomenon in the nation" (Singerman 1995:7). Popular classes' informal institutions reverberate in Egyptian "policy-making and macro politics" (Singerman 1995:269). Therefore, Singerman's assertion of the significance of informal politics is relevant to the 2011 protest movements and their calls for democracy.

Asef Bayat, too, discusses the interplay of formal and informal institutions, emphasizing the importance of maintaining strong grassroots local level political organizations. In *Making Islam Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn*, Bayat asserts that, "…the ability of social movements to effectively share political power depends on maintaining their popular support...social movements depend only on their capacity to mobilize their social basis; without this, movements cease to exist" (Bayat 2007:196). In other words, in their pursuit to share formal power in the government, social movements must not lose their relationship with "their social basis" (Bayat 2007:196).

In *Civil Islam: Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia*, Hefner, like Singerman and Bayat, examines the ways in which formal and informal politics work simultaneously, and claims that the two work in tandem to produce democracy. Hefner writes about the vital role that civil society, as a category of informal politics, plays in

democracy. He emphasizes the importance of civil society organizations, writing, "for formal democratic institutions to work, citizens have first to acquire the habit of participating in local voluntary associations" (Hefner 2000:23). In the 1980s and 1990s, scholars from various disciplines identified two "social entities," civil society and social capital, as features of society that increase the likelihood of democratic transition (Hefner 2000:22). Civil society is a form of social organization that is credited with providing "informal endowments" including "a political culture emphasizing…trust in one's fellows, tolerance, and respect for rule of law" (Hefner 2000:23). Social capital is the outcome of civil society; it is defined as the features acquired in a society through civil society organizations, such as norms and trusted networks that help improve efficiency in coordination.

Hefner describes the distinction between "vertical" and "horizontal" civil society, a concept first introduced by political scientist Robert Putnam in his study on the different patterns of government in and southern Italy. Putnam's argument, which has become widely accepted since the 1990s in literature on democratic political participation, is that not all civil society organizations facilitate democracy; the "key to democratic culture" is in "laterally organized 'civic' associations" (Hefner 2000:24). Civil society networks organized by "horizontal collaboration" are "democracy-good," while those with a "vertical hierarchy" are "democracy-bad" (Hefner 2000:24).

Hefner rejects Putnam's conclusions, calling them overly formulaic and simplified to "an almost mathematical precision" (Hefner 2000:24). Hefner argues that horizontalism doesn't guarantee "democratic civility," and verticalism isn't necessarily anti-democratic. While the vertical or hierarchical nature of civil society's organization

can be significant and worth analyzing, it is necessary to also "examine the way [civil society organization's] members relate…to outsiders, and ask whether the overall pattern contributes to a public culture of inclusion and participation" (Hefner 2000:24). Hefner proposes that vertical structures may in fact produce this sort of political culture by "preserving the peace or building bridges over troubled waters" (Hefner 2000:25). In other words, vertical coordination may help to maintain horizontal peace. Hefner concludes that a rejection of formulaic "associational explanations" like Putnam's "implies that modern democratization always involves more than just projecting old associations into new social terrains" (Hefner 2000:25).

In "Domesticating Democracy: Culture, Civil Society, and Constitutionalism in Africa," Maxwell Owusu elaborates on this point. He writes, "any strengthening of the power of civil society in Africa must involve respect for traditional institutions and the genuine decentralization of power at the grassroots" (Owusu 1997:143). Like Hefner, Owusu argues that civil society organizations should not be made to imitate Western examples, or be held to a single ostensibly universal standard. Instead, democracy-facilitating civil society should emerge from indigenous patterns of community coordination. According to Owusu, "the enduring bonds of kinship, language, and locality provide the immediate context within which the dynamic of 'civil ties'" should be developed (Owusu 1997:143). He encourages West Africans to look for the "democratic values of many traditional politics" rather than attempting to replicate foreign formulas for "democracy-good" civil society (Owusu 1997:144).

Anthropologists tend to study informal politics, and emphasize the vital role informal politics play as a complement to formal governmental politics.

II: Think Tanks on Informal Institutions and the Process of Institutionalization: SWP

SWP writer Nagwan El Ashwal's report, "Egyptian Salafism between Religious Movement and Realpolitik: Adapting to the Demands of the Political Game" covers one example of how informal movements produce and interact with formal institutions, as both are "part and parcel of the overall political dynamic in a nation" (Singerman 1995:3). It details the most prominent Salafi political groups, many of which are relatively informal and roughly comparable to the networks Singerman studies. A few, however, have become more active in formal political processes in Egypt. El Ashwal focuses on one particular Salafi movement called Salafi Call, examining how it developed a formalized political arm called the Nour Party. El Ashwal spends a great deal of the report detailing the Salafi Call and its central priorities and objectives (SWP Egyptian Salafism 3). She affords equal attention to the informal network and the registered institution. El Ashwal's focus thus conforms to Singerman's point that both formal institutions and informal political networks of the non-elite are effective and significant to a country's politics, and therefore "cannot be left out of political analyses without misrepresentation" (Singerman 1995: 3).

The emergence of the Nour Party from the Salafi Call movement is a process of departure from "grassroots" values and toward political pragmatism. It demonstrates that the process of institutionalizing can often involve becoming removed from, and even contradicting, popular class values. The title of El Ashwal's report clearly indicates this gradual shift: as the religious movement becomes formalized, it adjusts to "the demands of the political game" (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik August 2013:1). As Bayat writes, "The greatest challenge of a social movement is how to retain its movement

character and at the same time exert governmental power. While sharing state power may enable social movements to turn some of their ideas into public policy, failure to do so…would undermine their support base, thus rendering them powerless" (Bayat, 2007: 196). The coverage of the relationship between the Salafi Call and the Nour Party in "Egyptian Salafism" is an example of the challenge Bayat identifies.

El Ashwal defines Egyptian Salafism as lying somewhere between religious movements and "realpolitik." Realpolitik is a strand of realist political theory based on the assumption that in politics, "power is always the immediate aim" (Morgenthau 2013:33). In circumstances in which realpolitik applies, politics are characterized by "rational calculation of power and…distrust of overscrupulousness and sentiment" (Clinton 2010:1171). Realpolitik means decision-making primarily based on concerns of power, as well as other practical and material gains, as opposed to ideological or moral principles (Clinton 2012:1171). In the case of the Nour Party, a shift to realpolitik indicates the suspension of Salafi ideals for the purpose of gaining and sustaining power in the formal Egyptian political system.

Within Salafi Call, established in the late 1970s as a movement intended to reinforce Salafi religious doctrine and reject associations with Shia Iran, members initially refrained from entering formal politics. They instead proposed a "gradual transformation of society rather than adopting what they consider Western models of institutional politics" (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik August 2013:3). The Salafi Call rejection of western institutions recalls an anthropological approach to transnationally travelling government forms and processes. Anthropologists and Salafi Call leaders both advocate for political processes that emerge from local contexts and cultures. However,

after the 2011 revolution, the transformed political context propelled the Salafi Call to become active in national politics. The resulting political arm, the Nour Party, emerged from "pressure from [the Salafi Call] base," as well as from the leaders' concern that the redrafting of the constitution would remove sharia as the main source of law. The Nour Party gained substantial electoral success in the 2011-2012 parliamentary elections (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik August 2013:4).

Tensions between the informal, ideology-driven Salafi Call movement and the formally recognized Nour Party began to develop immediately. Salafi Call leaders objected to the fact that Emad Ebdelghafour, the Nour Party leader, began making decisions without first consulting the movement's sheikhs. Though El Ashwal writes that the Salafi Call still maintained clout in the Nour Party's decision-making process, its participation in parliament has compelled them to "accommodate actors and views they had not encountered before" (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik August 2013:6). For instance, in true realpolitik manner, the Nour Party collaborated with the secular National Salvation Front rather than the Islamist Muslim Brotherhood despite their lack of shared ideals, in an effort to oppose the Brotherhood's attempts to monopolize power (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik August 2013:6). In a number of other cases, the Nour Party has begun to treat secularists as "opponents or allies on particular issues" following considerations of their own power gains. In El Ashwal's words, the Nour Party has begun to deemphasize the "doctrinal purity and coherence that has characterized the movement" for the sake of "pragmatic decisions and practical compromise" (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik August 2013:6).

"Egyptian Salafism between Religious Movement and Realpolitik" is much more descriptive, and less prescriptive report than "Egypt's Revolutionary Youth." El Ashwal's language is less authoritative than Abdalla's, and she doesn't give policy recommendations until the conclusion of the report. Further, the recommendations are directed toward European governments; El Ashwal includes no reform recommendations for Egyptian Salafi groups. The relative absence of El Ashwal's voice makes for a report that is more informative than promotional. The report does not provide strong advocacy of particular steps. Therefore it is less apparent where El Ashwal departs from or aligns with anthropologists' discussions of institutions' and their role in democracy beyond the comparisons I have already mentioned.

There are, however, several lines in the report indicating that El Ashwal encourages the Nour Party to continue to distance itself from the informally organized Salafi Call. She writes that "persuading" the Nour Party to compromise will be a challenge, but a worthwhile one (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik August 2013:6). She is subtly but clearly promoting the Nour Party's movement away from informally expressed political values and religious "doctrinal purity" (Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik August 2013:6). Cooperation with various other parties representing a range of Egyptian interests can potentially minimize political polarization. I wish to clarify that I do not think it is necessarily wrong for the Nour Party to compromise and cooperate. I am merely pointing out that in this case, involvement in formal politics requires abandoning values held by informal networks with strong ties in Egyptian communities—a shift that El Ashwal supports. This contradicts Bayat's argument that in order for a movement to

be successful and remain effective as it gains formal power in government, it must "maintain popular support" by remaining close to its constituents' values.

While the anthropologists place a greater emphasis on informal politics, SWP stresses the importance of formal processes and forms of representation. This difference reveals one way in which SWP departs from an anthropological approach to democracy. Anthropologists believe that democracy is not a fixed, unchangeable form of government, but should be adapted to specific contexts. Scholars such as Bayat and Hefner therefore stress the importance of informal 'traditional' political participation that articulates the objectives and beliefs of local actors. Meanwhile, SWP highlights a process of institutionalization, which involves a departure from locals' political values for the sake of replicating or becoming involved in institutions that resemble those established in western democracies.

III: Think Tanks on Informal Institutions and the Process of Institutionalization: ICG

ICG also recommends that Egypt's revolutionary protests institutionalize, and transition from "street" politics to formal political institutions. The ICG report, "Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East (I): Egypt Victorious?" repeatedly espouses institutionalization of protestors' informal political participation. They assert that the protestors' democratic values must be protected and entrenched with institutions. For instance, the authors write, "the main challenge for the democracy movement today is about finding new modes of political action to import the force of popular mobilization into institutions" (International Crisis Group February 2011:22). Successful transition to a democratic political order "will require working through institutions…" (International

Crisis Group February 2011:22). The west is encouraged to take a "peripheral role," but convey the importance of "broad principles" and institutions such as "democratic systems" and "free elections" (International Crisis Group February 2011:26).

Although ICG promotes institutionalization of Egyptian informal political networks and movements, it is consistently vague about what those institutions are or how they can be created. This ambiguity suggests that ICG in fact employs the anthropologists' sensitivity to cultural context. The authors may refrain from specifying institutional forms out of an awareness that democracy in Egypt must develop directly from specific local values, and cannot be guided by western organizations and governments or simply duplicate western democratic reforms and policies.

In the conclusion, ICG details two models of transition that have been designed and proposed by Egyptians. The "power-sharing" model was supported by the "democracy movement," while the Supreme Council of Armed Forces has proposed the temporary "caretaker model" (International Crisis Group February 2011:28). Further, ICG asserts that "there are as many paths to democracy as countries that have attempted to navigate a transition" (International Crisis Group February 2011:27). This supports the interpretation that ICG's vagueness in promoting institutionalization emerges from a consideration of anthropologists' definition of democracy, and an understanding that reforms must be internally developed and informed by local opinion and circumstances rather than simply transferred from western democracies and prescribed by western institutions.

Additionally, ICG's inclusion of certain quotations from protestors undermines the assumption that the transition from informal to formal institutions is a vital and

reliable step in the process of democratic transition. In a section of "Egypt Victorious?" entitled "A Diffuse, Diverse, Leaderless Protest Movement," a protestor is cited telling ICG researchers the following:

> 'The question "who represents you" really gets on my nerves. It's being pushed by the regime as a means of control. The media picked it up, and now even some of our own young people are starting to believe it. They want us to divide, to fight among ourselves about who is going to put forward what nice ideas and then sit down and negotiate the points one by one. We reject that. This is a spontaneous action. Some took the initiative, that had ripple effects, and those had domino effects. The whole point is that it's hard to control! The regime has failed to control us and now they are asking us, in effect, to do its work for them…They are offering to negotiate with us according to the rules of the current game. But our whole goal is to change the rules of the game! They are trying to drag us into the same political process that we have suffered from for 30 years. They are treating us like it is a demonstration, not an uprising. They need us to get our "representation" so they can get on with their political process, business as usual" (International Crisis Group February 2011:20).

For this protestor, "representation" is a cover for disregarding the demands of protestors and undermining informal "popular class" politics in order to preserve the power of the regime and maintain formal political processes. The result of "representation," he argues, will be division and "fight[ing] among

ourselves" (International Crisis Group February 2011:20). This echoes Apter, Karlström, and the Comaroffs' skepticism of political parties and their potential to damage social cohesion. Like the anthropologists, this protestor sees the potential for a party system to produce divisions among the protestors. This man even suggests that political party representation, as a formal institution, is a tool intentionally used by "them"—presumably the Mubarak regime—to disempower the protestors.

Furthermore, this man's claim that the "rules" of the current system are "trying to drag us down" reveals a deep distrust of the "political process[es]" that have existed under Mubarak. For this protestor, participating in these processes means "business as usual." He sees participation in formal politics as a dead end instead of an avenue for change. In Chapter Three, I distinguish between SWP author Nadine Abdulla's tendency to think within an established political framework that first developed in the west, and the Comaroffs' criticism of this framework. Like the Comaroffs, this protestor calls for a new political system. Though he doesn't label the old system 'western' as the Comaroffs do, he clearly advocates for a new "game" that better reflects the interests and values of Egyptians—or at least those protesting. This protestor's rhetoric, however, is also similar to the Comaroffs in that he fails to specify how a new system can be achieved, or exactly what it form it would take. Nevertheless, by including this protestor's perspective, ICG entertains the possibility that implementing foreign, formal political institutions can be detrimental to a democratic transition.

IV: Conclusions

Many anthropologists focus their research on informal politics, and examine how informal processes and formal institutions relate to one another. Meanwhile, SWP and ICG advocate for institutionalization of informal politics, a process that risks losing the connection to informal political participation, and thereby resulting in the abandonment of certain local interests. However, ICG puts less emphasis on a shift away from informal politics. The vagueness of its recommendations, as well as the inclusion of a local voice that criticizes the push to institutionalize, indicates ICG's awareness that the process of institutionalization can result in neglect of emic informal politics.

In examining formal and informal politics, it is necessary to analyze the relationship between the two. Anthropologists contribute the idea that these spheres of politics are not totally distinct, but rather work to reinforce one another. Institutions are only legitimate when they articulate the values expressed in the informal political sphere. Likewise, informal politics can gain influence and power through elite, formal institutions. The Egyptian revolution's progress has been hindered because many protestors' values have continued to be relegated from formal politics. I therefore do not reject SWP's prioritizing of institutionalization, but rather suggest that anthropologists' conclusions about the process be taken into account. ICG exemplifies a balance between promoting both institutionalization and the protection of local interests.

Conclusion

Anthropologists reject the concept that democracy is a unitary system of governance that conforms to a specific model developed in western societies. They define democracy as a flexible concept, which can be interpreted and established in a multitude of ways. This pluralist definition informs their skepticism of formal institutions. The anthropologists I have cited all highlight the dangers of establishing formal western institutions such as elections and political parties in non-western contexts without molding those institutions to better fit local political cultures. They tend to focus their research on non-elite, informal political activities, examining how these localized processes are vital to democracies. Anthropologists such as Singerman and Bayat claim that informal politics are just as important as formally recognized practices. They warn that institutions often neglect the interests of their "social basis" (Bayat 2007:196). These anthropologists argue that formal institutions must closely reflect the indigenous values informally expressed by actors from all strata of society.

In contrast, SWP suggests that Egypt must emulate western democratic institutions and practices. Its reports dedicate limited attention to local political cultures, and uphold electoral systems as the primary mode of facilitating democratization. They emphasize the value of formal politics, political parties engaged in elections, over informal political processes that are more directly connected to certain citizens' interests and values. ICG, too, expresses the importance of a transition from informal to formal politics. However, its perspective aligns with anthropologists in its wariness of electoral systems, recognizing that elections do not unfailingly yield democracy.

SWP, to a greater extent than ICG, adopts a theory that conceives of a single model of modernity. The reports recommend steps that are intended to usher Egypt down a western path of modernization, towards a political culture that replicates western style governance. Unlike the anthropologists, and to some extent ICG, SWP assumes that democratization must be achieved concurrent with a process of westernization. According to SWP, only one form of democracy can exist, and it must be founded on institutions and values that have developed in Europe and the US.

Allaying Tensions Between Anthropology and Political Advocacy

SWP policy reports contradict anthropological insights regarding democratization. In Chapter Three I ask whether anthropological insights can be fully implemented in think tank reports, or whether they are too abstract to be translated into concrete reforms and policies? Anthropologists analyze and provide deeper understandings of the way democracies have travelled transnationally, but can their insights be made more practically applicable? David Scott's work shows how hard it might be for think tanks to incorporate findings from anthropology. He observes that existing "paradigms and political projects" are "no longer adequate to the tasks of the present" in many developing contexts (Scott 1999:10 as cited in Paley 2002:479). He therefore suggests conceptualizing the present as a "moment 'after liberal democracy.'" Anthropologist Julia Paley writes that Scott's work, "might offer a way of breaking free of transition narratives positing a preordained outcome, envisioning political possibilities beyond actually-existing democracy" (Scott 1999:10 as cited in Paley 2002:479). However, Scott's vision is abstract. He rejects the universality of democracy, but does not discuss in detail an alternative mode of governance. It is difficult to imagine how a think tank, with

the duty to make policy recommendations, could develop particular steps that move toward an alternative, improved form of governance when the vision of that government is so theoretical. Undoubtedly, anthropologists are vital in helping us to understand how democracy forms. But can anthropologists' insights help western institutions to promote democracy in a practical sense?

Furthermore, do anthropologists' relativistic perspectives on democracy, which argue for political transitions that emerge from local values and cultures rather than mimic western systems, undermine the very concept that western institutions should work to promote democracy in foreign contexts? If the most important factor in political transitions is that governments reflect indigenous perspectives, then it logically follows that local people should provide primary leadership and decision-making. Egyptian actors are, of course, much more "embedded in the community" that any think tank or foreign anthropologist could be (International Crisis Group "We are the International Crisis Group").

Despite these complications and the seeming nonalignment between anthropologists' perspectives and the mission of democracy promotion, I argue that westerners can be valuable actors in helping to facilitate democratic transitions in Egypt. In my opinion ICG exemplifies a commendable approach that balances anthropological concerns with its role of providing applied analysis to inform policy. The ICG reports I analyze incorporate anthropological relativism; they acknowledge local cultural differences and the resulting unpredictability of establishing western institutions in Egypt. ICG's consideration of these anthropological perspectives requires, however, that

their conclusions and recommendations be somewhat vague, certainly in comparison to SWP's specific and direct policy prescriptions.

For example, as I argue in Chapter 4, while ICG advocates for the "institutionalization" of popular mobilization in Egypt, they hesitate to provide a particular model for what those institutions should look like. They only specify that the process involves broad inclusion of local interests. Unlike SWP, ICG does not stipulate that informal organizations must emulate the structure of western political parties. Thus, ICG reports do not impose western systems on Egypt, nor do they presume knowledge that enables ICG to dictate the decisions of internal actors. By including many quotations from Egyptians, and by summarizing models of transition that Egyptians themselves suggest, ICG implicitly acknowledges the importance of local perspectives and even defers to them.

Furthermore, ICG recommends that western governments play a "peripheral" role in the Egyptian revolution. Western countries, United States, have a dismal and destructive record of attempting to play a direct role in exporting democracy from the west to the Middle East. Given this pattern, ICG aids political transition by advising the US and the EU not to intervene.

ICG thus exemplifies one successful example of western involvement in democratic development. It presents detailed research and general policy recommendations to decision-makers without being ethnocentric and without ignoring the concerns and insights of anthropologists. ICG is able to achieve this balance by adopting an approach of advocacy *at a step removed*. Reports by ICG are informational and analytical, and unlike anthropological scholarship, they conclude with practical

advice for both Egyptians and westerners. Their recommendations, however, are less specific and prescriptive than SWP's. Instead they are open-ended and generic so as to leave agency to internal actors.

In thinking comparatively about western attempts to study and facilitate democracy, it is useful to conceptualize approaches as situated along a spectrum according to the degree of involvement. Anthropologists are most removed from the decision-making process, their work instead contributes to analysis and understandings of democratic transitions. Though these analyses may have the potential to inform the decisions of both internal and external actors, their intended audience is likely other scholars. ICG is more practically involved than most anthropologists; it aims to provide advice for Egyptian leaders as well as for western governments. However, its somewhat restrained approach of promoting transition in Egypt makes ICG's method of democracy promotion somewhat removed in comparison to SWP. SWP's reports are more prescriptive; they impose specific reforms.

In moving along this spectrum, there are several other patterns and coinciding spectra that emerge. Approaches involving prescriptions with a higher degree of specificity are more likely to impose reforms that resemble those developed in Europe and the United States. More prescriptive approaches to democratization tend to remain within a western political framework. Meanwhile, a somewhat removed approach such as ICG's, or to a greater extent the approach of the anthropologists, leaves room for the independence of internal actors. ICG and anthropologists both empower Egyptian actors, while SWP disempowers them by imposing policy prescriptions.

Anthropologists' "Strategic Deployment" of the Term Democracy

Anthropologists have studied how the term "democracy" has been used in a multitude of ways; they have shown that in foreign contexts it "may have alternate meanings than elections and civil liberties" (Paley 2002:475). According to anthropologist Matthew Gutmann, who studies democratic discourses in Mexico, "democracy's very multivalence is a key reason for the zeal with which so many people have employed the term to dramatically different ends" (Paley 2002:476). Anthropologists themselves, however, must also be understood as deploying the term for their own ends. They widen the definition and apply the concept of "democracy" to various systems that deviate from the traditional western definition in an attempt to study other cultures' political systems in a more relativistic manner.

Anthropologists' use of the term 'democracy' works to challenge the western assumption that democracy is a "universally relevant system" (Sen 2001:3). Just as Ingelhart and Welzel believe that democracy is an inevitable product of modernization and "human development," (2005: 2) economist Amartya Sen writes that democracy is "universal value" that will "enrich citizens' lives" in every society (2001: 12). Sen points to waves of democracy movements as evidence that democracy's value is "not regionally contingent;" every culture is "fit for democracy" (Sen 2002:16).

Many of the anthropologists I cite revise this point, asserting that those democracies established in non-western contexts may diverge significantly from traditional western democracy. The democratic movements of the 'Arab Spring,' therefore, are not indications that the western system of governance has been proven dominant and universally needed. Though democratic concepts have travelled transnationally, they have been "indigenized" (Appadurai 1996:11). Local actors

significantly alter western democratic practices and values, blending them with emic history, traditions, and values. As anthropologist Arjun Appadurai argues, "globalization is not the story of cultural homogenization" (Appadurai 1996:11).

Anthropologists "strategic[ally] deploy" the word democracy to contest the argument that western democracy is a "universal value" (Paley 2002:476). Their usage is an example of relativistic inclusivity; they expand the coveted category of democracy to encompass a diverse range of foreign, divergent systems of government. This rhetorical strategy serves to legitimize non-western political cultures.

References

Appadurai, Arjun.
1996 Modernity at Large: Cultural Dimensions of Globalization. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press.

Apter, Andrew.
1987 Things Fell Apart? Yoruba Responses to the 1983 Elections in Ondo State, Nigeria. The Journal of Modern African Studies. 25(3): 489-503.

Arce, Alberto and Norman Long.
2000 Reconfiguring modernity and development from an anthropological perspective *In* Anthropology, Development and Modernities. Alberto Arce and Norman Long, eds. Pp. 1-31. New York: Routledge.

Bayat, Asef
2005 Transforming the Arab World: The 'Arab Human Development Report' and the Politics of Change. Development and Change. 6:1225-1237.

Bayat, Asef
2007 Making Islam Democratic: Social Movements and the Post-Islamist Turn. Stanford: Stanford University Press.

Clifford, James.
1983 On Ethnographic Authority. Representations 2:118-146.

Clinton, David.
2010. Realism *In* Encyclopedia of Political Theory. Mark Bevir ed. Pp. 1168-1174. London: SAGE Publications.

Comaroff, John L., and Jean Comaroff.
1997 Postcolonial Politics and Discourses of Democracy in Southern Africa: An Anthropological Reflection on African Political Modernities. Journal of Anthropological Research 53(2): 123-146.

Diamond, Larry and Marc F. Plattner
2001 Introduction. *In* The Global Divergence of Democracies. Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner, eds. Pp. ix. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.

Egypt Independents, "About Egypt Independent ." Last modified 2014. Accessed March 20, 2014. http://www.egyptindependent.com/about.

Eisenstadt, S.N.
2000 Multiple Modernities . American Academy of Arts and Sciences. 129(2)1-29.

Geertz, Clifford.
1973 The Interpretation of Cultures. New York: Basic Books.

Gelvin, James L.
2012 The Arab Uprisings: What Everyone Needs to Know. Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Gordon R., Michael, and Kareem Fahim. "Kerry Says Egypt's Military Was 'Restoring Democracy' in Ousting Morsi." *New York Times*, sec. World, August 1, 2013 . http://www.nytimes.com/2013/08/02/world/middleeast/egypt-warns-morsi-supporters-to-end-protests.html?action=click&module=Search®ion=searchResults#0&version=&url=http://query.nytimes.com/search/sitesearch/?action=click®ion=Masthead&pgtype=Homepage&module=SearchSubmit&contentCollection=Homepage&t=qry203#/Obama Egypt Coup&_r=1&.

Harris, Marvin.
1988 Culture, People, Nature: An Introduction to General Anthropology. New York: Harper and Row.

Hefner, Robert.
2000 *Civil Islam: Muslims and Democratization in Indonesia*. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Henry, Clement M.
1996 The Mediterranean Debt Crescent: Money and Power in Algeria, Egypt, Morocco, Tunisia, and Turkey. Gainesville : University of Florida Press.

Inglehart, Ronald, and Christian Welzel.
2005 Modernization, Cultural Change, and Democracy: The Human Development Sequence. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

International Crisis Group, "About Crisis Group." Last modified 2014. http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/about.aspx.

International Crisis Group.
February 2011 Popular Protest in North Africa and the Middle East (I): Egypt Victorious?. February 2011. http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/middle-east-north-africa/egypt-syria-lebanon/egypt/101-popular-protest-in-north-africa-and-the-middle-east-i-egypt-victorious.aspx.

International Crisis Group.
August 2013 Marching in Circles: Egypt's Dangerous Second Transition. http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/middle-east-north-africa/egypt-syria-lebanon/egypt/b035-marching-in-circles-egypts-second-transition.aspx.

International Crisis Group.
April 2012 Lost in Transition: The World According to Egypt's SCAF. http://www.crisisgroup.org/en/regions/middle-east-north-africa/egypt-syria-lebanon/egypt/121-lost-in-transition-the-world-according-to-egypts-scaf.aspx.

International Crisis Group. "We Are the International Crisis Group." YouTube video, 3:21. November 14, 2012. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pj0UFqKBReo.

Ivison, Duncan.
2010. Democracy *In* Encyclopedia of Political Theory. Mark Bevir ed. Pp. 357-361. London: SAGE Publications.

Karlström, Mikael.
1996 Imagining Democracy: Political Culture and Democratisation in Buganda. Africa: Journal of the International African Institute. 66(4): 485-505.

Loewenberg, Gerhard.
1995 Legislatures and parliaments. *In* The Encyclopedia of Democracy. Seymour Martin Lipset, ed. Pp. 736-746. Washington, D.D.: Congressional Quarterly Inc.

McGann, James G.
2012 2012 Global Go To Think Tanks Index Report. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Scholarly Commons. http://repository.upenn.edu/cgi/viewcontent.cgi?article=1006&context=think_tanks.

Meyer, Alfred G.
1995 Leninism. *In* The Encyclopedia of Democracy. Seymour Martin Lipset, ed. Pp. 751-754. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc.

Morengthau, Hans.
2013 A Realist Theory of International Politics. *In* Essential Readings in World Politics. Karen A. Mingst and Jack Snyder, eds. Pp. 32-36. New York: The Norton Series in World Politics.

Paley, Julia.
2002 Toward an Anthropology of Democracy. *Annual Review of Anthropology*. 31:469-496.

Powell Jr., Bingham G.
1996 Europe, Western. *In* The Encyclopedia of Democracy. Seymour Martin Lipset, ed. Pp. 451-461. Washington, D.D.:Congressional Quarterly Inc.

Said, Edward W.
1978 *Orientalism*. New York: Random House.

Scott D.

1999. Refashioning Futures: Criticism After Postcoloniality. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

Sen, Amartya.
2001 Democracy as a Universal Value. *In* The Global Divergence of Democracies. Larry Diamond and Marc F. Plattner eds. Pp. 3-17. Philadelphia: The John Hopkins University Press.

Singerman, Diane
1995 Avenues of Participation: Family, Politics, and Networks in Urban Quarters of Cairo. Princeton: Princeton University Press.

Smith, Steve B.
1995 Theory, Twentieth-Century European. *In* The Encyclopedia of Democracy. Seymour Martin Lipset, ed. Pp. 1255-1261. Washington, D.C.: Congressional Quarterly Inc.

Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, "About the Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik." Last modified 2014. http://www.swp-berlin.org/en/about-swp.html.

Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik. "Elite Change and New Social Mobilization in the Arab World: Introduction." Last modified 2012. http://www.swp-berlin.org/en/projects/arab-elites-and-social-mobilization.html.

Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik, "Friends and Partners." Last modified 2014. http://www.swp-berlin.org/en/friends-and-partners.html.

Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik.
March 2013 Egypt's Revolutionary Youth: From Street Politics to Party Politics. http://www.swp-berlin.org/en/publications/swp-comments-en/swp-aktuelle-details/article/egypts_youth_from_street_politics_to_party_politics.html.

Stiftung Wissenschaft und Politik.
August 2013 Egyptian Salafism between Religious Movement and Realpolitik Adapting to the Demands of the Political Game. http://www.swp-berlin.org/en/publications/swp-comments-en/swp-aktuelle-details/article/egypt_salafism_between_religion_and_realpolitik.html.

United States Agency for International Development, "Democracy, Human Rights, and Governance Strategy." Last modified July 15, 2013. http://www.usaid.gov/democracy-human-rights-and-governance-strategy.

West, Harry G., and Scott Kloeck-Jenson.
1999 'Traditional Authority' and Democratic Decentralization in Post-War Mozambique. African Affairs 98: 455-484.

The World Bank, "Net official development assistance and official aid received (current US$)." Last modified 2014. http://data.worldbank.org/indicator/DT.ODA.ALLD.CD.