



Who are the Democrats? Leading Opinions in the Wake of Egypt's 2011 Popular Uprisings

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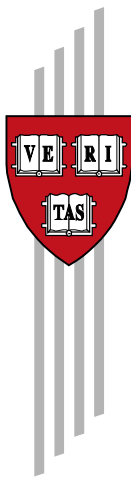
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Who are the Democrats?
**Leading Opinions in the Wake of Egypt's
2011 Popular Uprisings**

Ishac Diwan

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Who are the Democrats?

Leading Opinions in the Wake

of Egypt's 2011 Popular Uprisings

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Abstract. I look at changes in public opinion in Egypt, using the two waves of 2000 and 2008 of the World Value Survey. I find that during this period, there has been a major increase in popular support for democracy, a sizable rise in concerns about inequality, and a fall in support for political Islam. I examine the extent to which these changes are connected, and how they clustered along class, age, and education lines. The main findings are that while in 2000, younger Egyptians were more progressive than their parents, by 2008, Egyptian society had become much more organized around class interests and showed little inter-generational differentiation. New democrats come from all backgrounds, but with a concentration among those on the left. Among social classes, the middle class emerges as the main champion for democracy, driven by both aspiration and grievances motives.

I want to thanks Tarik Akin for superb research assistance.

Who are the Democrats?

Leading opinions in the wake of Egypt's 2011 Popular Uprisings

1. Introduction

What are the main driving forces behind the popular movement that led to the Egyptian revolution of 2011? While the youth, and among them the liberal and educated middle class, seem to have played a very visible role in the electronic media, millions of others mobilized and demonstrated, fought the onslaught of police forces, and more generally, contributed to rising social demand for change over the past years. Over time, various political movements have played a role in this shifting of attitudes, from an early support for the modernist but autocratic republic of Nasser, to various forms of opposition that came to life over time – from labor movements, to violent armed struggle, and to disciplined political opposition from the left, right, secular, and Islamic parties that constitute Egypt's political landscape.

While the intellectual literature on the nature and evolution of social movement in Egypt is far reaching, there is surprisingly little quantification about the role of the various components of society in leading change in Egypt. In this article, I try to discriminate between the main theories of change and democratization – modernization, distribution, a youth bulge -- based on the analysis of public opinion in Egypt, how it changed in the years leading to the uprisings, and whether the agents of change were concentrated among particular social classes, age groups, or religious orientation.

The use of opinion polls to test theories of social change needs to be justified. One can surely try to test the universal appeal of particular theories by examining cross-country variations, and indeed, many studies have attempted that (eg. Kaufmann and Haggard 2012). But clearly these approaches have their own limitations, such as the inability to find good controls, or the possibly highly contingent occurrences of change. The other alternative is to try to test these theories at a country level, using implications in terms of patterns of variations between *individuals* and between various types of sub-groups (by age, class, education, ect..). For this type of work, one actually needs to rely on opinion polls, since what's at stake are variables such as perceptions of inequality, preferences for democracy, or feeling of belonging to particular social classes. By looking at micro opinion data over individuals and over time, one should be able not just to observe the rise of "revolutionary" fervor, but also, to pinpoint who the leading agents of change are, and possibly, what drove them to change.

This is not to say that revolutions and uprisings are necessarily *caused* by changes on public opinion – for example, one prominent theory of change is that revolutions are caused by changes in inequality (Acemoglu and Robinson 2003). But unless a rise in inequality is *reflected* in perceptions of rising inequality, it would not motivate people to rebel. Moreover, opinions can tell us about the importance various social actors attach to inequality, which provides an important angle to test the validity of particular hypotheses by checking if the underlying mechanisms are at play – to stay with the same example, the theory of revolution as redistribution would suggest that the poor should be more interested in redistribution than the rich. If the reverse is observed, then we should be looking for another theory to explain change.

The article is organized in six short sections. In section 2, I present and discuss the various theories of transition to democracy and discuss their empirical implications to develop a hypotheses testing strategy. In section 3, I characterize the change in opinions regarding democracy, using the two waves of the WVS in Egypt in 2000 and 2008. In sections 4 and 5, I ask whether changing opinions towards inequality, and then towards Political Islam, are connected to the changing support for democracy. The concluding section 6 discusses the extent to which the various empirical regularities help us to discriminate between the various theories discussed earlier.

2. Theories of change

In this section, I go over what existing theories tell us about the particular role of age, social class, and education in democratic transitions. There is a rich global literature on transition to democracy which has emerged in the shadow of the “third wave” of democratization that has engulfed Latin America, Africa, Asia, and Eastern Europe in the past two decades. There are four major theories that are of interest as possible explanations of the social phenomena that led to the uprisings in Egypt (and elsewhere in the Middle East): modernization (or aspirations), the related youth bulge, distributional conflict (or grievances), and splits within the governing coalition. There are also many claims about the role of political Islam in leading, shaping, or slowing change that need to be put to the data.

A popular theory, developed under the umbrella of the World Value Survey (WVS) enterprise, views democratization as a long term phenomena that is driven by social “modernization”. Various analyses of the WVS data-sets have found that there are two main dimensions of cross-cultural variation in the world: (i) traditional values vs secular rational values; (ii) survival values vs self expression values. The former emphasizes modernity as a move away from religion, family ties, and deference to authority

towards greater rationality, while the latter emphasizes a move away from economic and physical insecurity towards rising levels of agency, trust and tolerance. This literature shows that greater emancipation from traditional and survival values foster democracy. This is typically accomplished through generational replacement, with younger generations usually leading change (Tilley, 2002). In the WVS sample of countries, Muslim and Arab countries tend to have the highest scores on traditional and on survival values (Inglehart and Welzel, 2010). When structural variables, including connections with globalization are taken into account, one still finds that the Muslim countries of the Middle East have been lagging on this emancipation path, but much more on gender equality rather than on democratic values (Esmer 2002, Norris and Inglehart, 2004), leading some authors to argue that the social dominance of Islam accounts for much of this specificity, although it is also found that higher education does have some impact in closing the emancipation gap (Alexander and Welzel, 2011). In this view of the world, the current wave of democratization in the Arab world would be related to the weakening of traditional authority and religion, driven by education, urbanization, and economic growth, which would have made these societies “ready” for democracy, and awaiting a political opportunity to coordinate social efforts towards democratization, which was provided by the Uprisings.

Hypothesis 1. Testing such a theory basically revolves around finding a rise in the support for democracy and other modern values, as well as inter-generational differences in opinions. In particular, we would expect differences on the main issues of desirability of democracy, the role of political Islam (PI), gender, trust, and possibly, the role of the state – with modernization usually connected with a larger role for individual agency and thus a lower reliance on the state, including in terms of redistributive policies.

A related theory, the “youth bulge theory of change”, developed by Cincotta and Doces (2011), predicts that youthful societies tend to be anti-democratic. Their arguments builds on the bulge thesis developed by various demographers, which asserts that states with youthful populations face a high risk of political violence and armed conflict (see Henrik 2006 for a summary of this literature). In such a context, citizens will tend to have a preference for an authoritarian bargain where they trade-off their political and civil liberties for guarantees of security (as la Ghandi and Prezeworski 2006). The work of Cincotta and Doces find that the cut-off for the onset of democracy is around a medium age of 25 years. In their sample, more than half the countries with a median age between 25-35 years are democratic according to a Freedom house definition; in the sample where median age is 25-35, the proportion rises to 90%. In the context of the Middle East then, it would be the aging and increased maturity of the

population, with median age increasing above 25 years in the 2000s that would explain the impulse for democratization.

H2. If this theory is true, we would see a rising support for democracy as a society ages. We would also expect to see rising levels of trust in society, in the sense that the impulse for change would not be driven by grievances but rather by a rising belief that governance along democratic lines becomes more feasible and credible.

The main alternative theory of democratization is based on a distributional drive supported by the poor (and possibly the middle class, (MC)). In these models, the poorer segments of the population favor taxation and redistribution, which the rich oppose. As a result, there is an incentive for the rich elite to govern in an autocratic way, and for the poorer segment to attempt to take over and form a democracy where policy is determined by the median voter. Starting from a socio-political equilibrium, when inequality rises, the system comes under stress. The equilibrium can shift to either a more repressive authoritarianism, or to a democratic order with some elements of the previous ruling coalition will split (Acemoglu and Robinson, 2006).¹ In models of democratic transitions, the distributive motive for change is expanded to endogeneize the very existence of democratic governments. When elites are confronted with mobilization from below, they can make short term concessions to diffuse the threat, but they can also be expected to default on these promises when mobilization subsides. Democratic institutions provide therefore a means for the elite to commit credibly to a more equal distribution of income in the future (because reversals are costly) when faced with credible challenges. As a result, when low income groups mobilize in favor of redistribution, they do so by militating for a more democratic order. In a recent wide-ranging empirical review of the past two decades, Kaufman and Haggard (2012), which was cited earlier, show that more than one half of recent transitions are explained by distributional concerns – the other half is divided between cases where it was driven by splits within the ruling elites, and cases where elites perceived democracy to serve their own interests.

In this account, revolutions are driven by a rise in inequality. Admittedly, there is no direct evidence that inequality has risen sharply in the recent past in Egypt on the basis of distribution data. Generally, household surveys reveal that consumption inequality (as measured by Gini coefficients for example) has risen moderately in Egypt, from about 0.3 in the 1990s, to 0.35 in the 2000s (Bibi and

¹ In such models, the equilibrium will tend to shift to one with rising repression when the initial level of inequality is high (because the rich have more at stake), and to a democratic equilibrium when it is low but rising.

Nabli, 2010, Belhaj 2011). But there are two reasons to think that nevertheless, distribution concerns have been central. First, household surveys are notorious for under-counting the rich. There are many indications of a rise in the income share of the 10% richest in society, which are perceived to have benefited most from a more market oriented economy, and of the top 1%, which have benefitted most from the rampant crony capitalism of the last decade (Diwan and Chekir, 2012). By some estimates, the top 10% in Egypt possibly commands 30-40% GDP.²

Second, large changes in education levels and in the workings of the labor markets suggest that grievances may be connected to perceived changes in the inequality of opportunities, rather than the inequality of incomes only. Over time, the roll-back of the state, which was initiated with Sadat's reform of the 1980s, had reduced the role of the state as an employer – from a height of 40% of the labor force, by 2009, only 25% of the labor force worked for the state. Recent studies show clearly that as a result, new entrants to the labor market divides themselves between the formal private sector, which did not grow in proportional terms, and where wages are higher than in the public sector, and a large and growing informal sector, where wages are lower than in the public sector (Asaad, 2007). Larger waves of more educated workers (average years of education had risen from 2 years in the 1980 to 8 years by 2009) were faced with an increasingly unfair labor market where relationship (“wasta”) and status were more important than diplomas in landing into the good jobs. Empirical research has only recently started to focus on this type of inequality of opportunity, but recent work by Assaad and Salehi-Esfanani and by Belhaj (2011) is starting to show that unlike simple consumption Ginis, such measures show a sharp increase during the era of neo-liberal reforms and rising cronyism. Such observations have led to a variant of the grievances theory, suggesting that it is the youth, with a higher level of grievances that the older “insiders”, which had the greatest incentives to rebel and change the system in their favor.³

H3. The main implication of a distributional theory of transition is that opinions would increasingly lean towards democracy, and that this would be accompanied by a shift in opinions towards redistributive policies and a decline in social trust. These opinions would normally be formed along class lines, but a variant (the youth revolution) would have them formed along age lines.

² Between 1998 and 2006, GDP rose by 60% in nominal terms, while consumption stayed essentially at the same level all along the distribution according to household surveys, suggesting that large parts of the increase may have accrued to the under-counted rich, and very little has trickled down to the rest of society.

³ Within a grievances view of the world, we would also expect a decline in social trust over time, as social forces become increasingly frustrated with the unequal distribution of income under autocracy (Jamal 2007).

The last set of concerns revolves around issues related to Political Islam (PI). The tenets of PI include some social values which are strongly espoused by some and not by other members of society (such as beliefs related to the role of Shari'a in legislation, gender issues, freedom of speech as it relates to the "sacred"). PI has been in the past one of the main organized opposition movement, militating at various points in time against autocracy, secularism, unpopular foreign alliances, or corruption – and it was at times severely repressed and it operated largely outside the formal system. More recently, some groups within the broad range of parties espousing PI (and in particular the Muslim Brotherhood) have moderated their messages and came to accept the democratic game. Indeed, it was only in 2004 that the Muslim Brotherhood managed to commit publicly to abide by a constitutional and democratic system, calling for the recognition of "the people as the source of all authority", and committing itself to the principles of the transfer of power through free elections, the freedom of belief and expression, the freedom to form political parties, and the independence of the judiciary (Shahin 2005).⁴ At the same time, insurgent groups have declined. The recent 2012 elections have revealed the existence of a large minority of Salafists, who seem to be more popular among the poor, and who espouse more populist views than the MB, with possibly a lower commitment to democracy.

In which ways could political Islam be connected to the uprisings? There are many possibilities, and rather than forming hypotheses, our approach will be to explore what the data says. As a mobilizing force, PI can resolve coordination problems around the forum provided by Mosques, as coordination is typically a central constraint in social movements. As an ideology, there are several competing narratives. PI can counter modernization with conservative values – for example on gender issues, and it can be used to neutralize distributional concerns by favoring quietism (values promoted by Sufi and Salafi groups among the poor). But it can also support middle class redistributive goals (as the Youth branch of the Muslim Brotherhood), or it can support middle class devout but economically conservative private sector oriented individuals (which seems to be the attitude of the Muslim Brotherhood).⁵ An altogether different possibility is that the moderation of PI facilitated the defection of the MC – Diwan (2012) argues that democratization was delayed in many countries of the MENA because PI scared secularist MC and threw them into a coalition of fear with autocrats. So to read the recent political

⁴ Similar processes of moderation through participation (Schweddler 2006) took place in other neighboring countries, notably Turkey and Tunisia. Demiralp (2009) describes the process leading to AKP's increased moderation by a combination of lessons from repression, opportunism, and the growth of a friendly MC. In Tunisia, Al-Nahda committed publicly in 1981 that: "we have no right to interpose between the people and those whom the people choose and elect" (quoted in Osman, 1989).

⁵ Many authors have argued that a weakening of religiosity is necessary for modernization, but others (eg Tarik Ramadan 2011) argue that modernization requires a reformation of religion itself (2011).

changes as a “victory of PI” does not constitute a theory of change in itself, and could be taken to mean many different things.

H4. The empirical implications are different for the hypotheses outlined above, and they can be differentiated by looking at the evolution of opinions towards PI and how they correlated at the individual level (and within well defined class, education, and age groups) with attitudes towards democracy and redistribution.

Finally, some see the success of the uprising in Egypt in toppling the Mubarak regime as mainly driven by the support it ended up receiving from the army and its western backers. This view would suggest that the main driver was a split within the elites, especially among those supporting the group of cronies which has been in power since 2005 or so and the traditional army/security complex elites. That these actors were influential is beyond doubt, but the question is rather whether their actions was a driving force, or whether they decided to side with existing social forces for change.

H5. In terms of implications, finding little empirical support for the two main theses described above (modernization and distribution) in public opinion would advantage the view of a contingent role for the army and its foreign supporters.

Before closing this section, it is useful to characterize more the MC, given that it appears to be the main competitor to the youth as the main actor for change in Egypt and the Middle East. Arab autocrats had valued keeping the mainly secular MC led parties in the governing “political settlement” in the past, either within the governing coalition, or as part of the legal opposition, due to their important legitimizing role. For the regimes in place, secular and liberal ideology was at the center of their Arab national ideologies of the 1950s, which ushered leaders such as Bourguiba and Nasser, bringing in the Attaturkian model of modernization based on secular and nationalist ideologies. For the Arab autocrats, losing their MC anchors is tantamount to losing all legitimacy and turning into naked dictatorship with no operational narrative. In this broader frame, the authoritarian bargain in the Arab world in the past decade can be best characterized as an alliance between elite capital and elements of the MC that delivered economic benefits to the coalition members, including in the form of subsidies. The poor in the meantime were denied economic advantages and their political movements were severely repressed (Diwan 2011).

There are indications that the MC has been hurt by the economic liberalizations of the 1990s, and especially by their acceleration in the 2000s. Beside the direct effect from the labor market discussed above, the interests of the MC have been hurt in many ways with the roll back of the state and the rise of neo-liberalism.⁶ In addition, low public sector wages also fueled petty corruption in areas such as health and education, generating another important source of discontent. More research is needed to understand more clearly the changing welfare of the MC. In the WVS data that we analyze in this paper, the survey asks respondents to identify the class they belong to (poor, working class, middle class, upper middle class, and rich). This measure provides a broad, self-assessed measure of well-being that goes well beyond income in capturing life-long income, aspirations, and ownership of assets of various sorts. Comparing data from 2000 and 2008 shows that the size of the MC has shrunk from 65 to 58% of the population in favor of the poor.⁷

But besides its size, the nature of the MC has also changed. Until recently, Middle Eastern scholars did not seem to believe that the MC could play an active role in leading political change. Its effective influence on policies was low as it was mainly made up of civil servants and employees of state owned enterprises, which reduced its ability to play the role of an “autonomous actor”. A new market oriented MC rose in late 1990s in response to economic liberalization. The newcomers tended to be small merchants and industrialists, often in the informal sectors, that have benefited from the market oriented reforms, as well as the small but expanding skilled labor of the formal private sector labor market. This group has been politically more active than the old (see Nasr 2009) -- for example, it played an important role in securing the success of the Iranian revolution in 1979, and the rise of the AKP in Turkey.⁸

Another argument for focusing on the changing interests of the MC is that the poor, while an important agent of change in redistributive models may in reality lack the means to forge class-wide coalitions, or may fear change given higher risk aversion for example.

In concluding this section, I summarize the implications of the theories presented in Table 1 below.

⁶ In Egypt, for example, real wages in the public sector declined over time. The minimum wage, which anchors all wages, has declined from 60% of per capita GDP in the early 1980s to a mere 13% in 2007 (Abdel Hamid and El Baradei, 2009). This can be also seen very sharply at the macro level – by 2019, 25% of the Egyptian labor force worked for the state but earned a total wage bill of less than 9% GDP, implying that average wages were below GDP/capita, which is extremely low by international standard.

⁷ The WVS also suggests that the financial satisfaction of the poor deteriorates, and that of the rich rises during the period (see Annex 2), further bolstering a sense of rising inequality during the period.

⁸ Indeed, the AKP benefitted handsomely from the alliance with the support provided to SMEs and the rise of what became known as the Anatolian tigers, SMEs that drove growth in Turkey in the past decade (Demiralp 2009, Gumuscu 2009).

Table 1. Theories of democratization and empirical implications

<i>Theory</i>	<i>Testable implications</i>
H1: Youth bulge	Rising support for democracy, Rising trust.
H2: Modernization theory	Rising support for democracy, more trust, low support for distribution, more support for gender, low support for PI. In all cases, effects should be stronger among the youth and among those with higher levels of education.
H3: Distributional conflict	Rising support for democracy, low trust, high support for distribution. Higher among the poor, followed by the MC. Youth variant has higher effect among the youth. But effects may be weaker for the poor if there is a “veil of ignorance” (or risk aversion effects).
H4 : how PI effects democratization?	Examine how the support for PI at the individual level is connected to democratic and economic orientation.
H5.: Elites fight, foreign support, intervention	No rise in support for democracy.

3. Attitudes towards democracy

I now attempt to test which of the theories described above applies best to Egypt by looking at the structure and evolution of opinions as collected by the 4th and 5th waves of the World Value Survey, in 2000, and in 2008, two years before the uprisings. The data and the questions that I use from the surveys are outlined in Annex 1. I focus principally on questions that measure attitudes to democracy (democracy vs. order), redistributive economic policy (a progressive/conservative political economy dimension), and role of religion in politics (secularist/Islamist orientation), and to a lesser extent on issues surrounding trust and gender. We also have information about individual characteristics of respondent such as their (self-declared) social class, education, and age.

That the last poll we use is in 2008, two years before the uprisings raises some concerns, as opinions in 2008 may not be similar to those in early 2011. The 6th wave of the WVS, which was supposed to be collected in 2012, has not yet been collected, not having been approved by the authorities. Hopefully, the next survey will be available in 2013, and it would be important to update this study then. In the meanwhile, one can hope that the 2008 survey is representative of long term trends, compared to opinions collected during the recent period of turmoil, which would likely be more noisy and possibly more transient. But it is also important to note that the 2008 survey was taken before

Egypt was hit by the global financial crisis, which led in time to a large fall in real wages (Roushdy and Gadallah, 2011).

Let us start by looking at how preferences for democracy (PfD) evolved over the period. I construct this variable from responses to a question where respondents are asked to choose their first and second choice from a list of four options that include democracy, order, fighting inflation, and more civil liberties (see Annex 1 for details). Because they had to make a choice, respondents tended to rank democracy lower than in other unconstrained questions that simply ask whether they like democracy - - the latter are not very informative and tend to show an over-whelming support for democracy. An examination of the data reveals three striking regularities.

It is instructive to first contrast the evolution of the national averages of the PfD for four populations in Egypt, Iran, Jordan, and Morocco, the only MENA countries covered by the WVS. Opinions are surprisingly diverse among these countries. There is a remarkable shift of opinions in Egypt, with the PfD variable jumping from 24% to 52% of the population over the period. In Morocco and Iran, support is initially a sizable minority at 36%, but it only improves marginally over time (to 37 and 40%).

Table 2: Average Preference for Democracy

(% of population)	Prefers Democracy over Order	
	4th Wave	5th Wave
Egypt, Arab Rep.	24.0	52.1
Iran, Islamic Rep.	35.9	39.8
Jordan	25.7	28.1
Morocco	35.6	36.8

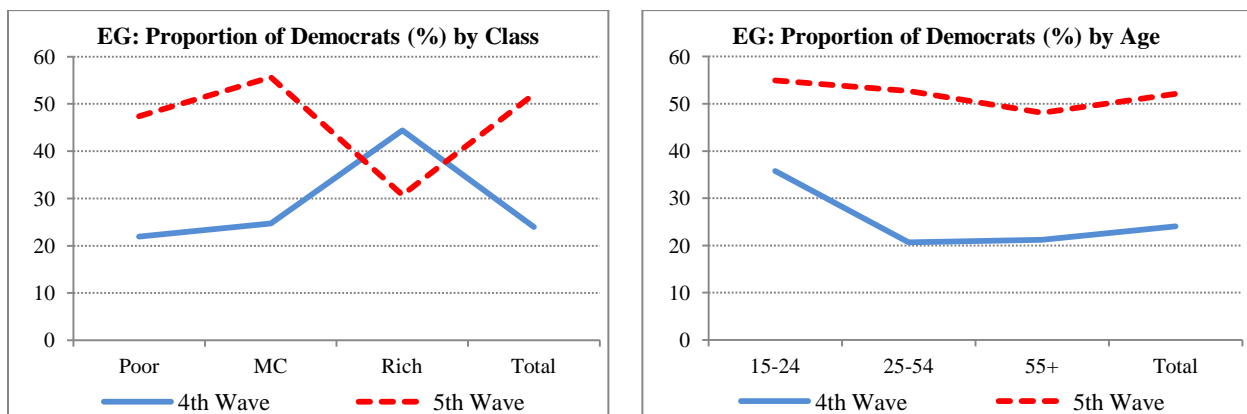
Source: WVS; the variables are defined in Annex 1.

These figures suggest that the Uprisings in Egypt do seem to represent a deep social wave that is specific to that country. There may be many reasons for these changes. Some could be circumstantial, such as the upcoming 2011 presidential election (and fear of the constitution of a Mubarak/crony capitalist's dynasty). But others may be related to longer terms social trends such as economic inequalities, or the rise of education among the youth, of the transformations of PI. It is also interesting to note that the similarities between Iran and Egypt on these scores coincide with a similar social

movement revolution in Iran – however, Iran’s “green” revolution after its 2009 elections was repressed successfully by the old guard, perhaps because support for democracy there was weaker than in Egypt.

Second, let us look at the PfD in Egypt according to class and age (Figure 1). It is immediately apparent that the rising support for democracy is very much a class phenomena – in particular, there is rising support among the poor and the MC, but declining among the rich. The middle class seems to play a leading role, supporting democracy more than the poor (by about 10 points), with more than 50% of the class in favor. This seems to suggest that while distributional factors are at play in 2008 (with the rich broadly against democracy, as suggested by the distribution theory), modernization forces may be providing an additional push for the MC to support democratization. There may also be factors that reduce the willingness of the poor to support a change in the status quo, such as risk aversion or ideological attitudes. These are themes and hypotheses that we will pursue further below.

Figure 1: Preference for Democracy, by Class and Age



Third, the youth do not seem to hold opinions in 2008 that are much different from their parents on the desirability of democracy, unlike the situation in 2000, when they were much more democratic than their elders. This seems to suggest that their opinions may have paved the way for a catch up by their parents. In this story, the closeness of the Arab family plays a positive role. To the extent that the underlying forces driving opinions are connected to skilled youth unemployment, a major phenomenon for the MC, it seems that Egyptian MC parents became as unhappy as their children about the lack of job opportunities – and this pushes them to favor regime change and democracy. The closeness of the Arab family has been recognized by the literature (Alexander and Welzel, 2011) – but here, it facilitates change, in opposition to the usual view of the “backwardness” of patriarchal societies (Alesina and Giuliano 2007).

It can be verified, with regression analysis, that these results are not spurious means comparisons, but that actually do represent an association between individual characteristics. I use Logit functional forms. To account for class structure, rather than using an ordered variable, given the discontinuities observed in the behavior of the MC, I use here dummies for the MC and for the Rich, relative to the Poor here.⁹ I run the following regression:

$$(1) \text{ Probability of support for Democracy} = f(\text{class dummies, age}).$$

The results which were apparent in the graphs are confirmed – there is initially a strong age effect that goes away by 2008 and is replaced by a strong MC effect, which did not exist in 2000.

Table 3. Logit regression for Preference for Democracy

Dependent Variable: Preference for Democracy	2000		2008
Age	-0.167***		-0.0276
	(-4.96)		(-0.95)
MC	-0.108		0.280***
	(-1.15)		(3.66)
N	2893		3050

Finally, to conclude this section, we can ask where the new democrats come from. This entails comparing the composition of the population between the two periods.¹⁰ Of the 28.3 points increased support for democracy in our sample (from 23.9 to 52.3% of the population), 12.1 points come from the poor, and 16.3 from the MC (and none from the rich, see Table 6 below). This change is due to a combination of two phenomena: a rise in support among both the poor and the MC, but with higher intensity among the MC; and a shift of population from the MC to the poor (7 percentage points).

4. Preferences for Equality

In this section, I investigate the extent to which the rise in support for democracy is connected with a change of opinions about distributional concerns by looking at individual preferences for equality (PFE). The related survey question asks respondents to rank (on a scale of 1 to 10) whether income

⁹ The coefficient for the Rich dummy is not shown, as it does not turn out to be significant in all regressions, most likely because of the small size of this group in the sample.

¹⁰ This comparison assumes that there is no churning in the data, since our data is not in reality a panel.

inequality is good for incentives (low score), or incomes should be made more equal (high score).¹¹ Answers to the question thus reveal opinions on how public policy should deal with inequality – at the risk of caricaturing a little, we can refer to people with high scores as “leftists”, and people with low scores as “rightists”.

Figure 2: Preferences for a Equality, by Class and Age

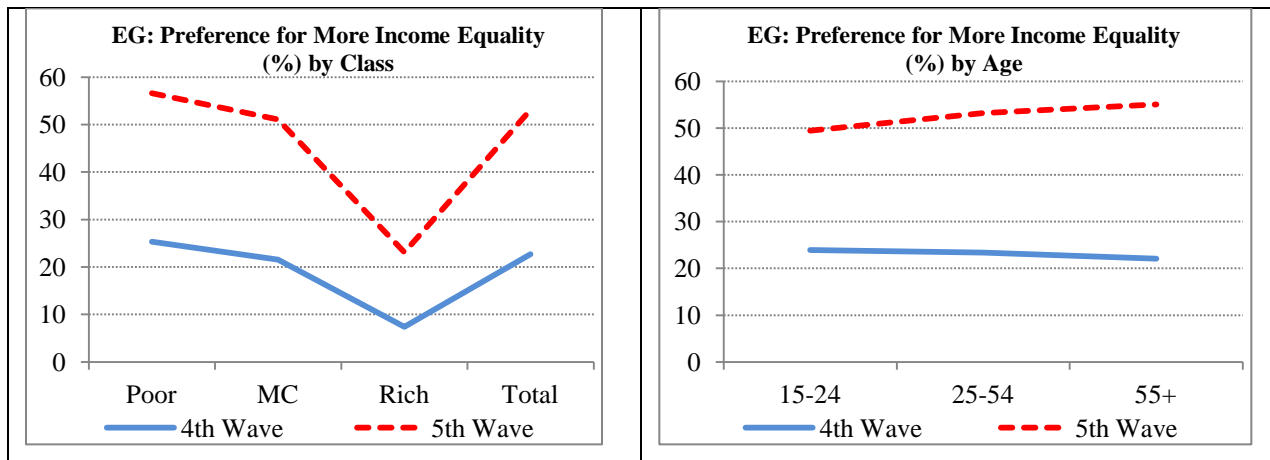


Figure 2 plots the PfE variable along class and age lines. It suggests several important conclusions. First, the large opinion shift towards a more equal society is class-related. As suggested by theory, the poor preferences for redistribution are stronger than those of the MC, which are themselves stronger than among the rich, and this holds in both periods – the MC is not leading opinions here, unlike the case for preferences for democracy. Over time, all classes move to the left. Support for redistribution was low among the poor in 2000, but not in 2008, which suggest that the decline in financial satisfaction in that class has started to counteract ideological conservatism (see Annex 2).¹² Second, it is clear again that there are no important age effects.

But while the increase PfD and the rising PfE happen in parallel, we still need to check whether they are connected at the individual level. Moreover, we are also interested in understanding why the poor have a high PfE and a low PfD relative to the MC. One hypothesis, suggested above, is that both distribution and modernization forces are at play simultaneously, which boosts the MC support. To

¹¹ In the actual survey, the scale is the reverse, but we have inverted it to ease the interpretation of the results. Note that the exact level of this indicator depends on how we code the information. Because opinions are very much clustered around the levels 1-3 in 2000, I take in the graphs any score above 3 to indicate a shift towards a preference for equality. In the regression analysis however, I code the variable in 4 levels: 1-3, 4-6, 6-8, 9-10 for greater precision.

¹² However, in spite of this turn to the “left”, opinions about a more activist role for the state turn more negative (including among the poor), suggesting that equality is to be achieved by a disengagement of the state, rather than by a more pro-active state. Again, these opinions are supported mainly by the Poor and to a lesser extent by the MC, but not by the rich, who favor a larger role for the state -- see Annex 2.

understand how individual characteristics connect and measure the potential effects of modernization and distribution separately, I run a Logit regression, where in addition to education and the PfE variable, I include interactive terms to try to discriminate between MC and poor among the “leftists”:

$$(2) \text{ Probability of PfD} = f(\text{education, PfE, PfE*MC})$$

The results are in Table 4 below and support the “dual MC effect” hypothesis:

- Supporting the modernization thesis, we find that education fosters support for democracy.
- While the “Left” supported democracy in 2000 as much (or as little) as the “Right”, by 2008, leftists supported democracy more than rightists, and moreover, poor leftists supporting democracy more than MC leftists (the interactive term is negative). This confirms that distributional concerns are after all, as suggested by theory, more important for the poor than the middle class -- this becomes apparent when controlling for education.

Table 4. Logit Regression for Preference for Democracy

Dependent Variable: preference for democracy	2000	2008
Education	0.163 ^{***}	0.0861 ^{***}
	(5.43)	(3.53)
PfE	0.0841	0.136 ^{**}
	(1.46)	(0.87)
PfE*MC	-0.0343	-0.130 ^{***}
	(-1.27)	(-3.51)
N	2893	3009

+ Note PfE variable is coded at 4 levels.

This leaves the possibility that rightists too may have a strong support for democracy, especially if they are over-represented among the educated. Indeed, in the sample as a whole, leftists are not more likely to be democratic than rightists in 2008. So we need to get a better feel about the characteristics of those that turn left. To do so, I run the following order Logit regression:

$$(3) \text{ Probability of support for R/L} = f(\text{class, age, education, PI}).$$

The results in Table 5 show that the support for the “left”: (i) is higher among the youth in 2000, but this age effect disappears in 2008; and (ii) decreases with class (in both periods). Moreover, we find

that (iii) in 2008, more educated people tend to lean to the right (and uneducated people to the left), which suggests that while education increases support for democracy, it does so more through the aspiration that through the grievances route, i.e, on the “right” rather than on the left. The variable PI is not significant – on average, secularists and Islamists are as likely to be on the left as on the right.

Table 5. Logit regression for PFE

Dependent Variable: PFE	2000	2008
Age	-0.0690*	-0.0280
	(2.40)	(1.05)
Class*	-0.158*	-0.239***
	(0.096)	(0.072)
Education	-0.079	-0.105***
	(1.31)	(4.85)
PI	-0.0312	-0.0217
	(0.36)	(0.43)
Observations	2788	2940

Note: the class variable here takes the value of 1 for the poor, 2 for the MC, and 3 for the rich

The last two sets of regressions confirm that there are two paths to democracy – going left and democratic (more intense among the poor) for distribution reasons, or going right and democratic (especially among educated and richer people), driven by modernization reasons. It is because they are at the intersection of both concerns then that the MC emerges as the key champion for democracy. It is also possible to determine the extent to which each of the paths was used in the data. Table 7 shows that overall, most of the action occurred on the distribution, rather than the modernization side, i.e, a large share of the increased support for democracy was due to the shift to the left. Of the 28.3 points increased support for democracy, 6.8 points come from the modernization and 21.5 points from the distribution channel.

Table 6: Sources of the Change in the Number of Democrats (share of total population)

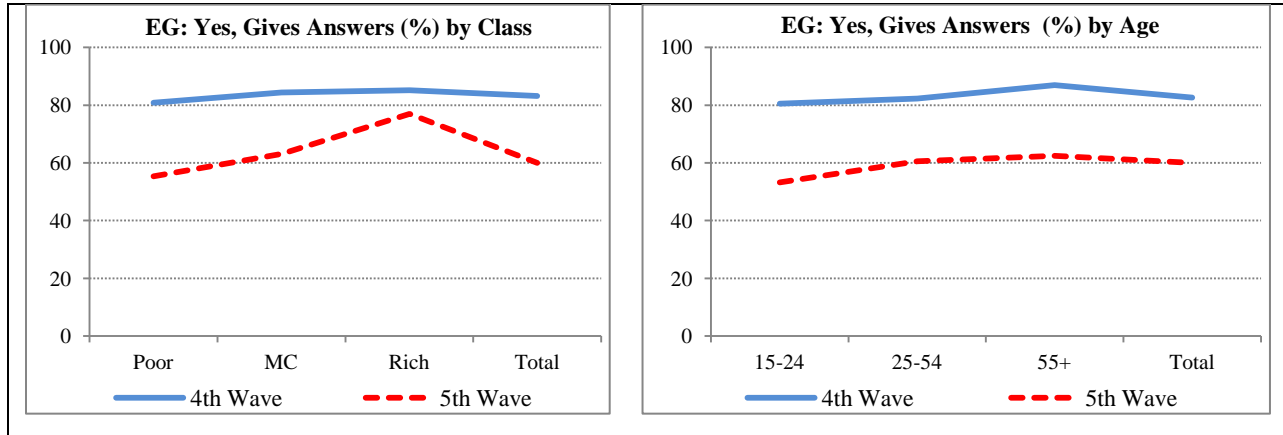
4th Wave	Poor	MC	Rich	Total	5th Wave	Poor	MC	Rich	Total	change	Poor	MC	Rich	Total
<i>Right</i>	5.6	12.2	0.3	18.1	<i>Right</i>	8.9	15.8	0.2	24.9	<i>Right</i>	3.3	3.6	-0.1	6.8
<i>Left</i>	2	3.8	0.1	5.8	<i>Left</i>	10.5	16.7	0.1	27.3	<i>Left</i>	8.5	12.9	0	21.5
<i>Total</i>	7.6	16	0.4	23.9	<i>Total</i>	19.4	32.5	0.3	52.2	<i>Total</i>	11.8	16.5	-0.1	28.3

5. The influence of Political Islam on Democratization

What role did PI play in paving the way, or obstructing, these individual paths towards democratization? Can PI, as a movement or an ideology, explain the conservatism of the poor that was noted above (especially in 2000), or can it explain the progressivism of the MC (especially in 2008)? Or perhaps the adherents of PI are those that continued to oppose democracy in 2008? Or is adherence to PI unrelated to opinions about democracy?

Let us start by exploring the drivers of the changing public opinions towards PI. The variable I use is constructed from a question where people are asked if they believe that “religious authorities provide answers to social problems”, where a yes is coded as a 1, and a no as a zero. The data shows a decline in popular support for PI, although it remains a majority view – from 81 in 2000 to 60% of the respondents in 2008 adhere to PI as defined here. The decrease in support for PI is concentrated among the poor followed by the MC, but not among the rich (Figure 3, see also Annex 3). This seems a priori surprising given that education, which goes up with classes, is usually connected with a fall in religiosity – we will try to disentangle these effects in the regressions below.

Figure 3: PI: Whether Religious Authorities Give Answers to Social Problems, by Class and Age



To explore the factors behind this shift, which is concurrent with a large shift in the PfE and PfD dimensions, it is useful to start by noting that the composition of groups along these dimensions changes massively between the two periods. In 2000, a very large 62% of the population supported both autocracy and PI, but this group shrinks to 28% in 2008. It is as if the acceptance by the Moslem Brotherhood in 2004 of the democratic rules of the game has thrown many citizens into turmoil and has confronted them with choosing new political orientations.

There are two major social transformations that are apparent in the recomposition of the political field: a move towards secular beliefs (+22.6 percent of the population), and a move towards democracy (+26.6 percent). Those that were religious autocrats in 2000 “move” to become mainly PI and secular democrats in 2008 (only a few select to become secular autocrats) – indeed, new democrats come mostly from secular (+15.4 points), but also to a lesser extent from PI backgrounds (+11.2 points).

Table 7. Preferences along PI/secular and Autocrat/Democrat dimensions (share of total population)

2000	Sec	PI	Tot	2008	Sec	PI	Tot	change	Sec	PI	Tot
Autocratic	11.8	62.3	74.1	Autocratic	18.9	28.6	47.5	Autocratic	7.1	-33.7	-26.6
Democratic	5.6	20.3	25.9	Demo.	21	31.5	52.5	Democratic	15.4	11.2	26.6
Total	17.4	82.6	100	Total	40	60	100	Total	22.6	-22.6	0

The shift in support for democracy then needs to be explained by composition effects and changes in preferences within groups – both of these show very large shifts. Table 8 indicates that in 2008, both secularists and Islamists had roughly similar propensities to support democracy, but a deeper examination shows that this average hides a class effect, with a PI orientation reducing the intensity of pro-democracy beliefs among the poor (i.e, among the poor, secularists tend to be more democratic than adherents of PI).

Table 8: Proportion of Democrats in various groups

4th Wave	Poor	MC	Rich	Total	5th Wave	Poor	MC	Rich	Total
R_S	26.1	28.8	66.7	28.1	R_S	52.0	55.1	0.0	53.3
R_PI	21.5	23.1	36.4	22.7	R_PI	49.1	55.5	33.3	53.0
L_S	28.6	28.8	100.0	29.4	L_S	47.8	56.8	0.0	52.5
L_PI	22.1	27.4	100.0	25.5	L_PI	44.7	56.7	60.0	51.7
Total	22.6	24.7	44.4	24.2	Total	48.0	56.1	30.8	52.5

Let us turn to regression analysis to verify this tentative result. I run the following ordered Logit regression, with multiplicative effects to separate the impact of PI on the poor and the MC:

$$(4) \text{ Probability of Preferences for democracy} = f(\text{PI}, \text{PI} * \text{MC})$$

The results in Table 9 confirm the rich complexities uncovered above. Adherents of PI did not support democracy in 2000 as much as secularists. By 2008, the pattern is the same, except that the MC group that espouses PI becomes a force for democratization as much as secularists! It seems as if PI acts as a conservative veil for the poor only, preventing them from expressing their class interests, but this effect does not operate among the MC after 2008, either because they are better educated, and/or because they are more likely to be influenced by more moderate parties within the PI umbrella, such as the Moslem Brotherhood. This supports and refines Tessler’s (2011) findings that support for PI is congruent with rising support for democracy – what we find is that this applies to the MC – but the new finding here is that the poor who supports PI generally does not seem to support democracy.

Table 9. Logit Regression for Preference for Democracy

Dependent Variable: PfD	2000	2008
PI	-0.349**	-0.246**
	(0.130)	-0.095
PI*MC	0.055	0.390***
	(0.102)	-0.097
N	2789	2976

Here too, it is useful to try to understand the composition effect better, i.e, what determines PI orientation. I run the following regression:

(5) Probability of support for PI = f (age, class, PfE, education).

The results in Table 10: attraction to PI rises with age and with class, and falls with education. In relation to distributional tendencies, the results reveal that individuals espousing PI tend to be equally divided among the right and the left as the PfE effect is not significant.

Table 10. Logit regression for preference for PI

Dependent Variable: PI	(2000)	(2009)
Age	-0.186*	-0.157*
	(0.087)	(0.069)
Class	0.325**	0.368***
	(0.108)	(0.078)
PfE	-0.019	-0.058
	(0.092)	(0.052)
Education	-0.154*	-0.115*
	(0.072)	(0.058)
Observations	2788	2940

So overall, it seems that bringing PI into the equation reveals that rather than two, there were actually four distinct paths to democracy in Egypt, with each attracting different types of people that had left the autocratic PI mainstream orientation of 2000. Within each path, support for democracy rises, but it also faces particular types of opposition forces, resulting in different propensities to become democratically oriented within the group. It is noteworthy that four particular candidates during the first round of Presidential elections in 2011 came to represent each of these views. Table 11 below characterizes these four paths.

Table 11: Four Paths to Democracy

	As Share of pop., 2008	Movement of people (% of pop.) 2000-08	% dem, in cell 2008	Dem. in cell as % of all dem. 2008	“New” democrats (share of population) 2000-08
R_S	18.7	+5.8	53.3	19.0	+6.3
R_PI	28.6	-36.1	53.0	28.8	+0.4
L_S	21.4	+17.5	52.5	21.4	+10.1
L_PI	31.3	+12.8	51.7	30.8	+11.5
Total	100.0	0.0	52.5	100.0	+28.3

These 4 paths to democracy can be described as follows (see annex 4 for more class related detail) – each is part of a distinct narrative with specific historical and philosophical roots:

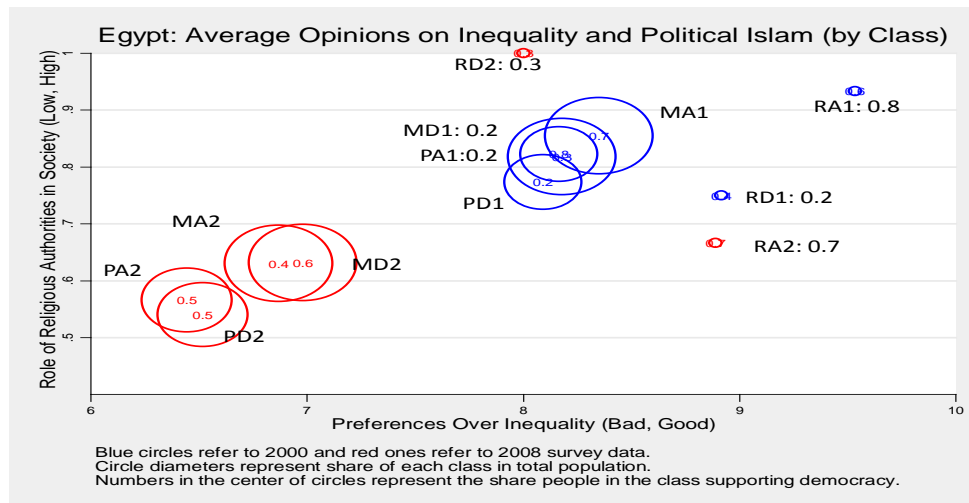
1. A rightist secular path (which would be the bloc captured by Amr Mussa), which probably draws mostly from the democratic wing of the NPD. This group has 18.7% of the population, but was not particularly dynamic in that only added 6.3 % points of new democrats (out of a total addition of 28.3 points). This is the only group where support for democracy draws with the same intensity from the poor and the MC – the other 3 have a MC bias.
2. A second group, the rightist Islamic democratic group, looks like the Muslim Brotherhood. It draws mainly from the MC, perhaps with the Salafi wings attracting the poor disproportionately, and reducing the attraction of democracy to the poor. This group support has shrunk over time, representing 28.6% of the population only in 2008, and thus contributing marginally to the net increase in support for democracy in the population.
3. The third leftist secular democratic group most likely represents the Nasserist tendencies in Egyptian society. This group made a big come-back, representing 21.4% of the population in 2008 (of which 17.5 points are new members), and contributing 10.1 points to the increased support for

democracy. Again, it is stronger among the MC than the poor, possibly because the poor are more attracted to the autocratic aspects of Nasser’s legacy.

4. Finally, the fourth Islamic leftist democratic group is the largest group in 2008 – 31.3% population. It also brings the largest 11.5 point additional support for democracy, indicating its high level of dynamism. This new tendency in Egyptian politics was captured by the surprisingly high score of Abdel-Monein Abdul Foutouh in the first round of presidential elections of 2012.

Finally, we turn to the last hypothesis, which is that the high support for PI by the poor in 2000 scared the MC into turning towards democracy then, but that this fear disappeared in 2008. Clearly, this logic does not seem at work in Egypt, as all classes were equally supportive of PI in 2000. It may have been more operational in Tunisia.

Figure 6. Opinions in Egypt on democracy, distribution, and PI -- by class



Notes. The first letter refers to class, the second to whether the group prefers autocracy or democracy. Figures on the side refer to the size of this group in the total population, while those in the circles refer to the size of the group in the relevant class.

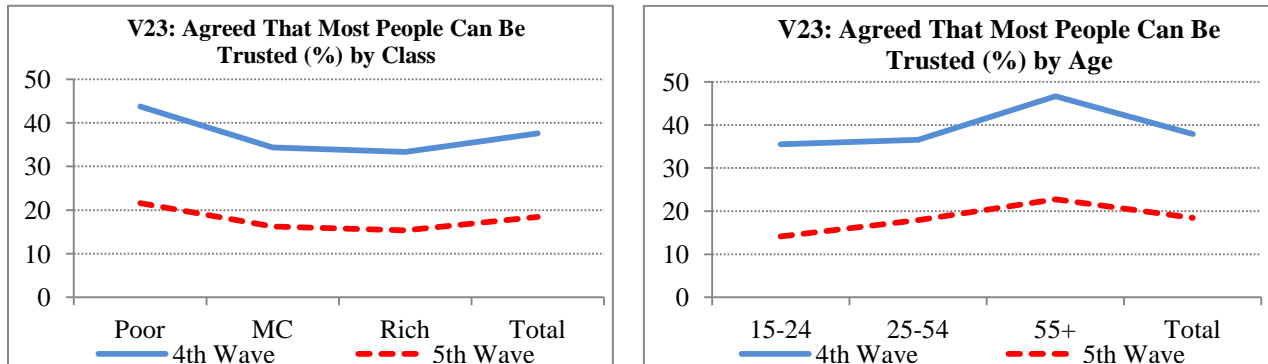
6. Conclusions: Bottom line on the 5 hypotheses

Let us now bring the various pieces together and discuss which of the hypotheses listed in Table 1 are supported by the evidence uncovered in the analysis above.

The data clearly does not support any of the youth-driven theories of change, including the youth version of H2 (youth driving modernization), and the youth version of H3 (youth grievances driven change). To check if H1 holds, one also needs to look into trust. Figure 7 shows a large decline in trust

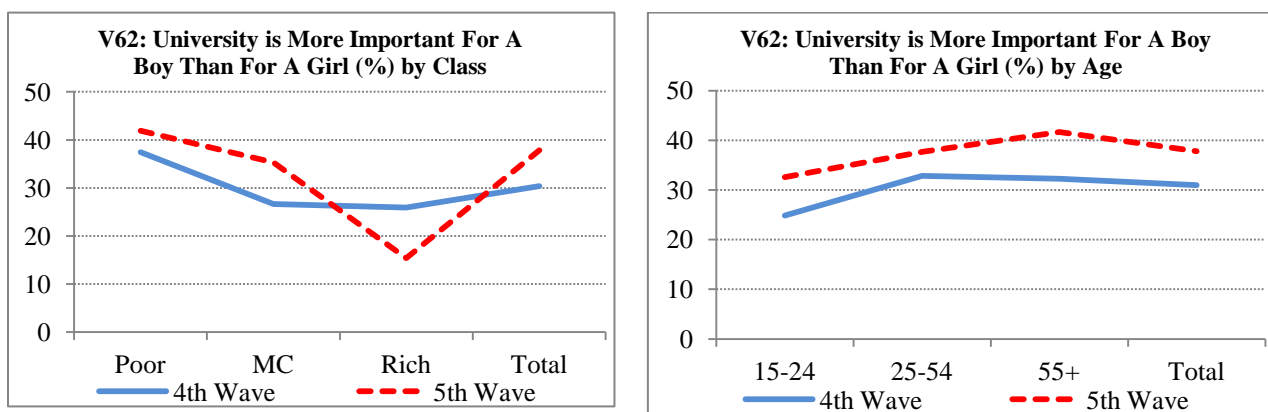
between the two periods, with richer people and younger exhibiting lower levels of trust than the rest of the population. This implies that H1 does not hold as well.

Figure 7. Trust by class and age



On the other hand, much of the analysis has shown that both the class based version of H2, and H3, draw strong support. Between 2000 and 2008, both grievances increased, and the aspirations of a more educated population rose simultaneously. This concurrence explains why the MC, which is at the interception of both forces, turned out to be the main champion for democratization. In effect, if demand for democracy came in surging, it was because of the coincidence of large social change in the past decades, together with the rise of inequalities in the late crony capitalism phase. This mix of aspirations and grievances was contained in several home-bred narratives along the religious/secular and left/right genres, in ways that found roots in Egyptian political history.

Figure 8. Opinions on Gender, by class and age



While the shift away from PI and from an activist state support a modernization view of the recent transformations in Egyptian society, one needs to recognize that this shift is only partial, as other values which are typically seen as central to modernity – and in particular, gender and trust, do not seem to improve over the period under consideration. In particular, views on gender (Figure 8) actually deteriorate, (possibly because of high unemployment), although marginal progress can be observed, as expected, among the rich – seemingly confirming Norris’s view that Muslims societies are different in terms of “Eros, much more than on Demos.

It remains to be seen if the nascent democracy can be consolidated. The most striking phenomenon in current Egyptian politics is the fierce competition for power to fill the vacuum created by the Uprisings. This intense competition is concentrating along the more divisive identity, rather than economic, issues, and there are risks of polarization between Islamists and secularists which could create a dynamic of its own, blocking the forces of modernization. But there are also forces of “moderation through participation” (Schwedler, 2012) that could push for a social resolution of divisive issues that had not been tackled openly by the autocrats of the past. Indeed, the necessity of governing will force the main social forces to establish bridges and coalitions. As illustrated in Figure 12, and to the extent that current figures are not too different from those of 2008, a majoritarian coalition will have to be either an Islamic left-right coalition which will have to establish economic bridges and compromises between very different views on desirable economic policies, or a grand coalition on the Left, which would need to bridge the identity gap to be able to function.

Table 12. Distribution of population in main political families, 2000 and 2008 (% population)

2000	secularists	Islamists	2008	secularists	Islamists
Left	4.2	18.9	Left	21.4	31.3
Right	13.2	63.7	Right	18.7	28.6

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ANNEX 1

The World Values Survey (WVS) is a research project that aims to understand and measure people's perceptions, opinions and beliefs all over the world. The survey's almost standardized set up since 1981 allow us to evaluate the change in perceptions, opinions and beliefs in a systematic way. Although the WVS encompasses opinion on a wide spectrum of issues relating to social life, such as religiosity, globalization, happiness, financial satisfaction and environment, the study focuses on the questions about attitudes towards democracy, economic policies, trust, perceptions of gender differences and role of religion in politics. A relatively large sample size (~3,000 respondents in each survey) and careful sampling methods along dimensions of urbanization, age, gender, and income allows us to exploit the micro-information contained in the database in ways that are not possible in other surveys.

The questions from the survey and generated variables from these questions used in the analysis are as follows:

a. Preference for Democracy (PfD)

PfD is generated by ordering of V71 and V72 (see below). If a respondent chooses 1 in V71 over other choices in V72, s/he is taken to prefer autocracy; group, if chooses 2 or 4 in V71 over other choices, s/he is categorized as preferring democracy.

V71. If you had to choose, which one of the things on this card would you say is most important? (Code one answer only under "first choice"):

V72. And which would be the next most important?

1. Maintaining order in the nation
2. Giving people more say in important government decisions
3. Fighting rising prices
4. Protecting freedom of speech

b. Distribution and economic policy:

V116. Now I'd like you to tell me your views on various issues. How would you place your views on this scale? 10 means you agree completely with the statement on the left (*Incomes should be made more equal*); 1 means you agree completely with the statement on the right (*We need larger income differences as incentives for individual effort*); and if your views fall somewhere in between, you can choose any number in between.

V117. Now I'd like you to tell me your views on various issues. How would you place your views on this scale? 1 means you agree completely with the statement on the left (*Private ownership of business and industry should be increased*); 10 means you agree completely with the statement on the right (*Government ownership of business and industry should be increased*); and if your views fall somewhere in between, you can choose any number in between.

V118. Now I'd like you to tell me your views on various issues. How would you place your views on this scale? 10 means you agree completely with the statement on the left (*The government should take more responsibility to ensure that everyone is provided for*); 1 means you agree completely with the statement on the right (*People should take more responsibility to provide for themselves*); and if your views fall somewhere in between, you can choose any number in between.

c. Religiosity and Political Islam:

V187. Independently of whether you attend religious services or not, would you say you are

1. A religious person
2. Not a religious person
3. An atheist

V188. Generally speaking, do you think that the religious institutions in your country are giving adequate answers to *the moral problems and needs of the individual* (Y/N)

V189. Generally speaking, do you think that the religious institutions in your country are giving adequate answers to *the problems of family life* (Y/N)

V190. Generally speaking, do you think that the religious institutions in your country are giving adequate answers to *the people's spiritual needs* (Y/N)

V191. Generally speaking, do you think that the religious authorities in your country are giving adequate answers *the social problems facing our society* (Y/N)

d. Trust:

V23. Generally speaking, would you say that most people can be trusted or that you need to be very careful in dealing with people? (Y/N)

e. Gender:

For each of the following statements I read out, can you tell me how strongly you agree or disagree with each. Do you strongly agree, agree, disagree, or strongly disagree?

V60. Being a housewife is just as fulfilling as working for pay.

V62. A university education is more important for a boy than for a girl.

f. Socio-economic groupings:

V252. People sometimes describe themselves as belonging to the working class, the middle class, or the upper or lower class. Would you describe yourself as belonging to the:

1. Upper class
2. Upper middle class
3. Lower middle class
4. Working class
5. Lower class

Classes are redefined in the analysis as “Rich” (1), “Middle Class” (2+3) and “Poor” (4+5).

g. Education:

V238. What is the highest educational level that you have attained?:

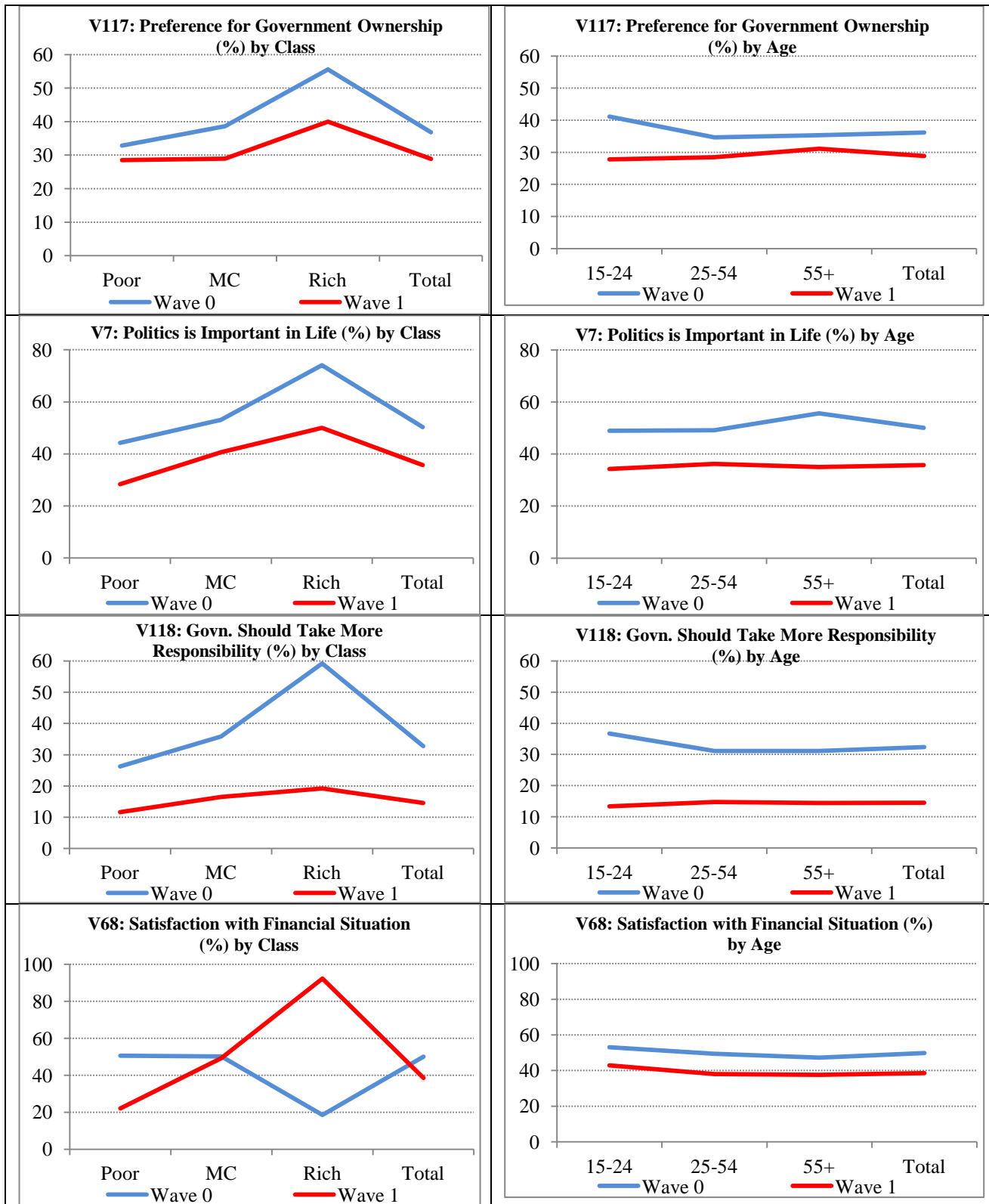
1. No formal education
2. Incomplete primary school
3. Complete primary school
4. Incomplete secondary school: technical/vocational type
5. Complete secondary school: technical/vocational type
6. Incomplete secondary: university-preparatory type
7. Complete secondary: university-preparatory type
8. Some university-level education, without degree
9. University-level education, with degree

h. Other:

V7. How important is Politics in your life on a scale of 1 to 10?.

V68. How satisfied are you with the financial situation of your household? Choose from 1 (completely dissatisfied) to 10 (completely satisfied).

ANNEX 2: Other Changes in Perceptions Supporting Redistribution¹³



¹³ All these graphs give a picture of binary recalculations of the corresponding questions that are in 1-10 scale.

ANNEX 3: Selected Variables on Religiosity¹⁴



¹⁴ All the questions below are binary in original format. The graphs depict proportion of respondent who answer yes.

Annex 4. Preference for Democracy along PI/secularist, left/right, and class dimensions

Decomposition by Political Views, Secularism and Class (% in Democrats)										
4th Wave	Poor	MC	Rich	Total		5th Wave	Poor	MC	Rich	Total
R_S	5.3	9.3	0.3	15.0		R_S	8.2	10.8	0.0	19.0
R_PI	17.9	41.6	1.2	60.7		R_PI	9.0	19.5	0.3	28.8
L_S	1.8	2.8	0.2	4.7		L_S	9.1	12.2	0.0	21.4
L_PI	6.4	13.0	0.2	19.6		L_PI	11.2	19.4	0.2	30.8
Total	31.4	66.8	1.8	100.0		Total	37.6	61.9	0.5	100.0
Decomposition by Political Views, Secularism and Class (% in Population)										
4th Wave	Poor	MC	Rich	Total		5th Wave	Poor	MC	Rich	Total
R_S	5.0	7.9	0.1	12.9		R_S	8.3	10.2	0.2	18.7
R_PI	20.2	43.7	0.8	64.7		R_PI	9.6	18.4	0.5	28.6
L_S	1.5	2.4	0.0	3.9		L_S	10.0	11.3	0.0	21.4
L_PI	7.0	11.5	0.0	18.5		L_PI	13.2	18.0	0.2	31.3
Total	33.6	65.4	1.0	100.0		Total	41.1	58.0	0.9	100.0
Proportion of democrats in group										
4th Wave	Poor	MC	Rich	Total		5th Wave	Poor	MC	Rich	Total
R_S	26.1	28.8	66.7	28.1		R_S	52	55.1	0	53.3
R_PI	21.5	23.1	36.4	22.7		R_PI	49.1	55.5	33.3	53
L_S	28.6	28.8	100	29.4		L_S	47.8	56.8	0	52.5
L_PI	22.1	27.4	100	25.5		L_PI	44.7	56.7	60	51.7
Total	22.6	24.7	44.4	24.2		Total	48	56.1	30.8	52.5