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From Sectarian Socialization to Violent Socialization:

A Case Study of the Politics of Securitization in Mohamed Morsi's Egypt

By

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To Ali Nooruddin

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From Sectarian Socialization to Violent Socialization: A Case Study of the Politics of Securitization in Mohamed Morsi's Egypt

Fatema Nooruddin

ABSTRACT

In the last two decades, academic work published on sectarianism in the Middle East has focused on the Sunni-Shi'a conflict in either states with heterogeneous Muslim populations, such as Lebanon and Iraq, or postwar states, such as Yemen and Syria. In other states, like Egypt and Sudan, academic work on sectarianism mainly revolved around the Muslim-Christian conflict, due to the assumption that the Muslim population is homogeneously Sunni. By studying the case of Egypt during Mohamed Morsi's rule, this study aims to explain the Sunni-Shi'a divide in a state that contains a homogenous Muslim population of one main sect. In this thesis, the theories of sectarian socialization and violent socialization are used to show that sectarian sentiments increased during this short period. The study explores the correlation between the rise of Islamists in Egypt and the increase in the sectarian divide. The perspective of the socialized Egyptians is also examined to reach an understanding of their belief in a societal threat. The threat is correlated with two main events during this period: Morsi's efforts to normalize Egyptian-Iranian relations and the rise of Salafi-jihadism in Syria. The thesis concludes that Morsi's policies and failure to invalidate the societal threat delegitimized his credibility as a president and fueled sectarian violence in Egypt.

Keywords: Egypt; Sectarianism; Socialization; Securitization; Mohamed Morsi

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CHAPTER ONE

INTRODUCTION

1.1 Introduction

After the United States invasion of Iraq in 2003, academic work on sectarianism in the Middle East increased exponentially (Byman, 2014; Salloukh, 2015; Haddad, 2017). Scholars argue that the collapse of the state in Iraq after the 2003 invasion fueled sectarian affiliations and divisions (Salloukh, 2015). The invasion of Iraq and its tragic aftermath led to the production of academic work on sectarianism that mostly tackles the Sunni-Shi'a divide in the Middle East. The majority of research has been on states containing heterogeneous Muslim populations of sizeable Sunni and Shi'a communities, such as Iraq and Lebanon (Byman, 2014; Haddad, 2017). Academic work on the Sunni-Shi'a conflict in states like Yemen and Syria attribute it to the regional geo-sectarian contest over the Middle East (Kaddorah, 2018). In other states, like Egypt and Sudan, the focus has been on the Christian-Muslim conflict (Byman, 2014; Haddad, 2017).

Egypt is considered one of the Middle Eastern countries that contain a relatively homogenous Sunni population. Shi'as in Egypt are estimated to be less than one percent of the population (Saleh & Kraetzschmar, 2015). Consequently, most academic work on sectarianism in Egypt mainly examines discrimination against the country's largest minority group: the Copts (El-Badawy, 2016; Guirguis, 2017; Rugh, 2016). This thesis contributes to the existing literature on sectarianism in the Middle East by exploring an understudied topic: the Sunni-Shi'a divide in a homogenous Muslim population, namely Egypt after the January 25 Revolution.

Many factors that explain the Sunni-Shi'a divide in other states are not applicable in Egypt because of differences in domestic dynamics, population-sect distribution, and history. Unlike other Arab states facing sectarian divisions, the Sunni-Shi'a divide in Egypt is not a result of a struggle for political power, as the Egyptian Shi'a community does not have enough members to politically mobilize or compete over political or economic resources. In contrast to other populations in the region, the tension is not a result of a struggle to claim a Sunni or a Shi'a identity in the country. What then explains the increase in sectarian agitation in this comparatively homogenous Muslim population?

Some scholars have attributed the increasing Sunni-Shi'a divide in Morsi's Egypt to the newly founded Salafi parties and their competition with the Muslim Brotherhood over religious and political legitimacy (Saleh & Kraetzschmar, 2015). Before the January 25 Revolution, the Muslim Brotherhood faced state restrictions under the rule of leaders like Gamal Abdel Nasser and Hosni Mubarak. During Mohamed Morsi's rule, the first democratically elected president after the January 25 Revolution, Islamists were able to mobilize and spread their sectarian ideas easily and without any state restrictions. Therefore, during the transitional stage in Egypt, it was easier to promote and spread sectarian sentiments in an open political arena.

Social media has been recognized for playing a key role in igniting the January 25 Revolution in Egypt (Eltantawy & Wiest, 2011; Howard & Hussain, 2011). Similarly, to raise awareness of the societal threat in Egypt, Islamist parties and figures relied on mass media outlets. The ability to operate with fewer state restrictions enabled important and influential figures in Egypt to share their views freely and easily with the public on television shows and in local newspapers. By relying on sectarian socialization as a theory, this thesis explains the reasons behind the rapid increase of anti-Shi'a sentiments among

the Egyptian population in such a short period. The term socialization refers to the process whereby people in a community or culture are taught specific values, social norms, beliefs, and behavior patterns (Grusec & Hastings, 2006). The socialization process is not static and individuals could be socialized according to changing circumstances (Grusec & Hastings, 2006). In *Political Order in Changing Societies*, Samuel Huntington (2006) introduces the theory of political socialization. He defines it as a shift in the attitudes and values of people as a result of education, literacy, better communications, mass media exposure, and urbanization (Huntington & Fukuyama, 2006).

After the January 25 Revolution, Islamists socialized sectarianism by weaponizing the mass media. The transition from sectarian socialization to violent socialization occurred when socialized Egyptians mobilized against the societal threat. The transition demonstrates the success of the political securitization practice, which is when a public issue turns into a security problem (Balzacq, 2005). During Morsi's rule, the Egyptian population perceived the Shi'a threat as a societal threat. This thesis explores the impact of Morsi's domestic and foreign policies on the socialization of sectarianism and the process of political securitization. It also studies the role of Islamists and the consequences of the political competition between them. To understand the perspective of the socialized Egyptians to the societal threat, the study addresses two main political events that transpired during Morsi's presidency: attempts to normalize Egyptian-Iranian relations and the escalation of the Syrian conflict into a civil war.

1.2 Research Questions

What then explains the threat of a Shi'a population in Egypt if the majority of the Egyptian Muslim population is homogenously Sunni Muslim? What is the correlation

between the growth of sectarian violence and the political rise of Islamists in Morsi's Egypt?

To answer the research questions, it is important to first answer a set of background questions: Why is Morsi's rule significant for the study of the Sunni-Shi'a divide in Egypt? How were Islamists in Egypt successful in spreading the fear of a Shi'a threat after the January 25 Revolution? What proves that sectarian sentiments increased during Morsi's rule? The second step would be to explore Islamist explanations behind the existence of a Shi'a threat in Egypt by studying their campaigns and statements. The questions that should be answered here are: What are some of the common factors used to explain the threat in Egypt? How did Morsi's policies and the tension between the Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafi parties impact the conflict?

1.3 Methodology

The thesis will be a single case study where the theory of sectarian socialization is used to explain the fear of a Shi'a threat in Egypt after the January 25 Revolution. It will explore the justifications used by Islamists to explain the legitimacy of fighting a Shi'a threat in a relatively homogenous Sunni population. The goal is to link data, the content that was produced by Islamists under Morsi's rule, with theory: sectarian socialization. The thesis sheds light on the perspective and actions of a specific social group: in this case, the focus is on the actions of the Salafi and Islamist groups and their followers' reactions and responses to them.

The focus is on the post-January 25 Revolution because it was a transitional time from Mubarak's authoritarian rule to a supposedly democratic one. Morsi's rule was in the

context of regional and local instability. Studies have shown that the socialization process is more likely to be successful during times of uncertainty and change (Grusec and Hastings, 2017). Therefore, the theory of socialization and the concept of political securitization are suitable for the case in question. This period was chosen because the research aims to prove that the power and freedom that the Islamist movements acquired after the revolution enabled them to reinforce and install sectarian sentiments on a wider scale in a short period. During this time, there were divisions between the Muslim Brotherhood and Salafi parties. Hence, the aim is to distinguish if each group had different motives behind spreading sectarianism. Another aim is to study if sectarianism was an outcome of the rivalry between them.

The collected primary sources include virtual outputs and mass media outputs that were produced with the motive of spreading more awareness about the societal threat. The data consists of Friday sermons at mosques, banners, and posters that were produced by the campaigners, campaigners' statements on talk shows of newly founded Islamist television channels, and news reports of their protests. The collected data was produced under Morsi's rule. Therefore, it has to be within the timeframe of 30 April 2011 to 3 July 2013. On 30 April 2011, Morsi officially established the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP), a party that is strongly linked to the Muslim Brotherhood. On 3 July 2013, Morsi was officially overthrown after a military coup and nation-wide protests demanding his resignation. The data will be used to trace the socialization timeline in chapter two. In chapter four, it will also be used to identify the justifications behind the Shi'a threat in Egypt: the projection of an Iranian regime's threat and the Syrian Assad regime's threat. Even though primary material will not directly be used or cited in the thesis, it nevertheless, guided the outlines of the chapters and the process of gathering secondary

sources. The primary material was used to understand and outline the process of securitization during Morsi's rule. Therefore, the thesis is based on secondary sources. Relevant academic work will be utilized to explore the theory of socialization. The thesis will analyze the impact of Morsi's policies, the Brotherhood-Salafi rivalry, and regional political events on the sectarian divide in Egypt. It will be argued that Morsi's policies towards religious minority groups contributed to his downfall, as he took part in the process of political securitization and fueled sectarian violence.

1.4 Map of Thesis

The thesis is divided into five chapters. The next chapter provides the theoretical framework of the thesis. By examining the origins and development of socialization theory, the theory of sectarian socialization will be explained. The chapter will tackle the methods used by Islamists to spread their message, their use of media as a tool, and their success in spreading their message and mobilizing supporters. A timeline explaining the socialization process and its results will be provided. In an attempt to prove that sectarian sentiments increased during Morsi's rule, the timeline will explain the escalation of sectarian socialization into violent socialization. It starts with the aftermath of the January 25 Revolution and ends with Morsi's overthrow. The third chapter examines the significance of Morsi's rule to the sectarian divide in Egypt, the political rise of Islamists after the January 25 Revolution, and the divide between the Muslim Brotherhood and the newly founded Salafi parties. It is important to explain the significance of Morsi becoming the first democratically elected president after the revolution to Islamist groups in Egypt, given their history and conflicts with previous Egyptian presidents. The chapter explores

the roles of the Muslim Brotherhood and the Salafis' roles as socialization agents. One of the main objectives of the third chapter is to shed light on the Islamists' ability to mobilize and promote their ideas without any state restrictions during Morsi's rule, as it is the main factor behind their success in socializing sectarianism. Chapter four identifies and explains the justifications for a Shi'a threat in Egypt from the perspective of the socialized Egyptians. This will also be linked to domestic, regional, and international affairs. Islamists associated the societal threat with two main threats: the Iranian regime's threat and the Assad regime's threat. Therefore, the fourth chapter evaluates the impact of Morsi's relations with Iran and the rise of Salafi-jihadism on the sectarian divide in Egypt. The final chapter spells out the implications of this case study's findings. It reflects on whether Morsi's fate would have differed if sectarianism was not socialized in Egypt and if he had implemented other policies. Chapter five will also conclude if sectarian socialization was a result of the conflict between the newly established Salafi parties and the Muslim Brotherhood.

CHAPTER TWO

SECTARIAN SOCIALIZATION: A THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

2.1 Introduction

This chapter examines socialization theory and sectarian socialization in Egypt after the January 25 Revolution. The first section examines the origins of socialization theory and the sociologists' and psychologists' emphasis on parental socialization. Initial work on socialization theory focused on the process of teaching children values and norms. Even though the concept is not widely used in academic work, the information presented is based on a similar theory, religious socialization. The section also assesses the development of socialization theory with the contributions of political scientists and the emergence of new theories such as political socialization, racial socialization, and violent socialization. It concludes with a definition of sectarian socialization theory.

The second section examines sectarian socialization in Egypt after the January 25 Revolution, namely during Morsi's era. A timeline of the socialization process from 2011 to 2013 is provided. The objective of the timeline is to demonstrate the success of the socialization process. By showcasing the escalation from sectarian socialization to violent socialization, the aim is to prove that sectarian sentiments increased during Morsi's rule. The timeline will reveal the impact the Islamists' campaigns had on their target audience, as they eventually mobilized in support of the campaigns' mission. Islamists utilized media outlets as tools to promote their campaigns' objectives and reach their audience.

Therefore, the section concludes with an evaluation of the importance of the role of the media in socializing sectarianism.

2.2 Sectarian Socialization Theory

2.2.1 Origins of Socialization Theory

Socialization can broadly be defined as the process by which individuals are taught the accepted behavioral patterns, skills, and values needed to assimilate into society (Grusec & Hastings, 2006). The socialization process involves the acquirement of socially constructed rules, beliefs, values, standards, and roles. It can take place in various forms and could be conducted by various influential agents or authority figures, such as parents, schoolteachers, and religious leaders. Socialization also includes the generational transmission of culture, which explains the preservation of some cultural practices and traditions for centuries. Culture is not static, as some practices are not adopted by the next generations and new ones are socialized (Grusec & Hastings, 2006). People can adapt to changing circumstances through socialization. Moreover, it occurs throughout the individual's lifespan, and not just during early age. However, in the mid-twentieth century, socialization was perceived as a process that mainly takes place during childhood.

In the 1940s, the term 'socialization' became widely used. In earlier work on socialization, theorists used other terms to describe the process. In *Mind, Self, and Society*, George Mead (1934) refers to the process as social behaviorism. Based on his theory that people mirror the behavior of the people surrounding them, he argues that the behavior of an individual can only be understood by studying the social group one belongs to (Mead, 1934). Early work on socialization theory was conducted by theorists interested in

explaining the process of teaching values and ethics to children (Grusec & Davidov, 2010). Theories focused mainly on parenting styles and on how parents socialized their children. Theorists attributed children's attainment of values to the process of socialization with their guardians and caregivers who are considered authority figures (Harris, 1957). Therefore, children were perceived as the learners who were going to be socialized and adults had the obligation to teach them. Psychologists argued that the socialization of children is a result of their dependency on their parents, as well as the urge to replicate them, or the fear of discipline and punishment (Grusec & Davidov, 2010).

Most work on socialization has focused on discipline as a method for social development. The correlation between discipline and the socialization of values led to the generation of various theories based on Sigmund Freud's child development theory (Carmichael & Mussen, 1970). Freud emphasized the significance of early childhood on personality development (Senn et al, 1975). He argues that early socialization by parents leads to the internalization of values and norms in children, which will eventually serve as a guide for their behavior without the need for direction from an authority figure. Researchers conducted comparative studies on different parenting approaches and their impact on socialization. Wesley Becker (1964) created a behavior analysis model in which he identified the parenting style based on two variables: Parents' restrictiveness versus permissiveness; and parent's warmth versus hostility.

Becker found that in a warm but restrictive parenting environment, children are more likely to be well socialized and passive (Gullotta, Adams & Markstorm-Adams, 2000). However, Diana Baumrind (1967) had reported that the children of warm and controlling parents are more likely to be confident, responsible and independent than passive. Baumrind's (1971) study on parent-child relationships has shown that firm but

balanced control leads to better socialization results than an authoritarian parenting style. Even though this thesis is not about parental socialization, early work on socialization theory paved the way for other types of theories, namely political socialization and racial socialization.

2.2.2 The Development of Socialization Theory

The field of socialization theory made significant developments through the inclusion of new theoretical perspectives. Psychologists and sociologists dominated early studies of socialization by focusing on the parent-child relationship. However, political scientists contributed to the development of socialization theory as they studied the process of socialization conducted by other authority figures. Theorists became interested in studying the socialization of political orientations and views during late adolescence and adulthood. In 1954, Gardner Lindzey was the first to use the term ‘political socialization’ in his book, *The Handbook of Social Psychology* (Wasburn & Adkins Covert, 2017). He claims that political socialization mostly takes place during national elections as they facilitate political conversations between parents and children (Lindzey, 1954). Therefore, even in early work on political socialization, the emphasis was mainly on parents as the authority figures and socializing agents. In 1959, Herbert Hiram Hyman published *Political Socialization*, the first book dedicated to the newly founded theory (Wasburn & Adkins Covert, 2017). Through a psychological approach, he also focused on the correlation between childhood experience and political patterns (Hyman, 1959).

Hyman’s contribution expanded research on political socialization exponentially (Sears, 1990). Between the late 1960s and early 1970s, studies on political socialization increased drastically and it became a recognized field within Political Science (Wasburn

& Adkins Covert, 2017). In *Political Order in Changing Societies*, Samuel Huntington (1968) refers to Karl Deutsch's social mobilization theory to explain the process of socializing new patterns of behavior. According to Deutsch (1961), social mobilization is the "process by which major clusters of old social, economic and psychological commitments are eroded or broken and people become available for new patterns of socialization and behavior" (p. 494). Huntington suggests that re-socialization is a "consequence of literacy, education, increased communications, mass media exposure, and urbanization" (Huntington & Fukuyama, 2006, p. 33). His contribution to the theory is important because he recognized that socialization is not a static process and is not limited to a specific age group. Huntington acknowledged communications and mass media as essential factors behind the socialization process, which is significant to the question of sectarian socialization in Morsi's Egypt.

Early researchers on political socialization argued that major political, religious, and social beliefs are highly consistent and rigid to change throughout a lifespan (Campbell, Converse, Miller, & Stokes, 1980; Lindzey, 1958). David Sears describes early research focusing on childhood experiences as the "traditional topic of political socialization research" (1990, p.71). His study on journal articles and research published from 1982 to 1986 proves that political scientists' interest in early socialization drastically diminished. By assessing the literature, Sears identified and conceptualized the different models of persistence. Sears' models of persistence are:

1. The persistence perspective: the view that pre-adult socialization is resistant to change. Traditional work on political socialization adopted the persistence perspective.

2. The lifelong openness perspective: the view that age is irrelevant to behavior and attitude change. It maintains that political views have a relatively constant potential for change at all ages (Wasburn & Adkins Covert, 2017).
3. The lifecycle perspective: the view that one's likely to adopt specific outlooks at certain life stages. For example, an older person is more likely to be conservative.
4. The impressionable years perspective: the view that one's more likely to be flexible to changes and different views in late adolescence and young adulthood.

Early theorists overestimated the stability of political views and relied on the persistence perspective. By the 1980s, political scientists started adopting other perspectives. In 1982, Gregory Markus (1986) conducted a study exploring change in political views by interviewing the respondents of a national survey that took place nine years earlier. The 1973 survey targeted high school students and their parents. Nine years later, Markus was able to analyze two different generations' flexibility to political change. The 1982 interviews proved that the younger generation was more open to changes. The offspring generation was still more liberal than the parents' generation, especially regarding issues such as the "rights of the accused, marijuana legalization, and overall ideological posture" (Markus, 1986, p. 26). However, both generations demonstrated more positive views and attitudes towards issues such as gender equality, government job guarantees, and aid to minorities. Therefore, the study's findings support Sear's impressionable years perspective, as young adults were more flexible to change than the parents' generation.

The study of political socialization facilitated a newfound interest in studying human adoption of radical beliefs or sectarian attitudes. The civil rights movement in the 1960s and its aftermath created an interest in the socialization of discriminatory attitudes.

Academics started exploring topics such as the construction of racial identities and public racial violence (Burt et al, 2012; DuRocher, 2011; Miller, 1999). They have explored the practice of racial-ethnic socialization in the African-American community as a resilience method and a coping mechanism against discrimination (Burt et al, 2012). African American parents racially socialize their children to prepare them for a hostile environment where their race has negative connotations (Miller, 1999). Kristina DuRocher (2011) considers the lynching ritual as a form of violent socialization. She regards it as a system of reinforcing the white community's own conceptions of racial supremacy. Jeffrey Checkel (2017) examines the link between socialization and violence in many settings, including civil wars, national militaries, and street gangs. Researchers have also used violent socialization theory to explain case studies of child soldiers (Gates & Reich, 2010; Weierstall et al, 2013). The notion of violent socialization is essential to the case study of Morsi's Egypt. The next section explores the way in which sectarian socialization in Egypt eventually escalated to violent socialization.

2.2.3 The Development of Sectarian Socialization Theory

Sectarian socialization is not a widely used concept or theory. Therefore, the description of the theory will be based on research and academic work on related theories such as religious socialization. Similar to early work on socialization theory, the literature on religious socialization mainly focuses on parents' influence on their children's religious beliefs (Acock & Bengtson, 1978; Hunsberger & Brown, 1984).

Alan Acock and Vern Bengtson (1978) found that mothers usually influence political and religious orientations. Bruce E. Hunsberger and L. B. Brown (1984) also argue that parents, especially the mother, enormously affected their respondents' religious

beliefs. Religious socialization leads to the formation of individuals' religious beliefs and preferences. Petts and Desmond (2016) describe religious socialization as the process associated with the adoption of religious values and beliefs. Darren Sherkat (2003) defines religious socialization as "the process through which social agents influence individuals' religious beliefs and understandings" (p. 151). Sears (1990) argues that socialization and attitude change takes place when the pressure to change exceeds the resistance to change. According to him, the stability of views is a result of high resistance to change or the lack of socialization pressure.

Maria Klingenberg and Sofia Sjö (2019) criticize the focus on parental socialization and propose a tentative definition for religious socialization. They argue for the study of other socialization agents and not just parents. They recognize the significance of family in the process of socialization but are concerned about the risks of limiting and narrowing the study of religious socialization through the neglect of other social agents and experiences. The definition they suggest mirrors the definition introduced by Sherkat (2003), but they do not limit religious socialization to a specific life stage. They rather define religious socialization as "the process in which an individual comes to hold preferences in relation to dimensions understood as religious in the surrounding context" (p. 174). Their aim is to provide space for the study of religious viewpoints, non-religious viewpoints, and anything in between through the theory of socialization.

My aim now is to define a theory of sectarian socialization based on a crosspollination between the literatures on religious socialization theory and sectarianism. Despite its use extensively, scholars have failed to reach a definition of sectarianism. Fanar Haddad argues that the literature on sectarianism has increased at a rapid rate in the last few years, yet most works aim to investigate the political and social impact of

sectarianism without even defining sectarianism (2017). He acknowledges scholars' efforts to classify different types of sectarianism, such as violent sectarianism and social sectarianism, but he still believes that the classifications are not enough to reach a full understanding of the term itself. Haddad (2014) claims that after the 2003 US invasion of Iraq, the term 'sectarianism' usually refers to "violent sectarian conflict, widespread sectarian hate, or the empowerment of sect-centric political actors" (pp. 146). Marcia Roche (2016) refers to Michael Hogan's (1984) definition of sectarianism as "the hostility between different churches or sects which has manifested itself in the wider arena of social and political conflict" (pp. 217). Both of them studied and assessed the sectarian conflict between the Catholics and Protestants in Australia. Alternatively, Bassel Salloukh et al. reject ahistorical and cultural explanations of sectarianism in Lebanon and define sectarianism as "practices of governance" (2015).

In this thesis, sectarian socialization is defined as the process of fostering and nurturing negative and hostile attitudes towards another sect and its members. In a similar manner to Burt's (2012) explanation of the theory of racial socialization as a form of cultivating resilience within the African-American community, sectarian socialization in Egypt was perceived as a form of preparation against the Shi'a threat and the risk of Shi'ism spreading in Egypt. Saleh & Kraetzschmar (2015) explain it as a form of 'societal security', in which society aims to maintain its values and character under changing pressures and threats. In the case of Morsi's Egypt, the alleged threat was the Shi'a community. This study follows Sear's lifelong openness perspective because Egyptians of all ages were socialized. In other words, the focus is not on early parental socialization. Hence, the socialization agents are not the parents. In the case of Morsi's Egypt, the socialization agents are the Islamist leaders and figures that used media outlets as tools to

mobilize their followers. The next section sheds more light on the process of sectarian socialization in Egypt after the revolution. It explains the role the media played in accelerating the socialization process. The main aim of the next section is to prove that sectarian sentiments increased during Morsi's rule.

2.3 Sectarian Socialization in Morsi's Egypt

2.3.1 Timeline of Sectarian Socialization in Morsi's Egypt

After the January 25 Revolution, Egypt underwent a period of political and social instability after authoritarian regime breakdown. Grusec and Hastings (2017) recognize the impact that changing social circumstances have on socialization. They suggest people get socialized as a form of adaptation in times of uncertainty, instability, and changes. Even though Morsi's rule lasted for just one year, the socialization process succeeded in a short period of time as a result of socialization pressure. In times of change, the socialization pressure exceeds and overcomes the resistance to socialization. The following timeline demonstrates the process of sectarian socialization in Egypt after the January 25 Revolution. It provides an overview of the increase in sectarian sentiments and escalation to violent sectarianism. Moreover, the concept of political securitization is introduced. The timeline starts with the 2011 revolution's aftermath and ends with the 2013 coup d'état.

I. The Aftermath of the January 25 Revolution

In early 2011, a wave of mass protests erupted all over Egypt, demanding the resignation of President Hosni Mubarak who was in power since 1981. On 11 February 2011, Mubarak's decision to step down after thirty years was celebrated by millions of

Egyptians who were hoping to start a new chapter in Egypt's modern political history. Just like the case of Tunisia, the revolution presented Egypt's Islamist groups with the prospect of a power shift. Prior to the January 25 Revolution, Islamist movements were hindered from politically participating in the government (Wilmot, 2015). 2011 was a historic chance for the Muslim Brotherhood to operate freely and gain political power (Tadros, 2011). However, the new opportunity presented the Muslim Brotherhood with a new challenge and rival: the Salafis. As the Islamist scene became more diversified, the Brotherhood was no longer the only Islamist group competing for political power. The political rise of Islamists worried the revolution's secular and youth movements who were skeptical of the Islamist parties' stance on women's and religious minorities' rights. (Al-Anani & Malik, 2013; Ozen, 2018; Shehata, 2011).

One of the key features of the political system in post-Mubarak Egypt is the emergence of new political parties (Tavana, 2011). Two weeks after Mubarak's resignation, the Muslim Brotherhood announced its decision to form a political party, the Freedom and the Justice Party (FJP) (Wilmot, 2015). In March 2011, the Supreme Council of Armed Forces (SCAF) permitted the establishment of new political parties after amending the electoral law (Tadros, 2011). On 6 June 2011, the FJP was granted legal status (Wilmot, 2015). On their part, Egyptian Salafis formed three political parties; Al-Nour (Light) Party, Al-Asala (Authenticity) Party, and Al-Fadhila (Virtue) Party (Al-Anani & Malik, 2013). This thesis focuses mainly on Al-Nour Party as it was the most successful in elections and played the most significant role in socializing sectarianism. The Salafi members of a religious organization called the Salafi Call, or the Salafi Da'wa in Arabic established the party. (Al-Anani & Malik, 2013; Lacroix, 2016). A few days after Mubarak's resignation, one of the founders of the Salafi Da'wa, Imad Abd al-

Ghaffour, decided to create Al-Nour Party (Lacroix, 2016). His aim was to politically include Salafis in the transitional period and to ensure the presence of an Islamic party. In May 2011, Al-Nour Party was officially founded (Shalata, 2016).

The 2011-2012 parliamentary elections and the 2012 presidential elections were crucial both locally, but also globally given Egypt's geopolitical weight. The parliamentary elections were held from 28 November 2011 until 11 January 2012. Egyptians had the opportunity to determine the fate of their country and choose between "a conservative and religious democracy under the Muslim Brotherhood government or a liberal democracy under the coalition of secular forces – the Egyptian Bloc and al-Wafd" (Ozen, 2018, pp. 454). The voter turnout of the 2011 parliamentary elections increased drastically in comparison to previous elections: from 23% in 2005 to 54% in 2011 (Farrag & Shamma, 2014). The FJP and Al-Nour Party were the two most successful parties in the 2011 parliamentary elections as they secured more than 60% of parliamentary seats (Farrag & Shamma, 2014). The FJP secured the most seats, followed by Al-Nour Party who took second place in the polls, leaving the secular parties in third place (Saleh & Kraetzschmar, 2015). The 2012 presidential elections took place in two rounds, in May and June. On 30 June 2012, Mohamed Morsi, a leading figure at the Brotherhood and FJP, was sworn in as Egypt's president (Bardhan, 2014).

II. Sectarian Socialization

The 2011 revolution altered the dynamics of sectarianism in Egypt as new movements, such as the Salafi parties, wanted to be politically involved in the new government. The Copts, Baha'is, and Shi'as, formerly apolitical minority groups, also wanted to be involved to protect their rights (Marechal & Zemni 2013). The number of Shi'as in Egypt is unknown as many of them practice their religion in secrecy. However,

some of them perceived the January 25 Revolution as an opportunity to reveal their religious beliefs in hopes of gaining societal acceptance and rights for their community (McGrath, 2013).

Saleh and Kraetzschmar (2015) claim that the newly founded Salafi parties are the reason behind the political and ideological transition in Egypt from the Islamist-Secularist divide into sectarian politics. They refer to Ole Wæver's (2011) work on the politics of securitization to explain the increase in sectarian sentiments. Wæver attributes the securitization process to the theory of 'speech act', which is the act of persuading people that a regular matter is a state security issue or threat. The securitization agent starts spreading the word of the existence of a specific threat to a state or community in order to spread the fear and urgency for a solution (Saleh & Kraetzschmar, 2015). Therefore, based on the theories and presented analysis, Salafis socialized sectarianism in Egypt by spreading the belief of a Shi'a threat and the necessity of protecting Egypt's Sunni identity, and, hence, securitized the Shi'a sect and its members.

The case of post-Mubarak Egypt proves that it is not an exception to Jack Snyder's (2000) transition to democracy theory. Snyder claims that ethnic, nationalist, and sectarian divides are more likely to flourish after the collapse of a non-democratic order and the development of democratic competition (Brooke, 2017). Al-Nour Party organized campaigns on the Shi'a threat in Egypt. On their TV channels, they reminded their supporters of the dangers of Shi'ism by asserting that Shi'as should not be integrated into Egyptian society due to their acts of insulting the companions of Prophet Muhammad (McGrath, 2013). Salafi clergymen stood on podiums and declared Shi'as as "filthy", "infidels", and "enemies of Islam" (Seikaly & Iskandar, 2013).

In April 2011, just three months after the revolution, the director of Sawasya Centre for Human Rights, Abdel Moneim Abdel Maqsoud, claimed that sectarian conflict is unlikely to take place in Egypt, due to the small percentage of Egyptian Shi'as (McGrath, 2011). He also believed that normalization with Iran could help in assimilating Egyptian Shi'as (McGrath, 2011). Unfortunately, Abdel Maqsoud's predictions were incorrect. Egyptian Salafis expressed their disapproval of Shi'ism and its linkage to the Iranian government (Saleh & Kraetzschmar, 2015). Morsi's attempts to normalize Egypt's relationship with Iran fueled sectarian strife and re-enforced the views of a Shi'a threat in Egypt (Brooke, 2017; El-Gundy, 2013; Saleh & Kraetzschmar, 2015). Iran's support for Bashar Al-Assad's oppressive regime was one of the main factors behind Egyptians' rejection of normalization with Iran and the entry of Iranian tourists to Egypt. In a televised rally against the Syrian government organized by the MB and Salafist groups, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, an Egyptian Islamic theologian, called for Sunni Muslims to fight the Shi'as in Syria (Brooke, 2017). Several speakers reminded Morsi, who was attending the rally, of his duty towards cleansing "those filth who insult the Prophet and his companions" (Brooke, 2017, pp. 852).

High profile and well-known religious figures and institutions played a significant role in enforcing sectarian sentiments (Brooke, 2017). In September 2011, Ahmad al-Tayyeb, the Grand Imam of al-Azhar, publicly condemned the growth of Shi'ism in Sunni countries (Brooke, 2017). In an online video, the founder of the ultra-orthodox Salafist Call, Mohamed Islamil Makdam, publicly blamed the Brotherhood for permitting Shi'ism in Egypt and called for fighting it to prevent it from spreading (El-Gundy, 2013). In a parliamentary session, a Salafi member of the parliament stated that Shi'as are a danger to Egypt's national security (Brooke, 2017). Based on Wæver's (2011) work on the

politics of securitizing religious communities, the presented statements and actions are examples of speech acts. The securitization and socialization agents, the Islamists, spread the word of a Shi'a threat in Egypt, and hence, succeed in securitizing the Egyptian Shi'a community. The next section explains the impact the Islamists had on their supporters.

III. Violent Socialization

Egyptian Salafis were able to depict Shi'ism as a societal threat. This, in turn, encouraged their supporters to use violence against Egyptian Shi'as (Saleh & Kraetzschmar, 2015). In April 2011, Ahmad Rasem El-Nafis, a Shi'a scholar, was hopeful that the 2011 revolution would grant religious minorities respect and tolerance (McGrath, 2011). He, and a group of Shi'as, attempted to form a political party called 'The Tahrir Party' (El-Gundy, 2013; McGrath, 2011). Egyptian Shi'as claimed that their conditions worsened when Morsi assumed power (McGrath, 2013). In 2013, El-Nafis claimed that Morsi's government applied discriminatory procedures against Shi'as and has not taken the necessary measures against Salafi extremists (McGrath, 2013). Based on his statements two years later, El-Nafis' initial hopes and expectations were dashed.

Sectarian socialization eventually escalated to violent socialization when the campaigns' supporters mobilized against the Shi'a threat in Egypt. In December 2011, at Old Cairo's Al-Hussein Mosque, a clash erupted between Salafi groups and members of the Egyptian Shi'a community who were at the mosque for Ashura, a significant day for Shi'a Muslims (El-Gundy, 2013). The conflict ended with the arrests of several people and the mosque's closure (El-Gundy, 2013).

The Egyptian government's decision to permit Iranian tourists to enter the country also sparked outrage within the Salafi community. A Salafi clergyman claimed that Iranian tourism could lead to spreading Shi'ism in Egypt (Saleh & Kraetzschmar, 2015).

During Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's historic visit to Egypt in February 2013, a man attempted to throw a shoe at him as he shouted, "you killed our brothers!" (Hill, 2013). During the same visit to Egypt, al-Tayyeb warned Iran against spreading Shi'ism in Sunni-majority countries and against interfering in their state's domestic affairs (Hendawi, 2013). In April 2013, people gathered in front of Al-Azhar to protest against the presence of Iranian tourists in Egypt and held signs denouncing Iran and Shi'ism (Saleh & Kraetzschmar, 2015).

One of the most significant sectarian events took place a week prior to the protests against Morsi. On 23 June 2013, a mob of people in Abu Musallam village gathered in front of the house of an Egyptian Shi'a who was hosting people in celebration of a religious holiday (Brooke, 2017). A Salafi imam at the local mosque incited the crowd of people (Abou-El-Fadl, 2015). The mob attacked the house with rocks and Molotov cocktails for three hours (Brooke, 2017). The situation escalated when the mob physically attacked four Egyptian Shi'as to death, lynched them and paraded their bodies around the village (Abou-El-Fadl, 2015; Al-Tabei, 2013; Brooke, 2017). DuRocher (2011) described the ritual of lynching African Americans in the South as a form of violent socialization. Similarly, the acts of physically attacking, lynching, murdering, and parading the dead are all considered forms of violent socialization. Egyptians accused Morsi of compliance and endorsement of violence for not protecting the rights of minority groups (Seikaly & Iskandar, 2013). The attack demonstrates the escalation from sectarian socialization or speech act to violent socialization.

On 30 June 2013, a year after Morsi's presidential inauguration, millions of Egyptians demanded his resignation from office as they protested in the streets (Wilmot, 2015). The army, led by Egypt's current president and previous minister of defense Abdel

Fattah el-Sisi, issued an ultimatum for Morsi to meet the protestors' demands in 48 hours (Tabaar, 2013). On 3 July 2013, the army ousted Egypt's first democratically elected president, Mohamed Morsi. Morsi's era started with sectarian socialization and ended with violent socialization.

2.3.2 The Power of Media

Researchers have recognized the role that social media played in igniting the 2011 Arab Spring (Bardhan, 2014; Hassan, Kendall, & Whitefield, 2016). They acknowledged the use of social media websites, such as Twitter and Facebook, as operation rooms to gather momentum and mobilize the masses (El-Bendary, 2013). The role of social media was even prevalent post-revolution. During the 2011 parliamentary elections, the FJP and Al-Nour Party utilized media to their advantage and they succeeded in marketing their brands and reaching a large segment of Egypt's population (Farrag & Shamma, 2014). As Egypt has a youthful population, the reliance on social media for news and mobilization is not surprising. Statistics have shown that Egypt's the country with the most Facebook users in the Arab world (El-Bendary, 2013; Harlow, 2013). Social media provided Egyptians with a virtual public space for expression and communication with each other (Gazzar, 2013). It also provided Egyptian Islamists with the space to connect with their supporters and mobilize them.

Since the late 1990s, a highly researched topic has been the impact of digital media on religious beliefs (Lövheim, 2012). The media is a crucial element of religious socialization. Heidi Campbell (2012) defines the term 'digital religion' as the way religion is presented and expressed online and the way digital media is shaping and being shaped by religion. Mia Lövheim (2012) conducted a study on the significance of the media on

the process of religious socialization in the modern world. She asserts that adolescents and young adults today rely on new arenas for religious socialization, such as the media, instead of traditional religious institutions. She does not undermine the role of the family or religious institutions in the socialization process but claims that they are mainly impactful at the early stage of life.

In the last few years, as ISIL gained global prominence and attention, a field of interest has been the use of media by religious extremists and terrorists. Researchers examined the group's use of media to recruit fighters and spread their propaganda (Farwell, 2014). They succeeded in recruiting fighters from all around the world, including the United States and Europe (Zekulin, 2018) preconceived notions. Authorities have also used social media to detect individuals with pro-ISIL tendencies or are planning to join ISIL (Rowe & Saif, 2016). Regardless of the recent focus on ISIL, it was not the first terrorist group to utilize technological advances and media to their advantage. Lashkar-e-Taiba relied on Google Maps and commands during phone calls to execute their Mumbai attack in 2008, and Al-Shabaab used Twitter to brag and spread fear during its attack on a mall in Nairobi in 2013 (Farewell, 2014). Academics did not limit the digital religion field to the study of terrorist organizations and global terrorist events. They have also examined the media's impact on certain religious groups, movements, and ideologies.

One of the researched topics is the impact of social media on the Salafi movement. Religious TV channels are not a new phenomenon in Egypt as some channels have provided prayer recitation and Quran readings. However, in the early 2000s, Salafis started using mass media to spread their message. As satellite dishes and receivers became more affordable, a wave of Salafism swept several countries (El-Sayed, 2009). Salafis were able to reach a larger audience, and Egypt was one of those countries. In 2003,

“Satellite Salafism” was the starting point of the rising support for the movement in Egypt (Al-Anani & Malik, 2013; Nathan & Hamam, 2009). Researchers divided religious Islamic satellite channels into two main types: Salafi channels and moderate channels (El-Sayed, 2009).

After the January 25 Revolution, Salafis started releasing and producing political content on mass and social media. The 2011-12 parliamentary elections results demonstrated their ability to mobilize their followers. Daniel Byman (2014) claims that social media accelerated the process of spreading sectarian messages. TV channels, such as Al-Nas and Al-Hafeth, incited the public and spread sectarian sentiments (Seikaly & Iskandar, 2013). The material produced by the Egyptian press and media during this period exaggerated the situation, and could have made the target audience believe that “Iran’s troops were massed on the border” (Byman, 2014, p. 81). El-Nafis also blames the Egyptian media for producing false news that dehumanized his community and linked them to the Iranian government (El-Gundy, 2013). Even though religious leaders used rallies and Friday prayer sermons to spread their ideas, the socialization process was unlikely to be as effective if they did not utilize media as a tool. Videos of their speeches at rallies and sermons were shared on social media websites such as Twitter, Facebook, and YouTube, hence, reaching a broad range of audiences.

2.4 Conclusion

This chapter has set the theoretical framework and provides evidence of the socialization of sectarianism in Egypt. Yet unlike early work on socialization, socialization is presented here as a lifelong process. Moreover, and while earlier work on

socialization focus on parents as the main socialization agent, this thesis provides an analysis of other socialization agents: religious leaders and figures. In comparison to the academic emphasis on state security in Egypt, the notion of societal security and threat was also examined. The research highlights the impact of non-state actors, the members of religious groups and movements. It examined the role they played in spreading the belief of a societal threat and, in the process, socializing sectarianism and mobilizing their supporters. In so doing, this chapter showed that sectarian sentiments increased during Morsi's rule. This chapter sets the theoretical framework and provides evidence of the socialization of sectarianism in Egypt. The next two chapters identify the factors influencing the socialization process. Chapter three explores the Salafi-Brotherhood feud and evaluates whether the conflict had an impact on increasing sectarian sentiments in Egypt, while chapter four explores the phenomenon from the perspective of the socialized agent's, the people who mobilized in support of the Islamists' campaigns.

CHAPTER THREE

THE SOCIALIZATION AGENTS' PERSPECTIVE: THE DIVERSIFICATION OF THE ISLAMIST SCENE IN MORSI'S EGYPT

3.1 Introduction

From Tunisia to Egypt, the wave of protests in early 2011 presented Islamists with the opportunity to acquire political power and become power holders after authoritarian regime breakdowns (Al-Anani, 2012). It also changed the narrative and image of Islamist parties and figures who were often portrayed as victims of authoritarian regimes. To demonstrate and prove to the world the compatibility between Islam and democracy, Islamist leaders had to allow others to operate in a freer environment without the kind of state restrictions that were previously imposed by the ousted authoritarian regime (Al-Anani, 2012). The rest of the world was debating and calculating the Muslim Brotherhood's chances of success. Meanwhile, in post-revolution Egypt, the new regime faced the challenge of permitting its rival, Al-Nour Party, the freedom to operate freely.

This chapter examines the significance of Mohamed Morsi's rule to Islamist politics in post-Mubarak Egypt. It also explains the significance of his rule to the Sunni-Shi'a divide in Egypt. Morsi's era signified the political participation of Islamists after the January 25 Revolution. The first section of this chapter discusses the political rise of the Islamists. The discussion includes one of the oldest political forces, the MB, and a movement that has recently entered the political arena, Egyptian Salafi parties. It highlights the discrepancies between the Islamist groups in a new context, as they are no longer placed in one category. As more political parties emerged, political competition

evolved from a distinction between Islamist group and secular groups to divides inside each category. As a result, the MB does not have a monopoly over the political Islamist scene in Egypt anymore. Morsi's era is characterized by the diversification of the Islamist scene in Egypt. The section presents the origins of the Salafi-Brotherhood feud and its escalation to public hostility. The second section explores the Salafis and MB's impact on the Sunni-Shi'a divide in Egypt. By exploring the roles the MB and the Salafis played in socializing sectarianism, we can then explore the correlation between this intra-islamist feud and the increase in sectarian sentiments during Morsi's rule. Consequently, while the previous chapter examined the increase in sectarian sentiments during Morsi's rule, this one surveys the conditions that enabled and facilitated the spread of sectarianism in Morsi's Egypt.

3.2 The Rise of Political Islamist Parties

3.2.1 The Muslim Brotherhood's Golden Opportunity

In 1928, a primary school teacher called Hassan Al-Banna founded the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt (Wickham, 2013). The MB was initially an apolitical and social service organization dedicated to encouraging religious and moral reforms (Munson, 2001). The name was chosen by Al-Banna who explained: "We are brothers in the service of Islam; hence we are the Muslim Brothers" (Wickham, 2013, pp. 21). Al-Banna criticized the monarchical regime, land ownership laws, and British imperialism (Wickham, 2013). In the late 1930s, the organization started delving into the political scene when they started collecting funds in support of the Arab general strike in Palestine (Gerges, 2018; Munson, 2001). The organization expanded and opened branches all over

Egypt, as well as in neighboring countries, such as Lebanon, Palestine, Sudan, Syria, and North Africa (Simms, 2002). In 1941, the MB officially entered the political sphere when they announced their candidates for the parliamentary elections and started organizing demonstrations demanding the withdrawal of British forces (Gerges, 2018; Munson, 2001).

From King Farouk to President Mubarak, the MB was perceived as an opposition movement and a threatening force to the Egyptian state. The Brotherhood was not taken seriously during King Fuad's rule and their letters to the king were ignored (Rinehart, 2009). The movement's expansion around the region in the late 1930s coincided with King Farouk's rule (Simms, 2002). They started gaining attention when they condemned the westernization of Egypt and the monarchy's relationship with the British Empire (Gerges, 2018; Rinehart, 2009; Simms, 2002). In December 1948, Egypt's Prime Minister, Mahmud al-Nuqrashi, issued a military order demanding the closure of the MB's branches, the confiscation of their documents and publications, and the arrest of their members (Simms, 2002). A couple of weeks later, on 28 December 1948, the Brotherhood assassinated al-Nuqrashi (Rinehart, 2009). By February 1949, King Farouk's internal security apparatus allegedly assassinated Al-Banna (Brykczynski, 2005). Even with the Egyptian Revolution of 1952 and the end of the Pashalik regime, the MB continued to face state restrictions (Rinehart, 2009). On 26 October 1954, the Brotherhood's failed assassination attempt on President Gamal Abdel Nasser unleash against it the full repressive force of the regime (Gerges, 2018; Rinehart, 2009; Wilmot, 2015; Zollner, 2007). The harsh conditions of Nasser's jails and the imprisonment and execution of Sayyid Qutb underscored the Islamist-secular divide in the country (Brykczynski, 2005).

Under the presidency of Anwar Al-Sadat, the state's initial policies towards the MB were more relaxed (Zollner, 2007). Sadat's empowerment of Islamist discourse in Egypt backfired when he signed the Peace Treaty with Israel in 1979 (Ranko, 2014). His decision to normalize Egyptian-Israeli relations led to his assassination by a radical Islamist group on the eighth anniversary of the 1973 War (Ranko, 2014).

In the early stages of Mubarak's rule, the MB presented itself as a religious counselor to the state but switched its role to political opposition after expanding its presence in the parliament (Ranko, 2014). The group was accused of being authoritarian, oppressive, and a threat to the Egyptian nation (Ranko, 2014). The organization's turbulent history with the Egyptian state demonstrates the role it played as an opposition group and, hence, the obstacles that were thrown in its path.

After eighty-three years, two kings and five presidents, the Brotherhood became a ruling force to reckon with. The MB was taken aback by the protests of January 25, 2011. During the early days of the revolution, it was cautious of publicly affirming its support of the revolution, hoping that it could strike a deal with the regime. Only when the number of protestors increased and Mubarak's regime appeared to be unsalvageable did the MB assume an active role in the revolution (Tadros, 2011).

The end of Mubarak's rule led to the rise of the MB as a key player in the new political order (Al-Anani, 2015). In June 2011, they officially established the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) enabling them to compete in the parliamentary elections and presidential race. The MB's 2012 presidential win was their opportunity to prove that Islamists can participate in a democratic system. Just a couple of days before Mubarak's resignation, to assert their limited political aspirations, the MB announced their decision to refrain from running for the presidency and they promoted the slogan of "participation,

not domination” (Al-Anani, 2015, pp. 532). A member of the MB’s media group released those statements to CNN. The member happened to be Mohamed Morsi. As the organization gained the majority of the parliamentary seats and won the presidential elections, the group did not abide by their slogan and initial promises. Nevertheless, the MB still had the opportunity to prove itself and demonstrate the compatibility between democracy and Islam to the pessimists. In 2006, Hazim Farouk, a brotherhood member of parliament, stated: “bringing about reform requires freedom, freedom, freedom” (Stacher, 2010, pp. 348). For decades, the organization criticized previous regimes for imposing restrictions and limiting freedoms. They were, therefore, expected to lift state restrictions in post-revolution Egypt. Some of the questions raised during this period were: Is the Brotherhood committed to the implementation of democracy, and will it grant others the freedoms they were deprived of for decades? Or are they just another violent and power-hungry religious movement? Consequently, when Morsi became Egypt’s first democratically elected president, there was much speculation

3.2.2 The Emergence of Salafi Parties

Unlike the MB, Egyptian Salafis initially maintained an apolitical stance after authoritarian regime breakdown, and did not pursue political participation. Their decision to politically engage in the new regime was a significant transformation from their previous stance on political inclusivity. Khalil Al-Anani and Maszlee Malik (2013) define ‘Political Salafism’ as a “socio-religious trend that includes various Salafi groups, parties and movements who seek to voice their opinion in the public sphere whether through participating in formal politics or mobilizing in informal networks” (pp. 58). Under the presidency of Mubarak, Egyptian Salafis claimed that political participation was *haram*

or religiously forbidden (Brown, 2011). Their belief stemmed from a tradition of political quietism (Al-Anani & Malik, 2013; Brown, 2011).

As the followers of a movement that calls for the return to true Sunni Islam, Salafis rely on and refer to ninth and tenth-century religious texts (Brown, 2011). These texts preach against the political participation of Muslim masses and forbid rebellion against the ruler, except when a ruler or the society as a whole abandons Islam (Brown, 2011). This attitude stems from the belief that political participation and interference could lead to divisions, which consequently increases the chances of rebellions and instability (Cavatorta & Merone, 2016). Salafis believe that Sharia law was the only suitable system of governance for Muslims and they forbid participation in a democratic system and, hence, voting (Brown, 2011). They view democracy as a western invention that contradicts their movement's values which is the return to and revival of true Sunni Islam. The word *salaf* stands for "predecessor" or "ancestor", indicating the first generation of Muslims, the figures Salafis aim to shadow (Trager, 2012). In 2011, Al-Nour Party became one of the first Egyptian Salafi parties to break the tradition of political quietism.

Even though Salafism as an ideology was first introduced in the 1300s by thinkers such as Ibn Taymiyyah, the success of Al-Nour Party dates back to the global and regional rise of Islamism and Salafism in the late 1960s and early 1970s (Anjum, 2016; Brown, 2011; Deschamps-Laporte, 2014). Egypt's defeat in the Six Days War in 1967 provided space for the emergence of religious ideologies and movements (Deschamps-Laporte, 2014; Shalata, 2016). Salafism and the twin notion of religious revival were a reaction to Nasser's socialist and nationalist politics (Anjum, 2016). In the 1970s, a group of university students in Alexandria founded the Salafi Call to promote and focus on religious education (Al-Anani & Malik, 2013; Lacroix, 2012). Anwar Al-Sadat's decision

to lift Nasser's restrictions on the formation of student organizations enabled the group to establish the Salafi Call (Deschamps-Laporte, 2014). A distinction between the movement and the MB was that they did not have a formal organizational structure and they mainly relied on distributing Islamic leaflets, preaching and presenting lectures in local mosques (Al-Anani & Malik, 2013).

When the January 25 protests took place in Egypt, the Salafi Call expressed their disapproval of the movement and they asked their followers to refrain from participating (Al-Anani & Malik, 2013). On the basis that suicide is a sin, they condemned the protestors that set themselves on fire as an expression of hopelessness and desperation (Gauvain, 2011). However, they had to change their position after Mubarak stepped down. The Salafi Call announced their formation of Al-Nour Party just a few months after the uprising (Lacroix, 2012). The party's spokesperson, Mohamed Nour, claimed that the party was established to protect Egypt's Islamic identity from seculars and liberals (Al-Anani & Malik, 2013). The Salafi Call's spokesperson, Abdel Moneim El Shahat, justified their decision by arguing that democracy in Egypt would empower Salafis who will have the power to implement Sharia law in Egypt (Trager, 2012).

The field of political Islam in Egypt was no longer limited to the Brotherhood and their respective parties (Brown, 2011). The MB lost its hegemony over the Islamist political scene in Egypt (Lacroix, 2012). The spectrum now included several Salafi parties, Al-Nour party being the most prominent and popular. Moreover, the performance of Al-Nour Party in the elections was an indication of its popularity in Egypt. Their success was surprising to some Middle-Eastern studies scholars and experts, but given the history and activity of the Salafi Call, their impressive electoral performance was expected by Alexandria's mosque-goers and religious Muslim Egyptians (Deschamps-Laporte,

2014). The phenomenon of Satellite Salafism also played a significant role in Al-Nour Party's success, as Salafi candidates were able to reach out to a wider target audience and secure their votes (Al-Anani & Malik, 2013). Moreover, Mubarak's restrictions on the Brotherhood benefitted Salafi organizations, enabling them to expand their following base (Cavatorta & Merone, 2016). The popularity of Salafi parties has also been attributed to the correlation between economic grievances and the revival of religious beliefs and identities (Al-Anani & Malik, 2013; Ibrahim, 1980). Laurence Deschamps-Laporte (2014) refutes the poverty hypothesis by claiming that the party does not focus on providing philanthropy work and, hence, acquiring supporters from a specific social class. He also claims that his study and interviews with various Al-Nour supporters prove that they come from a wide range of socioeconomic backgrounds.

The establishment and emergence of Salafi parties after the January 25 Revolution troubled some Egyptians. Observers worried about the Salafis' demands for the formation of an Islamic State. Secular Egyptians were concerned about the negative impact Salafis could have on the efforts that were made at Tahrir Square in the name of revolution and democracy. Given their rejection of democracy for the last few decades, sceptics questioned the Salafi parties' ability to function in a democratic system. Salafis argued that democracy was a by-product of the West and, hence, should not be imposed on a Muslim population (Anjum, 2016). Ovamir Anjum (2016) claims that Salafi views mirror Samuel Huntington's theory of the clash of civilization, with conflict in post-Cold War era centred on cultural and religious identities. Salafis quoted Sayyid Qutb who claimed that democracy encourages the rule of man over man, instead of the right path, which is the rule of God over all (Anjum, 2016). Another argument used against the establishment of democratic rule included the freedoms associated with democracy, such as the freedoms

of expression, religion, and speech (Anjum, 2016). This stems from the belief that they contradict Islamic laws related to blasphemy and punishment for apostasy and sins (Anjum, 2016). The establishment of Al-Nour Party fuelled controversy and backlash within the Salafi Call community, as some Salafis opposed the religious organization's decision to participate in politics (Deschamps-Laporte, 2014). The Al-Nour Party's turbulent relationship with the MB was also a topic of debate. The following section focuses on the different stages of the Salafi-Brotherhood feud.

3.2.3 The Salafi-Brotherhood Feud

The relationship between Egyptian Salafis, specifically the Salafi Call, and the MB can be divided into three main stages. The first stage started with the establishment of the Salafi Call in the 1970s and ended with the 2011 revolution; the second stage commenced directly after the January 25 Revolution and it persisted till December 2012; and the third stage started in December 2012 and persists until today. This following analysis explores the origins of the Salafi-Brotherhood feud. The struggle may be traced back to the 1970s when Egyptian Salafis were still following the tradition of political quietism and the conflict had not yet escalated into a public and broadcasted feud. The reasons behind the spiral into a public internal conflict are also addressed below. The aim is to set the scene for the next section, which addresses the correlation between the Salafi-Brotherhood feud and sectarian socialization in Egypt.

The first stage took place during the Salafis stage of political quietism in Egypt. Since the establishment of the Salafi Call in the 1970s, the relationship between the organization and the Brotherhood was characterized by enmity (Arafat, 2018; Ranko & Nedza, 2016). The Salafis' ideological and theological disagreements with the

Brotherhood were one of the reasons behind the establishment of the Salafi Call (Cavatorta & Merone, 2016). The university students that founded the Salafi Call opposed the Brotherhood (Karagiannis, 2019). One of the main differences between the Salafi Call and the MB was the organizations missions and goals. For decades, the MB embraced politics and aspired to politically engage and represent Islamists in Egypt (Arafat, 2018). Meanwhile, the Salafi call embraced the tradition of political quietism and criticized the MB for participating in politics and demanding democratic freedoms (Ranko & Nedza, 2016). The Salafi Call was established out of a rejection of the Brotherhood's cautious method, which was a consequence of the conditions they faced under Nasser (Rubin, 2013). Some of the founders were previous Brotherhood members who quit out of frustration or their rejection of the MB's version of Islam (Rubin, 2013). The Brotherhood was perceived as more of a reformist group rather than a revolutionary group (Rubin, 2016). The Brotherhood's fourth Supreme Guide, Muhammad Abu al-Nasr, elaborated: "The general atmosphere at present is not conducive to the establishment of an Islamic state, the most important thing is to work for the implementation of the Islamic Sharia" (Rubin, 2016, p. 39).

Unlike the Brotherhood, some Salafi groups rejected any form of compromise with current political systems (Rubin, 2016). A distinction was the movements' stance on jihad and the militant's use of violence (Rubin, 2013). Some former Brotherhood members joined the *jama'at* Islamist fundamentalist groups that aim to impose an Islamic government through violent revolution and jihad (Rubin, 2016). In the 1970s, one of the new organizations was *Al-Jama'a Al-Islamiyya* and it was responsible for several terrorist attacks in Egypt, including the assassination of Sadat (Rashwan, 2008). However, by the late 1990s, they officially renounced their old ideology and declared their decision to

abandon all forms of violence and terrorism (Rashwan, 2008). Therefore, in the first stage, the Salafis were divided into two main groups, a group advocating political quietism and another group advocating jihad and a violent revolution. Both groups detested the Brotherhood: the former opposed their participation in politics and the latter criticized their views on jihad.

The second stage occurred after the January 25 Revolution when some Salafi organizations decided to abandon political quietism and participated in the political sphere. This stage signifies the alliance and unity between the Salafis and the Brotherhood. The groups undoubtedly wanted to preserve their independence from each other, but they formed an Islamist alliance against non-Islamist and secular forces (Rubin, 2013). The Brotherhood's alliance with Salafis alienated it from non-Islamist parties and raised concerns about the MB's commitment to democracy (El-Sherif, 2015). During the November 2011-January 2012 parliamentary elections, Salafi parties and the Brotherhood united in hopes of pushing for common goals and aspirations for Egypt (Brown, 2011). Salafi leaders released positive statements on the Brotherhood and they advocated for their participation in the Egyptian parliament (Lacroix, 2012). The alliance proved successful when they gained 77% of the votes (Lacroix, 2012). In the second round of the presidential elections, some Salafi organizations, such as Al-Nour Party, announced their support for Morsi and the MB (Cavatorta & Merone, 2016).

When Morsi announced the deadline for the new constitution, Salafis and members of the MB drafted it together and responded to anti-Morsi demonstrations with counter-protests (Trager, 2012). The Salafis also defended the MB's decision to use violence against people protesting Morsi's presidential decree increasing his prerogatives (Trager, 2012). The Brotherhood viewed the Salafis as an essential voting bloc as they had shared

views on several issues (Rubin, 2013). The alliance benefitted the Brotherhood and Morsi who had Al-Nour's support in the constitutional referendum. In exchange for their loyalty and support, Morsi assigned three Al-Nour members as his advisors (Rubin, 2013). Eric Trager (2012) predicted that the alliance between the Salafis and the Brotherhood was going to be short-lived and would eventually escalate into a battle over power, recruits, and Islamic authority. The Brotherhood and Salafis took advantage of each other for their own purposes and agendas (Rubin, 2013).

The third stage and the feud's turning point unfolded in December 2012 when the Salafis recognized that the Brotherhood would always undermine and belittle them as a religious and political force (Arafat, 2018). The end of the alliance was caused by a disagreement over power-sharing (El-Sherif, 2015). Morsi's government was strengthened after the December 2012 Constitutional Referendum, prompting Al-Nour's decision to unite with the secularist National Salvation Front against the Brotherhood (Karagiannis, 2019). In an attempt to counter-balance the Brotherhood, the Salafi Call also aligned with the military and other secular forces (Arafat, 2018; Cavatorta & Merone, 2016). The alliance between the MB and Al-Nour could have been a result of their shared aspiration for an Islamist party to rule (Gauvain, 2011). Therefore, after the Brotherhood's victory, the alliance developed into a competition between the parties over the Islamist sphere and religious credibility. The feud spiraled into public enmity when the Salafi Call launched an aggressive "campaign against the Ikhwanization or Brotherhoodization" of the Egyptian state (Arafat, 2018, p. 78). In other words, the Salafi Call accused the MB of prioritizing the party's interests over national interests (Karagiannis, 2019).

After the short-lived honeymoon phase, the two parties competed over the dominance of the religious sphere and Al-Nour Party became Morsi's biggest opposition

party (Cavatorta & Merone, 2016). The Brotherhood broke their pre-election promises to the Al-Nour Party and did not provide their members with major positions in the government (El-Sherif, 2015). Salafis condemned Morsi's unwillingness to apply Sharia law, his acceptance of a loan from the International Monetary Fund (IMF), his efforts to normalize relations with Iran, and his acceptance of Shi'a Muslims (El-Sherif, 2015). During the 2013 protests, some senior Salafi leaders demanded the resignation of Morsi and fully supported General Abdel Fattah El-Sisi's coup against the Brotherhood's government (Karagiannis, 2019). The coup was an opportunity for Al-Nour Party to become the sole Islamist force in Egypt's political sphere and system (Karagiannis, 2019). Did the Salafi-Brotherhood feud result in the escalation of sectarian socialization into violent socialization? The next section highlights the roles of the socialization agents.

3.3 The Socialization Agents

3.3.1 The Salafis' Role

Not all Salafi parties socialized sectarianism as intensely and aggressively as Al-Nour Party. For instance, Al-Asala and Al-Watan parties did not organize awareness campaigns about the Shi'a threat in Egypt. Nor did both parties support the July 2013 coup (Cavatorta & Merone, 2016). There is thus a need to theorize the Salafi-Brotherhood feud, namely a theory of sectarian socialization. The prospect of overthrowing the Brotherhood could have been perceived by the Salafis, specifically Al-Nour Party, as an opportunity to gain political power and religious authority in Egypt. Therefore, demonstrating the MB's shortcomings and the faults with Morsi's policies could incite their followers and his followers against him. Indeed, one of the international community's criticisms against

Morsi pertained to his leniency towards the spread of Shi'ism in Egypt. His critics believed that he should have taken more rigid and strict actions to fight that threat. This sub-section revisits Saleh's and Kraetzschmar's (2015) theory of societal securitization. The theory is operationalized in depth by exploring the argument that sectarian socialization was a consequence of the feud and the Salafis' aspiration to politically dominate the Islamist scene in Egypt.

On the theme of religious minority rights, the Al-Nour Party claimed that Sharia grants Copts religious freedom and the same rights and duties as Muslims (Lacroix, 2012). Since Salafis call for the return to the time of the Prophet and caliphs, some of them advocated the traditional Islamic system of *dhimma*, or taxation in exchange for state protection (Lacroix, 2012). They, therefore, believe that Christians and Jews in Muslim states have to pay a tax in return for protection and rights from the Islamic state. Other minority groups, such as the Sufis, Baha'is, and Shi'a Muslims, are not included because they are not recognized by the state. During the third stage of the Salafi-Brotherhood feud, Al-Nour launched aggressive campaigns against the Shi'a threat in Egypt. They blamed Morsi for not fighting the Shi'a threat and for facilitating the spread of Shi'ism in Egypt (El-Sherif, 2015). They helped in intensifying sectarian sentiments by organizing and hosting a conference condemning the spread of Shi'a belief in Egypt (Mohieddin, El Adl, & Mohsen, 2013). They utilized social media to their advantage, uploading and spreading videos of Shi'as practicing religious rituals, and playing the videos as cautionary tales at local mosques (Mohieddin et al., 2013).

Saleh and Kraetzschmar (2015) attribute the Sunni-Shi'a divide in Egypt to the newly founded Al-Nour Party. They argue that the de-politicized minority group was securitized and presented as a form of social threat. On this view, then, Salafis wanted to

present themselves as the MB's political alternative and to mobilize their supporters to gain religious credibility in post-Mubarak Egypt (Saleh & Kraetzschmar, 2015). They presented themselves as the protectors of Egypt's Sunni Muslim identity. An exclusionary approach used by Salafis involves the notion of *Takfir*: the act of accusing others of being infidels (Olsson, 2017). The accusation of an individual or an entire minority group of being infidels leads to their dehumanization and prosecution. The Salafi teaching of *al-wala' wa-al-bara'*, or loyalty and repudiation, was deployed to justify the use of violence and aggression against 'the other' (Olsson, 2017). It disrupts the integration of minority groups in society. In post-Mubarak Egypt, 'the other' was the members of unrecognized religious minority groups, which includes the Egyptian Shi'a community.

The dehumanization of minority groups leads to the generation of more support for discriminatory and violent actions against them (Kteily & Bruneau, 2017). Therefore, by presenting the Egyptian Shi'a community as a societal threat regardless of their small percentage, the country experienced a growth of anti-Shi'a sentiments in a short period (Brooke, 2017). Moreover, this securitization of a minority group created the need for a protector; in this case it was the Salafis. It also delegitimized Morsi who was presented as an incapable leader unable to respond to this societal threat. It created the need to respond and preserve the security of Egyptian society through the use of violence against the threatening force. The use of violence was consequently normalized and justified through the belief that it was a true Muslim's duty to treat infidels with hate (Olsson, 2017). Based on the societal securitization theory, the Salafis in Egypt successfully securitized the Egyptian Shi'a community when sectarian socialization escalated to violent socialization. They also successfully portrayed Morsi as a delinquent and incapable leader, contributing to his overthrow. Yet the Al-Nour party's poor performance in the post-Morsi

parliamentary elections meant that they could not achieve their ultimate goal: to politically monopolize the Islamist scene in Egypt (Cavatorta & Merone, 2016).

3.3.2 The Muslim Brotherhood's Role

The Islamist parties' domination of the political scene in Egypt alarmed secular Egyptians, religious minorities, and Western governments (Brown, 2011). After Morsi's victory, the White House released an official statement about the importance of respecting the rights of every Egyptian citizen, including religious minority groups and women (Satloff, 2012). After all, the international community and local actors were suspicious of Islamists and their political motives. Post-Mubarak Egypt was a time of uncertainty and conflicting emotions for Egypt's minority groups. The revolution restored their hopes of acquiring more rights but the rise of Islamists was worrying and alarming. It was a far cry from 2005 when Milad Hanna, an Egyptian Coptic scholar, stated: "if the Muslim Brothers come to power, Egypt will be an Islamic state like Iran and Sudan. The day the Muslim Brothers win more than 50% the rich Copts will leave the country and the poorer Copts will stay. Perhaps some of them will be converted...I hope I die before this happens" (Stacher, 2010, pp. 351).

On December 25, 2012, the new Egyptian constitution was approved (Arafat, 2018). The 2012 constitution sparked outrage locally and prompted a backlash from international civil societies. During the drafting process, Coptic Christian delegates and the delegates of secular parties walked out as a symbol of boycott and rejection (Kirkpatrick, 2012). One of the main concerns was the freedom of religious exercise and practice. Human rights organizations emphasized the constitution's lack of personal freedoms and protections for minority groups (Lang, 2013). A representative of the Coptic

Church noted that the 2012 constitution should be called the Islamists' constitution as it only represents them (Kirkpatrick, 2012). Morsi was criticized for not reforming the security sector in Egypt and for adopting a coup-proofing strategy, hence, clashing with most political forces, organizations, and government sectors (Arafat, 2018). Instead of reforming the constitution and providing more rights for religious minorities, some of the articles were either identical to previous ineffective articles or were limited to the recognized minority groups, hence, disregarding communities such as the Shi'as and Baha'is (Nossett, 2014). The Egyptian state recognizes three religious communities: Sunni Muslims, Christians, and Jews. Hence, excluding other religious minorities and their access to rights and protection as Egyptian citizens.

Other than the constitution, Morsi's government was accused of persecuting and interfering with religious minorities. They impacted them through their failure to protect them from violent sectarian attacks (Nossett, 2014). One of the main criticisms of Morsi's rule was the lack of restrictions on Salafi parties and their campaigns. Morsi and the MB were blamed for not protecting the country's religious minorities by taking actions against the Salafi campaigns promoting discrimination of religious minorities. The government's lack of action validated the spread of hate (Mohieddin et al., 2013). Journalists and media outlets faced restrictions from Morsi's government (Arafat, 2018). During Morsi's first six months of rule, more people were persecuted for insulting the president than during Mubarak's 30 years rule (Arafat, 2018). However, the state's restrictions were evidently not imposed on everyone. After the January 25 Revolution, the lifting of restrictions on media enabled the promotion of hate speech against religious minority groups (Mohieddin et al., 2013). The permissibility of hate speech has been linked to the increase in sectarian violence (Mohieddin et al., 2013). Security forces were condemned for not preventing

violence targeting minority groups (Mohieddin et al., 2013). Religious minorities in Egypt faced two challenges during Morsi's rule. One of the challenges was that they were surrounded with an angry and violent population prone to enacting violent sectarian attacks (Nosset, 2014). The other challenge was the government's lack of protection of their properties, their freedom of religious practice and expression, and their lives (Nossett, 2014).

3.4 Conclusion

This chapter explored the conditions that enabled and facilitated the spread of sectarianism in Morsi's Egypt. These included the MB's opportunity to govern Egypt for the first time, the expansion of the political Islamist scene in Egypt, and the rivalry between the Brotherhood and new Salafi parties. The chapter also explored the Salafi and Brotherhood's roles as socialization agents. The feud was associated with the Salafis role as socialization agents by evaluating their securitization of the minority group. The Salafis viewed Morsi as compliant and accommodating to the Shi'a community in Egypt. On its part, the Shi'a community in Egypt viewed Morsi as compliant and accommodating to the Salafis.

When the FJP won the presidential elections, there were two varying views and expectations. Based on the Brotherhood's history with state restrictions and their persistent plea for more freedoms under previous regimes, the optimists expected them to provide those freedoms. On the other hand, secular groups and religious minorities were concerned with the Brotherhood's ability to protect their rights. The MB's alliance with Salafi parties alienated them from more Egyptians who viewed the union with suspicion.

The alliance was successful in the short term and it granted both parties seats in the parliament. However, in the long term, it impacted them negatively. Morsi's credibility as a democratic leader was questioned as he was accused of showing favoritism to Islamists through his alliance with Salafi parties and exclusion of non-Islamist parties. Al-Nour Party's alliance with secular forces and support of Morsi's overthrow cost them the votes of some of their Islamist supporters, affecting their political performance negatively in post-Morsi Egypt. While this chapter focused on the socialization agents, the next chapter focuses on sectarian socialization from the perspective of the socialized agent or those who were socialized.

CHAPTER FOUR

THE SOCIALIZED EGYPTIANS' PERSPECTIVE: JUSTIFICATIONS OF A SHI'A THREAT IN EGYPT

4.1 Introduction

The Arab Spring altered domestic and regional structures and created an environment that enabled Egypt's Islamists to mobilize their followers (Saleh & Kraetzschmar, 2015). The previous chapters examined the socialization agents and the conditions that facilitated the process of socializing and spreading sectarian sentiments in Morsi's Egypt. This chapter explores the theme from the perspective of the socialized Egyptians. It provides the justifications behind their belief in a Shi'a threat in Egypt. These were selected based on the content that was produced by the socialization agents in this period. In Friday sermons, talk shows on Salafi TV channels, and interviews during protests in front of the Iranian embassy, Islamists referred to two main threats when discussing the reality of a Shi'a threat in Egypt. In this thesis, the two main threats are associated with the fear of Shi'ism spreading in Morsi's Egypt.

When warning of the Shi'a threat, Islamists repeatedly referred to the Iranian and Syrian regimes. Therefore, in Morsi's Egypt, the Shi'a threat is associated with Iran and the Assad regime. The Iranian threat is relevant to the question of sectarianism during Morsi's rule due to the shift in Egyptian-Iranian relations. The 1979 Islamic Revolution marked the deterioration of Egyptian-Iranian relations. For the first time in decades, an Egyptian president attempted to restore Egypt's relations with Iran, angering a large

segment of the population and simultaneously harming the Egyptian Shi'a community. The threat of the Syrian regime is also relevant to Morsi's rule as the Brotherhood's rise coincided with the early years of the Syrian civil war. The rise of regional opposition to Bashar Al Assad and condemnation of the Syrian regime's atrocities also coincided with the political participation of Salafis in Egypt who promoted jihad in Syria. This chapter opens with the first threat: the Iranian threat. The first section provides an analysis of the impact Morsi's foreign policies with Iran had on the process of sectarian socialization in Egypt. His attempts to normalize Egyptian-Iranian relations reinforced the belief in the Iranian Shi'a threat in Egypt. The second section describes the second threat: the Assad regime's threat. It explains the correlation between the rise of Salafi-jihadism in Syria and the increase of sectarian sentiments in Egypt. The early years of the Syrian conflict coincided with Morsi's rule and the political rise of Salafis in Egypt who encouraged jihad in Syria.

4.2 The Iranian Threat

4.2.1 Egyptian-Iranian Relations in Morsi's Egypt

The following evaluation highlights the impact Morsi's foreign policies had on the socialization of sectarianism in Egypt. It also provides an explanation behind the views many Egyptians hold on Iran. Egypt and Iran share a few distinguishing characteristics. In the MENA region, both states are two of the most populated countries and, hence, they contain the largest armies (Bahgat, 2010). Both states are also considered as main powers and players in regional politics. They trace their history to some of the most ancient civilizations in the world, enforcing a great sense of nationalism and pride of historical

origins within their citizens (Bahgat, 2009). Today, both states contain a relatively homogenous Muslim population consisting of one main sect. Ninety percent of the Egyptian population is Sunni Muslim and ninety percent of the Iranian population is Shi'a Muslim (Cafiero, 2012). However, sectarian differences did not initially affect Egyptian-Iranian relations.

Prior to the 1979 Revolution, Egyptian-Iranian relations fluctuated regularly. When Egypt and Iran were still ruled by monarchies, the Egyptian king and Iranian Shah were perceived as Western puppets. In 1938, the British were involved in planning and arranging the marriage of Mohamed Reza Pahlavi and Princess Fawzia, the sister of King Farouq of Egypt (Dareini, 1998). Britain's aim was to strengthen the relationship between the two monarchies as the next generations of Shahs were going to be relatives (Dareini, 1998). Egyptian-Iranian relations were therefore more important than the language barrier between the royals. Moreover, regional events and relations were evidently still not based on sectarian divides. Nonetheless, after the 1952 Egyptian Revolution, diplomatic relations between Cairo and Tehran declined with the rise of President Gamal Abdel Nasser and his brand of revolutionary Arab nationalism. The Cold War intensified the divide as Nasser sided with the Soviet Union and the Iranian Shah was the United States ally (Bahgat, 2009). Nasser additionally severed relations with Iran as a result of the Shah's recognition of the state of Israel (Brunner, 2014; Shama, 2013). He would have been more likely to establish stronger relations with Iran if Iran's Prime Minister, Mohamed Mossadeq, was not overthrown in 1953, as the two nationalist leaders shared similar values and agendas (Shama, 2013). Egyptian-Iranian relations were restored just a month after Nasser's death when his successor, Anwar Al-Sadat, ended Egypt's relations

with the Soviet Union to establish close relations with the United States and ultimately sign a peace treaty with Israel (Bahgat, 2009; Shama, 2013).

After the 1979 Islamic Revolution, official Egyptian-Iranian relations were completely cut mainly with Sadat's decision to host the ousted Shah, Mohamed Reza Pahlavi, and the Egyptian government's support of Iraq in its eight-year war with Iran (Bahgat, 2010; Shama, 2013). More so, the Egyptian state honored the Shah with a state funeral in 1980 (Goodspeed, 2011). For three decades, relations between the two countries did not improve. Egyptian-Iranian relations were characterized by mutual suspicion and open hostility in some key regional events (Bahgat, 2010). Even after Sadat's death in 1981 and Khomeini's death in 1989, Iran was not able to restore relations with three main countries: the United States, Israel, and Egypt (Bahgat, 2009). A source of tension between the two countries was the Iranian government's decision to name a street after Sadat's assassin, Khaled El-Islamboli (Bahgat, 2009). During Hosni Mubarak's rule, Iran was charged with assisting, financing, and harboring Islamist opposition groups (Bahgat, 2009; Shama, 2013). Major regional events, such as the 1979 Revolution and the US invasion of Iraq, led to sectarian divisions and alliances. Therefore, Iran's attempts to mend relations with Egypt were not reciprocated by Mubarak who was against Iran's alliance choices and its interventions in the domestic politics of neighboring states (Brunner, 2014).

Even though Iranian authorities forcefully silenced protestors in the Iranian Green Movement two years earlier, the Iranian government and Ayatollah Ali Khamenei declared that the January 25 revolution against Mubarak was fully justified (Goodspeed, 2011). During the days leading to Mubarak's resignation, Iran provided full and extensive coverage of the protests (Goodspeed, 2011). They claimed that the January 25 Revolution

was a result of a regional Islamic revival inspired by the 1979 Islamic Revolution (Goodspeed, 2011). Given Mubarak's refusal to mend Egypt's relations with Iran, the Iranian government's display of enthusiasm and support for the start of a new chapter in Egyptian politics was not surprising. However, controversies arose as soon as Morsi was declared Egypt's first democratically elected president.

A day following Morsi's win in the presidential elections, an Iranian news agency released an alleged interview with Morsi who expressed his intention to mend Egyptian-Iranian relations (Esfandiara, 2012). The news-article instigated heated political debates on the potential of an Egyptian-Iranian alliance for the first time in three decades. Egypt's official news agency would later discredit the authenticity and credibility of the article (Esfandiara, 2012). However, speculations on Morsi's intentions did not last long. In August 2012, Morsi became the first Egyptian president to visit Iran since 1979 (Cafiero, 2012; Meringolo, 2015). Regardless of the widespread backlash against Iran's support of the Syrian regime, Morsi and officials from 119 countries supported Iran's nuclear program by attending the Non-Aligned Movement's (NAM) summit in Tehran (Cafiero, 2012). Three weeks earlier, at the Organization of Islamic Cooperation summit in Mecca, Morsi displayed his intentions to rebuild diplomatic relations with Iran by warmly embracing Iran's president (Cafiero, 2012). The greeting caused a media frenzy as it signified the possibility of normalizing relations between the two countries. It set the scene for Morsi's historical visit to Iran a few weeks later and Ahmadinejad's visit to Cairo a couple of months later (Özkan, 2013). The Iranian president's visit angered Salafis who mobilized and protested against him and Morsi ("Pious Politics", 2013). It led to the organization of a few demonstrations that turned into clashes (Gamblin, 2015). Al-Nour

Party condemned the visit and accused Morsi of spreading the Shi'a threat in Egypt by welcoming and permitting the danger in Egyptian land (Lacroix, 2016).

Ahmadinejad's visit to Cairo was the buildup to the decision that agitated the Egyptian public the most: Morsi's decision to permit and encourage Iranian tourists to visit the country. The tourism industry in Egypt was drastically affected by the political instability and violence that took place during the transitional period (Gamblin, 2015). In late February, after the Iranian president's visit to Egypt, the Egyptian minister of tourism signed a bilateral contract with Iran that aimed to attract 200,000 Iranian tourists and lift visa requirement for Egyptians visiting Iran (Gamblin, 2015). One of Morsi's advisors, Fuad Gadallah, resigned in April 2013 and warned against Morsi's decision to open Egypt's doors for Iranian tourists ("Pious Politics", 2013). He claimed that it could lead to the return of the Fatimid state as the Iranian government is going to be able to spread Shi'ism and eradicate the Sunni sect in Egypt ("Pious Politics", 2013). As the Egyptian president was not taking the necessary actions to protect the population from the perceived threat, some Egyptians decided to mobilize against him and the Iranian threat.

The conflict escalated into a violent one as the socialized Egyptians decided to take action. The Al-Nour party launched a violent propaganda and persuaded its followers to unite and mobilize. They called for *halal* tourism and spiraled the issue into a violent sectarian conflict (Gamblin, 2015). In April 2013, the first, and last, group of Iranian tourists arrived to Cairo (Gamblin, 2015). They were under strict security restrictions and were only allowed to visit specific ancient Egyptian monuments (Gamblin, 2015). During the same week, a group of forty Islamists protested against the normalization of relations with Iran in front of the residence of Amani Mojhtaba, an Iranian diplomat ("Egyptians Protest", 2013). The protest intensified into a violent clash as protestors threw stones and

attempted to forcibly enter the property (“Egyptians Protest”, 2013). The crowd chanted: “Egypt is Sunni” and “No Shi‘as in Egypt” (“Egyptians Protest”, 2013). The violent reactions promoted the Egyptian minister of tourism to release a statement declaring that the bilateral tourism agreement was not intended to encourage Shi‘a tourism (Gamblin, 2015). However, since Egypt contains significant Shi‘a religious sites, many Egyptians still believed in the risk of permitting Iranian tourists in the country.

Some political analysts viewed the Egyptian president’s actions as steps to reassert Egypt’s role as a key and strong actor in regional politics (Cafiero, 2012). Egyptians viewed the policies as Morsi’s way of providing legitimacy to Iran’s clerical regime (Cafiero, 2012). Morsi did not abide with the public views and continued pursuing the normalization of Egyptian-Iranian relations, causing a series of violent clashes and confrontations. His policies increased political instability and sectarian sentiments in the country as the Egyptian Shi‘a community was accused of being loyal to Iran.

4.2.2 The Correlation between Shi‘ism and Loyalty to Iran

Iran’s soft power in the region has been attributed to sectarianism by some (Bahgat, 2010). After the 1979 Revolution, the Iranian government has used spiritual ties to connect with Shi‘a communities in neighboring countries (Bahgat, 2010). Therefore, many Arab Shi‘as are perceived as loyal to the Iranian regime. Iran has also been accused of spreading Shi‘a missionaries in Sunni communities. In 2007, in a conference at Qatar, Yusuf Al-Qaradawi criticized Iran’s missionary politics in the Middle East (Brunner, 2014). This incident was one of the first to spark the debate on the issue of missionary activities (Brunner, 2014). After all, figures such as El-Nafis, one of the most vocal Egyptian Shi‘as, claimed that his conversion to Shi‘ism was a result of intensively reading

about the 1979 Revolution in Iran (Brunner, 2014). His statement reasserted the perception Egyptians have on Iran and its threat on their society.

This thesis does not suggest that the Sunni-Shi'a divide in Egypt is a phenomenon that emerged during Morsi's rule. For decades, Sunni Egyptian scholars and theologians denounced and condemned Shi'as stance on the issue of the *sahaba*, the prophet's companions (Brunner, 2014). Some Shi'a scholars and theologians angered Sunni Muslims, and hence increased the sectarian divide, by publicly denouncing the first three caliphs for supposedly seizing the right to the caliphate from the fourth caliph, Ali. (Hatina, 2014). Therefore, the conflict over the *sahaba* or the first three caliphs was one of the reasons behind the strong feelings of hostility towards Iranians and Shi'as in pre-Morsi Egypt. However, this thesis contends that sectarian sentiments increased during Morsi's rule as a result of his policies and decisions as president. One of those policies was his decision to mend Egypt's relations with Iran. He did not evaluate the negative impact his decision could have on his population and his credibility as a president. The decision exacerbated fears of Iranian designs in Egypt, constructing a form of societal threat and panic within the Egyptian population. The loyalty of Egyptian Shi'as was questioned due to the assumption that belief in the Shi'a sect and loyalty to the Iranian regime are mutually exclusive. In other words, all Shi'as, including Arab Shi'as, are assumed to be loyal to and guided by Iran's clerical regime.

Many Egyptian citizens and political parties were worried about Iran's previous political positions and current interventions in regional affairs and conflicts. Iran's 1979 Revolution ignited a new wave of regional upheavals (Gause, 2010). Under the Shah, the Iranian government wanted to maintain regional stability (Shama, 2013). However, under the new clerical regime, one of Iran's aims was to spread its message of revolution and

pan-Islamism to the rest of the region (Shama, 2013). As the Pahlavi dynasty came to an end, Ayatollah Khomeini returned to Iran with the aim of shifting the political dynamics of the Middle East by exporting the Islamic revolution (Ramazani, 2013; Seliktar & Rezaei, 2020). In traditional Shi'ite theology, the issues of political activism and governance are barely mentioned (Seliktar & Rezaei, 2020). The tradition of quietism was encouraged and believers were expected to remain apolitical until the return of their twelfth imam (Namazi, 2019; Nasr, 2007; Seliktar & Rezaei, 2020). Inspired by Sayyid Qutb's teachings and the struggle against capitalism, imperialism, and colonialism, a group of left-leaning clergymen established the first political religious group in Iran, *Fada'iyeen-e Islam* or the Fighters of Islam, which was responsible for several assassinations (Seliktar & Rezaei, 2020). During his early years as a clergyman, Khomeini believed in the group's cause and was open to abandoning the tradition of quietism and engaging in the political field (Nasr, 2007; Seliktar & Rezaei, 2020). His books expressed his vision and his teachings were perceived as a radical study and revision of Shi'ism known as neo-Shi'ism or Khomeinism (Seliktar & Rezaei, 2020).

Khomeini repeatedly highlighted Iran's commitment to export the revolution to the rest of the Islamic world (Ramazani, 2013). The Iranian regime viewed it as a commitment, but the rest of the world viewed it as a form of aggression, a direct threat to governments, and an unlawful intervention in domestic affairs (Ramazani, 2013). On March 21, 1980, Khomeini broadcasted his Persian New Year message in which he stated: "we must strive to export our revolution throughout the world and must abandon all ideas of not doing so" (Seliktar & Rezaei, 2020, p. 5). In 1989, Iran's Ministry of Foreign Affairs released a statement claiming: "since its creation following several decades of genuine Islamic and popular struggle, the Islamic republic of Iran has considered it one of its main

duties to defend dear Islam, its sacred aspirations, and the oppressed Muslims in every region of the world” (Ramazani, 2013, p. 128). Thirty years after the 1979 revolution, the Iranian government was still trying to spread the same message as it attempted to take credit for the 2011 Egyptian revolution by claiming that it was inspired by the revolution in Iran (Goodspeed, 2011). It is therefore not surprising that Egyptians were worried about Iran attempting to intervene in shaping political dynamics in post-revolution Egypt.

The 2003 US invasion of Iraq and the fall of the Saddam Hussein regime have been attributed with the rise of sectarianism (Nasr, 2007). It set in motion a “Shi’a revival” as Iraq became the first Arab country to be ruled by a Shi’a government (Nasr, 2007). For many countries, the rise of the Shi’as in Iraq was more alarming than the 1979 Revolution in Iran (Nars, 2007). The Shi’a Arab populations share more in common with the Sunni Arab populations than the Shi’a Iranian population. Culture, history, language, and territory are common factors between Shi’a Arabs and Sunni Arabs (Sariolghalam, 2007). The main concern is then the Iranian government’s ideological and revolutionary impact on the Arab Shi’a populations (Sariolghalam, 2007). In some cases, like Hezbollah in Lebanon, Iran is perceived as a form of inspiration and as a source for authority on issues such as religion and identity (Nasr, 2007; Sariolghalam, 2007). In other cases, like post-Saddam Iraq, Iran is viewed as a political ally and a convenient source of logistical and financial opportunities (Sariolghalam, 2007). However, in both cases, Iran plays a significant and relevant role. Therefore, when Morsi attempted to restore relations with Iran, some Egyptians worried about Iran intervening in their domestic and religious affairs.

Egyptians were also concerned about Iran’s involvement in civil wars and regional feuds. The international community and western powers have also accused it of promoting

instability and fostering terrorist groups around the region. The most referred to example is Hezbollah. The organization was founded in 1982 with the aim of standing against Israel (Bahgat, 2010). Iran supported its establishment by deploying thousands of Iranian Revolutionary Guards to fight the Israeli army's invasion (Bahgat, 2010). They have assisted the organization through financial means and military resources, which were used to provide and run social services such as hospitals and schools (Bahgat, 2010). Egyptians believe that their shared territory with Israel makes them a strategic place for Iran's and Hezbollah operations (Levitt, 2014). In November 2008, the Egyptian government arrested twenty-six people who were reportedly operating a Hezbollah cell in Egypt (Levitt, 2014). The official charges included "the conspiracy to commit murder, weapons possessions, and spying for a foreign organization with the intent of conducting terrorist attacks" (Levitt, 2014, p. 26). During the chaos of the January 25 revolution, prisoners were able to escape from prison, including the mastermind behind the Hezbollah cell in Egypt, Muhammad Mansour, who was successfully smuggled out of the country and warmly welcomed by Hezbollah officials in Lebanon (Levitt, 2014). As a result, many Egyptians possessed preconceived notions of Iran's and Hezbollah's designs in Egypt.

Iran's impact on some Arab Shi'a communities was concerning as their loyalty to their countries was suspect. Arab Shi'as, and in this case Egyptian Shi'as, were accused of being loyal to the Iranian regime as a result of Iran's attempts to penetrate various Shi'a communities in the region. For decades, the Egyptian press was suspicious of Iranian influence on Egyptian Shi'as and Iran's aspiration to cause instability in Egypt (Brunner, 2014). Members of the Egyptian Shi'a community denied receiving any funds and having any form of connection with Iran (Brunner, 2014). Even though this issue was a topic of contention well before the January 25 Revolution, Mubarak did not attempt to normalize

Egypt's relations with Iran. His support of Saddam Hussein and Iraq during the eight-years war meant that Egypt was one of Iran's enemies (Shama, 2013). Hence, Egyptians did not worry about the presence of a societal threat then because the regime was at the forefront of the regional alliance against Iran. By contrast, Morsi's foreign policy toward Iran was perceived as a direct threat to Egypt's national security. Iran has financially and politically supported Arab Shi'a groups against other religious groups in their countries. Their actions and involvements were alarming for other religious groups who worried about Iran's attempts to empower the Shi'as in their countries against them. The belief stems from Iran's support of the Assad regime in neighboring Syria. The next section spells out the Syrian conflict's impact on the sectarian divide in Egypt.

4.3 The Assad Regime's Threat

4.3.1 The Syrian Crisis' Impact on Egypt's Sectarian Divide

Morsi's foreign policies towards Iran were not just perceived as a form of acceptance of the Iranian government and its clerical system; but they were also viewed as a form of injustice towards the Sunni Syrians revolting against the Assad regime (Cafiero, 2012). Morsi was seen as a hypocrite for calling for the end of Bashar Al-Assad's rule but simultaneously making efforts to reconcile Egypt's relations with Iran, an ally of the Assad regime (Cafiero, 2012).

Many Egyptians opposed Morsi's visit to Iran and protested against Ahmadinejad's visit to Cairo and the decision to permit Iranian tourists into Egypt. The Iranian president's visit to Cairo was a result of his willingness to participate in Morsi's summit, the Organization of Islamic Cooperation, which was supposedly organized with

the aim of peacefully resolving the conflict in Syria (Özkan, 2013). During Ahmadinejad's visit, the protestor who attempted to throw a shoe at him was a Syrian refugee in Cairo (Hill, 2013). For Egyptians, this incident symbolized Syrians' frustration with Iran's involvement in the conflict and, hence, represented an objection to Morsi's decision to include Iran in the peace discussions. Some political analysts perceived Morsi's efforts towards the restoration of Egyptian-Iranian relations as his gateway to reaffirming Egypt's role as a powerful political force in the MENA region that will play an essential role in solving the Syrian conflict (Cafiero, 2012). However, Morsi's efforts did not resonate well with Egyptians and Syrian refugees in Egypt.

The ongoing 2011 Syrian civil war resulted in the displacement of millions of Syrians. The majority of them resorted to neighboring countries, mainly Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, Iraq, and Egypt (Mansour, 2018). Tens of thousands of Syrian refugees chose to migrate to Egypt as it did not require a visa, was thought to be more stable and welcoming than Lebanon, and less expensive than Jordan and Turkey (Grisgraber & Crisp, 2014). They were not placed in camps and were scattered throughout Alexandria, Cairo, and Damietta (Mansour, 2018). Initially, Egyptian citizens, Egyptian NGOs, as well as the president and his Islamist allies, warmly welcomed Syrians refugees in the country and offered them assistance (Grisgraber & Crisp, 2014; Mousa & Fahim, 2013). Morsi publicly condemned the Assad regime's atrocities against the Syrian people and announced the Egyptian government's support of the rebellion against him (Mousa & Fahim, 2013). Morsi's Egypt was sympathetic towards the Syrian refugees in the country (Grisgraber & Crisp, 2014).

As Morsi started initiating the normalization of Egyptian-Iranian relations, Egyptians started questioning the sincerity of his intentions towards the Syrian people.

The Syrian Assad regime is often grouped into the Shi'a side of the sectarian divide in the region (Byman, 2014). Iran, one of the Assad regime's main allies, is considered to be the leader of the Iranian-Hamas-Hezbollah-Syrian resistance and alliance bloc (Totten, 2012). Bashar Al-Assad would have been less likely to maintain his control over the country without the assistance of his allies (Ospina & Gray, 2014). Since the Syrian government is currently Iran's only ally from the Arab world, the downfall of Assad could be one of the worst things to happen to the Iranian government (Totten, 2012). After the 1979 Revolution, Syria facilitated Hezbollah's growth and the group's communication with Iran (Ospina & Gray, 2014). Bashar's downfall would disrupt Hezbollah's logistic and weapon routes to Iran through Syria; it would also undermine Iran's deterrence posture vis-à-vis Israel as it would deny it the ability to project its power through Hezbollah (Ahmadian and Mohseni, 2019). Despite the geopolitical and deterrence logic of these alliances, Iran's relations with Syria and Hezbollah are often interpreted by people in the region, and certainly in Egypt, in strictly sectarian terms (Lund, 2012).

The Assad regime does not acknowledge the sectarian nature of the war, even as it continues exploiting the conflict's religious dimension to its advantage (Cepoi, 2013; Lund, 2012). Prior to the 2011 Syrian uprising, Iran maintained that it was not a sectarian actor but an anti-Western and anti-American power (Byman, 2014). As the Syrian crisis started, Iran grew fearful of losing its power in the region and it exploited its sectarian identity by reaching out to Shi'a communities in the region (Byman, 2014). The negative reactions Egyptians demonstrated towards Morsi's new relations with Iran are therefore expected. As Iran attempted to expand its ties to Shi'a groups, it increased Egyptian's belief in the existence of a societal threat (Byman, 2014). They did not want their country

to be involved and associated with Iran and its allies. Moreover, given the sectarian nature of the divide, they believed that their Sunni identity is being threatened.

Morsi's Islamist rivals questioned his legitimacy as president for a number of reasons, including his inability to defend Syrians. Paradoxically, in post-Morsi Egypt, Egyptians started viewing Syrian refugees as Brotherhood supporters and as a threat to Egyptian national security (Grisgraber & Crisp, 2014). The refugees experienced hate crimes and were blamed for many socioeconomic problems issues including the lack of job opportunities and high unemployment rate in Egypt (Mousa & Fahim, 2013). However, during Morsi's rule, he was blamed for not taking action against Assad; Salafi parties attempted to rise to the occasion by promoting Salafi-jihadism in Syria.

4.3.2 Egyptian Salafis' Call to Jihad in Syria

The previous chapters highlighted the significance of Morsi's Egypt for Salafis as his rule coincided with their participation in the political sphere for the first time. His rule also coincided with the early years of the Syrian civil war when Salafis called for jihad in Syria. Egyptian Salafis did not restrict their political participation only to matters pertaining to domestic politics in Egypt, however. They were greatly invested in debates on jihadism in Syria. The Salafi-Brotherhood public feud and Morsi's stance on the Syrian crisis led to nation-wide Salafi campaigns urging Egyptians to fight for their Syrian brothers.

Compared to the uprisings in Egypt and Tunisia, the threat of jihadists was greater in Syria (O'Bagy, 2012). Many Jihadi groups were sponsored by the Syrian regime for over three decades and were now cooperating with local jihadists against the Ba'athist regime (O'Bagy, 2012). Salafi-jihadism is identified as a religious ideology that aims to

instill in true Muslims the belief that the sense of belonging in the *umma* is the only identity that truly matters (Moghadam, 2008). For centuries, Muslims have debated the definitions and interpretations of jihad, which plainly means to struggle (Maher, 2016). Some interpret it as a form of internal struggle against oneself, emotions, or desires to stray away from the right path of Islam (Maher, 2016). While others, including Salafi-jihadists interpret it as *al-qital* or the physical struggle and fight for the *umma* (Maher, 2016). Salafi-jihadist insurgencies share common goals, including the goal of establishing an Islamic state, overthrowing apostate regimes, and driving Western powers and their local non-Salafi allies out of their country or region (Byman, 2013). Moreover, due to their views on nationalism and borders, they call on Muslims to fight for other Muslims (Byman, 2013). Just like the Syrian regime's use of sectarianism as a tool, Salafi-jihadist groups and their foreign supporters have also utilized sectarian themes and slurs (Zuhur, 2015). From their perspective, fighting against Alawites and Hezbollah fighters, who are considered infidels and hypocrites, is as legitimate as fighting for Syrians (Zuhur, 2015).

Before the January 25 Revolution and the establishment of Salafi political parties, Salafi jihadi groups and networks were unorganized (Drevon, 2016). The revolution enabled internal interactions between Egyptian Salafi youths and previously unaffiliated youths (Drevon, 2016). Post-Mubarak Egypt was marked with not just the emergence of Salafi political parties, but also with the re-emergence of previous jihadi political parties that carried out various assassinations during the 1980s and 1990s (Drevon, 2015). *Al-Jama'a Al-Islamiyya* and *Jama'at Al-Jihad* regarded the revolution as a political opportunity to reassemble and mobilize (Drevon, 2015). Unlike the circumstances during Mubarak's rule, the absence of state restrictions benefited them during the revolution's aftermath and Morsi's rule.

During Morsi's time, Egyptian authorities announced that an estimate of at least 3,000 Egyptians have traveled to join the jihad in Syria (Awad & Hashem, 2015). They were driven to do so by different inclinations, including: peer pressure, solidarity with the Syrian Sunni population, the wish to avenge Sunni Muslims, the desire to experience the adventure of conducting military jihad, and the desire to add value to one's life through sacrifice for an honorable cause (Drevon, 2016). In the last decade, there has been an emphasis on online recruitment of jihadists. However, off-line social networks have also proven to be successful in recruiting youths. Salafi jihadists rejected the Brotherhood's plan of achieving gradual change through political participation (Awad & Hashem, 2015). Egyptian religious leaders issued a fatwa announcing that it is a religious duty for all true Muslims to aid the Syrian opposition by providing financial, human, and material support (Jones, 2013). Al-Qaradawi stated that every Muslim with the capability and training to fight should support the Syrian rebels in their battle against Al-Assad's regime and its allies, Iran and Hezbollah, which he denounced and described as the party of Satan (Jones, 2013). Local support networks assisted Egyptian Salafi-jihadists by securing them financial support for a visa or forging them a fake Syrian passport, supporting their families if they lost their lives in the battlefield, and giving them access to networks in Turkey and Syria (Drevon, 2016).

Jihadists were encouraged by Egyptian Islamist preachers to join the fight against Al-Assad's regime (Awad & Hashem, 2015). The Syrian crisis ignited the Salafi debates on the validity of the militarization of the Syrian revolution (Drevon, 2016). Since Egyptian Salafi organizations have established political parties and abandoned the tradition of political quietism, they contributed to the debate on Salafi Satellite TV channels. Some jihadists were also encouraged after mingling with the Syrian refugee

community in Cairo and participating in their political activities against the Assad regime and Iran (Drevon, 2016). They were eventually smuggled to Syria using a forged Syrian passport and were introduced to Syrian jihadi groups through their Syrian contacts (Drevon, 2016). Therefore, many Egyptians were deeply invested in the Syrian crisis, a conflict that led to the resurgence of sectarian violence in the region and had a spillover effect on Morsi's Egypt.

The escalation of sectarian socialization into violent socialization during Morsi's rule was a result of several domestic and geopolitical factors, then. Morsi's foreign affairs played a significant role as he attempted to restore Egyptian-Iranian relations without evaluating the negative impact it would have on his population. This decision exacerbated the popular belief in the existence of a societal threat. The sectarian aspect of the conflict in neighboring Syria was spilled over to Egypt as Egyptian Salafis promoted jihad in support of Syria's rebels. Recruitment jihadists benefited from Morsi's failure to refute claims of threats on Egypt and reassure Egyptians.

4.4 Conclusion

Preoccupied by his credibility as a world leader, Morsi lost touch with the average Egyptian. By establishing relations with Iran, he lost the support of other countries and leaders in the region. Moreover, he was not able to completely gain Iran as an ally since they shared different views on the Syrian crisis and had different propaganda strategies. The tourism industry was drastically affected by the revolution since tourists from all around the world, and mainly the Western world, refrained from visiting Egypt as the country was still facing instability. The bilateral tourism agreement with Iran could have

been an attempt to resuscitate the industry and, hence, the Egyptian economy. However, it produced more harm as it caused a series of demonstrations and violent clashes. Coverage of the domestic conflict and images of angry bearded Islamists burning flags and attempting to force their way into a diplomat's property repelled Western tourists even further. Morsi's decisions and foreign policies created more divisions and violence, harmed Egyptian minority groups, and ultimately contributed to his downfall.

As Morsi attempted to renew Egyptian-Iranian relations, his fight in support of the Syrian peoples against the Assad regime came under increasing scrutiny. Islamists from the Al-Nour Party denounced his foreign policies towards Iran and claimed that his actions were a betrayal of the Syrian's rebelling against a terrorist minority regime. The sectarian nature of the Syrian civil war divided the region based on sectarian lines. Cairo's friendly consultations with Tehran were viewed as an acceptance of Iran's position on the Syrian crisis and its support of Bashar's rule. Since the Assad regime in Syria was supported by Iran, Egyptians worried that friendly relation with Iran was tantamount to their government's indirect support of Bashar Al Assad. As the Salafi-Brotherhood feud intensified, Morsi's Islamist rivals described his policies as a threat to national and regional security. They utilized the Syrian cause as a method to mobilize their followers, the socialized Egyptians, against Morsi and the Shi'a religious minority. As a result, sectarian socialization escalated into violent socialization as Egyptians felt the need to eradicate a societal threat.

CHAPTER FIVE

CONCLUSION

5.1 Revisiting the Argument

This thesis examined the increase in sectarian agitation in Morsi's Egypt, a comparatively homogenous Sunni-majority Muslim country. It focused on the correlation between the political rise of Egyptian Islamist groups and the increase in sectarian strife in Egypt. Morsi's era signified the rise of sectarian divisions, but also the diversification of the political Islamist scene in Egypt. After the January 25 Revolution, the Muslim Brotherhood became the ruling force for the first time. However, their monopoly over the political Islamist field diminished with the entry of new Islamist political parties, mainly the Salafi Al-Nour Party. For the first time, Egyptian Salafi organizations decided to abandon the tradition of political quietism and enter the political arena. The relationship between the MB and Al-Nour Party was initially cordial when they united during the parliamentary and presidential elections against secular parties and candidates. After securing the majority of parliamentary seats, their short-lived union transformed into animosity and a public feud.

The escalation of sectarian socialization into violent socialization occurred during the peak of the Salafi-Brotherhood feud, which raised the question: was sectarian violence a consequence of the political competition between the Al-Nour Party and the Muslim Brotherhood? Were they competing for religious and political legitimacy? Both parties involved played a significant role in encouraging sectarian violence in Morsi's Egypt. The 2012 Constitution was criticized locally and by the international community for granting

religious minority groups fewer rights and protection. During Egypt's transitional stage into a new regime and unstable political circumstances, the Shi'a minority groups' lack of legal protection made them more prone to discrimination and violent attacks. The sectarian violence targeting those communities undermined Morsi's credibility, and led to a backlash from international political figures and human rights organizations.

This presidential transition and political instability were in turn the perfect environment for the socialization process. After all, in times of uncertainty people are more likely to accept new values and views. The lack of state restrictions and the Islamists' weaponization of the media led to the widespread belief in a societal threat within the Egyptian population. Paradoxically, while earlier regimes in Egypt were criticized for imposing state restrictions, Morsi's regime was criticized for not imposing state restrictions on hate speech. Consequently, the lack of state restrictions enabled the political securitization of the Egyptian Shi'a community. Nor did Morsi's government take the necessary measures to protect religious group from violent attacks.

Religious and political competition after authoritarian regime breakdown played a significant role in increasing the sectarian divide in Egypt. Al-Nour Party publicly condemned Morsi's attempts to normalize Egyptian-Iranian relations. His foreign policy was perceived as a way of accepting Iran's regional role. Egyptians protested against Morsi's foreign policy because they opposed Iran's involvement in the domestic affairs of neighboring countries and their alliances with controversial figures, organizations, and regimes. Morsi was adamant, however, and proceeded with the normalization process and the finalization of bilateral tourism agreements with Iran. Islamists mobilized after feeling unheard in their fight against the societal threat. Their frustration and anger were released

against the Egyptian Shi'a community who were accused of spreading the societal Shi'a threat.

The Syrian crisis was another political event that contributed to sectarian strife in Egypt. The political rise of Salafis in Egypt coincided with the emergence of Salafi-jihadism in Syria. By that time, Al-Nour Party allied with secular forces against Morsi and the MB. Many Egyptians were emotionally invested in the Syrian crisis, which was rapidly switching into a sectarian civil war. The sectarian nature of the Syrian conflict had a spillover effect on neighboring countries and brought back the Sunni-Shi'a divide to the forefront of regional politics. As Egyptian Salafi figures were promoting jihad in Syria, the Egyptian population expected Morsi to support the Syrian rebels against Al-Assad. Morsi's relations with Iran, an ally of the Assad regime, were perceived as a form of betrayal of the Syrians fighting for their liberation from the Assad regime. Since the Egyptian Shi'a community was axiomatically associated with the Iranian regime, the Islamists' anger was once again unleashed against the minority group.

The de-legitimization of Morsi's rule led to an escalation from sectarian socialization to violent socialization. The socialized population did not believe in the government's ability to protect them from the societal threat. They, therefore, decided to mobilize and protect themselves and their community from the threat. Outsiders and observers perceived their actions as forms of sectarian violence. Consequently, the socialized Egyptians perceived their use of violence as a form of self-defense against a threat to national security.

5.2 The Implications of the Argument

The escalation of sectarian socialization into violent socialization harmed all parties involved. Morsi's inability to protect religious minority groups in his country fueled backlash from international organizations and Western powers. The violent attacks were used to delegitimize his rule and credibility as president. After the January 25 Revolution, the country was politically unstable as it was transitioning to a supposedly democratic rule. Morsi managed to increase instability by implementing policies that were rejected by the Egyptian population. He did not strategically prolong his alliance with the Al-Nour Party. By uniting with the Al-Nour Party early on, he alienated himself from secular Egyptian citizens who were suspicious of the Salafis' political motives. The intensification of the Salafi-Brotherhood feud into a public feud cost Morsi the support of the Salafi political party, his biggest ally locally.

Morsi's foreign policy with Iran backfired. He aimed to revive the country's economy by signing a bilateral tourism agreement. However, the violent attacks and protests against the entry of Iranian tourists negatively impacted the tourism industry, and, hence the Egyptian economy. The protests and attacks against religious minority groups repelled the Western tourist from Egypt, as a tourist visit was deemed life-threatening and risky. The decision to renew relations with Iran angered Salafi leaders who believed that the MB's pro-Iranian policy could lead to the spread of Shi'ism in Egypt (Arafat, 2018). He did not correctly evaluate the newly sectarian atmosphere in the region and the impact the Syrian conflict had on his population. By attempting to mend Egypt's relations with Iran, the Egyptian Shi'a community was targeted by locals. Ironically, Iran condemned the Egyptian regime's inability to protect the minority group.

Morsi harmed the religious minority group by not taking action against the growing violence and sectarian speech. He also harmed the socialized Egyptians by not providing a sense of security and protection against any perceived threat such as the Iranian regime or the Assad regime. If he had successfully persuaded his population of the lack of a societal threat, they would have been less likely to mobilize and resort to violence. Lastly, he ultimately harmed himself and his rule's durability. Today, many remember him as the Egyptian Islamist who failed to prove the compatibility between Islam and democracy. In other words, Morsi and the MB worked against their interests (Arafat, 2018).

The Al-Nour Party was also harmed by violent socialization. The ousting of Morsi in July 2013 split the already fragmented Salafi camp (Cavatorta & Merone, 2016). Unlike the Al-Nour Party, the Watan, Asala, and Fadhila Salafi parties supported the MB and opposed the coup (Cavatorta & Merone, 2016). The Al-Nour Party's alliance with the military and secular forces infuriated many of their followers and Salafi clergymen. Moreover, the MB's supporters condemned the party's strategy and betrayal to the supposedly Islamist alliance. The party's alliance with secular parties did not grant them the support of secular Egyptians who blamed Al-Nour for the violent religious clashes in the country (Arafat, 2018). Their political performance and stances during Morsi's time revealed their illiberal views on minorities and personal freedoms (Al-Anani & Malik, 2013). During the 2015 parliamentary elections, the Al-Nour Party was the only Islamist option for conservative Egyptians (Lacroix, 2016). The party assumed their monopoly over the political Islamist scene would earn them more votes. However, they gained 12 seats out of 596, ten times less than their seats in 2011 (Lacroix, 2016). The Al-Nour Party

did not have the organizational and human resources to replace the Muslim Brotherhood (Cavatorta & Merone, 2016). If the party participated in overthrowing Morsi to become the next ruling force, they failed miserably.

Realistically, religious minority groups are unlikely to become fully integrated into Egyptian society in the near future. However, the case study of political securitization in Morsi's Egypt is instructive in a number of ways. Since Morsi's coup, the political power of Egyptian Islamists decreased exponentially. However, during his rule, they demonstrated their power to persuade their followers to mobilize in support of their campaigns. Many Egyptians still believe in the societal Shi'a threat. Their initial interest in the Syrian crisis subsided as their position on Syrian refugees in Egypt changed with time. However, the continuity and the destruction of the wars in neighboring Syria and Yemen could reinforce anti-Iranian sentiments. For almost a decade, Iran has continued to support their fighters in Yemen and Syria, hence, contributing to the increasing casualties and destructions. Therefore, the average Egyptian might still believe in protecting Egypt's Sunni identity from a societal Shi'a threat to avoid a deadly conflict. Consequently, the normalization of Egyptian-Iranian relations is unlikely to occur anytime soon as it could lead to further political instability.

This case study also demonstrates the importance of the international community's sensitivity to sectarian violence in Egypt. To reduce the backlash from international organizations and western leaders, Sisi's regime has to prevent attacks targeting minority groups. Moreover, since Egypt's economy and job sector is highly reliant on the tourism industry, sectarian violence must be avoided. If economic conditions deteriorate further, the country is more likely to experience political instability, as seen in the January 25 Revolution. This case study also underscores the necessity of state restrictions against hate

speech. The lack of state restrictions in Morsi's Egypt contributed to the escalation of sectarian socialization to violent socialization. Therefore, state restrictions against hate speech and violence can help protect vulnerable communities and, hopefully, reduce sectarian violence and political instability in the country.

Another similarity between Iran and Morsi's Egypt is the persecution of same-religious minority groups. In a homogenous Muslim population that consists of mainly Shi'a Muslims, Iranian Sunnis have also faced oppression and had to practice their religion in secrecy. In heterogeneous Muslim populations around the region, unlike the cases of Egypt and Iran, both sects generally have the space to practice their religious beliefs, traditions, and events. This could be a result of the fact that both sects are a sizeable proportion of the population. Hence, they have a community that shares common religious beliefs and practices. In some cases, they might be the dominant sect in certain areas or cities in the country, and they, therefore, have a safe space or platform to express themselves and their religious values. The sectarian divide is more of a taboo subject in homogenous Muslim populations that have not been exposed to the other sect as much as a heterogeneous Muslim population. Therefore, this research raises another question: is the sectarian divide in homogenous Muslim populations a result of the lack of awareness and exposure to the other sect? Is it the fear or the threat of the unknown?

Finally, explaining sectarian violence in Egypt through primordial or instrumentalist explanations brings us to the limits of these theoretical explanations. Unlike other cases in the region, the Sunni-Shi'a divide in Egypt is not a result of a struggle for identity-based political power, as the Egyptian Shi'a community does not have enough members to politically mobilize or compete over resources. Instead, socialization and political securitization are better theories to explain not just the case of

sectarianism in Morsi's Egypt, but also why sectarianism spiked during Morsi's tenure. The case study undertaken in this thesis displays the strength of socialization pressure in times of change and uncertainty, which was the case of Egypt after the January 25 Revolution. Since Egypt was undergoing a political transition and regime change, socialization pressures exceeded resistance to socialization. Morsi's rule lasted for just a year but the socialization process was successful as it took place during a time of uncertainty and change. Moreover, the case study demonstrates the success of political securitization in an environment that lacks state restrictions and regulations. The lack of state regulations in Morsi's Egypt enabled Islamists, the securitization and socialization agents, to spread the belief in a societal threat. Without state restrictions, the societal threat was successfully portrayed as a threat to Egyptian national security. Therefore, during political transitions and instability, governments need to impose regulations on discriminatory speech to avoid racially, ethnically, and religiously motivated attacks.

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