

UNIVERSITY OF LEIDEN  
FACULTY OF HUMANITIES  
INTERNATIONAL RELATIONS



**Universiteit Leiden**

# The Obama administration democracy promotion discourse after the Egyptian Uprising

---

**Federica Iudica**

Thesis supervisor: Vineet Thakur

Master of Science in International Relations

Specialization Global Conflict in the Modern Era

6 July 2018

## **Abstract**

This thesis aims at assessing the US rhetorical response in terms of democracy promotion to the events of the Arab Uprising, with a particular focus on the political transitions started in Egypt after 2011. Given the long history the mutual interests between the US and Egypt, the study conducts a throughout discourse analysis on the US statements and speeches delivered in the period 2011-2014, using the method of Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA). The analysis identifies three major narratives displayed by the US narrative, namely democracy promotion, regional stability/US-Egypt partnership and security interests, in order to understand how the discourses came together in the US rhetoric. More specifically, the thesis contends that, after an initial cautious support for the Egyptian democratization, the Obama administration increased the narrative on democracy promotion in 2011 and 2012, while associating it to the regional stability discourse. However, after the initial democracy euphoria displayed in the first two years after the revolution, the exam of the documents seems to reveal a notable prioritization of the security narrative in 2013 and 2014, especially with reference to counterterrorism practices and regional security. Finally, the thesis underlines the presence of a tension between the democracy promotion and the fostering of security objectives which worsened after the ouster of Morsi in July 2013.

## Table of contents

<b>1. Introduction</b> .....	4
<b>2. Literature Review</b> .....	7
2.1 <i>Conceptualization of democracy and democratization</i> .....	7
2.2 <i>Democracy promotion in International Relations theories</i> .....	8
2.3 <i>The role of democracy promotion in the American foreign policy</i> .....	10
2.4 <i>The Obama administration and the challenge of the Egyptian uprising</i> .....	14
<b>3. Methodology</b> .....	18
3.1 <i>Critical Discourse Analysis</i> .....	18
3.2 <i>Case selection</i> .....	19
<b>4. The Egyptian Uprising: the U.S. foreign policy narratives in 2011-2012</b> .....	21
4.1 <i>Democracy and human rights promotion after the Egyptian revolution</i> .....	22
4.2 <i>Regional stability and US-Egypt partnership narratives displayed by the Obama administration</i> .....	25
4.3 <i>Security promotion in Egypt in the aftermath of the Egyptian revolution</i> .....	27
4.4 <i>Preliminary conclusions</i> .....	29
<b>5. Democracy promotion or security promotion? The evolution of the narratives in 2013-2014</b> .....	31
5.1 <i>Obama's uncertain democracy promotion</i> .....	31
5.2 <i>The development of the regional stability narratives</i> .....	34
5.3 <i>Security concerns in US rhetoric</i> .....	35
<b>6. Conclusions</b> .....	38
<b>Bibliography</b> .....	40

## 1. Introduction

Democracy promotion has always constituted a significant objective of the United States (US) foreign policy, though the extent to which this objective was consistently pursued is at the core of an on-going debate. Many scholars identify a tension between the American rhetorical promotion of democratic values and the political practices of supporting democratization (Cox, 2013: 3). Indeed, while supporting human rights and transition to democracy, the United States foreign policy conduct is also highly influenced by economic and strategic calculations<sup>1</sup>. Historically, this resulted in the adoption by the US of controversial political positions, especially during the Cold War. Despite claiming to be the defender of the liberal world against the Soviet Union, the US was simultaneously supporting authoritarian regimes. Overall, although varying over time in the American Foreign Policy, democracy promotion has stayed in the political agenda of the administrations in the last decades (Cox, 2013: 7; Smith, 1994).

The American problematic relationship between democracy promotion and the pursuance of other political and security interests is particularly evident in the case of the Egyptian uprising in 2011. The US was profoundly affected by the mass protests occurring in the country due to its long history of mutual economic and political ties with the Arab state (Markakis, 2016: 77). Therefore, the Obama administration faced an unprecedented set of foreign policy challenges, to which it reacted with different positions overtime. Several analysts examined the U.S. responses during the Egyptian revolution, emphasizing the “realist” or “liberal” character of the American policies adopted towards Egypt (Bouchet, 2011: 572). However, few scholars (Hassan, 2017; Huber, 2015) have analyzed how the US democracy promotion discourse changed after the beginning of the Egyptian uprising and evolved in its aftermath.

Thus, this thesis will seek to contribute to fill this literature gap, while answering the research question “How did the U.S. democracy promotion discourse change after the Egyptian uprising in 2011?”. The study will investigate, through Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA), how the Egyptian Uprising transformed the democratization discourse proposed by the United States in the Arab country. Hence, the scope is to critically analyze changes in the US democracy promotion discourse from January 2011 until 2014 after the election of Fattah Al-Sisi as Egyptian President in May 2014. The hypothesis is that changes in the rhetorical discourse of democracy promotion after the Arab uprising reflected political and strategic considerations in terms of security. In order to

---

<sup>1</sup> For insights on the debate around the American foreign policy and its features from a theoretical perspective see section 2.2

answer the research question, it is first necessary to briefly consider the broader historical and political context in which the revolutionary events took place.

The “Arab Uprising”<sup>2</sup> mass protests that started in January 2011 in Tunisia and quickly spread to Egypt, Libya, Yemen and Syria, constituted an unforeseen political challenge for the long-established authoritarian regimes of the Middle-East and North Africa (MENA) region. Although driven by similar movements for more democratic institutions and freedoms, the countries had very different political outcomes. Indeed, while Yemen, Syria and Libya were driven into civil wars, Tunisia and Egypt started a transition to democracy process. This is defined as a “democratization of institutions and society”, which includes a procedure of political and cultural changes in order to develop democratic political practices (Miller, 2012: 57; Nachi, 2016: 432). On the international level, the Arab Uprising also had huge repercussions on the Western countries having a long history of economic and military ties with the Arab states affected by the mass protests. Two security-related issues emerged in the MENA region: the rise of radical Islamist groups and the migration phenomenon. These two security concerns impacted the bilateral relations between the Arab States and influential international actors in the area such as the United States and the European Union. (Markakis, 2016: 78).

The overthrow on 11 February 2011 of President Hosni Mubarak, whose authoritarian government lasted thirty years, determined the beginning of a transition period which culminated in the presidential elections held in May 2012. The leader of the Freedom of Justice Party (FJP) Mohamed Morsi became the first Egyptian president democratically elected (Anderson, 2011: 4). However, the Egyptian transition to democracy was problematic due to the fact that the Muslim Brotherhood regime led by Morsi failed to adopt policies that responded to the revolution’s mandate. Indeed, the Egyptian President proclaimed a controversial constitution on 22 November 2012. This included an increase in Morsi’s executive power and the seek to neutralize the authority of the judiciary. Therefore, the public opinion condemned the administration and started public demonstrations in the Tahrir Square on 30 June 2013, demanding the President’s resignation (Bhuyan, 2015: 497). The chief of the military Fattah Al-Sisi gave a 48 hours ultimatum to the President requesting the regime to resolve the political deadlock with the opposition forces and threatened the government with an army’s intervention. Given the government’s failure to solve the political issue within the deadline, the military forces overthrew Morsi on 3 July and suspended the constitution. (Sharp, 2014: 2). Consequently, Al-Sisi established an interim government led by the army and called for new presidential elections in 2014, when he was elected as the new Egyptian

---

<sup>2</sup> This thesis gives preference to the adoption of the term “Arab Uprising” over the notion “Arab Spring”, due to the fact that the former ensures more abstinence of judgments over the analysis of the events taking place from 2011 onwards in the MENA region. See Gelvin (2018), pp. 27-28.

President (Bhuyan, 2015: 498; Geddes, 2014: 313-317). The time framework of analysis will be confined to the period starting with the January Revolution in 2011 until 2014. The thesis will be divided into five chapters. This first section introduces the research question while presenting a brief historical background of the Egyptian revolution and its aftermath. The following second chapter examines the main literature review concerning American democracy promotion and democratization. Chapter three outlines the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) research method that is adopted in the study to answer to the research question and clarifies the scope of the thesis. The following chapter four and chapter five will constitute the critical analysis that is at the core of the research on the proclamations and official statements published by the White House. Their selection is based on their significance in terms of political language for the thesis's purpose of emphasizing the change in the democracy promotion discourse.<sup>3</sup> Chapter four investigates how the Obama administration changed its democracy promotion discourse from the Egyptian revolution outbreak in January, 27, 2011 until the end of 2012 with the approval of the 2012 Constitution. The official statements and speeches delivered by President Barack Obama and the Secretaries of State Hillary Clinton and John Kerry in the period from 2013 until the end of 2014 will be the object of inquiry of chapter five. Finally, Chapter six provides the conclusions deriving from the discourse analysis conducted in the former chapters, in order to answer to the research question.

---

<sup>3</sup> The complete list of the document chosen for the discourse analysis is offered at the section 4.1 and 5.1 of the thesis

## 2. Literature Review

Since this study relates to democracy promotion, and in order to answer to the research question concerning the changes of the US promotion after the Arab Spring in Egypt, it is necessary to assess which underlying notion of democracy is being promoted by the United States on the Arab country. Therefore, the first part of the literature will define which concept of democracy will be adopted for this research, defining then democratization and democracy promotion as it was conceived and promoted by the United States and the Obama administration.

### *2.1 Conceptualization of democracy and democratization*

The notion of democracy is widely debated in international relations; therefore there is not a universally accepted definition of democracy in the academia (McFaul, 2009: 15). In the field of political philosophy, many authors distinguish between two different meanings of democracy. On the one hand, the first notion of democracy is intended in a restrictive “procedural connotation”, as Schmitter and Karl define it (Schmitter and Karl, 1991: 78-79). This implies the establishment of a democratic political culture founded on the fundamental guarantee of freedoms as well as other features including a pluralistic political system, the holding of free elections and a check and balance system (Cavatorta, 2004: 3). On the other hand, the second conception of democracy is more inclusive and extensive, comprehensive of other attributes that go beyond the legal procedures mentioned above. This emphasizes the importance of public discussion and criticisms advanced by the population to government. Furthermore, political philosophers such as Amartya Sen argue that the second notion of democracy is the one that can sustain a transition to democracy. (Sen, 2005 cited in Nachi, 2016: 432-435). Thus, a political system to shift from an authoritarian system to a democratic regime must consider democracy in the extensive sense. This confers the citizens the right not only to exercise their electoral duty, but also to be part of a political community that fosters public debate and criticism (Sen, 2005 cited in Nachi, 2016: 432-433).

Among the authors who contributed to the formation of a vast literature on democratization, Alfred Stepan has argued that a fundamental condition for the achievement of a successful transition to democracy is the opportunity of citizens to express their political preferences. This freedom of expression must be guaranteed with the hold of free elections (Stepan, 2001: 215-216). Robert Dahl shared a similar perspective, claiming that a democracy is a regime where eight different institutional principles are included in the state. These are “the freedom to form and join

organizations; freedom of expression, which provides a political leader to compete for support and vote; alternative sources of information; and finally, free and fair election”. (Dahl, 1971, cited in Stepan, 2001: 215). This notion of democracy developed by Dahl has been defined as “Western liberal democracy”, which emphasizes the importance of the institutional principles mentioned above for the government’s legitimacy. Furthermore, Dahl considers the Western democracies as imperfect, arguing that competing elites manage the decision-making process over a majority of citizens. Dahl’s notion of Western liberal democracy will be analyzed during the study, due to the fact that this model of democratic regime is being promoted by the United States in its foreign policy conduct (Dahl, 1971 cited in Stepan, 2011; Markakis, 2016: 19).<sup>4</sup>

Due to the limited extent of the study, it is not possible to engage with the academic debate around other definitions of democratic regimes. Similarly, this section will not cover the main four approaches developed in the field of democratization, identified as structural, strategic, social forces, and economic approaches, as well as other theories elaborated by authors such as Cavatorta or Levitsky and Way, who focused on the external variable intervening in transition to democracy processes (Cavatorta, 2004; Levitsky and Way, 2014).<sup>5</sup>

## *2.2 Democracy promotion in International Relations theories*

Democracy promotion (DP) is defined as a very specific type of foreign policy. Many authors such as Stephan Keukeleire and Tom Delreux conceive foreign policy as a sum of all the official activities conducted by a state, transnational actors or organizations addressed to an external environment, influencing it. (Keukeleire and Delreux, 28-29). This definition allows to comprehend a wide range of policies and mechanisms used by governments and domestic institutions, while also endorsing the distinction between “relational” and “structural” foreign policy theorized by Keukeleire and Delreux. The two authors defined the former as a policy whose aim is to influence the behavior of the targeted actors and their relationships with other actors. The latter is intended as “a foreign policy which, conducted in a long-term perspective, has the objective of impacting the existent political, security and socio-economic structure in a certain environment”. (Keukeleire and Delreux, 2014: 28). From this perspective, democracy promotion is a structural foreign policy that substantially aims at shaping and encouraging the transition, consolidation or improvement of democratic regimes in other states’ societies (Keukeleire and Delreux, 2014: 28-29).

---

<sup>4</sup>The US democracy promotion and its role on the broader foreign policy will be the object of analysis in the section 2.3

<sup>5</sup>For a comprehensive understanding of the main democratization theories and other definitions of democratic regimes see Cavatorta(2004), Levitsky and Way (2014), Lipset (1959), Morton (1999), O’Donnell and Schmitter (1986), Rustow (1970), Teorell (2010).



In the field of International Relations (IR), the scholars of Realism, Liberalism, Constructivism and Critical theory engaged with the debate over democracy promotion, leading to very different interpretations of the phenomenon. Realism is based on the assumption that states are power-seeking actors that try to achieve their national interests in the international order which is governed by anarchy. Thus, realist authors sustain that democracy promotion should be part of the foreign policy of a state only if it helps reaching security-related goals. Nevertheless, democracy promotion cannot be seen exclusively as opposing security interests, but also as a differentiated security policy that can reduce threats and encourage a more stable international order. The scholars further underline that democracy promotion can trigger the emergence of within-state conflicts and terrorism, which can have an impact on the state's consolidation of democracy (McFaul, 2009: 9). Furthermore, this problematic relationship between security concerns and the promotion of democracy brings to a dilemma. Indeed, supporting democratization in the long term could foster security, which is politically risky if authoritarian regimes are the targets of the assistance. This dichotomy between security and democracy promotion will be examined during the study in order to assess how Obama's response to the Egyptian revolution was influenced by security and strategic concerns (Hassan, 2017: 329).

Many authors have also analyzed democracy promotion from a Liberal perspective. There is a vast body of literature which emphasizes different objectives pursued by the states that are promoting democracy abroad. One of the most important liberal traditions in international relations is based on the theory of "Perpetual Peace" by Immanuel Kant, which demanded internationalism in order to institute peace between liberal democracies. (Kant, cited in Huber, 2015a: 32). Another assertion of foreign policy idealism sustains that states should wage wars for principles and ideas and not to just to seek national interests. This tenet is strictly connected to the democratic peace theory, with its axiomatic argument that democracies do not go to war with other established democracies (Atlas, 2012: 359). This notion of foreign policy idealism is of particular significance for the American foreign policy conduct, as the section 2.3 of the thesis will underline.<sup>6</sup>

Among the different traditions of liberalism, Joseph Schumpeter and other representatives of the "commercial liberalism" approach focus on the role of economic interests as pushing factors for the promotion of democracy abroad. In addition, commercial liberalism claims that the combination of democracy and capitalism can create an international system with free trade and a peaceful relationship foreign policy for states. This configuration between states can occur due to the fact that capitalist societies ensure the best living conditions for the majority of people (Huber, 2015a:

---

<sup>6</sup> For a further understanding of the democratic peace theory as interpreted by the US see Atlas (2012), Ish-Shalom (2008), Owen (1994).

32; Schumpeter, 1951). Francis Fukuyama “End of History” argument is also theoretically founded on this idea (Fukuyama, 1989: 3-15). The “ideational liberalism” approach examines the role of transnational actors, whose behavior is influenced by social norms, values and knowledge. On the contrary “utilitarian liberalism” is based on the assumption that international actors’ foreign policies are determined by pre-given interests (Huber, 2015a: 32).

The constructivist academic tradition in IR was developed starting from the end of the Cold War, and traditionally emphasized the importance of civil society identities and transnational actors on the international level. With regards to democracy promotion theories, constructivists authors mostly underlined the role played by identity in shaping democratization processes, leading to the emergence of a literature on both the United States and the European Union as democracy promoters (Huber, 2015a: 35; Smith, 1994).

The academic tradition labeled as “critical theories”, questions the realist and liberal approaches sustaining that they are based on assumptions, while simultaneously providing a theoretical framework to analyze modern states. Among the many contributions to this literature, one of the most interesting examples is “transnational historical materialism”, which draws upon the theory and concept of “hegemony” elaborated by Antonio Gramsci. These authors argue that consensus is the essential mean to “hegemony” on the international level through the diffusion of a common culture. Robert Cox based his theory on this reasoning, arguing that “hegemony in world politics is expressed in terms of universal norms, institutions and mechanisms” (Cox, 1993: 61). Thus, from Cox’s perspective, democracy promotion could constitute a foreign policy mechanism to impose a common culture in a hegemonic world. William Robinson applies this argument to the U.S. foreign policies conduct, asserting that “low democracy promotion” is intended to serve the economic interests of a transnational hegemonic elite (Robinson, 1996: 6-10). Hence, as these authors highlighted in their theories, one of the main concerns in the study of democracy promotion is to investigate why democratic support is pursued by states, and it is from this perspective that this study will examine the political-strategy interests that are at stake in the U.S. democracy promotion policies in Egypt.

### *2.3 The role of democracy promotion in the American foreign policy*

Democracy promotion has always constituted a core aspect of the United States’ foreign policy. Historically, American promotion to democracy has combined different notions of democracy promotion, that can be classified as models of classical liberal and neoliberal democracy, which were intertwined with other US political objectives (Cox et al. 2000: 85-90).

The beginning of US democracy promotion can be traced back to the idea conceived by President Woodrow Wilson of liberal democracy promotion abroad. Moreover, Wilson integrated this notion with free market in order to develop a world economic system and it also considered the creation of international institutions to regulate conflicts and foster peace. Wilson's Fourteen Points included national "self-determination, freedom of the seas, free trade, representative governance and open treaties". (Patterson, 2012: 27; Cox et al., 2000: 90). Therefore, from Wilson's perspective, a combination of free trade and political engagement from US in promoting democracy and freedom abroad was to be intended both in rhetoric and practice. Many authors interpreted this American attitude as an "idealist" impetus grounded on American moralism and political tradition. This idealist image of American liberal internationalists was then discredited by the introduction of "realist" theories in US foreign policy<sup>7</sup> (Kurki, 2013: 123). As rightly argued by John Ikenberry, the American promotion of democracy, especially after World War II, was the expression of pragmatism and strategic calculations with the aim of establishing a stable and secure international order. This has been defined by Tony Smith as "liberal grand strategy" (Cox et al., 2000: 103; Smith, 1994). This theory was based on the belief that the world wars were the by-product of illiberal states' rise and that U.S. post-war security was highly affected by the successful transition to democracy of the states that were central to American foreign policy. This democratic peace theory argument must be intended as the belief that democratic states are very unlikely to engage wars between each other, due to institutional and normative reasons (Lynch in Cox et al, 2013: 179). This doctrine was also connected to the "liberal peace" argument that trade and economic openness would reinforce democracy and democratization, subsequently encouraging interdependence relations between different states. According to the doctrine, this would lead to peace on the international level (Campbell & Chandler & Sabaratnam, 2011: 1-3).

However, the deteriorating relations with the Soviet Union and the subsequent dynamics of the Cold War resulted in the "containment doctrine", therefore security and economic concerns prevail over democracy promotion in the US foreign policy (Cox et al., 2000: 110-115). President Jimmy Carter took distance from the previous foreign policy of containment, displaying an "idealist" notion of foreign policy which stressed the importance of human rights, even though many authors underlined its support for non-democratic states such as Iran and Saudi Arabia (Patterson, 2012: 28). In the 1980s, the Reagan's administration supported the involvements abroad in Chile and the Philippines as expression of the commitment to the expansion of democracy and markets, sustaining a model of "restrained liberal internationalism". (Cox et al. 2013: 25). The

---

<sup>7</sup> For an insight on realist theories see E.H. Carr's *Twenty Years' Crisis, 1919-1939*, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition (New York: Harper & Row) and Hans Morgenthau's *Politics Among Nations* (1985).

President shifted from the Nixon-Kissinger approach expressed in the “coexistence” notion towards the Soviet Union, moving forward to a foreign policy of democracy promotion which included human rights promotion alongside the democratic peace argument. Nonetheless, his administration policies display the traditional American tension between the promotion of democracy in rhetorical discourse and the immediate geopolitical interests at stake in world politics. These strategic considerations drove the administration to seek cooperation with anti-communist regimes, regardless of their human rights abuses on their population (Cox et al., 2000: 124-126).

After the end of the Cold War, President Bill Clinton endorsed democracy promotion as an approach to ensure security and peace worldwide. However, this period was also characterized by a growing conviction that political and economic liberalism was the solution for a broad range of political and social problems. This led to the creation of many international organizations established with the specific aim of promoting democracy abroad such as the Organization for Security and Cooperation in Europe (OSCE), and monitoring democratic elections in war-torn countries (Paris, 2010: 340; Jahn, 2007: 215). Nevertheless, the liberal peace argument started being questioned by many authors who identify that as a form of “western imperialism”. Roland Paris criticized the theory of liberal peace and its practice of liberal peacebuilding. In particular, Paris and others underlined how the theory’s focus on political and economic liberalization could be destabilizing for societies where liberal institutionalization did not occur in the country (Paris, 2010 cited in Sabaratnam, 2011: 13; Paris, 2010: 227). Therefore, the challenges of post-conflict reconstruction and the limit of the liberalization practices became more visible, as demonstrated in the cases Angola, Rwanda and Cambodia, where liberalization efforts were not translated into durable peace. Other authors interpreted peacebuilding operations as forms of Western or liberal imperialism, which was perceived as part of a project perpetuated by the Western states to spread their hegemony. From this perspective, liberal peacebuilding was used as a façade to pursue imperial or quasi-imperial domination. This interpretation became increasingly popular during the Bush era and its declaration of “war on terror”. (Paris, 2010: 342).

The presidency of the George W. Bush started at the beginning of the twenty-first century was initially characterized by an emphasis on domestic policy, as opposed to the Bill Clinton’s administration which was involved in many humanitarian interventions abroad in the 1990s. However, the terrorist attacks of the 9/11 determined a shift in the foreign policies adopted by Bush. The new environment of terroristic threats and political instability brought the United States to promote democratization in the MENA region. This was seen as a priority for many reasons, among them national security (Carter & Scott, 2014: 742). Therefore, the commitment to democracy promotion emerged as a uniform approach in the National Security Strategy (NSS) of 2002, which

was then labeled as the “Bush Doctrine”. (National Security Strategy, 2002). The NSS report defines the four pillars of the Bush Doctrine as “The maintenance of American military primacy, the embrace of preventive war as a supplement to traditional deterrence; the war on terrorism; and democratization”. (Berenskoetter, 2005: 76). Therefore, a cornerstone of this doctrine was the promotion and support of freedom abroad, as it was developed in the “Freedom Agenda”, which was conceived not just as a rhetorical discourse, but also as a practical approach. The document underlines the American role as guarantor of liberty and justice abroad, making the agenda the expression of the “US exceptionalism”. (Berenskoetter, 2005: 76-77). In terms of threats perceptions, the Freedom Agenda emphasizes the danger coming from transnational terrorism that affects US national security. An interesting aspect of this foreign policy is that it considers under the “danger” label also governments and states that fail to counter terrorism. Endorsing the assumption of universal responsibility, the Bush doctrine conceived the “War on Terror” as a duty not only to defend and preserve freedom, but also to actively fight terror and expand freedom. (Berenskoetter, 2005: 78-83). With the regard to the MENA region, this foreign policy agenda, despite recognizing the potential for legitimating crises in the area, was trying to prevent them from occurring for the maintenance of regional stability and security (Hanau Santini & Hassan, 2012: 70).

Critics assert that Bush’s Freedom Agenda was too strictly connected to early or premature elections that resulted in the exacerbation of tensions in countries without long-term institutional development. This became a fundamental component of Bush’s grand strategy to fight the “global war on terror”. The neoconservative administration engaged in a series of multilateral democracy promotion programs which combined political and economic liberalization, such as the “Middle East Free Trade Agreement (MEFTA), a Common Future for countries in the Broader Middle East and North Africa (BMENA) and the Middle East Partnership Initiative (MEPI)” (Patterson, 2012: 29). However, the Bush administration and the Freedom Agenda were harshly criticized in two main aspects. The first line of criticism was targeting the empirical results of Bush’s foreign policy, questioning the contribution of those policies to democratizing authoritarian regimes, as in the cases of Iraq and Afghanistan, where these countries were driven into political instability. Many analysts started equating international peacebuilding operations conducted by Bush with the phenomenon of Western imperialism. Lacher (2010) and Bendana (2005) shared similar ideas regarding the peacebuilding mission in Iraqi war, interpreting it as an expression of the imposition of imperialist logics. Furthermore, the authors similarly assert that the United States prioritized strategic and economic interests over the promotion of human rights and self-determination (Bendana, 2005: 5-15; Lacher, 2010: 247).

Several authors also critiqued the Freedom Agenda for its emphasis on the use of military force as a mean to implement democracy promotion, by rejecting the association between the invasion of Iraq and the Freedom agenda that was promoted by President Bush, as well as the use of the term “regime change”, which started acquiring a negative connotation (McFaul, 2009: 9-13). Therefore, according to some commentators, the liberal interventionism doctrine seemed unable to support liberal democratic transitions. This results in enhancing insecurity and raises skepticism about the effectiveness of promoting democracy through liberalization. Finally, other authors argued that the Bush administration, rather than demanding the political liberalization of authoritarian regimes was involved in a close partnership with them in order to slowly liberalize them (Jahn, 2007: 220).

#### *2.4 The Obama administration and the challenge of the Egyptian uprising*

The Bush administration’s foreign policies had severe repercussions on the American image of democracy promotion. This led to an international backlash from the support of democracy assistance, particularly in regards to the Arab countries. Therefore, many observers debated how the Barack Obama administration was addressing this dilemma between security and democracy promotion, analyzing its policies in terms of continuity and changes from the Bush presidency (Bouchet, 2011: 572; Cox et al., 2013: 196).

President Obama and Secretary of State Hillary Clinton appeared to purposely avoid rhetorical references to democracy promotion during the first months of their administration. Particularly, the President did not mention democracy assistance abroad in his first inaugural address (Carothers, 2012: 9). Similarly, in the confirmation hearing in the Senate, the US Secretary of State Hillary Rodham Clinton declared that the three pillars of the Obama’s administration in terms of foreign policy would be “three D’s” of diplomacy, development and defense. The absence of “democracy” contributed to increase the observers’ concerns around the role of democracy promotion as conceived by President Obama (Carothers, 2012: 9; Clinton, 2009). Thus, the new approach combined economic growth and political development, where democratic governance was intended to cover a supportive role for the former objectives (Bouchet, 2011: 575).

According to authors such as Nicholas Bouchet (2011), Barack Obama’s democracy promotion can be interpreted as a conventional “liberal internationalism” in the US foreign policy. Obama’s co-sponsoring as a senator for the program Democracy Act introduced in 2005, as well as his intention to rhetorically distance himself from the Bush’s doctrine of the Freedom Agenda and its contradictions, was the expression of this liberal approach (Bouchet, 2011: 574-576).

Furthermore, the presidency's attempt to move away from Bush's Freedom Agenda was also testified by the administration's investments in development in the region as a method to respond to Islamist organizations (Hanau Santini & Hassan, 2012: 74-76).

An alternative interpretation of Obama's democracy promotion is supported by scholars who described the former US President as a "pragmatic idealist", arguing that his foreign policy integrates elements such as democracy promotion, security and economic concerns. Authors such as Indyk suggested that Obama's policies have "repeatedly manifested a combination of the realist's pragmatic approach to the world as it is and the idealist's progressive approach to a new world order that he seeks to shape". (Indyk et al. 2012b: 6). Thus, the liberal perspective is combined with strong pragmatic instincts and the desire to solve specific issues through the building of consensus with authoritarian countries rather than supporting confrontation. Fareed Zakaria focused on the strategic level of Obama's foreign policy defining it as "post-imperial policy in the midst of an imperial crisis", meaning the Afghanistan policy and in general the former President's multilateral opening to authoritarian countries in order to pursue priorities in terms of geopolitical interests (Zakaria, 2009, cited in Bouchet, 2011: 576).

The first National Security Strategy statement, released in May 2010, defined US national interests as founded on four principles: "security, prosperity, universal values and an international order that allows stronger cooperation to meet global challenges" (Obama, 2010). Therefore, Bouchet argues that democracy promotion is interpreted through the lens of development. This follows the thesis advanced by Thomas Carothers who claims that the United States have a long history of strategic political agenda for development through the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) (Carothers, 2012: 13). Thus, according to the Obama administration, the strategic engagement interpreted as *realpolitik* does not contradict the American promotion of democracy, rather it reflects the idea that bilateral cooperation with authoritarian regimes in order to pursue a broad range of goals can be mutually beneficial for achieving democratization objectives (Bouchet, 2010: 580). Furthermore, Carothers also identifies some continuities of Obama's administration with the past US democracy promotion policies such as the absence of consistency and coherence between the pro-democracy rhetoric and the actual commitment to support it in practice; the assumption that the US still covers a dominant role in shaping international democracy promotion, based on its status of its "democratic exceptionalism"; and a more extensive democracy promotion in states where the assistance does not endanger other American strategic and security interests as opposed to a tendency to downplay democratic support if other concerns are at stake. (Carothers, 2012: 12-14; Cox et al., 2013: 196-197). Starting from these considerations, the thesis will assess how the democracy promotion discourse changed in

order to understand whether it was influenced by security concerns, in particular regarding counterterrorism policies. Moreover, there is a tension between Obama's rhetoric promoting human rights and democracy and the strategic policies which provides funding to authoritarian regimes such as Egypt under the Mubarak's presidency. The decision made by the Obama administration to decrease part of the democracy assistance program from the perspective of consensus-building and multilateralism resulted in prioritizing cooperation with the regime over democracy concerns there. Indeed, the USA cut funding for democracy-related activities and also reduced the support for civil society from \$32 million to \$7 million during the first year of Obama's administration (Cox et al., 2013: 201; Flanagan, 2014: 441).

The Egyptian revolution that occurred in 2011 constituted the first challenge in terms of crisis-management in relation with one of most important US allies in the MENA area. Indeed, the Egyptian uprisings had tremendous implications for the American interests in the region. On the strategic level, these are represented by the primary cooperation on counter-terrorism and the advance of moderate policies in relation to Israel. Furthermore, since 1979, the US provided Egypt with large military aid amounting to \$1.2 billion per year on the condition that Egypt upholds the Camp David treaty with Israel. (Hassan, 2017: 323). On the level of energetic cooperation, the constant access to Gulf petroleum could be jeopardized or strengthened by a possible democratic government. Therefore, most analysts defined the US foreign policy in the first half of 2011 as cautious, emphasizing how the Obama administration only broke with the Mubarak regime when it was clear that the dictator was going to be overthrown. The administration also made explicit preference for an orderly transition led by the military<sup>8</sup> (Indyk, Lieberthal & O'Hanlon, 2012a: 38). This attitude of incremental embrace and support for regime change was influenced by several geopolitical considerations. The uncertainty whether the transitional government would sustain American interests in the region and the attempt to avoid scenarios where Mubarak stayed in power after the US had publicly supported the uprisings all affected the US decision-making process (Cox et al., 2013: 208-210). However, it must be underlined that the US actively supported the transition in Egypt through the deployment of economic aid package for Egypt while encouraging the military to complete the promised democratic reforms. In addition, after the democratic election of Mohamed Morsi as President of Egypt in May and June 2012, Secretary Clinton visited Cairo and the State Department stated that the three main goals for the visit were to improve economic development in Egypt, to sustain the ongoing democratic transition and to ensure that the Egyptian role as regional stability provided in the MENA area was guaranteed (Rieffer-Flanagan, 2014: 444). A military coup removed Morsi in July and an interim government was established under the

---

<sup>8</sup> For further observations on Obama's first reaction to the Egyptian revolution see Carothers (2012); Cox et al. (2013);



command of the General Al-Sisi, who was then elected as Egyptian President in the presidential elections held in May, 2014. The Obama administration did not label the ouster as a “coup”, nor the administration cut the economic and military assistance package to the Egyptian government consisting on \$1.3 billion in 2014, despite the latter’s constant violations of human rights in the country (Fabbrini, 2014: 72). The US officials condemned these abuses. However, while some economic and military assistance was suspended in 2013, in July 2014 the USA released \$575 million of those suspended funds (Rieffer-Flanagan, 2014: 442).

This tension between the strategic interests in Egypt and the military and economic ties between the Arab State and the US will be examined in the following chapters of the thesis in order to analyze how the democracy promotion rhetorical discourse was influenced by the already mentioned security concerns. Indeed, the relations with Egypt were affected by the rise of the terrorist threat both in the Sinai Peninsula and in the rest of Egypt, with repercussions on the MENA area. Therefore, the language adopted by the Obama administrations shows evidences of the progressive prevalence of security and stability languages over the support for a democratic regime.

### 3. Methodology

#### 3.1 Critical Discourse Analysis

The study of political language in the field of International Relations has increasingly emerged with the development of the poststructuralist theory. This approach conceives the international arena as socially constructed, thus it confers particular importance to the language adopted by political actors in addressing issues such as identities, historical events and power relations. Therefore, the study of political discourse can serve as enhancing understanding on how political actors construct their discourses and policies (Hansen, 2014: 173).

In the field of discourse analysis there are many definitions of *discourse*, which can be interpreted as “meaning-making”, as aspect socialization processes, or as a language connected to a specific social process (Wodak et al., 2016: 87). In order to ensure clarity in the thesis, the study will adopt the term *semiosis*, which is defined by Norman Fairclough as discourse in its broadest definition. The endorsement of this notion has the advantage of considering discourse analysis as a system with different semiotic modalities. Furthermore, this definition acknowledges the fact that language is only one of the modes examined in discourse analysis, which comprehends also non-verbal communication and visuals (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997: 257).

This theoretical perspective is strictly connected to the Critical Discourse Analysis (CDA) school of discourses. CDA focuses on structures of social practices and strategies of social agents which try to accomplish their objectives of social and political domination. The objective of this approach is thus to underline the relationship between ideology, power and language, situating them in a broader social and political context. The notion of “critical” implies underlining connections and causes which are hidden in a certain discourse (Fairclough & Wodak, 1997: 258).

In addition, Fairclough further argues that ideologies are the by-products of language-based discourses. He developed a CDA model which consists of three dimensions of discourse that are tied to three interdependent processes of analysis. The dimensions are the *object of analysis*, intended as written or visual text; the *discursive practice*, the processes through which the object is produced, and interpreted by the subject; and the social and historical conditions of interpretation, defined as *social practice*. Moreover, Fairclough also focused on *intertextuality*, which is defined as the presence of linkages between the single discourse examined and discourse components of other texts. Closely associated to this notion is that of *interdiscursivity*. This concept indicates the articulation of different discourse in the same text which might disclose changes in a series of discourses by a given actor (Jørgensen & Phillips, 2002: 61-68). Therefore, it is fundamental to take

into consideration all the three dimensions while carrying on the analysis. The use of Fairclough's approach in the thesis will offer a better understanding of the different narratives included in political discourses through the study of vocabulary choices including themes and keywords used by the political actors. Of particular importance will be the concepts of discourse implied in the political statements and the interdiscursivity between the different documents.

Since this thesis aims at investigating how the US democracy promotion changed after the Egyptian revolution, the theoretical framework developed by Fairclough will allow to emphasize the presence (or absence) of different concepts of discourses that appear in the American foreign policy conduct. Simultaneously, the intertextuality and interdiscursivity will reveal how the democracy promotion discourse changed overtime. The identification of three main theme categories is believed to be representative of the major issues identified in the political discourse of the Obama administration from 2011 until the end of 2014. The three concepts of discourses investigated in the analysis will be related to:

- 1) promotion of democracy and human rights, explored in its dichotomy with concepts such as dictatorships;
- 2) regional stability, both in strategic and economic terms including the US objective of strengthening its partnership with Egypt and in political terms due to the treaty signed between Egypt and Israel;
- 3) security promotion (counterterrorism, regional security) objectives;

These three macro-categories are believed to be representative of the major issues that should be inquired in order to critically evaluate how the Obama administration used political discourses in statements and speeches as part of a broader foreign policy strategy. Indeed, the emphasis on these recurrent themes may expose the presence of the discursive strategy pursued in Egypt after the Arab Uprising.

### *3.2 Case selection*

The research will use mostly primary sources, namely official statements from both the former President Barack Obama and the Secretaries of State who served under the Obama administration: Hillary Clinton and John Kerry. To be more specific, speeches and statements delivered from January 2011 until the end of 2014 will be inquired. This category comprehends Department of State statements on situation in Egypt, remarks by the President on the Middle East

and North Africa, Special Briefing and Background Briefing documents. The analysis will also analyze several transcripts of both interviews to Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama during the mentioned historical period and meetings with the Egyptian authorities such as the Egyptian Foreign Minister. For clarity reasons, a detailed inventory of the documents that constitute the objects of inquiry will be presented in the initial sections of Chapter 4 and Chapter 5. As already mentioned, the study will cover the period starting with the revolution outbreak in January 2011 until the end of 2014, following the election of Al-Sisi in May 2014. The choice of including documents by other administration's officials is done with the aim of underlining the position of the administration as whole, in order to avoid the bias brought by the analysis of a single person's rhetorical discourse. This process will allow to emphasize the presence of differences in the use of the most dominant political discourses in terms of security and democracy. Among the existent studies on the US democracy promotion in the aftermath of the Arab uprising, very few conducted discourse analysis. Therefore, this study attempts to contribute to fill this literature gap by tracing the changes in the narratives adopted by the Obama administration in the occurrence of the Egyptian revolution and its aftermath.

#### 4. The Egyptian Uprising: the U.S. foreign policy narratives in 2011-2012

As already outlined in the literature review (see section 2.4), the relationship between democracy promotion and security has always been problematic for the US foreign policy. The events of the Arab Uprising represented an unforeseen challenge for the Obama administration, whose response was modified in the aftermath of the revolution in the period 2011-2012. The research will use the historical background knowledge regarding the relations between Egypt and the United States as covered in the sections 2.3 and 2.4 in order to have a more accurate analysis. From a theoretical perspective, this study of democracy promotion discourse is based on the methodological considerations elaborated by Norman Fairclough in his CDA theory. Thus, the focal point rests on three main elements: its specific contents in terms of linguistic devices; its significance and its level of intertextuality between the similar political documents examined through the discourse analysis; its importance with regards to the presence of interdiscursivity within the Obama's administration statements.

This chapter will conduct the discourse analysis of six proclamations of 2011. (1) (25 January 2011) Statement on Situation in Egypt; (2) Hillary Clinton's Remarks on 25 January protests in Egypt; (3) (1 February 2011) Statement of the President Barack Obama on Egypt; (4) (9 February 2011) Conference Call to Discuss Egypt; (5) (19 May 2011) Remarks by the President Obama on the Middle East and North Africa; (6) (3 November 2011) Special Briefing on U.S. Support for the Democratic Transition Underway in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya. The choice of these documents is determined by their significance in terms of the three analytical categories presented during the methodological considerations in Chapter 3.

These proclamations will be analyzed along with other official statements and interviews from 2012, in order to emphasize how the US political discourse changed overtime as the revolutionary events were unfolding. The language of five 2012 proclamations will be studied. (7) (23 March 2012) U.S. Support for Egypt; (8) (14 July 2012) Background Briefing en route to Cairo; (9) (14 July 2012) Remarks with Egyptian Foreign Minister; (10) (17 July 2012) Interview Hillary Clinton with Elise Labott of CNN; (11) (12 September 2012)<sup>9</sup> The discourse analysis of the texts from 2011 and 2012 will be conducted to underline the presence of three recurring themes, identified in the documents as a form of Fairclough's intertextuality and interdiscursivity. Thus, the following sub-sections of the chapter will investigate how the Obama administration modified the narratives in terms of democracy promotion, regional stability, and security. The analysis will also

---

<sup>9</sup> All the documents examined in this chapter were retrieved from the United States State Department Archive, see <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/index.htm>

emphasize how the three themes are related to each other and come together in the different historical periods.

#### *4.1 Democracy and human rights promotion after the Egyptian revolution*

The first part of the discourse analysis will focus on the macro-category of democracy promotion in order to examine how the narrative displayed Obama administration changed after the outbreak of the Egyptian revolution in 2011 and in its aftermath in 2012. The section will also consider how the rhetoric of democratization was interrelated with the regional stability and security discourses.

The Arab uprisings in Egypt started on 25 January taking the form of non-violent mass protests. Initially the Obama administration adopted a cautious approach towards the demonstrations, avoiding to actively support the demonstrations or to break with the Mubarak regime. The Secretary of State Hillary Clinton declared on an initial Statement on 25 January 2011 that “the Egyptian government is stable and is looking for ways to respond to the legitimate needs and interests of the Egyptian people”. (Clinton, 2011). The analysis on the U.S. Department of State Press Statement on the same day reveals a similar support for the “fundamental right of expression for all people”. However, the statement did not mention the need for a transition to democracy but only stressed the necessity for reform within the country in a peaceful atmosphere environment, declaring that the U.S. “raised with government in the region the need for reforms and openness in order to respond to their people’s aspirations” (State Department, 2011a).

The first clear political address to the uprising in terms of democracy promotion can be identified in the Statement of President Obama on 1 February 2011, when Obama significantly shifted the Administration’s position by recognizing that the “status quo was is not sustainable”. The American President also expressed the belief that “an orderly transition must be meaningful, it must be peaceful, and it must begin now”. (Obama, 2011a). The idea of a transition to democracy recurred also in the Conference Call to Discuss Egypt on 9 February 2011. Both documents showed an increasing change of tone with reference to a future democratic Egypt. This is reflected in the choice of the vocabulary which emphasized the necessity of achieving a “meaningful, lasting and legitimate transition to democracy” in order to respect the universal rights of the Egyptian population. (State Department, 2011b). Obama also clarified the American support to Egypt throughout the transition to the democracy period, which was said to lead to “free and fair elections and orderly transition”. These explicit references to the “transition to democracy” were not present in the Press Statement released at the end of January (State department, 2011a). Similarly, in the

Remarks by the President on the Middle East and North Africa, the language presented a vocabulary connected to human rights values. Therefore, the President used words such as “freedom”, “democracy”, “democratic transition”, explicitly declaring that the United States supports a “set of universal rights” and the U.S. policy will “promote reform across the region and support transitions to democracy”. (Obama, 2011b).

Following Fairclough’s notion of interdiscursivity, it is also significant to notice how the democracy promotion discourse in the Remarks on the Middle East and North Africa came together with the regional stability and security narratives. This is visible when the President articulated the “set of core interests in the region” as well as “a set of core principles that have guided our response to the events of the past six months”. (Obama, 2011b). Obama specified the American interests in the region as “countering terrorism and stopping the spread of nuclear weapons; securing the free flow of commerce and safeguarding the security of the region; standing up for Israel’s security and pursuing Arab-Israeli peace”. (Obama, 2011b).

With reference to the political discourse displayed by the administration in 2011, scholars such as Atlas and Huber argued that Obama applied American idealism rhetoric to the Arab Uprising (Atlas, 2012: 362; Huber, 2015: 62). This argument seems to be valid in light of the documents examined from 2011. In particular, in the Remarks of the Middle East and North Africa Obama stressed how the events were “an historic opportunity to show that America values the dignity of the street vendor in Tunisia more than the raw power of the dictator. There must be no doubt that the United States of America welcomes change that advances self-determination and opportunity” (Obama, 2011b). In addition, the president also emphasized the US “opposition to the use of violence and repression, and the support of universal rights, as well as economic and political reforms”. (Obama, 2011b).

Another recurrent theme strictly connected to both the democracy promotion and the regional stability discourses is that of “change”. As Huber argued, the US used its political rhetoric in order to represent the US in the region as a power welcoming change (Huber, 2015: 61-63). The already mentioned Statement of President Obama on Egypt seems to provide evidences for this argument. Indeed, Obama emphasized the notion of change by declaring that the “status quo is not sustainable” and “societies held together by fear and repression may offer the illusion of stability for a time, but they are built upon fault lines that will eventually tear asunder”. (Obama, 2011b).

Hence, the discourse analysis on the 2011 documents seems to suggest that the position taken by the Obama administration gradually shifted from supporting Mubarak before the Arab Uprising, to calling for reform, to expressing the immediate need for an orderly transition to democracy. In addition, the analysis of inter-discursivity also seems to reveal a double tendency

regarding the democracy promotion discourse. On the one hand, the Obama administration affirmed the US role as advocate of democratic change, intended as a supporter for democratic change based on local ownership. Obama added the notion of “non external interference” with the acknowledgement that “it is not American that put people into the streets of Tunis or Cairo. (Obama, 2011b). While the administration insisted in declaring its support for the Egyptian transition to democracy, this narrative was also strictly connected with the rhetoric regarding regional stability and security concerns, as explicitly articulated by Obama. (Hassan, 2017: 362; Huber, 2015:61).

The analysis of the Background Briefing En Route to Cairo is particularly important due to the fact that it is dated back to July 14, 2012, only a few weeks after the democratic election of the Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi. Moreover, the text represents the first official visit of the Secretary of State Hillary Clinton in Egypt since the start of the Arab Uprising. The Senior State Department Official explained the three main areas of discussion during the encounter with President Morsi, with the civil society, and with Field Marshal Tantawi. These are expressed in terms of economy stabilization, political transition and regional security. Interestingly, despite asserting the importance of a “dialogue with all the stakeholders at a very important time of change and transition of Egypt”, the Senior State Department Official did not firstly focus on the political area of debate. On the contrary, the first focal point of the briefing was the need for economic stabilization and investments in Egypt. Among the various economic “support” and “assistance” initiatives promoted by the U.S., the briefing also named the billion dollar package already mentioned by Obama in his speech on 19 May 2011 (State Department, 2012b). The Senior State Department Official moved forward explaining the institutions for Egypt’s political democratization. These included a “fully representative parliament, a constitutional process that is inclusive and produces a document that protects the rights of all Egyptians”. (State Department, 2012b). A similar vocabulary concerning human rights promotion is also evident in the Hillary Clinton Remarks with Egyptian Foreign Minister speech, delivered on 14 July 2012. The Secretary of State referred to the “democratic transition” nine times in the statements, further stressing the “importance of keeping Egypt’s democratic transition moving forward”, and to protect the “rights of all Egyptians”. This shows evidences of the political reference to the concepts of “inclusion” of all the Egyptian civil society, with particular allusion to “minorities” and “women’s rights”. (Clinton, 2012a). Therefore, the analysis of the two documents reveals a continuity with the democracy promotion discourse displayed by the administration in 2011, even though the agenda setting of the Background Briefing en Route to Cairo seemed to have prioritized the discussion of the economic assistance to Egypt over democratization.



Another element of the narrative regarding democracy promotion that is similar to the one presented in 2011 is that of “non interference”. Indeed, the Senior State Department Official, in reference to the Secretary of State Hillary Clinton, declared that “she’s not coming with prescriptions or with a specific set of proposals” (State Department, 2012b). Clinton further argued that the power of deciding for their political future is in the Egyptian people, and the United States will not interfere with the process, limiting their role as a supportive force (Clinton, 2012a). The emphasis on the choice of not intervening in the Egyptian political process seems to represent a sharp contrast with the former foreign policy conduct of the Bush Administration. Indeed, the administration was harshly criticized for its “Freedom Agenda” consisting in coercive democracy which resulted in political instability in countries such as Afghanistan and Iraq (Cox et al. 2013: 196).

#### *4.2 Regional stability and US-Egypt partnership narratives displayed by the Obama administration*

The United States has a history of strategic partnership with Egypt, to which is tied in a relationship of mutual interests. From the perspective of the American foreign policy objectives, Egypt represents a fundamental ally to influence and control the stability of the region, particularly due to the peace treaty with Israel (Carothers, 2012: 30). The long-history of partnership between the two countries clearly emerges in the political discourses used by both the Obama administration. In The Conference Call Document to Discuss Egypt, the Deputy National Security Advisor for Strategic Communication Ben Rhodes described the relationship between the two countries stating that “the United States and Egypt have a longstanding Partnership that does not just include governments. We have very broad contact civil society and very deep relationship in the Egyptian populace”. (State Department, 2011b). Therefore, the Deputy emphasized that the American ties with Egypt are not only confined to governments, but on the contrary they expands on the civil society level. “Civil society” organizations must be intended as groups that are apolitical and generally fight for human rights. According to Elliott Abrams, these can help to lay a foundation for establishing a democracy. Thus, international policymakers engaged in close relationships with civil society organizations in Egypt hoping they could sustain the democratization process (Abrams, 2017: 179-180). The term “engagement” in reference to the civil society is recurrent in the document (State Department, 2011b).

The US rhetoric discourse used the notion of engagement and strategic partnership with the Egyptian government also in association with the democracy promotion narrative. Indeed, by

expressing the need for an “orderly transition”, many analysts argued that the administration was supporting a gradual transition to democracy that would also preserve stability on the regional level (Carothers, 2012; Indyk, 2012 cited in Huber, 2015: 15). The Special Briefing on U.S. Support for the Democratic Transition Underway in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya presents the dual narrative of prolonged engagement and regional stability. The Ambassador William Taylor emphasized the significance of the successful transitions in the Middle East for the State Department, declaring that “the assistance that we provide is part of our overall strategy towards these countries”. (State Department, 2011c). However, Taylor also acknowledged “our overall strategy is clearly to support them going in the direction that we would want them to go in. Now if they are not, if they are going in the wrong way, we still engage”. The ambassador also argued that “our interference is not what we’re after”. (State Department, 2011c). This discourse concerning democracy assistance as part of a broader strategy was also displayed by Rhodes who declared “we’re not going to be the ultimate arbiters of this”. (State Department, 2011b). Therefore, it seems to be visible that the narrative of prolonged engagement to promote democracy without interference and the regional stability discourse came together in the US foreign policy rhetoric. Evidences for this argument seem to be found in Obama’s declaration that Egypt “will continue to have a friend and partner in the United States”. In the same Statement, Obama also opened to the possibility of economic and military assistance to the country in transition, with the objective of stabilizing Egypt (Obama, 2011b).

The same political rhetoric concerning “mutual interests and mutual respect” can be traced months later, on 21 May 2011, when Obama underlined the need to achieve stability in the countries on transition and on the regional level. (Obama, 2011b). In addition, Obama listed the series of partnership initiatives that the U.S. would undertake in order to foster economic liberalization, which was believed to lead to democratization: “America’s support for democracy will therefore be based on ensuring financial stability; promoting reform and integrating competitive markets with each other”. (Obama, 2011b). Since the U.S. rhetoric clearly conferred Egypt a pivotal role as “regional leader” (Obama, 2011b), Obama displayed America’s economic partnership through the creation of the Enterprise Funds to invest in Tunisia and Egypt . The administration further announced USD 100 million in economic aid and USD 65 million to of \$1 billion in order to help Egypt regaining access to markets and trade investments. (Obama, 2011b). However, actual aid delivery was limited since the US aid to Egypt was conditioned by Congress on the government to meet its responsibilities under the 1979 Israeli peace treaty, as well as on its transition to a civilian government, comprehensive of free elections and respect of freedom of association and religion. (Huber, 2015: 63). These economic initiatives and the conditions of the

U.S. assistance further seem to reveal how the narratives of democracy promotion and that of regional stability were intertwined.

The discourse analysis of the 2012 documents displays a continuity in terms of regional partnership to achieve stability. Particularly, the U.S. Support for Egypt document clearly showed a first evidence of this argument. Indeed, the text stated that the U.S. overarching goal is to “maintain our strategic partnership with an Egypt made stronger and more stable by a successful transition to democracy”. Thus, there is continuity with the 2011 political discourses as previously examined. In particular, Egypt is identified as a “leader in promoting regional stability and peace”. (State Department, 2012a). However, the importance of the partnership between the United States and Egypt is more emphasized than in 2011. This is explicitly argued by the Senior State Department Official through the strong statement “how important this relationship is to us”. The Official applied a rich vocabulary which clearly conferred a positive connotation to the U.S.-Egypt relationship. The Senior State Department Official raised terms such as “important”, “enduring partnership”, “benefits”, “optimism”, “positive”. (State Department, 2012a).

The discourse analysis on the Briefing document further exposes the U.S. rhetorical insistence on the notions of “engagement”, “partnership” and “mutual support”. This is the expression of the political aim of achieving shared interests between the two countries. (State Department, 2012a). Indeed, the use of terminology of support and the pursuance of common goals served the purpose of setting the political goals the United States have in the region. As expressed by the Senior State Department Official, Egypt is considered as the “regional leader” and the country covers a “crucial role” for the future of the MENA region. (State Department, 2012a). This political discourse is coherent with the speech delivered by Clinton on the same date with the Egyptian Foreign Minister. Clinton defined the relationship between the two countries as an “historic relation, which serves the interest of both countries and which goes back to 40 years”. Therefore, both documents emphasized how the U.S.-Egypt partnership is “crucial” for both parties involved, highlighting how the mutual objectives can only be pursued by working “together”. The Secretary Of State, similarly to Obama (2011a), also employed a vocabulary that included the idea of “friendship”, describing the talks with President Mohamed Morsi as “amicable” and “friendly”. (Clinton, 2012a).

#### *4.3 Security promotion in Egypt in the aftermath of the Egyptian revolution*

Security is the third macro-category that constitutes the discourse analysis. Therefore, this section will concentrate on the use of vocabulary that can be considered security-related, such as rhetoric references to counter-terrorism, regional and national security.

The discourse concept of stability examined during the previous section is strictly connected to the narrative of security. Indeed, on 19 May 2011 Obama expressed the American's bond to Egypt and the other MENA countries through economic and security interests. The President explicitly mentioned the security concerns that the United States have in region. Among them, "countering terrorism and stopping the spread of nuclear weapons, safe-guarding the security of the region; standing up for Israel's security and pursuing Arab-Israeli peace". (Obama, 2011b). Interestingly, Obama further seemed to defend the American objectives in the region, asserting that "America's interests are not hostile to people's hopes; they're essential to them" (Obama, 2011b). Obama also addressed one of the most problematic element of the U.S. foreign policy, namely the tension between the pursue of strategic objectives and the promotion of democracy.<sup>10</sup> This is evident when the U.S. president stated that "failure to speak to the broader aspirations of ordinary people will only feed the suspicion that has festered for years that the United State pursues our interests at their expense". (Obama, 2011b). The two-sided "mistrust" between the Arab countries and the United States, as expressed by Obama, is closely associated to terrorism attacks against Americans (Obama, 2011b). The speech of the U.S. President is characterized by the use of lexicon related to "threat", "security", "concrete" "pragmatic". Despite arguing that "there will be times when our short-term interests don't align perfectly with our long-term vision for the region", Obama also reinforced its commitment to the promotion of universal rights through the statement "our support for these principles is not a secondary interest". (Obama, 2011b). This declaration seems to be the response to another problematic aspect of the U.S. foreign policy. Indeed, authors such as Zakaria stressed the presence of a dilemma that brings inconsistency between short-term and long-term goals of the American conduct in the Middle East area. Zakaria argued that the Obama administration prioritized short-term geopolitical interests over long-terms democracy promotion in the MENA region (Zakaria, 2009, cited in Bouchet, 2011: 576).

The rhetorical insistence on the mentioned U.S. security concerns is a recurrent theme in the language used in the texts dated after the election of Morsi. The Senior State Department Official declared that regional security was a major theme to be discussed in the meeting between the Secretary of State Hillary Clinton and the Egyptian President. In particular, there is a large use of vocabulary related to security and counterterrorism in all the examined texts, as demonstrated by the Senior State Department Official who raised concerns in terms of counter-piracy and of jihadists' presence in the Sinai. (State Department, 2012b). The U.S. showed full support towards Egypt with "resources, equipment, technical capacity, training", to be discussed with the President. (State Department, 2012b). In addition, it can be noticed how strategic and security interests were

---

<sup>10</sup> For an insight of the debate between security and democracy promotion, see section 2.3 and 2.4 of the thesis

mentioned as a decisive push factor to seek cooperation with the Egyptian government (State Department, 2012b). Similarly, in an interview with Elise Labott of CNN, Clinton used a vocabulary associated with the perception of “danger” while discussing the terrorist threat in Sinai in Egypt. The Secretary of State argued that it would be “dangerous” for America and Egypt the expansion of terrorist groups in the area. This reference seems to show how the rise of terrorism would endanger the American national security, as shown by Clinton’s stress on the notions of “safety”, “security”, “concern”. (Clinton, 2012b).

The analysis of the U.S. rhetoric discourse reveals a change after September 2012. The attack on the U.S. diplomatic post in Benghazi, Libya had repercussions in the representations of the Arab Uprising from the American perspective. Indeed, the Secretary of State Hillary Clinton implied a narrative of construction of a safe and stable world, underlining the US role as an anchor of security: “the job of putting an end to violent extremism and building a safe and stable world continues”. (Clinton, 2012a). Furthermore, the U.S. Support for Egypt Statement also stated that the Egyptian transition to democracy was strictly connected to the American national security interests. This security rhetoric was related to the regional stability and partnership narrative when the State Department identified Egypt as a security partner (State Department, 2012a). The cooperation between the two countries was also aimed to foster security interests such as the maintenance of the peace between Egypt and Israel and the “prevention of arms proliferation and smuggling”. (State Department, 2012a). Finally, the partnership with Egypt was considered a mutual vital security concerns both for the American foreign policy and the Egyptian government in terms of counterterrorism practices. Indeed, the cooperation with Egypt can “facilitate missions from Afghanistan to counterterrorism in the Horn of Africa”. (State Department, 2012a).

#### *4.4 Preliminary conclusions*

While the democracy promotion discourse was used in the first revolution’s aftermath, the references to democracy and transition to democracy as a single narrative progressively decreased as the events unfolded. More particularly, there is an increase in the interrelation of the democratization rhetoric with the regional stability discourse, especially in 2012. Overall, the use of inter-textuality allowed to conclude that the Obama administration used a cohesive range of different narratives. Indeed, both Obama and Clinton made similar considerations towards the support for Egypt in terms of human rights promotion, regional stability and security objectives. However, the discourse analysis of the years 2011-2012 also revealed that the U.S. democracy promotion discourse is highly intertwined with the objective of achieving security objectives in

Egypt and in the MENA region. Thus, it can be sustained that the position taken by the Obama administration consisted in an initial cautious U.S. approach in terms of democracy promotion which gradually increased after the overthrow of Mubarak. In addition, the speeches delivered by Obama (2012b) and Clinton (2012b) in 2012 seem to reveal a growing interdependence of the three narratives displayed by the United States. The scrutiny of the selected texts from 2013 and 2014 will investigate further changes in the democracy promotion discourse.

## **5. Democracy promotion or security promotion? The evolution of the narratives in 2013-2014**

This chapter will then move forward will emphasize how the Obama administration changed its position in the period 2013-2014. The analysis will thus examine eight documents from 2013. (1) (26 February 2013) Readout of the President's call with President Morsi; (2) (2 July 2013) Readout of the President's call with President Morsi of Egypt; (3) (3 July 2013) Statement by President Barack Obama on Egypt; (4) (6 July 2013) Violence in Egypt; (5) (15 August 2013) Remarks by the President on the Situation in Egypt; (6) (23 September 2013) Remarks by President Obama in Address to the United Nations General Assembly; (7) (9 October 2013) U.S. Assistance to Egypt; (8) (3 November 2013) Remarks with Egyptian Foreign Minister Nabil Fahmy.

In addition, the study will also take into account six documents from 2014: (1) (18 January 2014) John Kerry's Remark on Egypt's Constitutional Referendum; (2) (22 April 2014) Readout of Secretary Kerry's Call with Egyptian Foreign Minister Fahmy; (3) (21 June 2014) Background Briefing En Route to Cairo, Egypt; (4) (June 22 2014) Remarks With Egyptian Foreign Minister Shoukry After Their Meeting; (5) (21 July 2014) U.S. Condemns Terrorist Attack in Egypt's Western Desert; (6) (13 September 2014) Joint Press Availability With Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry. Similarly to the analysis conducted for the years 2011-2012, the research will examine how the Obama administration developed the different narratives applied to the events unfolding in Egypt in 2013 and 2014. The aim is to emphasize the interrelation between the three macro-categories, in order to trace changes in the political discourse in the mentioned period.

### *5.1 Obama's uncertain democracy promotion*

The discourse analysis of the readout of a phone call between Obama and Morsi seems to signal Obama's reiteration of the US support for the Egyptian transition to democracy. The U.S. president "welcomed President Morsi's commitment to serving as a President for all Egyptians, including women and people of all faiths" (Obama, 2013a). In the same speech Obama largely discussed regional security identifying Egypt as a pillar for regional peace and stability in the region, revealing a continuation with the 2011-2012 dual narrative of democracy and security promotion (Obama, 2013a). Nevertheless, the scholars Fabbrini and Youssef argued that the Obama administration failed to respond properly to the authoritarian initiatives adopted by the Morsi government (Fabbrini and Youssef, 2015: 69). The authors criticized Obama for identifying Morsi as a President for all the Egyptian regardless some controversial political initiatives issued by the

Egyptian government in terms of steps towards democracy. In particular, in November 2012, Morsi drafted a constitutional declaration that conferred the Egyptian President extensive power and gave him decisional immunity from judicial review. Furthermore, this draft Constitution later approved in December 2012, despite including progressive articles on individual freedoms, also comprehended other elements such as the superiority of the Sharia law and the military trials of civilians (Fabbrini and Youssef, 2015:70).

The anti-Morsi demonstrations started on 30 June 2013 appeared to have repercussions on the US political discourse applied in Egypt. Indeed, on 2 July 2013, Obama reaffirmed the U.S. commitment to the democratic process in Egypt, specifying the American abstention from supporting any specific party or group. The President further stressed that only a political process could represent the solution for the political deadlock (Obama, 2013b). However, when the Egyptian army overthrew Morsi on 3 July 2013, the Obama administration seemed to change its position demanding the military forces to “move quickly and responsibly return full authority back to a democratically elected civilian government as soon as possible”. (Obama, 2013c). The same day, Obama also requested a review on the US military assistance to Egypt and its implications within the US law. (Obama, 2013c). This resulted on 24 July 2013 on the delay of the delivery of four F-16 fighter jets, which constituted proportion of the \$1.3 billion package of military aid to Egypt (Fabbrini and Youssef, 2015: 71). The discourse analysis on the documents also seems to expose an internal incoherence in the US rhetoric. While Obama expressed concern and requested the review, the Secretary of State John Kerry controversially affirmed in an interview on 1 August that “the Egyptian military was restoring democracy”. (Siddique, 2013).

The ousting of Morsi and the consequent establishment of an interim government guided by Adil Mansour was interpreted by many analysts as a turning point in the US rhetoric discourse. (Fabbrini and Youssef, 2015: 71; Hassan, 2017: 330-331) Indeed, the events questioned the discourses overall structure of the Obama administration towards Egypt, exposing a tension between the different narratives. On the one hand, the Obama administration condemned the use of violence by all the parties involved in the demonstrations, supporting the establishment of a pluralist government (Obama, 2013c). For instance, the Secretary Of State John Kerry urged all parties to avoid violence and maintain calm, further proclaiming that “lasting stability in Egypt will only be achieved through a transparent and inclusive democratic process with participation from all sides and all political parties” (Kerry, 2013a). Similarly, Obama declared on 15 August 2013 that “the US strongly condemns the steps that have been taken by Egypt’s interims government and security forces. We deplore violence against civilians. We support universal rights” (Obama, 2013d).



On the other hand, Hassan (2017) and Fabbrini (2015) argued that the administration's discursive act of refraining from calling the ousting a "coup" was significant since such definition would cut military assistance from the US. Indeed, the Fiscal Year 2012 foreign operations appropriations acts prohibited "the issuing of foreign assistance to the government of a country whose elected head of government is deposed by a military *coup d'état* or decree". (Congress, 2012, 7008, cited in Hassan, 2017: 331). Despite declaring the intention of recalibrating the assistance to Egypt to advance the US interests, the administration also seemed to foster its security objectives in the region. The US assistance document clearly stated the US intention of continuing to assist Egypt in countering terrorism and proliferation, ensuring security in the borders and in the Sinai area, while providing "part for the for the U.S.-origin military equipment as well as military training and education". The administration also clarified that "the law does not require us to make a formal determination- that is a review that we have undergone- as to whether a coup took place, and it is not in our national interest to make such a determination". (Psaki, 2013). These declarations seem to show evidences of a rhetoric tension between the narrative concerning security interests as part of the US national interests and the support for democratic transition in Egypt (Hassan, 2017: 330-333).

The discourse analysis on the statements from the second half of 2013 and 2014 seems to indicate a downscale of the democracy promotion discourse. Indeed, in his Address to the United Nations General Assembly in September 2013, Obama did not refer to the Arab Uprising in terms of transition to democracy, focusing instead on the security concerns at stake in the region (Obama, 2013e). New vocabulary such as "violence" and "extremism" entered his interpretation of the uprising when referring to Egypt. In addition, despite declaring that the American overriding interest was to encourage a legitimate government in Egypt, Obama reiterated the engagement with the Egyptian interim government regarding the Camp David Accords and counterterrorism (Obama, 2013e). In the same speech, he also pointed out how "the interim government that replaced Morsi responded to the desires of millions of Egyptians, who believed the revolution had taken a wrong turn, but it, too, has made decisions inconsistent with inclusive democracy". (Obama, 2013e). Therefore, this statement seems to expose the tension between supporting democratization and pursuing security interests with a non democratic regimes.

The Obama administration appeared to display this dual narrative also in 2014, when the US repeatedly urged the interim government to move towards an inclusive democratic regime, comprehensive of the rule of law and the respect of universal rights (Kerry, 2014a). Besides the request to Egypt to "follow through on its commitment to transition to democracy", the Obama administration also reiterated the U.S.-Egyptian strategic relationship (Kerry, 2014a). The Secretary

of State John Kerry in a phone call with the Egyptian Foreign Minister Fahmy identified Egypt as an important strategic partner in countering terrorism and weapons proliferation, further stating that Egypt was “upholding its obligation under the Egypt-Israel Peace Treaty” (Psaki, 2014).

While describing the US-Egyptian relationship in the period 2013-2014, Fabbrini pointed out that despite the US rhetoric of democracy promotion, the US engaged returned to “business as usual” with a military-ruled regime (Fabbrini, 2015: 73). This argument seems to be proved valid by the fact that despite condemnation from the US to the mass trials of journalists and activists occurring in Egypt, the Obama administration did not use negative conditionality with the Al-Sisi regime. Indeed, the U.S. aid budget for FY2014 was \$1.5 billion, including \$1.3 billion in Foreign Military Financing (FMF) and \$7 million for other security assistance programs (Office of the Spokesperson, 2014).

### *5.2 The development of the regional stability narrative*

The discourse analysis conducted on the statements from 2013 and 2014 seems to show an initial reinforcement of the idea of partnership between the United States and Egypt. After the military coup on 3 July 2013, Obama stressed that the “United States continues to believe firmly that the best foundation for lasting stability in Egypt is a democratic political order”. (Obama, 2013c). Thus, the President emphasized that a successful democratic process was the only method to achieve stability, which was said to be beneficial for the US-Egyptian shared interests (Obama, 2013c).

The same narrative of cooperation between the two countries can be identified in a statement by the Secretary of State John Kerry, who stressed the importance of the “longstanding friendship and partnership between the United States and Egypt (Kerry, 2013a). Similarly, Obama conferred Egypt a pivotal role in the MENA area, referring to the Arab state as “an ancient center of civilization and a cornerstone for peace in the Middle East” (Obama, 2013d). The President also pointed out that “in the spirit of the mutual interest and mutual respect, I want to be clear that America wants to partner in Egyptian people’s pursuance of a better future. And we are guided by our national interest in this long-standing relationship” (Obama, 2013d). This rhetoric of strategic engagement was maintained in 2014, as demonstrated by the US Senior State Department Official who asserted that the longstanding relationship with Egypt was based on mutual strategic interests (State Department, 2014). The administration also specified that the economic assistance to Egypt was bonded to several conditions. Among them, the Senior State Department Official cited requirements abiding by rule of law and additional steps towards democracy, as well as the

maintenance of the strategic relationship with the United States and the upholding of the peace treaty with Israel (State Department, 2014). The narrative on the pursuance of shared interests and concerns can also be observed in a meeting between the Egyptian Foreign Minister Shoukry and the Secretary of State John Kerry. The Secretary used a lexicon that stressed the “importance” and “strength” of the strategic partnership with Egypt, making references to the US work to provide stability and economic transformation in the country (Kerry, 2014b). Thus, these documents seem to disclose a continuation with the US rhetoric applied in 2011-2012, resulting in the interrelation of both democratic values and regional interests while sustaining the partnership with Egypt.

Another recurrent element of persistence as compared to the speeches analyzed in the previous chapter is that of engagement with non interference. Indeed, in the face of the events occurred on 2 July 2013, the American President in a phone call with Morsi reiterated that only the Egyptian citizens could determine the political future of their country (Obama, 2013b). Likewise, in the Remarks by the President on the Situation in Egypt, Obama underlined that America “cannot determine the future of Egypt. That’s a task for the Egyptian people. We don’t take sides with any particular party or political figure” (Obama, 2013b). The US administration seemed to clarify their non interference with the future of Egypt, further rejecting the accusations that the United States were supporting Morsi (Obama, 2013b).

### 5.3 *Security concerns in US rhetoric*

As examined in the section 5.1, the democracy promotion and security narratives seemed to be at the core of the US political discourse in 2013 and 2014. In the Readout of the President’s call with President Morsi of Egypt, Obama used a vocabulary that included recurrent references to the idea of “danger” and “concern” (Obama, 2013b). In particular, the president condemned the use of violence and expressed concern over the “safety of U.S. diplomats and citizens in Egypt”, encouraging the Morsi’s government to guarantee protection to the US diplomatic personnel (Obama, 2013b). Of significant importance is the analysis on the Obama’s speech delivered on 15 August 2013. The address seems to show how the narrative of pursuing security objective was interrelated with the partnership and stability discourse. Indeed, the American President mentioned “national security interests” as one of the main reasons for the engagement and partnership with Egypt (Obama, 2013d). Similarly, in the Remarks to the United Nations General Assembly Obama declared that thanks to the “cooperation with allies and partners, the world is more stable” (Obama, 2013e). With specific reference to the Middle East and North Africa, the American President did not make a first reference to the democratization of the region, but instead articulated the US core

interests in the region. These were explicitly listed as the “free flow of energy from the energy to the world” and the “dismantle of terrorist networks that threaten our people” (Obama, 2013e). Furthermore, Obama also clarified that the mentioned security interests are not the only American objectives in the region, arguing that it “is in our interests to see a Middle East and North Africa that is peaceful and prosperous, and will continue to promote democracy and human rights and open markets” (Obama, 2013e). The administration’s rhetoric also seemed to take distance from the Bush US foreign policy, by declaring that “Iraq shows us that democracy cannot simply be imposed by force” (Obama, 2013e). On the contrary, the address seems to provide evidences of the Obama administration’s belief that the cooperation with countries and populations of the region can lead to stability and peace (Obama, 2013e). While claiming that the US engagement was a necessity to ensure America’s security, Obama also applied the rhetoric of “American exceptionalism”. Particularly, he expressed the belief that “America is exceptional in part because we have shown a willingness through the sacrifice of blood and treasure to stand up not only for our narrow self-interests but for the interests of all (Obama, 2013e).

In the Address to the United Nations General Assembly, Obama also explained the American US foreign policy approach towards Egypt. This consists on the “constructive relationship with the interim government that promotes core interests like the Camp David Accords and counterterrorism” (Obama, 2013e). In addition, Obama also stated:

“The United States will at times work with governments that do not meet, at least in our view, the highest expectations, but who work with us on core interests. Nevertheless, we will not stop asserting principles that are consistent with our ideals, whether that means opposing the use of violence as a means of suppressing dissent, or supporting the principles embodied in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights” (Obama, 2013e).

This declaration seems to express a rhetoric of engagement with authoritarian regimes in order to cooperate to foster core security interests, even though these governments are not consistent with the American values. Many authors such as Fabbrini interpreted this political discourse as coherent with Obama’s “pragmatism”, arguing that the administration prioritized the achievement of security goals over the support for a transition to democracy (Fabbrini, 2015: 71). The discourse analysis on the documents from 2014 seems to provide evidences for this argument. Indeed, while defining Egypt a strategic partner for the U.S. the Senior State Department Official recognized that “Egypt faces a serious security challenge. We stand with them and want to be supportive as they confront the threat of terrorism mounted by groups like Ansar Beit al-Maqdis” (State Department, 2014). In the same statement, the administration also expressed concern over regional security, reaffirming

the U.S. support for Egypt to address critical concerns such as counterterrorism, border security and security associated with regional concerns like the Libyan crisis (State Department, 2014). The Secretary of State Kerry made similar considerations on 22 June 2014 when he stated that both the U.S. and Egypt had the mutual security interests of “standing up to the greatest threat of all to this region, which is the threat of these terrorist who want to tear apart rule of law” (Kerry, 2014b). The rhetoric emphasis to support security interests rather than the Egyptian democratization, as suggested by Fabbrini, seems also to be proven by the various statements the administration released in support to the Al-Sisi government in the occurrence of terrorist attacks in Egypt (Harf, 2014). Kerry also expressed concern for the repercussions of the terrorist threat for the American national security, stating that in a globalized world a regionally localized threat inevitably expands everywhere (Kerry, 2014c). In the speeches delivered by Kerry in 2014, the Secretary of State also seemed to address the critic advanced to the administration of overlooking human rights for the pursuance of strategic and security objectives, asserting that “the United States doesn’t ever trade its concern for human rights for any other objectives. It’s always a concern and we had a frank discussion today about the concerns that have been expressed”. (Kerry, 2014c). However, despite the remarks the Obama administrations regarding human rights violations occurring in Egypt, the United States maintained the military assistance associated with border security and counterterrorism both in 2013 and 2014. Indeed, the U.S. assistance to Egypt budget in 2014 was \$1.3 billion. (Fabbrini, 2015: 72; Psaki, 2013; Office of the Spokesperson, 2014).

## 6. Conclusions

As the discourse analysis in the thesis has demonstrated, the Obama administration displayed changes in the political discourse on democracy promotion towards Egypt. In particular, the US adopted a cautious approach in the first aftermath of the January revolution of 2011, where the Obama administration progressively supported the democratization path advanced after Mubarak's overthrow. However, the method of interdiscursivity and intertextuality has led to underline how in 2011 and 2012 the democracy promotion discourse was strictly associated to the aim of enhancing the U.S.-Egyptian partnership both in economic and military terms. Both Clinton and Obama focused on human rights promotion and on the importance of the Morsi's government to ensure the respect of the peace treaty with Israel. As the transition to democracy was unfolding, the U.S. rhetoric seemed to reveal a growing interdependence of the three narratives displayed by the Obama administration, as shown by the vocabulary insistence on security and stability (Clinton, 2012b; Obama, 2012b).

However, the initial rhetorical support for the Egyptian democratization was downscaled as the Arab state was slipping into a political turmoil which culminated in the ouster of President Morsi in July 2013. This event had huge repercussions on the U.S. political discourse. The strategic choice of not calling the ouster a military "coup", which would cause legal restriction on the military assistance to Egypt, seems to indicate a prioritization of security over democratization. In addition, despite condemning the violence occurring in the country and the violations of human rights at the expense of activists and political opponents such as the Muslim Brotherhood, the U.S. government did not apply negative conditionality. On the contrary, the U.S. aid budget for FY2014 was set at \$ 1.5 billion (Office of the Spokesperson, 2014).

Another aspect that emerged from the analysis on the statements delivered in the 2013 and 2014 is the constant association of the democracy promotion narrative with the idea of strategic partnership with Egypt. Particularly revealing for this argument was the fact that the Obama administration considered both steps towards democracy and the upholding of the peace treaty with Israel as requirements for the disposal of economic assistance to the Egyptian government.

Overall, the thesis's exams on the documents in the period 2011-2014 proves how the Obama administration rhetorically distanced itself from the previous administration, stressing the idea of "engagement without interference", intended as refraining from engaging with regime-change and nation building abroad. Furthermore, the analysis of different narratives emphasizes the

reliance of the Obama administration on the authoritarian regime of Al-Sisi in favor of pursuing regional stability and international security over political change. Hence, it can be argued that the American political discourse resulted in a strategy of status quo maintenance and partnership with authoritarian regimes in order to counter the threat of international terrorism and weapons proliferation.

## Bibliography

- Abrams, E. (2012). *Realism and Democracy. American Foreign Policy after the Arab Spring*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Anderson, L. (2011). 'Demystifying the Arab Spring Parsing the Differences Between Tunisia, Egypt, and Libya'. *Foreign Affairs*, 90(3), pp.2-7. Available at <http://heinonline.org/HOL/SelectPage?handle=hein.journals/fora90&collection=journals&page=2> (Accessed 3 March 2018).
- Atlas, P.M., (2012). 'U.S. Foreign Policy and the Arab Spring: Balancing Values and Interests'. *Digest of Middle East Studies*, 21(2), pp.353–385. Available at [http://catalogue.leidenuniv.nl/primo\\_library/libweb/action/dIDisplay.do?vid=UBL\\_V1&search\\_scope=All\\_Content&docId=TN\\_wj10.1111/j.1949-3606.2012.00158.x&fn=permalink](http://catalogue.leidenuniv.nl/primo_library/libweb/action/dIDisplay.do?vid=UBL_V1&search_scope=All_Content&docId=TN_wj10.1111/j.1949-3606.2012.00158.x&fn=permalink) (Accessed 9 June 2018).
- Bayat, A., (2013). *Life as politics : how ordinary people change the Middle East*, Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Bendana, A. 2005. 'From Peacebuilding to Statebuilding: One Step Forward and Two Steps Back?', *Development*, 48(3), pp.5-15. Available at [https://www.researchgate.net/publication/5219652\\_From\\_Peacebuilding\\_to\\_State\\_building\\_One\\_step\\_forward\\_and\\_two\\_steps\\_back](https://www.researchgate.net/publication/5219652_From_Peacebuilding_to_State_building_One_step_forward_and_two_steps_back) (Accessed 7 May 2018).
- Berenskoetter, F.S., 2005. 'Mapping the Mind Gap: A Comparison of US and European Security Strategies'. *Security Dialogue*, 36(1), pp.71–92. Available at <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0967010605051925> (Accessed 8 May 2018).
- Bhuiyan, S. (2015). 'Can Democratic Governance Be Achieved in Egypt?'. *International Journal of Public Administration*, 38(7), pp.496-509. Available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/citedby/10.1080/01900692.2014.949745?scroll=top&needAccess=true> (Accessed 4 March 2018).
- Bouchet, N. (2011). 'Barack Obama's democracy promotion at midterm'. *The International Journal of Human Rights*, 15(4), 572-588. Available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13642987.2011.569232> (Accessed 2 April 2018).
- Bush, S. (2015). *The taming of democracy assistance : Why democracy promotion does not confront dictators*. Cambridge, United Kingdom: Cambridge University Press.
- Campbell, S., Chandler, D. & Sabaratnam, M. (2011). *Liberal Peace? : The Problems and Practices of Peacebuilding*, London: Zed Books.
- Carothers, T. (2012). *Democracy policy under Obama: revitalization or retreat?*. Washington: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace.



- Cavatorta, F., (2004). 'Constructing an open model of transition: the case of North Africa'. *The Journal of North African Studies*, 9(3), pp.1–18. Available at <http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/1362938042000325787> (Accessed 2 March 2018).
- Chenoweth, E. & Stephan, M.J., (2011). *Why civil resistance works : the strategic logic of nonviolent conflict*, New York, NY [etc.]: Columbia University Press.
- Chilton, P. & Schäffner, C. (2011). *Discourse and Politics*. In Dijk, T. A. Van, (2011). *Discourse studies : a multidisciplinary introduction* 2nd ed., London [etc.]: SAGE.
- Clinton, H. (2009). *Statement Before the Senate Foreign Relations Committee, Nomination Hearing to Be Secretary of State*. US Department of State. Available at <https://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CHRG-111shrg54615/pdf/CHRG-111shrg54615.pdf> (Accessed 31 May 2018).
- Clinton, H. (2011). *Hillary Clinton's Remarks on 25 Jan. protests in Egypt*. US Department of State. Available at <http://jotman.blogspot.com/2011/01/hillary-clintons-remarks-on-25-jan.html> (Accessed 12 June 2018).
- Clinton, H. (2012a). *Remarks with Egyptian Foreign Minister*. US Department of State. Available at <https://2009-2017.state.gov/secretary/20092013clinton/rm/2012/07/195027.htm>. (Accessed 31 May 2018).
- Clinton, H. (2012b). *Interview with Elise Labott of CNN*. US Department of State. Available at <https://2009-2017.state.gov/secretary/20092013clinton/rm/2012/07/195145.htm> (Accessed 3 June 2018).
- Clinton, H. (2012c). *Remarks on the deaths of American Personnel in Benghazi, Libya*. US Department of State. Available at <https://2009-2017.state.gov/secretary/20092013clinton/rm/2012/09/197630.htm> (Accessed 10 June 2018).
- Cox, R. (1993). *Gramsci, Hegemony and International Relations: An essay on Method*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Cox, M., G. J. Ikenberry, G., and Inoguchi, G. (2000). *American Democracy Promotion: Impulses, Strategies, and Impacts*. London: Oxford University Press.
- Cox, M. et al. (2013). *US foreign policy and democracy promotion : From Theodore Roosevelt to Barack Obama*. London: Routledge.
- Dahl, R. (1971). *Polyarchy: Participation and Opposition*. New Haven, CT: Yale University Press.
- Fabbrini, S. and Yossef, A. (2015). 'Obama's wavering: US foreign policy on the Egyptian crisis, 2011-13', *Contemporary Arab Affairs*, 8(1), pp. 65-80. Available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/17550912.2014.976404> (Accessed 12 June 2018).
- Fairclough, N., (1995). *Critical discourse analysis : the critical study of language*, London [etc.]: Longman.

Fairclough, N. and Wodak, R. (1997). *Critical Discourse Analysis*. In Van Dijk, T. A., *Discourse as social interaction: A multidisciplinary introduction*. (Vol 2, pp. 258- 84). London: Sage Publications Ltd.

Fukuyama, F. (1993). *The end of history and the last man*. New York, NY: Avon Books.

Geddes, B., Wright, J. and Frantz, E. (2014) ‘Autocratic Breakdown and Regime Transitions: A New Data Set’, *Perspectives on Politics*. Cambridge University Press, 12(2), pp. 313–331. Available at <https://www-cambridge-org.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/core/journals/perspectives-on-politics/article/autocratic-breakdown-and-regime-transitions-a-new-data-set/EBDB9E5E64CF899AD50B9ACC630B593F> (Accessed 18 January 2018).

Gelvin, J. (2018). *The new Middle East : What everyone needs to know*, Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Harf, M. (2014). U.S. Condemns Terrorist Attack in Egypt’s Western Desert. Washington, DC. Available at <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2014/07/229558.htm> (Accessed 18 June 2018).

Hassan, O. (2017). ‘The \$74 billion problem: US-Egyptian Relations after the Arab Awakening’. *International Politics*, (54), pp. 322-337. Available at <https://link.springer.com/article/10.1057/s41311-017-0032-1#citeas> (Accessed 6 June 2018).

Hanau Santini, R. & Hassan, O., (2012). ‘Transatlantic Democracy Promotion and the Arab Spring’. *The International Spectator*, 47(3), pp.65–82. Available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/03932729.2012.700021> (Accessed 8 May 2018).

Hill, C. (2003). *The Changing politics of foreign policy*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

Huber, D. (2015a). *Democracy promotion and foreign policy : Identity and interests in US, EU and non-Western democracies*. Houndmills, Basingstoke, Hampshire: Palgrave Macmillan.

Huber, D. (2015b). ‘A Pragmatic Actor: The US Response to the Arab Uprisings’. *Journal of European Integration*, 37(1), pp.57–75. Available at [http://catalogue.leidenuniv.nl/primo\\_library/libweb/action/diDisplay.do?vid=UBL\\_V1&search\\_scope=All\\_Content&docId=TN\\_tayfranc10.1080/07036337.2014.975989&fn=permalink](http://catalogue.leidenuniv.nl/primo_library/libweb/action/diDisplay.do?vid=UBL_V1&search_scope=All_Content&docId=TN_tayfranc10.1080/07036337.2014.975989&fn=permalink) (Accessed 6 June 2018).

Huntington, S.P., (1991). *The third wave : democratization in the late twentieth century*, Norman, OK [etc.]: University of Oklahoma Press.

Indyk, M., Lieberthal, K. & O’Hanlon, M., (2012a). ‘Scoring Obama's Foreign Policy: A Progressive Pragmatist Tries to Bend History’. *Foreign Affairs*, 91(3), pp.29–43. Available at <http://heinonline.org/HOL/SelectPage?handle=hein.journals/fora91&collection=journals&page=29> (Accessed 11 May 2018).

Indyk, M. et al. (2012b). *Bending history: Barack Obama’s foreign policy*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press.

- Ish-Shalom, P. (2008). 'Theorization, Harm, and the Democratic Imperative: Lessons from the Politicization of the Democratic-Peace Thesis'. *International Studies Review*, 10(4), pp.680–692. Available at <https://www.jstor.org/stable/25482016> (Accessed 9 June 2018).
- Jahn, B. (2007). 'The Tragedy of Liberal Diplomacy: Democratization, Intervention, Statebuilding Part II', *Journal of Intervention and Statebuilding*, 1(2), pp. 211-229. Available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/17502970701302847> (Accessed 7 May 2018).
- Jørgensen, M. & Phillips, L. (2002). *Discourse Analysis as Theory and Method*, London: SAGE Publications Ltd.
- Kerry, J. (2013a). *Press Statement*. Secretary of State. Available at <https://2009-2017.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2013/07/211574.htm> (Accessed 12 June 2018).
- Kerry, J. (2013b). *Remarks with Egyptian Foreign Minister Nabil Fahmy*. Available at <https://2009-2017.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2013/11/216220.htm> (Accessed 11 June 2018).
- Kerry, J. (2014a). *Readout of Secretary Kerry's Call with Egyptian Foreign Minister Fahmy*. Available at <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2014/04/225074.htm> (Accessed 13 June 2018).
- Kerry, J. (2014b). *Remarks with Egyptian Foreign Minister Shoukry After Their Meeting*. Available at <https://2009-2017.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2014/06/228234.htm> (Accessed 18 June 2018).
- Kerry, J. (2014c). *Joint Press Availability with Egyptian Foreign Minister Sameh Shoukry*. Washington, DC. Available at <https://2009-2017.state.gov/secretary/remarks/2014/09/231616.htm> (Accessed 18 June 2018).
- Keukeleire, S. and Delreux, T. (2014). *The Foreign Policy of the European Union*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan.
- Kurki, M. (2013). *Democratic futures : Revisioning democracy promotion*. London [etc.]: Routledge.
- Lacher, W. 2007. 'Iraq: Exception to, or epitome of Contemporary Post-Conflict Reconstruction?'. *International Peacekeeping*, 14(2), pp.237-250. Available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13533310601150859> (Accessed 7 May 2018).
- Lawson, G., 2015. 'Revolution, Nonviolence, and the Arab Uprisings' , *Mobilization*, 20(4), pp.453–470. Available at <http://mobilizationjournal.org/doi/abs/10.17813/1086-671X-20-4-453> (Accessed 8 March 2018).
- Levitsky, S. & Way, L.A., 2014. *Competitive Authoritarianism*, New York: Cambridge University Press. Available at <https://www.cambridge.org/core/books/competitive-authoritarianism/20A51BE2EBAB59B8AAEFD91B8FA3C9D6> (Accessed 4 March 2018).
- Lipset, Seymour Martin. (1959). 'Some Social Requisites of Democracy: Economic Development and Legitimacy'. *American Political Science Review* 53: 69–105. Available at [https://www.jstor.org/stable/1951731?seq=1#page\\_scan\\_tab\\_contents](https://www.jstor.org/stable/1951731?seq=1#page_scan_tab_contents) (Accessed 25 January 2018).

Markakis, D. (2016). *US democracy promotion in the Middle East : The pursuit of hegemony* (Routledge studies in US foreign policy). New York: Routledge.

Mcfaul, M. (2009). *Advancing Democracy Abroad : Why We Should and How We Can*. Lanham: Rowman & Littlefield.

Miller, L.E. et al., (2012). *Democratization in the Arab World Prospects and Lessons from Around the Globe*, Santa Monica: RAND Corporation.

Myers, R. (1997). 'Hans Morgenthau's Realism and American Foreign Policy'. *Ethics & International Affairs*, 11(1), 253-270. Available at <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.1747-7093.1997.tb00031.x> (Accessed 2 May 2018).

Nachi, M. (2016). 'The construction of religion as a 'public problem': The emergence of Islam in the public space during Tunisia's transition to democracy (2011–14)'. *Social Science Information*, 55(4), 495-510. Available at <http://journals.sagepub.com/doi/abs/10.1177/0539018416658152> (Accessed 3 May 2018).

Bush, G. W. (2002). *National Security Strategy*. Washington, DC: The White House. Available at <http://nssarchive.us/> (Accessed 20 May 2018).

Obama, B. (2010). *National Security Strategy*. Washington, DC: The White House. Available at <http://nssarchive.us/NSSR/2010.pdf> (Accessed 21 May 2018).

Obama, B. (2011a). *Remarks by the President on the Situation in Egypt*. Washington, DC: The White House. Available at <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/02/01/remarks-president-situation-egypt> (Accessed 30 May 2018).

Obama, B. (2011b). *Remarks by the President on the Middle East and North Africa*. Washington, DC: The White House. Available at <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2011/05/19/remarks-president-middle-east-and-north-africa> (Accessed 30 May 2018).

Obama, B. (2013a). *Readout of the President's Phone Call with Egyptian President Morsi*. Washington, DC: The White House. Available at <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2013/02/26/readout-president-s-phone-call-egyptian-president-morsy> (Accessed 21 May 2018).

Obama, B. (2013b). *Readout of the President's call with President Morsi of Egypt*. Washington, DC: The White House. Available at <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2013/07/02/readout-presidents-call-president-morsy-egypt> (Accessed 10 June 2018).

Obama, B. (2013c). *Statement by President Barack Obama on Egypt*. Washington, DC: The White House. Available at <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2013/07/03/statement-president-barack-obama-egypt> (Accessed 10 June 2018).

- Obama, B. (2013d). *Remarks by the President on the Situation in Egypt*. Washington, DC: The White House. Available at <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2013/08/15/remarks-president-situation-egypt> (Accessed 10 June 2018).
- Obama, B. (2013e). *Remarks by the President Obama in Address to the United Nations General Assembly*. Washington, DC: The White House. Available at <https://obamawhitehouse.archives.gov/the-press-office/2013/09/24/remarks-president-obama-address-united-nations-general-assembly> (Accessed 16 June 2018).
- Obama, B. (2015). *National Security Strategy*. Washington, DC: The White House. Available at <http://nssarchive.us/national-security-strategy-2015/> (Accessed 21 May 2018).
- O'Donnell, G. et Schmitter, P. (1986). *Transitions from authoritarian rule : prospects for democracy*, Baltimore [etc.]: Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Office of the Spokesperson. (2014). *U.S. Aid to Egypt*. Washington, DC. Available at <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2014/04/225147.htm> (Accessed 15 June 2018).
- Owen, J. (1994). 'How Liberalism Produces Democratic Peace', *International Security*, 19/2, pp. 87-125. Available at [http://catalogue.leidenuniv.nl/primo\\_library/libweb/action/diDisplay.do?vid=UBL\\_V1&search\\_scope=All\\_Content&docId=TN\\_gale\\_ofa16348274&fn=permalink](http://catalogue.leidenuniv.nl/primo_library/libweb/action/diDisplay.do?vid=UBL_V1&search_scope=All_Content&docId=TN_gale_ofa16348274&fn=permalink) (Accessed 9 June 2018).
- Paris, R. (2010). 'Saving liberal peacebuilding'. *Review of International Studies*, 36(2), pp.337–365. Available at <https://www.cambridge.org/core/journals/review-of-international-studies/article/saving-liberal-peacebuilding/7D418DC4B737D4F8F7249A8816911EB6> (Accessed 7 May 2018).
- Patterson, E. (2012). 'Obama and Sustainable Democracy Promotion'. *International Studies Perspectives*, 13(1), 26-42. Available at <https://onlinelibrary.wiley.com/doi/full/10.1111/j.1528-3585.2011.00447.x> (Accessed 5 April 2018).
- Pearlman, W., 2011. *Violence, nonviolence, and the Palestinian national movement*, New York: Cambridge University Press.
- Psaki. (2013). Spokesperson daily press briefing. *U.S. Department of State*. Available at <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2013/10/215258.htm> (Accessed 9 June 2018).
- Rieffer-Flanagan, B., (2014). 'Democratic Dreams Neglected in the Land of the Pharaohs: US Democracy Assistance in Egypt'. *Human Rights Review*, 15(4), pp.433–454. Available at <https://rd.springer.com/article/10.1007/s12142-014-0332-4> (Accessed 4 April 2018).
- Robinson, W. (1996). *Promoting Polyarchy: Globalization, US intervention, and Hegemony*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Rustow, D. (1970). 'Transitions to Democracy: Toward a Dynamic Model'. *Comparative Politics* 2: 337–63. Available at

[http://biblio.institutoelcano.org/docs/VVidapolitica/Acienciapolitica/3Democratizacion/Transicionpolitica/Rustow\\_TransitionstoDemocracy.pdf](http://biblio.institutoelcano.org/docs/VVidapolitica/Acienciapolitica/3Democratizacion/Transicionpolitica/Rustow_TransitionstoDemocracy.pdf) (Accessed 31 January 2018).

Schäffner, C. (1996). *Editorial: Political Speeches and Discourse Analysis*. In *Current Issues in Language & Society* Vol. 3(3). pp. 201-204.

Schmitter, P. and Karl, T. L. (1991), 'What Democracy Is... and Is Not', *Journal of Democracy*, 2(3), pp. 75-88. Available at <https://muse-jhu-edu.ezproxy.leidenuniv.nl:2443/article/225590> (Accessed 31 January 2018).

Schumpeter, J. (1951). *Imperialism and social classes*. Oxford: Basil Blackwell.

Scott, J.M. & Carter, R.G. (2014). 'From Cold War to Arab Spring: mapping the effects of paradigm shifts on the nature and dynamics of US democracy assistance to the Middle East and North Africa'. *Democratization*, pp.1–26. Available at <https://www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1080/13510347.2013.877893> (Accessed 8 May 2018).

Sharp, J. (2014). *Egypt: Background and US relations*. Congressional Research Service Report RL33003. Washington, DC.

Siddique, H. (2013). 'Egypt's army was restoring democracy, says Kerry'. *The Guardian*. August 2. Available at <https://www.theguardian.com/world/2013/aug/02/egypt-army-restoring-democracy-kerry> (Accessed 10 June 2018).

Smith, T. (1994). *America's Mission: The United States and the Worldwide Struggle for Democracy in the Twentieth Century*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.

State Department. (2011a). *Press Statement*. Washington, DC: The White House. Available at <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2011/01/155307.htm> (Accessed 29 May 2018).

State Department, Office of the Press Secretary. (2011b). *Conference Call to discuss Egypt*. Washington, DC: The White House. Available at <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2011/02/156284.htm> (Accessed 30 May 2018).

State Department. (2011c). *Special Briefing on U.S. Support for the Democratic Transitions Underway in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya*. Washington, DC: The White House. Available at <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2011/11/176653.htm>

State Department, Office of the Spokesperson. (2012a). *U.S. Support for Egypt*. Washington, DC: Department Spokesperson. Available at <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2012/03/186709.htm> (Accessed 31 May 2018).

State Department. (2012b). *Background Briefing En Route to Cairo*. Washington, DC: The White House. Available at <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2012/07/195023.htm> (Accessed 31 May 2018).

State Department. (2014). *Background Briefing En Route to Cairo*. Washington, DC: The White House. Available at <https://2009-2017.state.gov/r/pa/prs/ps/2014/06/228225.htm>. (Accessed 15 June 2018).

Stepan, A., (2001). *Arguing comparative politics*, Oxford [etc.]: Oxford University Press.

Stepan, A. & Linz, J. (2013). 'Democratization Theory and the "Arab Spring"'. *Journal of Democracy*, 24(2), pp. 15-30. Available at <https://muse.jhu.edu/article/504616> (Accessed 3 March 2018).

Teorell, J., (2010). *Determinants of democratization: explaining regime change in the world, 1972-2006*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.

Wodak et al., 2016. *Methods of critical discourse studies* 3rd ed., Los Angeles: SAGE.