Despite the passage of more than three years since the outbreak of the revolution in Egypt, attempts to reform police and military institutions – or to develop democratic civilian rule – have not borne the desired fruit. Through multiple governments, constitutional re-writes, and changes in the alliances of power within state institutions, Egypt’s repressive security establishment continues to wield enormous power over the country.

The decade before the revolution saw the police grow in influence, at the expense of the once-dominant military, as part of an alliance with a clique of business leaders surrounding the Mubarak inner circle. With the January 2011 revolution overthrowing Hosni Mubarak, the military attempted to take advantage of the situation at the expense of the unpopular police, widely associated with the repressiveness of the Mubarak regime. Widespread protests against the interim military government, however, led it to more readily develop an alliance with the Muslim Brotherhood, with their broad popular appeal, and the police, which was seeking to rehabilitate its image.

This coalition of these three groups began forming in March 2011, and remained together until late 2012. While it lasted, the Brotherhood, army and police exercised different levels of influence within the coalition, with each group forced to fight battles on three fronts in parallel: they fought to maintain cohesion within their own group, they battled with their coalition partners for increasing influence, and they battled for public support in the face of escalating protests.

President Morsi managed to place his chosen leaders at the head of the army, which quietly and temporarily took a step back from heavy involvement with governing the country. The Brotherhood, however, was unable to push through reforms for the police, instead coming to rely on them to quell rising protests from opposition groups. The police, in turn, struggled with their role in repressing the opposition and supporting a government composed of people that they had previously been tasked with oppressing.
Despite the resilience of this alliance during nearly two years of revolutionary turbulence, it eventually collapsed in December 2012 for several connected reasons:

- The Muslim Brotherhood’s failure to contain opposition from the wider public, which saw the contrast between the demands of the revolution and the actual political and economic activities of the Brotherhood government;
- Deepening political polarization as the Brotherhood ruled in an increasingly isolated manner to the exclusion of other parties;
- The escalation of political violence and its rapid transmission from across the country;
- The army’s loss of influence over a president who increasingly relied on the police for internal repression;
- Rejection by rank and file police of their leaders’ demands to defend the Brotherhood-led power alliance against protesters and opposition groups;
- Growing concern in the military about the security of the Egyptian state due to the failure of civilians to effectively run the government and contain political disputes;
- The inability of the Brotherhood to deal with rising fears for the survival of the state.

With Morsi’s overthrown and the crackdown on the Brotherhood, the military and the police remain allies in power today, but the Egypt that they rule is not the same one that existed under Mubarak. The Egyptian people have awoken to their own power to take political action, and the turbulence of the last three years has disrupted old balances of power within the security institutions, which will play out in unforeseeable ways in the years ahead.
The outbreak of the Egyptian revolution on Police Day in January 2011 was not a historical coincidence. But it was an expression of popular rage against the security apparatus. This was shown two days later on the Friday of Rage, during which dozens of police stations were burnt down in different provinces. Since President Mubarak stepped down in February 2011, eliminating the militarization and securitization of society has been the main demand for revolutionaries. This was shown by their repeated confrontations with the police, their repeated demands for the purging and reformation of the Ministry of Interior and their chant against "the rule of the military".

Three years later, the security establishment does not appear to be in a better condition than it was before the revolution. Successive governments since the revolution have failed to present serious visions of reform. Moreover, the death toll of the protests in the second half of 2013 exceeded the death toll of the two previous years. It even exceeded the number of protest casualties during the decades that Mubarak ruled. It appears that the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) is wielding political influence more visibly today than at any time during the last thirty years, including during the period of direct army rule immediately after Mubarak stepped down.

In summary, different alliances of power (including, at certain points, the Islamists, before the security establishment went back to repressing them), have succeeded in protecting the security establishment from serious reforms. This paper researches this issue by looking at the relationships within these shifting alliances, as well as at the relationship patterns prevailing inside both the security institutions and their allies in power.

1) Disintegration of the State and Rise of the Security Taifas

The Egyptian state was rendered invalid a decade before the revolution. The state against which the revolution happened bore only a slight resemblance to the one that Abdel Nasser inherited from the king and the British. Economic liberalization and the signing of the Camp David Accord in the 1970s, followed by the dismantling of bureaucratic institutions and battles between the police and violent groups in the 1980s and 1990s, and, finally, the neoliberal transformation in the last decade have collectively led to the disintegration of the state, the isolation of its institutions from each other and the infiltration of networks of economic interest in varying degrees.\(^1\)

The result has been that in every institution - particularly powerful institutions such as the army, the police and the judiciary - a culture of tribal isolationism has become entrenched, making it a "state of Taifas (petty kingdoms)" as described by Ashraf Sharif; "a state with Mamluk-like character invoking the model of feudal conflicts in Mamluk Egypt, or of the Taifa wars in Andalusia after the collapse of the unified Islamic Umayyad dynasty in the

eleventh century”\(^2\). This means that each of its institutions has become a Taifa, moving according to its own vision of its role, function and interests, hardly related to other institutions. This includes the security and military institutions whose role in the daily management of the state started from the time of Nasser.

We can divide security institutions primarily into military institutions and police-related institutions, though both groups are connected with a number of other state institutions, through which they manage society. Conflicts of interest have come to exist between them as result of their unique historical development.

**The Military Taifa**

The modern Egyptian identity emerged from the womb of the state. The army, by virtue of its role in the Muhammad Ali state in the first half of the 19\(^{th}\) century, had the main role in its formation. It saw itself since the last third of the 19\(^{th}\) century as the defender of Egyptian nationalism in the face of foreign pressure. This was seen, for example, in the Urabi Revolution, which showed the dual perception of the army about its national role: it reveres the “great” Egyptian people (as an abstract concept) and believes in its sovereignty, but it sees civilians (the members of this great Egyptian people) as "dependants”, incompetent and with no agency, so the military establishment must administer their affairs.

This concept was reinforced with the arrival of the military to a governance role in the second half of the twentieth century. President Abdel Nasser bolstered the qualifications of senior officers to make “them into a group of technocratic cadres capable of challenging their civilian counterparts”\(^3\). The military leadership thus expanded their control over different institutions of the Egyptian state. As military personnel served as ministers and in government departments, the army started to see itself as responsible for the state and a guardian over the citizens. The army looked after citizen interests - according to its own top-down vision - while keeping them from decision making circles.

Two important developments in the 1970s influenced the relationship of the army with the state. The first was the signing of the Israeli-Egyptian peace treaty in 1979, after which the declining threat of war led to the reduction in the military cast of the state (as shown in the relative decline in numbers of military ministers), in the military role for the army (opening the way for its preoccupation with other tasks) and in military spending (reducing the number of recruits and the increasing reliance on American military aid). The result was that the army was preparing for a war that it knew it would not go through, and planned how to defend a homeland while depriving itself from recruits, weapons and the needed funding for war. It came to rely on the state’s vow to guarantee the supremacy of its enemy, while developing a system that kept its officers under constant surveillance through security reports.\(^4\)


The second of the two developments was the adoption of a policy of economic "liberalisation", which led to increased inflation that negatively affected the standard of living of the middle class, to which army officers belong.

As a result, the economic activity of the army expanded. It expanded military industries to include income-making projects such as social clubs, military hotels and civilian public works contracts whose revenue was used to fill the gap between what the state provided and the needs of the army for armament and maintaining an acceptable standard of living for its officers. These projects were defended and sustained by qualifying them as "supply lines" that the army depended on for armament after the decline in military spending. After the transformation of the military’s national service from the military to the economic sphere, the Ministry of Defence established the National Service Project Organization to provide foodstuffs and other basic needs for citizens.

These institutions enjoyed privileges with respect to taxes, permits and contracting, in addition to remaining outside the purview of monitoring bodies. Their revenues remained exclusive to the military establishment, without interference from the state.

With these steps, a gradual isolation started between the army and the state with changing social and economic directions for the latter. The army started to appear as a national sect, busy - in times of stability - with safeguarding its interests as a Taifa. This involved the protection of economic resources, the preservation of influence concerning high policies and guaranteeing the economic interests of the officers. The army could then transform - in times of turbulence - to defend the survival of the state.

With the rise of neoliberalism and the disintegration of the state in the 1990s, the sectarian character of the military was shown in two parallel but opposite behaviours: the first was "isolation", which aimed at preserving the coherence of the sect when faced with the economic effects of neoliberalism. The military established 24 housing cities to house officers, along with a number of summer resorts and discounted services for its officers. To confront the politicisation that threatened cohesion within the army, the laws of promotion were adjusted to prioritise the value of loyalty. Junior officers who were considered to have political affiliations or to be undeserving of trust were not promoted above the rank of major. The state kept the loyalties of senior officers through loyalty allowances that they received at retirement. The powers of senior officers expanded in the face of decreasing powers of junior officers until the power of the colonel in the Egyptian army became equivalent to that of a sergeant in the American army.

The result was the success of Mubarak’s process of integrating senior officers, securing their loyalty and submission to him, while at the same time insulating them from the social and

5 Interview with political researcher Aly Al-Reggal, Cairo, 2 December 2013.
8 Ibid, p 5.
political reality of Egypt. This reduced their ability for initiative and creativity but it did not decrease their desire to protect their acquired powers and accumulating privileges.\textsuperscript{10}

In parallel with the isolation process, the military establishment infiltrated the institutions for managing society with the aim of preserving the interests of the Taifa, guaranteeing jobs and income for senior officers after retirement during times of stability, while also preserving the state in times of turbulence. This infiltration appeared in state institutions and in the market, consolidating the presence of "senior executive officers and administrators in the Ministry of Interior and the Directorate of the General Intelligence affiliated with the president."\textsuperscript{11}

Former officers also became involved in local government institutions. Since the 1990s, the military kept between 50 and 80\% of governorships and monopolised the post of the Minister of Local Development. Retired officers also occupied a large percentage of secondary positions such Deputy Governor, director of the governor's office, the Secretary General, Assistant Secretary General for the local council in the governorates.\textsuperscript{12} The military also monopolised the presidency of the Administrative Control Authority, which is responsible for combating corruption and investigating financial and administrative violations in the state. Through these positions, the military maintained their influence at the top of the decision making ladder and maintained an eye on the rest of the state institutions from the inside. Their supremacy was established on the local level, sparing them confrontations with the masses.

This was not enough to appease the military, however, especially with the market empowerment that accompanied the rise of Gamal Mubarak, son of President Hosni Mubarak, and the decline of military spending from 12.46\% of the budget in 1990 to 2.2\% in 2010 (accompanied by a major increase in police spending at the same time). Thus a transformation took place where, because of the political restrictions imposed on arms industry, "the main goal of the arms industry was to safeguard independence... to transform Egypt into a regional arms dealer."\textsuperscript{13} Gamal Mubarak, along with the businessmen close to him, established alliances with the police rather than the army, so the influence of the police in internal issues expanded at the expense of "military sovereignty". The result was the weakening of combat efficacy for the armed forces, to the extent that a leaked cable from the American embassy staff in 2008 confirmed the decline of tactical and operational readiness for the forces: "U.S. officers and officials familiar with the military assistance programs to Egypt describe the Egyptian Armed Forces as no longer capable of combat."\textsuperscript{14} The status of military officers was marginalised in favour of police officers, producing a distance between the army and the ruling wing of the state from 2006. The rift expanded, without disturbing the institutional interests of the army, until the revolution happened in 2011.

\begin{itemize}
  \item \textsuperscript{10} Yezid Sayigh, ‘The Officers Republic’, p 9.
  \item \textsuperscript{11} Ibid. p 6.
  \item \textsuperscript{12} Ibid, p 15.
  \item \textsuperscript{13} Kandil, Hazem, ‘Back on Horse’, p 184.
  \item \textsuperscript{14} Yezid Sayigh, ‘The Officers Republic’, p 10.
\end{itemize}
The Police Taifa

On the eve of the revolution, the attitude of the majority of Egyptians toward the police was different from their position towards the army. The protests that broke out on Police Day led to calls for the removal and trial of the Minister of Interior and then to the burning of many police stations. In contrast, many protestors welcomed the arrival of the armed forces. This great divergence in the perceptions of the army and police can be traced back to their relationship with the people. The army, as mentioned before, believes in its national duty, venerating the people as a mythical, abstract concept, though believing in the inferiority of civilians. The creed formed by the police, however, is based on contempt for the people, mistrusting them to the extent that the former Minister of Interior used to tell his officers that "to see good in others and to feel contentment is a privilege for humans and a vice for State Security Officers."15 Contrary to the army, the ideological discourse of the police does not include any patriotic terms that could secure for it popular support.16

The "colonial" position of the police is not new. The police form the arm of the state used to enforce modernism from above. It was used for torture, legally, to oppress the peasants (Fallaheen), force them to do certain tasks and extract confessions from suspects.17 It was not unusual, therefore, that the British Consul-General for Egypt, Lord Cromer, kept the structure of the colonial Ministry of Interior as it was, adding only "the political police" and the process of modernization and discipline for violent practices to become more efficient. Some researchers point out that the police are the only state institution that "did not undergo a process of Egyptianization and did not go through any historical rupture."18 Even at the height of the processes of Egyptianization in the Nasser era, the creed of the Ministry of the Interior remained resistant to change. What changed is its loyalty to its new rulers, after a brief drop that was followed by Nasser bringing back the senior men of the ministry, including the director of the political police, during his time running the ministry. Nasser also brought back the political police, weeks after dissolving it, and renamed it the General Investigation department. After securing the loyalty of the Interior Ministry, Nasser started to depend on it, first in parallel with the army and then in place of the army, to pursue political repression. This repression increased significantly under Presidents Sadat and Mubarak because of their keenness to keep the army away from the political arena for fear of coups.

With the increased reliance on the Ministry of Interior, three main institutions grew within the ministry, some with names changed but with continuous functions. First, General Security is responsible for handling crime and preserving social peace. The majority of police officers work in General Security. Second, Central Security is the state group for confronting political, economic and social protests and violent groups. It was composed of 189 officers and 11690 soldiers at the end of the 1960s and it expanded to reach 300,000 officers and soldiers on the

16 Interview with Aly Al-Reggal.
18 Interview with Aly Al-Reggal.
eve of the revolution. Third, the State Security Investigations Service (SSIS), including political police, general investigations, state security and national security) is responsible for tracking the opposition, current and potential, of all affiliations: from extreme religious activists to civil society and human rights groups. Its influence expanded during the last years of Mubarak's reign. It came to play an important role in selecting the ruling party's candidates for election, was able to refuse a person access to university, to transfer a scientist to a job that distanced him from the masses and to demand from some media groups not to publish a story. The state security apparatus was, in the eyes of many, the actual ruler of the country, courted by those who wish to ascend the social and political ladder. This apparatus expanded until it reached almost 100,000 individuals on the eve of the revolution.

The primary reason for the expanding police force was the pressing need to keep the army away from internal struggles because of the concern among the political leadership about the likelihood of coups. In addition, adopting economic and social policies that led to the impoverishment of Egyptians and the spread of social injustice required the regime to use a strong security instrument to defend itself, pursuing a war on terror during the 1980s and 1990s.

The result was a strengthened relationship between the Interior Ministry and the businessmen – the heads of the burgeoning economic system – who did not find much resistance to the imposition of their interests on the ministry. The absence of a patriotic element in its ideological constitution, plus its institutional weakness compared to the army, facilitated the Interior Ministry’s infiltration by networks of interests. The reciprocal relationship between the ministry and the business sector grew stronger, as evidenced by the use of police by businessmen to remove residents from land that they wanted to develop: before the revolution in Toson, in Alexandria, and, after the revolution, in Ramlet Boulak in Cairo. It then grew to infiltrate different levels in the ministry. Thus, the rise of the market and the intertwining relationship of the police with certain well-connected businessmen led to the police force changing its relationship with the state. In a way, it became the hand of the market, or at least of the parasitic capitalists surrounding the president and his son, in running the country.

As for the war on terror, the police force emerged from it with extra legitimacy for oppression, describing itself as the "master" capable of spreading influence and to which, consequently, all must submit. With this war, and with the spread of informal settlements and the disintegration of big cities, the strain on the capacities of the security forces became more than it could withstand. It was forced to outsource its security services by delegating it to local informants, who helped it enter areas where violent groups were concentrated, and who shouldered the burden of security management (whereas previously, their role was restricted to surveillance) in exchange for enjoying local influence that allowed them to reap benefits.

With the erosion of the state, the police transformed into a utilitarian Taifa focused on surviving and safeguarding its interests. Its senior officers were co-opted by the political

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20 Tewfick Aclimandos, ‘Healing without amputating?’
21 Interview with Aly Al-Reggal.
regime through loyalty allowances, privileges and through networks of interests that tied them with the businessmen who had wielded influence during the last decade of Mubarak's rule. The police also maintained political influence via a presence in the institutions of local governance and in parliament, which in the last decade included many former police officers, especially from the SSIS, and, to a lesser degree, well-connected businessmen.\textsuperscript{22}

Police influence also increased through networks of thugs, or Baltagiya, mercenaries that use violence and work for businessmen and police officers, and who multiplied dramatically with the beginning of the millennium.\textsuperscript{23} Fact finding commissions have proven their association with the security institutions.\textsuperscript{24} The police also spared its members legal accountability for violations by building influential networks in a number of institutions, including the public prosecution, which some legal reports accused of "blatant interference...to protect the security apparatus,"\textsuperscript{25} (and whose members declared that they work according to the Ministry of Interior, according to testimonials of human rights lawyers)\textsuperscript{26}, as well as forensics investigators (as in the famous case of Khaled Said before the revolution) and the judiciary (which includes amongst its ranks a large percentage of former police officers).\textsuperscript{27}

The security strategy in the years before the revolution was based on two pillars: first, the "domestication" of different political and social opposition movements, achieved by infiltrating and destroying unions and party organizations, by encouraging the reformation of leaders of violent movements in prison and by delineating calculated spaces of manoeuvre for leaders of reform opposition movements in the street, in the media and in legislative institutions. The second pillar involved severing whoever was outside this framework through campaigns to eliminate violent trends, defamation, attacks on opposition symbols,\textsuperscript{28} and the use of exceptional trials (martial and emergency high state security) against the opposition.\textsuperscript{29}

While the army was not satisfied with its status on the eve of the revolution, the police were at the height of their influence and power. They were completely prepared to go into the battle between the common masses and the rulers of the state and market. However, as had happened in the past, most recently in January 1977, the police lost this confrontation. The army did not side with the rulers as it had in 1968, 1977 and 1986. The police were defeated after four bloody days in the streets and squares of Suez, Cairo and other governorates. It was forced to retreat on the eve of 28 January, 2011.

\textsuperscript{22} Tewfick Aclimandos, ‘Healing without amputating?’
\textsuperscript{23} Ibid.
\textsuperscript{24} Interview with Ahmed Ragheb, member of the fact finding commission on the events of the revolution, Cairo, 26 January, 2014.
\textsuperscript{25} For example, see ‘Obstructing Accountability’, The Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights, January 2013 available at \url{http://eipr.org/report/2013/01/22/1604}.
\textsuperscript{26} Interview with Mahmoud Belal, lawyer at the Egyptian Center for Social and Economic Rights, Cairo, 20 January 2014.
\textsuperscript{27} Including former vice president Chancellor Mahmoud Mekki. From interview with police officer in service who did not allow disclosure of his name, Cairo, 20 December 2013.
\textsuperscript{28} As had happened in an attack on the late doctor Abdel Wahab Al-Messery, who was thrown in the desert, as well as journalist doctor Abdel Halim Qandil and the smear campaigns that targeted doctor Mohamed Al-Baradei after his return to Egypt in 2010.
\textsuperscript{29} As in the trials of leaders of the MB and several leftist movements.
2) Rise and Fall of the Taifas and the Rearrangement of the Ruling Elite

The first wave of protests levelled a decisive blow to the police, forcing it to withdraw from the streets and squares and leave them to the protesters. In the aftermath of the collapse of the security situation, the revolutionary circumstances facilitated a massive shakeup in the existing patterns of control in three main institutions: the army, the police and the Muslim Brotherhood (MB). A state of fluidity allowed for the reconfiguration of relationships between the different Taifas, and inside each Taifa, in a way that led to a new political order. The main steps towards a reconfiguration were done in the transition phase after Mubarak stepped down, during which the Military Council ruled under the directorship of Field Marshal Hussein Tantawi.

Disintegrating Relationships between Institutions

Many factors interfered with the intervention of the army to suppress the protests in 2011. First, there was military discontent over the "inheritance" project involving Gamal Mubarak that accompanied the expansion of market economics and the erosion of military influence in the government, to the benefit of certain connected businessmen. Second, there was a desire to reclaim its status vis-à-vis the Ministry of Interior. After Mubarak stepped down, activists were told by the then-Head of Military Intelligence, Lieutenant General Abdel Fatah Al-Sisi, that there was tension in the relationship between the two because of damage police officers did to the military establishment and because of surveillance of its officers by the SSIS. Third, there was a realization by the military establishment of the impossibility of the continuance of Mubarak's regime because of the widespread rage shown in the protests across the entire country. Thus, the military position was based on two foundations. First, there was a quest to preserve the state after the burdens placed on it by Mubarak’s inheritance project and the introduction of neoliberal economics. Second, the military seized the available opportunity to get rid of the ascending "police sovereignty".

It was not surprising that the first weeks of military rule saw widespread arrests of the businessmen close to Gamal Mubarak, Colonel Habib Al Adly, the Minister of Interior for Mubarak, and a number of his aides. When protesters were allowed to break into the headquarters of the SSIS, and the SSIS disappeared, Military Intelligence took its place over a number of internal security issues, arresting and interrogating a number of protesters in different occasions in the first half of 2011.

With protests continuing in the weeks after Mubarak stepped down, the military transformed from trying to protect them to trying to contain them, seeing the protests as threatening to the ruling pattern that was based on the supremacy of the state and its institutions. A law was issued to criminalise strikes, which had become threatening after the breaking of the police role led to suspended action in enforcing the law. The military intervention to break up a
limited protest (demanding the resignation of Colonel Ahmed Shafik's cabinet) led to angry reactions that forced the military to issue an apology. The need of the new rulers for the political support of Islamists became apparent, as they were a political force that ranged between conservatism and reform and enjoyed wide popularity. Islamist support was seen as being able to help contain these protests and push for a more conservative path. The military council released imprisoned Islamist leaders and singled out the MB to be represented in the constitution amendment committee by Sobhi Saleh. This military-Islamist understanding remained valid for two years before the collapse of the network of interests that constituted it, as will be seen. The need for a police apparatus was reaffirmed, as it was considered a coercive force trained to deal with popular protests in a way the army can't without losing popular support. This explains the delay in responding to the calls for institutional reform of the police. The head of Military Intelligence justified this to revolutionary groups that met him by saying: "we know that the Ministry of Interior's position has deteriorated but we cannot work without them." Work continued on "improving the performance of the police apparatus while keeping it under military control." Signs of a new alliance of power appeared, with the patterns of relationship between the military and the police and the Islamists changed from what they were before the revolution.

**The Decay of Power Patterns inside the Institutions**

The police establishment before the revolution was based on "administrative oppression" that subjected junior officers to senior ones, in isolation from the laws. The upper hand was given to the SSIS, with "the impact and influence of its junior officers with the rank of captain exceeding the impact and influence of senior officers with ranks of Lieutenant General who belong to other sectors in the police departments." During the bloody clashes of the first week of the revolution, this administrative oppression was exposed to great a shakeup because of the feeling of injustice of junior officers and members of the police who felt they were being made accountable for "the political alliances of their leadership with the rulers at the expense of the masses." They felt insulted by being forced to confront the masses on behalf of the rulers and then abandoned by the leadership which withdrew on the eve of 28 January. Signs of revolutionary feeling started seeping into the police, showing itself first in the "Officers but Honourable" coalition at the heart of Tahrir Square on 1 February, 2011 to demand the "reorganisation and restructuring of the Ministry of Interior." At the same time,

33 MB leader Khayrat Al-Shater was released on 1 March 2011 and the leaders of Jama’a Islamiyya, Aboud Al-Zomor and Tarek Al-Zomor on 11 March 2011.
34 Interview with Mostafa Al-Naggar, former MP, Cairo 1-12-2013.
35 Rashed, Dina. ‘Reforming the Egyptian Police?’ *Foreign Policy*. 8-7-2013, http://mideast.foreignpolicy.com/posts/2013/07/08/reforming_the_egyptian_police
36 Interview with Doctor Colonel Mohamed Mahfouz, former police officer, Alexandria, 4-3-2013.
38 Interview with Doctor Colonel Mohamed Mahfouz.
the leadership tried to contain the crisis and let the junior officers carry the responsibility for
the human rights violations that roused the masses.40 When Mubarak stepped down, the
ministerial leadership remained in place, seeking to keep the prevailing relationship pattern,
until Lieutenant General Shafik's cabinet resigned, including Major General Mahmoud
Wagdy the Minister of Interior, in March 2011, leading to the appointment of Essam Sharaf as
Prime Minister and Major General Mansour el-Essawy as Minister of Interior.

Uncertainty within the institution changed the rules significantly from underneath the control
of the leadership, especially with the break-in at SSIS headquarters in the beginning of March
in 2011. Different coalitions appeared (including the General Coalition of Police Officers, the
General Coalition of Warrant Officers and Members of the Police) that agreed on refusing
work conditions, but disagreed on everything else. Some of them had demands for
institutional reform and sought to "civilianise" the police, while some wanted more
"militarisation" to empower officers in the face of the people. The demands escalated for
establishing a union for officers and members of the police, and it appeared impossible to
maintain the relationship patterns inside the ministry.

For the military establishment, threats to prevailing relationship patterns were not great, being
restricted to the limited number of officers that declared, before Mubarak stepped down, their
support for the revolution and demanded their leaders who were affiliated with the regime to
resign. Limited numbers of officers and ex-officers later participated in the April 2011 strike
and in both cases the "rebellion" remained limited and isolated and did not find popular
backing.

The military leadership contained the rebellion through three strategies. First, it isolated it
from potential popular support by focusing on the dangers of instability and division, pointing
out repeatedly the effects of military rebellion in Libya and Syria and constantly emphasizing
the existence of an external conspiracy to break up the army. Second, it showed decisiveness
in acting to bury any signs of rebellion lest it would lead to an expansion, as happened with
the military's interference to break up the April strike and the arrests of the military members
who participated in it. Third, there was a paternal containment of the rebels, covering up their
rebellion with the purpose of keeping the spirit of cohesion for the Taifa. This was shown in
the reduced martial rulings against the rebels in January and April and their privileged
treatment vis-à-vis the civilians that were imprisoned with them.

40 In an interview with some of the youth from revolutionary groups, before Mubarak stepped down, Major
General Hasan Abdel Rahman, then-head of SSIS, said that junior officers are the ones committing the human
rights violations, that it is not systematic and that the leadership is trying to "spread the culture of human rights
in the police authority." He promised to take more serious measures in that regard, while Major Colonel
Mahmoud Wagdy, then-Minister of Interior, denied the responsibility of the police authority in killing protesters.
He accused "foreign bodies that want to stoke the conflict in Egypt." Interview with Mostafa Al-Naggar.
3) Taifa Worldviews and Alliances for Building a New Regime

The period between March and November 2011 was critical in rebuilding the control patterns inside the different Taifas. In the Ministry of Interior, with the failure of the efforts of Shafik's ministry in containing demands for change from both inside and outside the ministry, the ministry of el-Essawy resorted to another manoeuvre aiming at maintaining the cohesion of the Taifa. It was based on three main pillars.

First, they showed more openness to civil society and a greater degree of flexibility in dealing with its demands for reforms. The SSIS was disbanded and decree 445 was issued to establish the new department of Homeland Security. A number of human rights activists and politicians were invited to attend a presentation about the new department. The department’s public relations people got in touch with emerging parties, emphasizing that it had become "concerned with collecting information only" and therefore there was no returning back to the practices of torture, human rights violations and political interference that was practiced by the SSIS. The ministry also invited a number of activists to visit the police academy, where the hosts told them about naming the new class at the academy as "the class of the January Revolution". They confirmed that the curricula had been changed and the focus was on the rights component in the curricula, emphasizing the ministry's keenness on change and the upholding of the culture of human rights among the ranks of its members. The ministry promised to issue a new law that regulates the work of the Homeland Security department (from the General Investigation department to the SSIS, there remained no working since Nasser's time). Other reformist tendencies appeared in this period in limited measures, such as requiring officers to hang identity cards with their names and ranks, starting in March 2012, and issuing a code of conduct and ethics for police work in October 2012. These measures were aimed at keeping the Ministry of Interior away, even if only a little, from the range of fire from media and activists demanding change at a time when the rhetoric for change was at its peak.

The second pillar of Major General el-Essawy’s policy was based on showing a greater degree of tolerance towards attempts at reform by officers and police members, and to their autonomous organization independent from the ministry. Different coalitions grew without visible harassment from the ministry. Some, like the "Officer but Honourable" coalition grew with the support of civil society and presented, in a broader alliance of human rights activists, lawyers, politicians and officers, an initiative to reform the Ministry of Interior under the title: The National Initiative to Rebuild the Police Force. The ministry welcomed this initiative, along with other initiatives, confirming its dedication to studying it. The ministry allowed junior officers room to vent their anger from the insult that had befallen them. Considering the

41 Interview with Gamal Eid, The Arab Network for Human Rights Information, Cairo, 23-1-2014.
42 Interview with Mostafa Al-Naggar.
43 Ibid.
44 Interview with Karim Elnarah, Researcher at the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights, 27 November, 2011.
45 For more about this initiative, please review Doctor Colonel Mohamed Mahfouz, ‘The Egyptian Security Sector in 2013’, p.15 and after
recent damage to the standard tools of administrative oppression, attempts at using them would have backfired. However, the tolerance of the ministry towards autonomous organization of officers never reached the degree of allowing it officially. This remained a red line to the ministry's leadership, whose strategy focused on containing spontaneous anger, which slowly ebbed away following even small changes. It would have been a fatal blow to allow union organization.

The third of the pillars was to lay the foundation for a new power alliance that included the Islamists. The leadership of the ministry was keen on winning over the Islamists as new allies to power, especially after the clear swing of the Islamist voting bloc into their favour after the March 2011 constitutional referendum. The ministry showed flexibility in responding to their demands, like the exclusion of some state security officers who were transferred to other work areas (entering at higher levels as a way of compensation so as not to provoke the general officers) and presenting their exclusion to the media as part of the process of purging the ministry.\textsuperscript{46} The first round of these transfers came in March 2011 with a limited transfer movement that was marked by a great lack of transparency. The names of those set to retire and those transferred were leaked to the press and it appeared that it barely included any officers who had worked on Islamist files.\textsuperscript{47} It had nothing to do with human rights, professional discipline or professional efficiency but it was primarily a part of a process of establishing a new ruling elite.

The first revolutionary wave threatened the dominance of the MB leadership in the Islamist arena.\textsuperscript{48} It changed the relationship between the leadership and the base because the revolutionary circumstances were alien to the conservative nature of the group. The revolution threatened to break the monopoly of the MB over Islamist political action with the release of the leadership of Jama’a Islamiyya by the SCAF, who announced their desire to return to political action through the Building and Development Party. The entry of the Salafis (who had previously quit politics) into political action through a group of political parties appeared to have been supported by the security apparatus.\textsuperscript{49} The MB leadership was keener on dealing with the internal threat, the continuation of which threatened the capacity of the organization to enter power arrangements. It began efforts at internal containment, taking advantage of the escalating atmosphere of polarization since March 2011 referendum. This enabled it to re-establish influence over its members when it sensed external threat.\textsuperscript{50} As for "democratizing"

\textsuperscript{46} Interview with Doctor Colonel Mohamed Mahfouz.
\textsuperscript{47} Interview with Karim Ennarah.
\textsuperscript{49} Although there is some evidence, the intervention of some security institutions to encourage the establishment of these parties cannot be confirmed. It was striking, for example, to see the interference of leaders of Alexandria Salafis to mediate between the police officers and the families of the martyrs and ask the parents to accept blood money in June 2012. Another item of note was the establishment of one of the Salafi parties by a former police Major General, the brother of one of the advocates of the most famous Salafi preachers in Cairo. A number of these leaders (some of them ran and became members of the Parliament at the time), are former police officers.
\textsuperscript{50} The internal rebellion was shown in the rejection of a number of MB members from joining the emerging Freedom and Justice Party, followed by their quest to create other parties. Additionally, the organization of a
Islamist action, that did not concern the MB the same degree at first. It took several months until it started serious attempts at coordination with the Islamists. It established the Sharia Board for Rights and Reform to coordinate between the MB and other Islamist factions and to prevent the MB from clashing with Salafi factions despite their differing positions. The MB leadership was keenness to present the MB as a moderate group in the face of "Salafi extremism" while still keeping itself with the Salafis in one Islamic grouping facing the secularists.

In parallel with the processes that saw the leadership of every Taifa attempting to reclaim internal control, understandings between different Taifas took place to form new powers. This was established on a conservative Islamist/MB front that enjoyed popular support, and in the security apparatus as the military took control of strategic files while the police institution was undergoing another phase of "modernization" that enables it to repress in a more effective manner befitting the new phase. These power arrangements began in March 2011. The military released Islamists from prisons, and pushed them towards a path between being conservative and revolutionary. They did not push in the direction of real structural changes to the political and economic system, however, nor to the structure of state institutions, especially those related to security. The leadership of police institutions started reshaping itself in line with this new alliance, transferring a large number of state security officers who were implicated in human rights violations against Islamists, while keeping other state security officers in the alternative department of Homeland Security. This did not stop it from collecting information, as indicated by the latest leaks of activist calls, but its efforts were directed, apparently, away from the Islamists. The ministry was re-oriented away from the rule of the SSIS, so the five ministers since the revolution came from the General Security

number of the youth conferences addressed ways to reform the MB, resulting in divergence between representatives in the Revolutionary Youth Coalition, with its conservative tendencies, and other positions. The MB tried to contain the rebellion by speaking to them, and expelling some of them from the brotherhood, while at the same time promoting a number of youth, known for their loyalty, to leading media positions in the brotherhood and the party without election, lest the balance of power change within the organization.

51 If the MB's lack of concern over the emergence of competitors on the Islamist scene seems a bit strange, it can be interpreted, if possible, according to their perception of the possibility of these movements accepting their political dominance (in light of the talk of some of their leaders in the early days of the revolution about the necessity of supporting the MB as the group with the experience and knowledge of political affairs).

52 The MB preferred, in many situations, to align with the Salafists in the face of secular forces, and the MB spaces of assimilation expanded to accommodate a number of Salafi leaders, from preachers and politicians. These included Mohammed Abdel-Maksoud from Cairo Salafis, who reproached the MB until he became one of the main pillars of their campaigns, Dr. Talaat Afifi, who took over the Ministry of Religious Endowments, Dr Mohamed Yousry Ibrahim, who is close to MB leaders, and Khairat Al-Shater, who the MB supported in the parliamentary elections and then pushed for his appointment in the Constituent Assembly of the Constitution, eventually nominating him to head the Ministry of Religious Endowments despite the resistance of Al-Azhar to his appointment. All of these connections seemed to be part of the strategy of grasping the threads of influence in the Islamist arena.

53 In recent weeks, one of the hosts for a TV show screened a series of telephone calls for activists in March and April 2011 that were most likely leaked by national security. These leaks were all for activists away from the Islamist movement, which suggests that the Islamists were out of the surveillance of security services in this period, and reinforces the hypothesis of what recurred after 3 July 2013: that the security agencies were arresting some of the former MB leaders who left the Brotherhood early after the revolution, on the grounds that they are still in the organization, and they went to arrest some of those who died during the last three years, all of which indicates that the Islamists database has not been updated on a regular basis during that period, while other activists were subject to significant surveillance.
sector, which was less involved with circles of power and more representative of the majority of the officers.54

Building an alliance that is, by definition, counter-revolutionary was not easy in light of a revolutionary tidal wave. As social demands were ignored and the revolution was dealt with as a process of limited democratic transition, and as responses were delayed to demands for police reform and investigation of human rights violations, there were renewed clashes between the police and the revolutionaries at the end of June 2011. These clashes showed the administrative laxness in the ministry and the beginnings of decline in the rhetoric of reform as the police returning to vengeful practices. Human rights reports confirmed that clashes continued until the afternoon hours on 29 June despite the 3 a.m. orders of the Minister of Interior to security forces to withdraw from Tahrir Square.55 The EIPR reported that "police actions.... were not trying to control a demonstration or break up a riot, but that this was a matter of personal revenge between police and demonstrators, for the officers were constantly nervous and were using obscene gestures."56 The police were no longer in the same position of weakness as they had been in the previous months, as their strategy had succeeded in alleviating the pressure on them.

This change was in parallel to the changing pattern of control and management inside the police institution. The talk about "changing the police creed" that the leadership repeated on every occasion, along with the talk about a "security vacuum" and the need for security to return, opened the way for a rhetoric that was less radical towards the institution. It also allowed the delay in responding to demands for change and the reclamation of an institutional culture that was inimical to the people. There was rhetoric of a narrowing of the wide base calling for reform because of the absence of the political will for change and the continuance of a climate hostile to reform.57 So, the police saw itself as a military institution, not a civilian one as the constitution outlined, and it started, consequently, to withdraw into itself. This helped the gradual escalation of the rhetoric of "self-purging" that excluded civil society and political actors from efforts at reforming the police and the ministry.

The ministry used its long experience in infiltrating unions to reduce the impact of the police coalitions that were trying to establish a union for officers, members of the police and the civilian employees working in the ministry. The role of the General Coalition for Police Officers grew at the expense of the "Officers but Honourable" coalition and it held its meetings in "vital and important police locations under the eye of the leadership of the Ministry of Interior."58 The role of the General Coalition grew and became more focused on certain employment rights like improving work conditions and arming and securing officers, than on the right of independent organization and the institutional reform for the ministry. The General Coalition even participated, with prime minister Kamal Al-Ganzouri, in selecting

54 Interview with Col. Dr. Mohamed Mahfouz.
55 The Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights announced the results of its field investigation into the clashes between the police and the protesters on 28 and 29 June. See the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Right website, 4 July 2011, http://www.eipr.org/pressrelease/2011/07/04/1189.
56 Ibid.
57 Interview with Col. Dr. Mohamed Mahfouz.
Major General Mohamed Ibrahim Youssef as Minister of Interior to succeed Major General Mansour el-Essawy, who had resigned with the cabinet of Essam Sharaf after the clashes in Mohamed Mahmoud Street in Cairo in November 2011.

4) Road to the Palace: The Completion of a New Power Alliance

The leadership of the Ministry of Interior succeeded in regaining its control over the ministry gradually during the last quarter of 2011 and the first third of 2012 on three fundamentals. First, the decline of the pressure to reform internally and externally (for reasons that have been explained) which enabled the leadership to shift from the former strategy based on "reconciliation" with the reform rhetoric to another strategy based on containing reform. Emphasizing the high cost of a security vacuum meant that the "return of security" must be prioritised over reform. The danger in moving at a fast pace in expelling corrupt leaders was described by some army leaders: "If you fire all those implicated in violations, and there are many of them, and I don't have the necessary funding to rehabilitate them or offer them civilian jobs or adequate pensions, I am going to create a catastrophe, not reform." There was also expanding room for the rhetoric of conspiracy that saw the restructuring of the Ministry of Interior (as well as reorganizing the relationship between the military and the civilians) as a foreign conspiracy aiming at dismantling the state institutions. These claims started defaming the 6th April movement, but it did not end with the case of civil society organisations. The ministry also launched a number of campaigns to arrest arms and drugs dealers and crack down on public order offenses. This gave the impression that the police were busy with legal functions and distancing itself from political conflict. In this way, the ministry avoided being within close range of the demands for reforms.

The second fundamental that the Ministry of Interior relied on was isolating the police from society in a way that would prevent the police from seeking empowerment from civil society, human rights activists or politicians in their demands of restructuring. This was shown in the rise of the rhetoric about "reform from within" during the reign of Major General Mohamed Ibrahim Youssef, who took over the ministry based on the nomination of the General Coalition for Police Officers. The General Coalition had withdrawn, since its inception, from civil society and retained the perception that the ministry of interior alone could pursue its work, with no partner required to achieve any restructuring. Isolation from society took place according to two rules. The first was the enabling of the General Coalition and its supporting officers by marginalizing the others, like the "Officers but Honourable" coalition, whose initiatives for reform were not met with any serious attention. Second, alienation to prevent the general officers from cooperating with the society was instigated by invoking the enmity between the police and the protesters who were calling for reform. The intentions of those calling for reform were questioned and they were associated with foreign interests. The ability of those outside the ministry to understand how to fix it was also questioned.

The third fundamental was the reestablishment of cohesion within the police Taifah on a new basis, including the partial response to the economic demands of officers and police personnel to raise their salaries, as well as a partial response to their professional demands in eliminating military trials for members of the police. This took place along with the erosion of reconciliation space that was available for those seeking to form a union. Restrictions started by referring the general coordinator for the Officers but Honourable coalition to disciplinary council in November 2011 (while at the same time retaining the General Coalition for Police Officers and consulting with them concerning the selection of a minister).

The MB, the new allies in power for the police, helped in maintaining the cohesion of the police Taifah through a series of measures that started with their parliamentary majority in January 2012. The need appeared for their project, neoliberal in its economic orientation and extremely conservative politically, for a security instrument to use to after the revolutionary period. Their candidate lists included a number of former police officers who formed a large bloc in the parliamentary committee concerned with police issues. The MB got busy with keeping the repressive structures of the police institution and deepening their ties with it. This became clear in the aftermath of the incident of the football match between Al-Ahly and Al-Masry in Port Said in February 2012 which killed more than 70 fans. The accusation was directed in a significant way at the Ministry of Interior (because of clashes between the ministry and Ahly fans before and after the revolution and its desire for revenge). Pressures increased for purging and restructuring, and the Minister of Interior was called to the parliament to present the ministry's vision for reform. The MB contained the initiatives for reform put forward by civil society through a number of meetings with human rights activists. Their suggestions mainly dealt with "amending the articles regulating the use of arms in police law, articles on administrative structure, and the forming of a supreme council for the police to be more representative of different ranks. Such a council would include civilians and would have powers in the making of general policies for the ministry, with the minister, and adding new sections for the law such as setting mechanisms to monitor places of detention." The project suggested to the MB for reform did not come out from the defence committee for a period of three months, and then the discussion concerned with reforming the Ministry of Interior was restricted to one point: raising salaries. Some parliamentarians criticised the silence of the majority about "a group of Major Generals running the ministry as if it were a ring for organised crime, and that all that the revolutionary parliament was doing was an attempt to amend the articles concerned with salaries and pensions." The MB did not provide this protection to the Ministry of Interior without receiving anything in return, but pushed to exclude another

An opposition group in parliament presented a draft law for police reform, but the committee of complaints and suggestions did not present it to the general committee. The Speaker justified this by saying: "we don't want to clash with them." The project suggested to the MB for reform did not come out from the defence committee for a period of three months, and then the discussion concerned with reforming the Ministry of Interior was restricted to one point: raising salaries. Some parliamentarians criticised the silence of the majority about "a group of Major Generals running the ministry as if it were a ring for organised crime, and that all that the revolutionary parliament was doing was an attempt to amend the articles concerned with salaries and pensions." The MB did not provide this protection to the Ministry of Interior without receiving anything in return, but pushed to exclude another

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62 Interview with Karim Ennarah. Ahmed Ragheb also pointed to those meetings during the interview.
63 Interview with Mostafa Al-Naggar.
64 Interview with Karim Ennarah.
number of national security officers, to push certain names for certain positions in the ministry, and to enroll a large number of their members in the police academy.”66 These testimonials are reinforced by others which confirm in their entirety that the MB consented to preserve the police institution as it is, while ensuring the expansion of their influence within it.67

In the aftermath of the Port Said shakeup and with the ministry regaining its cohesion, relying on the popularity of its new allies, the leadership showed a greater degree of firmness in confronting grassroots attempts at union organization. With the rise of a new wave of police protests in March 2012, the ministry contained the demands of warrant officers by introducing the rank of honorary officer to which they can be promoted after 24 years of service, by improving work conditions, and by allowing establishment of the general club of police officers (that came out of General Coalition of Police Officers). Additionally, the ministry took a firmer stance with leaders who called for founding a union by referring them to disciplinary councils in March 2012.68

At the beginning of the second half of 2012, Mohamed Morsi, head of the Freedom and Justice Party, a subsidiary of the MB, became president. This became another moment of extended fluidity that allowed more reconfiguration of the relationships between the Taifas. The military establishment, with declining legitimacy and which popular pressure forced to hand over power for fear of coups and internal splits, sought to safeguard its interests through issuing a constitutional declaration giving it temporary legislative power.69 It also tried reducing the influence of the new president on security institutions by issuing law 25 for 2012, deleting the text that makes the president the head of the highest police authority. It also included, through many appointments and decrees, a heavy military presence in the presidential palace.

66 Interview with a police officer, 20 December 2013.

67 For example, Colonel Dr. Mohamed Mahfouz says that the MB pressured Mohammed Ibrahim Yusuf, a former Minister of Interior at the time of the Port Said events, and threatened him with prosecution, to be able to infiltrate the police institution. He, with his repressive creed, represented the perfect tool to run society with their project. The MB strengthened leaders willing to cooperate with them, as well as trying to employ police reform initiatives for their benefit, such as with the proposal of Faculty of Law graduates to join the police academy to civilianise the latter, which the MB tried to use to enrol the largest number of MB to the institution in the least number of years. Interview with Colonel Dr. Mohamed Mahfouz.

68 Including Lieutenant Colonel Nabil Omar and Major Ashraf Al-Banna, both referred to a disciplinary council on 10 March 2012.

69 After the first round of presidential elections, the Supreme Constitutional Court issued a ruling invalidating the election law on the basis of which the Parliament was elected. The military council issued a ruling to dissolve the parliament, and accompanied it with a constitutional declaration, giving it the same legislative power until the election of a new parliament, and gives itself supervisory authority on the process of writing the constitution, among other things.
The Birth of a New Old System

President Morsi's bias toward the state institutions and its business allies was evident from the first day of his term, with his attempts to treat them from a "revolutionary" position in a way that enabled him to line up the masses behind him. His goal was to pressure them, to achieve some gains, and to ensure the organizational cohesion of the MB, which was partially threatened with being assimilated by state institutions without changing them.\textsuperscript{70} The first two months of president Morsi's term presidency saw the appointment of Major General Ahmed Gamal Al-Din as Minister of Interior and Lieutenant General Abdel Fatah Al-Sisi as Minister of Defense, each of whom had influence and popularity in their Taifas. They both worked from the start of their appointments to reclaim the cohesion of their Taifas in light of the new alliance of power. A struggle between the three parties (the Islamists, the military and the police) over each Taifa's space in this alliance continued, often in a muted way revealed through appointments, dismissals, and leaks, though sometimes in a completely open way, as in two incidents of clashes between armed forces and police in the street.

In parallel to president Morsi entering the presidential palace, the culture of the Taifa with its old alliances almost completely took over the police. The main interests of the police Taifa during the first few months of Morsi's reign was to avoid being used as a tool in a political conflict (meaning getting involved in the suppression of political protests) and in restoring their prestige and influence, through which benefits can be accrued, on the social level. Guarantees against accountability for human rights and legal violations and the raised level of armament in the ministry made its members feel the protection of authority and its predisposition towards them. These interests allowed for the finding of wide common ground with their new power partners. As for the use in political conflict, the MB tried from the beginning of their reign to avoid it due to its high cost (both for them and for the police).

As for reclaiming prestige and influence, the MB turned a blind eye to several violations by the police that took place in the first months of Morsi's reign. What united them was the police's attempt to reaffirm its sovereignty as a Taifa whose members have a status above the people. Violations included police forces in Minya setting a number of cars on fire, the random shooting of one officer was in a feud between two families,\textsuperscript{71} officers from a security forces camp in Beni Soueif killing four people in a fight between a recruiter and the people of the village, torturing citizens to death in police stations in Shubra Al-Kheima, Meet Ghamr and Tahta, assaulting street vendors and killing them, and the expansion in the use of violence and live ammunition in police ambushes in a way that resulted in the death of a number of citizens in non-political incidents.\textsuperscript{72} As for immunity against accountability, it was guaranteed, as previously mentioned, by the prosecution, whose ranks include a large number of former police officers who show a great degree of willingness to cooperate with the police.

\textsuperscript{70} For more, see El Houdaiby, Ibrahim, “From Prison to Palace…”
\textsuperscript{71} This refers to the incident that happened in the first months of Morsi's term. See Dziadosdz, Alexander, ‘Insight: Egypt's revolution fails to bring police reform,’ Reuters, Mar 20, 2013.
As for advancing the level of armament, the MB helped this through the purchase of armoured vehicles, wagons, weapons, batons and tear gas canisters, in addition to raising the wages of the police.

In addition to this alliance, the MB neoliberal project helped in protecting the alliance between the police and their business partners. This was shown in the incident of Ramlet Boulak, in which the police intervened on behalf of the businessmen to evict the residents in a way that allow the construction of a real estate investment project.

The military establishment retreated a step with the dismissal of the Field Marshal Hussein Tantawi and Lieutenant General Sami Anan in August 2012, especially with the rising popularity of the president and the popular support that accompanied their dismissals. The new leadership appeared more accepting of the presence of a civilian president from outside its ranks for the first time since the founding of the republic. The military presence then receded in the councils of ministers and governors and there was the impression that the president was making tangible progress in the issue of civilian-military relations. However, the military establishment showed its fangs on two occasions where its interests appeared threatened. First were the events of Qursaya island, which the Armed Forces insists that it owns despite the fact that it was declared a natural reserve in 1998 by cabinet decree 1969 and that the residents received a final verdict in 2010 obliging the government to renew their leases. This confirmed the rights of the squatters on the island as residents and considers them to have a legal right to live and farm it. The armed forces attacked the residents on the eve of 18 November 2012 and referred a number of them to military trials without the political leadership moving to prevent the assault.

The second place that army revealed its fangs was in the Constituent Assembly created to write the constitution. The army insisted on keeping the institution under the command of its officers, away from civilian authority, and restricting the discussion of the military budget to a committee half composed of members of the military. General Mamdouh Shahin, a member of the Supreme Military Council and of the Constituent Assembly, objected to the request for more civilians on the committee by saying: "if you add of one you (i.e. the civilians) we will add one of us (i.e. the military)."

The military establishment appeared in these two situations

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73 Interview with Colonel Dr. Mohamed Mahfouz

74 Several human rights organizations documented the events in Ramlet Boulak, including the Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights which said in its report that the people they spoke to fear that the current intimidation campaign was part of the pressures exerted by the company owning the Nile City Towers in order to buy land which the residents live on and which is located directly behind the towers. On October 19, 2011, the Governor of Cairo issued resolution No. 8993 for the 2011 on the temporary takeover of the land that has the Nile Towers squatter settlements but it was not published in the Official Gazette until June 20, 2012. See the report of the initiative about the incident: http://www.eipr.org/pressrelease/2012/08/14/1466.


76 Article 195 of the constitution states that the Minister of Defence has to be appointed "from among the officers" of the armed forces, placing for the first time a constitutional barrier to appointing a civilian in the position.

to be keen on delineating red lines that it won't allow civilians to transgress. Most of its effort, however, went towards regaining internal cohesion and re-building the image of the armed forces on the street to overcome the crisis of trust that was caused during their 18 months in power.

Thus the MB succeeded, during the first months of their reign, in using the mass momentum to change their relative position in the new power alliance, so that they were no longer the weaker party. They secured for themselves a space to manoeuvre by forcing the military and the police to move back. The MB had the opportunity to push toward changing the repressive structure of the state. The bureaucracy, along with influential parties in the army and the police, seemed ready to cooperate with them, accepting, within reasonable limits, the idea of a civilian president.78 The MB started moving with confidence in state institutions, appointing Major General Khaled Tharwat as director of Homeland Security79 at the ministry of Interior. The appointment of Tharwat, previously responsible for monitoring civil society and political parties as the former head of the internal activity unit of the SSIS, was another indicator of the orientation of the new alliance. MB interest appeared to be focused on the Homeland Security department in particular, considering it an information tool and useful for political control. The MB tried, after Morsi won the presidency, to cancel the affiliation of the department to the Minister of Interior, instead making it subject to the presidency or the prime minister, but that drew much resistance, so the sector remained affiliated with the Ministry of Interior. Secrecy still surrounded its work, with no law regulating it, and its structure is not public like the other sectors of the ministry on its official website.80

78 Interview with Aly Al-Reggal.
80 Interview with Karim Ennarah.
5) The Collapse of Power Alliances

Four months into President Morsi's term, MB stability in power seemed to be taken for granted. The new president picked the Ministers of Interior and Defense and the Directors of General Intelligence and Military Intelligence. The national security sector and state institutions appeared, with few exceptions, to accept MB rule and were willing to negotiate with them from this standpoint. However, the Supplementary Constitutional Declaration issued by President Morsi in November 2012, and the subsequent political escalation that led to the Ittihadiya events, caused a large crack in the power alliance. The MB did not deal with it well, unlike the military and the police, and the alliance began a process of erosion, eventually culminating in its dissolution in June 2013.

**Repeating Mistakes: The Path of Stubbornness and False Bets**

The neoliberal signs for the MB project appeared clear in the "Nahda Project", on which president Morsi campaigned for office, and it materialised in a major way during his first weeks in the presidential palace. There was a deepening of the relationship between the presidency and certain business leaders, and renewed efforts to get an IMF loan, coupled with government austerity measures. In parallel to this, labour protests multiplied in the second half of 2012, deepening the MB need to contain them and pass the policies required for the loan. Beginning in October, political protests reappeared on the Friday of Accountability, 100 days into Morsi's presidency. They took a sharp turn in mid-November with the commemoration of the anniversary of Mohamed Mahmoud, in parallel with a rising sentiment among the new rulers of their mastery over the reins of power.

In the face of these developments, President Morsi issued a constitutional declaration on 22 November 2012 describing the presidency as "revolutionary" and immunising presidential decrees against appeal. The declaration also immunised the Shura Council (the interim legislating body) and the Constituent Assembly of the Constitution (the formation of which the opposition had objected to) and appointed Chancellor Talaat Abdallah as the new Prosecutor General in place of Chancellor Abdel Meguid Mahmoud, among other decisions. These decisions provoked the opposition, which called for repeated protests in Tahrir Square. The president did not respond to opposition demands to reconsider the declaration. The protesters then marched to Ittihadiya Palace on 4 December 2012 and the police forces found

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81 President Mohamed Morsi issued a constitutional declaration of six articles on November 22, 2012. At the same time, he dismissed the Prosecutor General and monopolised the appointment of a replacement, immunised the Constituent Assembly and the Shura Council against judicial rulings, and immunised his previous and subsequent decisions against court rulings. The decision was welcomed widely among the ranks of the MB, who came out in front of the High Court to support the decision, while the revolutionary forces and the constitutional opposition rejected the declaration. They protested against him in an escalating manner in Tahrir Square for ten days, then the protesters marched towards the presidential palace in Heliopolis. There, the police forces withdrew after limited clashes, and the MB and Islamist leadership called for a "general alert" to defend the legitimacy of the president and the presidential palace. The MB protesters arrived to the perimeter Ittihadiya Palace, assaulted opposition protesters and broke up their sit-in by force. The revolutionary forces and the opposition fell apart and clashes occurred between Islamists and the opposition that stretched from the afternoon of December 2 until the dawn of the following day, killing more than a dozen people from both sides.
themselves requested to suppress political dissenters for the first time since President Morsi assumed office.

The confrontations did not last long, as the police withdrew after using limited violence in the face of the protesters. The decision to withdraw showed the power of the Taifa culture. The officers, who had opened fire on protesters near their ministry, killing some of them, just days previously on the anniversary of the clashed in Mohamed Mahmoud Street, were keener to defend the ministry than the presidential palace. Defending the ministry means defending the prestige of the Taifa through which they are seeking to extend their sovereignty, while defending the palace puts them in the line of fire on behalf of their opponents in the MB. Regardless of who took the decision to withdraw (whether it was the Minister of Interior, as the prevailing narrative goes, or junior officers, as some say), the end result was that entering into political confrontations seemed an element of threat to the police's alliance with the new rulers.

In the face of the police withdrawal, the MB resorted to invoking its members to "defend the president", leading to a confrontation 5 December during which victims fell dead from both the MB and opposition protesters. There were also frequent stories that police members were involved in detaining and torturing dissidents in partnership with the Islamists who participated in breaking up the sit-in and repressing the demonstrators. As social tension increased, the president issued a decree abolishing some of the articles of his earlier constitutional declaration. However, the relationship between the president and the political opposition and revolutionary groups suffered a fracture. This prevented the president from working with them to manage the relationships with state institutions.

The events of Ittihadiya were a defining point in preventing the completion of the new alliance of power. It was followed by different arrangement of the Taifas sharing power (the MB, the army and the police). For the MB, this led to their separation from the "revolutionary street" which saw the MB as having transformed into a repressive power that distanced itself from the street. This hurt their ability to win over new supporters from outside the Islamist movement. Faced with a need for "mass mobilization", considering that they were the popular ally in power, the MB decided to rely on an Islamic coalition and to dispense with the "symbolic" participation of secular forces after they lost their support in the protests. This was clearly shown by the cabinet changes subsequent to the referendum on the constitution, from which secular forces were practically absent, relative to the wide participation of the MB and Salafi beside their alliance partners from the military and the police.

82 Interview with Colonel Dr. Mohamed Mahfouz, who said that, "The minister was implicated before in bloody confrontations and he did not resist the rule of the MB, but was cooperative with them. But the broad base of the officers who felt the pressure of the bloody confrontations with citizens refused to endure any more of the regime's mistakes and its political battles in the face of the masses. Opposition within the ministry to the directives of the leadership is what led the leadership to failure in the implementation of the orders of confrontation." This view is reinforced by what a MB leader said in a previous interview with the researcher, indicating that the Minister of the Interior showed great cooperation with the MB after the incident of the soldiers being killed in Ramadan, and that he informed the president,"there is a plot to attack him at the funeral and advised him not to go." This information was confirmed to the president from other entities, and because of them he refrained from attending the funeral and then dismissed some security leadership.

83 See, for example, the testimonials of activists Ola Shahba and Lena Mogaha about the events in their appearance with anchor man Yousri Fouda. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=AXsfirC0uLI
For the police, the repercussions of the Ittihadiya events led to the dissolution of its alliance with the MB, starting with the dismissal of the Interior Minister, Major General Ahmed Gamal El-Din and the appointment of Major General Mohamed Ibrahim (less popular amongst "the Taifa", and more willing to appease those in power) in his place. The relationship was also damaged by the return of sometimes violent political protests and the increasing need for the police to deal with them. The new minister seemed more cooperative with the president than what the majority of the police Taifa would accept, who responded to him at first. The role of Homeland Security was bolstered in a significant way as cases of kidnapping and killing of opposition activists took place (as in the case of Mohamed Christie). The police received the support of the political leadership for its repressive practices, shown by the reference of more than one thousand protesters to trial and the demand for the execution of some of them by members of the prosecution appointed during the tenure of Chancellor Talaat Abdallah. The government also continues to provide financial support to the ministry to buy arms for its members and for tools to break up demonstrations. After the large scale assault by the police on protesters in Port Said in January 2013, the president declared his support for the police forces that obey his command, and imposed a curfew on the cities of the Canal for a month to stop the escalating protests. The coy talk about reforming the police ceased completely and the minister defended the absence of reform by declaring that "there is not time for reform" in the light of successive confrontations. The restoration of security, rather than the reformation of security, became the rhetoric that served the interests of the partners in power. An Islamist member of parliament (and former police officer) stated that the restoration of security is a priority because "the absence of security represents the main nail in the political coffin of president Morsi."

With the escalating political protests, rebellion spread amongst the ranks of the police, many of whom stated their objection to the great rapprochement between the minister and the MB. Their protests started taking a more radical turn with the deaths among police ranks in terrorist attacks. The minister was accused of collaboration with the president who "released the murderers" as part of the pardons he issued after he assumed office. The protest movement expanded to include the police who refused to protect the MB headquarters from attacks by protestors and the Baltyagiya. It included strikes in 27 governorates by officers demanding not to be directed by the police toward political confrontations. The officers also demanded improved work conditions, a new law that provided better armaments and legal

84 Interviews with Col. Dr. Mahmoud Mahfouz and researchers Karim Ennarah, Aly Al-Reggal and Mahmoud Belal.
85 Interview with Karim Ennarah.
87 Interview with Mahmoud Belal.
88 See, for example, Colonel Doctor Mohamed Mahfouz, ‘The Egyptian Security Sector in 2013’, p. 7.
89 President Morsi’s speech on 27 January 2013. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g7U2oZ1WL5w
91 Interview with Colonel Dr. Mohamed Mahfouz. This was the idea of junior officers, however most releases happened during the ruling of the Military Council because of its quest to build a new alliance with the Islamists. For more on the pardon decision, see Hossam Bahgat, ‘Who Let the Jihadis Out?’ Mada Masr, 16-02-2014, http://www.madamasr.com/content/who-let-jihadis-out.
cover for the officers in face of protesters. This situation led the general prosecution to ask citizens to exercise their right to judicial arrest, as provided in Article 37 of the law of criminal procedures, a turn which drew concerned reactions from the opposition and some state institutions.

Face with these pressures, the minister's power to control the ministry and to serve the project of the rulers diminished. President Morsi tried to contain the anger during his visit to the leadership of Central Security Forces in mid-March when he talked about the "police being at the heart of the revolution". The minister tried to contain the Taifa again by conducting elections for officers and police members clubs in April. However, the sentiment of the majority was sufficient, along with media and popular support, to stop the creation of a new alliance with the MB. The evolution of the military's position prevented reconciliation between the two Taifas until president Morsi was removed from power in 3 July 2013.

The confrontations opened to the army a window of opportunity to reclaim its political standing. The Minister of Defense called the conflicting parties (the president and the opposition forces) to a "community dialogue" in a dinner banquet hosted by the armed forces. Despite the Minister of Defense withdrawing the invitation upon the request of the presidency, it reflected a shift in the behaviour of the military establishment. It appeared ready to re-expand into the political arena, propelled by an interest in preserving its institutional interest and by concern for the disintegration of the state with the rising severity of the conflict.

The repressive police intervention in the Port Said events in January 2013 drove the army to interfere and stop "the authority's indulgence in killing." During those events, the army regained the upper hand on the police, on whom the Morsi regime increasingly relied. The army was also regaining popular standing as popular discontent toward Morsi’s regime grew just as the Minister of Defense’s star was rising. The army was not seeking to be in the forefront of the political scene, but was interested in sharing the throne with the president and in ensuring the stability of the state against the rising risks posed by social division. On successive occasions, the army continued to push for consensus between political parties, offering to play a role in creating this consensus. This was met with stubborn refusal from the MB which refused to respond to the army's demands and refused to compromise with political opponents. They were interested in keeping the army outside the political arena, relying on the solid conviction of their ability, supported by their Islamist allies, to control the street, which no one could mobilise but them.

By the second half of April 2013, the political horizon seemed blocked. The MB used the same state tools that President Mubarak had used, the opposition refused to sit with them, and

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political violence moved from the centre to the periphery very quickly. Fears grew about the limits of the president and his team's professionalism in management, in a way that threatened strategic interests. This was seen in the presidential meeting with opposition forces to discuss the water crisis, and in the mass conference to support Syria, attendance to which was restricted to MB and Salafi leaders. It was also seen in the direction of antagonistic rhetoric toward the opposition, the choices of governors and the problems that that raised, and in the growing stubbornness which closed political horizons (with the president’s insistence on not demanding the Prosecutor General’s resignation and on refusing to dismiss the government). The resistance of state institutions to MB rule widened and affected the basic services provided to the citizens. There was increasing divergence between the MB and "sovereign" institutions, with the latter sensing the openness of the MB to other regional movements, and the president reigning in communications except for within closed circles to MB members."

The growing divergence between the army and the MB helped the police to maintain its independent position from the MB. The calls for protests on 30 June 2013 opened new horizons for change, through which it would be possible to get rid of the MB partner. The army announced its "grace period" to political forces to reach an agreement amongst themselves, and the Police Officers Club announced that it is not going to secure any political party headquarters and would not thwart peaceful protests. Thus, "the chants sounded during the meeting calling for the end of the rule of the Supreme Guide" so the 30 June protests happened with the police and the MB exchanging the positions that they held on 25 January 2011. The police came out on the side of the revolutionary masses to demand the overthrow of the MB rule.

6) After 30 June: History Marches in One Direction

Just as the alliances formed after the 25 January revolution did not arrive overnight, so the 30 June alliances need some time before formation will be complete. At first, the 30 June alliance included extremely diverse groups, ranging from the police, to secular groups and the army. The police wanted to regain their "prestige", to take revenge, and to improve their image. Based on wide mass protests, the secular groups sought to displace from power the MB, who had refused to meet with them, while still preserving a democratic path. As for the army, it aimed first to preserve the state, then to secure the economic and political interests of the military institution, and then to ensure freedom of action for its members. With the president ignoring the demands of the protestors to hold early presidential elections, the army intervened on 3 July, toppling President Morsi and arresting many of the MB leadership. Since that moment, the influence of civilian forces in the alliance started to gradually weaken.

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95 Mahmoud Belal points out that a lot of the practices that violate the law, and that the prosecution falls for now, were rooted at the time when the MB were in power, from interrogating detainees in unlawful detention locations to accusing the protesters of killing their colleagues. Interview with Mahmoud Belal.

96 Interview with Aly Al-Reggal.

During the month after the removal of President Morsi, the MB adopted an inflammatory sectarian rhetoric during their sit-ins in Rabaa and Nahda squares in Cairo. There was also a recurrent rumour about the existence of division within the army. This rumour was spread with the intention of invoking a feeling of injustice and confrontation that could help postpone internal criticism and preserve the organizational cohesion for the group. This situation led to the erosion of common grounds, the rise of the extreme rhetoric on both sides, and hence to the changed balance of power in the 30 June alliance in favour of security forces. This was seen in the call of the Minister of Defense to the people to "delegate him to confront potential terrorism", and then by the break-up of the sit-ins of Rabaa and Nahda with levels of violence unprecedented in modern Egyptian history.

The final months of 2013 and the first quarter of 2014 witnessed the creation of a new/old alliance for power. Its biases are aligned to the logic of the market, which has not changed, and its main parties are the military establishment and the police establishment. The space that the MB occupied in the alliance is still partially empty, filled partly by the military, especially with the rising popularity of Field Marshal Abdel Fatah Al-Sisi. This has created fascist circumstances characterised by love for the state, fear of opposition and dissidents, the rise of conservatism on all economic, social and religious planes, and the wide societal condemnation of labour protests.

Under this new alliance, constitutional and legal measures were taken to securitize the society and impose military authority. A state of emergency was declared for three months and then the law regulating/criminalizing protest was passed amid extensive objections from the opposition. The Taifa of the army maintained its independence and its constitutional privileges, and it added to them with constitutional text that guarantees it "autonomous rule". The choice of the Minister of Defense must happen with the agreement of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces and the minister is immune from dismissal for two presidential terms.

As for the Taifa of the police, it secured itself against rebellion with a constitutional provision that forbids union organization for the police, and it preserved the independence of the Taifa by reducing all forms of monitoring from outside. During the same period, repressive measures were expanded at unprecedented speed. 3248 protesters were killed in the period up to the end of January 2014 (according to the census of the website wiki thawra)\textsuperscript{98}, tens of thousands were arrested and aggressive verdicts were sentenced against protesters and violators of the anti-demonstrations law.

However, all these indicators don't show that Egypt has gone back to what it was before the revolution. History marches in one direction. The police who launched their repression, antagonizing and violating the masses, with its organizational structure founded on administrative oppression that completely subjected junior officers to their seniors, has changed in two main ways. The first is the emergence of "the masses" as a political actor capable of confrontation. Its "violation" is no longer as simple as it was before and the police, especially junior officers who endured 2011's "insult", do not want to repeat the experience.

\textsuperscript{98} WikiThawra, \url{http://wikithawra.wordpress.com/}
Their ability to oppress is thus tied with the need for popular support. This support is momentarily provided by the fascist circumstances, but is not viable in the long run. Second, the police's ability to re-institute societal oppression has shrunk significantly. In the 1990s, it waged alone "the war on terror", but today, the masses participated in ousting the MB from power in a way that has created a relationship of collaboration and not supremacy.

Junior officers depend on the "benefits" that they get from the citizens as a major part of their income, however, and their current inability to collect it the same way puts the continued cohesion of the police Taifa in doubt. Junior officers will find themselves between the hammer and the anvil: they are under economic pressures but they can't collect benefits from the citizens in a way they are used to; and an internal rift in the Interior Ministry is expected to increase with the changing balances of power produced by the law promoting warrant officers to the rank of honorary officer. This internal rift is postponed for two main reasons: first, financial support from the Gulf provides the liquidity that enables the economic question to be temporarily postponed; second, the war on terror justifies the postponement of all the professional and economic questions in the ministry because of the constant threat to the lives of individuals.

However, the postponement will not last long. Political and economic circumstances may soon impose themselves to open a new window for reforming the police force. Maintaining the stability of the new political system (with the presidential and parliamentary elections) will eventually require talk about reconciliation, possibly leading to a decline in rhetoric about the war on terror. The deteriorating economic conditions may be blamed on the inability of the regime, with its current power alliances, to make structural changes in the economic and social infrastructure. This might lead to the disintegration of the economic structure that supports the fascist order.

If the opportunity for a "revolutionary change" has passed, and is not expected to return in the near future, several windows for partial reforms will open in the coming months. Some have to do with the right of union organization for police officers, an issue that may be put forward after the completion of the electoral processes (presidency and parliament) in the light of the expanding wave of social protests led by independent unions. The leaders might be forced, with the de facto power that they have, to remove constitutional obstacles from their path. The expected turbulence might push inside the Interior Ministry to re-introduce the case for union organization. The spread of human rights violations and the decline of fascist circumstances might also contribute to an increase in pressure to develop mechanisms for protecting human rights from police violations. Lastly, "national reconciliation" negotiations, expected after the elections, might open the door for some transitional justice procedures and the reformation of police and judicial institutions.

These partial openings for reform will return the ball to the field of civilian political actors and human rights activists, testing once more their ability to seize their opportunities. These entities will need to take the initiative, review the reforms that they had proposed in the original revolutionary circumstances, and redevelop them in light of Egypt’s current political reality.