

Inter-Cultural Limbo: The Dilemma of Western Education in Traditional Societies: Egypt as a Case-Study

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1. Introduction

The sense of belonging is a highly subjective perception. In traditional societies that are inherently conservative, cultural and religious the perception of the self becomes inherently bound to the holistic context of the society. From the moment you are born you slowly submerge in a world where traditions, culture and the divinity of religion make up almost every aspect of ones daily life whether in public or in private. Slowly the society becomes a collective of individuals who work to safeguard traditions, culture and religious heritage. This holistic bond is, however, broken once a culture of individualism enshrined in the ideals of freedom and rights is instilled in the education and thus value system of those growing up in a traditional society. Meanwhile, the widening cultural gap between East and West, renders the clash of civilizations - of cultures - more evident. What about those who lie at the so-called fault-line of this “clash”? What is responsible for creating a generation of individuals who tend to break away from the normative culture incumbent within one society? The concepts of ”culture, “civilization”, “alienation” and “belonging” have for long been taken for granted, especially in the field of political science. More importantly, these concepts are plagued with their highly relative and subjective essence. Little has been done and is available in literature to better understand how those so-called civilizations will emerge and form in the future. Will they be between nation states or will they go beyond borders and defy the very concept of the state in international politics in the near future? What determines peoples culture and how within one society cultural perceptions and affiliations can diverge to the extent that they would create a clash of civilizations not only between nations but also within one nation. Taking the case of Egypt amidst the Arab Spring revolts, this article aims to examine the current cultural and political divisions currently witnessed within the Egyptian society. This is done with respect to Western education analysing whether it has been the main reason for this division. The first part of this paper will examine the overall context in Egypt and the current struggle between the

various strata of the society after the “Arab Spring” - instigated by poverty, lack of education and a centralized system that has allowed for religious charity organisation to provide services for the poor in its absence. With Egypt's revolution being labelled by some as the “Facebook Revolution”, the second part will shed a light on the existing educational system and show the result of a survey conducted on a sample of Egyptian Facebook users examining the correlation between the type of education received and its effect on cultural perception and sense of belonging. This will perhaps open the door for more future studies that analyse a possible link between political change and education, which may instil norms and values that uphold the Western principles of freedom and democracy.

2. The “Arab Spring” and the Egyptian Socio-Economic Context

What was hoped to be a revolt for freedom and a so-called “Arab Spring” soon ended up in a struggle between the rise of Islamism and the call for liberty and democracy. The series of revolutions that swept the region were initially started by the youth and social networking activists who called for the protests and mobilised people online - mainly on Facebook and Twitter - under the slogan of “bread, freedom and social justice”. Yet, the supposed democratic process in the post-revolution era and the rise of political Islam to power now raises doubts that the calls for democracy and freedom would truly find the ground to foster. Since the Arab Spring Revolution, Egypt witnesses the rise of political Islam to power and with it a visible division in peoples culture and political orientation, which is noticeably affecting the sense of belonging of a wide spectrum of people as the state is slowly moving towards Islamization under the majority rule of the Muslim Brothers. From those “classified” as liberal/Western to those falling under the category of conservative Islam, what Egypt is witnessing today is a division that is not based on religion per se, but rather on culture, which is slowly diverging to create a sort of clash of civilizations within one nation. Hence, the theory of the clash of civilization is becoming more evident across the region on the peoples level rather than on the state level, where the variation in cultural perception is alienating and defining peoples sense of belonging. The Egyptian case allows us to study the situation of those lying at the fault-line of this clash and more perplexingly the cause of this division within the society. Examining whether education - particularly Western education - affected peoples cultural perception and sense of belonging, this paper sheds light on the overall Egyptian context in terms

of poverty levels and the lack of education among the poor strata of the society that it accompanied and caused the current separation and division in the normative cultural perception of people.

2.1. Egypts Poverty Profile

Egypt has long been suffering from soaring poverty rates that stood in the way of development measures and strategies, yet one of the main reasons that drove the Egyptian masses to a breaking point on January 25, 2011. Whereas the 2009 Arab Human Development Report indicates that poverty in Egypt rates as high as 41%¹, recent statistics released by Egypts Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics confirm that poverty levels increased to “51.4 percent in rural Upper Egypt from 43.7 percent in 2008-2009, and 29.5 percent in urban Upper Egypt from 21.7 percent in 2008-2009” (quoted in Egypt Independent 2012). The statistics furthermore confirmed that “Egypts poverty increased to encompass 25.2 percent of the population in 2010-2011 as compared to 21.6 percent in 2008-2009” (quoted in Egypt Independent 2012). The Poverty Assessment Report in Egypt in mid-2007 indicates that poverty in Egypt has been primarily seen as a rural problem that has slowly moved to the capital city of Cairo with Rural Upper Egypt being the most deprived (43.7% of its residents are income poor) (quoted in Egypt Independent 2012). At the same time, poverty in Egypt can be characterized as being multidimensional and inter-generational. It is a multi-faceted condition that is reflected in all aspects of life exacerbated by corruption, lack of political freedom and democracy and poor access to all available resources, favourism and nepotism. For a long time and until the January 25 Revolution, ordinary Egyptians showed a complete lack of interest in understanding their social and economic rights despite the staggering figures stipulated above. The denial of the most basic social and economic rights such as the right to health, shelter and a sustainable life seemed to over 40% of all Egyptians rather luxurious rights (Egypts HDR 2010, 76-77). Most importantly, discrimination and social exclusion reinforced the deteriorating condition of the poor contributing to an inescapable hereditary chain making poverty inter-generational. Unemployment and the difficulty to find work have been seen as a major source of frustration among the poor. According to the 2010 Human Development Report, “[a]t least 90% of the unemployed are aged less than 30 years” (Egypts HDR 2010, p. 6). A major challenge that faced the Egyptian Government has been “not only creating more jobs, but also about creating

¹According to UN estimates absolute poverty rates are on the rise, where “[b]etween 2000 and 2005 the absolute poverty rate rose to 19.6 percent from 16.7 percent of the population.”

better jobs, since the informal economy currently represents the main source of employment for new labour market entrants” (Egypt’s HDR 2010, 7). In fact, “[t]he 2006 Census data indicates that the total number of workers in the informal sector increased to 7.9 million, up from 5 million in 1996” (Egypt’s HDR 2010, 7). At the same time, such frustrations have led a large number of youth suffering from poverty to resort to religion as means to help them to better “cope” and “accept” their condition of poverty, deprivation and societal marginalization. Gender disparity remains to be a problem in Egypt over the past decades especially when it comes to the education and employment of women. The “twin problems of school dropouts and non-enrolment continue as a phenomenon that is mostly peculiar to poor girls with Upper Egypt being the most disadvantaged region” (Egypt’s HDR 2010, 6). A large percentage of poor women thus end up working as servants or cooks with 70% of the servants getting paid on a daily basis and 60% working in houses three times/week and in more than one house. Those women end up being vulnerable to abuse and lack a social umbrella. Young women in Egypt usually face the most difficult school to work transition. In fact, “Egypt has one of the lowest female labour participation rates in the world at 18.5%” (Egypt’s HDR 2010, 7).

2.2. Egypt’s Culture of Poverty

The attitude of “us” versus “them” and the materialization of the concept of “the others” is an overwhelming and ensuing attitude among Egypt’s poor, especially in the Metropolitan region of Egypt and slum areas. Egypt has been suffering from a classist society -with an ever-widening gap between the rich and the poor. Today, this gap led to an almost disappearing middle class (Mansour 2008). Research shows that the attitude of the poor is rather ruled by the so-called “culture of poverty.” This term was first coined by anthropologist Oscar Lewis in 1959 and Daniel Patrick Moynihan introduced this idea to the public in a 1965 report. In fact, scholars have for long believed that the life of the poor is ruled by a certain culture that further exacerbated the problem in an attempt to answer the most dominant question relating to the phenomenon of poverty, namely “why the poor are poor?” In Egypt, the situation is no different. The poor are said to have their own culture and perception of life. While no economic or political policy has proven to be more able to address the legal and social context within which such a phenomenon was created and aggravated, the 2011 Egyptian Revolution that came to call for “reform, freedom and social justice” but also human dignity and equality came to bridge the gap of culture and unify Egyptians regardless of

social class or background around the same goal: Overthrowing a 30-year-old regime that failed to alleviate poverty, instilled corruption and denied the political, economic and social rights of the Egyptian people.

3. Egypt's Educational System

During the first half of the 19th Century, a modern European-style education system by the Ottoman ruler Mohammed Ali (1805-1849) was introduced in Egypt and with it abandoning the dependence on family education. According to the Egyptian Constitution of 1971, education is a right guaranteed by the state with elementary education being compulsory and all phases of education being under the supervision of the state (art. 18). Art. 19 specified religious education as being a basic subject within the general educational curricula, whereas art. 20 stipulated education in state educational institutions as being free in all phases. Yet, "Egyptian education focuses on some specific issues, namely: National unity; preservation of national, religious and cultural identity and social coherence; enhancement of the sense of loyalty and of belonging; implanting faith and pride in religion as well as respect for other faiths" (IMPACT-SE, Egypt Report 2004, 2). The Egyptian school educational system is divided between state and religious education with the latter being sponsored by the Al-Azhar religious university.² There are private schools at all grade levels comprising two kinds of schooling: ordinary and language schools. These schools teach either ordinary or language courses that are sometimes co-administered by another non-Egyptian entity (such as the German and French schools) giving additional focus on Western educational methods and contents. The Muslim Brotherhood has its own privately funded schools as well.³ At the same time, it should be noted that Egyptian public schooling has been suffering, especially at least in the last 20 years, from what can be termed the "private lesson syndrome". As pointed out in the latest Chatham House Report, at a certain point demand has superseded the Governments

²Generally, the school system is made up of five main stages: pre-school education (hadana), primary education (ibtidai), preparatory education (adadi), secondary (thanawi) and tertiary/post-secondary education. "Compulsory basic education is comprised of six years of primary and three years of preparatory school."

³There were also various projects initiated by the Government sometimes in cooperation with private Egyptian or non-Egyptian bodies in order to improve certain aspects of the educational system. These are typically known as experimental school, most of which are language schools typically found in urban Egypt and are classified under private education.

available resources, which led to the quality of publicly provided education to deteriorate coupled with a rapid growth in hiring insufficiently qualified teachers. Moreover, today, many public schools are unable to accommodate the number of students being enrolled every year (also partly caused by the fact that the Government has not been engaged in building more schools to accommodate the increase in population) operating in shifts, especially in densely populated urban areas. Today, with Egypt having 32% of its population under the age of 15, the teacher - student ratio in public schools often stands at one to fifty coupled with persistent gender inequality (Loveluck 2012, 3-4).

4. Surveying Egyptian Facebook Users

While Egypt's Arab Spring Revolution has been called in the media the "Facebook Revolution", statistics show Egypt to be the only Arab country in the top 30 countries of those with the highest number of Facebook users with a sheer 3.6 million users in July 2010 compared to 783,440 users in July 2008, representing a yearly growth of around 121.4% and an increase of 357.2% in the two year period from 2008-2010 (Burcher 2011). The user community in Egypt particularly increased with the launching of the Arabic version of Facebook in March 2009. In fact, in the years prior to the outset of the revolution in Egypt, social networking and blogging websites, most notably Facebook have been the scene for political activism against the Mubarak regime and the ensuing corruption, social injustice, poverty and the vigorous repression of civil and political rights particularly the rights to freedom of expression and opinion. To examine the existence of a possible correlation between the type of education received by Egyptian youth and activists and their self-identification and belongingness within the Egyptian society a survey of a convenience sample (what is a convenience sample) of 62 Egyptian Facebook users was conducted, which includes those who ignited the first sparks of the revolution online. This will show whether the activists are reflective of the population of voters that contributed to the rise of political Islam in power. The correlations with the type of education received at the secondary level of school education Allows to analyse whether Western education has shaped or affected their understanding of the emblems of democracy, liberty and rights. The reasoning for focusing on this particular level of education is that it is determined by the prior levels of education in Egypt, namely it is rare for students coming from public education to switch to and be accepted in a private school and vice versa. Consequently, correlations with earlier levels of education, namely primary and secondary education, do not illustrate significant differences. It should be noted in this regard that choosing this particular small sample is meant to

measure the views of Facebook users and social networking activists that are said to have started the revolution in Egypt against the reality seen on the political arena today. As such, the views of this sample should not represent the majority of poor or illiterate that as indicated earlier, represent over 50% of the population. It may be safe to argue that those who started the revolution and stood in Tahrir Square for 18-day demanding the fall of the regime under the slogans of freedom, democracy, liberty and rights may have not been representative of the largest pool of the society.⁴

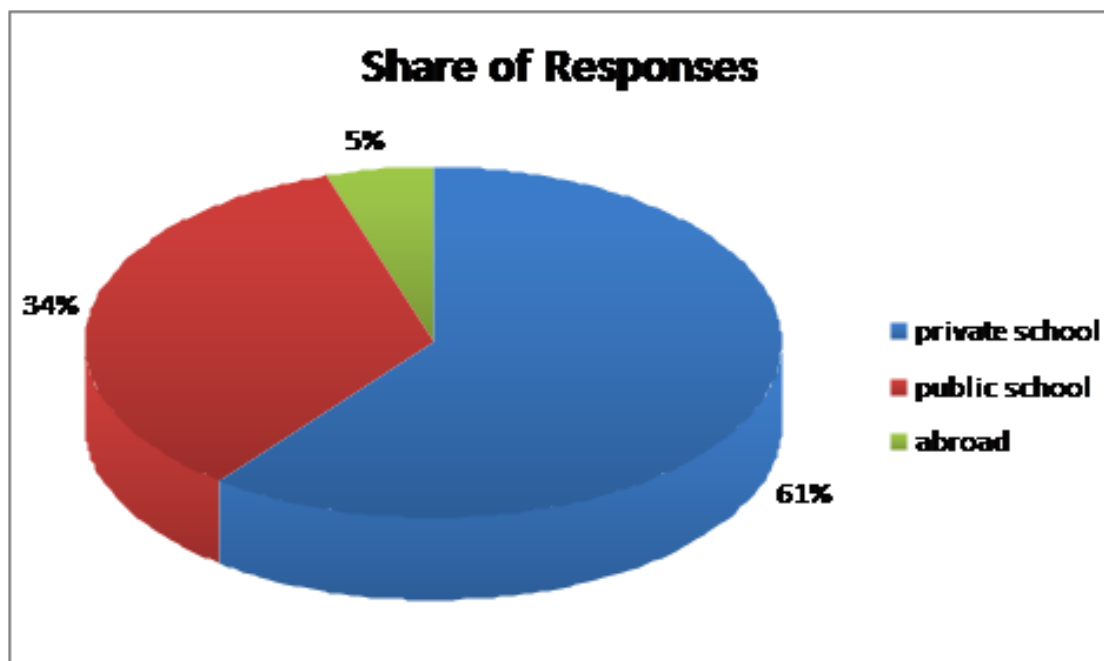


Figure 1:

Results show that 61% have received their secondary education at a private (foreign) school, whereas 34% at a public school and only 5% abroad, indicating that a majority of those using the

⁴It should be noted that the choice of schooling is, however, not random. It is heavily linked to the cultural background of the parents. More liberal/Westernised parents will send their children to a private school or abroad with higher probability than those who are more conservative and abide to the rules of Sharia. They will, in addition, convey their own beliefs to their children. Yet, this does not contradict our results. In contrast, it strengthens the correlation between differences in the educational background and the growing rift in society, since it implies, in fact, that with each generation the rift will widen.

Facebook as a social networking tool for activism may have received Western education.

Accordingly, the sample were given questions ranging from their perception of their own identity, their sense of belonging and their perception of the possible Islamization process of the state. Correlations between the type of education received and these questions are illustrated in the following.

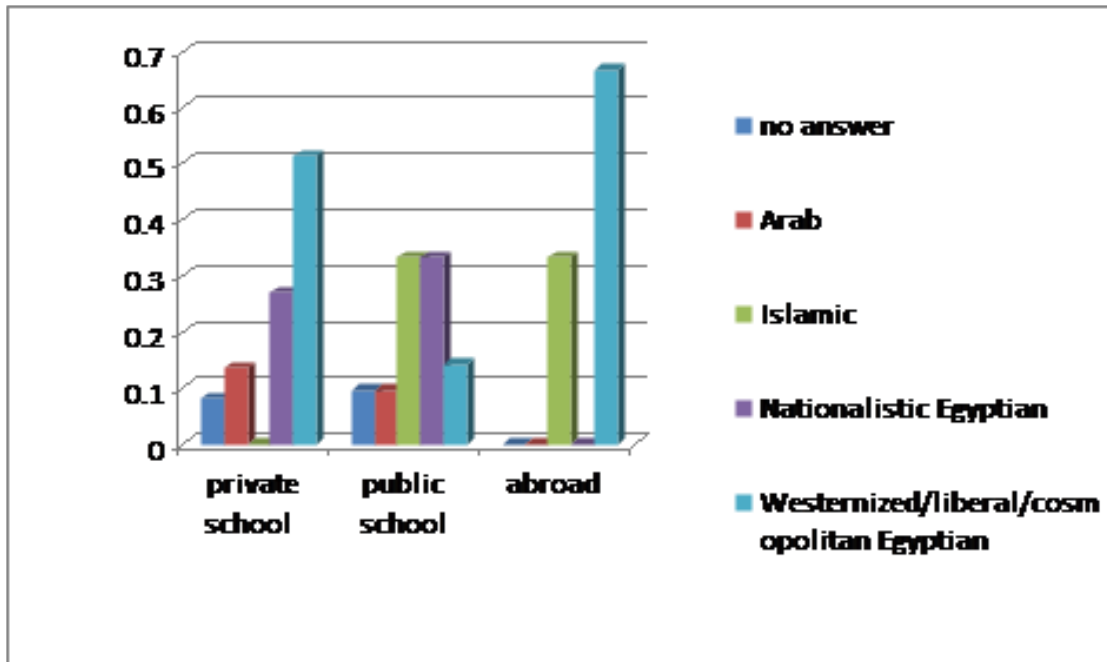


Figure 2:

Figure 2 shows the reply of the sample with respect to the type of education received when asked how they classify their own cultural identity. Those who received private (foreign) schooling perceive themselves to be mostly Westernised/liberal/cosmopolitan Egyptians, whereas the majority of those receiving public education perceive themselves more as being either Islamic or nationalistic Egyptians, suggesting a strong correlation between the type of education received and ones own cultural perception and identification.

When asked if they belong to the prevailing culture in Egypt, the majority of those who received private foreign education denied this, whereas the contrary seems to be the case with regards to those who have been educated in public school and interestingly those who were educated abroad.

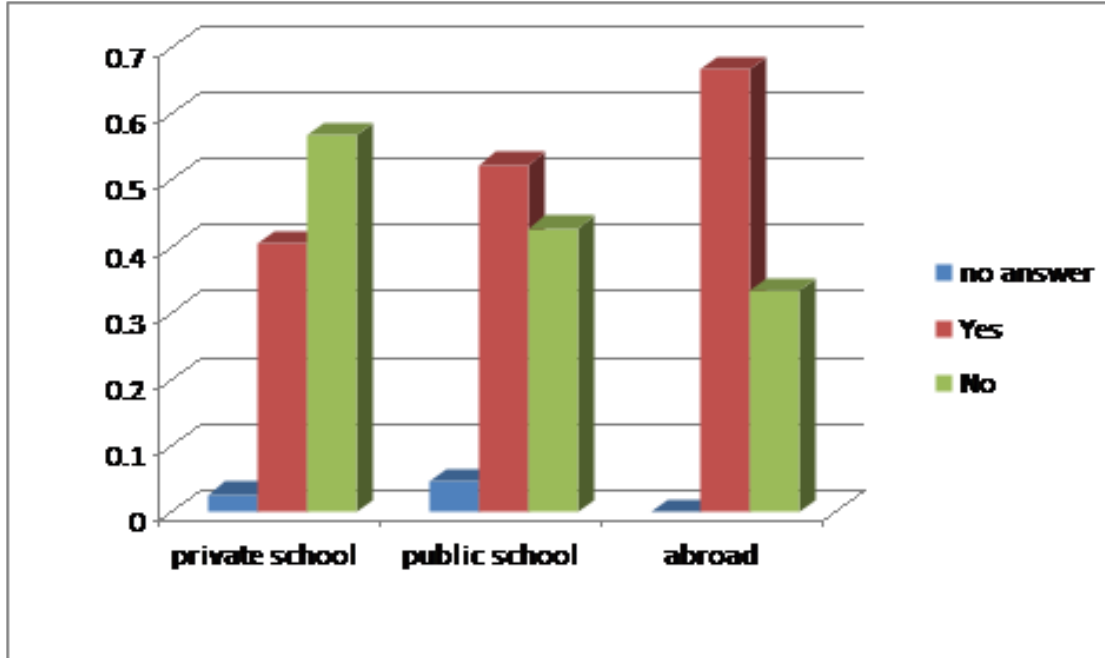


Figure 3:

Given that the survey does not specify the region by which “abroad” refers to, it is difficult to know whether this pool has received their education in Western countries and to what extent this may have affected their perception.⁵ In addition, the small sample size of those having received education abroad, does not allow for statistically significant inferences.

When asked if they agree to the Islamization of Egypt the results as depicted in figure 4 indicate that those of private schooling either refuse it or are totally against it and call for Egypt to remain a moderate country. Those of public schooling though have a majority that refuse it, yet is not completely against it (other opinions being statistically insignificant). Regarding their belief in human rights and gender equality the figures 5 and 6 illustrating that there is a large majority

⁵Examples of reasons given for not having a sense of belongingness to the prevailing culture range from the issue of the current possible Islamization process that the country is going through, to the lack of human rights and respect of women to the issue of discrimination against minorities, from which some selected examples are the following. For confidentiality reasons, any information regarding those surveyed have been omitted and their person is made anonymous. Detailed examples can be found in the appendix.

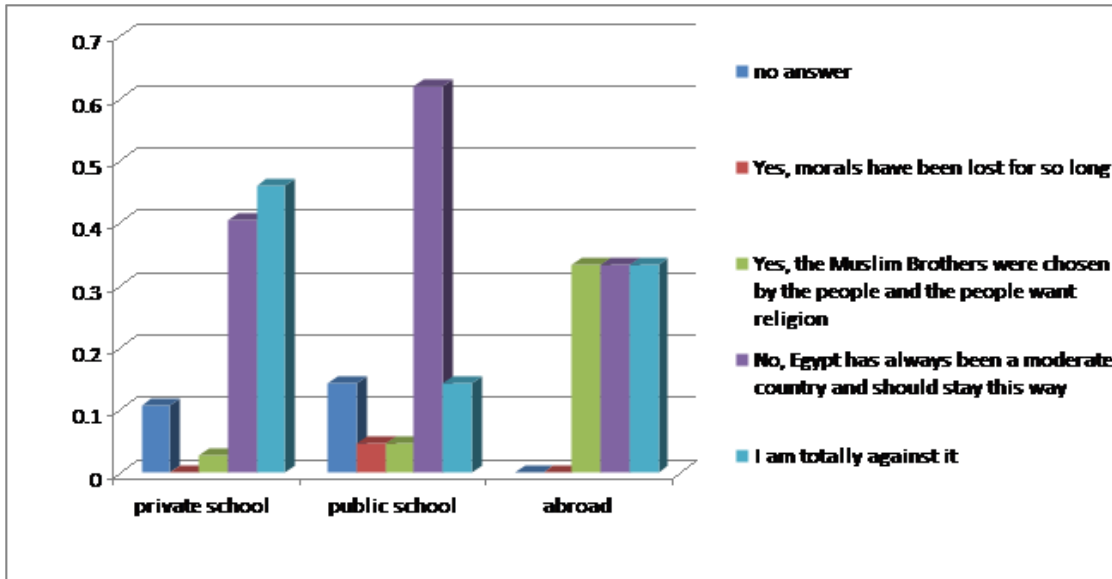


Figure 4:

among those who received public schooling in both questions that restrict human rights and gender equality within the realms of Islamic Sharia, which cannot be seen among those who received private schooling or were educated abroad.

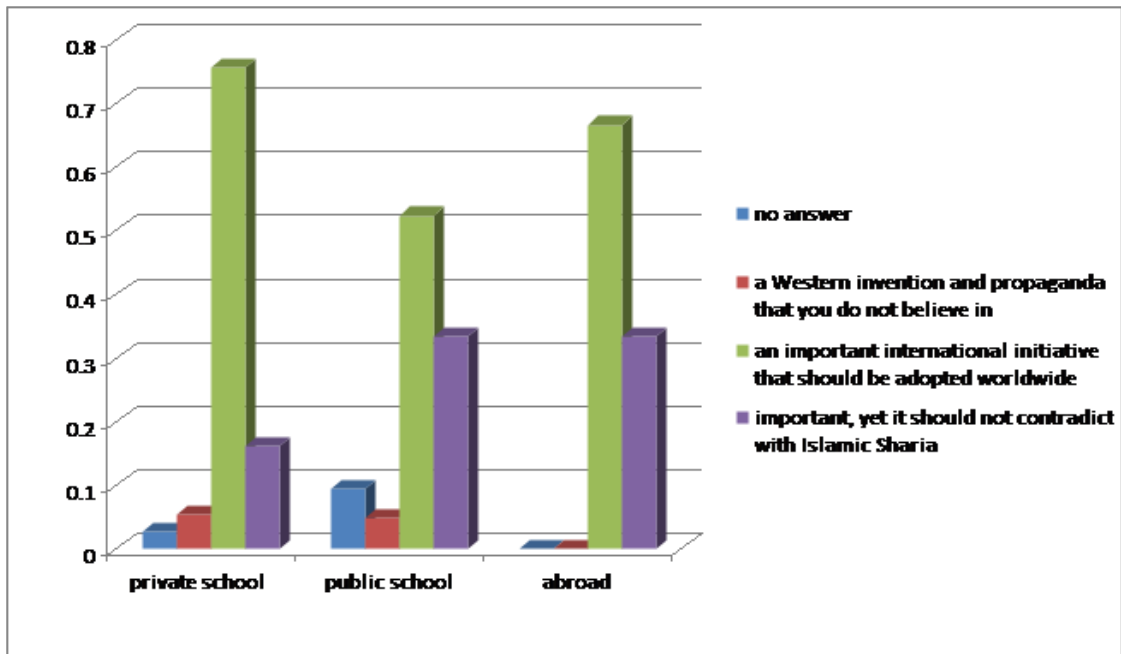


Figure 5:

5. A Simple Analytical Model

An analytical model will help us to illustrate and better understand the results we obtained previously. The dynamics of this model are based on individual decisions. It will thus describe the evolution of what has been termed *organic institutions*. In this model, we do not observe joint/collective actions such as during times of revolutions and social turn-over⁶ but transformations of the social framework are based on individual choices.(elaborate)

Assume for simplicity that a society is divided into three groups: conservatives, a-politicals, and liberals. Conservatives prefer a strict society, in which each individual adheres to the dictated social norms. A-politicals are simply not bothered, do not interfere with politics and bow to any decision though they generally prefer a less restrictive society. Liberals, on the contrary prefer to enjoy their liberty and to live in a society that places very few restrictions.

Each individual can freely choose to which group he prefers to belong. We can defined the

⁶For an example, refer to (Ile, 2012b).

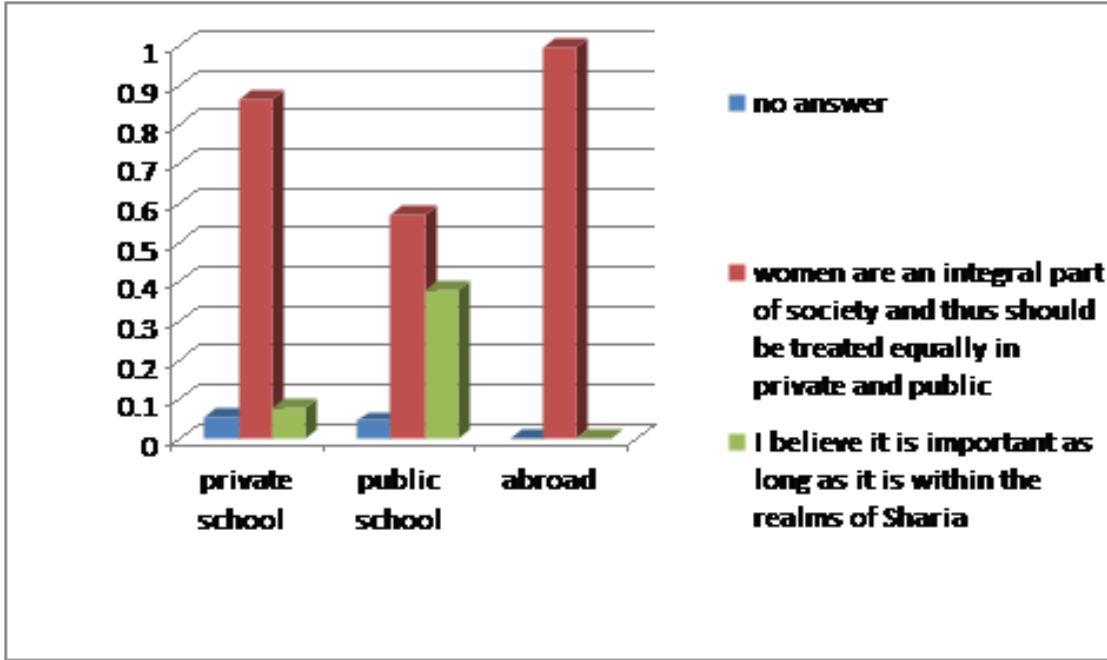


Figure 6:

frequency of conservatives by α , the frequency of a-politicals by β . Liberals make up the rest of the population and thus their frequency is simply given by $1 - \alpha - \beta$. In addition, let us assume that each individual is defined by an individual identity that represents an idiosyncratic preference for the level of conservatism of his society. Call this a_i (with the subscript defining the value for individual i) and let, for simplicity, a_i be uniformly distributed over the interval ranging from zero to one. Notice that because of the way, in which we will define the utility functions, an individual with a high value of a_i , i.e. a conservative identity, chooses to belong to the conservative group.⁷ Those with a low level of a_i and thus a preference for a society without strict conservative rules have a liberal identity and will choose to belong to this group. Given the share of conservatives α , the idiosyncratic level of conservatism in this group will range from 1 to $(1 - \alpha)$. Consequently, the idiosyncratic level of those, which are a-political goes from $(1 - \alpha)$ to $(1 - \alpha - \beta)$. Those who are

⁷Under the assumption that all parameters are positive, we obtain $\frac{\partial U_c}{\partial a_i} > 0$, $\frac{\partial U_{ap}}{\partial a_i} = 0$, and $\frac{\partial U_l}{\partial a_i} < 0$ from equations 3, 4, and 5.

liberal will have values below. We define the average level of conservatism in each group as group identity. Thus the group identity of conservatives equals a^α , those of a-politicals a^β , and those of liberals a^γ . Consequently, we can say that the groups' identities (and thus prevailing norms inside the group) are defined by

$$a^\alpha = \frac{1 + (1 - \alpha)}{2} \tag{1a}$$

$$a^\beta = \frac{(1 - \alpha) + (1 - \alpha - \beta)}{2} \tag{1b}$$

$$a^\gamma = \frac{(1 - \alpha - \beta) + 0}{2} \tag{1c}$$

Since a-politicals do not interfere in the political and social process that defines the prevailing norms, they do not influence the level of conservatism in the society. Conservatives might have very strong political power. As such, only very few individuals might be able to dictate the society's norms. We can alternatively assume that this group has only partly power over the norms prevailing in a society, since these norms are additionally shaped by the ideals of liberal thought. Therefore assume that the relative strength of these groups in determining the society's level of conservatism is given by a value ρ that is exogenously determined and ranges from zero to one half.⁸ The prevailing level of conservatism \bar{a} in the society and hence its norm can then be written as

$$\bar{a} = (1 - \rho)a^\alpha + \rho a^\gamma \tag{2}$$

A conservative prefers that his personal identity is close to the ideal given by $a_i = 1$. In other words, the more conservative this individual is, the higher is his personal utility. We can express this simply by πa_i , with π being a positive constant. Yet, a conservative dislikes to interact with liberals, especially when they are very liberal and divert fundamentally from the prevailing norm. Let this *disutility* be expressed by $\sigma(\bar{a} - a_j)$, with σ being again a positive constant and a_j the level of conservatism of a liberal j he encounters. In addition, assume that conservatives jointly

⁸This value could be made endogenous by assuming that its value depends on the relative size of both factions. If all individuals are conservative then it equals zero, if all are a-political it is one half, and if all are liberal it is equal to one. In this case, we can write $\rho = 1 - (\alpha + 0.5\beta)$. This will change some of the dynamics, but not the overall results. For reasons of simplicity, we will keep to the simpler version.

punish (by legal, political or social means) liberals at an individual cost and for simplicity, let this be $c(1 - \alpha)$.⁹ Hence, the more numerous conservatives are the lower the individual cost. Putting all together, the utility function of a conservative is

$$U_c = \pi a_i - \sigma(\bar{a} - a_j) - c(1 - \alpha), \quad \text{if } j \text{ is liberal} \quad (3a)$$

$$U_c = \pi a_i - c(1 - \alpha), \quad \text{otherwise} \quad (3b)$$

A-politicals are not involved in politics. They evaluate their utility with respect to the social norm, and prefer that to be relatively liberal with respect to their group identity. This can be expressed as the difference between the idiosyncratic level of conservatism and the prevailing norm. Since the group identity equals a^β , we can write the utility function of an a-political as

$$U_a = \phi(a^\beta - \bar{a}) \quad (4)$$

with ϕ also being a positive exogenous constant.¹⁰

Liberals want and do enjoy their liberty, but are punished by conservatives and also dislike to live in a restrictive society. Let the individual gain from acting out his freedom be given by v , and assume that the more they are liberal the more they draw a utility from exercising it, so $v(1 - a_i)$. Yet, the more conservatives are around, the more difficult this action would be and whenever a conservative is around he is deprived of that action. For simplicity, let his cost from being punished be again c (the same value that we have in the utility function of a conservative).¹¹ Thus we have the utility function of a liberal

$$U_l = -c, \quad \text{if } i \text{ encounters a conservative} \quad (5a)$$

$$U_l = v a_i, \quad \text{if } i \text{ can exercise his liberty unperceived by a conservative} \quad (5b)$$

⁹We abstract her completely from the issue of free-riding. It can be assumed that punishing liberals is a norm inside the group of conservatives. If they do not adhere to the norm they would face a so-called second order punishment, and the best choice for each conservative is thus to punish.

¹⁰As an alternative, we might write $U_{ap} = \phi(0.5 - \bar{a})^2$, implying that a-politicals also dislike if the public norm is too liberal and that their preferred public norm lies simply at a moderate level of conservatism. Notice, however, that introducing this equation barely changes the dynamics, since this change will only play a role if ρ is chosen close to one half.

¹¹We have done this to keep parameters low, but we might change that.

For simplicity we assume that individuals encounter each other at random (random pairing) and that now and then they compare their utility with others and switch if those do better. The better they do the higher the likelihood of switching. Equations 3, 4, and 5 can then be simplified to their expected value for a member of each group. Remember that the group identities defines also the average level of conservatism in a group and that the probability for an individual to encounter a member of a certain group is simply defined by the relative frequency.¹² The expected utility of each group member denoted by Π can then be defined as

$$\Pi_c = \pi a^\alpha - \gamma \sigma (\bar{a} - a^\gamma) - c(1 - \alpha) \quad (6a)$$

$$\Pi_a = \phi(a^\beta - \bar{a}) \quad (6b)$$

$$\Pi_l = v(1 - \alpha)(1 - a^\gamma) - c\alpha \quad (6c)$$

We can solve the system and find the equilibria of the given type of interaction, i.e. stable distributions of conservatives, a-politicals and liberals under which no individual has an incentive to change his membership. For reasons of simplicity and to render the dynamics comprehensible for the less mathematically inclined reader, this will not be done her. ¹³ Instead, the dynamics of the are presented graphically. This provides an easy way to illustrate not only in which way the system behaves but also how the dynamics and equilibria are modified if specific parameter values change. This will allow us to make comparative statics, analyse some of the issues we have discussed in the earlier sections of this article, and above all check the model for plausibility.

6. The analysis

We can represent the state space of this system of three possible actions in a simplex as in figure 7. The reason for this triangular form is that the frequency of the third strategy is directly

¹²For simplicity, we do not assume assortative mixing.

¹³The details of the model and its best response and equilibrium functions can be asked from the authors. The dynamics of this game are defined by a system of replicator dynamics, namely

$$\dot{\alpha} = \alpha(\Pi_c - \bar{\Pi}) \text{ and } \dot{\beta} = \alpha(\Pi_a - \bar{\Pi}) \text{ with } \bar{\Pi} = \alpha\Pi_c + \beta\Pi_a + \gamma\Pi_l$$

defining the average utility of an individual in the society.

deducible from the other two since their sum adds up to one, i.e. $1 = \alpha + \beta + \gamma$. At the three vertices the population is homogeneous, i.e. everyone belongs to the same group. The simplex represents thus a *tilted* coordination system. If we have an interior state p , the length of the dashed lines perpendicular to the axis defines the frequency of those group that is written at the opposite edge. The length line α defines the number of conservatives, and the length of line β the number of a-politicals. Thus, a point at the edge of the unit simplex defines a state in which two out of the three groups have members; the left edge implies the absence of liberals, the right edge the absence of conservatives, and the bottom edge the absence of a-politicals.

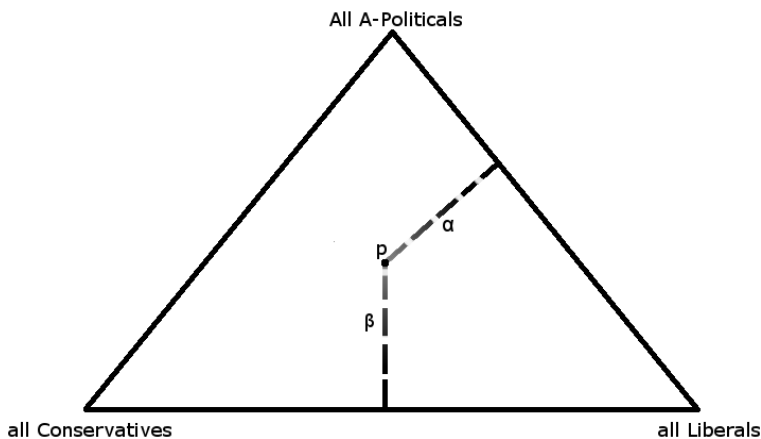


Figure 7: Exemplar unit simplex of the game: state p defines an interior point that defines a frequency of Conservatives given by α , of A-Politicals given by β , and of Liberals given by $1 - \alpha - \beta$

The underlying dynamics assume that now and then individuals consider whether it might be better for them to change their affiliation and eventually switch to a group which seems to make its members better off. They simply do this by comparing their utility to other individuals that they randomly encounter. In order to analyse the dynamics, it is convenient to graph the points (or line segments) in which the membership within a group is stationary, i.e. where no member has an incentive to move out or into this group. An equilibrium is then defined if this case holds for all three groups. In addition, an equilibrium occurs on a the simplex' edges if this is the case for the two groups with positive frequency, and it always exists at the simplex' vertices.¹⁴

¹⁴If one group contains the entire population, there is no possibility to compare to a member of another. Hence, the vertices in the simplex are equilibria. If individuals of the society only divide into two groups, i.e. one frequency

Figure 8 shows one example of the dynamics, which we will also use as a reference to see the effect of parameter changes. The blue lines define the states in which the frequency of conservatives, i.e. α does not change, the red lines represent stability within the a-politicals, i.e. no change in β , and the green lines illustrates states with no change in the frequency of liberals, i.e. γ .¹⁵ We thus observe that left to the blue line conservatives increase, below the red line a-politicals increase, and right to the green line liberals increase. The vectors thus indicate the direction in which the system evolves.

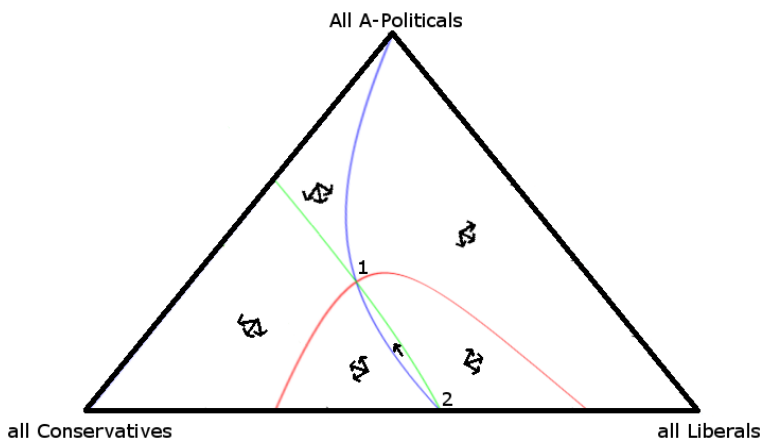


Figure 8: Projection of the unit simplex of the game: with parameter values $\rho = 0$, $\pi = 5$, $c = 6$, $\theta = 2$, $\sigma = 6$, and $v = 3$

In addition to those at the vertices, we observe two equilibria: an interior labelled by 1, and one on the edges labelled 2. In equilibrium 2 no a-politicals exist. By looking at the vectors, it turns out that all equilibria are unstable and will persist in the long-term if we observe that individuals commit errors infrequently. Take equilibrium 1. Each member in the society has the same utility and thus no incentive to switch. If an individual decides by idiosyncratic error to become a-political and has not been so before, all a-politicals have a lower utility and so at least one will leave to another group. (Hence, the equilibrium is attained again.) If, in contrast, an a-political at the

equals to zero, an equilibrium only requires that members of the group with strictly positive frequency need not have an incentive to switch to the other group with strictly positive frequency. Since the third group has no members, there is no-one to compare with.

¹⁵These are the roots of the functions in footnote 13. For a stable equilibrium (node), the eigenvalues of the system's Jacobian have to be negative at this point.

equilibrium 1 decides to adhere to another group, all a-politicals have a higher utility and thus at least one individual, who has not been a-political switches to that group. Equilibrium 1 is thus not upset by changes in the frequency of a-politicals, but is self-stabilising along this direction. It is, however, by changes in the frequency of members of the other two groups. If an individual decides to become liberal, all liberals experience a higher utility. Consequently, more and more individuals will switch and join this group. If in equilibrium 1 an individual decides to become conservative, all conservatives are better off. In this case, the frequency of conservatives will continue to increase as more and more other individuals will join this group. We can repeat a similar argument for equilibrium 2.

In this example only two equilibria are stable in case of small fluctuations: *all conservative* and *all liberals*. We observe that once a society has reached such an equilibrium, it will be very unlikely that it is upset by random fluctuations. A shift between equilibria can only occur if a large number of individuals idiosyncratically chooses to belong to a group that is not to their individual benefit. (Remember that this model is based on individual actions and not joint actions.) In addition, we also observe for the given parameters that the set of states that eventually leads to an equilibrium with all conservatives is larger than the set of states that converge to all liberals. We might thus assume that given the parameter values, the equilibrium with a very conservative society is more likely to occur than the equilibrium with a very liberal society.¹⁶ This provides a first indication of what might be occurring in Egypt. After the revolution, the distribution within the society might have been situated to the left of the blue line. As a consequence, an increasing number chooses to become a-political, conservative or to leave (we will add this option to the following game). In addition, more and more a-politicals will tend to turn into conservatives until we finally end up in a very conservative society.¹⁷

¹⁶The larger *basin of attraction* is an often used discrimination criterion to differentiate between equilibria and to determine which is more likely (or will evolve in the long-term) - see stochastic stability approach (Young, 1993). Under certain conditions, however, this criterion does not provide a suitable explanation for a long-term equilibrium; see (Ille, 2012a).

¹⁷Note that the model here is very simplified with only three groups from which an individual can choose. Furthermore, here individuals are basically maximising their individual utility based on these reduced and abstract functions. If we assume that there is a certain probability that individuals choose a non-optimising action, we can suppose a certain degree of fluctuation around this point. The main conclusion yet remains that we might observe an increase of conservatives in the future in Egypt.

We will now observe what happens when we change some of the parameters, see figure 9. The

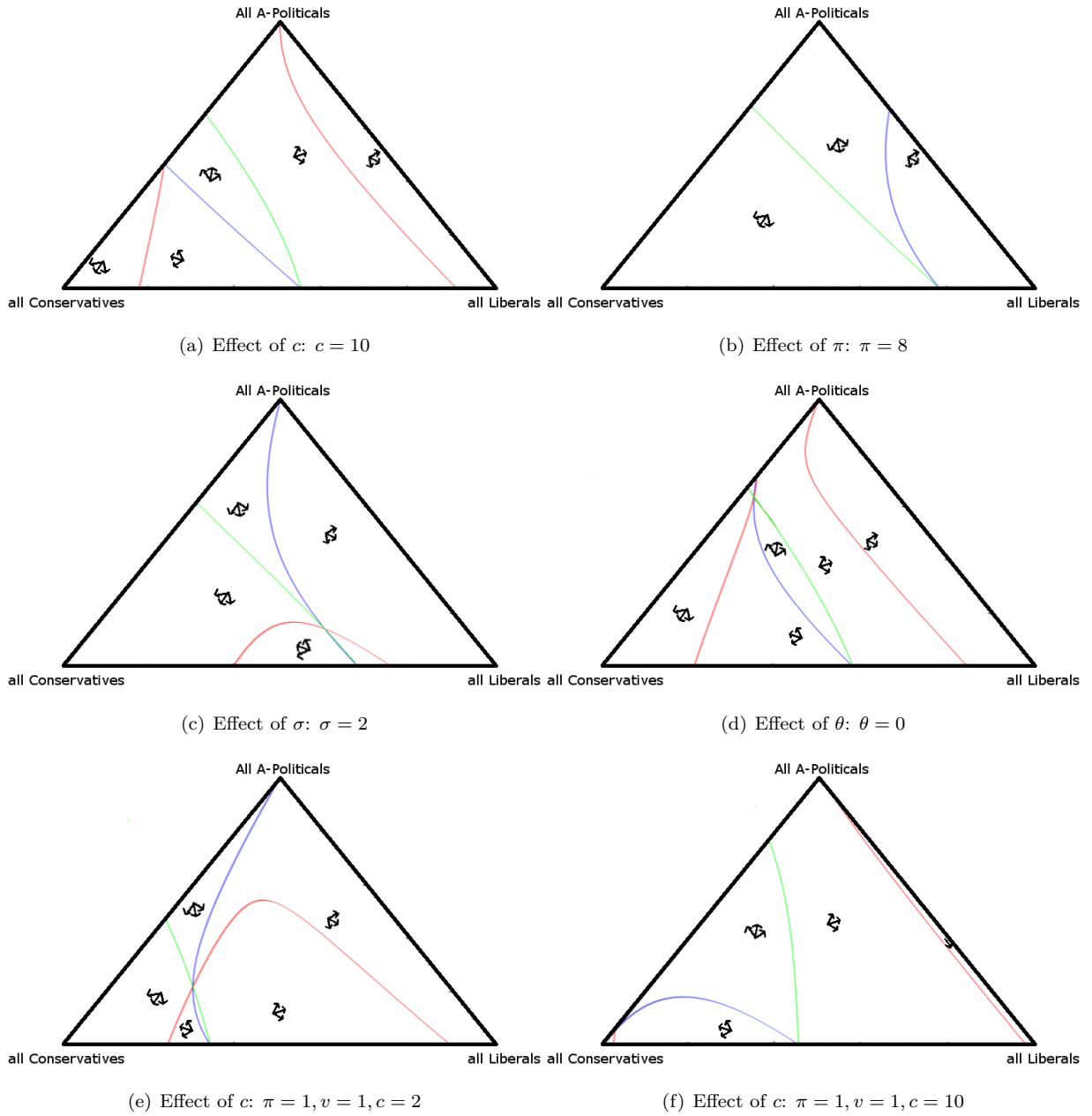


Figure 9: The unit simplex with different parameter combinations, baseline parameter values follow those in figure 8 ($\rho = 0, \pi = 5, c = 6, \theta = 2, \sigma = 6, \text{ and } v = 3$) except if mentioned otherwise.

first line covers variables that might be called intrinsic, since they consider those variables that are self-regarding and are not associated to the level of conservatism of the individuals he is interacting with.¹⁸ v is not considered here, since its effect is approximately inverse to that of π . The second line considers the *other-regarding* variables and the third line illustrates a special case.

Coming to the first line, the left figure shows the effect of an increase in the costs to punish of a conservative and also the level punishment received by a liberal. We observe that the green threshold line, referring to the liberals, is only marginally affected by rotating a bit clockwise, but that the blue, referring to conservatives shifts rightwards, and the red, referring to a-politicals, shifts upwards. This implies that an increase in punishment and punishment costs effects mostly conservatives and a-politicals. The higher punishment costs of conservatives are not upset by the increasing punishment received by liberals and thus it becomes increasingly unlikely for an individual to choose that group. Mainly all of these individuals will choose to become a-political, but not liberals. This further implies that with high cost of punishment a trend towards conservatism becomes less likely. This is inverted if punishment cost and also the level of punishment of liberals become smaller. With c equalling zero, all individuals will choose to become conservatives. This is reasonable: If an individual draws a benefit from the fact that others behave in the same way and adhere to the same principles and this individual can enforce that at no cost, it would surely opt for that option.

The figure on the right shows the effect of an increase in the individual benefit of a conservative to act in this way. This has an effect on all three groups. If π is sufficiently high, no individual will choose to be apolitical and some liberals will switch to being conservative. In this case, an equilibrium in which all individuals are conservative becomes more likely. Notice that an increase in v , namely the individual gain of a liberal from acting out his liberality has a similar effect. With v sufficiently high, a-politicals disappear and the blue threshold line for conservatives would shift to the left, leading to a higher likelihood of the all-Liberals equilibrium.

The left figure in the second line considers the effect of counterpart's conservatism on the utility of a conservative. If this effect decreases, it has interestingly only little effect on the blue and red lines but significantly on the green line. This indicates that if the other regarding component

¹⁸ c is collective for conservatives and the punishment a liberal receives is independent of his level of a_i but only depends on his affiliation.

of conservatives becomes less influential, mostly a-politicals will convert to conservatism (and the other way round in case it becomes more important). The right figure shows the effect the other regarding component in the utility function of a-politicals. In the graph, θ is set to zero and thus a-politicals are completely ignorant of the prevailing norms in their society. We observe that both (and in roughly equal terms) conservatives and liberals are more inclined to become a-politicals. As a consequence, a destabilisation of the all-liberals and all-conservatives equilibria becomes much more likely. It does not require a lot of liberals in the former equilibrium and a lot of conservatives in the latter equilibrium choosing a different strategy to unsettle this equilibrium.

The lower line illustrates a case in which both liberals and conservatives draw little utility from acting according to their membership (or aspired self), i.e. very liberal or very conservative. In this case, we observe that the effect of the cost and level of punishment (both c) is much more severe (independent of c generally benefits the all-liberals equilibrium). A low level further entails that only few a-politicals exist. If we take c even further down, say to 0.5, a-politicals would be completely absent. Once c sufficiently increases, a-politicals become much more like, as is shown on the right. Though utility maximisation would lead to the all-liberals equilibrium with high likelihood, this equilibrium can be easily disturbed. Only closely to the right edge, i.e. in the case of a complete absence of conservatives, it is best to be a liberal.

7. Leaving as an option

Until now, it has been assumed that all individuals stay within their country. Yet, as we have seen in the earlier part of our articles, some of them choose to leave their country. We can assume that as long as leaving provides a higher utility than switching to being (or pretending to be) conservative (or at least a-political), individuals who have been liberal will choose to do that. We could introduce that additional option into the former model. Yet, a graphical analysis would be then infeasible.¹⁹ As a consequence, we will develop a model that is similar to the former.

Assume that liberals have the option to stay or to leave. If they leave they can choose to assimilate (or adapt to the prevailing culture) or not to do so. In the case, in which they stay, the utility is basically determined by those in the former model. Yet by leaving, liberals influence

¹⁹Notice that four groups (or strategies) implies a three dimensional representation, and five groups would require four dimensions.

the value of a^γ in their home society. For simplicity we assume that those who are most liberal will leave.²⁰ Assume that the frequency of those liberals who are staying is given by x , thus those who leave by $1 - x$. Hence, the share of individuals leaving considering the whole society is $(1-x)(1-\alpha-\beta)$ (remember that $(1-\alpha-\beta)$ is the total share of liberals). Consequently, the average level of conservatism of the liberals that stay reduces to $((1-\alpha-\beta) + (1-x)(1-\alpha-\beta))/2$, and we obtain the utility function for liberals that stay as

$$\Pi_{l_s} = v(1-\alpha)(1-a^\gamma(2-x)) - c\alpha \quad (7)$$

Those who leave can enjoy their liberty freely (indicated by v), but bear the cost of leaving k . If one such individual chooses to adapt, he bears the cost of adaptation, that is behaving according to the cultural rules and customs that might not reflect his own preferences and characteristics. We might again assume that these individual characteristics are uniformly distributed over the unit interval. If the frequency of those that adapt is given by y , then again the average level of these characteristics is given by $(1 + 1 - (y/1 - x))/2$. The ideal value is again 1 and the difference between the ideal value and the average characteristic is then simply $1/(1-x)(y/2)$. If t measures the impact of adaptation on the utility, and assuming that adaptation is easier the more liberals left the country (e.g. there is a higher chance to form a community in the foreign country or inhabitants are more used to foreigner and their habits from this country.), we obtain

$$\Pi_{l_a} = v - k - t \frac{y}{2(1-x)} x \quad (8)$$

Those who do not adapt, face the potential costs of ostracism. This also decreases if more liberals leave the country (for the same reasons as in the former utility function). If r reflects this cost, we have

$$\Pi_{l_n} = v - k - rx \quad (9)$$

Based on the equations 7, 8, and 9, we can make the same analysis as we have done in the former part. Let the blue line indicate the threshold line of those liberals who stay, the red of those

²⁰We have seen the correlation between willingness to leave and liberality at the beginning of this article.

who adapt, and the green of those who do not adapt. Our benchmark case then looks as shown in figure 10

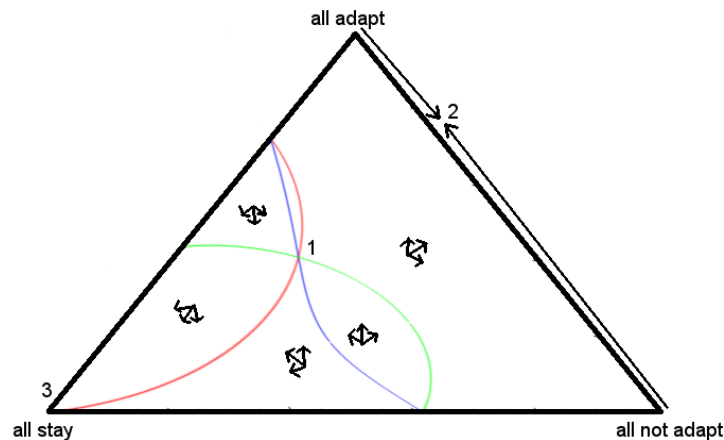
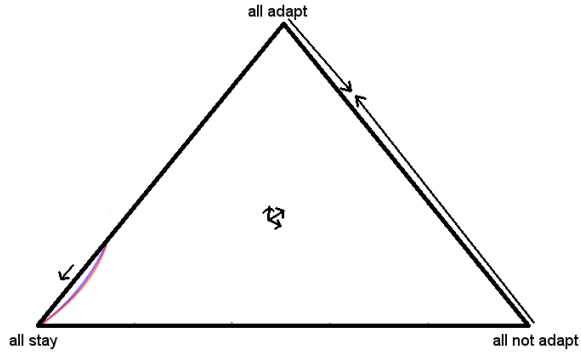


Figure 10: Projection of the unit simplex of the game: with parameter values $v = 3$, $\alpha = 0.6$, $a^\gamma = 0.2$, $c = 2$, $k = 3$, $t = 3$, and $r = 1$

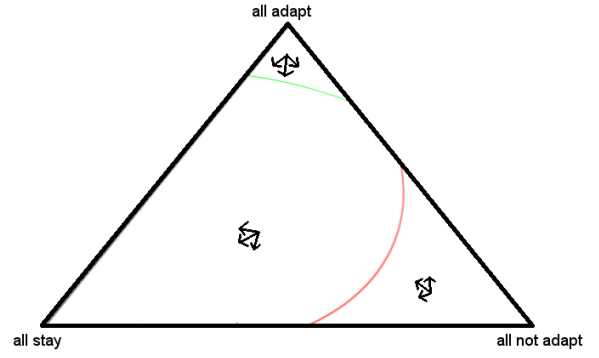
We observe two mixed equilibria. The interior marked by 1 is again unstable, yet the one on the right edge marked by 2 is stable. This defines a situation in which some liberals choose to adapt to the culture and some not. The third equilibrium is the pure one marked by 3, in which all liberals choose to stay.

As before, the easiest way of analysis is to change few parameters and to compare the dynamics to our benchmark case. This is shown in figure 11. 9. The top row refers entirely to the utility of liberals which stay inside the country. By looking at equation 8, we observe that staying liberals benefit from both a lower α and lower a^γ . The latter is, however, constrained by the former. The maximum value of $a^\gamma = (1 - \alpha)/2$ and α cannot change in the same scale. The top line illustrates the fact. In the left graph, α is increased and a^γ decreased. In the right graph, we observe the inverse effect. In the case, in which conservatives are very numerous, the few remaining liberals will choose to emigrate. Some of them will choose to adapt, others won't. In the contrary case (illustrated to the right), liberals will choose to stay in their country.

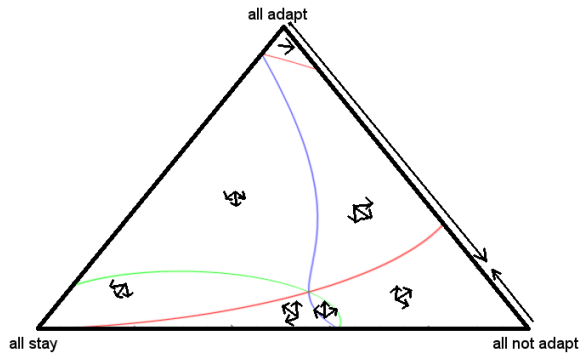
The middle row shows again the effect of two variables that have an opposite effect. The left graph illustrates only a change in the arduousness of adapting to the new social norms in the host society, i.e t . The original equilibria are maintained but shift downwards towards the lower edge,



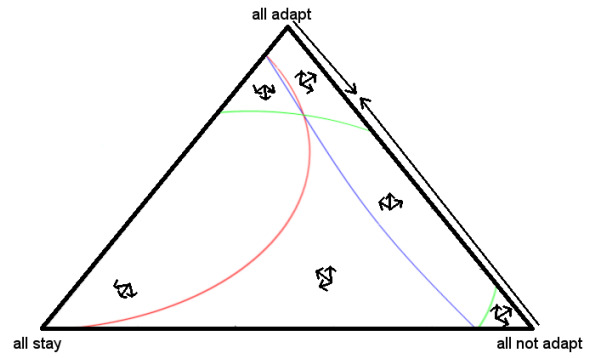
(a) Effect of α and a^γ : $\alpha = 0.8$, $a^\gamma = 0.1$



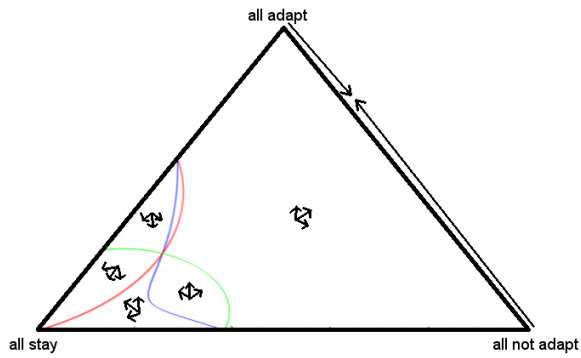
(b) Effect of α and a^γ : $\alpha = 0.2$, $a^\gamma = 0.4$



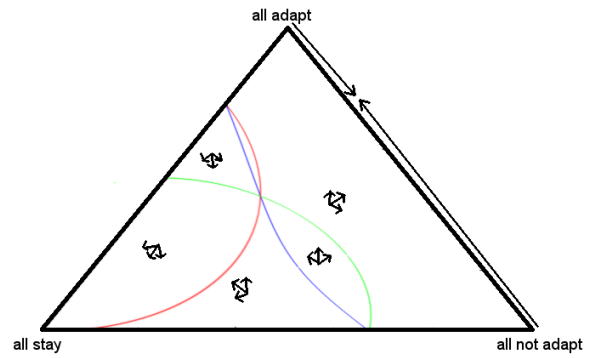
(c) Effect of t : $t = 10$



(d) Effect of t and r : $t = 10$, $r = 4$



(e) Effect of v and k : $v = 2$, $k = 2$



(f) Effect of v and k : $v = 7$, $k = 6$

Figure 11: The unit simplex with different parameter combinations, baseline parameter values follow those in figure 10 ($v = 3$, $\alpha = 0.6$, $a^\gamma = 0.2$, $c = 2$, $k = 3$, $t = 3$, and $r = 1$) except if mentioned otherwise.

at which adapters are absent. As a consequence, the right stable equilibrium moves to a locus at which relatively few liberals adapt. Yet, the all stay equilibrium does not become more likely in this case. The right shows how this can be counteracted, if the cost of ostracism increases. The right stable equilibrium is roughly at the same locus like in the reference case. We observe that the all stay equilibrium is now much more likely.

The last row analyses the effect of the general benefit from acting out his own liberty, i.e. v versus the cost of moving, i.e. k .²¹ Those liberals who leave generally benefit more from exercising their liberty, but they also bare the cost of leaving their beloved and even property behind. The left graph illustrates the case in which both variables are low. This implies that it is easy to leave but also that there is not much reason to do so. We observe, however, that the cost effect prevails. The stable equilibrium on the right edge barely moves but becomes much more likely. The right graph shows the inverse case. Both variables are high but k has been increased only by 3 instead of 4. If both variables had increased by the same level, all liberals would choose to stay in their country. Thus we observe again that the cost variable prevails and is very decisive for the decision of moving. Since it occurs independent from the choice of whether or not to adapt, the stable equilibrium on the right edge is not influenced.

8. Conclusion

Though this article intends to provide a summarised version of our analysis for answers provided to 49 questions in the survey conducted, it already suggests that Western education has aggravated the cultural gap between those who receive such education - and thus perceive themselves to be more Western than the rest of the society and do not abide to the laws of Islamic Sharia - and those who have not. Additional analysis shows that Western educated Egyptians believe that, at the same time, they are never perceived as being part of a Western culture and are put in the stereotypical category of Arabs, Middle Eastern or Muslims hindering their integration in Western societies. As such, they find themselves in an inter-cultural limbo - neither belonging to their perceived nor to their normative culture.

²¹Notice that c has a somewhat similar effect to v , and is thus not analysed separately.

Policy Implications

1. Country of origin
 - (a) Decrease costs from punishment: Human Rights
 - (b) Increase social acceptance of liberalism
 - (c) Reduce ignorance towards prevailing norm: better (political) education
 - (d) Reduction of peer pressure: individual rights
2. Host country
 - (a) Facilitate adaptation of foreigners: language courses
 - (b) Reduce cost of ostracism: increase acceptance of other cultures
 - (c) Ease the cost of moving

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Appendix A. Answers Given

1. I am a secularist in an Islamic state!
2. Lack of personal freedom due to the stress imposed by the society in judging your deeds!
3. In Egypt, your cultural background often depends on class. The prevailing culture is of the middle and the very poor economic classes in Egypt. My economic class is a slightly different!
4. No acceptance of other or respect of citizenship
5. Because my values are Islamic but my practices are westernized and modern
6. Still a lot of problems and societal demands that doesn't suite the modernity of the world we are living in, in addition to many wrong norms and practices based on it.
7. Egyptians are like a herd of sheep; they follow only what they're told from society, family, tradition and I follow only my mind and what I think is right. [The] Egyptian society doesn't accept difference and I respect differences. [The] Egyptian society violate[s] personal freedom and I know the limits of personal freedom.
8. I am a christian woman, and I think that says it all
9. Because I am secular and have socialist ideological inclinations, there are few Egyptians I can relate to. I belong to non-Islamists aspects of this culture. However, neither my family, my friends or myself have adopted at any stage in my life the cultural patterns associated with the Islamist revival.

10. it is a culture of extremism
11. Our culture has shifted from being a liberal, easy going culture where people were free to express themselves to a political and religiously oppressive one. People have become hypocrites who hide behind their beards and hijab. People lie, cheat and steal all in the name of religion. The thing is, they were always there but as a minority. Now they are the majority. And you can't speak against them or you're an infidel, and an attack on them is an affront to God himself! The saudiazation of Egypt has been creeping up on us slowly and now it's unfortunately upon us. I am a liberal, Western educated female who will never wear the hijab because I simply don't believe in it. What place have I in a society such as this?
12. I'm a Christian and have felt alienated in most issues that had to do with establishing the identity of the country as a purely Islamic one. I also belong to the upper middle class with its unique non-absolutist views on matter where Islam/religion in general is not the main point of reference so my reasoning stands to be quite different.
13. Egypt is about Egyptians, their history and their culture. Arab & Wahhaby culture imported from Saudi Arabia makes me feel like a stranger in my own country. In addition to the new rulers, they are in a way or another changing what Egypt is.
14. I always thought of Egypt as a cosmopolitan place, accepting all people, cultures, differences...no[w] I feel different n my own country and I don't feel safe.
15. I don't follow many of the mainstream values, and I have my own set of values and standard-sand way of living that are different from many people, especially girls in Egypt.