

# Neither Fulul nor Ikhwan: The Thought of Abdul Rahman Yusuf and the Rise of an Alternative Current in Post-Morsi Egypt

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# Neither Fulul nor Ikhwan: The Thought of Abdul Rahman Yusuf and the Rise of an Alternative Current in Post-Morsi Egypt

## Abstract

Since independence, the military and the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) have exerted unmatched influence and control over Egypt. However, an “alternative current” is on the rise. In this paper, first, I survey the role played by the military and the MB. Second, I highlight one of the voices of this alternative current, Abdul Rahman Yusuf. The evolution of his thought in post-July 2013 coup era unveils the difficulties facing this alternative current in competing with the well-entrenched voices of both the military and the MB. Notwithstanding such challenges, I argue that suggesting the existence and eventual resilience and popularity of an alternative current that politically and intellectually defies both the military and the MB in Egypt is not a far-fetched aspiration should the leaders of this current articulate their ideas with clarity, embrace genuine reform, celebrate diversity and difference as prerequisites for constructive societal and political pluralism.

## Keywords

Arab uprisings, Islam, Egypt, Muslim Brotherhood, military, intellectuals, alternative current

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## Cover Page Footnote

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Since independence, the military and the Muslim Brotherhood (MB) have exerted unmatched influence and control over Egypt. However, an “alternative current” is on the rise. In this paper, first, I survey the role played by the military and the MB. Second, I highlight one of the voices of this alternative current, Abdul Rahman Yusuf. The evolution of his thought in post-July 2013 coup era unveils the difficulties facing this alternative current in competing with the well-entrenched voices of both the military and the MB. Notwithstanding such challenges, I argue that suggesting the existence and eventual resilience and popularity of an alternative current that politically and intellectually defies both the military and the MB in Egypt is not a far-fetched aspiration should the leaders of this current articulate their ideas with clarity, embrace genuine reform, celebrate diversity and difference as prerequisites for constructive societal and political pluralism.

The January-February 2011 and June-July 2013 events that took place in Egypt have been described in a variety of ways. Revolution, uprising, and the Arab Spring are but a few examples. However, the genuine popular contestation that commenced on January 25, 2011, did not translate into a full-blown revolution for three simple reasons: the unchanging stature of the ubiquitous Egyptian military, the initially powerful yet subsequently disorganized youth-led contestation, and the rise of the well-organized Muslim Brotherhood (MB) who formed an invincible alternative to all other opposition groups, especially the decentralized youth factions.<sup>1</sup> While contemporary Egypt has been conventionally situated under the influence of either the military or the MB, it is witnessing the rise of an alternative current that is neither military- nor MB-affiliated. After presenting the military-MB dynamic, I examine the ideas of one of the intellectual voices of this current, Abdul Rahman Yusuf. By analyzing the evolution of Yusuf's thought in the immediate post-July 2013 coup era (July-November 2013), I highlight the difficulty this alternative current faces in articulating its position amidst the competing voices of both the military and the MB. Notwithstanding such challenges, I argue that the existence and popularity of an alternative current that politically and intellectually defies both the military and the MB in Egypt is not a far-fetched aspiration granted that leading representatives of this current clearly articulate their ideological affiliation, reform program, shun differences, and innovatively work together.

### **Egypt Between the Military and the Muslim Brotherhood**

Former President Mubarak resigned on February 11, 2011, after losing the support of military leaders, represented by the Supreme Council of Armed Forces (SCAF), in record eighteen days. As a sign of its immense power, Mubarak did not transfer his authorities to his newly appointed vice president, Omar Suleiman, but handed power to SCAF.<sup>2</sup> A product of the military, Mubarak was forced to return power to the institution that granted it to him, the military, after he lost the support of some of its key leaders. While the military has held power since 1952, SCAF has been the custodian of power since February 11, 2011. The military did not obstruct the unfolding of free and fair parliamentary and presidential elections

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<sup>1</sup> Jonathan Guyer recognizes the role of the military too: "Hosni Mubarak was removed from power by the combination of a mass uprising and a military coup." While Guyer characterizes the 2011 events as a coup-uprising combination, I frame it as a coup only since the military hijacked the mass uprising and co-opted revolutionary demands. See Jonathan Guyer, "Under Morsi, Red Lines Gone Grey," <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/14293/under-morsi-red-lines-gone-grAbdul-Rahman-Yusuf> (accessed November 13, 2013).

<sup>2</sup> For the full speech transcript, see CBS News, "Egyptian President Hosni Mubarak Resigns," <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/egyptian-president-hosni-mubarak-resigns/> (accessed November 13, 2013).

in 2012. However, it undermined the results of both elections. It issued executive decrees that restricted the president's authority, reverted to courts that annulled the MB-dominated parliament, and finally executed a complete military takeover in July 2013.<sup>3</sup>

The recent Egyptian scene has been marred by coups. The current period may be viewed in the future as a prelude to a future revolution after protesters are able to overcome the twin hurdles of the military and the "deep state."<sup>4</sup> Only time will tell what path Egyptians will take and how that will reshape Egypt's political narrative.

The second coup in Egypt's contemporary period, the July 3, 2013 military coup, temporarily halted the MB's public political foray in the post-Mubarak era.<sup>5</sup> The MB appeared invincible after it formed and registered a political party in 2011, seized the majority of parliamentary seats in 2011-12, won the presidency of Egypt in 2012, and gained legal NGO status in early 2013.<sup>6</sup> However, two factors impeded these gains. First, the supremacy of the military certainly restricted the MB and any other political player who would be in the MB's position. Second, none of the MB electoral victories were landslides by any measure. The extreme polarization that characterized Egyptian politics, and citizens by extension, did not dissipate. Rather, it ran throughout Muhammad Morsi's year of rule and continued after the military takeover. Many Egyptians are split between remnants of the previous regime, or *al-fulul*, and the MB, or *al-Ikhwan*. Many voices are lamenting the return of military rule as much as there were voices that lamented MB's domination of the Egyptian political scene.

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<sup>3</sup> For more analysis on the role of the military in Egypt, see Sarah Salem, "The Egyptian Military and the 2011 Revolution," <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/14023/the-egyptian-military-and-the-2011-revolution> (accessed November 13, 2013).

<sup>4</sup> The "deep state" is a concept that denotes the existence of a state within the state. It refers to the existence of a powerful group of individuals whose power equals, if not exceeds, that of the formal state apparatus. In the Egyptian context, it refers to all those civil servants, interest groups, and members of state bureaucracies who are vested in the military establishment due to the benefits they accrue.

<sup>5</sup> Sherif Mohy Eddin charts the differing compositions of appointed councils during the Morsi and Sisi eras. See his "*T'adat tashkil al-nukhba ba`ad thalatha yulyu fi masr* [The Remaking of Elites after July 3<sup>rd</sup> in Egypt]," <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/14196/%D8%A5%D8%B9%D8%A7%D8%AF%D8%A9-%D8%AA%D8%B4%D9%83%D9%8A%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%86%D8%AE%D8%A8%D8%A9-%D8%A8%D8%B9%D8%AF-3-%D9%8A%D9%88%D9%84%D9%8A%D9%88-%D9%81%D9%8A-%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1> (accessed November 13, 2013).

<sup>6</sup> Wickham, *The Muslim Brotherhood*, 248-9 & Gamaledidine, "Breaking: Court Bans Egyptian MB," <http://english.ahram.org.eg/News/82304.aspx> (accessed September 23, 2013).

## The Implications of the Second Military Coup and the Fall of the MB

Amidst this extreme polarization, a growing new voice that is neither MB- nor military-affiliated has emerged. I call it the alternative current. Thanks to the events of the last four years, the recent and blatant military takeover is encouraging the rise of this alternative current that experienced the worst of both groups. During the lead-up to the June 30, 2013 protests, many voiced their aggravations with the MB and its failures. While the MB may have exhibited a perturbed and inflexible attitude at times, its failures are also due to its inexperience in managing a country.<sup>7</sup> It is too early and rather immature to judge these failures as solely MB-borne. It could very well be that these accusations were exaggerated, expectations were high, post-coup environment was difficult to manage, Egypt's problems were mostly inherited from the Mubarak era, and the military and deep state did not make it any easier for Morsi and his government to achieve significant landmarks in the short span of time that was allotted to them.<sup>8</sup>

Regardless of the reasons behind siding with one camp over another, the recent military takeover should be seen as an advantageous step towards the long-term fulfillment of the Egyptian peoples' aspirations for freedom, social justice, and economic prosperity. While this is a controversial argument, average Egyptians need to experience both modes of governance, Islamist and military, in a post-Mubarak era at a span of time short enough that it would allow them to effectively compare the merits and disadvantages of each regime. The military was always a power to reckon with throughout the post-Mubarak era. However, the military exercised self-restricted rule in 2011-2012 before giving the MB some space in 2012-2013. Since July 2013, the military has engaged in a public reassertion of power, first through an interim figurehead president and, second, through the rule of President Sisi. It may seem that the current period is a return to

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<sup>7</sup> Karim el-Gawhary surveys Islamists' reflections on the MB's performance while in power and the lessons they deduce from this experience. See "Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt: Limited Options," <http://en.qantara.de/content/muslim-brotherhood-in-egypt-limited-options> (accessed November 15, 2013). Another interesting MB-related development concerns the overtures by the MB-friendly National Alliance for Supporting Legitimacy. See Wael Nawara, "The Muslim Brotherhood's Bankrupt 'Strategic' Vision," [http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/11/muslim-brotherhood-egypt-initiative-constitution.html?utm\\_source=&utm\\_medium=email&utm\\_campaign=8604](http://www.al-monitor.com/pulse/originals/2013/11/muslim-brotherhood-egypt-initiative-constitution.html?utm_source=&utm_medium=email&utm_campaign=8604) (accessed November 26, 2013).

<sup>8</sup> For an analysis of Morsi's year in power, see Amani al-Tawil, "*Ma`arakat hukm al-masriyyin bayn al-jaysh wa- 'l-ikhwan* [The Battle over Governing Egyptians between the Military and the MB]," <http://www.dohainstitute.org/release/0b5d0cf6-8337-4d28-91a6-8aa2035dcb79> (accessed November 15, 2013).

the ultra-nationalistic Nasserist phase with the unswerving popularity of Col. General Sisi.<sup>9</sup> But this is simply not the case, given the various transformations that Egyptian society has undergone since Nasser's time, the evolution of a stronger civil society, and the further globalization and connectivity of Egypt and the world as a whole with the advent of advanced information infrastructure and digital media.

Furthermore, there has been a parallel, albeit smaller, growing trend of criticizing the military for its encroachment on the ideals of the January 2011 'revolution'.<sup>10</sup> By being able to criticize the two strongest players in contemporary Egyptian politics, the military and the MB, after the 2011 and 2013 coups, Egyptians will help pave the way for alternative players on Egypt's political scene that could eventually be serious contenders to the MB and the military.<sup>11</sup>

### **An Alternative Current – Methodology & Gramscian Intellectualism**

To demonstrate an example of post-June 30 discourse evolution, I map out the changing discourse of a controversial figure, Abdul Rahman Yusuf, the son of the more controversial Shaikh Yusuf al-Qaradawi.<sup>12</sup> I argue that Egypt is not destined to an either-or formula that fatally places it at the ruling whim of the military or the MB by surveying one of the spokesmen for an alternative current in Egypt's

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<sup>9</sup> In the name of nationalism, some liberal groups forsake their principles and allied with the military to avoid a continued MB presidency. Renowned novelist, Sonallah Ibrahim, is one example. See Lindsey Ursula, "A Voice of Dissent Joins the Nationalist Chorus," <http://madamasr.com/content/voice-dissent-joins-nationalist-chorus> (accessed November 13, 2013).

<sup>10</sup> More Egyptians are now protesting against both the military and the MB, such as the November 19, 2013 protest on the anniversary of Mohammad Mahmood St. events. See "Tadhahurat munahidha li-'jaysh wa'l-ikhwan [Protests against the Military and the MB]," <http://www.ademocracynet.com/Arabic/index.php?page=news&action=Detail&id=10654> (accessed November 26, 2013).

<sup>11</sup> An example of such groups is the "Revolution Path Front," who specifically states its anti-MB, anti-military disposition. Some of the founding members of the April 6 Movement launched this front. See "New Anti-Brotherhood, Anti-Military Front Launched," <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/14297/new-anti-brotherhood-anti-military-front-launched-> (accessed November 13, 2013).

<sup>12</sup> Yusuf al-Qaradawi (b. 1926) is a prolific Islamic scholar and *mufti* who authored more than one hundred and twenty works, such as *al-Halal wa-'l haram fi-'l-islam [The Permissible and Prohibited in Islam]*. He is also an activist who set up different Islamic centers worldwide. Schooled in Egypt's al-Azhar, Qaradawi moved to Qatar and gained its citizenship after being harassed in Egypt in the 1940s-61 due to his involvement with the MB. Qaradawi attracts a large following and is considered one of the leading Muslims religious scholars [*ulama*] of the contemporary era.

political-intellectual scene. Through examining Abdul Rahman Yusuf's debate with his Islamist father, Yusuf al-Qaradawi, on the one hand and the supporters of the military on the other, I show that the evolution of this alternative current is not an easy process. It is marred by mixed feelings, contradictions, and confusion. The surveyed texts show how difficult it is to carve an independent course amidst a polarized society. I recognize that Abdul Rahman Yusuf's writings are neither representative of all Egyptians nor representative of a growing alternative current per se. Other public intellectuals, politicians, and media figures, who are part of this non-MB, non-military alternative current, such as Belal Fadl, Bassem Youssef, Hani Shukrallah, Wael Kandil, and Emad Shahin are equally, if not more, influential.<sup>13</sup>

In my categorization of Abdul Rahman Yusuf as an intellectual, I simultaneously adopt and challenge Antonio Gramsci's conceptualization of intellectuals. Gramsci recognizes the ability of people to produce ideas in general, but only those that should be recognized as intellectuals are those whose social function is determined by the ideas they acquire, develop, and reproduce. According to Gramsci, one can only categorize individuals as intellectuals when their ideas actually influence their course of action. Gramsci expands the notion of intellectuals to not only include thinkers and writers, but other professionals as well, such as "scientists, theorists...philosophers," as long as they fulfill an independent, critical thinking component.<sup>14</sup> In this sense, Yusuf and the other identified members of the group readily qualify as intellectuals given the quality of their thought and its popularity among people.<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>13</sup> For more background and link to their works, see <https://twitter.com/belalfadl>, <https://twitter.com/emadshahin>, <https://twitter.com/hanishukrallah>, <https://twitter.com/drbasemyoussef>, <https://twitter.com/waiel65>. This group of intellectuals is united in its aversion to any form of hegemony, whether that perpetrated by the military or the MB. However, each one expresses his sentiments differently. Emad Shahin, by far, is the most vocal critic. This has led to his self-imposed exile after the government-military establishment brought forth a lawsuit against him while he was abroad for a conference engagement. As a result of this case, Shahin was sentenced to death in absentia in May 2015. Both Fadl and Youssef are also under self-imposed exile in the US. Youssef is well known for his attacks of the MB during their rule and of the military after their takeover. However, he was forced to stop his show twice, at CBC and MBC channels, after pressures from the Egyptian government. Youssef remains critical, but does not voice his critique against the military in a publicly sharp tone, as he previously did.

<sup>14</sup> *Gramsci Reader*, 302.

<sup>15</sup> Some of the already-mentioned intellectuals have a following in the hundreds of thousands or in the millions. Many of their articles are cross-posted on social media sites and attract numerous comments. As to Yusuf, his website, [www.arahman.net](http://www.arahman.net), is similarly popular and has attracted over 16million+ visitors as of May 2014. This number was at the bottom of the website's main page, but the number is no longer shown on the website. Information remains incomplete, though, as the website's age is unknown. Sixteen million reflects the number of views or hits. The time it took to

However, Gramsci stresses that all intellectuals protect and represent the interests of their social group and are coopted by the “dominant social group,” or the state, becoming the “deputies” of the state in its application of hegemony. In the case of Abdul Rahman Yusuf, he and other members of this alternative current fit into Gramsci’s expanded definition of intellectuals by presenting critical thought and trying to represent the politically subaltern, but they have not been coopted by either the military or the MB regimes in Egypt. As such, Yusuf and his cohort challenge Gramsci’s characterization of intellectuals as the mouthpiece of a dominant order. It remains to be seen whether the state’s methods of cooptation or repression succeed in silencing the members of this alternative current, putting it in further alignment with Gramsci’s standpoint on intellectuals.

I translate and analyze two of Abdul Rahman Yusuf’s articles.<sup>16</sup> Yusuf wrote the first surveyed article four days after the July 3, 2013 military coup and in response to his father’s pro-Morsi *fatwa* [legal opinion]. Abdul Rahman Yusuf wrote the second highlighted article on November 23, 2013 denoting a shift in his priorities. In both articles, he discusses Egypt, the role of Islam, the MB, and the military. I first present a brief biography of Abdul Rahman Yusuf, analyze the main ideas in his texts and compare the content of his articles, accentuating Yusuf’s stance and changing mood. I conclude by defining the contours of an alternative current and the challenges it faces based on the evolution of Yusuf’s thought.

### **Abdul Rahman Yusuf – Like Father, Like Son?**

Abdul Rahman Yusuf does not use al-Qaradawi for a surname. Given the immediate recognition the surname attracts, Abdul Rahman Yusuf probably does not want to be readily associated with his father in the public arena. In stark contrast to his father’s traditional dress and beard, Abdul Rahman Yusuf dons modern clothes and has no facial hair. Unlike his father’s Islamist and MB orientation, Abdul Rahman Yusuf is a liberal journalist and a best-selling poet.<sup>17</sup>

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reach this number of hits is unknown. It is not the number of unique visitors; therefore, various repeat visitors are surely part of the mix. This does not reduce the significance of this large number, but puts the number into a larger context.

<sup>16</sup> Analysis follows in the article while my full translation of both newspaper articles are in two appendices.

<sup>17</sup> To get a better sense of Abdul Rahman Yusuf’s poetry and style, see the following YouTube: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O3HP0FftRPo> (accessed November 30, 2013). Abdul Rahman Yusuf published eleven poetry collections, some of which were reprinted several times. His first collection, *Bleeding Letters*, was published in 1992 and his latest, *Shameless [‘Ala ras-ha bat-ha]*, was published in 2014. See Abdul Rahman Yusuf Website, <http://www.arahman.net/2012-12-31-00-20-44> for digital images of all his poetry book covers (accessed March 22, 2015).

Born on September 18, 1970, Abdul Rahman Yusuf is Qaradawi's third son.<sup>18</sup> Abdul Rahman Yusuf associates himself with Egypt's youth when contrasting his generation to his father's in the first surveyed newspaper article. Abdul Rahman Yusuf followed his father's educational footsteps by studying shari'a during his undergraduate years and *Maqasid al-shari'a* for his masters at Cairo University's *Dar al-Ulum*.<sup>19</sup> However, Abdul Rahman Yusuf's career path diverged from his father's as the former pursued journalism and poetry writing, leaning towards political themes in his publications. The father-son divergence does not end here. They do not meet ideologically either. Other than their common aversion of Mubarak and his regime, Abdul Rahman Yusuf was a major supporter of Mohamed El-Baradei and a founding member of the campaign that endorsed Baradei's change platform prior to the January-February 2011 coup.<sup>20</sup> Abdul Rahman Yusuf was also one of the founding members of *Kifaya*, a political opposition group founded under Mubarak's rule. Clearly, he is not an MB member or sympathizer, like his father.<sup>21</sup> This bustling, anti-regime activity and poetry resulted in Abdul Rahman Yusuf's ban from both writing and presenting TV shows in Egypt in the 2000s.

Abdul Rahman Yusuf has contributed articles to various Egyptian newspapers, such as *al-Shorouk*, *al-Yawm al-Sabi`*, *al-Masry al-Yawm*, and *Arabi 21*. His shows debuted on Jazeera Documentary and the liberal Egyptian channel, CBC.<sup>22</sup> Abdul Rahman Yusuf certainly picked up his father's passion for writing, though in a different form and orientation. Like al-Qaradawi, Abdul Rahman Yusuf realizes the importance of media and has made a career out of it. Both father and son are celebrities, yet for different reasons and to different audiences. Realizing the impact of his father on both Egyptian public opinion and many of

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<sup>18</sup> Abdul Rahman Yusuf's personal information comes from his personal website, <http://www.arahman.net/2013-01-10-09-36-31> (accessed November 13, 2013).

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ibid. Mohamed El-Baradei is an Egyptian diplomat who served as the Director General of the International Atomic Energy Association (IAEA) from 1997-2009. He received a Nobel peace prize in 2005 jointly with IAEA for his efforts at curbing the threat of atomic energy. Upon his retirement, he returned to Egypt and turned to politics by pushing for change prior to the 2011 events. He has a large following among the non-MB, non-military masses. However, he lost some credibility after joining the government that followed the July 2013 coup as vice president for one month before his resignation after the Rabi'a attacks against MB followers. He now resides in Vienna, Austria and has stayed away from Egyptian politics with the exception of posting a few political opinion-editorials.

<sup>21</sup> There were rumors that Abdul Rahman Yusuf converted to Shiism in 2008, an act that Abdul Rahman Yusuf publicly denied. For more details, see "I Did Not Convert: Son of Egyptian Sunni Preacher," <http://www.alarabiya.net/articles/2008/10/15/58297.html> (accessed December 5, 2013).

<sup>22</sup> Abdul Rahman Yusuf Personal Website, <http://www.arahman.net/2013-01-10-09-36-31> (accessed November 13, 2013).

the religiously observant, Abdul Rahman Yusuf attacks the MB in an emotionally charged article in response to his father's pro-Morsi *fatwa*. He defends his ideals and convictions in a July 7, 2013 response article, giving readers a rare glimpse of the well-known father and son, a religious scholar versus a liberal poet, in a public battle over the hearts and minds of Egyptians. Less than four months later and in the second surveyed article, Yusuf drops his diatribe against the MB, shifts directions, and concentrates his criticism on the military instead.

### **From Anti-MB to Anti-Military: The Evolution of Yusuf's Thought**

Abdul Rahman Yusuf displays a respectful and affectionate tone towards his father in the first surveyed article, unlike the second, more charged article against members of the pro-military, ultra-nationalist wave. The personal letter to Qaradawi contains criticisms against Morsi and the MB, but it is not the sole purpose of the article, as is the case with the second, more focused article on Abdul Rahman Yusuf's detractors. Second, we learn intimate details about the father-son relationship in the first article that would not be known otherwise. For instance, Abdul Rahman Yusuf refers to his father's "liberal" upbringing of his children that focused on cultivating independent judgment and the pursuit and preservation of freedom. We also find a loving son finding excuses for the father while criticizing his *fatwa* by blaming it on the father's generation lack of understanding, the complications of the situation, and Qaradawi's busy schedule:

My virtuous, great father: I am your student before being your son. It appears to me and to many of your disciples and students that the current moment, in all its complications and confusions, is wholly novel and different from the experience of your whole generation. Your generation did not know real, popular revolutions and was not close to the will of the people and the uncommon thinking of youth. Because of this probable reason, what you have recently written does not reflect what your graciousness taught me or what you raised me up on.

Abdul Rahman Yusuf lists unconvincing reasons. Many members of his father's generation stood against Morsi and many have busy schedules, too. Furthermore, they were not as "patient" as Abdul Rahman Yusuf paints them. Many of his father's generation attempted revolting against the regime several times, but were crushed by President Nasser and faced imprisonment, death, or exile. Although he is forty-five years old, Yusuf conflates his generation with the protesting youth of 2011. Yusuf and his generation by extension lived all their lives under military rule and were not able to effect any change. The younger protesters, on the other hand, forcefully and successfully pushed for change in

2011 only when the military, which was equally surprised by the popular protests, did not block the uprising against Mubarak.

Beyond his employment of the generational divide argument, Yusuf is trying to rationalize his father's position while ensuring that both his father and the public accept his newspaper article. He frames his letter in this tone because he clearly loves and respects his father. Writing the article in this manner serves his project as well. In line with Egyptian and Muslim culture's utmost respect for parents, average Egyptians would not approve a son's public critique of his father, especially when the father is one of the major religious figures of contemporary times.

Third, Yusuf uses religion to respond back to his father's *fatwa*. Raised in a religious household and educated in shari`a, he is more than capable of defending his anti-MB stance by countering his father's religious arguments. Here, Yusuf quotes some of his father's previous works and refers to private lessons he received from his father that go against the *fatwa*'s content:

You told my whole generation and told me: "freedom before shari`a!"<sup>23</sup> With these words, I was and continue to be one of the revolutionaries who demands freedom for all people. I demanded this freedom in [Tahrir] Square on January 25<sup>th</sup> and on June 30<sup>th</sup> as well. I did not concern myself with calling for shari`a – it is not my duty to enforce shari`a on anyone. Rather, I was busy inciting people to be free. To me, freedom and shari`a are the same. Did God not create people to be free?

My great father: in your *fatwa*, you appealed to General Sisi, all political parties, and to all seekers of freedom, justice, and dignity to unite and defend righteousness by reinstating President Morsi to his position, advising him continuously, and putting forth well-guided solutions [for Egypt's problems]. What if I tell you, sir, they have been doing that for a whole year, and the man did not respond.

Fourth, Yusuf presents his case against Morsi and the MB while criticizing his father's pro-Morsi stance. He lists all the promises made and breached by Morsi. He also accuses Morsi of various mistakes, such as imprisoning critics and blindly obeying the MB, without providing any evidence proving that Morsi committed these acts. Exemplifying the emotional anti-MB stance held by several of Yusuf's liberal, upper-middle class cohort right after June 30, 2013 and during the time of

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<sup>23</sup> This echoes a similar statement given by Kuwaiti MB leader, Tareq al-Suwaidan. Suwaidan's statement elicited sharp, critical responses in the Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) member states. Qaradawi presented the idea before Suwaidan introduced it in a 2012 conference held in Kuwait.

writing this article, Yusuf frames Morsi as a prisoner of the *murshid* [supreme leader] and the MB without, again, any evidence.

Fifth, in the boldest critique of his father, Abdul Rahman Yusuf frowns upon Qaradawi's form of intervention. Qaradawi did not issue an opinion. He released a *fatwa*. Here, Yusuf's infuriation is the clearest with his call for the separation of religion and politics. Sixth, the military receives scant reference in the first text. Other than reassuring his father that the 'revolution' would not be hijacked by the *fulul* and the military, the bulk of attack is centered on the MB. By supporting the deposition of Morsi, Yusuf is indirectly expressing support for the military, even though it does not clearly appear in the text.

It took Yusuf a few months to realize that the reassurances he gave to his father regarding the military were both naïve and premature. After the entrenchment of the military regime and the development of a Sisi cult, Yusuf shifts course and focuses his attention on ridding the 'revolution' from inhibiting forces. In a second article, Yusuf expands on a recently coined colloquial term to describe the group that he was once part of: *al-Yunyagiyya*.<sup>24</sup> Here, he does not explicitly attack the military, although he is indirectly criticizing its supporters and many of its circles. The *Yunyagiyya* are portrayed as pro-military and anti-MB who are not necessarily part of the old regime, the *fulul*, but have voluntarily moved from their anti-MB stance to a pro-military one:

Who are *al-Yunyagiyya*? They are, in sum, a group of Egyptians who took to the streets on June 30, 2013; [a group] who supported what happened on July 3<sup>rd</sup> and [who supported] the bloodshed that took place afterwards. They have distinctive features. [One] of these features is their belief that God gave them the right to speak on behalf of those that descended to the streets [protested] that day; that is, [speaking on behalf of] over forty million persons (according to them).<sup>25</sup>

Like Baradei, Yusuf loathes all of those who adopt MB-like exclusionary tactics and laments the loss of Egypt to the MB or military circles. Noting the restricted freedoms that unfolded after the July coup, Yusuf indirectly comments on the closure of TV channels towards the end of his article. He retracts from his earlier letter by stating that his actions are based on his love of Egypt and not

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<sup>24</sup> The colloquial Egyptian term *Yunyagiyya* was, most probably, not coined by Yusuf. It seems that it developed organically after the June protests. Appearing on various social networking sites, the term is becoming more popular. But the term refers to supporters of the June coup in general, and does not necessarily adopt the features that Yusuf holds for *Yunyagiyya* in his article.

<sup>25</sup> The author inserts both the parenthesis and the words within the parenthesis. I insert any additional words in brackets to smoothen the translation.

“hatred [for] *al-Ikhwan*.” Gone are the virulent attacks against the MB. They are now replaced with an attack on *al-Yunyagiyya* and their actions:

Another feature of *al-Yunyagiyya*: they hate Islamists and [Muslim] Brothers more than they loathe tyranny. They do not mind supporting tyrants in their oppression of the Egyptian people as long as the tanks [of the tyrants] crush the Islamists. For the sake of that [excluding Islamists], they [*al-Yunyagiyya*] commit the same mistakes committed by *al-Ikhwan* when the [latter] were in power. But theirs [*Yunyagiyya*'s mistakes] are exponentially multiplied [when compared to MB mistakes].

Another noticeable feature is the presence of socialist motifs unfound in the previous text. Yusuf absolves himself from any association with *al-Yunyagiyya* and their luxurious lifestyle by announcing that he is a real protestor: one that does not eat “smoked salmon... and kabob” while protesting. He frames the revolution as the revolution of the poor who are pitted against the “rich... *Yunyagiyya*.”

While written in a cynical and highly critical tone, the article ends on a less negative, prophesying note: the *Yunyagiyya* will eventually wake up and act in the country's best interest. Yusuf goes more extreme and public in his attack of the military in another article published on November 30, 2013, “Are You a Revolutionary or Are You Sawsan?” Due to its biting criticism of the military, the article was not cleared for publication by *al-Shorouk*. Yusuf published it on his website instead.<sup>26</sup>

### **The Contours & Challenges of the Alternative Current**

Through a brief snapshot of a few newspaper articles, Abdul Rahman Yusuf offers readers and spectators a microcosm of the issues, methodology, and structural weaknesses and opportunities facing a rising alternative political-intellectual current in Egypt. The non-MB, non-military current, as viewed solely through the focused lens of Abdul Rahman Yusuf, is not anchored in an

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<sup>26</sup> Abdul Rahman Yusuf Website, “*Inta thawri willa Sawsan?* [Are You a Revolutionary or Are You Sawsan?]” <http://arahman.net/menu-types/1602-2013-11-30-08-17-57> (accessed December 5, 2013). In a different article published on December 7, 2013, and titled “*al-`Azil wa`l-ma`zoul* [The Impeacher and the Impeached,]” Yusuf goes back to his anti-Morsi position and defends it while simultaneously attacking military action <http://arahman.net/menu-types/1605-2013-12-08-06-38-07> (accessed December 9, 2013). His articles either react to events or to his audience's feedback. Yusuf also denounces Egyptian media in his latest articles. He further announces his recent move to a new online newspaper, *Arabi 21*. Yusuf's shift to *Arabi 21* is most likely a reaction to *al-Shorouk*'s ban of his “Sawsan” article. See <http://arabi21.com/a-2/a-299/708047-a>.

ideological setting; presents no clear agenda; it is reactive in nature; and simply lacks the unity and leadership that would allow it to compete with the dominant forces in Egyptian society: the military and the MB.

Abdul Rahman Yusuf embodies the obscurity plaguing many members of the non-MB, non-military group. Yusuf's ideological orientation is unclear. He presents himself as religiously oriented in one article yet socialist-leaning in another. It could very well be that he believes in strands of both. While this is certainly viable for Yusuf and any other intellectual, this ideological amalgamation detracts from building a support base or allowing for a larger following like that of the MB, for instance. Openness to ideas is a hallmark of liberals; however, this same openness and fluidity confuses more than it helps attract Egyptians in search for a consistent and clear model that comfortably pulls them away from an attachment to either the MB or military establishments or a move towards general apathy. If the alternative current aims to be liberal, what does liberal mean to it? What are its core beliefs? What are its non-negotiable traits? Starting with a clear ideological affinity and an identification of a solid model coupled with well-articulated definitions of and positions on basic concepts, such as religion, freedom, social justice, and equality will go a long way in bolstering a political-intellectual alternative in post-Mubarak, post-Morsi Egypt.

Once Yusuf clarifies his ideological affinity, he needs a detailed reform program that engages and incites others in ways that go beyond the current generalities that characterize his newspaper articles under consideration. This program is needed the most in times of uncertainty, like the post-July 2013 coup environment that Yusuf is writing under. Instead, Yusuf's discourse is reactive in nature, whether to the MB at the beginning or to the military in the second and third articles. Building an alternative current that is only reacting to the statements and activities of foes fulfills a limited objective. It temporarily deters the other camp under attack if Yusuf presents a convincing argument; however, it does not advance one's own intellectual-political program. There is no need to refrain from criticizing other platforms. However, engaging in such activity alone without simultaneously and proactively holding and propagating a sustained program will not help build a popular base for an alternative current.

The glaring lack of leadership in the non-MB, non-military camp is a major handicap that plagued the efforts of the youth in the immediate post-uprising era and continues to plague any serious contenders to the military and the MB. Muhammad el-Baradei, the founder of the Constitution Party, initially played this role. He certainly was the leader of the group that Yusuf was a member of under

both the Mubarak and the immediate post-Mubarak eras. However, Baradei has stepped out of the scene, resigning from the vice presidency after the military shootings of MB supporters in August 2013. Since then, various individuals speak out against both the MB and the military, but there is neither coordination nor a unifying vision between them.

### **Conclusion – Toward a Stronger Foundation for an Alternative Current**

Egyptians are neither the hostages of the military nor the MB. While there are many voices who either support the military or the MB, I have shown that there are other voices who politically and intellectually defy both routes. The rise and visibility of an alternative current in contemporary Egypt is a reality. While not representative of all Egyptians by any means, the writings of Abdul Rahman Yusuf are an important vignette into one form of public discourse on contemporary Egyptian political developments. Yusuf combines features found in both camps: religious upbringing and MB familiarity as well as a liberal outlook that favors the separation of religion and state. Yusuf's familiarity with and experience of both the MB and military regimes allows him to revolt against both routes in his writings and pave the way for another alternative. Many other members of civil society are calling for the fulfillment of Egypt's aspirations for freedom, social justice, and economic prosperity through a non-military, non-MB route. In order for this alternative route to take hold, Yusuf and other members of this cohort need to go beyond attacks of the MB and the military and express their ideology, philosophy, and program to be able to offer an intellectual blueprint that can incite a real uprising against the status quo.

It will take the will of the likes of Abdul Rahman Yusuf to increase awareness and build strong foundations for resilient options that could stand against two powerful and organized entities like the Egyptian MB and the military. A firmly entrenched non-military, non-MB current is in the making. It has faced and will continue to face hurdles and challenges yet its appeal should not be underestimated.

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### **Appendix I – First Surveyed Newspaper Article:**

“Abdul Rahman Yusuf al-Qaradawi Writes – ‘Excuse me my beloved father, Morsi has no Legitimacy’”

Sunday, July 7, 2013

*al-Yawm al-Sabi`*<sup>27</sup>

My great and virtuous father, the erudite Shaikh Yusuf Al-Qaradawi,

I have known you to be an honorable scholar and an erudite jurist: a person who knows the secrets of shari`a, delves into and reflects upon its purposes (*maqasid al-shari`a*) and heritage. We are witnessing critical moments in Egypt's history in the present time: the Egypt that you are so proud of and love to the extent of choos[ing as a] title for your memoirs, *Ibn al-Qarya wa-'l-Kuttab* [*The Son of the Village and Madrasa*]. Today, I address the Egyptian in you that was born in the village and raised in the *madrasa*.

My virtuous, great father: I am your student before being your son. It appears to me and to many of your disciples and students that the current moment, in all its complications and confusions, is wholly novel and different from the experience of your whole generation. Your generation did not know real, popular revolutions and was not close to the will of the people and the uncommon thinking of youth. Because of this probable reason, what you have recently written does not reflect what your graciousness taught me or what you raised me on.

Each drop of blood of mine testifies to your knowledge and virtue, my precious father. You issued a *fatwa* yesterday ordaining the support of the (rightly)<sup>28</sup> impeached President Muhammad Morsi. The *fatwa* states –

“For the last thirty years, if not sixty years, Egyptians were deprived from electing their own president and from submitting to a person of their own choice until God empowered them, allowing [Egyptians] to freely choose a president. [The people] chose President Muhammad Morsi and gave him an oath of allegiance and covenant to obey him in hardship and ease (*`usr wa yusr*) and in matters they either condone or support. All persons acquiesced [to Morsi's authority], whether they were civilians, military personnel, or rulers and ruled. Among those who consented [to Morsi] was

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<sup>27</sup> For the original Arabic text, see Abdul Rahman Yusuf, “*Abdul Rahman Yusuf al-Qaradawi yaktub – `afwan abi al-habib, Morsi la shari`yya lahu* [Abdul Rahman Yusuf al-Qaradawi Writes – ‘Excuse me my beloved father, Morsi has no legitimacy].” <http://www.youm7.com/News.asp?NewsID=1152641#.Upy9LWthiSP> (accessed November 03, 2013).

<sup>28</sup> This is the author's word and parenthesis. At other instances, I will include the original Arabic in parenthesis if the translation does not convey the original text's complete spirit. Words in brackets are my own.

Colonel General Abdel Fattah al-Sisi, who was Defense Minister in [PM] Hisham Qandil's government. He [Sisi] took an oath and solemnly pledged allegiance, vowing to adhere [to] and obey President Morsi (*al-sam` wa-'l-ta'a`*). He remained loyal to his oath until we saw him suddenly change and transform himself from a mere minister to becoming the upholder of ultimate power. He justified deposing his legitimate president by repealing his oath and siding with one group of citizens against another group, claiming that he is with the numerically superior side.”

My dear father, the comparison between Morsi and Mubarak is unacceptable. This is our generation's view, which is not understood by previous generations probably. My sir, our generation did not endure despotism for sixty or thirty years as you stated. Rather, it is your generation that [endured despotism] in the name of patience. As to us, we are a generation that learned to prevent the seeds of despotism from flourishing on Earth. This is why we decided to uproot despotism in its first year before it grows because it is a malicious tree that needs to be uprooted.

If Morsi committed one percent of his predecessors' actions, we would not remain quiet. This is our right. We will not fall into the trap of comparison to the past sixty years. I learned from you that Muslims must abide by their stipulations [the rules they set upon themselves]. Didn't you say,

“If the leader (*imam*) agreed to abide by the majority opinion and was given an oath of allegiance on that basis, he must legally abide by what he committed to. It is not permissible for him to negate this condition after assuming power and declare that consultation (*shura*) is optional and not binding on him. Let him [the leader] think whatever he wants; but if he was chosen by the elites [of society] (*ahl al-hall wa-'l` aqd*) on a condition, then he has no choice but to abide by it and execute its terms.<sup>29</sup> Muslims must abide by the conditions set upon them. Loyalty to one's covenant is a duty, and it is part of the believers' ethics. Hence, (and the words are still yours [father]) we believe that even if a group of people disagrees over the compulsory nature of *shura*, people can still enforce it

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<sup>29</sup> *Ahl al-hall wa-'l` aqd*, literally translated to ‘those that loosen and bind,’ is a diverse group that tends to be comprised of the elites of society, such as the *ulama* (religion), merchants (trade), and tribal heads. The ruler who would consult them on major decisions enables their decision-making capacity. This informal consultation process endows the decision with legitimacy and is a form of symbolic representation, since it assumes that each group speaks on behalf of its larger constituency. There is no singular definition or uniform application of the concept. It is, rather, fluid and adaptive to the context.

upon the guardian if they stipulated so when contracting him into his position of leadership. He must abide by *shura* and its results and he needs to adopt the opinion of the majority, whether it is an absolute [majority] or [a] restricted one. On this basis, differences cease” (Quoted from *Public Policy in accordance with the Shari`a (siyasa shari`yya) in Light of Sharia & its Purposes*, page 116, Wahba Publishers).<sup>30</sup>

My gracious and great father, we gave an oath of allegiance to the man [Morsi], and he promised us [that he would reach] consensus [with all political groups when drafting] the constitution, but he did not fulfill [his promise]. He also promised consensus when forming the government, but he did not fulfill [his promise]. He promised that people would participate in governing the country and not rule it single-handedly. He did not fulfill his promise. He pledged to be a president for all Egyptians, and he did not fulfill his promise. More important than all of that is our oath to him to serve as the Egyptian president of the revolution. Instead, he declares, when addressing the police corps on the anniversary of the revolution, that “you are the heart of the January revolution!!!” He promised to purify the police corps, and he did not fulfill that promise either. Based on which of these [unfulfilled] promises do you want us to uphold him [as our president given his negation of all his oaths to us]?

He reconciled with the deep state, the remnants [of the past regime: *fulul*], Mubarak’s businessmen, and with all underlying evils of bygone eras. He even tried to enlist all of these groups to his service and bring them closer to his *jama`a*. He aided the unjust ones with their injustices, leading God to empower them against him.

My father and teacher: I memorize a statement you taught me which I will never forget as long as I live. It surpasses all statements. This statement has become my sacrosanct principle and guided me in understanding both Islam and public policy. You told my whole generation and told me: “freedom before shari`a!”<sup>31</sup> With these words, I was and continue to be one of the revolutionaries who demands freedom for all people. I demanded this freedom in [Tahrir] Square on January 25<sup>th</sup> and on June 30<sup>th</sup> as well. I did not concern myself with calling for shari`a – it is not my duty to enforce shari`a on

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<sup>30</sup> There is no agreed-upon translation of *siyasa shari`yya*. I translate it as public policy in accordance with shari`a, but I also like Baber Johansen’s translation of the term, “political function of the sacred law.”

<sup>31</sup> This echoes a similar statement given by Kuwaiti MB leader, Tareq al-Suwaidan. Suwaidan’s statement elicited sharp, critical responses in the GCC. Qaradawi presented the idea before Suwaidan introduced it in a 2012 conference held in Kuwait.

anyone. Rather, I was busy inciting people to be free. To me, freedom and shari`a are the same. Did God not create people to be free?

My great father: in your *fatwa*, you appealed to General Sisi, all political parties, and to all seekers of freedom, justice, and dignity to unite and defend righteousness by reinstating President Morsi to his position, advising him continuously, and putting forth well-guided solutions [for Egypt's problems]. What if I tell you, sir, they have been doing that for a whole year, and the man did not respond!

What if I tell you, my teacher, that some of his own advisors, whom he chose himself and whom we trust and [who] are known for their knowledge, religiosity, loyalty, and nationalism, have all left him after discovering that they were nothing more than democratic décor and a façade covering up for a new despotism. The man was not listening to anyone, except his *jama`a* and Supreme Guide (*murshid*). The MB and its *murshid* were never honest advisors or virtuous supporters. Instead, they supported him in what did not lead to the betterment of Egypt, whether in spiritual or worldly affairs. They pushed him into a confrontation with the people by [Morsi] siding with the MB over [the people] and by justifying and passing his decisions unilaterally, leading to much bloodshed and sedition. Egyptians and revolutionaries did not pay Morsi an oath of allegiance for all of this.

My sir and the 'crown of my head' (*taj rasi*) [denoting utmost respect to his father], what if I tell you that I myself participated in various efforts for reconciliation [between the President and the opposition before the June 30 demonstrations], but the president, his supporters and clan (*`ashira*) proudly rebuffed our gestures.<sup>32</sup> We met with all parties during [those] hard times. No one doubted the legitimacy of the president back then. Reconciliation was possible with simple concessions [from Morsi], but unfortunately there were no responsible statesmen. We were confronted with a group of greedy men intent on domination, regardless of the consequences.

We all wished that the president completed his term and [wished] for the success of the first elected civilian president experiment. But he insisted on delegitimizing himself by himself! He did that by blindly following those who controlled him and for his allegiance to those who have no legitimacy or an oath of allegiance or a covenant [with the Egyptian people, such as the *murshid*]. These same people are now emotionally blackmailing their

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<sup>32</sup> He is mocking Morsi's use of *`ashira* when addressing the Egyptian people instead of using citizens.

followers and prominent figures into falling for blasphemy by calling for the protection of legitimacy and shari`a!

The reality of what happened in Egypt in the past year is that the Muslim Brotherhood treated the Egyptian presidency as a division within the *jama`a*. We paid and will continue to pay the price of this action with spilled blood and malice between the sons of our one country!

My teacher and sir, I respect every word you have written. I know your good intentions. However, my reservation is that your opinion was not a political one that could either be right or wrong: an opinion written by the “citizen” Yusuf Al-Qaradawi, the son of the village and *kuttab*. Rather, it was a legal *fatwa* provided by the *wasatiyya imam* “shaikh”<sup>33</sup> Yusuf Al-Qaradawi. I am hurt, confused, and amazed by this [*fatwa*].

The time has come for this *umma* to undergo the arduous path and draw the boundaries between that which is religious and that which is political, so we know when it is time for jurists to speak and when it is time for politicians to speak!

In conclusion, I am the one person who knows you the most in this world, and [I know] that you would not sell your religion for worldly affairs. You are keener on upholding righteousness and justice than upholding a sect or ideology. The details of all the events we went through are plenty and too complicated, and you are busy with your grand scholarly endeavors. I know, father, that your fatwa came in defense of the right of Egyptians to freely choose who represents them without reverting back to the domination of military rule. We will never allow the military to rule us again. My comments are a token of gratitude to you and a thankful testimony to your beautiful knowledge that you bestowed upon me.

Believe me, my gracious, patient father. If we apply what you wrote in your books on the community and the state (*al-umma wa-`l-dawla*), the jurisprudence of priorities, the jurisprudence of reality, the jurisprudence of the purposes of shari`a, and [on] freedom that comes before shari`a, as you taught us, then you would be the first to call for revolting against the unjust [person] who betrayed his covenant, leaked state secrets, and imprisoned his opponents for supposedly defaming him. He [Morsi] left [his opponents with]

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<sup>33</sup> These are the author’s quotation marks on both citizen and shaikh.

the [same level of] freedoms that Mubarak left them with [by stating]: “say what you want and I will do what I want.”

My great father: there are hundreds of thousands of pure and loyal youth in Rabia al-`Adawiyya Square. They are a powerful national force that will be misused by a group of lowly stakeholders and merchants of blood by pitting them against other Egyptians in a losing battle that is neither national nor Islamic in nature. It is not even a battle against an enemy, and it is certainly not a battle that will emerge with a victor. All who enter this battle will lose. Millions of loyal souls will be facing a doomed destiny as a price for the greed of a few persons who are seeking more power and domination. We are in such a dire need for rational words that contain truth [and] that preserve pure blood from wastefully spilling.

The popular will of June 30 is nothing but an extension of [the] January 25 [revolution]. If some of the past regime remnants (*fulul*) thought that what happened [on June 30] is a prelude to their return [to power], then I tell your grace, in all confidence, they are dreaming. This exceptional generation will stand firm against any unjust person and will never let its revolution slip away until it reaches its goals. They will stand firm against any unjust person, whether he is wearing a helmet [denoting the military], a hat [denoting foreigners], or a turban [denoting `ulama and/or the MB].

My beloved father, you raised us, your sons, on freedom and independent thinking. I am proud of you as much as you are proud of us and beyond. I know that this article will push some individuals to castigate me with disobedience [and ingratitude towards you]. But I could not remain silent over what you stated as a fatwa and not as an opinion. You accustomed us to being free and independent. You warned us repeatedly against blind imitation, following others without evidence, and for [aimlessly] trailing behind leaders and symbols [of power]. You taught us to proclaim the word of truth, even if it goes against our parents, our relatives, and us. You taught us to know [the true quality of] men through their commitment to truth and not know the truth through [uncritically accepting what is claimed as truth from] men.

Our family deserves to be proud of not raising distorted copies of one another. Our family produced independent figures, unlike many other families that claim to be liberal and free, yet we only see carbon copies [of liberal family members] without differences.

My great father: these words are some of what you instilled in us. It is originally your ideas and words and some of your grace and jurisprudence. It is your precious merchandise returning to you.<sup>34</sup>

And God is behind all purposes. Long live Egypt for Egyptians and with Egyptians.

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## Appendix II – Second Surveyed Newspaper Article:

“Al-Yunyagiyya”<sup>35</sup>  
*al-Shorouk*, November 23, 2013

Who are *al-Yunyagiyya*? They are, in sum, a group of Egyptians who took to the streets on June 30, 2013; [a group] who supported what happened on July 3<sup>rd</sup> and [who supported] the bloodshed that took place afterwards. They have distinctive features. [One] of these features is their belief that God gave them the right to speak on behalf of those that descended to the streets [protested] that day; that is, [speaking on behalf of] over forty million persons (according to them).<sup>36</sup>

Another feature of *al-Yunyagiyya*: they hate Islamists and [Muslim] Brothers more than they loathe tyranny. They do not mind supporting tyrants in their oppression of the Egyptian people as long as the tanks [of the tyrants] crush

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<sup>34</sup> This phrase recalls a Quranic verse, Q12:65, that presents another narrative of a father and a son, Jacob and Joseph, and uses the same terminology: “And when they opened their baggage, they found their merchandise returned to them. They said, “O our father, what [more] could we desire? This is our merchandise returned to us. And we will obtain supplies for our family and protect our brother and obtain an increase of a camel's load; that is an easy measurement.” Translation by Sahih International from <http://quran.com/12> (accessed November 29, 2013).

<sup>35</sup> *Yunya*, or June, is expanded into *Yunyagiyya* with the literal translation being ‘those of June,’ in reference to the supporters of the June 30, 2013 coup. I keep the term without translation throughout the article, as the author defines his term in the text. For the Arabic text, see Abdul Rahman Yusuf Website, “*al-Yunyagiyya*,” <http://www.arahman.net/menu-types/1601-2013-11-23-07-30-12> (Accessed November 20, 2013).

<sup>36</sup> The author inserts the parenthesis and the words within the parenthesis. I insert any additional words in brackets to smoothen the translation.

the Islamists. For the sake of that [excluding Islamists], they [*al-Yunyagiyya*] commit the same mistakes committed by *al-Ikhwan* when the [latter] were in power. But theirs [*Yunyagiyya*'s mistakes] are exponentially multiplied [when compared to MB mistakes].

The *Yunyagi* creature sees no harm in a constitution that sanctions military trials for civilians. If you are bold enough and dare tell him [the *Yunyagi*] that the Minister of Defense-related [constitutional] article makes the *Yunyagi* constitution hundred times worse than the 2012 Constitution [of the MB], you will hear justifications from him that are worse than those given by *al-Ikhwan* [when defending] their constitution. If you insist on objecting, you will be deemed, in his opinion, a traitor or a member of sleeper cells.

Most of them are breed of humans that never said 'no' in their whole lives until the advent of the January Revolution. They are now depriving the people of all the gains of the January Revolution. Most of these people have no history [they are unknowns], and most of them were close to centers of power, whether corrupt or [supposed] father-like authorities.

Most of these *Yunyagiyya* deeply hate the January Revolution. It is the revolution that called for the return of rights to its rightful owners: the poor people. Most of these *Yunyagiyya* are rich and accustomed to wealth and luxury. They do not mind the death of thousands for the sake of bringing back their opulent lifestyle, their joyous nights, and the profits [they gain during their] daytime [activities].

They do not care for democracy or freedoms or human rights. Life, freedom, and social equality are not important to them. To the majority of them, Egypt is merely an investment fund containing stocks, bonds, and real estate. [To them,] Egypt is not a homeland (*watan*) worth dying for.

The *Yunyagiyya* accuse their opponents with two matters: first, belonging to *al-Ikhwan* (or the sleeper cells that serve them [*al-Ikhwan*]); second, being disconnected from reality. Ironically, both of these accusations apply to *al-Yunyagiyya*. Through their [*Yunyagiyya*'s] stupidity, they are proving that the MB could not have done any better than what they already did [when in power]. Their [*Yunyagiyya*'s] racist constitution is a great testimony to that.<sup>37</sup> Therefore, their actions serve *al-Ikhwan*! Regarding the second accusation, [it

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<sup>37</sup> Given the striking parallels between both constitutions in their curtailment of freedoms, the author notes that the military regime's actions validate MB's actions when the latter were in power.

is they who are out of touch with reality] because they do not feel the diminishing popularity of the coup, and they do not sense the catastrophe of Egypt's international isolation and the gravity awaiting Egyptian officials abroad.

I protested on June 30. I called people to protest (*al-nuzul*). I do not regret that at all. I used my constitutional right in objecting to a president who lost, in my opinion, his legitimacy. But I am not one of the arrogant *Yunyagiyya* who looks down on people and is detached from reality.

I protested because I love Egypt and not because I hate *al-Ikhwan*.

I am not one of those who eat smoked salmon [translated from French] or kabob in three-hour protests where people are having fun watching air show parades.

*Yunyagiyya* creatures abandoned the streets and let the tanks occupy [the streets instead]. They ask you to vote favorably for the constitution for the sake of stability. They continue watching their [TV] channels that only show what they want to see, and they remain isolated from reality. Present events, however, will soon prompt their wake-up call.

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