

# Egypt's Looming Competitive Theocracy

by [Eric Trager \(/experts/eric-trager\)](#)

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## ABOUT THE AUTHORS



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## The currently cordial relationship between Egypt's Salafists and the Muslim Brotherhood isn't likely to last: their mutual pursuit of an Islamic state belies their deep ideological and behavioral differences.

In the aftermath of his November 22, 2012 constitutional declaration seizing virtually unchecked executive power, Egyptian President Mohamed Morsi had few political allies more stalwart than the Salafists. As non-Islamists poured into Tahrir Square to protest Morsi's edict, the long-bearded Salafists locked arms with Morsi's shorter-bearded Muslim Brotherhood colleagues, hastily drafting a new -- and quite Islamist -- constitution while also coordinating a series of counter-protests to overwhelm Morsi's detractors. Even amidst the bloody clashes on December 4, when the Muslim Brotherhood sent its cadres to attack those who had gathered outside the presidential palace to protest Morsi's decree, the Salafists remained in Morsi's corner. "If you are capable of using violence there will be others who are capable of responding with violence," declared prominent Salafist Shaykh Yasser Bourhamy, who blamed the civil unrest on those "saying words that were insulting to the president" during an Al-Jazeera interview.... ❖

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