



An Analysis of the Social Factors that Resulted in the 2011 Social Unrest in Egypt, Integrated with a Personality Profiler of its Revolutionary Leadership

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Abstract

At the beginning of 2011, the majority of Egyptian citizens ended the thirty-year authoritarian regime of President Mubarak. From the full of celebrations day of 25th January Revolution till the beginning of July 2013 a lot of political drama overflowed the turbulent Egyptian society, leading to the overthrow of the first legitimately elected President M. Morsi. General Al-Sisi took over the presidential duties in 2014, and the whole world is still struggling to determine whose actions favor and which undermine the democracy and/or the interests of Egyptian people. In an effort to research the social factors that prepared and resulted in the political activism and unrest in Egypt over these latest years, this study has been developed on two main axes. The first one applies an analytical model focusing on the critical drivers towards social unrest, especially adjusted for the data referring to Eastern Mediterranean and Middle Eastern societal characteristics. The second axis then takes advantage of the model's assessments and proceeds with the narrative interpretation of the facts through a personality profiler for M. Morsi. In this way the research questions meet answers, conclusions and policy implications that combine, in terms of political psychology, both personality-based approaches to politics as well as structural and institutional role constraints restricting the range of initiatives available for leadership decision making.

Keywords: Egypt; social unrest; political Islam; secularism; Arab Spring

1. Introduction

At the beginning of 2011, the majority of Egyptian citizens ended the thirty-year authoritarian regime of President Mubarak. From the full of celebrations day of 25th January Revolution till the beginning of July 2013 a lot of political drama overflowed the turbulent Egyptian society, leading to the

overthrow of the elected President Mohammad Morsi. The political movement supporting him, namely the Muslim Brotherhood, suffered a severe crackdown, civil rights and freedom of the press heavily and rapidly declined, while all the youngsters who actively and optimistically brought the revolution of 25th January 2011 at the front were surprised to realize that both the revolution they dreamed of as well as the follow up military reaction proved to be out of control and distant to their original expectations. General Al-Sisi took over the presidential duties in 2014, and the whole world is still struggling to determine whose actions favor and which undermine the democracy and/or the interests of Egyptian people (Sadowski, Carvacho, and Zick 2017).

Before the 25th of January 2011 Revolution the political participation was a privilege of a few ruling elites at an extent wider and deeper compared to a similar situation that Turkey experienced for long, but contained and called "deep state" a decade before Egypt's attempt to reform. Due to their 2011 unrest, Egyptians were in principle enabled to proceed into several forms of western-wise political freedom like elections, demonstrations, party founding, etc. (Asad 2012). However, researchers examine whether this so called Arab Spring indeed offered what was expected in terms of liberalization of politics as well as what forms of political participation were after all appreciated and embraced by the people, along with the prospective likely to appear in the future. The common ground though of any working hypothesis to be analyzed is that during 2013, the year President Morsi was finally ousted, the average citizens of this state have witnessed the whole range of decline in their political participation, the harsh political realities that undermine peace and stability in Middle East, resulting in vicious cycles of violence and authoritarianism.

In an effort to research the social factors that prepared and resulted in the political activism and uprising in Egypt over these latest years, this study has been developed on two main axes. The first one applies an analytical model focusing on the critical drivers towards social unrest, especially adjusted for the data referring to Middle Eastern societal characteristics. The second axis then takes advantage of the model's assessments and proceeds with the narrative interpretation of the facts through a personality profiler for M. Morsi. In this way the research questions meet answers, conclusions and policy implications that combine, in terms of political psychology, both personality-based approaches to politics as well as structural and institutional role constraints restricting the range of initiatives available for leadership decision making. This is in line with contemporary sociological role theory and modern personality theory that tend towards an integrated view of the of official roles' impact in interaction with leaders/agents' personalities. In other words, this paper attempts to set up a paradigm for combined examination of data analytics and the case study of an Egypt's presidential personality, highlighting the interoperability between leadership and political contexts (Cuhadar et al. 2017).

2. A Multi-Criteria Method for the Assessment of Social Unrest in Egypt

J. Karkazis (2011) introduced a multi-criteria approach for the analysis of the phenomenon of social unrest, focusing on three basic aspects of it: eruption, dissemination and sustainability (or reversely diffusion). The selection of the criteria of this approach is confined to available credible statistics for the specific time and spatial area; 2010 was considered the appropriate point of time reference just before the events in discussion take place. Egypt and thirteen more Balkan, Middle East and North Africa countries were assessed according to this approach (Table 1).

2.1 Assessment of the risk of social unrest eruption

Regarding the aspect of eruption of social unrest, we employ the following group of three criteria determining the severity of social discontent and consequently the possibility (risk) of social unrest eruption: Unemployment, Poverty and Corruption (Table 1).

Table 1. Social unrest eruption criteria for Eastern Mediterranean and Middle Eastern countries (made by the authors).

Unemployment		Poverty		Corruption	
Yemen (H)	35.0	Yemen (H)	45.2	Iran (H)	0.45
Libya (H)	30.0	Lebanon (H)	28.0	Yemen (H)	0.45
Iran (M)	14.6	Israel (M)	23.6	Libya (H)	0.45
Tunisia (M)	14.0	Algeria (M)	23.0	Syria (M)	0.40
Jordan (M)	13.4	Saudi (M)	22.0	Lebanon (M)	0.40
Turkey (M)	12.4	Greece (M)	20.0	Egypt (M)	0.36
Greece (M)	12.0	Egypt (M)	20.0	Algeria (M)	0.34
Saudi (M)	10.8	Iran (L)	18.0	Morocco (M)	0.29
Algeria (L)	9.9	Turkey (L)	17.1	Greece (M)	0.286
Morocco (L)	9.8	Morocco (L)	15.0	Tunisia (L)	0.23
Egypt (L)	9.7	Jordan (L)	14.2	Turkey (L)	0.227
Lebanon (L)	9.2	Syria (L)	11.9	Jordan (L)	0.21
Syria (L)	8.3	Libya (L)	7.4	Saudi (L)	0.21
Israel (L)	6.4	Tunisia (L)	3.8	Israel (L)	0.16

The above criteria express the intensity of the sense of socio-economic inequalities perceived by and of the economic stress imposed on the non-privileged groups of the respective societies. The source of unemployment (percentage of total population) and poverty (percentage of population below poverty level) criterion values was the 2010 CIA Fact Book. The source of corruption criterion values was the Corruption Perception Index (CPI) of the 2010 Report of Transparency International. Note that CPI expresses the level of corruption perception in regard with public officials and politicians (Transparency International 2010). According to Transparency International, corruption is “the abuse of entrusted power for private gain (Transparency International 2017)”. Since original CPI figures are directly related to the notion of “transparency” they increase in straight analogy with the level of transparency in a country. The corruption criterion values employed here are reversely analogous to CPI figures (1/CPI figure) ranging in the interval. The above transformation does not alter ranking and distributional characteristics of CPI figures.

The values of the above three criteria are classified as “high” (H), “medium” (M) and “low” (L) on the basis of their ranked position and of the deviations among them with the aim to create distinct and meaningful classification groups characterized by high, medium and low risk of social discontent eruption. **According to the above assessment a short time before Morsi’s election as President of Egypt the country was running a moderate risk of social unrest eruption.**

2.2 Assessment of the risk of social unrest dissemination

The second group of criteria introduced by (Karkazis 2011) regards the access to information/news compilation and dissemination rate which, in turn, influences the social unrest dissemination. These criteria were: Internet Coverage, Freedom of Press and Urbanization (Table 2). The first criterion refers to internet users per 100 inhabitants and expresses the power of mass technologies of communication to disseminate news worldwide. The source of relevant values is the Internet World Statistics for 2010. The second criterion refers to Press Freedom Index (PFI) for 2010. PFI gives an annual grading and classification of countries, prepared and published by the organization of Reporters Without Borders (Reporters Without Borders – For Freedom of Information 2016). PFI is set up on a “survey asking questions about direct attacks on journalists and the media as well as other indirect sources of pressure against the free press”. Since original PFI figures are directly related to the “attacks” on press these figures are reversely analogous to the level of press freedom enjoyed in a country. To establish a straight analogy between the values employed by this criterion and the press freedom levels we use instead the following transformed figures: 1/PFI. The third criterion (urbanization) refers to a measure of public proximity to mass gathering facilities which can be found only in urban areas. This type of mass social proximity acts as an amplifier of the socio-political signals derived during the compilation and dissemination of news, especially political ones.

Table 2. News Dissemination Criteria for Eastern Mediterranean and Middle Eastern countries (made by the authors).

Internet Coverage		Urbanization		Press Freedom	
Israel (H)	71.6	Israel (H)	92	Greece (H)	0.053
Greece (H)	46.2	Lebanon (H)	87	Lebanon (H)	0.049
Turkey (H)	45.0	Saudi (H)	82	Israel (H)	0.043
Iran (H)	43.2	Libya (M)	78	Jordan (M)	0.027
Saudi (M)	38.1	Jordan (M)	78	Egypt (M)	0.023
Tunisia (M)	34.0	Turkey (M)	69	Algeria (M)	0.021
Morocco (M)	33.0	Iran (M)	68	Morocco (M)	0.021
Jordan (M)	27.2	Tunisia (M)	67	Turkey (M)	0.020
Lebanon (M)	24.2	Algeria (M)	65	Saudi (L)	0.016
Egypt (M)	21.2	Greece (M)	61	Libya (L)	0.016
Syria (L)	17.7	Morocco (L)	56	Tunisia (L)	0.014
Algeria (L)	13.6	Syria (L)	54	Yemen (L)	0.012
Libya (L)	5.5	Egypt (L)	43	Syria (L)	0.011
Yemen (L)	1.8	Yemen (L)	31	Iran (L)	0.011

As with the previous assessment, the countries under consideration are classified into three groups according to whether they ran a high, medium or low risk of dissemination of social unrest. **On the basis of the second assessment a short time before Morsi's elevation to power Egypt was running a moderate risk of social unrest dissemination.**

2.3 Assessment of country's social unrest defusing capabilities

The aspect of sustainability of social unrest depends mainly on the capability of the political system of a country to defuse tensions and solve the problems causing the social unrest. Well established democratic institutions and a free press are the primal mechanisms for undertaking free and creative "discussions" within a society which, in principle, leads to a consensus on solutions of problems causing social discontent, and therefore they defuse social unrest (De Smet 2015). On the other hand, the lack of such institutions makes the solutions of such problems much more difficult, contributing in this way to the sustainability of social unrest. Furthermore, the educational level of the citizens, involved in such "discussions" and decisions, determines to a large degree their quality and effectiveness, and as a consequence the "education" factor is crucial for defusing the social unrest.

On the basis of the above analysis, the following three criteria are employed for the assessment of social unrest defusing capabilities: Freedom of Press (as in the previous case), Democracy Index (DI) for 2010 and Education Index (EI) for 2007 (the most recent available data). DI is an index prepared and published by the Economist Intelligence Unit. Democracy Index measures the state of democracy in 167 countries (Economist Intelligence Unit 2010). The Economist Intelligence Unit's Democracy Index draws information from sixty indicators categorized in five sections: electoral process and pluralism, civil liberties, government functionality, political participation and culture. EI is compiled by U.N. in its annual Human Development Reports (United Nations Development Programme Human Development Reports 2016). The Education Index is calculated by the adult literacy rate, on a two-thirds weighting ratio, while the combination of primary, secondary, and tertiary gross enrollment ratio (GER) is based on the rest one-third weighting. The adult literacy rate indicates reading and writing abilities, while the GER indicates levels of education from the kindergarten to the postgraduate education (Table 3).

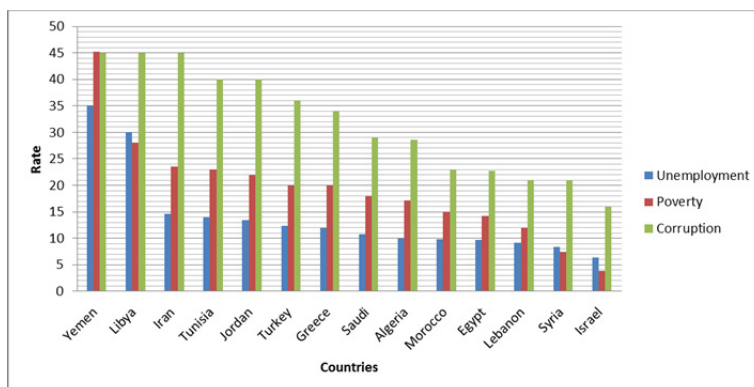
Table 3. Social Unrest Defusing Capabilities Criteria for Eastern Mediterranean and Middle Eastern countries (made by the authors).

Press Freedom		Democracy Index		Education Index	
Greece (H)	0.053	Greece (H)	7.92	Greece (H)	0.981
Lebanon (H)	0.049	Israel (H)	7.48	Israel (H)	0.947
Israel (H)	0.043	Lebanon (M)	5.82	Libya (M)	0.898
Jordan (M)	0.027	Turkey (M)	5.73	Lebanon (M)	0.875
Egypt (M)	0.023	Morocco (L)	3.79	Jordan (M)	0.870
Algeria (M)	0.021	Jordan (L)	3.74	Turkey (M)	0.828
Morocco (M)	0.021	Algeria (L)	3.44	Saudi (M)	0.828
Turkey (M)	0.020	Egypt (L)	3.07	Iran (M)	0.793
Saudi (L)	0.016	Tunisia (L)	2.79	Syria (M)	0.773
Libya (L)	0.016	Yemen (L)	2.64	Tunisia (M)	0.772
Tunisia (L)	0.014	Syria (L)	2.31	Algeria (M)	0.748
Yemen (L)	0.012	Libya (L)	1.94	Egypt (L)	0.697
Syria (L)	0.011	Iran (L)	1.94	Yemen (L)	0.579
Iran (L)	0.011	Saudi (L)	1.84	Morocco (L)	0.574

As with the previous assessments the countries under consideration are classified into three groups according to their capabilities to defuse social unrest: the countries running a high risk (L) of social unrest sustainability (or equivalently having low capabilities for social unrest diffusion), these running a medium risk (M) and those running a low risk (H) for unrest sustainability. **On the basis of the third assessment a short time before M. Morsi’s elevation to power Egypt was running a high risk of social unrest sustainability.**

2.4 Overall assessment

On the basis of the above three multi-criteria assessment analysis, Egypt was running a medium to high risk of social unrest eruption, dissemination and sustainability. All factors examined contributed with a high share of influence on the preparation of the uprising; especially press freedom, democracy and education indicators revealed an institutional sociopolitical order with high likelihood of peace and stability interruptions. The diagrams below present in a comparative way the medium to high risks for the unrest activities launch (Diagram 1). However, the data themselves only indicate the “readiness” of the society to react. Looking for the trigger to spark the revolution, the research drives to the need for a complementary analysis concerning persons and parties in deep conflict that form long running ruling elites like the Egyptian religious and military ones. Around 2011, the wind of change was blowing strong in plenty of Arab Spring inspired countries; Egypt though took the lead of the reforms sharpness and intensity due to its leadership particularities as they further discussed below (Fiedler and Osiewicz 2015).



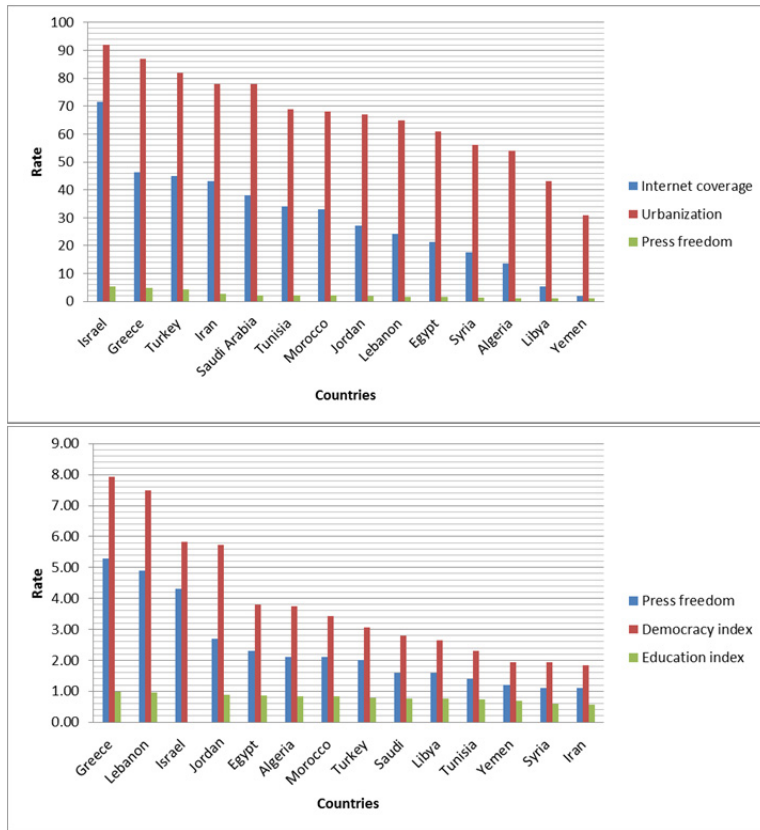


Diagram 1. The diagrams above present in a comparative way the medium to high risks for the Egypt’s unrest activities launch (made by the authors).

3. Religion and State Relationship

In that occasion, religion’s intervention in politics has been proved to be the major challenge after the 25th of January Revolution, since the Egyptian liberals supporters of secularism soon expressed skepticism for the success of the Muslim Brotherhood’s “Freedom and Justice” Party in the 2011 elections. The apogee of political turmoil came up a year later, in the fall of 2012, when Morsi’s government backed by an Islamic-dominated Parliament proceeded towards the first major constitution amendment. In the context of middle-eastern societies it is well known that the line between religion and politics dominates the political debates and provides the interpretation of all historical events over numerable decades and beyond (Agrama 2012). In the Egyptian past, Nasser had also used the religion to maintain a social mix of secular-socialist regime and traditionalist populations. His successor, Anwar Sadat, enhanced an Islamic revival against the former socialist regime (Kassem 2004). Mubarak’s regime was described as schizophrenic “secularreligious” on the basis that its authority was sourced in both religious and secular nature of governance, practically driving in quasi-religious state discourses ruling over both the religious institutions and political parties (Bayat 2017).

The skepticism mentioned above concerning the 2012 anti-secularist President’s decrees triggered another wave of protests, this time against the Morsi’s government, causing multiple destabilizing consequences, like the country’s stock exchange plummets, debates and tension among social and professional fractions. One of the most unfortunate historical moments for any

society happens when its members are almost evenly divided for and against strategic decisions, missions and visions. The edge of major social dichotomies is the cradle of civil wars and national disasters. Inevitably, the optimism of Arab Spring was succeeded by violent showdowns between masses supporting and opposing President Mohamed Morsi (De Smet 2015).

4. Towards an Anti-Secularist Constitutional Change

At the end of 2012, protesters were storming Muslim Brotherhood offices, and consequently several demonstrators died at the moment the President decrees were granting himself immunity from judicial revisions and further measures neutralizing the judges. After a few days another series of presidential orders were issued, guaranteeing unchecked powers to the President and assigning an Islamist committee with drafting the new Egyptian Constitution. Plenty of courtrooms then were shut down because of numerable striking and protesting judges. The Morsi-affiliated Freedom and Justice Party tried to relieve the tension by issuing a statement describing the decrees' temporary character, making clear though that the President had no intention to repeal the orders. A quote of that declaration was stating (The Globe and Mail Inc 2017): "The Freedom and Justice Party believes that the President's Decrees contained in his recent Constitutional Declaration fulfill many revolutionary goals demanded by all political, social and popular groups that participated in the January 25th revolution - for freedom, dignity and social justice, ... We faced, together, many obstacles during the tumultuous transitional period - obstacles made by former regime loyalists in order to discredit the revolution and halt its progress ..."

The famous Egyptian politician Mohamed El Baradei, former General Director of the International Atomic Energy Agency and once candidate for presidency, challenged Mr. Morsi to reject the trap of a "power grab," while the new generation of protesters were mocking the President calling him "Morsilini". Tahrir Square was once again populated by unrest demonstrators, while the clashes between security officers and rioters were taking place on a daily basis at the downtown of Cairo and elsewhere in the country. The signs of chaos were already apparent (Omar El 2012).

5. A Flashback to the President's Curriculum

Morsi was born in 1951 at a small and conservative town on the Nile Delta, El Adwah of the Sharqiya province, where his father was running a village farm, while his mother was taking care of their five children. Once M. Morsi mentioned that he could remember going to school on the back of a donkey (Economist 2012). After he moved to Cairo for studies, he earned a BA, with high honors, at the Cairo University in engineering. During his military service in the Egyptian Army served in the department of chemicals. In 1978, after he graduated Cairo University, was awarded a Master degree in metallurgy engineering. In 1982, because of a government scholarship he was awarded a Ph.D title at the University of Southern California, which accepted his research dissertation: "High-Temperature Electrical Conductivity and Defect Structure of Donor-Doped Al₂O₃." Then he was teaching as a professor of Engineering first in USA and then in Egypt (Times Higher Education 2012).

During his first steps in Egyptian politics he was a member of the anti-Israeli group, "Committee to Resist Zionism", but was mainly politically active in favor of the Muslim Brotherhood, winning a parliamentary position in the elections of 2000. In the 2005 elections, Brotherhood kept one-fifth of the seats in parliament with Morsi remaining in the parliament. It was then the first time he was arrested and jailed for seven months because of protesting in favor of reformist judges. At the 2010 elections, he had been assigned the role of the spokesman for the Islamists.

The Brotherhood website boasted once a cooperation of Dr. Morsi with a NASA space program, but Morsi later denied ever having worked for NASA. He was avoiding to show familiarity with western values, on the opposite he was taking dynamic stances against practices he thought of as blasphemous. In this way he initiated a boycott of an Egyptian phone company because its members had published a Disney cartoon feature covered with a Muslim face veil. Some years earlier, he authored an analysis for the Brotherhood's Guidance Council including a ban on female

as well as Christians candidates for the presidency (Bradley 2012). He had also formed a council of Islam theologians to offer law consulting for the Parliament on the law. In 2012, however, the newly-elected Morsi modernized his public statements during an interview for New York Times: "I will not prevent a woman from being nominated as a candidate for the presidency, ... This is not in the Constitution. This is not in the law. But if you want to ask me if I will vote for her or not, that is something else, that is different (Al Jazeera 2016) ."

It was anyway a first line imperative of the Muslim Brotherhood to spread over the society the core Islamic ethics. Yet along, they were positioned towards the middle, while the far-right area of conservative politics was reserved by the Salafis. Consequently, it has been noticed that as the Egypt's political compass was being redirected, the Brotherhood's ideological directions were presenting remarkable adjustability. According to the Georgetown University Professor of History Al-Arian (Al Jazeera 2016): "The 2011 revolution was a massive wake-up call ... Brotherhood all of a sudden had to take much more concrete positions on things. The more concrete their positions became, the far more likely it was that they weren't going to impose these ideological stances ..."

6. The Allegedly Uncharismatic Politician

Morsi was, as we mentioned above, democratically elected president in 2012. Although there were earlier statements by the Brotherhood that no presidential candidate should be proposed, the Brotherhood had to navigate and control the newly created political space. Inside his party, he came to office in a highly polarized environment, voted by the 51,7% electoral percent. Actually, he was the Muslim Brotherhood's candidate only when the first and most preferable candidate, Khairat El-Shater, was disqualified. In other words, his name emerged as the Muslim Brotherhood's "spare" candidate (Bassiouni 2016). The future president, however, supposedly responded to the public opinion request for an average person with a moderate leadership profile. In Turkey, there was a similar course identifying R.T. Erdogan as the original agent of popular wishes, although the latter progressively developed several "sultan" characteristics that probably increase the distance between his current hegemonic leadership and his past moderate political profile (Baltos, Vidakis, and Balodis 2017). During the Egyptian Arab Spring the then Turkish Prime Minister had enthusiastically addressed people with the "Rabaa sign" in several occasions, mainly during prayers at mosques. The Rabaa signal itself is figured by raising four fingers, praising in this way the victims of the fights during the anti-coup protests at Rabaa al-Adawiya Square. Websites, tweets and hashtags dealing with Rabaa were ranked among the most trend multimedia topics in Turkey and worldwide. In this way Turkish people supported civilians who held demonstrations in Egypt. Millions of users in Pakistan, Iraq, Bosnia, Indonesia, etc. exchanged messages favoring the Arab Spring and its spearhead model revolution in Egypt (Cambanis 2016).

In Egypt, however, many had written M. Morsi off as uncharismatic politician, assessing that he would not be able to guarantee massive support. No matter his personality prospective, the Brotherhood mobilized formidable resources behind the movement's political arm, the Freedom and Justice Party. Morsi was not considered, as we already mentioned, the most talented politician, but indeed for the first four months, his popularity was flying high, especially when he gave an oath at Tahrir Square, and stated that he never needed special security measures or to put on a bulletproof jacket. Just afterwards, he was "generous" enough to release 572 prisoners detained during the revolution by the army. It is worthy to mention though that he had also been jailed for the 2011 riots. Then he escaped along with other Brotherhood, Hamas and Hezbollah members (Lampard 2017).

7. The Egyptian Deep State Proved Alerted

According to an interview of Al-Arian to Al-Jazeera (Al Jazeera 2016), it was Morsi's mistake during his presidential service that he persuaded his fellows that he was performing in full control and responsibility, while he was indeed in the hands of the people monitoring Mubarak's previous regime. Morsi's efforts had harshly challenged a status quo erected by a deep state, deeper than the Turkish similarly called "deep state", whose main characteristic is the preservation of a particular but not liberal secularism, at any expense (Karkazis et al. 2017). Morsi's Minister of

Supply stated that plenty of military and socio-economic clusters were drastically undermining his initiatives, urging the gas stations to raise their prices and avoid the implementation of reforms initiated by that government.

The negative impact on Egypt's population was severely out of control. The value of the currency was decreasing, the unemployment was climbing higher, while IMF refused securing a loan in favor of Egypt. Al-Arian once again characteristically stated that "the Brotherhood never maintained political power, instead there was an illusion of power that they played along with". President Morsi himself in June 2013 admitted: "I have made mistakes", however, it was already late, the crowds were protesting again at Tahrir Square, rioting once in favor of and the other time against President's resignation (Lenze 2016).

8. Conclusions and Policy Implications

In the end the armed forces headquarters issued an ultimatum that M. Morsi should either step down or else would be overthrown. The latter happened on July 3, 2013; he was first sentenced into "house arrest" and afterwards he was jailed, while he is still facing charges that could end up to a death penalty execution. The day after the sentence, Brotherhood announced it would join the protests that would eventually topple almost two weeks later.

Two and a half years after he was jailed in the morning of January 28, 2011, a few days before the fall of President Mubarak, he was back in detention, escalated by a series of five verdicts in a row that prove the political extremism of the Egyptian political attitudes and behaviors. The military coup of July 2013 spread spasms of violence across Egypt, while more than a thousand of Morsi's supporters were killed in the bloodiest political era of Egyptian modern history. The epilogue of Morsi's government had been signaled before by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) when it announced a declaration stripping Morsi's government of authority (Sonn 2015). Two weeks later a new president, Adly Mansour, was officially sworn, followed up a year later by General Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi. Then, the Supreme Constitutional Court (SCC), originated back to Egypt's Mubarak-era, dissolved the lower House of Parliament, where Brotherhood was having till then the majority of deputies, and the consequent legislative control (Hamed 2014).

Summing up the lessons learned from the latest Egyptian political adventure, while outlining the horizon for further research and interpretations, we may highlight the following conclusions and policy implications:

- 2011 revolutionary democratization pledges quickly failed, given that the Muslim Brotherhood government faced strong resistance from the state apparatus and President Morsi turned into increasingly authoritarian ruling.
- He was criticized not only for authoritarian decision making, but also for an exclusivist approach to politics driving to social polarization, populism and sectarianism.
- The point of no return for his presidency came up in November 2012, when he awarded himself, by decree, sweeping executive powers. Previously, in August 2012, he had nullified the SCAF declaration, set up his own, allotting himself executive powers over the parliamentary ones, and selecting a new constitution-drafting committee.
- Another political overstep that caused huge reaction against Morsi's plans was the way he forced into retirement the Mubarak-era military elite, i.e. the institutional pillars of a secular political ruling over the latest decades.
- In the mid of such a socio-economic disorder the Brotherhood has been forced to accept the state crackdown; even more, multiple accusations were almost blacklisting it in Egypt as a terrorist organization. Although the Muslim Brotherhood declared an Islamic state gradually growing up and through peaceful means, many of its young members have been drawn to violence against the military regime which overthrew their president.
- Despite any criticism on Morsi's perception as a popular "persona politica", he nevertheless faced stiff internal and external opposition as well as the deep rifts of a characteristically divided post-revolutionary society (Herzberger 2006).
- The political status being so fragile, it took only twenty four hours for the engineer-turned-

politician both to be praised internationally for negotiating a ceasefire between Israelis and Palestinians in Gaza and to be nation-wide excoriated as the "new pharaoh" who established a dictatorship and betrayed the revolution against Hosni Mubarak. Not only foes but also friends were in fear that, despite their hopes and sacrifices, they would end up being governed by a "Mubarak with a beard" (Black 2012).

All the above concluded in a vicious cycle of political extremism, performed by dynamic leaderships, whose actions are somehow predetermined as long as they carry over heavy emotional loads and ideological legacies. This nation's destiny draws the attention of researchers worldwide, offers multi-faceted lessons learnt on how social structures interact with ambitious and decisive leaders, but the bottom line needs hopefully to be a balanced, knowledgeable and moderate approach, cultivating peace and prosperity for Egyptian people.

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