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Ruling Elite, State Formation and Democratic Transition's Obstruction since 2011: the two Cases of Egypt and Sudan Compared.

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Abstract

This paper aims to explain first round demands for democratization and reforms defeat in the aftermath of the Arab Spring. Taking the two examples of Sudan and Egypt, the paper argues that this round collided with the differences among the forces that sought change on the aspired change's form and extent. In contrast, there was a clear unity among forces opposing to change who mobilized their external allies. This is added, of course, to the unprecedented violence this movement was faced by. Moreover, hostility and antagonism between the liberal and Islamic currents created a discrepancy that was vital for the continuation of the authoritarian regimes. The paper adopts a model of conflict approach and proposes to focus on the behavior of political organizations and parties as "political actors" in the course of a revolution because they represent focal points that witness intense interaction between political behavior from "below and from up". In their pursuit of their seemingly irreconcilable interests, these political organizations constantly (re)position themselves and mobilize ideology, religion, political violence, government institutions, social and political movements and the economy. The paper is mostly based on secondary data in addition to the researchers' follow-up of the events in the last five years. It concludes that the political parties and organizations which have believed in, and sought, change have been deeply divided from the beginning and characterized by opportunism and constant tendencies to compromise on the process of political reforms it sought. That is why it was unable to invest in the sudden uprisings which sought to liquidate the authoritarian governments. These groups failed, more importantly, to form long-term blocs that would dismantle the ruling regimes and their alliances and advocate a better future to the masses that had already achieved an aborted change in Egypt and sought hard in Sudan.

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1. Introduction

After the "apparent failure" of the Arab Spring, despair and frustration spread across the Arab countries and across the forces that sought democratic changes and the liquidation of the corrupt ruling regimes that failed to bring about development and social justice. By so doing, these regimes increased the rates of poverty and progressively relied on oppressive apparatuses to circumvent any attempt for transparent and responsible governments. It succeeded to survive in some way after they changed their senior leaders in Egypt and Tunisia. Others managed to turn the table on the demands for reforms in Libya, Yemen and Syria by ushering these countries into a state of sectarian, tribal and civil wars that at present seems open to all possibilities.

Nevertheless, the Arab Spring was an important response to ordinary people who hoped for change and believed in it. The horizons of the political game within these countries were long blocked. The state agencies are, and were, controlled by comprador elite that are related to their welfare and privileges stemmed from the preservation of the distorted patterns of development and the underdeveloped economy that they oversee. These ruling elite have been increasingly entrenched in practices of corruption and repression and lost any creative responses to meet the dire situation in their countries. The Arab Spring was, moreover, an attempt by the ordinary people and their political organizations alike to open up more spaces for hope, which it seems to have vanished at the moment.

The price paid all at levels by the Arab masses to get rid of their corrupt and tyrannical rulers was very enormous indeed. More than 600,000 people, according to our estimations, were killed in civil wars or attempts made to curb various revolutions. More than 80% of them were in Syria alone. In addition to the widespread violations of citizens' basic human rights in an unprecedented systematic manner, added to this are forced displacement and migration, just to name a few. These existing regimes succeeded, moreover, to install in the people's mind that the price for seeking any kind of change would always be costly, such as this. Consequently, safety has become the goal of a wide range of citizens who have realized the cruelty of their political regimes and what they can do to remain in power. Therefore, a large number of observers and large sectors of the Arab citizens in these countries that witnessed revolutions, or did not witness it, concluded that this round of work on change has been aborted (Clark, 2013).

A number of authors, especially in some Western countries, have tried to explain this failure by relating it to the so-called "the Arab exception" (Fukuyama, 2015: 1) in the sense that the people of this region have not yet been able to get rid of history's burden and they are unable, therefore, to break into modernity. Their predominance traditional way of thinking, others would add, and their adherence to a religion that insists on controlling all aspects of its followers' lives, is one of the great obstacles in front of them. Further, there is a deep political culture that is far from liberalism, and accepting the idea of change as inevitable and lasting.

Apart from these non-objective interpretations, this paper argues that what appears to be a 'failure' at the present time in trying to bring about democratization and political reforms

at the political level in the Arab countries is due to the success of the ruling elite in thwarting these attempts by staying united against it and stirring various local, regional and international alliances so as to increase fears of change. In addition, the forces aspiring to change are characterized by deep hostilities to the extent that some preferred to ally themselves with the regimes and their counterrevolutions against rival groups seeking change. These forces have not focused on democratic transition and transformation processes and staying united to liquidate the ruling regimes. Instead, they went on to focus on inheriting the corrupt and totalitarian regimes that did not seem to be fully neutralized. In accordance with this analytical line, the paper also argues that middle class groups that sought change in the Arab region at the beginning of the Arab Spring revolutions failed to create long-term alliances between various forces that aspired to change, especially in the cases of Egypt and Sudan. That is why they were not able to advocate a better future for the various forces that participated in the revolutionary movements after 2010. This is added, of course, to aspects of political culture that tended to tolerate authoritarian regimes as far as they are able to achieve 'some' kind of economic and political stability in their countries.

The paper takes Egypt and Sudan as two case studies that can be compared because the history of these two countries is clearly linked. There are also many economic, political, cultural, social and geopolitical characteristics that bind them together. Perhaps the clearest characteristic in this respect is the almost continuous military rule of the two countries since their independences from British colonialism. There are, of course, many distinguishing features among them, and yet they remain the closest to each other in the 'Arab world' and have continued to affect each other for long periods, especially the continuing Egyptian influence over Sudan.

The theoretical approach of the paper draws on Thomassen who asserted that "the study of revolutions therefore implies not only a focus on political behavior "from below," but also recognition of moments at which "high and low" are relativized, made irrelevant, or subverted, and the micro and macro levels fuse in critical con-junctions. Anthropologists might have quite a lot to say about exactly those "big events," those extraordinary moments or situations where existing power con-figurations crumble and collapse in brief and drastic events.", (2012; 684).

Elaborating on the above points, I think that not only the 'moments' that we need to consider in our quest for a theoretical understanding of the societies in revolution. It is equally important to explore 'spaces', 'arenas' and 'entities' where there is usually an intense, mainly political, social interaction taking place. In accordance with this way of thinking, I have analyzed the behavior of political parties and influential political organizations in both Egypt and Sudan. I did this because these are the focal points where there is a concentrated interaction between the ruling elite along with their opposition on the one hand, and the politically active, or inactive, citizens at the grassroots level on the other. Through this interaction, which I have already referred to, decisions are always taken as the final results of prolong and complex interactions carried out within these organizations. This process makes the political party or political organization, act as a

'social actor' whose decisions and political behavior would directly affect the ongoing development in the political arena. The main actors move, in the scene, in order to affirm their conflicting interests. In such an endeavor, they constantly (re)position themselves and mobilize ideology, religion, political violence, government institutions, social and political movements and the economy as a means of reward and punishment.

This paper is divided into five sections where this introduction represents the first. The second section deals with the impact of the Arab Spring on the Sudan since 2011 and the interaction of the different political forces, whether those who aspire to import revolutionary models, or those seeking to thwart this process, including groups allied with the ruling elite. The third section discusses the Egyptian case and tried to explain the failure of the democratic transition by reviewing the behavior of different forces in the conflict over political power after 2011. Section four is a comparative discussion of the findings of the previous two sections in order to try to understand the differences and similarities between them. Finally, the fifth section is the conclusion in which an attempt is made to comprehend what happened in the two countries and how could it be analyzed.

2. Sudan: Insurgency and Counterinsurgency Measures

The National Islamic Front (NIF) coup d'état in June 1989 was one of the most important events in the second half of the twentieth century in Sudan. It was, at least partially, an attempt to answer the question of how to build a united and cohesive nation-state, a question that almost all political elite have hitherto failed to answer. The fragility of the state, its weak national formation and the distribution of loyalties and identities has been the cause of many civil wars and political unrests since independence. The basic idea of the coup was that; Islam, as the religion of the majority, could be a unifying force in a very diverse country where colonialism played the most important role in its establishment. In any event, this vision may have been true in the case of the former South Sudan before the separation, which is characterized by its population as Afro-Christians or followers of traditional African religions. South Sudan could be juxtaposed with the north, which has been arabized in large part and Islamized for a long period of time. Subsequent civil wars in Darfur, Nuba Mountains, and Blue Nile regions, mainly in western and southern parts of the present day Sudan, make political Islam as an allegedly unifying force a baseless claim. For example, all the people of Darfur region, just before the start of the civil war in 2003, were Muslims.

In fact, some authors like El-Affendi (2015) consider that the so-called Government of National Salvation in Sudan, immediately proclaimed after the coup, is a ruling elite whose composition has changed continuously by several successive coups d'état since June 1989. These coups brought about profound changes in the nature and structure of the clique that came to power in 1989. Currently, a selection of military and civilians are surrounding the president who led the many coups aforementioned on some of those who collaborated with him during his previous periods in power. The skills gained by these elite in governing; its numerous political maneuvers; buying off political loyalty; alliances it has held at the grassroots level in society; mutual interests that it strongly keep with the nomadic Arab

fighters in western Sudan, and; oil export revenues that have steadily increased since 1998, enabled it to continue to govern despite the many challenges it has been facing.

After the formal secession of the Republic of South Sudan in July 9th, 2011, these ruling elite realized the difficulties it would face ahead due the withdrawal of about 70% of the producing fields' revenue from the state budget. It was, therefore, forced to engage in a political reform process in which, for objective reasons, many political parties and organizations in the Sudan do not have trust. This period of decline in economic performance was a real threat to the regime as the exchange rate of the local currency sharply declined. Likewise, the real wages of workers in public and private sectors also declined and the economy returned to the problem of scarcity that it suffered throughout the 1980s and 1990s of the last century. With the extension of the Arab Spring wave to Egypt, many political organizations, parties and activists in Sudan saw an opportunity to overthrow the regime of military nature, which has so far withstand all other means to remove it from power, including military coups, popular uprising and successive guerrilla warfare in regions distant from the Capital.

Since the summer of 2009, "Qirifna" Movement has been active in importing the model of the Egyptian way of protests and mobilizing all platforms of social media to launch a large campaign to incite people takes to the streets in peaceful protests aiming at overthrowing the regime. This strategy increased after the 25th January Revolution in Egypt. It considered that the atmosphere is ripe for such a move in the light of the economic crisis suffocating the regime who would not dare to forcibly suppress it as long as it remains peaceful.

A number of people imitating the examples of the revolutions of Tunisia and Egypt also burned themselves to death in some grounds and marketplaces. I have counted three cases of this type to 2015. Adding to the unfortunate incident in which one of the people stabbed himself to death in front of the Zakat office in Khartoum in protesting against the negligence of his case. These cases of self-immolation created a mood similar to that prevailed in some countries that witnessed the Arab Spring since 2010. Accordingly, a number of peaceful protestors took to the streets in many major cities in Sudan - particularly Khartoum - chanting that: "the people want the fall of the regime."

In the beginning, the regime has mostly dealt with these protests in a nonviolent manner; even some members of the parliament affiliated to the regime have recognized the right of citizens to demonstrate peacefully in self-expression to claim their rights. Some pro-regime politicians who have been known of their tendency to insult and use a defiant language have been banned from making any press releases so as not to excite the public and provoke them more.

But this tolerant approach did not stand long the test of continuous protests; the security apparatus used an iron fist on one of the largest of such events in September 2013 for raising fuel prices and other austerity measures. The security apparatus reacted very violently, killing more than 200 protestors in direct chest and head injuries. Subsequently, the government completely denied being responsible for the killings and attributed it in its statements to an "unknown third party". It should be noted that this 'third party' has not yet

emerged. The cold-blooded killing pattern of September 2013 protests was a clear message, however, that the patience of the regime had limits and that it would not tolerate the chaos and looting that accompanied the movement. In fact, there have been widespread looting, burning and vandalism in the capital, Khartoum, during these protests.

However, the attempts to defeat the regime made by opposition parties, which remained opposed and did not respond to temptations and promises made by the regime and rejected its invitation to participate in the political process, such as the Sudanese Communist Party and the Sudanese Congress Party and others were also futile. These refusing parties have been willing to overthrow the regime through the weapon of protests and collection of signatures. Though, this stirring up of peaceful protests did not succeed in becoming a real threat to the regime until December, 2016.

Some major platforms of opposition to the regime were the social media. After the failure of the successive attempts made by formal opposition parties to mobilize people, a preferential advantage was given to the younger elements of the opponents to occupy the scene. These young generations succeeded in transforming social media platforms to a real force that drives opposition cause further after violence was used to silence the street in September 2013. They achieved remarkable successes compared with the performance of the political parties, organizations and activists that preceded them. This success is attributed mainly to the fact that it has been done across political affiliations, via social media and networking by mostly young people of both sexes who oppose the regime from their own point of views. They were politically unorganized or acts in transient political affiliations. Worth to mention here, that the formal political opposition in Sudan in general has only little support and legitimacy, as a number of recent studies has shown (Elawad, 2014). Disagreements, conflicts and the loss of democracy within the structures of these formal political parties have greatly damaged their reputation and have thus weakened their ability to convince the people that the time has come to dispose of the regime that was about to complete three decades in power until December 2016.

The counter-protest strategy of the regime was the confiscation of newspapers, tightening of censorship, occasional blocking of some websites, and making large-scale arrests during the last movement of civil disobedience in December 2016 for various active cadres of political parties and organizations. In short, all those who wished to dispose of the regime whatever their political stands might be possible targets for detention. However, one of the most important methods used by the regime in thwarting the process of change was exploiting the momentum of the violence seen in Arab revolutions themselves. Accordingly, a constant intimidation was made of what is called "sleeper cells" in the Capital belonging to opposing armed groups that are active on various fronts of the civil war in post-secessionist Sudan. The regime kept threatening that these groups would be the only alternative to it in case it falls.

The above mentioned strategy has been very effective in the case of the riverine region of Sudan, where most of the influential major urban centers are. This region have achieved better levels of development than other parts of the country, so that the people here are absolutely unwilling to import the violence model as a means of liquidating and disposing

of the regime. This model was long-accepted by many ethnic, tribal constellations and other organized opposing groups in the Sudan as a legitimate means for resistance. The tribe, in this central region, does not play an important role in the public sphere, although it remains with some folkloric and symbolic importance, and perhaps, within very narrow limits, at the social and political levels as well. Therefore, this region and its urbanized middle class, which had long entered into a 'silent alliance' with the existing regime based on the acceptance of its excesses, especially corruption, poor governance and mismanagement, in exchange for keeping insecurity and unrest away.

In the same context, the regime has established important alliances at the community level, with political activists in various regions of Sudan, similar to 'political clientelism', an old phenomenon in Sudan (Lemarchand, 1972). It has also allied itself with some Sufi orders, tribal popular administrations and, most importantly, with the military power of nomadic groups in Kordofan and Darfur in an alliance based mainly on the exchange of benefits and services.

Thus, when the regime felt a real threat from the movement aimed at initiating a state of civil disobedience in December 2016, which was fairly successful on the first day, it sought to redeploy these highly loyal paramilitary Arab groups in a number of camps around the Capital. They had been used to threaten those who want to challenge the regime's authority in Khartoum. The capital was without any real threat, at that time, from any side whatsoever. It was understood then the regime is reminding that it can easily convey the state of violence and civil wars experienced by some countries to this region. These paramilitary forces have been known for their massive violations of citizens' rights and law wherever they were in Sudan.

Besides, when the regime's authority was seriously shaken by the impact of the Arab Spring on Sudan, it was, without hesitation, aided by other Islamists of all political affiliations, including some of the most hostile who were openly declaring their desire to overthrow it. Many fatwas were soon issued by religious scholars (*'Ulama*) from various backgrounds stating that it is not permissible to go out on rulers. The various Islamic currents have rallied with the regime on the grounds that the fall of it would be a threat to 'Islam itself' as a religion in Sudan. We, suddenly, saw a secular alignment on the one hand, and a loose coalition of Islamists on the other, as it happened in many Arab countries in the last few years.

The regime has been boosted also, at the level of its nonviolent strategy in combating the Arab Spring in Sudan, by its relative success in improving security situation in the country at large; success of its military strategy in areas of armed conflict; and its success in dismantling and neutralizing many of opposition armed movements along with some of its influential leaders. The regime also increasingly succeeded in breaking the state of international seclusion within which it lived a quiet period of time by improving its foreign relations since the secession of the Republic of South Sudan. The strong entry, made by the regime, into some important regional alliances helped it significantly to overcome its recent economic troubles. Purposeful policy process has also been launched for making political reforms aiming at incorporating the biggest possible number in it, even if only at

rhetoric level. This movement, proposing political reforms, has succeeded in bringing about more confusion and doubts amid regime's opponents among whom some opted for joining the regime's political structures or its political process as the best available option.
In the same line, the tangible achievement of the regime before 2011 which was mainly at economic and services levels was of some sort of help as well. The regime was able to accomplish some infrastructure in the period from 1998 to 2011, thanks to oil export revenues, of course. These achievements were among the reasons why some people appear reluctant to attack the regime during the upheavals that followed 2010 in the entire region. For them, the regime is the best in terms of achievement compared to previous governments in Sudan. It must be given an opportunity, therefore, to overcome its hardships and wait for its returning once more to its 'second delivering phase', according to the regime promises.

3. Egypt: Not only the Military that Destroys Hope

It has been said that ex-President Sadat, who ruled Egypt from 1970-1981, came accidently to power (Heikal, 2009: 91-92). This also appears to apply to former President Mubarak, who was ousted by a popular uprising which his regime tried unsuccessfully to suppress and therefore resigned on February 11th, 2011. No one expected that this 'modest' Army officer, who won his fame for planning the air strike in 1973 Arab-Israeli War, would rule Egypt for the longest period since its nominal independence from Britain in February 1922. Nevertheless, he proved to have a degree of pragmatism that has always enabled him to increase his control over the state and to permanently weaken and manipulate his opponents; including the Muslim Brotherhood (MB). He implicitly employed the latter group to steadily intimidate the West as the only alternative to his rule. And at the local level, MB have been allowed to move so as to keep civil and liberal forces in constant fear and in a constant need for Mubarak regime's support to confront them. That is why the state apparatus, during that period, turned a blind eye to MB's mosques, financial and charitable institutions that numbered a few thousands. They were sometimes even allowed to enter the Egyptian parliament and play an overt political role (the pre-Mubarak downfall parliamentary election of 2004). However, they were not acting under their formal movement's name.
Mubarak succeeded in ending up Egypt's isolation from its Arab surroundings without canceling the agreement with Israel (signed in March 1979), which was the sole cause of this isolation. Egypt has taken on, since then, an increasing role in the region as an ally of the United States and a 'friend' of the various right-wing forces in the Arab world. Successive Egyptian governments under Mubarak kept good relations with the State of Israel, whose one of its leaders described Mubarak as the "strategic treasure" of the Jewish state (El-Labbad, 2014: 83). Although he did nothing to democratize his country, he was insisting that he was gradually turning to democracy under the emergency laws, which was not abolished all through his 30 years in power until only a few days before his depose.
The last of his governments was made up of wealthy businessmen and entrepreneurs, some of whom were known for their corruption, undisclosed sources of their fortunes and their

association with the ruling National Party (Osman, 2010: 136-7). The performance of his last governments had always been weak in the face of the escalating challenges faced by Egyptian society due to lack of resources, population growth, poor investment in productive sectors, corruption and mismanagement. The dictator, like other Arab absolute rulers, sought to transfer power to his eldest son, only to add to his difficulties. The to-be-heir's son has many ties to many businessmen among the emerging rich class in his father reign. Transferring power to this particular son was a disturbing scheme to the Egyptian army, who feared a possible alliance of this son, who was outside the military establishment, and the businessmen class who increased their influence under his father so that the army might lose its privileges.

Thus, when the effects of the Arab Spring spread to Egypt, there were already some active political movements such as the Egyptian Movement for Change emblazoned with "Kefaya" Movement (founded in summer 2004) and the April 6 Youth Movement (founded in April 2008). These movements took advantage of the Arab Spring momentum which actually started in Tunisia (December 18th 2010) and embarked in mobilization in the streets among people. Mubarak regime was suspended in the air and no one rushed to help except for its security services, which targeted the protestors, killing more than 800 of them. This repression, however, did not prevent Mubarak from a forced resignation (announced on February 11) in which he conceded power to the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) that same day under pressure from the military (Marshall, 2015;21). SCAF seized power from February 11th, 2011 to June 30th, 2012.

Most of the political forces, including the MB which embraced the revolution in its final stages assumed, wrongfully, that the revolution success was inevitable and that Mubarak regime had gone irreversibly. They started to press, along with other political forces, on the SCAF to accelerate the democratic process in Egypt so as to reach the ballot boxes. At this point the ways were separated by the old and new revolutionaries alike.

The MB Movement was seeking to hasten the elections, confident that it is the most organized and capable movement with the most financial resources. It was also popular, especially among the lower class, which mostly descended from disadvantage urban neighborhoods and the rural areas (Blomey, 2015). These groups similarly saw a movement adopting an Islamic discourse and did not have yet the opportunity to govern like others. It is fair then, according to this way of thinking, that these "people of Allah" have their fair chance in power too. The Movement has been able through various voluntary and service associations that it had established in all of Egypt to reach these groups with different services that are more tangible and effective than those provided by the state.

There were also other secular and liberal movements of different trends which represented the groups of modern forces that were seeking to liquidate Mubarak regime additionally for becoming a real obstacle to its aspirations. Notably among these aspirations is to achieve a free and open society and real economic development that would benefit everyone as a step toward attaining 'social justice' which was one of the three main demands of the 25th revolution along with 'freedom' and 'Bread'.

The so-called secular forces were highly divided and aware that the rush to hand-over power from SCAF to civilians would give many advantages to their traditional rivals, i.e. the Islamic political movements, the most important among them being the MB. So it began to maneuver with the SCAF in delaying the date of elections to deny the political Islam of its advantages. Thus SCAF's rule (2011-2012) has become a period of continuous confrontation between these two currents that eventually depleted their prowess, while at times the military junta seems to play the role of a mediator.

The SCAF, which the revolutionaries have seemingly forgotten its menace, was not ready to forsake its interests stemmed from a long history of political power it enjoyed and the alliances that it has succeeded in establishing at the internal level with most of the large economic institutions in Egypt and abroad (Marshall, 2015). Externally, it has kept close relationship with the United States from which it has received ongoing supports of around $1.3 billion dollars in annual aid since Egypt signed a peace treaty with Israel in March 1979.

The Egyptian army, with more than 750.000 soldiers, not to mention the reserve forces, represents the most organized institution in Egypt with an economic empire that said to be managing about 20 to 40 percent of the Egyptian economy (Marshall, 2015; Abul-Magd, 2013). Senior retired Egyptian army officers usually end up as new millionaires or top managers of megaprojects or army-affiliated firms operating in the country. Therefore, the Egyptian army was not willing at all to abandon all these concessions and entrust the country to an unknown president to be brought by the ballot boxes. Therefore, SCAF worked to convince Mubarak to step down in a clear bending before the storm tactic, where it can get rid of the inheritance project designed by Mubarak and at the same time giving up some points to the revolutionaries in the streets to appease them (Heikel, 2012). But that did not mean by any means abandoning the project SCAF had prepared and which would be implemented later using the power of the revolution itself.

The ratifications of the new constitution of December 2012 and the accession of ex-President Mohamed Morsi to power in July 3rd, 2013 was the apparent culmination of a long and arduous political process. The revolutionaries, who failed to organize themselves in a unified political current, started to feel that they were gradually losing power to an untrustworthy political group i.e. MB, and that they did not make all those sacrifices to surrender power to a religious group that was proved to be selfish and opportunistic. Due to such fluidity of the political landscape, youth groups that achieved the revolution mostly turned against MB and its allies who were about to "hijack" the state institution.

On the other hand, the MB Movement, which has always been a closed group organizationally and with respect to its core value-code, has not made any convincing concessions that it does not want to do so. MB, in this way, effectively contributed to the dismantling of the revolutionaries who did not complete yet their project and by so doing the Movement forgot that some of these youth had voted for ex-President Morsi and thus enabling him to won the presidential election against Ahmed Shafik. The latter was widely seen as representing the symbolism of the former Mubarak regime and was clearly

supported during his election rally by the counterrevolutionary forces together with the Armed Forces.

During the period of the former president, the counterrevolutionary forces were able to organize themselves and drive the whole country into a state of paralysis in the field of basic services. They have created, furthermore, a continuous scarcity in many services such as water, electricity, gas and flour, in addition to instigating continuous streets' riots and demonstrations which the counterrevolution exploited against the legitimacy of the elected institutions. Some influential businessmen were also unhappy with the liquidation of the old regime because their privileges and economic opportunities were based on its existence and support. So they were also angry at the president-elect's rule. They practically financed the process of accumulating signatures in millions to have an early presidential election. The support they provided was necessary for funding and organizing the whole process.

The state bureaucracy was actively involved in the mobilization, organization and participation in the June 30 Movement (also widely called the June 30 Revolution), which is, according to its own definition, a broad and legitimate protest movement. According to Bishara (2012: 162- 165), perhaps the participants in this demonstration exceeded those who participated in the January 25th, Revolution itself. Bishara (2012) also added that the participation of the majority of the state apparatus was clear in mobilization, organization and signing against the constitutionally elected president.

Thus, the legal cover was provided for the coup d'état to occur on July 3rd, 2013 against the constitution, based on the "legitimacy of the street". The coup prime architect, current president El-Sisi, after reading the coup statement, in which he tried to justify his move, gave a formal military salute to the millions who were in the streets throughout Egypt. Thus he inaugurated the resumption of the Egyptian military rule after having almost lost it since 2011. In the background of the television scene, sat the Grand Imam of Al-Azhar, the Pope of the Egyptian Orthodox Church, some top bureaucrats, senior Army staff, and some parties' leaders so as to bestow more legitimacy upon the scene, which was apparently carefully prepared.

4. Some General Remarks on the two Cases

It has been stated "that revolutions are most likely to occur when a prolonged period of objective economic and social development is followed by a short period of sharp reversal (Davies, 1962: 5). Although the situation in Sudan was ideal for such a calculation, the totalitarian regime in Sudan survived the Arab Spring, while the Egyptian regime of Mubarak was unable to do so. The reasons for this, according to the above discussion, can be summed up in the following: Since the occurrence of an uprising was not possible without an active participation by urban areas and the middle class in general (Bishara, 2012: 184-186), it made this a preferential advantage of the regime in Sudan over the Egyptian one. Sudan is a country with fragile national formation compared to Egypt. In Sudan the only region where there is a relative national integration is the most developed central riverine region with its relative prosperity and economic development. Here tribes

and tribal affiliations play fewer roles in public sphere than in other parts. These riverine region have long been in a 'silent alliance' with the regime - not to say that they are satisfied with it - because they fear the transfer of conflicts and civil war - such as the tragedy in Darfur since 2003 - with its various problems to the more urbanized and stable part of the country.

The armed movements that aspire to change the regime in Sudan by force have slowly sunk over time in ethnic, regional, and narrow discourses, especially after the many defeats it suffered by the military. It was not a model that the people in central riverine region would accept as an alternative to the opportunistic regime that had always invested in this fear in its anti-Arab Spring strategy. Such fears - the fragmentation of the country on a regional, tribal and sectarian basis - were not on the table in the Egyptian case; Egypt has already come a long way in national integration and nation-building.

In addition, the regime in Sudan has held many alliances at the community level, such as the already mentioned the "silent alliance"' with the middle class and urban areas of the riverine Sudan. This alliance is based on rejecting the model of change offered by various opposition forces, in other words, accepting the bad for fear of the worst. Furthermore, the regime has also established many more noticeable alliances with other Islamists groups, tribal administrations and Sufi orders and introduced them to varying degrees in the state bureaucracy and ruling party structures. It also has a clear alliance with Bedouin Arab groups in western Sudan with their formidable military power; an alliance based on mutual services. Therefore, when the Egyptian regime lost almost all of its allies - except for businessmen - a few years before the Arab Spring stood at its door, the Sudanese one was building alliances and consolidating them.

There have been, as well, many social movements and fundamental cross-party and sectarian affiliations in Egypt actively operating many years before the commencement of the Arab Spring on December 18th 2010. These movements have been able to play a decisive role in the success of the protests through its work on mobilization, organization and legitimization of the "taking to streets" as a possible strategy to get rid of a corrupt regime. For example, there were the Egyptian Movement for Change (Kefaya) and April 6 Youth Movement, both were working among the people for years. In contrast, there were no such movements in Sudan, although some anti-regime activists tried to import the Egyptian model by establishing the "Qirifna" Movement (founded in October 2005). Their influence was very limited resembling that of the civil society organizations in general in Sudan, which are deeply divided and sharply polarized by their different positions concerning the ruling regime.

The most important point of difference between civil society organizations, various political parties and organizations is, and was, their position on accepting the reform process kicked off by the regime since the secession of the Republic of South Sudan in July 2011. This process involved the participation of most of the influential political forces within the regime's structures. Although the regime has thus far held power joints decisively, it always offered promises of further political reforms. In contrast, the former Egyptian regime of Mubarak showed clearly that it was not serious about the political

reform process it had repeatedly stated that is would like to see in the country. It ended up, in fact, forming governments of mostly wealthy entrepreneurs and businessmen since July 2004.

Worth to mention here as well that the relative repression practiced by the Egyptian regime - like all other autocratic regimes - was systematic, harsh and supervised by repressive apparatuses that gained extensive experience and would spare nothing to suppress opponents. While many such practices have existed in Sudan over the past three decades, still the levels of repression have been lower than the one practiced in Egypt, if we ignored civil war zones. In Sudan, many people could criticize the regime, write or even demonstrate against it and then return home safely or go away with it unnoticed. Above and beyond, the repression in which the current regime is involved has increased when compared to other political regimes that preceded it. In general, however, there is almost a consensus - even among the regime opponents - that violence and repression practiced in Sudan are less than those in Arab countries with the same kind of government. Consequently, the explosion was very big in Egypt when, suddenly, all social control mechanisms failed and more regime opponents opted for revolution and called for the regime downfall. So, the margin of relative freedom in the Sudanese case played a role in favor of the regime and prevented it from paying in full the bill of the Arab Spring.

5. Conclusion

Considering the outcomes of the Arab Spring in both Egypt and Sudan, it is luring to conclude that this round of reforms and democratization demands has already been lost. Old regime has returned in Egypt with a repetition of the same rates of oppression – and perhaps more – as well as the same rates of failure to address the challenges traditionally faced by its population.

The regime in Sudan has also passed the test of facing street demands for political and democratic reforms. And now it seems more powerful after being able to control, to a certain degree, the great economic collapse that followed the secession of the Republic of South Sudan. Its position in power is further strengthened by convening of many alliances at the local and regional levels, and after it was able to attract many influential forces into its power structures, or to its maneuvers of political dialogues. These alliances - especially with the Gulf States - were vital in helping the Sudanese regime to overcome its economic challenges and bringing about more legitimacy and drawing it closer to the former and current US administrations, which in turn strengthened its internal position. This external factor was also crucial to former Mubarak regime which was convinced that it must surrender to fate when it was abandoned by all its foreign allies.

Thus, the external factor was decisive in the ability of the two regimes to survive, including the new one in Egypt and the old one in Sudan. Nevertheless, the external intervention was generally working against the interests of groups aspiring to change, especially that influence practiced by some Gulf powers to support the two regimes. They did that because they simply feared that the Arab Spring phenomenon might be extended to their own territories.

While various anti-change forces were united, including its foreign allies, the positions of the political forces that sought change were characterized by their continued fragility, antagonisms and divisions over the form and magnitude of change they wanted. Hence, they did not trust each other and there were no common platforms in which to conduct mutual dialogues and understanding. The last fact facilitated the process of differentiating them in the two countries through various temptations and luring tactics and then attacking them severally afterwards, especially in Egypt. While this process, of breaking up the unity of protestors, was unfolding, counterpart revolutionaries have sided willingly with the old regimes and its counterrevolutions. In the same way, the demands of political change, which have been advanced by various political forces in Sudan, have been emptied of its content. Accordingly, the forces of change in the two countries were politically and ideologically divided, while economic and political interests strongly and closely united the various forces opposed to change in the two countries alike.

There are some concerns in the case of Sudan which are not present in the Egyptian one, and these are the fears that the country will be torn into cantons and collapse, as happened in many neighboring countries. In such a case, a vacuum would be created only to be filled by various terrorist organizations working across borders. Many of the people in riverine Sudan and the urbanized middle class remained hesitant to cast their lot against the regime, because this time the trade-off was between the regime, with all its burdensome flaws, on the one hand, and the real possibility of a total chaos on the other. Many experiences of the Arab Spring countries and in many neighboring countries as well have confirmed this belief. Remain to say that the two regimes in both Egypt and Sudan dealing with movements demanding political and democratic reforms has often been characterized by high levels of violence that have deterred some of those who wish to remove them without paying for the change.

However, given that the two countries are characterized by steady population growth and in consequence increasingly enlarging young categories in their population pyramids; and given that there are more technological developments and social networking tools that always exhibiting a different kind of life characterized by higher democratic achievements and greater economic well-being in the West, and perhaps in some other Asian and African countries; These images, perceptions and ideas are daily passing by in front of the vision of the younger generations that have excelled in using this form of technology; and given that the ruling regimes of the two countries are not able to actualized any model of development and/or creative responses to many challenges facing the largest number of their population, most of whom are the youth, there is only little doubt that new rounds of demands for reforms and democratization are on the way to the two countries. It is reasonable, then, to conclude that the statement that reads “the Arab Spring in the two countries is an apparent failure” remains not perfectly accurate.

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