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**Day 2 Session 4:
Consequences of Political Islam
Rise of the Islamists and Democratisation of the Arab
World in the Post-Arab Spring:
Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt from Politics to Prison
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Rise of the Islamists and Democratisation of the Arab World in the Post-Arab Spring: Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt from Politics to Prison

Dr. Rafiullah Azmi

Emergence of Islamist Oriented Parties in the Middle East

Modern Islamism emerged as an alternative political order in response to the crisis and vacuum created by the collapse of Ottoman Empire and the subsequent domination of Western political thought. Reformist thinker who promoted Islam's political idea often argued that Islam was complete way of life and that the colonial world aimed to destroy Muslim culture and values. They emphasized the glorious past of Islam and pitched Islamic values against the Western cultural values, essentially arguing on a moral stand; the alternative, thus, prioritised faith over everything else (El-Hodaiby, 1997).

The emergence of contemporary Islamist politics in the Middle East can be traced back to the fall of Ottoman Empire; this process has generally gone through four phases: The first phase started around 1930s when Hassan al Bana, then a young school teacher, started to mobilise the idea that aimed to reform social and religious contours of Egypt. For al-Bana, Egypt's indigenous social and cultural values were diluted by the influence of the colonial West and needed reformation and revival (Sattar, 1995). After the fall of Ottoman Empire, Brotherhood emerged as the first popular Islamist movement in the Arab World. It was around the same time that Abul Ala Maududi founded Jamaat-e-Islami in British India. Like Bana, Maududi's reformist idea gained legitimacy and eventually had its followers in entire South Asia.

In the post-colonial era, when secular ideologies, as an extension of colonial West, failed to deliver in Muslim majority countries, political Islam gained further legitimacy at places where Muslims lived in majority. At the end of WWII, the issue of Palestine took the priority of Arab political activism. Muslim Arabs relate the issue of Palestine directly to their faith which also became a factor for Arab unity (Joffé, 1983). It was during this time that another Islamist movement, Hamas, took birth in the region. All Arab countries, despite their ideological differences and political alliances, rallied around the political Issue of Palestine.

This wave of political Islamic lasted till 1970s. During the 1973 war; though Arabs lost militarily, they achieved political goals inside their own lands. Islamic politics started to influence the regional politics in East. Years later, in 1979, Iran's revolution was spearheaded by the idea of Islam which challenged the centuries old dynastic rule prevalent in Persia – the modern-day Iran. Islam, suddenly, became “a modern political alternative,” (Wright, 2015). It was during this period that even the outright secular regimes like Anwar Sadat in Egypt, began to endorse the role of Islamic politics in regional politics. Some countries like Algeria, Pakistan and Egypt even altered their constitution and made Sharia as the basis of their legislation.

The second phase roughly started during 1980s. It marked the emergence of Ennahda Party in Tunisia in 1981, by Rashid al Ghannushi a Islamic reformist political thinker. Ennahda was essentially inspired by the Iranian revolution. Ennahda called for an equal distribution jobs and other economic resources. It also urged the authorities to establish multiparty democracy, besides calling for the implementation of more religiosity in the daily life of Tunisian society. Ennahda believed in aspiring of these goals through nonviolent means. After 1984 the party was reorganized to operate clandestinely as well as publicly. To gain legal recognition, however, it took its current name in 1989. During Zine el-Abidine Ben Ali's administration, Ennahda wasn't recognised a legal party in Tunisia. But after Ben Ali's departure from power in 2011 Arab Uprising, Ennahda was formally legalized to contest elections.

This was followed by creation of Islamic Salvation Front in Algeria in 1989 by Ali Belhadj and Abbasi al-Madani. The party emerged as majority in local elections of 1990 in Algeria; it also won most of the seats in the National Assembly in the first round of balloting in 1991. Subsequently, the existing government of Algeria cancelled the second round and arrested many of the group's leaders. Following this, The FIS and more extreme Islamist groups afterward waged a protracted guerrilla war against the existing regime in their own country.

This could be called as reformist Islamism – a period when Islamist political parties started to participate in mainstream politics. The Islamists moved beyond the rhetoric; the Islamist thinkers worked to find a way to reconcile with demands

of the contemporary socio-political issues. The end of Cold War altered the power balance in the Muslim world, especially in the Middle East. After Iran, the reformist political Islam faced a test in Algeria in 1991. The Islamic Salvation Front won the elections essentially because of the history corruption of the earlier political parties. This trial was disrupted by the Algerian army when they forcefully seized power in 1992. The leaders of Front were arrested. By and large, this happening discouraged Islamists and betrayed their trust in mainstream politics because of which certain 'extremist' groups took birth in Algeria. Elsewhere, however, Islamist parties continued their work, further encouraged by the changing dynamics of global politics. In 1992, Hezbollah contested Lebanese elections. Three years later, in 1995, after decades of suppression by the Dictators, Egypt's Muslim Brotherhood ran for parliament. During the same time Jordan's Islamic Action Front emerged as the largest opposition elected to parliament. Islamist oriented politics gained widespread acceptance till 9/11 – the incident that brought a paradigm shift in global politics.

Here started the third and most crucial phase Islamist faced all over the world. Post-9/11, almost all the incidents related terrorism started being attributed to Muslims. Islamist faced a challenge to create different identities within themselves, and, on certain occasions, disassociate themselves from 'militant Islam'. The following decade was a kind of counter-Jihad with politicians across the world misusing the anti-Muslim rhetoric to gain political goals. For reformist Islamism, new discourse about the inclusiveness of Islam came to fore, with many neo-liberal scholars contesting Islam's social, political and cultural resilience.

Little more than a decade later, Arab Uprising changed the equation of political Islam; until this stage, all the Islamist movements were, more or less, a reaction to what was happening in the world. With Arab Uprising, the new phase of Islamist movements, had more of a provocative mission. After the fall of dictators, Arabs voted Islamist to power demonstrating an urge to be set free and treated with dignity and justice. The Islamist alternative may not necessarily be a consciousness one, but for Arabs it was a choice between authoritarianism and religions politics; they choose the later. Although the Islamists found widespread acknowledgement in polls, majority of the Islamist parties lacked a genuine comprehension about how to rule. "The growing array of Islamist political parties constituted a whole new bloc – separate from the purely militant movements. The distinctions among them were often nuanced. But the groups shared at least four common denominators..." (Wright, 2015).

Islam and Democracy

The relation between Islam is democracy is a tricky one. Any belief system, owing to the whims, logic, and rationale of the interpreter and the believer, exposes itself to a multitude of interpretations. The very notion that no religion exclusively defines a system of government increases the possibilities of scholarly investigation of what would constitute a 'utopian' idea of government in that respective belief system? Not far from this, a believer herself poses this question.

Since any belief system is totalitarian in its attitude and tries to impose its values on the believers, the religious values become conventional values especially in religious oriented societies. Believers often invoke the veracity of the religion and use the prism of their own beliefs to comprehend culture, politics, economics and history. Such reasoning is not confined only to the believers but Ismail (2006) maintains that a plethora of recent literature on Islam and politics hold similar views and "place 'Islam' within an established narrative of world history" (Ismail, 2006).

She argues that such a narrative shows a preoccupation of Islam with western modernity. Thus, it becomes imperative on Muslims, or, on a whole, the religion of Islam, to counter or adapt Western modernity. The formation of such a binary intensifies the debate whether Islam is compatible with democracy or whether Islam has problems only with the western idea of liberal democracy. Further it reduces Islam to an 'Other' ever in conflict with modernity.

Modernization as it evolved in West had much to do with secularization of the society where religion became a private affair. As most Muslim countries, through colonization, adapted or inherited the western values of governance, secularization of the West inevitably became a part of Muslim societies. From a western perspective as Volpi (2003) has showed how "the process of colonization... mixed *Realpolitik* and economic calculations with noble' moral and philosophical objectives," (Volpi, 2003). Islamists, who live on high citadel of religion, reject such an onslaught of West.¹ Post decolonization movements, as the indigenous social and political elites of colonial era formed governments; they continued the policy of 'orientalizing' the society much like their colonial counterparts (Volpi, 2003) Very soon, as national policies of economic development and social progress were formed, a new breed of Muslims emerged contesting the claims of indigenous elites and challenging their power which was mostly on militaristic.

¹ For example, Syed Qutb in his book *Milestones* castigates the hegemonic claims of West and argues how Islam is the only religion/civilization which can civilize the world. Written in a polemical tone, it led a generation of Muslims to counter the west through ideological or militant means. Another important Islamist ideologue Abul A'la Maududi continuously build a case against West's secularization philosophy. See, Qutb, Sayyid. (2002). *Milestones*. New Delhi: Islamic Book Service (p) Ltd; and Nasr, S.V.R. (1996). *Maulana Maududi and the Making of Islamic revivalism*. New York/Oxford: Oxford University Press.

Democracy, the way it was inherited, did not yield any democratization but soon turned into a tool for a select group to continue their authoritative regimes. On the other hand, Islamists used religion to counter the regimes using religious allegory, symbols and historical narratives. It problematized the whole debate: what was essentially to be understood as a power struggle between two groups was conceptualized in a different manner. As the Western powers continued to support the authoritarian regimes from time to time, Islamists easily appropriated their struggles as anti-West. Much worse than that Westerners blamed Islam saying the religion was incompatible with modernity and needed massive reformation. Ismail clarifies that "Islamism's anti-Western posture was a rejection of that hegemony," (Ismail, 2006). She further argues that "Islamism is not essentially an anti-modern movement, but an effort at dislodging the West from the position of centrality that it claims."

Democracy as the high ideal of western civilization thus became an eye in the storm. Its rejection became imperative on Islamists who wanted to govern and form their own regime. Even if Muslim societies were to adapt democracy what kind of democracy they dreamt of. Under that pressure, Islamists came with a contemporary term which was rooted in the teaching of Islam. *Shura* or Consultation was the response to the electoral politics of Liberal Democracy. Belkeziz (2009) points to the fact that the theoretical poverty of this concept led contemporary thinkers to borrow some of its features from the western concept of democracy. Islamists, however, point that *Shura* preceded the basic principles of democracy (Belkeziz, 2009).

As the concept of *Shura* continues to develop a shift came in Muslim politics where they engaged themselves in the democratic practices held under authoritarian regimes. The shift came in the form of repression that the authoritative regimes in the Muslim world imposed on general public in general and on Islamists in particular. The question was not about Islam or democracy but "who gets what, when and how"²: the most basic questions of politics.

Ideological positions were also reframed. Take the example of Pakistan where soon after its formation the Islamist ideologue Abul A'la Maududi asked the members of his party (Jama'at e Islami) not to swear allegiance to the new state for its lack of religiosity. Soon after, the party began a campaign to Islamize the constitution and as the Pakistan state declared that the "sovereignty belongs to Allah" the party had, more or less, no reservations in participating in elections. The constitution of the new state was in no way closer to what Maududi understood by his concept of democracy or what he called theo-democracy. Similar ideological positions were also reframed in Egypt. After the death of Sayyid Qutb, there was proliferation of Islamic militant movements who declared Egypt as a *Jahiliyah* state. But the chief ideologue of Muslim Brotherhood Hassan Hudeibi rejected such theorization paving way for members of MB contesting elections and even winning the first democratically held elections in 2012 under Mohammad Morsi. Similar examples can be taken from Bangladesh, Algeria, Tunisia, Palestine and other countries.

It is essential to understand how the inseparability of Islam and politics is understood by Muslims. Politics, by any means, demands to recognize that any idea or vision is not timeless and thus bound to change. Thus, when Muslims assert the concepts of Khilafah or Sharia they assert continuity and a relation with the past but at the same time, inadvertently they also appreciate the "modern intellectual terrain," (Eickelman & Piscatori, 2004) "Of crucial importance in this process has been a 'democratization' of the political process of Islam and the development of a standardized language inculcated by mass higher education, the mass media, travel, and labor migration" (Eickelman & Piscatori, 2004).

The debate around the compatibility between Islam and democracy thus is not only about electoral politics. Since electoral politics in democracy decides the sphere of power but too much importance to it neglects the sphere of culture, human rights, economics etc.

Bayat (2013) deliberating on the same line of reasoning makes an important interjection claiming that this sort of dichotomy (Islam versus Democracy) is an academic fallacy. For him, such a dichotomy pits Islam against democracy exclusively as if both are devoid of any internal complexities. Further, he critiques democracy (or the liberal democracy) from a Marxist and feminist point of view. Bayat argues that there is nothing intrinsic in any religion or Islam for that matter that renders it democratic or undemocratic. It is the nature of the social agents that makes the outward and inward character of religion, (Bayat, 2007).

² Harold Lasswell, quoted in Eickelman, D. F., & Piscatori, J. P. (2004). *Muslim politics*. Princeton University Press. In the post-colonial era, Islamists faced a greater challenge of reformation not from within but from outside. Since Islam forms an essential part of the political process in Arab conscience, the authoritarian regimes did not really want the Islamists to manifest their political idea in a way that could have influenced the existing political thought of the Arabs. An alternative political thought would have meant a competition to the authoritative regimes; so for them there was always an option to avoid such possibility.

Essentially,

[The] compatibility or incompatibility of a religion, including Islam, with democracy is not a matter of merely philosophical speculations, but of political struggle. It is not as much the question of texts as the balance of power between those who want a democratic religion and those who pursue an authoritarian version (Bayat, 2007).

In other words, how a group comes to power or electoral politics is not a determinant of democracy but what kind of legislation it imposes on people. The ethos of a particular society will determine the legislation and how well they are respected will determine the democratic attitude of that regime.

The Emergence of Muslim Brotherhood

Muslim Brotherhood is an ideologically driven religio-political organization which Hasan al-Bana, a schoolteacher, established the Muslim Brotherhood in Isma`iliyya, a Suez Canal city greatly impacted by the British military presence (Mitchell, 1993). Realizing the need that Egyptian society needed a revival, not abandonment of Islamic principles, al-Bana developed a movement to promote Islamic values. Initially, it was explicitly declared the Brotherhood is not to become a political party; the movement emphasized an Islamic solution for the problems faced by the society in general and the youth, in particular.

Brotherhood developed renewed perspectives regarding the origin of problem generally encountered by people in Egypt. For al-Bana, the nationalist secular parties and their wealthy landowner representatives were also failing Egyptian society. Although a partial independence was obtained by these parties in 1922, they had not been able to affect the life of common citizenry. Majority of the Egypt was not benefiting from the policies of government. Brotherhood came with some remedial measures, providing youth development programs, medical clinics, educational fellowships, and *da`wah*³; this resulted in the rapid rise of Muslim Brotherhood.

After its ardent role in Palestinian struggle especially during late 1940s, Brotherhood gained legitimacy and public acceptance. Around the World War II, Brotherhood had a change of mood; the movement which was started for the socio-religious activism stepped into the domain of politics. With sufficient public support Brotherhood challenged the political consciousness of Egypt, opposing almost every political initiative that would not draw inspiration from religion. At this pedestal, Brotherhood viewed democracy as an extension of West's colonial political doctrine, and hence opposite to the Islamic political thought which the organization cherished: "Democracy has become infertile... the period of western (democratic) system has come to an end primarily because it is deprived of those life-giving values which enabled it to be the leader of mankind...at this crucial juncture, the turn of Islam has come," (Qutb, 2007).

Brotherhood initially aimed to work at a small scale focussing on schools, hospitals and other social welfare issues; the aim was to invoke the spirit of Islamic teachings in the society. "The public services evolved into mini-states-within-states, taking on distinct political agendas for changing the rest of society too. Many other Islamist movements later duplicated the formula," (Wright, 2015).

The Shift in Brotherhood's Policy

In a place where Islamism plays a vital role in shaping public discourse, political stability requires appropriate harmony between religion and politics (Audi, 2000). But to deal with the growing influence of Islamic groups in the civil and political life of the country, the dictatorial regimes in Egypt have always adopted two pronged strategies. First, the government enacted a series of legislation aimed at curtailing the freedom of expression and restricting the opportunities for political participation so that Muslim Brotherhood, the largest opposition group of the country and other Islamic forces could be prevented from utilizing the institutional resources to mobilize the people against the exploitative policies of regime in power. Secondly, in order to set a demoralizing trend among the cadres of militant Islamic groups, mostly the youth, the regime physically intimidated Islamists and assaulted them on various pretexts.

To start with the Muslim Brotherhood did not have a political programme on its agenda when they came to existence. It started off as an ordinary socio-religious organization with the aim to help the general public of Egypt. It built mosques, schools, hospitals besides launching some small socio-economic schemes to help society. Its underlying objective, however, has always been to infuse Quran and *Sunnah* in the society (Kerckhove, 2012). It was towards the mobilization

³ *Da`wah* is a form of religious preaching. After the fall of Ottoman Empire, it became one of the famous tools to propagate Islamic knowledge. These kinds of movements remained very influential for decades appealing especially to the less educated sections of society.

of Second World War that it felt the need to protect the economic rights of the Egyptian society as a whole. Theorizing the idea that he had on mind, Hassan al-Bana, the founder of the Muslim Brotherhood, suggested that if one desired he might describe Brotherhood as: “(1) a Salafite call, for they invited the Muslim to the return of original Islam, (2) a way based on the prophetic model behaviour; (3) a Sufi reality...; (4) a political association...; (5) an education society...; (6) an economic company...; and a collective thought”.⁴ By then, however, Brotherhood was no way near to mainstream politics; besides, theorising an idea is often easier than its application.

It was towards the later 1940s that Brotherhood thought seriously about political Islam. Although Brotherhood had some confidential people in the mainstream politics, Egypt never allowed the Islamists a chance to settle down. So, before it could manifest the applicability of its political idea in the changing global political dynamics, Egyptian army and the liberal-secular political elite started their repression of the Islamists. This repression divided the society. Instead of taking the society into confidence and explaining to them the constraints and restraints faced by the government, Egypt's dictators either over-publicised the achievements of their government or blamed the Islamists for their shortcomings. The contrast between unstable political order and unstable social and political conditions became more obvious to society when the regime failed to offer solution to the social political anxieties of Egypt.

Although the Islamisation of traditions in Egypt has been so deep that sometimes it is difficult to distinguish between the two (Bari, 1995), a vast debate - which sometimes forms the origin of chaos - about the role of Sharia in Egypt's political sphere has remained an issue of contestation at a global level. Not only Islamists, even some secularists differ among themselves. Some secularists outright object the blending of *Sharia* and politics in any shape, while others argue for the application of the *Sharia* for Muslims, so long as non-Muslim minorities (mostly Christians) are not forced to comply (Al-Ali, 2000). This dichotomy – which has emerged due to the lack of genuine debate about the role of Sharia – has pushed people into a situation where political parties and political actors are rendered trust-less.

Egypt is one among such Muslim dominated states where relationship between religious and political institutions has historically remained unstable for at least two reasons: (1) Social and economic change in the form of urbanization, social mobility, improved communication, and increasing access of education continues to transform the religious institutions. These changes have increased ‘pluralism’⁵ and produced conflict within the religious sphere. With such dynamic circumstances, the role of religious institutions has varied from time to time. Some elements of the religious sphere have sought to profit from their strength to make a more prominent, or even dominant, part of state. (2) Given that Egypt has been one of the harsh dictatorships, the state has always responded by seeking unduly enhanced powers to subjugate religious institutions. The regime has always undermined the power and social mobility and acceptance Islamic organisations would acquire by their subtle social work.

The strength of Egypt's political culture and its evolution does not depend on state's Islamist identity or on the ideological disputes about sovereignty. But the religious and political spheres depend upon the prevailing political culture. Both spheres reflect the ideas about morality, authority, and participation contained in that culture and have limited means to alter that culture in the short run. The ‘*political*’ and the ‘*religious*’, entangled though they are, had been previously somewhat successful in transforming each other. Therefore, the domain of encounter between religion and politics is thus quite different from those previously described.

Implication of the Rise of Brotherhood: From Politics to Prison

Generally, secularism is viewed as a confrontation between religion and politics. But, in Egypt, it did not launch a visible attack on religion for a very long time. The political actors on either side, particularly the Islamists, see religion as the fundamental framework of the political culture and the only source of legitimacy. The Islamist discourse, in this context, is simply confined to the idea of serving Islam. For Middle East modernization, an instinctively different pattern of secularism is adored, which is based on the redefinition of religion in the public sphere rather than a direct confrontation with it (Ardic, 2012).

Even before the Arab Uprising, the idea of religious politics had transformed with time. Though religion wasn't simply seen as a ‘system of belief restricted to personal and private life rather than as a complete

⁴ This is mentioned by Hassan al-Bana in his famous work *Rasa'il*. At this stage Brotherhood has not stepped into the domain of political Islam.

⁵ By pluralism I refer to the triangular relationship among government, the official religious establishment, and the unofficial establishment (the Muslim Brotherhood) remains unstable because the status quo depends upon the will of the state. Despite the government efforts over the past century or so, the organizational structure of Islam in Egypt has become pluralistic. It is thoroughly politicized. The state has transformed the institutional structure of Islam in Egypt and incorporated it in various degrees into the structures of state. Transforming Islam has transformed state. And this has paved a way for the political pluralism.

way of life,⁶ for Islamists across the world – particularly the Egyptian Islamist – this notion has seriously hampered peoples' ability to understand the nature of Islam and many of the world's religions (Esposito, 2000). Al-Ghannouchi draws attention to the difference between the Western experience where “secularism is associated with scientific progress, industrial revolution and democratic governments” and modernization in the West Asia where “pseudo-secularism...has destroyed society and rendered it easy prey to a corrupt elite.” He also argues that in this region secularism has become “a ‘church’ of the same type against which the West rebelled,” (Ghannouchi, 2000).

After decades of repression by dictators, Islamists were finally in the saddle of transformation⁷ in Egypt. But political success is barely anything as easier as ostensibly perceived by the Brotherhood. Every time Egypt seemed to come closer to the stability and democracy, a new problem surfaced. In the current Arab world, however, prevailing indigenous models of democracy have historically worked to side-track genuine political reform. Given the contestability of democracy, it is minimally defined here as a form of legally conditional and limited rule standing in contradistinction to that most widely practiced rule in the Arab world: the autocracy (Labri, 2000).

During post-Uprising era, political instability appeared more rigorous, violent and persistent phenomenon than ever with uneven happenings drifting the situation back to square one. When people were out to vote in the first ever democratically held elections, Egypt's Supreme Constitutional Court issued a ruling that the law under which the parliament had been elected was unconstitutional. The SCC ruling further maintained that the lower of parliament should be disbanded. To pile over the agony, military also passed a new constitutional declaration under which president was deprived of any significant power. This declaration carved a very strong role of military in the constitution writing process that was underway.

The Islamist camp did not show any reaction initially. They waited, and once elected to power, Mohamed Morsi reassembled the support against these steps and eventually moved to court demonstrating the suspension of the same. He negated the authority military was trying to hold, and issued a constitutional declaration that all such powers belonged to presidency. This move was followed by yet another decree nullifying the military's recent actions. With the sequence of unfolding events, apprehension that presidential power may go unchecked crept severely in the Egyptian society. The ruling FJP invited the opposition to dialogue about the constitution drafting and other controversies that had been simmering. But the opposition “continued to refuse to involve themselves in the constitution process which grew increasingly shrill in their criticism of Islamists,” (Labri, 2000).

When deadline for drafting the constitution came near, Morsi alleged that some secular elements and the supporters of old regime were conspiring to dissolve the constitutional assembly. He tried to control the situation in a different way: he issued a constitutional declaration removing the issue of constituent assembly and others matters from judicial review. This amounted to the base of second uprising – this time against Morsi – as the opposition took it as an assertion of absolute presidential power. In the meantime, the constitution assembly finished the draft work and Egyptians were called to polls yet again to pass a referendum. The constitution was passed in a very low voter turnout with only 33 percent of the population taking part in it.

The non-Islamist opposition built their movement primarily on this initiative. A sense of insecurity was induced in the Egyptian political consciousness on the claim that Islamists were trying to hijack the revolution which lead to further protests. Although people demonstrated sincerely to save their revolution, the protests were no longer an independent peoples' movement. On 30 June 2013, mass demonstration took place across Egypt. Army issued a warning to the political actors to resolve the issues within 48 hours, but to no avail. The

⁶ Some of the historians argue that in Christian Europe a similar religious discourse did exist up to the 18th century. It was accompanied by the emergence of various denominations, especially in Protestant countries, which was eventually replaced by the more familiar discourse positioning reason and science against religion and superstition; in Middle East, this was the distinctive character of the entire modernization process.

⁷ When Brotherhood started their political ambition at the outbreak of World War Second, their idea of governance was to preserve the religious and cultural heritage of Egypt. During that period, their message influenced the youth at a large scale. By as the modernization and secularism flourished in Egypt, Brotherhood had to change their idea of governance. And after the uprising, the ideology of Brotherhood was far distant for the idea that its founder, Hassan al-Bana, nourished.

persistent denial to engage in dialogue by the opposition allowed army to intervene on July 3. Though this was an unjustified move by army,⁸ Egypt was not alien to such a situation: It was the death of democracy in its infancy.

During the small period of Morsi regime, certain things duly changed in Egypt. The security situation improved; there were no political imprisonments. There was no curtailment of freedom of expression, no ban on press, no emergency law in place. But with Morsi gone, there were now celebrations, and mourning: The army with anti-Brotherhood alliance are rejoicing the fall of president who 'failed to meet the sentiments of people', the Brotherhood is by caught by the grief of the 'unconstitutional ousting of Morsi'. The conspiracy by 'deep state' to crumble Brotherhood took a new turn when Sheikh al-Azhar came publicly in support of the road map issued by army. This was a yet another 'acknowledgement of legitimacy' for General Sisi. Although people did not initially notice their mistake, by giving their consent to yet another army dictator, they are more likely to regret it soon.

Failure of 'democracy' was essentially the miscalculation of 'main political actors' in Egypt. As a system, democracy is not something that can be established overnight no matter how much the society is eager for freedom. And in a place where dictatorship has been the rule of law for generations at stretch, it may take even more time for people to get used to this idea. But Egypt showed no respect to the rules of democracy. Since Islamists came to power through electoral majority, they should have been given full term to rule. This would have consequently shown the practical form of Brotherhood politics. Given more time, there was a possibility that Brotherhood would have brought political stability to Egypt by improving upon their mistakes. Here, political stability would have driven more support in favour of FJP and inevitably made the non-Islamist opposition little less relevant in society, but neither the old guard nor the deep state were ready for it.

Deception of the Deep State

The outcome of revolution ought to go beyond the aspect of toppling the regime; because revolutions do not always produce the outcome that 'revolution makers' desire at the outbreak of an uprising. Sometimes the outcome is utterly the opposite of 'revolutionary aspiration', and sometimes the version that comes out of the revolutionary process is the façade of aspirations misrepresented by the force which comes to power. People can only hope for it and make their best attempts in this pursuit. But the role that the 'deep state'⁹ plays, like in case of Egypt, spoils the structure of 'revolutionary imagination'. Egypt felt victim to such misrepresentation by its army and the deep state.

The leadership – within Army and the political circles – that obtained the command to transform Egypt on the principles of the revolution failed to understand their responsibility. The correct method lies in compassionate-reconciliation. The role of political party that comes to power in the wake of the revolution is to liberate society from the clutches of authoritarian fear to ensure the justice is being done.

Although the equation of dictatorship over the people continues to remain a significant dynamic of Egyptian politics, the role of army and the conflicting views among the political elite has troubled the society the most in the post-Hosni Mubarak era. The 'military-controlled media' created the scene of widespread protests against the 'failure of Morsi government', Egypt's sentiment of discontent against the Brotherhood was not an isolated phenomenon, thus. Behind the veil there was a 'deep state' involved in manoeuvring the movement

⁸ Unlike the role army played in Egypt during 2011, this time it chose to take a stand: they sided with the non-Islamist camp possibly deeming that it was also in defiance of their own interests. Army, as such, shall remain vigilant and determined to provide safety and security to nation. It has no role to flourish the democracy. By taking side, the military did not only jeopardize the revolutionary momentum in Egypt, it also replayed the role for which people have hated them for decades. At times, it seemed that people endorse the position of army. But once the romance of fiddling demonstration calms down and people return to the normal life, they will, most possibly, regret the support they lent to military's move against the democratically elected government. Military takeover is never a solution for bad governance.

⁹ In the post-revolution era, both the Islamists and Secularists wanted to reap benefits of the Uprising. Each side mobilized their sympathizers to gained trust and support. Eventually the Islamists won the elections. Backing upon their political victory, the Islamists made constitutional changes which the secular opposition and army could not get along with. In a bid to get rid of Brotherhood the several political and non-political actors – like secular opposition, Egypt's army and some foreign actors – joined hands against the Brotherhood. This camp forms 'deep state'; it conspires against the regime without much of such information coming in the public domain.

of 'coup'. In a democratic set-up, every ideology is given a platform to express their support in favour of or against the regime. But, Egypt's 'uprising' against Morsi was a clear frame of disparity: the deep state mobilised the narrative in a way that those protesting against Morsi were given free passage and security, while as those protesting army's 'unconstitutional move' were murdered on streets. Under such a situation, Egyptian army, with the support of deep state, desisted from accommodating dissent disapproving its action.

In the battle between Islamists and the secularists, and the bloodshed that took place, Brotherhood's controversial presidential decree was at the heart of conflict. Initially it weakened the understanding between the ruling coalition and subsequently made Salafist Al-Noor party to change its alliance. Brotherhood miscalculated the discontent of people. And when the 'deep state' started to indoctrinate society with an apprehension of 'Islamic dictatorship', Brotherhood was already late to react.

Towards the end of 2013, military's issuance of statements against Brotherhood – and condemning them as the terrorist organization – was an illusion to protect their image at the global level. When this appeared to be less influential, the state controlled judiciary issued a judgement of mass death penalty to hundreds of Brotherhood supporters for allegedly killing a police officer. This judgement¹⁰ was last nail in the coffin of 'democracy'. By so doing, the 'deep state' tried to give a message that 'terrorism' cannot be tolerated: but here 'terrorism' was only a euphemism for supporting Muslim Brotherhood'.

¹⁰ This ruling, however, is a sign that some elements within the Egyptian state still favour a drastic escalation of violence against Morsi supporters. Doing so might come at the cost of the rule of law: After the trial's March 22 opening session, Tarek Fouda, head of the lawyer's syndicate in Minya, said that the presiding judge had "veered away from all legal norms and that he breached the rights of the defence."

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