

Understanding Authoritarian Restoration in Egypt after Arab Spring

*Nebahat Tanrıverdi Yaşar**

Abstract: Among the studies, those focusing on the relation between state and society reveal how the authoritarian regime survived from democratic pressures and continued to preserve power in the Middle East. Thus, in a similar vein, inspired by Historical Sociology, this study argues that the Egyptian state historically established authoritative relations with society through adopting façade party politics and corporatist formula. This study aims to draw attention to the fact that these historical legacies that had formulated the authoritarian regime have implied certain constraints on key actors as well as provided them vital resources, and thus enabled the authoritarian restoration in Egypt.

Keywords: Arab Spring, Egypt, Authoritarian Restoration, Corporatism, Party-politics, Historical Sociology

Arap Baharı Sonrası Mısır'daki Otoriter Restorasyonu Anlamak

Öz: Devlet-toplum ilişkisine odaklanan çalışmalar, Ortadoğu'da otoriter rejimlerin demokratik baskılardan nasıl kurtulduğunu ve iktidarlarını korumaya devam ettiğini ortaya koymaktadır. Dolayısıyla, benzer bir şekilde, Tarihsel Sosyolojiden esinlenen bu çalışma, Mısır devletinin tarihsel olarak, göstermelik parti siyaseti ve korporatist formülü benimseyerek toplumla otoriter ilişkiler kurduğunu savunuyor. Bu çalışma, otoriter rejimi formüle eden bu tarihi mirasın, bir yandan kilit aktörlere belirli kısıtlamalar getirdiğine diğer yandan da onlara hayati kaynaklar sağladığına ve böylece Mısır'da otoriter restorasyonu mümkün kıldığına dikkat çekmeyi amaçlamaktadır.

Anahtar Kelimeler: Arap Baharı, Mısır, Otoriter Restorasyon, Korporatizm, Parti Siyaseti, Tarihsel Sosyoloji

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*PhD Candidate, Middle East Technical University, CATS Fellow, German Institute for International and Security Studies nebahat.tanriverdi@gmail.com, ORCID: 0000-0003-0307-0322

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Introduction

The mass protests in the summer of 2013 and following military intervention on July 3, 2013, in Egypt demonstrate that the collapse of an authoritarian regime is not an easy process. The outcome of the transformation process started in 2011 in Egypt has been the authoritarian restoration rather than a democratization process. The authoritarian restoration and continuing persistence of the authoritarian regime in Egypt requires a re-visiting of the works on authoritarianism, especially those focused on the Middle East. Among the studies, those focusing on the relation between state and society reveal how the authoritarian regime survived from democratic pressures and continued to preserve power in the Middle East. Thus, in a similar vein, this study argues that the Egyptian state historically established authoritative relations with society through adopting façade party politics and corporatist formula. This study aims to draw attention to the fact that these historical legacies that had formulated the authoritarian regime have implied certain constraints on key actors as well as provided them vital resources, and thus enabled the authoritarian restoration in Egypt. To reach these aims, this study first discusses the mainstream approaches to democratization and authoritarianism. After the assessment of the historical roots of authoritarianism in Egypt, the final part of the study evaluates the authoritarian restoration in the country.

Two Camps of the Literature on Authoritarianism and Democratization

In regime transitions theories, there are two mainstream approaches: *the macro-oriented structuralist approaches* that emphasized structural and configurational explanations; and *agency-based process-oriented approaches* that focus on the process of change, the political variables, the political actors, and their strategies. The structuralist approaches are preoccupied with macro-level social, historical, and/or economic conditions, while the process-oriented approaches tend to analyze micro-level variables, which are based on the reconstruction of individual cases. This is not the only main difference, but there is a more fundamental division between these two approaches concerning the political choices in political actions. For the structuralist approaches, the political choices in political actions are shaped by the exogenous and/or endogenous structural constraints. The process-oriented approaches, in contrast, assume that the political choices in political actions are the outcome of the actor's strategic calculations which have been shaped by

their cognitive and normative perceptions and calculations of preferences and constraints.

The opening up of the system is indeed usually correlated with the decisions of and negotiations between ruling elites and opposition in the process-oriented approaches. The role of “the individuals and groups which hold the power of decision” (Perthes, 2004) on social and political actions emerges as a significant framework in a recent analysis. Referring to Robert Dahl’s assumption that “key economic and social decisions” are made by “tiny minorities”, Peter Bachrach (2010) underlines the significant role played by political elites in a democracy. Inspired by Dankwart Rustow’s dynamic model of democratization, process-oriented approaches emphasize the strategic choices made by political elites; stress the process, and observe the decision-makers, the calculation of their actions, and the strategies to explain the breakdown of authoritarian regime and democratization. As long as, the ruling coalition has the capacity to maintain political exclusion, the restriction of political arena, political and economic participation; and the opposition do have neither democratic agenda nor capacity to challenge the ruling coalition/regime; it is unlikely to occur a transition from authoritarian to a democratic regime. Moreover, the interest calculation of the ruling coalition and opposition define their stance on democracy. The formation of a liberalizing coalition that exists of the soft-liner of an authoritarian state and the moderate or truly democratic opposition is the common characteristic of a democratic transition period (O’Donnell, 1999).

The noteworthy fact here is that approach does not imply a democratizing mission to any specific class. The process-oriented approaches are in general against the assumption “that the transition to democracy is a worldwide uniform process, that it always involves the same social classes, the same types of political issues, or even the same methods of the solution” (Rustow, 1995, p. 67). This perception implies that there may be many roads to democracy. Similarly, there may be differences among the actors due to conflicts in changing timeframes in the same country. As Rustow (1995) mentioned, this approach provides a dynamic model of the transition for the possibility of such differences. However, a fundamental weakness of this process-oriented approach is that actors are freestanding agents, independent of any political, economic, social, and/or historical context. Yet such structural determinants are crucial in explaining the agents and their strategies which have also changed over time.

The decisions made by these factions are highly influential during the transition. However, it should be noted that oppositional groups are not self-directed from class interests; because *“they (class interests) are historically constructed by movements, organizations, and leadership that act in some particular environment of influences and opposition, possible alliances and enmities.”* (Rueschemeyer, Stephens, & Stephens, 1993, p. 75). Hence factions in oppositional groups represent different interests at different historical periods whereas different social classes act as agents of democratization under different conditions. On one hand, the relationship between state and society and on the other hand, the shifts in the balance of class power have causal links with the emergence of pro-democracy agents and democratization (Rueschemeyer et al., 1993).

Specifically, in late-developing countries, the special character of industrialization and the central role that state sponsorship nurture the development of private sector capital and labor in financial, social, political, and infrastructural means and rises social forces capable of amassing sufficient power to challenge the authoritarian state and impose a measure of policy responsiveness upon it (Bellin, 2002). Moreover, state sponsorship also undermines the enthusiasm of social forces for democracy; because these social forces, which enjoyed the benefits of state sponsorship, have less interest in challenging the state and allying with unprivileged masses (Bellin, 2002). Hence both the internal and international factors that change the extent and character of state-sponsorship may well transform class attitudes about the utility of democracy and increase their enthusiasm for democracy (Rueschemeyer et al., 1993). Hence the structuralist approaches, such as Modernization Theory, Political Economy, and Historical Sociology, provide better explanations with their references to social and economic bases as well as emphasize the contingent nature of change processes.

Among those, Modernization Theory, pioneered by Lipset, hypothesized that transition to democracy has occurred on the condition of advanced socio-economic development or modernization. This theory assumes that the emergence of democracy is a consequence of the transformation of class structure, especially the emergence of a bourgeoisie, the development of urbanization, the emergence of democratic values, and some other socio-economic factors. As it is understood, this theory asserts a linear development model, ‘prerequisites’ based on this model and a certain pathway for democratization. As originally proposed by Lipset, modernization theory

argues that the level of economic development correlated positively with democracy, because political culture and social structure are closely associated with economic development. The middle class, which gains in size with socio-economic development, emerges as the main pro-democratic force in Lipset's hypothesis.

On the other hand, Historical Sociology, pioneered by Moore, argues that democracy requires a balance between the state and society. Rueschmeyer, Stephens, and Stephens (1993) draw attention to the fact that economic development also expands the size of the urban working class and argue that the urban working class plays a more redemptive role in democratization. Hence "capitalist development is related to democracy because it shifts the balance of class power" (Rueschemeyer et al., 1993, p. 75) in favor of subordinated classes to demand reform and "facilitate their self-organization, thus making it more difficult for elites to exclude them politically" (Rueschemeyer et al., 1993, p. 83). "Democracy is a matter of power and power-sharing" (Rueschemeyer et al., 1993, p. 73), thus dominant classes need to be balanced by subordinated classes as well as the power of the state needs to be counterbalanced by civil society to democratize. According to this assumption the capitalist development, at the same time, erodes the size and the power of the anti-democratic force- the upper classes (Rueschemeyer et al., 1993, p. 84). Overwhelmingly the explanations of the deficit of democracy in these late-developing countries focus on the level of *etatisme* that characterizes the political economy of these countries. Alexander Gerschenkron argues "that the later a country is its economic development, the larger the role that the state is likely to play in trying to promote development" (in Ayubi, 1996, p. 13).

Democracy Deficit in the Middle East

More specifically, like most of the late-developing countries, countries in the Middle East experienced what Eva Bellin (2002) has called "stalled democracy" as a result of the dual paradoxes of state-sponsored industrialization. State-sponsored industrialization enhances the empowerment and autonomy of social forces from the state by fostering the development of labor and capital and gives rise to the "developmental paradox" of the authoritarian regime, but at the same time it undermines their enthusiasm for democracy and causes "the democratic paradox." Similarly, Nazih Ayubi (1996) underlines the economic and social role of the state in regional countries, which creates a dependency of capital and labor on the state, as the leading factor of democracy deficit. Ayubi defines the states in the Middle East as over-stating states which refers to a

remarkable expansion of the state in the public and economic arena. The state in the Middle East, which represents various degrees of corporatism, expands in quantitative terms by way of expansion not only in industrialization and social welfare but also in public personnel, public organizations, and public expenditures. Despite all liberalization and privatization policies since the late 1970s and 1980s, the states in the Middle East are not about to withdraw from the economy (Ayubi, 1997). Privatization is a public policy adopted and applied by the state to ease its “fiscal crisis” rooted in its inability to continue with its etatist and its welfarist policies at the same time under the pressure and temptation from globalized capitalism and its international institutions (Ayubi, 1997). So, a state’s withdrawal from the economy, according to Ayubi (1997), mainly is a result of the state’s inability due to its fiscal crisis rather than the pressure from the private sector or contingent decision of the ruling elite.

The privatization and liberalization in the regional countries have not diminished the role of the state in the economy and society; to the contrary, the character of these reforms provided the resources for regimes to resist democratization and to transform authoritarianism (King, 2009). Privatization and liberalization “created and then favored a rent-seeking urban bourgeoisie and landed elite with no interest in democracy or political participation” as noted by King (2009, p. 434). The gains, which derive from liberalization and privatization, tend to be distributed unevenly and foster the dependency of social forces that benefited from the new economic policies, on the state.

The authoritarian regime survived from democratic pressures and continued to preserve power in the Middle East by forming and reproducing a set of political and economic dependencies based on their authoritarian relationship with society. In a similar vein, the Egyptian state historically established authoritative relations with society through adopting façade party politics and corporatist formula. These historical legacies that had formulated the authoritarian regime have implied certain constraints on key actors as well as provided them vital resources, and thus enabled the authoritarian restoration in Egypt.

Authoritarian Regime in Egypt from Nasser to Mubarak

The Egyptian state has been the key socio-economic and socio-political force and historically established a set of authoritative relations with society since Egypt’s independence in 1956 and especially after the Free Officers coup of July 1952. Al-Wafd was the most prominent political party, which was affiliated

with the nationalist struggle. It had developed ties with a set of national organizations including unions, students, youth, and other organizations (Vitalis, 1995). However, despite its popular support, Al-Wafd had also close relations with landlords, bankers, and manufacturers (Vitalis, 1995). Its failure to respond to the demands of Egyptian lower and middle classes as well as to overcome British colonial rule in Egypt paved the way for the emergence of another socio-political force in the country. In 1952, the Free Officers led by Gamal Abdel Nasser overthrew the monarchy and put an end to colonial rule in Egypt. The Free Officers eliminated Al-Wafd, the civil representative of Egypt between 1919 and 1952, abolished the parliament, and outlawed the political parties (King, 2009).

After the elimination of Wafd, and constitutional order between 1952- and 1954; the Free Officers began to create a ruling party and state-affiliated corporatist organization as well as subordinate the existing organizations to govern the relations between state and society and to fill the vacuum that emerged with the banning of political parties by the regime (Shehata, 2010). Free Officers did not emerge from a political party; hence they had paid continuous efforts to fill the institutional and organizational vacuum, which was a result of the elimination of Wafd, parliament, and monarchy, with ruling parties. In this regard, the Liberation Rally (1953-1958); the National Union (1958-1961); and the Arab Socialist Union (1962-1977) were formed (King, 2009). To structure the political life in support of the regime, these parties were to manage the support of the ruling coalition of the regime and implement the policies of social transformation.

Among other things, the regime needed to subordinate the organized labor; hence it led to the formation of the Egyptian Trade Union Federation (ETUF) in 1957 but reserved several powers over it including the right to choose its leaders, established strict control over it, and limited its ability to respond developments (Posusney, 1997). In addition, non-state political actors which began to develop before the republican period was taken to control of the regime with the corporatist policies and have lost their economic and institutional autonomy (Shehata, 2010). Hinnebusch (2015) interpreted these efforts as the incorporation of pro-regime participation which remained weak and chiefly instruments of control.

These different versions of ruling parties together with the subordinated mass organizations enabled the regime to manage its relationship with the Egyptian society, while the alliance of military and state technocrats under the leadership

of Nasser ruled the country (Waterbury 1983; King, 2009). But the party politics in the country did not develop during this period. According to Perlmutter (1974, p. 13), this is “a direct result of Nasser’s military praetorianism”.

The regime was institutionalized and centralized due to corporatist and populist policies (King, 2009). The civil and military bureaucracy had expanded and protected from internal strife with the growing authority of the presidency and the executive (Shehata, 2010). Abdel Malek (1967), interpreted Nasser’s policy towards the military as the militarization of the state bureaucracy, which provided a disproportionate share of political power to the military establishment in Egypt. He stated that the officers who quit their ranks, in turn, received key posts in the state apparatus and the upper ranks of non-military establishments. Due to these policies and expanding nature of the military within the state, Abdel Malek (1964) and Perlmutter (1974) considered Egypt to be a military regime; however, S. Cook (2007) argued that there is a military-dominated system in Egypt.

However, Abdul Malik [Abdel Malek] (1968), as Nazih Ayubi (1980), identified the Egyptian state in this era as a modernizing agent, which had implemented land reforms, industrialization, and nationalization policies, and expanded the public sector. Even though these policies adopted during Nasser are provided workers and peasants significant gains; they also led to the establishment of state patronage favorable to the lower classes and enabled it to co-opt the masses. As a result, the state became the driving force of modernization, industrialization, and economic development.

The power transition from Nasser to Sadat did not change the presidential-dominated bureaucratic regime, but the Sadat era was marked with the further personalization and centralization of the decision-making process. Sadat encircled himself with those accountable and loyal to him. He also gained more power with the adaptation of laws in dealing with cases on social, national, moral, and religious issues in addition to all economic matters (Ayubi, 1991). Moreover, Ayubi (1991, p. 92) argues that with these powers given to the president during the Sadat era, “Egypt had truly become a boss-state (*etat-rais*)”. Sadat also demilitarized the cabinet, cut the army’s budget, and restricted its role in public life (Hinnebusch, 1985; Cooper, 1982). But despite all these policies, Perlmutter (1974) argued that during the Sadat era, the military establishment was strengthened at the expense of competing for political structures because Sadat, himself, not only depended on the support

of the military but also did not have the power to keep the military within the borders formed by Nasser.

The most significant policy shift during Sadat is the adaptation of economic liberalization policies, the *infitah*, or Open-Door policy, which also triggered a transformation of the ruling coalition, some political institutions, and legitimacy strategies (Hinnebusch, 2015; King, 2009). The *infitah* marked a new development model which aim to liberalize the Egyptian economy by reducing the role of the state in the economy and improving the private sector to attract and encourage foreign investment (Tür, 2009). Sadat cut state subsidies in some products, restricted state's intervention to the private sector, compensate for the loss of some landowners affected by Nasser's land reform through compensation or derequisition (Tür, 2009). In this way, also Sadat reconnected with the rural elites to sustain its control over the rural areas (Hinnebusch, 2015).

These policies met with resistance both from some political elites and some segments of society. The dissident elites, mainly composed of Nasserites, leftists, and opponents of the Peace Treaty with Israel, were expelled from the ruling coalition. In parallel to that, the legitimacy strategies based on populism and charismatic leadership shifted to neo-patrimonial leadership and Sadat began to legitimize himself with discourses cultivated from religion and tradition (Hinnebusch, 2015). In addition, a partial pluralization in terms of political parties had been introduced to fulfill the aims of sustaining legitimacy, eliminating and neutralizing Nasserites and generating support from the bourgeoisie as well as easing the tension that emerged due to the newly adopted economic policies (King, 2009). The Arab Socialist Union National Congress allowed the formation of three platforms within the party; the Socialist Democrats (later the National Democratic Party, NDP), Tagammu, and the Socialist Liberals. These three platforms were allowed to transform into political parties and then attend the elections in 1976 (Ayubi, 1991). The introduction of party politics did not bring a balanced multi-party system; on the contrary, the regime's ruling party, the Arab Socialist Union and later the NDP, dominated the system (Zaki, 1995; King, 2009). Consequently, John Waterbury (1983) interpreted the adaptation of the multi-party system as a strategy for the continuation of the corporatist formula in Egypt. Moreover, Hinnebusch (2015, p. 21) observed a "cycle of opening, when the regime had sufficient rent to sustain patronage, and closing when opposition mounted." The labor, like peasants, had lost most of the benefits that gained during the

Nasser era due to the *infitah* policies of Sadat, and hence, social dissident translated into the protests in the late Sadat period (Fahmy, 2010). In response to this, Sadat increased the state's subordination over the labor unions by reducing their numbers, co-opting their leadership cadres, and strengthening the administrative and financial controls over them (Fahmy, 2010).

As Hinnebusch (2015) states, the cycle of opening and closing, which are observed Sadat period, also continued under Mubarak. In his early years, Mubarak re-liberalized Egyptian politics and pledged a return to the promises of expanded political participation made by Sadat (Hinnebusch, 2015; Davidson, 2000). Limited liberalization was achieved after reinstating the multiparty system, which had continued to be dominated by the NDP. Moreover, the officially outlawed Muslim Brotherhood was allowed to run in the elections by allying with legally recognized parties and through independent candidates (Davidson, 2000). By the 1990s, this limited re-liberalization reversed once again.

Analogically, the authoritarian regime under Mubarak's leadership reflects continuity both from the Nasser and Sadat eras. As Ayubi noted, Mubarak inherited a complex legacy from them; he mostly continued relying on these foundations. The social base of the regime that he inherited from Sadat was composed of "the pre-revolutionary semi-aristocracy, the state bourgeoisie of the sixties, and the commercial/financial cliques of the *infitah* era" (Ayubi, 1991, p.100). The NDP, after the 1984 elections, continued to take the support of landlords and the bourgeoisie, while the number of businessmen in parliament showed a significant increase after the 1980s and reached its peak in the 2000s (King, 2009). The leading business figures such as Rachid Mohamed Rachid, Mohamed Mansour, and Ahmed Ezz acquired important political posts, while the number of the businessman as parliamentarians was 59 in 1995 elections, and increased to 120 in 2000 elections (King, 2009; Roll, 2013). As noted by King (2009) and Hinnebusch (2015), within the NDP, the new emerging business class and neo-liberal oriented technocrats, who wanted to accelerate economic and social reform, and encouraged by Gamal Mubarak, became influential by the mid-2000s, and the government formed by Ahmad al-Nazif in 2004 was dominated by this group.

By the 1990s, the crony capitalist bureaucrats and private businessmen had benefited from a series of economic liberalization and privatization policies, but in a highly cronyistic environment, the private sector continued to remain dependent on the state (Hinnebusch, 2015). In addition, despite these policies,

the principal owner and allocator of the land, production sector, and banking system was still the state which also continued to be the biggest employer in Egypt. Furthermore, since the late 1970s, the military had growingly expanded its involvement in the Egyptian economy, “including the selling and buying of real estate on behalf of the government, domestic cleaning services, running cafeterias, managing gas stations, farming livestock, producing food products, and manufacturing plastic table covers” (Abul-Magd, 2011). According to Satloff (198), Mubarak endorsed the military’s share and role in politics and economy to ensure the support of the military to his rule since the mass and opposition control had become more problematic due to its economic policies.

The crony capitalism in Egypt eventually resulted in growing inequality, poverty, and social insecurity for the lower classes, and concentrated the wealth in the hands of the richest that are closely linked to the state apparatus. This, in turn, transformed into a wave of protests, which gained momentum in number and scope, especially by the mid-2000s in the country. According to data gathered by Hamzawy and Ottoway (2011), Egypt experienced more than 1,000 episodes from 1998 to 2004, more than 250 strikes, labor sit-ins, and demonstrations in 2004, 222 in 2006, 580 in 2007, and 400 strikes in 2008. The Egyptian Movement for Change (Kefaya) organized echoed protests in 2004 and 2005 during the constitutional referendum and presidential election. The April 6 Youth Movement was established in 2008, by activists to organize the strikes in El-Mahalla El-Kubra. In addition to The April 6 Youth Movement; Karama Party, the Wasat Party, the Lawyers’ Syndicate with state workers, and Kefaya supported the strikes in El-Mahalla El-Kubra. 2010 Elections also triggered another wave of protests with violent clashes in several cities of Egypt. These country-wide protests then extended the context of the socioeconomic demands of the protests to political demands and transformed into the uprising in 2011.

Authoritarian Restoration after Arab Spring in Egypt: Cycle of Opening and Closing?

The authoritarian regime in the country was challenged when Egyptians took the streets in the early months of 2011. The 18-days protests seized the largest cities of Egypt and then continued their uprising in November 2011 till Hosni Mubarak’s resignation and transfer of his powers to The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) on February 11, 2011. The regional mass movement against the authoritarian regimes as a catalyst to change triggered a transformation period in Egypt between 2011 and the July 2013 military

takeover, but the transitional period ended with the restoration of the authoritarian regime once again. The ruling elites re-ensured their control over the political situation and state mechanism and the new constitution adopted with the referendum on 14-15 January 2014 increased the powers of civil and military bureaucracy –especially military, police and jurisdiction- and transformed the political system into a more bureaucratic one. In this context, despite all the expectations on behalf of democratization, Egypt has experienced an authoritarian restoration.

As noted by Hinnebusch (2015), the authoritarian regime in Egypt had adopted a cycle of opening and closing for regime survival during the Sadat and Mubarak era and similar cycles of opening and closing brought the authoritarian restoration in Egypt after 2011. This strategy consists of opening the political space to new political and economic elites when the regime had sufficient resources to sustain patronage while closing it when the opposition challenge to transform economic policies promoting rent distribution or foreign policy (Hinnebusch, 2015). Accordingly, these opening and closing cycles were in general consecutive and depend on the regime's ability to co-opt opposition, sustain its etatist policies, distribute the rent for patronage, which in the end, foster the dependency of social forces on the state. However, rather than consecutive periods of opening and closing, Egypt had experienced an intertwining of both opening and closing cycles between 2011 and 2013. This intertwining nature of the process provided the necessary means and resources to the military elites to reconfigure the state's authoritarian relation with the Egyptian society through the very similar strategies adopted by both Sadat and Mubarak eras.

The Egyptian army gained a stronger and more effective political position in three phases- revision, reposition, and consolidation- between Mubarak's removal and the military takeover in 2013. The revision phase started on Mubarak's resignation and ended with the retirement of a considerable number of high-ranking generals, along with the head of SCAF, Gen. Mohammed Hussein Tantawi, in August 2012. This period was also marked by a cycle of opening, which included the removal of Mubarak and partial political liberalization, which was adopted in the country. The partial political liberalization implied the dissolution of the ruling party NDP and the allowance of other political parties to run in the election that held after 2011. After the Parliamentary elections in 2012, the outlook of the parliament changed drastically with the lack of former ruling party NDP. Muslim

Brotherhood-affiliated, the Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) won 47.2% of the votes and gained 235 seats in the Egyptian parliament while al-Nour Party, a coalition of Salafist parties at the time, came in second with 24.3% of the votes and 121 seats. The Wafd Party (7.6% and 38 seats) and the Egyptian Bloc, a coalition of three secular parties, the Tagammu Party, the Social Democratic Party, and the Free Egyptians (6.8% and 34 seats) came in third and fourth. However, during the same period, the repressive strategies also served to limit political participation, weaken the pro-democratic systemic pressure put by organized labor, youth groups, and civil society. With the adaptation of the 2011 Constitution, with the support of the Muslim Brotherhood and Salafi groups, the army secured and legitimized its nearly a-year rule (Religious propaganda, vote-buying flourish in Egypt ahead of vote, 2011). The SCAF continued to use the Emergency Law and special courts, and forwarded to more than 12,000 civilians, including children, to military tribunals during 2011 (World Report 2012: Egypt- Events of 2011, 2012). Numerous protesters, who attended anti-Mubarak protests in January, were arrested and sentenced to prison with charges of “thuggery” (World Report 2012: Egypt- Events of 2011, 2012). In September 2011 the SCAF expanded the validation date of the Emergency Law through May 2012 (Egypt army says emergency law valid until 2012, 2011). Torture and excessive use of force by the military in 2011 continued, even increased in that year as well (World Report 2012: Egypt-Events of 2011, 2012). Thus, the mass organizations that ensure the continuity of the protests in the big cities were suppressed. Despite all these violations and repressions; the army created an illusion promising that the elections would pave the way for democratization. Not enacting a provisional constitution, electoral law, and civil society law during this phase led to the transition ending up in favor of authoritarian restoration.

In the post-2011 period, the state-party unity has disappeared along with the dissolution of the ruling party, the NDP, and the expropriation of its assets. NDP had functioned as one of the most important power pillars of authoritarian state by playing a rent-distribution mechanism as well as guarantying hegemony of regime over the politics via single-party rule. In the post-Nasser period, the state continued its etatist policies, but sacrificed its welfarist policies, as the state could not resolve its fiscal crisis (Ayubi, 1997). This strategy created favored rent-seeking economic and political elites who have little appetite to challenge the authoritarian regime in the country. But for the same reason, the ruling party did not become popular with the lower classes but service provision by the state helped secure the dominance of the

hegemonic National Democratic Party in the urban (Koehler, 2017). Authoritarian regimes' ability to preserve their relations with the lower classes of the society in which services could be obtained in return for political silence had reached its limits with the urban workers' protests that arose in the mid-2000s. The post-2011 period did not bring a sudden improvement for those and the lack of consensus on the economic policy in the parliament further impoverished them. Both the former and new political elites increasingly had paid their attention to domestic politics and struggled for determining the scope of change, adapt to the changing balance of power, and re-positioning in politics in this era. Secondly, internal insecurity triggered by a popular uprising and political turmoil in the country turned off investors and collapsed tourism income. GDP growth declined from 5% to 1% in 2011 and %2 in 2012 (The Arab Spring and Economic Transition, 2013). Unemployment rates boosted following the evasion of investors.

Even though the party's political elites had continued to support the regime during the post-2011 era, the party could not regain its influence over decision-making under an institutional structure. NDP has not been re-institutionalized as well as the formation of a new ruling party has not occurred since July 2013 while regime elites have expanded and consolidated their powers. The pre-2011 political elites returned to the parliament, however, the new reconfiguration of the political system eroded the power of political elites (Lynch, 2016; Polgar, 2022; Hamzawy, 2017) and political parties.

The repositioning phase, signaling the cycle of closing, started with the retirements of several generals by Mursi as a response to the dissolution of parliament by court decision and ended with July 2013, Mursi's ouster. After the presidential election, SCAF transferred the power to president Mursi, who forced several high-ranking generals to retire. The army did not resist Mursi's decision for the elimination of high-ranking generals, and that caused a perception that the army was growing weak (Springborg, 2012). But the army was not excluded from the process; on the contrary, it continued to expand a vital position in politics. The gains of the army during the Mubarak period were guaranteed in Egypt's 2012 constitution. In addition to the assurances that make it possible for the military bureaucracy to expand towards the civilian sphere such as civilians being tried in military courts, the constitution paved the way for the Egyptian army to form three commissions, and thus also made its influence institutionally (Egypt's draft constitution, 2012). While the army gained constitutional guarantees, it also produced an understanding that the

army also agreed to change and to accept the democratization process. Muslim Brotherhood by giving constitutional gains and guarantees to the military to soften the military establishment's resistance to democratization and political change in the country (Sayigh, 2013), however, the outcome was the repositioning of the army as a supra-political "regulatory" actor in the country. For example, on 11 December 2012, due to deepening crisis between Muslim Brotherhood and opponents which were escorted with mass protests, Egypt's defense minister, Gen. Abdul Fattah el-Sisi, invited president Mursi, ministers, some officials, and other political parties and groups along with some public figures to "a meeting for humanitarian communication and national coherence in the love of Egypt" (In Cairo, Effort to Broaden Support for Charter, 2012). This dialogue initiative led by Sisi was taken unilaterally and without prior consultation with the president or cabinet to ease political confrontation among parties (In Cairo, Effort to Broaden Support for Charter, 2012).

Finally, in the consolidation phase, with the ouster of Mursi by military intervention on, supra-political "regulatory" status of the Egyptian army is recognized and consolidated. At this point, it is indisputable fact that the playmaker in Egyptian politics is the Egyptian army. Coup 2013 indicates that the Egyptian Army is accepted as the upper authority to solve political deadlocks as well as the highest authority in determining the boundaries of politics in the country. The Egyptian military's success to restore the authoritarian regime in Egypt owed too much to its ability to manage the dependency of economic elites on the state and military's economic power in the country (Hubbard & Kirkpatrick, 2013; Bradley, 2013). Networks connecting important Egyptian entrepreneurs and business families had taken a seat back and accelerated Mursi's failure to meet the demands of Arab Spring. In addition, after two years, it became clearer that Tamarrod Movement received financial support from business elites. For example, Naguib Sawiris later admitted his financial support to Tamarrod (Hubbard & Kirkpatrick, 2013). A significant part of the economic and civilian political elites, which gained more power, especially in the last years of Mubarak's rule, were either eliminated or their influences were confined by the military. Although the dissolution of the NDP is considered an important step in terms of democratization, it also provided an opportunity for the military to discipline economic and political elites flourished patronage and state-sponsorship and rebuild their dependencies.

In addition, the military's gains achieved in the 2012 Constitution are preserved in the new constitution adopted in 2014. The new constitution extends an additional considerable measure of autonomy to the Egyptian military including legal and financial autonomy. Only the National Defense Council has the right to review the budget of military and defense in detail, parliament and other state bureaucrats can only have the right to access a single figure in the national budget. In addition, Article 170 states that the defense minister, which must a military officer, must receive the approval of the SCAF. Also, the military trials for civilians, which had been implied during the Mubarak era by transferring cases to the military courts and then continued to use after 2011 to suppress the opponents, constitutionally left to the jurisdiction of the military with the Articles 173 and 198.

Conclusion

The authoritarian restoration in Egypt after Arab Spring allows us to assess the historical legacies that implied some limitations as well as resources and strategies for the agencies of transition periods on the both spectrum of democracy and authoritarianism. First, it suggests that the state sponsorship in Egypt undermines the enthusiasm of business elites for democracy, basically because of their dependence on the benefits provided by the state. Hence Egypt's business elite and military apparatus along with its business empire have less interest in challenging the state and allying with unprivileged masses. Secondly, the military apparatus along with civil bureaucracy have been benefiting from authoritarian structure, which ensures corporatist formula for them to re-establish and preserve their privileged status in the country. This points to how the post-populist authoritarian regime in Egypt has been able to manage the crises with cycles of opening and closing with the help of the historical roots and basis of the authoritarian regime. Yet, the authoritarian restoration in Egypt after Arab Spring reveals that cycles of opening and closing can be intertwined and occur simultaneously. After 2011, the partial political liberalization created an illusion of transformation with the dissolution of the ruling party NDP and the allowance of other political parties to run in the election. However, the authoritarian regime in Egypt has instrumentalized the façade party-politics to survive since Sadat. Mubarak continued to adopt a similar strategy during his rule. Consequently, while the façade party politics triggered the fragmentation of the opposition after 2011, the military suppressed the opposition, arrested the political activists. Moreover, the military also manage the transformation process on behalf of the

survival of the regime, discipline favored rent-seeking political and economic elites under a new constitutional and bureaucratic configuration.

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