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## Egypt in Historical Perspective: Some Thoughts

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### Abstract

Ancient Egypt was gifted with visionary Pharaohs who maximized the gift of the Nile to build one of the famous ancient civilizations in the world. The country emerged from an economy of hunters and gatherers to a viable economy that attracted foreigners like Alexander the Great, Romans, Ottoman Turks and the British raj. Indeed, Egypt was a melting pot of cultures. These foreign influences further harnessed the achievements of the Pharaohs that in modern times Egypt is now a tourist country endowed with Egyptian beautiful architectural designs and mummies. However, in recent past, the reverse is the case as the country is inextricably tied to a political, social and economic convulsion which emanated from the traumatic wave of Arab Spring. It is from this background that this paper seeks to examine how Egypt, a country renowned as a cradle of human civilisation degenerate into a nation that has lost its compass. Tourism which contributed immensely to the economy hitherto to this present time has dissipated as foreigners flee the country for insecurity. To this effect, this work employs multi qualitative method of narrative and case studies towards actualizing the purpose of this research. It is expected that this paper will benefit political analysts and policy makers in designing practicable solutions to the numerous political, economic and social problems confronting the state of Egypt. Therefore, the objective of this paper is to provide analytical information on the current state of the country through narrating the historical development of the country.

**Keywords:** Egypt, Pharaohs, Civilisations, Arab Spring, Instabilities, Underdevelopment.

### INTRODUCTION

Life becomes more mysterious and thought-provoking especially at the sudden or gradual fall of the mighty. The current ramshackle state of Egypt, a country which was not only once mighty but the greatest on earth not only demonstrates how mysterious life is but also necessitates a brainstorming historical enquiry on the catalyst behind its tumbledown. Thus, an in-depth historical assessment of Egypt from the ancient time to the moment unrolls that neither the Nubian invasions

to Ottoman occupation nor the Napoleonic and British colonisation to the Israeli war was more cataclysmic than the Arab spring which started in 2011. For from the onset of the Arab spring, the country started experiencing series of socio-political and economic inconsistency in a rate that had been never witnessed in her history. According to Inbar (2013, 1), the Arab spring was a series of events that caused great political tremors in the Middle East. It is true with Dahrendorf (2008, 1) that 'revolutions are melancholy moments of history' but revolutions are also bound to meet positive outcomes as the overall by-products. Unfortunately, the positive changes – civic state and rights, security, democracy and all issues for which the Egyptians demonstrated at the Tahir square in 2011- have not been realized. Contrary, political instability, social decadence and economic stagnation all defined by all forms of violence and insecurity, despotism and autocracy, huge budget deficit and debt crisis, whistling inflation, overwhelming unemployment, and as well sloppy decline in tourism and foreign investment have remained the mega. Only a memorable and enlightened knowledge of Egypt in the Ancient times would light the question - Is this the real Egypt of the ancient time? Of course, history is only bound to note the fact, and the comparative fact is that while the current Egypt is a replica of the Ancient just only in name, it is in no way similar with the political, economic, and socio-cultural feature of Ancient Egypt.

Ancient Egypt was a glorious state and a harbour of the world's oldest civilization which its reality of existence, a severe and enlightened criticism can neither doubt nor deny. It was a haven of architectural and artistic innovation, and equally a boulevard of plenty watered by agricultural and industrial economy. Governed by absolute monarchs, yet a medium of rights and freedom adorned with peace and order defined the state. The monarchs did not have to rule his subjects with relentless cruelty in order to compel obedience just



like the Muslim Arabs, Mubarak, Mossi, and currently Sisi. Even there was no seclusion of women at any time among the ancient Egyptians and from time to time women actually exercised in Egypt the royal authority, (Rawlinson and Gilman; 1897, 64). Polytheism and later monotheism both defined religion in ancient Egypt yet never in the period was there any religious antagonism. The Egyptian socio-political life, her natural environment, and her architectural and artistic supremacy -all served as tourist attractions. That Egypt became the envy of the outside world which invaded, conquered, and occupied Egypt in turns became 'a no surprise'. Though Egyptian glory and prosperity never withered, its respective invasions and occupation only served to make it more cross-cultural environment- further improving her legacy and vitality. How and why then is Egypt at the moment very different from what it was? Though holding Arab Spring as the major illegal-accomplice, only a genuine tour on Egyptian historiography from the ancient time will highlight the undiscovered but impeccable solution to Egypt's present predicament. From observations so far, ample solutions have been proffered and applied to remedy Egypt's ill-condition yet each time, Egypt ends up submerged in deeper problems. Thus, it is in a bid to unveil permanent solution that this paper decides to take on a unique dimension via exploring Egypt from the Ancient time.

### Tracing Ancient Egypt- Dynasties of Kings

History is only bound to unveil the fact. In the Egyptian tradition, the history of Ancient Egypt is tabled around dynasties of kings which according to Chester (1974; 55) might or might not be related. That, notwithstanding, for comprehensive and simplistic sake, the history of Ancient Egypt which has long centuries of archaic origin is conventionally categorized into the Pre-dynastic Period- up to 3200/3100 B.C.E; the Early Dynastic Period- 3100 to 2686 B.C.E; the Old Kingdom- 2686 to 2181 B.C.E; the First Intermediate Period- 2181 to 2040 B.C.E; the Middle Kingdom, 2040 to 1750 B.C.E; the Second Intermediate Period- 1750 to 1550 B.C.E; New Kingdom- 1550 to 1069 B.C.E; the Third Intermediate Period- 1069 to 715 B.C.E; and the Late Period-700 BCE-332BC, Arthur (2008; 11) and the post empire era, Chester(1974).

It began several thousand years ago, when men with modern skull known as Homo sapiens first appeared in Africa. Just barely 40, 000 years ago, there numbers had become more plentiful, (Hall and Kirk, 2015; 14) and about 25, 000 years

later, almost 15000 years ago, according to (Goucher and Walton, 2013; 35), a desiccation of the Sahara led to the loss of the region's great waters and created a vast desert very tough to survive in. The quest and struggle to sustain life provoked inventions, migrations and dramatic shifts in lifestyles and technologies leading to agricultural revolution of 10,000 BC which gave men the skill and ability to exploit their environment to their advantage. Within the region enclosed between the red sea and the Mediterranean Sea measuring 1,073km from north to south and 1226km wide, from east to west is the land of Egypt with its embellished valley and deltas. A long and narrow river called the Nile not only slashed this land into two halves of upper and lower Egypt but made it agriculturally suitable which according to (Wells 1956; 171, and Rawlinson and Gilman; 1897 ) attracted Nomadic hunters of negro race and of bandarian culture who settled for agricultural life on the Nile valley as early as 5000 BC. Down at the Lower Egypt, settled other groups of people notably the Amratians from the West and Gerzans from the South, (Rawlinson and Gilman; 1897). Ritner (1993) in his *Studies in Ancient Oriental Civilizations* reveals that these groups though slightly different in physical structure but not too dissimilar culture became the early Egyptians. They designated their land as "the two lands" known in Hebrew words as the "two mazor" but organized into autonomous local villages ruled by local chieftains. The absence of a central authority marked this epoch as the pre-dynastic period in Egyptian historiography. In the tradition of Egyptians, it is referred as the shadow land or the time of the gods on earth, (Rawlinson and Gilman; 1897).

By 3200BC, one of the local chieftains, the chief of Thebes, Menes also known as Narmer travelled wide across the country; gained wide influence over other chiefs, and united the two Egypt, (Willson1951; vii-viii). Authur (2008) further noted that Menes having united the land, assumed the King by placing on his head the double crown which hence forth symbolized dominium over both regions and for administrative and strategic reasons, he established the capital at Memphis. This period as indicated by excavations at Abydos and Sakkara, the necropolis of Memphis, according to Arthur (2008), lasted about 400 years with about nine kings having reigned in succession. It terminated at about 2700 BC, and ushered in a new period known variously as the old kingdom, the age of pyramids or the third to the sixth dynasty, Hunt (2009). Authorities agree that the



reign of Pharaoh Zohza marked the beginning of the period and was succeeded by about eight more kings reigned hereafter. From Reece (2006), one could discover that this period was remarkable for the erection of pyramids such as the Great Pyramid, the Second Pyramid, the Third Pyramid, the Step Pyramid and other constructions. (Reece 2006; Olivares-Escobedo and Weaver 2002) exposed that the Pharaohs were also supreme and affluent. However, during the sixth dynasty as noted by (Goldschmidt 2008; and Arthur 2008), there was succession dispute within the ruling family leading to a decline of the central government. The immediate result of this was that the power of the Pharaohs was challenged by small kingdoms in Egypt's provinces- the pharaohs were no longer absolute. This ushered in the first Intermediate Period and the Middle Kingdom from 2200 BC to 1000 BC. One notable feature of this epoch was excessive unregulated migrations into Egypt. The largest of the immigrants were the Hyskos often designed as invaders. Disguising as merchants, they imported into Egypt, horses and chariots, musical instruments, and olive and pomegranate amid resentments by native Egyptians, Hunt (2009; 11). Within some decades the Hyskos had asserted authority over native Egyptians and their rule became the second Intermediate period (1775-1550BC), Hunt (2009;11). Thus, the seventeenth Dynasty succeeded in driving out the Hyskos by 1550BCE; this development marked the beginning of a new period called the New kingdom (1550-1069BCE), Spalinger (2005). The Egyptian pharaohs of the Nile valley who had succeeded in driving out the Hyskos established their own dynasty (the Eighteenth). This period saw the Egyptian state became the first empire of the world with control of city-states stretching from Nubia to the Euphrates River in Asia, Arthur (2008). Two pharaohs stand prominent in this period; Pharaoh Akhnaton (1353-1335) and Pharaoh Ramesses II (1290- 1224 BCE). These two pharaohs, in the hall of talented and skilled pharaohs of Egypt are been given a high place. Remarkably, from the period of unification to the new kingdom, Egypt sustained longevity of about 2000 years. Such uninterrupted lifespan is yet to be witnessed elsewhere. Completely after 2000 years of unique existence, Egypt by 700 BC had aroused the envy and possessive desire of other nations which invaded and occupied it in turns. To what extent would a nation become the target of other nations? Surely Egypt must have possessed priceless legacies inexistent in other parts of the world. A brief-detailed reflection on these legacies must inevitably cast illumination not only on the reasons

behind her invasions but on the areas of backwardness of current Egyptians.

### Civilizations of Ancient Egypt

As the 19th Century was nearing its sunset the western world was already experiencing a state of human society that is very developed and organized socially, economically, politically, and otherwise. This has been referred as civilization and the West claims to be the first. Down in the land of Egypt, from 3000BC was a state of human society not only having attained the most developed economic, political, and socio-cultural life but pioneers in scientific and technological know-how. This was the land referred by Chancellor (1952) when he states that the land of the blacks was not only the cradle of civilization itself but that the blacks were once the leading people on earth.'

In all the achievements of societies and men in history, the people's temperaments are always the sine qua non. This is true for the civilizations of ancient Egyptians. According to Gosse (1915) the Egyptians were naturally industrious and cheerful. Simplicity, nonchalance, and irresistible care-freeness characterize their personality. 'They were industrious by nature and capable of very hard work, and being endowed with a buoyant disposition they preserved a contented cheerfulness, even amid poverty and strenuous toil', Gosse (1915). Affability and friendliness and their immeasurable gratitude for even the most trivial services distinguished Egyptians from the rest of the world. The meaning of music as part of life being a sound that is pleasing to the ear is made manifest in Ancient Egypt. Music and dancing were very popular. The wall paintings show many different instruments, and apparently it was usual to use concert to entertain the guests at a party at which the most famous singers of the day performed, accompanied by an orchestra (Rawlinson and Gilman 1897; Olivares-Escobedo 2002). This music not only digested in dances, and performances rooted in colourful ceremonies but are rich in vitality. Olivares-Escobedo (2012) further recorded that sportsmanship notably in hunting, racing, jump, and wrestling performed amid amusement concluded the Egyptian temperament. Hunt (2006;7) considering the great monuments of Egypt remarks 'it was the ordinary people of Egypt— constant and almost unchanging— who were the lifeblood of this great culture. By their efforts, Egypt became a land of plenty, justly and wisely governed.'



The Egyptian temperament was by all means watered by the socio-political system of the people headed by lines of kings called Pharaohs. The Pharaoh meaning 'the Great House' was aided by a number of officials prominent among them being two viziers or chief minister; one for Upper Egypt and one for the Nile Delta, Rice (1999; liv) Under the viziers were Scribes who collected dues and taxes, supervised the construction of temples and other public works, and kept government records, Authur (2000). Below the Scribes were local administrators for Egypt's 42 nomes (provinces) of ancient Egypt. In the congregation of state officials, the local administrators represent modern legislators. Although the Pharaoh had final say in judicial matter, Authur (2008) unveils that he was in some ways represented by judges of which some are priests. Together with his competent officials, the pharaoh was charged with maintaining the rule of order that protected the world from the constant threat of chaos. The socio-political system though revolving around absolute monarchy accorded deep chasm of all rights and freedom and as well equal representation and accountability, Rice (1999; liv-lix).

Ancient Egypt's socio-political order was by no means men's exclusive reserve. Women from time to time played equal roles. Behind the Pharaoh was the Queen in order of rank. The queen's name is coupled with the King's in edicts and documents, and if the King died, the Queen continued as sole ruler, Gosse (1915). Several of Egypt's notable sovereigns were women. Women were regarded as man's indispensable and inevitable helpmate. According to (Rawlinson and Gilman 64), She 'shared his thoughts, ruled his family, and during their early years had the charge of his children'. (Rawlinson and Gilman 64) further notes that Egyptian women had equal marital statues and that there was nothing like polygamy for the Kings dare not have more than one wife. In a nutshell, women were entombed with much care and almost with as much pomp as men. Alan (1961; 82) makes a picture of slate statue in the Boston Museum in which Mycerinus was not only sided by his wife but extended her arm around his waist. Women also bore titles like pharaohs. For instance, in the reign of Sneferu, his wife bore the title 'Daughter of the God', Alan (1961; 82). Indeed, women enjoyed all the privileges of men which according to Gosse (1915) made the Greeks to say that Egyptian women are supreme.

Whatever the Egyptians lacked in socio-political excellence, they made it up in militarism. The ability of the Egyptians to drive off the Hyskos depended on their military power. The army was

organized into regiments of archers, calvarias and infantries. Handwork and valour were watered with meritorious rewards, and the Egyptian army grew up to be one of the largest and most invincible force in the ancient. Between the 16th and 19th century, Britain was attached with maritime superiority. But she must not be accord the first position in the achievement of such credit for was a state with superior maritime power- Egypt. The Egyptians were essentially a maritime people; their boats and battleships made up of cedar wood some 300 feet long, 45 feet wide and 60 feet high navigated the Red Sea and the Mediterranean as well as the Nile. Gosse (1915) reveals that one ship carried 4000 rowers, 400 sailors, and 3000 soldiers. The glittering victory at the battle of Megido during the reign of Pharaoh Thuthmos III was due to Egyptian military might, Spalinger (2005; 83) With her large armies and maritime prowess, Egypt conquered some of the lands of the Upper Nile, mainly Nubia, and also ancient Syria and Palestine especially during the middle kingdoms.

Agriculture was the mainstay of Egyptian economy. Ancient Egypt can be thought of as an oasis in the desert of north-eastern Africa, dependent on the annual inundation of the Nile River to support its agricultural population. The country's chief wealth came from the fertile floodplain of the Nile valley, where the river flows between bands of limestone hills, and the Nile delta, in which it fans into several branches north of present-day Cairo. This largely informs the reason why Herodotus (485-425BC), scribbled that Egypt is the gift of the Nile. Necessity is the mother of inventions. Scarcity of rainfall made the Egyptians to develop methods of watering their crops such as Shadof and Canals thus making improved irrigation agriculture the practice, Buah (1978; 47). The state was also pre-occupied with managing the Nile flood, dividing the land, ensuring an adequate harvest and storing grain and beer as a precaution against years when the flood was unsatisfactory endangering harvest. The Egyptians cultivated wheat, barley, beans, peas, onions, grape and figs, reared domestic animals such as cows, ducks, geese and pigeons and kept bees in hives for honey, Bauh (1978; 48). Flax and cotton were extensively cultivated as well as Horse and sheep rearing which were respectively used for wool and war, (Rawlinson and Gilman 1897). Behind agriculture, Egypt also excelled in local industry. According to James (1925), they engaged in pottery, sculpture, brick-making and masonry. Again, Buah (1978) adds that wine making was a perfected art in ancient and that there were many varieties, both red and white. The leather workers,





goldsmiths, carpenters and cabinetmakers formed an important part of the community. They manufacture works of great artistic design. Egypt was also essentially business people. Ships were used extensively in commerce to bring the precious woods, spices, slaves, ivory and gold that enriched Egypt. They exchanged grain and other foodstuffs, copper, malachite, gemstones, and natron for timber, iron, silver, tin, and lead, Reece (2006; 28).

The origin of modern education and literacy is traced to Ancient Egypt. According to Rice (1999; xlv), writing was only preceded by prehistoric period. Egypt had two forms of education viz formal and informal. The formal comprised the elementary education and the university education while the informal comprised handiwork apprenticeship. However, in both forms of education, writing was predominant. Gosse (1915) notes that in Egypt everyone was at least taught the "three R's, and that at age four; the child became a "writer in the house of books." Gosse (1915) further notes that while the art of writing begins in the elementary education which ends was completed with swimming, sacred songs and dances, attention was equally paid to manners and morals, as well as to the mind and body. After this elementary schooling, the boy was next instructed by his father in a handicraft. At graduation those children destined for the learned professions passed from the Writing School to the University while those not destined take up handiwork. The University curriculum was diverse and included writing, both hieroglyphic and hieratic, geography, cosmography, astronomy, geometry both practical and theoretical, surveying, architecture, sculpture and painting, ritual dancing and music, law and medicine and literature, Moret (1972; 411-455). With hieroglyphic, the Egyptians was able to represent among other things; gesture, movement, caricature, and many absurd sketches, full of humour. There were several centres of learning, each being pre-eminent in a special subject but the greatest centre was the ecclesiastical college at Khmunu (Hermopolis), Moret (1972). One thing is certain; the state laid strong emphasis on education.

Egyptians also achieved the highest feat in architecture, science and technology that is yet to be rivalled. Visiting Egypt, one is bemused with strands of structures that are hardly believed to be handiwork of men- the pyramids, Sphinxes, gods, sarcophagus, tombs and mummies of deceased pharaohs. In fact, only a visit to Giza and Thebes particularly would convince describe the impossibility extra-ordinary nature of this construction which modern men even with his modern sophisticated technology still doubts the

possibility of making a similar construction. For instance, the Great Pyramid of Giza is a monument not only the most majestic, but also the most perfectly constructed, that man has ever achieved. Historians estimate it took more than 20,000 workers almost 20 years to complete, Reece (2006; 30). Reece (2006; 31) considering the stress and skill behind it, referred it as mysterious engineering feat. The mathematics behind the structure is best described by Rossi (2003) in his *Architecture and Mathematics in Ancient Egyptian*. Scientifically, the Egyptians not only advanced in astronomy but were the pioneers. They studied the solar system and cosmic planets. They treated of the position of the fixed stars, solar and lunar conjunctions, illuminations, phases of the moon, and the risings of sun, moon and stars and invented calendar and calculated seasons and months. They were aware of the earth's motion round the sun. The manipulation of gigantic masses of stone, and their hydraulic engineering in the form of network of pyramids, canals and dykes is an example of their technological prowess. The rise and fall of the Nile were strictly regulated and measured by means of Nilometers, Hunt (2009; 15). According to Gosse (1915), 'The genius of this people for constructing waterways was truly remarkable, and led them to anticipate the famous Suez Canal by many thousands of years.

#### **Egypt under Invasions and Foreign Rule 700 – 1922.**

Between 1069 – 525 BCE, Egypt once again witnessed decline and division with some pharaohs ruling only in the Delta or only in upper Egypt. The period witnessed many petty invasions notably the Libyans, and Nubians assertion of independence. In 568 BCE, the Babylonians invaded Egypt against a rising power further east: the Persian Empire. Having conquered Egypt in 525 BCE, his successors, Darius (521- 486 BCE) made Egypt a Persian province and appointed a satrap or provincial governor to govern it. In 380 BCE, Nectanebo, an Egyptian general revolted and overthrew the reigning Persian puppet. Unfortunately, the Egyptian Independence ended once again in 343 BCE when the Persians reoccupied the country under Artaxerxes III. Egypt remained under Persian rule until 332 BCE, when it was conquered by Alexander the Great (r. 332-323 BCE) of Macedonia. At his death in 323 BCE, his childhood friend, Ptolemy became a satrap, and by 306 BCE, he had declared himself king of Egypt and founded the Ptolemaic dynasty which lasted for 300 years with the defeat of the last Ptolemy, Queen Cleopatra by Ceaser Augustus of Rome in the battle of Actium in 31 BCE. The Romans ruled



Egypt from 31BC to 640 AD. Besides the plundering of Egyptian resources, this period witnessed the rise of Christianity in Egypt with the Apostle Mark made the first patriarch of the Natural Church of Egypt 40 to 60 CE. Although ancient Egyptian religion was becoming less relevant, Egypt became a cockpit for the theological disputes and chasms that divided Christendom. By 600 AD, the internal disputes in Egypt Christendom had weakened the state laying it more vulnerable to attack.

In 640 AD, an Arab general Amr Ibn al-As (d 163) seizing the opportunity invaded and conquered Egypt and set Islamizing it. The Arabs from Abbasids dynasty, through Ayyubids, Buyids, Fatimids, Gheznawids, Hmdanids, Hashimites, Ikhshids, Mamluks and Ottomans ruled Egypt until 1798 when it was conquered by French Napoleon Bonaparte. Both within the period of Arab and Ottoman rule, Egypt's Christians, or Copts and Jews made up a gradually decreasing but still substantial part of the population. The people became increasingly Sunni Muslims with equal numbers being Shiite, McCarthy (1976, 1). A period of French Napoleon Bonaparte campaign, Egypt fell under his sway. Although short lived, in 1802, French troops left Egypt following its defeat by a joint Anglo-Ottoman force which had occupied Delta in March 1801. Following Egyptian freedom from France, an Ottoman officer, Mehmet Ali employing Machiavellian tactics by summoning all the Mamluk chieftains and their supporters to a ceremony at which his men proceeded and massacred them. The royal house founded by Mehmet Ali continued to reign as Khedives until 1879 when mass discontent and protest forced the reigning Khedive, Ismail into exile. Ismail also was reputed to have continued the modernization and westernization processes begun by his grandfather, Ali but did not master Ali's prudent and moderate financial sense. Dwelling solely on foreign loans from European bankers and over taxation and in conjunction with his life of luxury and excessive pageantry, he catapulted Egypt into financial ruin and hardship. This, thus led to the rise of Muslim nationalist movement of anti-European exploitation and European Christian dominated government, led by Tamal Ud-Din, a philosopher of Afghanistan origin. An attempt by Ismail to respond to people's grievance by dismissing British finance minister and France minister of labour and works, provoked Anglo-French conspiracy to Ottoman sultan against Ismail in favour of his son Tewfik. At the departure of Ismail, the nationalist led by an army officer, Ahmed Arabi pressed Tewfik to accept a nationalist government and upon the refusal by

Britain and French to accept the Arabi's declaration, he set to fortifying Alexandria against a possible attack by the Anglo-French fleet. Defying British warning to halt the fortification, Arabi attracted Anglo bombardment, and his subsequent capture into exile. Though Khedive authority was restored, this episode marked the beginning of British colonialism in Egypt with its occasional interference by France.

During WW1, Ottoman Empire (Turkey) took side with German leading to British declaration of Egypt her protectorate and the end of Turkish nominal hegemony. The British also deposed Abbas 11 for suspected anti-British intrigues and proclaimed his uncle Hussein Kamil the first Sultan of Egypt. Already independence movement in Egypt had led to the establishment of Wafd national party which after some certain humiliations of its members notably Zaghlul succeeded in winning Egypt's independence in 1922 under four conditions vis a-vie: the security of Britain's imperial communications, the defence of Egypt against foreign aggression or interference, the protection of foreign residents, and the future of the Sudan. The declaration ended British rule in Egypt but it was not until 30years later that Egypt became completely independent. For following the Italians move on the invasion of Ethiopia, Egypt and Britain concretized the 1922 treaty in what has become the 1936 treaty, which even after the Second World War, Britain refused to end. Instead after Israeli war of 1948, it occupied Egypt in 1951 following Naha's unilateral declaration abrogating the treaty (Rawlinson and Gilman 1897; Hunt 2009, Spalinger 2005, and Arthur 2008).

### **Egypt under Indigenous Egyptians: People of talent, 1952-1981**

However, in 1952, a military coup toppled the government, forced Farouk, Naha's successor into exile and proclaimed Egypt a republic in 1953 with General Neguib a president and prime minister. Early in 1954, due to internal fracas within the military, Colonel Gamel Abdul Nasser, the real force behind the coup successfully deposed Neguib, became the prime minister, Meredith (2011;31) and ended the 1936 treaty. Nasser's government though anti-communist was strongly socialist. Nasser expressed concern in the condition of the people and sort to improve it by limiting the rate of western influences. One instance was his ignore of Anglo-American aid and his acceptance of Soviet financial help during his Answa Dam project which he completed in 1970, Isserof (Mideastweb). Except for the effects of her war with Israel, one party system, and high rate of



illiteracy, Egypt under Nasser experienced universal suffrage and absence of religious discrimination. Dying in 1970 of heart attack, he was succeeded by Anwar El-Sadat. Isserof (Mideastweb). The major achievement of Sadat was the commendable diplomatic role, he played to ending Egyptian- Israeli war with considerable level of victory going to Egypt and his 'Open Door Policy' that advocates open market economy. The Egyptian Israeli peace treaty was signed in March 1979. The moves by Sadat was met with disfavour by Egyptian intellectuals and opposition politicians who feeling that he was crushing the gains of the revolution of 1952, labelled him corrupt and selfishly extravagant. In October 1981, Sadat was assassinated by Muslim Brotherhood Islamist Fanatics.

Hosni Mubarak was the vice to Sadat. At the death of Sadat in 1981, Mubarak succeeded him as acting president, and later run emerged as president in subsequent elections, ruling from 1981 to 2011, a period of 30 years. Mubarak's reign was the direct contrast with Nasser's and Sadat. All the causes of revolution enumerated by Briton in his popular theory of revolution known as Crane Briton's theory of revolution manifested during the Mubarak's regime.

In the political scene, Mubarak's regime was an ancient regime. Mubarak has been stubbornly clinging on power since 1981. As if this was not enough, Mubarak in 2005 began a constitutional amendment that would inevitably thrust power into his son's hand, Bakr (2011). In a nutshell, Mubarak's was making an evidential move to transform Egyptian governments into hereditary rule. His ancien regime was further staffed with incompetent officials whose accountability was directed not to the people but to Mubarak and his family. Elections from 1980 to 2010, was heavily characterised with fraud and forgery. Corruption and marginalization go in hand, El-Mallakh (2017). For instance; while Egypt took 80<sup>th</sup> position in the list of corrupt countries of the world according to Transparency International (2010), marginalization deprived some areas the fruit of development. Economically, the economic growth was only modelled to the benefit of the regimes noble class, (Farooq, Bukharis, Ahmed; 2013). Jobless university graduates accounted 9.7%. (Mulderig 2013, and Bakr 2011). Green (2011, 17 February) informs that two-thirds of Egyptians are under 30, and each year 700, 000 new graduates compete for 200,000 new jobs. High rate of inflation and unpaid wages and salary dominated the atmosphere. From the social assessment, Mubarak's regime treated minority

groups and ethnic groups with intolerance and neglect. There was constant violence against Christian Copts. For instance; Terrorist act on the eve of new year 2011, not only targeted the church of two saints in Alexandria but 23 people were killed and 97 injured plus the 2000 Kosheh massacre that left 21 Copts dead, Bakr (2011). In all this, the restoration of churches was authorised with difficulty and religious lessons were avoided. Bahais, Nubians, and Bedouins also experienced discriminatory practices. The repressive measures employed by Mubarak against protests since 2000 to the 2011 became the last political rod that struck the camel back. Yet the frustrations of Egyptians also flowed from international scene notably the loss of Egyptian regional power to Saudi Arabia Qatar, and Turkey, the Egyptian-Israeli peace treaty, and the kleptomaniac hands of America and Europe in Egyptian affairs (Blitz 2014; Bakr 2011). All these factors contributed to slap in the face of Egyptians towards changing the system.

### **The Arab Spring: A Pollution of the World's once Greatest Civilization, Egypt.**

On December 17, 2010, in Tunisia, the self-immolation of Mohammed Bouaziz after the confiscation of his illegal selling cart triggered a revolution that deposed the ancien Tunisian government of Zine El Abidine Ben Ali, Inbar (2013). The successful purge of Tunisian fossil institutions and the tragic death of Bouazizi sparked off similar blazing demonstration in Egypt, (David and David; February 13, 2011). According to Blitz (2014), an estimate of 18 million protesters demonstrated in all of Egypt's twenty-seven provinces including Cairo, Alexandria, Suez, Ismaila, Mansoura, Sinai, and so on. Blitz (2014) further noted that at Tahir square, millions of protesters demanded the resignation of Mubarak with clash and heavy confrontations occurring between protesters and riot police. After 18 days of massive protests beginning on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2011, President Hosni Mubarak resigned on February 11, 2011 (Inbar 2013.; Bltz 2014; Acemoglu, Hassan, and Tahoun, 2014).

The Arab spring aimed at renovation of the natural order of things in Egypt. But the pertinent question is "how is Egypt at the present moment, after about seven to eight years revolution?" If there is any change brought by the Arab spring it is just in the physical change of regime, the qualities of pre-Arab regime such as corruption, neglect, autocracy, despotism and monarchism are still, manifest. Between 2013 and 2017 corruption was Egypt's major obstacle. It manifested in form of bribery, embezzlement,





nepotism and favouritism, and extortion and tampering with official documents and circulation in the veins and artery of the executives, judiciary and legislators. According to (ES 2016), companies face moderately high risks of corruption when dealing with Egypt's judiciary. Studies conducted by (GCB 2017) reveals that one in five Egyptians believe most or all the judges and magistrates are corrupt. There was also reportedly embezzlement of project fund by the executive officials and appropriation of constituency fund by the members of legislature (GAN 2017). For instance, Daily News Egypt (July9, 2018) reports the head of Egypt Custom Authority, Gamal Abdel-Azim, has been charged by Administrative Control Authority (ACA) of receiving a bribe of EGP 1m from a textile merchant. In September 2017, partnership for Transparency Fund (PTF) estimated that nearly EGP 140 was wasted as a result of corruption during the month of August alone, including embezzlement, bribes and squandering of public funds, Daily News Egypt (December 13, 2017). Daily News Egypt also noted at the same time that eight officials had been charged with corruption accusations in separate incidents in Alexandria, Suez, Ismailia, Luxor and Aswan. El- Menilawy (May 6, 2018) reports that the rampant administrative corruption in the state agencies are the most dangerous challenges facing Egypt. He was seconded by El-Fekki (May 6, 2018) who noted that bureaucratic routine and corruption remain the two major obstacles facing foreign and local investors in Egypt. For instance; El-Fekki reports that APA's investment cases unit announced it recovered nearly EGP 16bn of state funds. In 2018, corruption Index reports by Transparency International, Egypt scored 35 points out of 100, (Trading Economics). According to the study, corruption Index in Egypt up to 2018 averaged 32.11 points.

Though corruption in Egypt seems overwhelming, terrorism by its mode of operation draws greater attention. Between 2011 and 2014 when Sisi's democratic government came on board, Egypt was like South Vietnam in 1965. It was estimated that out of every 100 deaths between the period, 40 was by terrorist attack. Bombasts, gunmen attacks, kidnaps and stabbings have been the forms in which it manifests. Mossi's Muslim brotherhood claims responsibility. Although Sisi's government has been following them with tooth for tat but despite efforts, terrorism in Egypt has not totally subsided. In Dec 11 2016- Botroseya church bombing claimed by IS killed 30 people and injured dozens during Sunday Mass, Egypt Today (2016-2019). Another attack came on November

24, 2017- Al-Arish attack in which about 30 militants waving the black flag of the Islamic State (IS) terrorist group attacked Al-Rawdah Mosque, leaving 305 dead and 128 injured. Egypt Today (2016-2019). There were also brinks of other forms of insecurity such as armed robbery, carjacking, sexual assault and burglary, Landler (April 9, 2019). Although recently terrorist attacks have subsided to sporadic level due to the iron fist of the government towards it. For instance, in 2018, there were no major terrorist attack. Unfortunately, in 2019, it reeled its ugly head again. According to Magdy (May 19, 2019), on May 19, 2019, bomb blasts on tourists' bus near Egypt's Giza Pyramids left at least 17 injured, Magdy (May 19, 2019) further notes that from official report, the bus was carrying at least 25 people mostly from South Africa. This also brings to memory of July 2017 incident that involved stabbing at a red sea resort in which three tourists died.

In all Egypt's political and social doldrums manifesting through the faces of terrorism and corruption excretes economic instability as its waste product. Tourism and investment are the two economic sectors that are worst hit. The resultant of this, is fall in foreign and domestic revenue leading to huge budget deficit. Behind this is also the surge of unemployment. According to Arthur (2008; 9), 'international tourism is a service industry that employs millions of Egyptians but it is often disrupted by political instability and terrorism.' Since 2011, inflation has been on ascending order and on January 2019, it reached 12.7 percent ETS (Feb 10, 2019) whereas in 2010 it was 10%. However, on May 2019, the annual inflation rate to 14.1 percent from 13 percent in the prior month despite government efforts, EIR (May 2019). It is not that the government is not making a greater effort but the fact is that the Arab Spring has not exerted any positive impact.

What about dictatorship and autocracy? On Friday 25<sup>th</sup> January 2011 which marked the eighth anniversary of the Tahrir Square revolution, HRW says tens of thousands of opposition activists, writers and intellectuals, secular leftists and Muslim Brotherhood supporters have been locked up under regulations introduced since 2013 including anti-terrorism laws. In the words of Simon (Jan, 2019), '... the dictatorship of Hosni-Mubarak has been replaced by even worse one-that of the general-turned president, Abdel Fatah al- Sisi'. To further illustrate the rate of autocracy and despotism, Simon (January 2019), reports that within the month, Ahmed Dauma, who helped lead the Tahrir protests was convicted for 15years for



allegedly attacking security forces in 2011. Chick (December 13, 2017) dropped that under the guise of fighting a “war on terrorism,” Cairo is cracking down on organizations that shed light on its abuses.

In a situation where Muslim terrorism and political autocracy and despotism reign supreme, one wonders what the position and situation of women looks like. Judging the precarious condition of women in a Muslim state, one then wonders the fate of secular women such as Copts and Jew. And pagans in a Muslim dominated state. Certainly, their life is defined under hellish brutality. In Egypt, secular women have been the target of Muslim fundamentalism. Both Christians and Jewish women face constant gender violence that is hardly reported by the media. Gilbert (December 5, 2018) captures this as “Egypt’s silent Epidemic of kidnapped Christian Girls’. According to Gilbert (Dec 2018), Christian women in Egypt face an epidemic of Kidnapping, rape, beatings and torture. Lela mourns that innumerable girls and women vanish forever, and even if they are somehow rescued, their stories are thought to be so shameful that they’re hidden as dark family secrets’. Although the cities may be interwoven with fierce security forces, remote villages and outskirts of cities remain vulnerable. In these places, writes Gilbert, ‘radicalized thugs act with impunity, sometimes forming raging mobs and leaving behind a trail of blood, ashes and broken people. The government equally is not helping matter. If it has made any effort, such effort is only neglect. Although Sisi himself may not be taking it kindly but his local authorities’ majority of which are Muslims always turn a blind eye to anti-Coptic and Jewish persecution, Gilbert (December 2018). However, writing on late January, 2019, Simon accuses Sisi’s claim of fighting for both Jewish and Christian women as pretentious. Tisdall (Dec, 2018) avers that Sisi has failed to halt terrorist violence in Sinai and against Coptic Christians. Yet there is another kind of violence being experienced currently by Egyptian women. Khaul (May 30, 2019) referred it as obstetric violence; The silent epidemic in Egyptian maternal health system. Khaul elucidated that Obstetric violence ‘ranges from the denial of the comfort of a companion of choice, to lack of information about the different procedures performed during care; unnecessary caesarean sections; deprivation of the right to food and walking; routine and repetitive vaginal exams without justification; frequent use of oxytocin to accelerate labour and cutting episiotomies without consent’ Khaul noted that this ultimately leads permanent physical, mental and emotional damage, and the Egyptian women are currently experiencing

this. It is also evidential that the whole Egyptian women face political marginalization. Women in Egypt have no political voice. The government of Sisi remains largely a patriarchy. For instance; majority of his ministers and ambassadors, are men. This contrasts sharply to ancient Egypt where women not only took part in the administration but had in several occasion assumed pharaohs.

It should be recalled that one factor behind the convergence at Tahrir square was the sit-tit-government of Mubarak- ancient regime. Mubarak amended the constitution in 2005, in a way that his son would succeed him in 2011. He wanted to make Egyptian government a hereditary rule. This kind of situation is currently manifesting with Sisi revealing his intention to stay in power until 2034. He made this intention known during his meeting with US president Donald Trump, in which he asks for his support and opinion. Mark (April, 2019) captured the dialogue and reports that Sisi is seeking to amend the Egyptian constitution to allow him to run for two more six-year terms which would keep him in power until 2034.

This single development has further revealed one thing; Egypt’s deepening relationship with the west. Tamal Ud-Din led a protest against Ismail’s government because it was heavily dominated by European Christian officials, and therefore under heavy exploitation. Arabi pressed Tewfik to accept national government because of the perceived European exploitation. Nasser overthrew Farouk because he was deeply pro-west. Muslim brotherhood assassinated Sadat for selling out to Washington. And in 2011 Mubarak’s regime was disposed for its treaties with the west such as IMF with its SAP and Point IV program. But here in 2019, the government of Sisi is not only reaching treaties with America and Europe but depends on them for support and advice. Such is the irony of the Arab spring in Egypt. But nevertheless, a strong therapy has been derived from ancient Egypt which will inevitably catapult Egypt to a greater glory than it is currently experiencing.

### Conclusion and Recommendations

In the first place, the Egyptian constitution should be amended to incorporate unlimited religious freedom of all religion in Egypt. Ancient Egypt was a hub of polytheism but was it not their system of religion which helped drove their artistic and architectural development? No religion is superior. Granting unlimited and equal religious freedom to all religion in Egypt is the first step of cultivating social equality which is sine qua non to social progress which brings about economic and



political development. In the second place, Washington and Europe should intensify their security support to president Sisi to help him crush entirely the stubborn but stupid and selfish Muslim brotherhood which acts like pre-archaic men. More so, if staying in power till 2034 will guarantee the safety and freedom of the minority, Washington and Europe should help Sisi to stay as long as he wants. After all ancient pharaohs ruled for life insofar they promoted equality and safety of the people. Sisi is nearly the same. But nevertheless, he should minimize his iron hand especially on matters relating to civilians.

Economically, it seems the country's main income comes from tourism. In April, Minister of tourism received global award for excellence in promoting tourism. What did the minister do? He influenced government policies towards building resorts and security defence system around Egypt's major tourist centre. At least in the recent terrorist attack, no life was lost. Therefore, the measure should be intensified. But beyond this, the economy should be diversified with greater effort going towards agriculture and industry. This will help minimize importation, create employment and as well reduce inflation. Recommendations of IMF should also not be taken for granted but equally care should be taken to forsake those areas that

could bring suffering and poverty on the people. For instance; Free market enterprise without any atom of government regulation and as well subsidy removal should not be adopted. For instance as revealed by EEU (April 1, 2019), Egypt's non-oil private sector and activities is being hampered by cumbersome business environment mainly caused by non-tariff measures and poor institutional capacity at the border that constrains trade.

Equally education should be among the major priorities of the government. Those courses offered in the ancient should be revived and diversified. Building of more schools highly equipped with modern facilities, free education, and scholarships to study abroad should define government's educational policies. Those who are not academically gifted should be granted some aid by the government and NGOs to excel in their talented areas of handiwork.

Lastly but not the least, the temperament of ancient Egyptians should be highly imitated- that temperament defined by gratitude, care freeness, happiness, love, industriousness, amusement, exercise and creativity. Certainly, once all these are put into practice, the country's vision 2030 would be achieved even before 2025. Life and achievements of ancient Egyptians should be a model for current Egyptians.

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