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STABILITY OF SOCIOPOLITICAL SYSTEMS IN THE CONTEXT OF GLOBALIZATION: REVOLUTION AND DEMOCRACY¹

Issues of sociopolitical systems' stability and risks of their destabilization in process of political transformations belong to the most important ones as regards the social development perspectives, as has been shown again by the recent events in Ukraine. In this respect it appears necessary to note that the transition to democracy may pose a serious threat to the stability of respective sociopolitical systems. This article studies the issue of democratization of countries within globalization context, it points to the unreasonably high economic and social costs of a rapid transition to democracy as a result of revolutions or of similar large-scale events for the countries unprepared for it. The authors believe that in a number of cases the authoritarian regimes turn out to be more effective in economic and social terms in comparison with emerging democracies especially of the revolutionary type, which are often incapable to insure social order and may have a swing to authoritarianism. Effective authoritarian regimes can also be a suitable form of a transition to efficient and stable democracy. The article investigates various correlations between revolutionary events and possibilities of establishing democracy in a society on the basis of the historical and contemporary examples as well as the recent events in Egypt. The authors demonstrate that one should take into account a

¹ The study was implemented in the framework of the Basic Research Program at the National Research University Higher School of Economics (HSE) in 2014.

country's degree of sociopolitical and cultural preparedness for democratic institutions. In case of favorable background, revolutions can proceed smoothly ("velvet revolutions") with efficient outcomes. On the contrary, democracy is established with much difficulty, throwbacks, return to totalitarianism, and with outbreaks of violence and military takeovers in the countries with high illiteracy rate and rural population share, with low female status, with widespread religious fundamental ideology, where a substantial part of the population hardly ever hears of democracy while the liberal intellectuals idealize this form, where the opposing parties are not willing to respect the rules of democratic game when defeated at elections.

Keywords: *globalization, Near East, Egypt, democracy, revolution, reaction, extremists, counterrevolution, Islamists, totalitarianism, excessive expectations, military takeover, economic efficiency.*

Sociopolitical destabilization may be produced by rather different causes. However, sociopolitical transformations may be considered as ones of the most powerful among them. This may look paradoxical, but attempts of transition to democratic forms of government may lead to a very substantial destabilization of a society in transition. The present article analyzes the relationships between revolution, democracy and the level of stability in respective sociopolitical systems.

There is a widespread opinion that globalization contributes to the spread of democracy. Besides, there is a conviction, which is more widespread among the politicians and ideologists than among the scholars that democracy contributes to a faster and/or more adequate economic growth. The following quotation passionately expresses this conviction: 'For the past three decades, globalization, human rights, and democracy have been marching forward together, haltingly, not always and everywhere in step, but in a way that unmistakably shows they are interconnected. By encouraging globalization in less developed countries, we not only help to raise growth rates and incomes, promote higher standards, and feed, clothe, and house the poor; we also spread political and civil freedoms' (Griswold 2006).

In this context, many supporters of democracy consider extremely disappointing that sometimes democracy does not work properly and the waves of democratization get weaker. Samuel Huntington (1993) called the period of a fast spread of democracy in the 1970s – early 1990s ‘the third wave of democratization’. On the threshold of the twenty-first century, many researchers note that the number of democratic regimes ceases to grow and that it would be a dangerous intellectual temptation for the democrats to consider that the world is inevitably moving towards some final natural democratic state (see Diamond 1999, 2004; 2008). In this situation, the trend has strengthened which promotes democracy in all countries with non-democratic or partially democratic regimes. This trend, on the one hand, is based on the global geopolitical goals of the USA and the West (see, *e.g.*, Brzezinski 1998), and on the other hand, relies upon an active support of a broad ideological and informal movement. And this justifies the efforts to support democracy and to encourage democratic opposition for the purpose of increasing chances of victory of democracy in case of the crisis of authoritarian regimes (Diamond 2000). The intensive efforts led to a number of interventions and color revolutions.

Undoubtedly, the globalization trend is anyway connected with the growing number of democratic regimes. One can hardly object that in the recent decades the general vector was moving towards the expansion of democracy. However, the connection between democratization and economic success it is not that evident as new democratic regimes failed to advance either in economic or social sphere. That is why the intervention and propagation of democracy arouses much criticism. Besides, an increasing number of people support the idea that people should create their own democratic models which can significantly differ from the Western model (Weinstein 2001: 414)

Thus, we suppose that some delay in the spread of democracy in the 2000s was due to the formation of rather successful economic models of development which do not require democracy and even contradict it.

Thus, in practice it is not all that simple as the political philosophers, political scientists and politicians used to think. First of all, an explicit connection between a democratic regime and economic success is not always present; one would even say that it is present in the minority of cases. There are rather scarce studies which clearly demonstrate such a

connection especially with respect to emerging democracies but at the same time there are abundant works that prove the opposite (see Polterovich, Popov 2007).² On the contrary, in most cases it is precisely the authoritarian and semi-authoritarian regimes that achieve much economic success as they can better concentrate resources and invest (*Ibid*). Of course, the most telling example here is China where the authoritarian rule is the basis for the economic progress. Such countries as Vietnam, Iran, Turkey, Malaysia, and Kazakhstan are rather illustrative examples, as well as Egypt and Tunisia before the recent events. There is a peculiar enclave of monarchy regimes of the Gulf region that also achieved a rather salient economic success.³

“In the past two decades, a number of economies have followed the path of economic and trade reform leading to political reform. South Korea and Taiwan as recently as the 1980s were governed by authoritarian regimes that did not permit much open dissent. Today, after years of expanding trade and rising incomes, both are multiparty democracies with full political and civil liberties. Other countries that have most aggressively followed those twin tracks of reform include Chile, Ghana, Hungary, Mexico, Nicaragua, Paraguay, Portugal, and Tanzania,” claims Daniel Griswold (2006).

In fact, such transitions from authoritarianism to democracy did occur. But one can hardly define their way to democracy as a quick and easy one. Besides, it is important to keep in mind that such countries as Taiwan, South Korea and Chile achieved the main economic success right under authoritarian regimes. And it is far from certain that if a political democracy had been immediately established there (or preserved as in case with Chile) these countries would have shown the outstand-

² Even the UN Report stated that there is no direct relationship between democracy and economic growth (UNDP 2002). It is also noted that the total effect of democracy on the economic growth can be characterized as weakly negative (see Barro 1996).

³ On the other hand, the weakening of the economic engine in traditional democratic countries of Europe also leads to certain distrust to democratic institutions (see Lowi 1999). And what can be the result of the process which has already been considered, in particular by Robert Dahl who argues that extending the sphere of supranational activity reduces the citizens' opportunities to control their vital problems through the national means of rule (Dahl 1989).

ing results at the onset of their rise (we can even suppose that this would not have come true). Finally, there are many examples when a rapid transition to democracy leads to economical and often social decline, to hard times in countries' history. Rather tragic events occurred in the development of the former USSR and a number of socialist countries among which Rumania and Bulgaria still remain in difficult situation. The revolutions in Ukraine under the banner of a great enhancement of democracy also have exacerbated economic difficulties. Here we can conclude that ideology aimed at introducing democracy in countries with non-democratic or partly democratic regime can bring drastic consequences for the peoples of those countries; it does not bring prosperity but on the contrary, can cost the country great and useless sacrifices. "Democracy above all" is a dangerous slogan, and the policy supporting the radicals and revolutionaries does not hold true from the point of welfare for those countries to which revolution is exported or where it is introduced.

It was demonstrated quite some time ago that revolutions in general tend to impede rather than to promote the economic growth: "One might expect revolutions to unleash great energy for rebuilding economic systems, just as they lead to rebuilding of political institutions. Yet in fact this rarely if ever takes place. For the most part, long-term economic performance in revolutionary regimes lags that of comparable countries that have not experienced revolutions" (Goldstone 2001: 168; see also Eckstein 1982, 1986; Zimmermann 1990; Haggard, Kaufman 1995; Weede, Muller 1997).

Thus, one may conclude that there is generally a need in quite a long transitional period to democracy; and moreover, it may often turn that an authoritarian or semi authoritarian regime is capable of such a transitional function. So to evaluate a regime positively, one should estimate it not in terms of its concordance with democratic values, but in terms of its economic success and social orientation, as well as the efficiency of its state institutions contributing to order, stability, secure and consistent policy implementation (on the particular importance of a strong order, state institutions efficiency see among others Liew 2001; Barro 2000; Polterovich, Popov 2007). With a country's advancement toward larger opportunities for people, such regimes are very likely to move toward larger liberalization. Here it is sufficient to encourage the

regime's actions contributing to liberalization but not to rely on the radical forces that can overthrow the regime under the banner of democracy, hurling a country into chaos.

One should note that the globalization context with a general recognition of the people's rights and condemnation of the violation of justice and law, with a demand for legitimacy (that is electivity) of government can by itself build a positive trend and in certain respects restrain authoritarian rulers. With decreasing illiteracy and with growing population's self-consciousness necessarily accompanied with enlarging personal political experience, a transition to democracy may proceed much easier, smoother and more effectively than the attempts to establish democracy through revolutionary ways.

The present article makes an attempt to show different variants of a transition to democracy (from time to time using the example of the recent events in Egypt), to show the costs and political, economic and social perils of the striving to establish democracy quickly and by radical means.

* * *

The general mood in Egypt in July 2013 was exultant, the revolutionaries were exultant either and their slogans demanded true democracy. They were exultant because the Egyptian military had ousted the legitimately, publicly and democratically elected President.

Paradoxical, but the Muslim Brotherhood's post-revolutionary political rhetoric sounded incomparably more advanced, than their opponents' archaic political rhetoric. The secularists (as well as the military, supporting them) in an absolutely archaic manner identified the people with the crowd in Tahrir Square, the Brotherhood, in turn, appealed to formal legitimate democratic procedures.

Why were the revolutionaries excited with the overthrow of the legitimately elected President? What was this? An absurd, a paradox, a peculiarity of Egypt? No, it is just a common and quite expected outcome of revolutionary events. So the major issue to be discussed in the present article is whether the revolution and democracy are always closely related.

"Every revolution ends in reaction. It is inevitable, it is a law" wrote the famous Russian thinker Nikolay Berdyaev (1990: 29) who elaborated this profound idea through hard intellectual efforts and personal po-

litical experience. Of course, Berdyaev was limited by the historical background of the early 20th century. The past and the present century have shown that the stability of democratic accomplishments of a revolution to a huge degree depends on the phase of society's modernizing transition, on its cultural traditions, environment and a number of other factors. So successful democratic revolutions (or the reforms of a revolutionary kind) tend to happen in countries with a high level of socio-cultural and economic development, and where a long period of fascination and disappointment in democracy as well as the cycles of democracy and authoritarianism is already over; after such revolutions a rather stable democratic regime is established. One can set here the examples of "the Carnation Revolution" in Portugal in 1974 or "the Velvet Revolution" in what was then Czechoslovakia in 1989⁴. Besides, such successful revolutions – 'glorious', 'velvet' and usually non-violent – would proceed quite quickly.⁵

⁴ In addition, scholars also tend to characterize as such some other revolutions/revolutionary reforms in Eastern Europe in the late 1980s and the early 1990s, the 1986 Revolution in the Philippines, as well as the revolutionary reforms in South Africa in the early 1990s: "Until very recently, revolutions have invariably failed to produce democracy. The need to consolidate a new regime in the face of struggles with domestic and foreign foes has instead produced authoritarian regimes, often in the guise of populist dictatorships such as those of Napoleon, Castro, and Mao, or of one party states such as the PRI state in Mexico or the Communist Party-led states of the Soviet Union and Eastern Europe. Indeed, the struggle required to take and hold power in revolutions generally leaves its mark in the militarized and coercive character of new revolutionary regimes (Gurr 1988). It is therefore striking that in several recent revolutions – in the Philippines in 1986, in South Africa in 1990, in Eastern European nations in 1989–1991 – the sudden collapse of the old regime has led directly to new democracies, often against strong expectations of reversion to dictatorship" (Goldstone 2001: 168; see also Foran, Goodwin 1993, Weitman 1992, Pastor 2001).

⁵ In a certain sense even the French Revolution of 1870–1871 fits this model if to exclude the episode with the Paris Commune. At the same time, the experience of a number of successful countries, in particular of South Korea and Indonesia (to the degree it can be considered successful at present) show that at a certain stage of modernization the authoritarianism may contribute to its expansion. However, just in this case it objectively paves the way for its own limitation and consequent political democratization (for detail see Prosorovsky

The history of such political overthrows starts from the Glorious Revolution of 1688 in England, but the recent decades of human history have witnessed a large number of them. If a society is not properly modernized (also in terms of demography⁶), there are many illiterate people, non-urban population constitute a large share, a strong influence of the traditionalists is present and so on, then “Berdayev’s law” of a revolution’s transformation into reaction has large chances to come true. After some time, the idea of democracy can again start generating a new revolutionary explosion. Still there are historical precedents when democracy and authoritarianism alternated many times. Besides, one should point that in such societies a revolution faces really large-scale challenges, and respectively its intensity can provoke a strong resistance. Extending his idea, Berdyaev wrote: ‘The more violent and rigorous is a revolution, the stronger is the reaction. The alternation of revolutions and reactions makes a mysterious circle’ (Berdyaev 1990: 29). Rather a typical example here is China which after the first in its history democratic Xinhai Revolution of 1911 yielded to Yuan Shikai’s dictatorship. Many times they tried to restore democratic institutions, but China eventually plunged into a long-lasting anarchy and civil war.

The path to a stable and sustainable democracy is rather long and complicated.⁷ In any case, it requires a certain level of society’s economic, social and cultural development. Let us emphasize again that liberal democracy as a rule (which still has some known exceptions) will no endure long in the countries with large illiterate cohorts, considerable share of rural population, and with low living standards. Modernization in (more or less large) countries always proceeds unevenly. As a result in modernizing countries a rather modernized “core” is formed while periphery remains rather weakly modernized and prone to con-

2009). Still one should note the authoritarian stage often becomes an extremely important and necessary.

⁶ The structural-demographic factors regularly generating social explosions in the modernization process are thoroughly investigated in our previous publications (see, e.g., Korotayev, Zinkina 2011a, 2011b, 2011c; Korotayev, Grinin *et al.* 2011; Korotayev *et al.* 2011, 2012; Grinin 2011, Grinin 2012a, Grinin 2012b; Grinin, Korotayev 2012a); hence, we will not describe them here.

⁷ Both in a particular country and in the world in general. It may seem paradoxical but in 1990, democratic regimes were established in approximately 45.4 per cent of independent countries of the world, that is almost the same rate as it was seventy years earlier in 1922 (Huntington 1993).

servatism with the majority of population (the people) living here. In this context, it turns out that revolutionaries (who claim to care for the people), regularly get disappointed in the people and the people's conservatism, and in that at some point the people start voting in a way different from the liberals and radicals' expectations and would prefer an order and stability, and also familiar and clear forms to some unfamiliar political and ideological appeals; moreover, the people would prefer something material to superficially ethereal freedoms. One should go a long way, to gain own political experience of several generations, to gradually emancipate the consciousness, to support cultural-humanitarian development, so that freedoms and democracy would get the status of the values that are precious to the majority.⁸ One should also realize that the stability of democracy does not depend on to what extent a constitution is democratic but on how political institutions and actors fit each other and are ready to play the game. An outstanding French sociologist Raymond Aron fairly notes in his profound study *Democracy and Totalitarianism* that "the stability and efficiency are supported not by the constitutional rules as such, but by their harmony with the party system, with the nature of parties, their programs, and political conceptions" (Aron 1993: 125). This naturally takes much time to achieve. The similar ideas on high requirements to the society, its leaders and bureaucracy, were also pronounced by Joseph Schumpeter (1995: 378–385). In particular, he argues that for a successful functioning of the democratic system 'the human material of politics' (that is people who operate the party machines, work in the executive branch, and take part in broader political life) 'should be of sufficiently high quality'; it is necessary that the bureaucracy should also be of high

⁸ This means that one should first achieve the cultural-humanitarian level allowing a true democratic transformation, namely, there should be present an intellectual stratum, a certain level of borrowings from the world culture, and certain political forms. But to establish democracy an even higher cultural-humanitarian level is needed as well as a dramatic change in social situation. Besides, democracy is not just an idea but a mode of life; and to take the root it should become a really important part of everyday life. But since in newly democratic states the idea of democracy is quickly discredited, thus it fails to become a really important constituent of everyday life. Here we observe a vicious circle which can be broken only after several attempts and under certain social-economic conditions.

quality and have a developed sense of duty and esprit (this notion will naturally exclude corruption and nepotism). There is also needed a 'democratic self-control' (*Ibid.*).

Thus, the people (or the majority of people) can eventually and unconsciously betray the ideas of revolution and the very notion of democracy. On the other hand, the population's sensible pragmatism can prove to be wiser than the educated radical and revolutionary minority's lofty ideals and aspirations. Then people by intuition choose a leader who (with all his drawbacks, vices and egoism) will generally choose for the country a moderate and more appropriate course (diverging in the most important aspects from the previous pre-revolutionary policy but at the same time not longing to implement at all accounts the revolutionary slogans). Napoleon III's activity serves a quite typical example here. But at the same time (as we witness it today in some Near Eastern countries) it can happen that even the revolutionary minority itself that has previously strived for power under the banner of establishing democracy can give up the democratic principles. Thus, the conservative majority can turn out to be more democratically-oriented. And this is not surprising. As already stated, in the process of modernization a country's core is modernized quicker and thus, the 'liberal-revolutionary' minority in 'capitals' turns out to be surrounded by the conservative, not to say 'counterrevolutionary', majority of provinces. Against this background, the increasing adherence to democracy on the side of the conservative ('reactionary') majority is quite natural as with fair election they have good chances to come to power through an absolutely democratic procedure. Meanwhile, among the revolutionary ('progressive') minority the adherence to democratic ideals can be undermined as for them fair elections are likely to end with defeat.

Even with an election falsification in the societies where democracy appears restricted through the manipulation of the 'party in power' quite a large share of society or even its majority is loyal to power (even if they are discontented with something) and consequently, conservative. The rulers can win even fair elections but certainly with less advantage than with the faked vote (with 80–90 per cent of votes). Put another way, in theory they could do without falsification but here the system of 'controlled democracy' starts operating in its own way and forces the local authorities to demonstrate their loyalty because an unconvincing majority at the elections is considered as a motion of no confidence to the authoritarian ruler.

Returning to the issue of a correlation between revolution and democracy one can remember that the brilliant politician Vladimir Lenin emphasized that “the key question of every revolution is undoubtedly the question of state power” (Lenin 1958: 145). At the early stages of modernization the revolutionaries who are too devoted to their initial slogans inevitably fail because their appeals although being attractive and inspiring for the masses are still unrealizable under existing conditions. That is why the logics of revolution either makes the revolutionaries in power ignore the democracy and even suppress it (as it happened when the Bolsheviks dismissed the Russian Constituent Assembly), thus continuing escalation of violence; or those who are too devoted to democratic revolutionary ideals are substituted (in a non-democratic and less frequently, in a democratic way) by those who are less democracy-driven but are more prone to radicalism, to the deepening of forced changes and to reinforcing the power and themselves in power. The history of the Great French Revolution of 1789–1794 and Napoleon serves here as a classical example.

Pitirim Sorokin who studied history and typology of multiple revolutions in the ancient world (note that in Greek *poleis* and Roman *civitas* intense socio-political struggle between citizens for power and rights was much more frequent than peaceful periods) pointed that famine and/or a war often trigger a revolution (Sorokin 1992a, 1992b, 1994). Lenin also considered the “aggravation of the masses’ distresses below usual levels” as one of the main attributes of revolutionary situation. However, the current researches demonstrate something different: revolutions are often preceded by a rather long period of growth of living standards (see, e.g., Davies 1969; Korotayev *et al.* 2011, 2012; on the Egyptian revolution see Korotayev, Zinkina 2011a, 2011b, 2011c). But such a growth often combines with exactly the same and sometimes with even larger increase of social inequality and stratification. This increases social tensions in society and brings to life the idea that the living standard achieved by a part of population should become the majority’s property. At the same time, the modernization of society brings the formation of a more or less large stratum of intellectuals (and students/ recent graduates as its “striking force”) who strive for higher (adequate to their education level) living standards but, naturally, the number of profitable positions is always limited and distributed.

It is of utmost importance that there emerge excessive expectations when the growth of living standards fails to meet the expectations of the majority of population; besides, the increasing inequality and violent

breach of common justice on the part of the men in power ‘fuels’ the discontent. Here the most volatile situation occurs when after a period of sustainable growth there happens an interruption (which is often not the country authorities’ real fault; after all, who can smoothly pass the modernization transition? Nobody can). In this case, the people’s expectations (as well as those of the elite) continue to grow by inertia, while the real satisfaction level decreases (the so-called Davies’ J-Curve [Davies 1969; see also: Grinin and Korotayev 2012b]). As a result the gap between expectations and their satisfaction reaches a critical level and triggers a social explosion. With respect to Egypt this refers both to Mubarak and to Morsi – it is just after the January 25 Revolution that the metropolitan citizens’ expectations radically grew while their satisfaction drastically declined which brought the ‘difference of potentials’ which in many ways led to the dismissal of the first democratically elected President of Egypt. But the same ‘difference of potentials’ may also turn fatal for new Egyptian regimes.

In what way is the above-discussed related to democracy? First of all, democracy can become the opposition’s key idea, a magic wand that is thought to help to solve social problems (naturally implying that democracy is a system that will inevitably bring “right leaders”, that is the oppositionists, to power). And since a rigid regime is in power (principally non-democratic or usurping the power) and naturally resists a quick establishment of democracy, then to overthrow this regime becomes a goal in and of itself. This regime embodies society’s every evil (which is expected to disappear with the fall of the regime). The regime is claimed to have no positive, valuable, and advanced characteristics (everything made by regime is supposed to happen all by itself or it is even spoiled by the regime without which this good would have been even better).

However, in spite of the frustration widespread in society, the ideas of democracy actually penetrate the minds only of its some part which often represents neither the society’s majority nor even its significant minority. For most people who have a limited cultural intelligence and relatively narrow vital problems, democracy is a mere word (or something established by someone but not necessary for the population to take part in).⁹ Under certain circumstances, the ideology-driven minori-

⁹ The voting abstention in Russia even when the mass voter turnout could be decisive is quite a typical example. Moreover, a large number of voters (es-

ty attracts the majority which is indifferent to democracy (to democracy but not to personal problems) and in this case there can arise a revolutionary situation. But from here it is a long way to a strong democracy. Here it is appropriate to reflect on the correlation between the revolutionary minority and the majority within different contexts. The revolutionary minority is strong in its activity, persistence, ability to self-organize for joint actions etc. That is what brings it to the fore of the political scene of revolution; it is ahead and at first seems to represent the whole society. Besides, the radicals/liberals genuinely believe that they are the society, their aspirations are necessary for the society (here works the logics that anyone who is against "us" is the enemy of revolution; who is not with us is against us). If the revolutions are "superficial" and do not establish universal democracy (as it used to be in Latin America or Spain) then the most part of population stays out of politics. The revolutions are made by rather numerous but still a minority. Here, by the way, originates one of the most important causes of instability of the revolutionary governments since the masses would quite indifferently witness their overthrow. But if a fair (without falsifications) suffrage is immediately introduced then the relation between the revolutionary minority and the majority can significantly change. In such new situation, the latter actually becomes democratic but paradoxically it may still continue to be not convinced in the value of democracy. The example of Egypt proved this rather well. Against the background of meetings and exultation one can really think that all people expect radical changes in the spirit of Western democratic and liberal ideology, but it turns out that the major part of population has rather different values. But in a certain situation the democratic system can actually turn profit-

pecially among the young) almost simultaneously with the right of voting get a steady ideological skepticism. Why voting? What is the use of it? Nothing will ever change. My vote means nothing. However, it seems easy to go and vote. But probably it is difficult as one should make a choice. On the other hand, there is some truth in this skepticism. The other part of the Russian population is accustomed to voting "they say we should, then we will vote" but also not for the sake of a reasonable voting. In any case, it is out of question that the skepticism of one part of population and the promptness of the other part have been to the advantage of the party in power and of different kind of political chancers. This example explains how a political apathy may in a democratic way support certain forces in power. Karl Kautski called such masses involved in voting 'the political flock of sheep'.

able to the conservative ('reactionary') majority and thus it becomes more popular amidst them; meanwhile it loses supporters among the revolutionary ('progressive') minority who strived for power under democratic slogans.

There can be no doubt that the revolutionaries' activity, their good organization, propaganda and persistence also play a great part at elections, but still it is less than it used to be when organizing meetings and actions. Outcries will not lead to an easy victory. The defeat of revolutionaries to a great extent is caused by their internal disagreements (which could seem quite unimportant for an external observer but crucial for the parties themselves).

As a result of such a turn, the democratic elections, for whose sake the revolution is actually undertaken, seem to bring victory to conservative forces and here comes the moment of truth. What is more important for revolutionaries: the democratic ideals or the revolution proper, that is, a constant overthrow and escalation of changes in society? The challenge is solved in different ways by different parties in different countries and situations. Some political forces are unable to reconsider situation and diverge from their absolutes. Thus, the Mensheviks during the Civil War in Russia hesitated to join either the Whites or the Bolsheviks, and disappeared as a political force by 1922. But quite frequently it is just the revolutionism (for the sake of rather vague revolutionary principles but with an ultimate urge for power) becomes of utmost importance. In recent decades, one considers as faked votes any defeat at elections where radicals who previously overthrew the government (or forced it to conduct free elections) failed to win elections (when the hated government actually gives them such an opportunity). The examples of "color revolutions" in post-Soviet states, in Serbia and other countries prove this rather well. Thereafter, the revolutionaries insist on the solution by force. The logic is that it is not democracy proper that is of utmost importance but the opponent defeated at any cost.¹⁰ This logic

¹⁰ Revolution (as any kind of politics) is hardly a fair contest, in this or that way one uses provocations, disinformation, deceit, and backstage dealings. The provocations often imply stirring up enmity towards government and opponents through direct or indirect murders (shooting from within crowd or something of this kind; with respect to the Revolutions of 1848 and some other revolutionary events see Nefedov [2008]; recent examples can be found in Brazil or Ukraine)

is quite clear and explicable. But this is the point where revolution and democracy diverge.

In short, in a society with uncertain democratic values the following principle works: ‘We will support democracy if our candidate wins elections. If he does not, we do not need such a democracy’.¹¹ The ability to lose elections, to acknowledge the value of rules of democratic game irrespective of who comes to power, to wait for consequent elections and work hard to win – these are actually essential signs of social readiness for democracy.

Since revolutions often occur in societies unprepared for democracy, it often happens that at early and intermediate stages of modernization **the pathways of democracy and revolution eventually diverge**. Their conjunction at relatively early stages is an exception rather than a rule. Of course, as we said above, we remember “velvet revolutions” in Czechoslovakia and some other Eastern European countries, the Glorious Revolution in England, the Carnation Revolution in Portugal *etc.* Of course, it is highly desirable that all revolutions follow the same scenario. However, at initial stages of modernization it can be hardly realized, as ‘velvet’ revolutions are already the end of a long-lasting social and political development.

Political opponents can make more or less active attempts to turn the revolution to their advantage through reduction, renunciation or abolition of democratic procedures and institutions established during the revolution. Sometimes they succeed; in any case attempts produce some effect. It often provokes a dramatic aggravation of the conflict. This seems to be the case of Egypt. In this respect, it is interesting to understand the new authorities' logic when they delivered a firm ultimatum to the Society of the Muslim Brothers to stop sit-ins in early August 2013. Did they really hope that the Muslim Brotherhood would just go and break up? Did not they realize that the solution by force would cause hundreds of victims (and all foreign observers warned against that)? Do they really hope the repressive policy against Muslim Broth-

which evoke the escalation of violence, formation of military guards etc. Thus, violence and other rather precarious means become normal. Consequently, the violation of democracy is not considered as something terrible.

¹¹ The elections in such Caucasian territories as Karachay-Cherkessia and South Ossetia, when the opponents renounce the win of the other party and thus trigger the political crisis, is a very illustrative example.

ers will lead to the end of their resistance? Even after Nasser and Mubarak have failed with this? Before August 14, 2012, the leader of the Muslim Brotherhood Gehad El-Haddad said about his organization: ‘This organization has been built for 86 years under oppressive regimes. That is the nature of the organization and our comfort zone. They just pushed us back into it...’ (Fick 2013).

Let us dwell on the question why the pathways of revolution and democracy in countries with unstable democracy should inevitably diverge? In addition to the above mentioned reasons (the unpreparedness of society, idealization of democracy *etc.*) there is a variety of causes.

Firstly, it appears that democracy by itself is insufficient to accomplish the purposes of revolution; you cannot do with democracy alone. Theoretically, democracy is a mean to replace a bad government by a good one which is supposed to automatically assure the country’s prosperity. In reality it is certainly impossible. The arrangement of particular matters requires a specific and effective management. But revolutionaries as a rule do not possess such skills. They should either retain old functionaries and managers (who are anyway professional), but then the situation to a large extent remains the same with same abuses; or substitute them, and thus worsen the situation as revolutionary reforms usually aggravate economic situation (see, *e.g.*, Eckstein 1982, 1986; Zimmermann 1990; Haggard, Kaufman 1995; Weede, Muller 1997; Goldstone 2001: 168).

Secondly, since a rapid miracle and general improvement do not happen, and revolutionary actions and ample promises aggravate the situation, it is absolutely essential to find someone to blame and thus, to draw attention away. But then does the respect for democracy really count for? Will the revolutionaries (or radicals, if the moderate revolutionaries come to power) wait for several years to win the next election? Certainly, they will not. The revolutionary epoch is not the time for a quiet life. Everyone wants to obtain the targeted results immediately and without any compromises. If the radicals wait, they will lose their influence, their common followers will start asking hard questions and so on. In this case the democratically elected or a transitional (provisional) government finds itself between the hammer and the anvil (*i.e.* between the radicals, discontent with the worsening situation, and the conservatives displeased with changes and disorders).

Thirdly, the masses, whose main concerns are their concrete and immediate problems (*e.g.*, food for their children *etc.*) become dis-

enchanted with democracy. In general, people gradually cease to connect the solution of acute social problems with an abstract idea of democracy, and instead they associate it with the struggle against enemies of the revolution, of the president, of the party, Islam, Socialism *etc.* It is clearer and more concrete. As a result conditions for radicalization and broadening of revolution emerge. However, as we remember, the more radical is a revolution, the more probably it will transform into reaction.¹² Among other important terms of stability of liberal regimes, Raymond Aron points out the necessity to limit people's demands in the initial period of development of a constitutional regime (Aron 1993: 141). He writes: "Let us study the situation in France in 1848. The substitution of monarchy by a republic did not increase the society's resources and economic production. For the masses' income to grow it is insufficient to call the regime republican or democratic. The revolutionary changes naturally evoke hopes and demands. And the regime falls victim to discontent". However, it is obvious that the revolutionary masses support revolution not to level down their demands and to wait for something. They think that they have already been waiting for too long. But since the rapid and excessive demands are difficult to satisfy, the country can slide into economic disaster while the democratic regime risks of being overthrown.

Fourthly, in this context it turns out that the number of the genuinely democracy-oriented people is very small in comparison with those who strive for power or welfare. In a modernizing, rather poor, narrow-minded and suffering from drawbacks society it cannot be otherwise. In

¹² The 'reaction'/'counterrevolution' is usually considered to be a definitely negative phenomenon (while revolution is associated, though not so unambiguously, with something positive – among other things just because it is supposed to lead to democracy). But such an interpretation is not always reasonable. The reaction often plays a rather positive role preventing the aggravation of revolutionary upheavals and thus establishing more balanced and viable political institutions. Sometimes positive aspects of political reaction's processes are more pronounced, than the negative ones. For example, the Thermidorian reaction of 1794 can be considered just as an attempt of the French political leaders to mitigate rampage of the Jacobin Terror which caused the fierce civil war in many provinces and to form a new more viable social and political system. One can also point to a positive component in the Bonapartist reaction to the French revolution in 1848. History gives numerous examples.

corrupt undemocratic societies everybody abuses the law (although, perhaps, a bad law that often complicates life) and accuses of this everyone except for oneself. Everyone thinks in an undemocratic way, even those who struggle for democracy. Only a few people can stick to their principles, but they have little influence. However, one should realize that globalization can really strengthen the people's strive to change the political regime, but nothing can make up for the people's peculiar political experience which helps to transform political mistakes into political wisdom. This refers not only to insufficiently politically aware masses but also to intellectuals who need much time to strip away their illusions. Thus, globalization increases the gap between the rate of getting information and ideological attitudes from outside, on the one hand, and the accumulation of experience and creation of a necessary economic basis for a transition to stable democracy.

Fifthly, democracy as a political system, when people accept their defeat and work peacefully in opposition, has a generally limited social base. It can persist in one form or another, but reduced and misrepresented, though for a society such a substitution proceeds unnoticeable for some time.

Sixthly, genuine democratic institutions do not meet the purposes of revolution. Quite frequently radical revolutionary changes are realized through constituent assemblies, parliament *etc.* It works well in the beginning and with respect to the most urgent or consensual changes. But revolution often involves radical, drastic, grave, impetuous destruction. Common parliamentary procedures with their long discussions, procrastination and respect for minorities do not satisfy the society. That is why assemblies, parliaments, councils, *majlises* can issue laws and decrees to launch radical changes, but it is the dictatorial authority (a party, central committee, executive committee, leader *etc.*), relying on revolutionary source of power and, therefore, independent from the parliament, that should run the state. It is those authorities that solve the major problems and then submit the decision for approval. The democratic and pseudo-democratic decision-making process is quite often used to approve determining and fundamental documents and to consolidate the winning party's power. That is what Morsi did with the Constitution. In January 2014 Morsi's opponents did the same. In fact, the decree on the preparation of a new Constitution was almost the first step of Egypt's Interim President Adly Mansour in July 2013.

It is not surprising that dictators so like referenda which consolidate their power. *In fact, the democratic institutions turn out to be subsidiary.*

Thus, a genuine and full-scale democracy, that revolution strives to formalize, soon enough starts to contradict both the real purposes of revolution and other political (party, group and private) goals and conditions.

Democratically elected authorities (or even a transitional pro-democratic government) is either overthrown or separated in full or in part from democracy (transforming into a pseudo-democratic organization like the Long Parliament of England). As has been mentioned above, we speak about societies that have not completed modernization; meanwhile, more culturally developed and advanced societies can frequently transform a post-revolutionary regime in a firmly liberal one.

One should also keep in mind that the key issue of revolution is always the one of power, so democracy is acceptable as long as it supports the domination of the most powerful group, party, social stratum *etc.*

Since large-scale and omnipotent democracy does not fit the revolutionary transformations, and due to the lack of necessary institutions and ability to live according to democratic laws (as well as to the fact that revolution is always a struggle – sometimes illegal – between opposing forces, involving huge masses of people), *in the revolutionary and post-revolutionary period a pure democracy is reduced and transformed to a degree and in different ways* depending on society's peculiarities, results of political struggle and other factors. In societies which are ready for democracy and where modernization has been completed, this can be an insignificant reduction (similar to the prohibition to propose a candidate from among the former members of communist parties *etc.*). It is worth noting that universal suffrage, taken as a model today, was not legalized in a day, there often were applied voting qualifications. Even in the USA, whose comprehensive democracy fascinated Alexis de Tocqueville (1830), democracy was not perfect. The Indians, Afro-Americans, women and a considerable part of men (who acquired the right during Jackson's presidency) were deprived of electoral right. Moreover, the presidential elections were a staged procedure (quite real at that time). In the cradle of modern democracy, Great Britain, in 1830 only a small percentage of population had the voting right. In 1789, in

France the part of the Estates-General, which at first declared themselves the National Assembly and then the National Constituent Assembly, passed many well-known laws. But one should remember that the election rules there had little, if anything, to do with the current notion of democracy

Just as embryo passes certain development stages, the non-democratic societies, striving for democracy, go through stages of evolution of democracy associated with its limitation. *But in many cases democracy is limited because it fails to function to the full just due to the above-mentioned reasons.*

In the course of revolution, the restrictions can be associated with attempts to secure political advantages, and also with revolutionary and counterrevolutionary violence (we can observe both in Egypt), with activity of a powerful ideological or any other center (as for example, in Iran), with a dictatorial body, with an introduction of property or political qualifications, with assassination or arrests of the opposition's leaders (what has happened in Egypt recently), with curtailment of free speech and associations, formation of unconstitutional repressive bodies *etc.*

The post-revolutionary regime also restricts democracy or just imitates it. In contemporary world the most widespread forms of limitation of universal democracy (without which only a few governments perceive themselves legitimate) are different kinds of falsification of election results which often combine with repressions of political opponents (the recent example is Ukraine where one of the opposition political leaders was imprisoned), and constitutional and legal tricks (Russia shows remarkable examples). There are some peculiar cases when there is an unconstitutional or constitutional, but non-democratic, force which enjoys supreme authority (Iran). Other forms are possible as well. The most widespread one is still the military coup or attempts to conduct a revolutionary overthrow (Georgia and Kyrgyzstan provide numerous examples). The military forces step in when a democratic government decays or degrades or when a state reaches an impasse. Anyway, the course of democracy development is corrected. On the other hand, the military also cannot remain in power endlessly or even for too long without legalizing the regime, so they have to hand over authority to the civilian community and hold elections.

Thus, the general political course of modernizing societies follows the democratic trend (increasingly approaching the ideal), but the fluctuation along this trend can be severe and painful. The development can remain incomplete, oscillating within the controlled democratic system.

In Egypt, the new presidential elections are likely to be held rather soon (if the situation does not get worse). However, this election seems to be less democratic (even in comparison with the previous events) because the Muslim Brotherhood was proclaimed a terrorist organization. The path to genuine democracy is very long (it is necessary to eliminate illiteracy along with solving other problems), but the chance is rather good that there will be established a new dictatorship in the form of controlled democracy and military power, supporting the authorities.

Another important point explains why democracy cannot be established in a post-revolutionary society or quickly degrades there. 'Democracy is the worst form of government, except for all the others', said Winston Churchill. For the societies that just enter this path, the first part of the phrase is of utmost importance. Democracy (just as free market and private property) has numerous drawbacks. Mature democratic societies, among other things, have found some means to mitigate them. But in young democracies these drawbacks get excessive forms. And acquiring immunity against such 'infantile diseases' of democracy is a long and painful process. As a result, a society can turn out to be abnormal (as in the case with lack of immunity against private property and free market – actually, rather egoistic institutes if they are not restricted). It is clear that an introduction of formally democratic institutions is absolutely insufficient, since although including multi-party elections, they often conceal and even legitimate an actual dominance of authoritarian rule (Diamond, Linz, Lipset 1995: 8; см. также: Diamond 1999)

In conclusion, we should note that the transition from an authoritarian regime to democracy can occur in three main ways: through a revolution (quickly from below), a military takeover or coup d'état, and a reformation (gradually from above). In previous epochs the reformative way was almost impossible, so the path to democracy was paved by revolutions and counterrevolutions. Still some rather successful examples of reformative transition to democracy (or just a step in this direction) can be observed as early as in the 19th century. For example, in Japan there the parliament was established from above (1889). In Germany Otto Bismarck introduced full male suffrage (1867), while in Prussia

the election system proper was established by the Revolution of 1848. Some Latin American states experienced transitions from military dictatorship to democracy, but the latter could not be firmly established in this region, with a few exceptions. However, in the 20th century, especially in its last decades, due largely to globalization, we can find numerous examples of voluntary dismantling of authoritarian and totalitarian regimes by the very military or other dictatorship (in Spain, Chile and other Latin American countries, South Korea, Taiwan, Indonesia, lastly the USSR). Some significant steps towards democratization were also made by the Arab monarchic states. Paradoxical at first sight, but on the eve of the Arab Spring most Arab monarchies appeared much more democratic, than the majority of the Arab republics (see, *e.g.*, Truettsev 2011).

Such a non-revolutionary transition to democracy, *ceteris paribus*, can turn out to be more direct and secure. This is especially important against the background of the absence of any significant positive correlation between the democratic government and the GDP growth rates – what is more in authoritarian states higher GDP growth rates are more likely than in young democracies – let alone post-revolution systems (Eckstein 1982, 1986; Zimmermann 1990; Haggard, Kaufman 1995; Weede, Muller 1997; Goldstone 2001: 168; Polterovich, Popov 2007). And in the modernization context economic growth rates are of crucial importance.

Democracy, Revolution, and Counterrevolution in Egypt: an analysis of conflicting forces

In July 2013 Egypt entered a bifurcation zone when a slight variation of parameters (including actions and sayings of particular individuals) could lead to rather different evolutionary trajectories. One of the emergent possibilities (that now risks not to be realized) was the possibility of a dramatic growth of the popularity of the democratic ideas among the Islamists, when leaders of the Muslim Brothers started making such declarations as “We have our own belief in the democratic system and we are willing to die for it” (Chumley 2013).

* * *

Our young Egyptian friends (a sort of “leftist liberal revolutionaries”) consider the post July 3 events in their country as “counterrevolution”. And we would tend to agree with them – though with some important difference. Almost by definition, revolutionaries regard the “counterrevolution” as something unequivocally negative; whereas we believe that the present-day political regime has serious positive respects (though, no doubt, its formation has led in the recent months to a significant growth of the authoritarian tendencies). Yes, it may well be denoted as “counterrevolution”, as it returned to power that very block of military, economic, and bureaucratic elites that had ruled the country before the 2011 Egyptian Revolution. However, as we have already demonstrated this before (see, *e.g.*, Grinin 2012b; Grinin, Korotayev 2012a, 2012b: 251–289; Korotayev, Zinkina 2011a, 2011b, 2011c; Korotayev *et al.* 2012), it ruled Egypt in a rather effective way, securing in the years preceding the Revolution a rather successful (especially, against the global background) economic and social development of this great country.

However, it would be rather wrong to say that Egypt has returned now precisely to that very state where it was before the revolution. And some newly emerging features contribute evidently to the regime destabilization. This is first of all the radicalization of the Muslim Brothers coupled with the emergence of their very strong media support in the form of al-Jazeera’s satellite channel “Mubasher Misr”¹³.

On the other hand, there are much more of those features that have emerged during the Egyptian Revolution and the Egyptian Counterrevolution that contribute to the regime stabilization.

The Egyptian 2011 Revolution was able to achieve a rather easy victory due to the following two points:

First of all, this was a very strong elite conflict (that is so important for the success of revolutions in general [*e.g.*, Goldstone 2001] and that was especially important for the success of the Arab Revolutions in 2011 [see, *e.g.*, Nepstad 2011; Malkov *et al.* 2013; Issaev *et al.* 2013]). This was mostly the conflict between the military (“the old guard”) and the economic elite (“the young guard”) – a group of the leading Egyptian businessmen headed by Gamal Mubarak. The military

¹³ <http://mubasher-misr.aljazeera.net/livestream/>.

group controlled (and controls) not only the Egyptian Armed Forces, but also a major part of the Egyptian economy. And these are not only military factories, but also large pieces of land, various real estate, fuel stations, construction and transportation enterprises, as well as various factories that produce not only military production, but also things like TV sets, refrigerators, spaghettis, olive oil, shoe cream and so on.¹⁴ Estimates of the share of the Egyptian economy controlled by the military range between 10 and 40%¹⁵ (Roy 1992; Nepstad 2011: 489; Tadros 2012; Marshall, Stacher 2012). This group of the Egyptian elite was frightened by the ascent of the “young guard” of the leading Egyptian businessmen (under the leadership of Gamal Mubarak) who controlled the economy block of the Egyptian government. Since 2004 this government had been implementing rather effective economic reforms that led to a significant acceleration of economic growth rates in Egypt (*e.g.*, Korotayev, Zinkina 2011a, 2011b, 2011c). “Over the past decades, the Egyptian military has not limited its focus to security matters; it has also acquired valuable real estate and numerous industries. By one estimate, the military commands up to 40 percent of the Egyptian economy. Before the events of 2011, Egyptian officers expressed concern about President Mubarak’s plan to appoint his son Gamal as his successor. If Gamal took office, many believed that he would implement privatization policies that would dismantle the military’s business holdings” (Nepstad 2011: 489; see also Roy 1992; Tadros 2012; Marshall, Stacher 2012). Indeed, there were all grounds to expect that in case of Gamal Mubarak’s coming to power the leading Egyptian businessmen from his circle will establish an effective control over the generals’ economic empire – and it would be rather easy to justify this indicating to (quite real) ineffectiveness of exploitation of the respective economic assets and the necessity to optimize it.

The Egyptian elite conflict allows to understand some events of the Egyptian Revolution that may look mysterious at the first glance. For example, throughout the revolution the army guarded quite rigorously all the official buildings, effectively blocking all the attempts by

¹⁴ Note that military factories (virtually possessed by Egyptian generals) have a clear competitive advantage, as they can exploit virtually free labor of the conscripts (see, *e.g.*, Tadros 2012]).

¹⁵ However, the latter estimate appears to be clearly exaggerated.

the protesters to seize them. However, already on the first days of the Revolution (on the 28th and 29th of January, 2011) the army let protesters seize, crash, and burn the headquarters of the ruling party of Mubarak's Egypt – the National Democratic Party. However, at a closer inspection one will not find here anything strange – as the real head of this party was just Gamal Mubarak; thus, the military elite delivered a very strong blow upon its archenemy with the hands of the protesters (see, e.g., Исаев, Шишкина 2012).

Within the context of the still rather fashionable interpretation of the Egyptian events of January and February 2011 as a sort of “confrontation between revolutionary people masses and the repressive authoritarian regime” one could hardly understand the apparently enigmatic (but extremely famous) “Battle of the Camel”, when there was an attempt to disperse the Tahrir protesters on the part of a motley crew of cameleers – workers of tourist services operating in the Pyramids area and engaged in renting horses and camels to tourists; the cameleers attacked the protesters while riding camels and horses (which, incidentally, rendered a specific exotic color to events of February 2 – and to the Egyptian 2011 Revolution, in general). However, if this was indeed “the confrontation of popular masses and the repressive authoritarian regime”, why was it necessary for the “authoritarian regime” to employ such strange amateurish figures, and not to use such a simple thing as the professional repressive apparatus? The point is just that already on the 2nd of February Tahrir protesters confronted not the professional repressive apparatus controlled by the “old guard” (that took the position of friendly neutrality toward the protesters), but the economic elite clique that in order to counteract the protesters (who demanded the removal of the businessmen's leader) had to employ semi-criminal elements rather than professional repressive apparatus (see Essam El-Din 2011; Issaev, Shishkina 2012: 70–73; Issaev, Korotayev 2014 for more detail). Thus, already in early February 2011 the protesters in Tahrir were countered not by the repressive apparatus of the authoritarian state, but by a clique of the businessmen who were very rich indeed, but who did not control the repressive apparatus – which accounts for a very easy “victory of the revolutionary masses” up to a very considerable extent.

The second point that secured an unexpectedly fast success of the protestors was the formation of an unexpectedly wide opposition alliance, which united in a single rather coordinated front very diverse forces including not only all the possible secular opposition groups (liberals, leftists, nationalists and so on), but also Islamists in general, and the Muslim Brothers in particular.

The situation that we observe now is *exactly the opposite*.

Firstly, the Egyptian Revolution made the Egyptian economic elite reconcile with the military, and in June 2013 they acted together in a well-coordinated front that allowed such a swift overthrow of President Morsi (see Issaev, Korotayev 2014 for more detail); whereas no serious cracks in the new coalition of the Egyptian military and economic elites (that was formed in the first half of 2013) appear to be visible yet. The economic elites have understood that for them it turns out to be extremely counterproductive to continue any serious attempts to get hold of any economic assets controlled by the military, that it is much better for them to recognize the dominant position of the military in the ruling block, as well as the immunity and inviolability of the generals' economic empire (among other things – through direct constitutional amendments). The economic elites have understood that any serious attempts on their part to get dominant positions in the ruling block may result in their losing incomparably more than gaining¹⁶.

Secondly, the Revolution with the subsequent Counterrevolution led to an extremely deep split in the January (2011) opposition “macroalliance”. What is very important is that this split took place along many lines. Within this macroalliance even the Islamist alliance was split – as the July 3 coup was supported by the second strong Islamist party – the party of Islamist fundamentalists/salafis Hizb al-Noor (as well as a number of prominent Islamic figures outside this party). Of course, the support of secularist-military regime by the Egyptian Salafi Islamists needs a special commentary (a special commentary is also naturally needed for the fact that in July 2013 the archconservative Is-

¹⁶ Emergent cracks in the ruling coalition (see, e.g., Gulf News 2014) are rather connected with the participation in this coalition of some leftist secularists (first of all, Hamdeen Sabahi and his Egyptian Popular Current [*al-Tayyar al-Sha'biyy al-Misriyy*]), whereas the continuation of the cooperation of this part of the ruling alliance with both military and (especially) economic elites can in no way be guaranteed – one would rather expect to see eventually the final split between the left-wing and right-wing secularists in Egypt.

lamist Saudi Arabian regime acted as a faithful ally of the anti-Islamist alliance that included an exceptionally wide range of forces – liberals, nationalists, leftists, ultraleftists – up to Trotskyists [Abdel Kouddous 2013; Baer 2013; Nasr 2013; al-Alawi, Schwartz 2013; al-Rasheed 2013]). The main point here appears to be connected with the fact that Saudi Arabia acts as the main financial sponsor of Hizb al-Noor (Daou 2012; Lavizzari 2013). And as regards Saudi Arabia, the Muslim Brothers pose a real threat to the respective country's regime. In 1937 in the USSR it was much less dangerous to proclaim oneself a Slavophil rather than a Trotskyist (in 1937 the latter [but in no way the former] would have led to an almost immediate execution) – whereas for non-Marxists the difference between Stalinists and Trotskyists could look entirely insignificant. Similarly, for the Saudis Trotskyists are a sort of unreal exotics, whereas the Muslim Brothers for them are almost the same as the Trotskyists were for Stalin – they are precisely those leftist Islamists who question effectively the very basics the regime legitimacy and may even take concrete steps to overthrow it (Baer 2013; Nasr 2013; al-Alawi, Schwartz 2013; al-Rasheed 2013]). And against such a background one can easily understand the readiness of Saudi Arabia (+ the UAE and Kuwait that have similar problems) to ally with anybody (including anti-Islamist minded liberals and Communists, let alone Egyptian military and economic elites) in order to weaken in its own homeland the enemy that threatens the very survival of the Arabian monarchical (with the natural exception of the Qatar monarchy). On the other hand, for the Egyptian Salafis the removal of the Muslim Brothers from the legal political arena was somewhat advantageous objectively (irrespective of any connections with the Saudi interests), as it allows to strengthen significantly their own positions, including the potential further widening of its presence in the Egyptian parliament – as the present-day main legal Islamist party of the country.

The secular leftist-liberal alliance has been also split, as the majority of its members were so frightened by one year of the rule of Muslim Brothers, that continue to support the present regime. However, the forces that continue to oppose the regime remain deeply split – as the anti-regime leftist liberal-revolutionary youth still refuses any idea of a new alliance with the Muslim Brothers; suffice to say that one of its main slogans *Yasqut, yasqut illi khan, in kana `askar aw ikhwan* is

translated as follows: “Down, down with all those who betrayed – be they military, or Muslim Brothers!” We believe that new revolutionary paradoxes in Egypt will not keep us waiting.

Thus, the revolutionary events often assume a paradoxical character. For example, one may sometimes get across such revolutions which the revolutionaries do not expect. The revolutionary repressions may often turn against those who were actually meant to benefit revolution. And those whose names were on the banners when overthrowing the old power join on a mass-scale the counter-revolutionary camp. The zealous monarchists or the henchmen of authoritarianism suddenly turn into democrats, while those who considered democracy as the highest value get ready to establish a dictatorship.

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