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## Egypt: Revolution of peripheries besiege Sisi

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Abdel Fattah Al-Sisi seems to have so much time to stay in power with the escalation of the popular movement coming from villages and the country's peripheries, as well as the efforts of the popular movement to dismantle the security cordon imposed on the capital, amid outbreak of protests in some of its outskirts despite the tight police grip, and failure of all attempts to absorb the anger of people and deescalate tension, where the main demand of demonstrations has become removal of the Sisi regime.

The expansion of the scale of demonstrations that started in some Egyptian governorates on September 20 upon the call of the businessman Mohamed Ali, to reach most governorates on the first "Friday of Wrath" on September 25, indicates that this is a new revolution similar to the January revolution (2011) that was behind the overthrow of late President Hosni Mubarak, but with a different style and way of movement.

The current Egyptian revolution comes from the society roots, that is from the depth of the Egyptian countryside; where its heroes are simple citizens who have been crushed by the government policies. The current revolution comes from villages and hamlets, not an elite revolution in the capital and cities – as it was the case on January 25, 2012 – where all society groups, including adults and children, men and women, participate.

The chants in these demonstrations reveal that the motives behind the people's burst are not only due to economic suffering or against the law on reconciliation in building violations, despite the importance of its impact. However, the general feeling that is currently prevailing is that Sisi is carrying out an anti-national agenda to destroy and sabotage Egypt, evict and [displace](#) Egyptians, fight religion, and destroy mosques. Therefore, the most common chant repeated by protesters is "There is no god but God, Sisi is the enemy of God", which carries many meanings and confirms that people's trust in Sisi has run out.

## Breaking the fear barrier

The new Egyptian revolutionaries on the streets are so bold that they have broken the fear barrier which Sisi has been relying on to dominate the Egyptian people. Breaking this barrier has resulted in a major shift in people's collective awareness and a change in the humiliating Egyptian reality that is imposed by the ruling regime through repression and intimidation since the Rabaa massacre in 2013, which is likely to put an end to Sisi's dream of survival and continuation in power.

Among the significant facts that reveal the boldness and new spirit of protesters is what happened in the Al-Warraaq Nile Island, Giza, that Al-Sisi wants to displace its residents to be able to sell the area to foreign investors. The Al-Warraaq residents responded to the security forces' arrest of four of its youth by holding 3 security personnel as hostage. They refused to release the four security personnel except after releasing their children, which was actually achieved. This incident reveals some of the features of the new situation in Egypt, that is the relative weakness of authorities in the face of people's resilience and rising power.

There is a second incident that provides a significant indication, where demonstrators in Aswan moved to the presidential rest house there and set it on fire, taking into account that they had previously been afraid of just passing by it. After that, the people of Aswan continued their daily protests, where security forces were unable to stop them. When the police arrested two children, the demonstrators surrounded the Security Directorate, forcing the security services to deport the two children to Cairo. However, due to fear of escalation of popular anger, the police released them and sent them back to their hometown.

Despite the presence of some clashes at some protest points and the killing of three protesters in the village of Al-Blida in Giza, at the hands of the security forces, and the use of gas bombs against protesters in other places, the general context confirms that there is no consensus in the regime circles to use killing weapons in the face of the demonstrators, which is considered a great gain that confirms rejection of clashing with the people by some sectors of the army and the police, and refusal of some circles within the authority to get involved in bloodshed for the sake of Sisi.

## Boldness and courage of the new generation

The most important observation about the ongoing demonstrations is the absence of political movements that mainly exist in cities. Villages are characterized by cohesion and tribalism that sometimes make such societies even stronger than the State. Also, people there are fortified in terms of security as police armored vehicles cannot enter these areas in most cases, where clashes take place at the entrances, which drains the power of the security forces and exhausts them.

The heroes of the village revolution are the youth and younger generations. Young men under twenty were younger during the January 2011 revolution, but their revolutionary sense has never faded away.

However, what is more surprising is the participation of children in these demonstrations with all enthusiasm and courage, a phenomenon that is worthy of contemplation. The new generation has become more aware of the Egyptian situation than earlier ones, from early age, which indicates that they are likely to play a major role in shaping the new political order in the future.

Official media campaigns have failed to accuse the Muslim Brotherhood of being behind the demonstrations, and the accusations of terror used against demonstrators by the government-owned media as well as pro-regime media outlets have all evaporated. This failure is due to the fact that the revolutionaries this time come from the depth of the Egyptian countryside, represent all sects and classes of the people all over governorates, and whoever has delayed in taking to the street during the past days will join the revolution sooner or later, because they have the same reasons and justifications.

However, the absence of political parties from the current scene has been beneficial with respect to blocking the way of attempts to demonize the revolution. Since the July coup (2013) against President Mohamed Morsi and the Rabaa massacre, Sisi has relied on promoting that he is fighting an internal enemy with an external extension, and has demonized the Muslim Brotherhood, accusing everyone that opposes him of belonging to the Brotherhood, even if he was a communist.

Despite the absence of political parties and politicians from the internal movement, politicians from all Egyptian political spectrum play a pivotal role in providing media support to the revolution. Opposition satellite TV channels that broadcast video footage about the revolution moment by



moment, have caused a major shift, as cell phone video clips have become one of the most important tools for revolutionaries to document their movement and broadcast it to public opinion both at home and abroad. In addition, Egyptian politicians and non-politicians living abroad contribute to supporting the revolution, and even intervene in directing the revolutionaries and encouraging them.

## Abandonment of Sisi

Al-Sisi is seemingly confused and perplexed in front of the revolution. Either he chooses to push his security forces to the peripheries and let the center fall, or to keep forces in the center and lose the peripheries. In both cases, his prestige is eroding and his legitimacy will imminently fall, as the revolution will eventually extend to the capital that is boiling and waiting for the appropriate moment of explosion and drawing the scene of the end.

Every passing day is in the interest of the revolution, because the burning fire will not stop, and the quiet cities today will ignite tomorrow, because the causes of the revolution are present in every home. The harm afflicted every Egyptian, until life became extremely difficult for the majority of the Egyptian people.

Al-Sisi seems to have no chance to continue, as almost no one in Egypt wants him. He not only led a coup against President Mohamed Morsi, but also launched more than one coup to achieve his goal to rule alone. He turned against the army, dismissed almost all the members of military junta who participated with him in the move, and imprisoned Lt. General Sami Anan, the former chief of staff of the armed forces, because he only thought about running for the presidential elections against him. He also put Lt. General Ahmed Shafiq under house arrest when he considered running for president against him, after abducting him from the UAE in agreement with Mohammed bin Zayed.

Sisi turned against Egyptian national security by selling Tiran and Sanafir, handing over the Straits of Tiran to Israel, dispensed with the Nile River by signing an agreement to cede it to Ethiopia, sold Egypt's rights in the Mediterranean after allying with Israel, Cyprus and Greece against the neighboring Arab and Muslim countries.

Al-Sisi turned against the liberal and leftist political forces that participated with him in his move on June 30, 2013, and put their leaders in prison. The great coup has been against the religion of the Egyptian State, under the guise of renewal of the Islamic discourse! His most dangerous decision was

October 6, 2020

to demolish mosques, challenging the belief of the Muslims' creed in Egypt and the whole world, under the pretext that they were built without obtaining a licence!

Al-Sisi has destroyed the Egyptian economy by squandering money on non-productive and unnecessary projects that have either priority nor any return. He flooded the country with loans and took destructive measures such as floating the local currency, which made Egyptians lose more than half the value of their possessions. He has also sought to liquidate state assets and sell them through a special fund under his direct management. The most dangerous thing is the [dismantling of Cairo from Mokattam to the Nile](#) with the aim of selling it in partnership with the United Arab Emirates and international organizations under the guise of 'Historic Cairo Project' and transforming the capital into a World Heritage property managed by UNESCO (read the writer's previous [article](#)).

The spark of revolution that is likely to end Sisi's rule was the coup against the Egyptian people by the deliberate impoverishment and infringement on people's homes and inhumanely demolishing them against all principles and laws that protect the human right to housing and living in dignity. But it seems that Sisi was blinded by his authoritarianism until he dived into a dark tunnel from which there is no apparent escape.

The wheel of change has started to revolve, where the revolution is expanding, and Sisi has apparently lost many of his supporters, even in circles of power. This was clearly demonstrated in his recent speech, where he threatened everyone. Even Israeli and foreign circles on whose support Sisi has always depended are not likely to rescue him this time because the confrontation is now with the Egyptian people. The hostile cunning will never triumph over a nation that works to seize its right to freedom, as such revolutionary nation will overcome everyone that may attempt to stand in its way for liberation and independence.