

No Muslimbrotherhood, no army: The Revolution Continues

by Blabiush / Tahrir International Collective Network, 10.07.2013

So you're confused? Maybe because the complexity of every society is confusing, especially in its turning points and the process of change. Anyway let's try to answer some questions and accusations which emerge now and provide another perspective on the current situation.

First. Was it a revolution or not? Yes, it was and still it is. When you see 30 million highly motivated people on the street, you cannot talk just about the isolated decisions of power holders.

Tamaroud is a grassroots movement, even though its aims are reformist and it gained the quick support of main opposition players which each wanted to gain benefits from changing the situation (it is obvious and was obvious, we exist in reality), and without this support the movement wouldn't be so successful. It was Tamaroud which pushed society and political parties to take more radical steps against the Muslim Brotherhood. It was the will of people to depose Morsi due to his failure to deliver on any of the promises of the revolution. And even though it has turned into a military coup, it was the will of people who push the army to change its position and declare itself against Morsi.

Second. Was it legal to depose Morsi, or not? What is this question! From an anarchist perspective it is irrelevant.

Our aim is for direct democracy, about freedom of the people to emancipate themselves from the oppressive structures of power that seek control and dominate them. It is not about occasionally celebrating freedom of choice among offers given to us from the elites and then granting them a temporary immunity for doing their businesses. Again, there were 30 million people on the street wanting Morsi to step down, and people have the right to kick out whoever they want, whenever they want. They don't need to wait four years for another day of artificial freedom of choice.

Third. Conspiracy theory. It's boring. It's boring repeating the same scandalous scheme, of people masturbating themselves with finding another evident proof to discredit whatever happens as the result of secret manipulation. It's nothing to be excited with.

Power holders will always seek to co-opt and control the course of events to serve their own interests and maintain their hegemony and dominance. Arabs not only have to face the reality of years of European colonialism and US imperialism but also face new local struggles as regimes which have been in power for decades are toppled and new actors vie for power and control over the people. The reality of the strength of US imperialism in the region, also precludes the possibility of any one coming to power without making a pact with the devil (US) which will seek to benefit from the situation emerging on the ground in any way possible.

But to be honest we are sick of these Western-centric and somewhat racist arguments that Arabs cannot be agents of their own destiny without the US dictating the course of events. The simplistic vision of the world of conspiracy theorists brings with it a deeply hidden belief in the lack of ability of people to decide by themselves and present them as just marionettes activated by strings held by a few influential demi-gods playing their virtual game. It also brings defeatism putting into question all efforts undertaken to change the world. So better stay at home? For when you go out for sure USA will use it.

Fourth. Was it a military coup? Again the question is largely irrelevant, what is clear is that the army has seized power (although it was never really out of power in the first place).

Although we stand firmly against the army, we have to admit that the intervention of the army was cheered by the people, for a number of reasons. Taking the streets on 30th June, people, while motivated to stay until the fall of Morsi, expected nothing but blood, felt risk of civil war, and confrontation with Islamist militias, so the army entering onto the scene gave them some relief. We can accuse them, of course, but if you prefer a picture of people storming the presidential palace by themselves, go there and die.

Also, although people united themselves against Morsi, it doesn't mean that this people are really united, that they are not fractured, that there is no contradiction in goals between various groups and even hostility. So ceding the job on the army was also seen as preventing this unity from being broken by running for particular interests before finishing the fight against Muslim Brotherhood. Finally also, like in any other country, the majority of the society do not want a deep change but slight reforms and will cling to any opportunity to ease themselves from the political burden and return to their private home lives.

For revolutionaries, they just cannot fight at the same moment both with Islamists and the army. It would be a suicide. To confront the Islamists it was necessary at least to keep the neutrality of the military forces. Making them a target now would prompt the army to keep its alliance with Muslim Brotherhood and all the people's movement would be crushed. It should be seen just as another stage of the revolution. The people fight the Islamists today, and soon it will be the time for the army. The revolution continues.

Fifth. Was Tamaroud movement revolutionary? Of course not. It was obvious since the beginning. They were clear in their goal – just a new election and new constitution.

And despite having respect for their ability to mobilize the people this «crown of the youth» does not want to go further than classic democracy. As it was said before, most people just want reforms and it is exactly due to its non-radicalism that Tamaroud could gain the support of such a wide section of the people. And exactly because of this it got a support from all the main opposition parties who just saw for themselves an opportunity to get their seats in the parliament quicker than they could have done otherwise.

It was also not surprising their support for the army. In the end all parties want just to seize power and to achieve it they need their apparatus of repression and they needed a deal with the army. Yet, just as it was needed for the Muslim Brotherhood to come to power, to discredit political Islam in Egypt and possibly for the region, now it is time for people to see that oppositional parties or control of the army cannot provide any positive change in their lives. Hopefully the people will come to see that no form of representative democracy can bring bread, freedom and social justice.

Sixth. Fuck the SCAF! We will never forgive. We will never forget.

Now again we have the rule of the army. Actually the rule which was never broken and was just temporarily shared with Muslim Brotherhood. The army again dominates the street presenting its executive power through arial acrobatic displays supposedly in the name of the people.

We remember the abuses of the army against all who expressed their disappointment or even simply dared to show themselves on the street. We remember the battles of Mohammed Mahmoud St., forced virginity testing, brutally beaten the Blue Bra girl and military trials. It is not lost on us the irony that 2 years to this day, millions of Egyptians were in the squares across the country trying to reclaim the revolution and calling for the military junta to go. We do not cheer the army's crack down on Islamists. The attacks which the army carries out on Islamists today will be attacks on anyone not comfortable enough for the regime tomorrow.

All those who call themselves anti-authoritarians, should oppose state brutality whenever and against whoever it occurs. It is a false that all Muslim Brotherhood supporters are peaceful demonstrators, many came to streets with weapons and attacked the people. But likewise it is not true that all Muslim Brotherhood supporters are crazed thugs that throw children from rooftops. Women and children are at pro-Morsi demonstrations too, they feel disenfranchised that their vote means nothing. At the end of the day, political Islam may (or may not) have now been defeated as a political force, but the reality is that it still has many supporters and we need to find a way to avoid conflict which could lead to a bloody civil war. In a longer perspective, this what Islamists have to face today, will work for them tomorrow and crushing them unconditionally down will produce in them feeling of victimness and veneration of martyrs which will after explode with much much more power than now.

The army is the strongest institution in Egypt and its the most difficult pillar to overcome. There was no time for this now, but without overthrowing the military junta and destroying all its structure, will be no change in oppressive character of the state, both internally and externally. The last agreement of cooperation between the Egyptian and Israeli armies in the Sinai and destruction of the tunnels to Gaza show that there is no will to change Egypt's politics in Middle East. The new power in Egypt has turned away both Palestinians entering the country and Syrians who are seeking desperately needed refuge. We cannot talk about freedom and justice until Egyptl stops its shameful participation in oppression against Palestinians.

But the revolution is not finished yet. There is no point to announce its death or to count 1st, 2nd or even 3rd ones. This is all part of the same revolution with its stages, turning points and complexity.

It is only during the first days of any rebellion that people unite as one happy family. After, all diversities will come to the surface again. Egypt has 80 million people and a rich political, religious and ideological diversity and even within the revolutionary camp there are a lot of contradicting, intertwining and overlapping goals and ideas.

There are no chocolate box revolutions.

Struggle is a complex, long and often brutal process. The best use of our energy is not to dissect all the competing power struggles at play and intellectually pontificate over them. But to give support to the anti-authoritarian tendencies within that process in the hope that they will strengthen and grow.

Yes, the revolution is confusing. But it's normal. To have a clear vision wait 100 years to get your schoolbook.

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