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#June30: "Tamarod"/"Rebel" Campaign – Is Egypt on The Verge of a Civil War?



Zeinobia

Tamarud: Rebels With A Cause

"Rebellion" or "Tamarud" is a name of a public campaign in Egypt now that is causing controversy and making headlines in the media. Everybody is speaking about this campaign, the revolutionaries have high hopes for it while the Muslim brotherhood supporters mock it. The former regime supporters are divided whether to support it or not while the Islamists refuse it altogether and even launched a counter campaign to this rebellion. "Tamarud" campaign aims to two main goals: To withdraw confidence from Mohamed Morsi and to have early elections. It is a crazy thing to topple a democratically elected president but the campaign is doing this through the collection of ID signatures from Egyptians. They are putting a target of 15,000,000 signatures to withdraw the confidence from the elected President. On next 30 June 2013 the campaign will present these signatures "if it manages to collect that number" to the Supreme Constitutional Court. In the campaign's best case scenario the Court will consider these signatures like votes and withdraw confidence from Morsi and call for early presidential elections"



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Tarek Radwan

Can the 'Rebel' Campaign Bring Down Morsi?

"The short answer is no, but the Tamarod or 'Rebel' campaign can certainly create a massive headache for President Mohammed Morsi, the Muslim Brotherhood's Freedom and Justice Party, and the security apparatus.



Tamarod campaigners have made an impressive splash on the Egyptian political scene in recent weeks, collecting signatures from ordinary citizens to demonstrate a vote of no-confidence against Morsi and demand early presidential elections under the supervision of the Supreme Constitutional Court" [...] **"Despite the impressive response garnered by the Tamarod campaign, it will not end in early presidential elections, no matter how many signatures they collect. Nonetheless, it could elicit a significant political shift.** If the campaign can push voters towards a more balanced parliament, the potential for meaningful constitutional changes, via an agreed upon amendments process, could swing the odds towards the political opposition. It might even add a provision on the terms of early elections, shifting power away from the presidency. Morsi may have temporarily abandoned the active pursuit of political consensus in recent months, but a quantitative measure of his opposition could affect what legitimacy he still holds. The cases brought against journalists and political activists suggest that Tamarod is a risk Morsi is unwilling to take"

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Alternatives

"people have once again shifted their focus to National politics, specifically the 30 June demonstrations. Expectations are flying high on the side of the opposition, with Amr Moussa declaring on his own that 30 June will mark the end of Muslim Brotherhood rule, without any actual basis, proof or even working theory as to how that will happen exactly. Something to consider: **If the 30 June demonstrations fail (God only knows what its parameters of success are), it will make the very weak Brotherhood regime appear stronger than it really is**" [.....] "As much as the questions of finding an alternative to the Muslim Brotherhood rule before 30 June, and what should take place if somehow 30 June topples them, are important and valid, they both ignore an equally valid and important question: What is the alternative, at least for the people, to not participating in 30 June demonstrations, exactly? We have a regime that has so far destroyed the economy; paralysed the political discourse; ignored all attempts at accountability, rule of law or state institutions; and one year later still has not come up with a single working or functional policy in any of the sectors it governs. What is the alternative to not opposing? What is the alternative for the millions that are not politically represented in any way, have no faith in a corrupt electoral system that doesn't seem like it will get reformed in any meaningful way under the new regime, and whose living conditions are deteriorating on daily basis, except to go down and protest?"

[...] "The Morsi defenders ignore all that and state that he still deserves to complete his full term, while the Morsi opposition believes that if he does finish his term, at the rate the situation is going, he will finish the country with him. **The question that faces every Brotherhood enthusiast now is: what is your priority? Morsi or Egypt? Because it's really getting down to that**"

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Bassem Sabry

Will Egypt Have Its Second Revolution on June 30?

"What's worse, the country is now more polarized than ever, the different sides and their supporters becoming increasingly radicalized and unwilling to compromise (regardless of right and wrong), and the public sphere is growing increasingly heated as well. Many around me think there is still some chance to right what is wrong and reclaim even some of the earlier promise, but they simultaneously also have less and less faith this chance would ever be seized upon. As Morsi approaches the anniversary of his first year in power, **it is perhaps the ultimate irony that this anniversary is to be marked by an attempt to repeat the 2011 revolution that actually brought him into power, and largely by the very same people who sparked that very same revolution against the former dictator who once imprisoned the current president**"

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Maher Hamoud

Is Egypt on the verge of a civil war?

"There are not two "organised groups" in Egypt. There's only one group: the Muslim Brotherhood or maybe the Islamists on the one hand, but currently there is no other hand. It is just the people. And the people are masses that are far from self-identifying as an organised group. So, a civil war looks to be an impossibility, given the political, cultural and social factors. The term civil war is being used as a scare tactic by the Brotherhood and naively and irresponsibly parroted by others. I'm not guaranteeing that 30 June will remain peaceful. Actually, I believe that "the absolute nonviolence" label attached to the January 25 Revolution is a myth. It was violent, and violence played an important role in bringing down Mubarak. However, it was a reaction to the regime's organised violence and it was kept to a minimum. Given the current heated and aggressive public discourse, **I think the prospects of a peaceful day on 30 June are under threat. And if violence occurs, I would blame the Brotherhood and their well-**

organised but unthinking followers. But rationally speaking, even if clashes do occur, they still won't turn into civil war, simply because the country lacks the precursor for one"

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Ahmed Kadry

Rebels with a Cause

"Much like the January 2011 revolution, Tamarod does not appear to have a goal beyond removing the president from office, which begs many questions. **If Tamarod's planned protests succeeded, how long would it take to elect a new leader, who would oversee the elections, and what role would the army play?** Yet the importance and popularity of this campaign on such a significant date unequivocally shows that Egyptians feel something has gone very wrong in their revolution. Asking Abdelsalam about the questions that would surface if Mursi were to be removed later this month, he shrugs his shoulders in apathy: **"We'll get it right once we correct our wrongs"**

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Bassem Sabry

Is Morsi's Call For National Reconciliation Sincere?

"First, A key condition for the Sysiphean IMF loan has been political stability and reconciliation. Given that, and increased international and local criticism, Morsi will benefit from looking like a statesman seeking national unity. Second, **the planned June 30th Protests seem to be gaining much steam, with the Tamarrod movement recently announcing they're already close to reaching 15 million signatures demanding early presidential elections.** Ostensible moves for national reconciliation talks could potentially lead to divisions in the opposition both on leadership and grassroots levels, and/or dispersement of the some of the momentum leading up to the protests. The third theoretical option, for sure, is the relatively far-fetched possibility Morsi really means it. But despite the intransigence of the opposition, the ball is really still in Morsi's court. **If Morsi truly wishes for national reconciliation then he must do more than broad announcements or generalist calls"**

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Mohamed A. Fouad

One thing is true though; this will not be a movement with the same magnitude as 25 January 2011. Planned protests on 30 June are likely to fall short of reinventing the revolution wheel" [.....] **"30 June is an important day, not because it will be a game changer; it won't. However, it serves as a reminder that the power of the people, while not necessarily tamed, can still wreak havoc on any ruling regime that falls short of its promises. It is an excellent form of pressure. We must start to learn how to pressure a system to change, not completely break it down; we must remember that they call them "pressure groups" not "demolition groups". The motto "The revolution continues" needs to be put to rest, as it portrays revolution as a goal or a prize and not a means. We don't need to reinvent a revolution as much as we need to reinvent a sustainable political process. It's not quick, it is not exciting and certainly not easy, but it remains the only way"**

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Nervana Mahmoud

How Can Tamarod Succeed?

"There are several scenarios, based on other countries' experiences that many predict for Egypt. Although the risks of a possible Algerian or even Iranian (failed green revolution) scenario should not be dismissed, the chances of its occurrence in Egypt are actually very slim. Egyptian military is certainly not pr-Morsi, and there are already many police officers who resent Morsi and his rule, however, neither the army nor the police are willing to be dragged into violent battles with Jihadis. Both will try to be professional, and secure law and order without interference in the country messy politics, which is definitely what Egypt needs. We do not need a junta or a ruthless rebound of religious authoritarianism. Tenacity, and peaceful demonstrations are the right ingredients for a mature democracy. In many ways, Tamarod resembles the 1919 revolution. True, it is leaderless movement, we still have no equivalent of Saad Zaghloul; yet, it can set in motion a different dynamic that can potentially create a new leadership. June 30 is a great opportunity for Egypt that should not be wasted. As president Morsi marks one year in power, he should contemplate this Hadith of the Prophet: "The destruction of Ka'aba is better than spilling the blood of Muslims," before he formulate any plan for June30"

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NGO Trial: A Farce

H.A. Hellyer

A Farce

*"A farce. That is all I can say about the NGO trial verdict that was delivered on 4 June in post-Mubarak, present-Morsi, still-not-revolutionary Egypt. Here is the verdict, plain and simple. Guilty. Didn't hear that right? Guilty. Every single defendant on trial in the NGO court case that has been dragging on for more than a year has been found guilty. No one is innocent. Not on a technicality, not on the facts; nothing. They're all guilty" [.....] **"Is the Muslim Brotherhood at fault here? They're not responsible for the law that this case used, and they're not responsible for the verdict. Indeed, the leadership might have been hoping that the verdict would be far lighter to avoid the inevitable hassle that is now going to come from international media and foreign administrations. But there is one person who is able to fix this, and it would even be to his own benefit. The Egyptian president is already facing a great deal of pressure over the new draft NGO law; he could deflect a lot of the pressure if he pardoned the defendants. It would be the smart, legal thing to do, but as it would open him to populist criticism, no one ought to hold their breaths. The irony of feloul and supporters of the government agreeing; albeit on accusations of "foreign intervention"***

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Amy Hawthorn

What the United States Should Have Said to Egypt about the NGO Trial

*"The episode, Egypt's worst crackdown on civil society workers in recent memory, should mark a low point in bilateral relations. **It is impossible to understand the vitriolic state media campaign against the NGOs, the deeply flawed trial open to manipulation, and the egregious sentences as anything other than a deliberate act to poke a finger in the US eye, intimidate Egyptian civil society activists and the United States government, and flout global democratic standards.** The court's justification contains no clear legal reasoning or evidence but many xenophobic rants. President Mohamed Morsi, who inherited the problem from the military-led government, did nothing to*



avoid this outcome. In the face of all this, the US response conveys a persistent reluctance to challenge Egypt on democracy and human rights issues critical to Egypt's future" [...] "As the pop psychology phrase goes, "When someone shows you who they are, believe them." **Egypt has now showed the United States its willingness to play hardball with civil society (and with Washington) in a way that should be impossible to ignore.** And the United States, as the world's most powerful democracy and still the nation most important to Egypt, should send its own very strong signal right back. The US relationship with Egypt is multifaceted, and the United States has no choice except to keep working with Egypt on certain issues. But **this Egyptian government does not have an unquestioned right to US aid or to international democratic legitimacy**"

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Egyptian- Egypt Water Crisis Over Renaissance Dam

Sendmonkey

Regarding the dam

"Here is what Egypt should do: 1) Given our experience at building and maintaining the Aswan High Dam, **we should be the people helping Ethiopia build and manage their dam, thus ensuring that it doesn't hurt our interests;** 2) **Start negotiations between Ethiopia, Sudan and Egypt to renegotiate respective shares of the extra wasted waters,** thus ensuring that we don't lose all of it; 3) Having that dam will leave Ethiopia with almost 4,000 megawatts of electricity for export purposes only, at a time where we need the electricity. If we play ball now, **we could get a long term deal that is beneficial to the needs of the Egyptian public and isn't affected by the prices of fossil fuels;** 4) Ethiopia has seriously ambitious agricultural plans, and we have about 10 million farmers without actual land to farm, so **we can reach an agreement, decrease our unemployment and boost our food security;** and finally 5) Egypt needs to **seriously reconsider its water policies, and create an infrastructural investment plan in desalinisation and extracting ground water from now**" [.....] **"We will not do any of this because we have a fistful of misanthropes and imbeciles running our governments and our parties, which is not a new phenomenon.** Proof in point: Our own High Dam. If we ignore the environmental disaster that it is for a second, we should note that it was 60 years ago that we thought of using a renewable source of clean energy (hydro-electric power) to successfully meet our power needs, and somehow that didn't translate into a desire to replicate the idea via other sources of

clean energy (solar, wind) that we have in abundance. Instead we rely on fossil-fuel powered power plants while we lack the fossil fuels necessary to operate them, and actually have to pay for it in hard currency. The natural conclusion is what we have now: a government unable to meet our energy needs because it lacks the hard currency to purchase it, all the while complaining about the high financial burden on our budgets that is our energy subsidies, and also not doing anything about it"

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Nervana Mahmoud

The week of Aabath (absurd and futile nonsense)

*"The best example was Monday's shambolic meeting called by president Morsi to discuss the Ethiopian dam project, which was broadcast live on Egyptian television. **Unaware that the event was airing live, Egyptian political "elite" expressed candid, but reckless, and even condescending suggestions including: sabotaging the dam, interfering in the internal political disputes in Ethiopia, even bribing the local tribes. In a nutshell, our "wise men," as Amr Hamzaway has rightly described, had decided to assume the role of James Bond.** Inevitably, they drew scathing criticism, and provided rich material for Bassem Youssef and his satirical show. Even social media joined in with inspired widespread mockery. It is worth noting that workers at Egyptian state TV were instructed not to label the Ethiopia Dam as a renaissance dam, obviously to keep "renaissance" as the exclusive catchphrase of the Brotherhood's project aimed at rebuilding Egypt. In addition, some local media have circulated that China will not finance Ethiopia's dam, yet there was no independent verification of this news.*

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Sectarian War: Shia Jihadism in Syria

Hassan Hassan

The rise of Shia Jihadism in Syria will fuel sectarian fires

"There is a deep distrust between Shia and Sunni, with each side labeling the other as the "near enemy" for "stabbing Islam in the back". Politicians exploit these sentiments to divert attention from being themselves labeled as the near enemy, an idea adopted by many Salafi-jihadists. Influential clerics who spew sectarian venom, like Egypt's Youssef Qardawi and Syria's Adnan Arour, should be stopped before it is too late. These clerics and their backers are playing with fire. Also, Arab states that disenfranchise their Shia citizens must take measures to prevent them from drifting towards the extreme. Politicians who see the rising sectarian tensions and violent ideologies as politically expedient will find that these trends cannot be contained or managed"

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Nadine Elali

A self-fulfilling prophecy

*"Hezbollah and Iran have been indoctrinating fighters to believe that they are fighting an End of Days war in Syria. **Young Shiite men from both Lebanon and Iran believe that they are fighting inside Syria for the appearance of the Mahdi, a thousand year old ideology that the Iranian republic reinvented and promulgated through religious texts over the course of 30 years to advance its own interests in the region.** Early in the Syrian conflict, Hezbollah and Iran downplayed any involvement. Today, however, they are trumpeting their presence in Syria and offering sacrifices under the pretext of protecting Shiite interests. Near Damascus, Hezbollah members are fighting to defend the shrine of Sayeda Zeinab (revered by Shiite Muslims) from Sunni rebels. In the north, however, they are pushing more deeply into a very different fight" [.....] "**The regime in Iran is keen to emphasize that what is happening in Syria is not an extension of the Arab Spring, but [rather] a war against the Shiites and therefore the need to interfere.** And given Iran's vital role on the Shiite discourse in the region - particularly in Lebanon - the use of the notion of the Hidden Imam is also being used by Hezbollah"*

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Is Syria Hezbollah's Vietnam?



Michael Young

Hezbollah's Vietnam?

*Many have commented on the fact that Hezbollah's reputation is in tatters. The so-called champion of the deprived is now at the vanguard of Bashar al-Assad's repression of his own people; the embodiment of resistance has shifted forces away from the border with Israel to help in crushing an uprising against a brutal dictator. That's perhaps true, but Hezbollah is not particularly concerned with its reputation, except when it affects its political power. The party's behavior is shaped by stark power calculations, and it has often read this into political situations with some accuracy. Hezbollah feels that, ultimately, if Assad stays in office and the uprising against him is overwhelmed, this will impose a new reality that will allow the party to resist all counter-reactions. In the end, Hezbollah knows, power tends to define reputation in the Middle East much more than allegiance to what is regarded as the morally acceptable position. But that interpretation will apply only if Hezbollah avoids being drawn into a long and debilitating campaign in Syria. **The party's tolerance threshold is high, as is its ability to maintain Lebanese Shiite loyalty. But in Syria, as in Lebanon previously, the outsider is at a disadvantage. Hezbollah should learn the lessons from its own experience. The party cannot allow Syria to become its Vietnam***

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Elias Muhanna

Hizbullah and Rational Choice

*"If we step back and consider Hizbullah's military activities over the past eight years, they tell a straightforward story. **Whenever the resistance's strategic position has been threatened, no response has been off the table, no matter the costs in terms of bad PR or sectarian strife. The party made a calculated decision to go forward with the operation that led to the July War in 2006 knowing full well that Israel's reaction would be severe and would exacerbate the deep political divide in the country. The military takeover of Beirut in May 2008 came when the government threatened to shut down the party's telecommunications network and to remove a loyal officer in***



airport security. The assassination of Rafiq al-Hariri and perhaps several others (at least according to the STL narrative) was allegedly carried out by individuals connected with Hizbullah in the wake of international pressure to isolate Syria and disarm the party. **Why should we be surprised when Hizbullah acts like a state? Why is it not obvious that the party would routinely use its military assets to protect its interests?** In the deliberation process that precedes military action, public opinion and long-term “soft” consequences (like aggravating sectarian tensions) apparently count for very little”

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Turkey

Taksim Is Not Tahrir: It's Not A Turkish Spring

Zeynep Tufekci



Is there a Social-Media Fueled Protest Style? An Analysis From #jan25 to #geziparki

So, let's get some of the Tahrir/Taksim comparisons out of the way. **Turkey's government, increasingly authoritarian or not, is duly elected and fairly popular. They have been quite successful in a number of arenas. They were elected for the third time, democratically, in 2011.** The economy has been doing relatively well amidst global recession, though it has slowed a bit recently and there are signs of worrisome bubbles. So, Turkey is not ruled by a Mubarak. But it's also not Sweden. **The government has been displaying an increasingly tone-deaf, majoritarian-authoritarian tendency in that they are plowing through with divisive projects.** (I should add that the opposition parties are spectacularly incompetent and should share any blame that goes around). **The government has also revolutionized Turkey's government" services through the expansion of a spectacular level of e-government—which has greatly eased many people's lives as bureaucracy is a major quality of life issue in countries like Turkey.** This, in turn, has altered power relations between civic servants (who form the majority of the secular middle-class which does not vote for AKP) and the mass of citizens (many of whom do vote for AKP). [.....] "Where is this going? I can't offer predictions but **I do emphasize that this is not going to topple the Turkish government by itself. This is not Tahrir, 2011, but it is an interesting inflection point**

among the frustrated but powerful segments of the Turkish society who believe that the current government has decided to run roughshod over them and cannot find efficacious outlets for their opposition"

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Bassem Sabry

Egypt, Turkey, The World And A New Political Spring

*"So what do anti-government protesters in Egypt and Turkey want and express? Well, many things, some are perhaps legitimate, some perhaps more towards the hyperbolic. But, like I mention, **one of the themes I feel has been pervasive in both countries was the demand for a more inclusive and widely-consultative democracy, and that a simple majority cannot just have its way, whether in terms of policies or overall national vision.** This appears to be what Turkish President Abdullah Gül understood when he said on Monday that he "the messages [...] have been received", and that "democracy does not only mean elections." According to Turkish journalists on social media though, Prime Minister Erdogan said he wasn't sure what message the president thinks he has received, likely raising the ire of protesters. On the other hand though, Egypt's president Morsi and the Brotherhood seem to be getting the opposite message altogether from repeated protests, so perhaps Erdogan's angry confusion was relatively a blessing"*

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Abdullah Kamal

Mursi and Erdogan – a thorn in each other's side

However, the ruling systems in the two countries are different on one score. It took Erdogan many years before trying to do this. For its part, the Mursi regime has been unwise enough to rush into carrying out its project at cultural, political, social and legal levels. Egyptians and Turks share the possibility of confronting their own rulers to block the controversial ideological project, regardless of whether it has already fulfilled achievement as in Turkey, or proved a fiasco as in Egypt" [...] "At the same time, the Brotherhood's ruling in Egypt and the resultant problems have made the Turkish public aware of the outcome of Ankara's support for governing Islamists in the Arab world and the shift Erdogan's ruling system has taken. With demonstrations mounting in Turkey amid political uncertainty, Egyptian protest groups brace for mass nationwide rallies on June 30,

which marks the first anniversary of Mursi's presidency. The protesters will call for withdrawing confidence from Mursi. **While protests in Turkey are like a yellow card for Erdogan, those planned in Egypt may come as a red card for President Mursi**"

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Khalil Al-Anani

Turkey's uprising is beyond the Islamists

"There are five very critical differences between the two models, whether on the level of protest movements or relations between Islamists and their opponents. First, what is happening in Turkey today is the fruit of "Erdoganism", not vice versa. In other words, those protesting the demolition of a public park to build a shopping mall are exercising the freedom and openness that were entrenched over the past decades, and have become an intrinsic part of the openness of "public domain" in Turkey. It is the result of political and legal transformations and changes that the AKP made in the structure of the political system in Turkey" [...] "Second, while social and economic demands were – and continue to be – the source and core of protests in Arab countries, the opposite is true in Turkey" [...] "Third, one cannot draw parallels between protests in Turkey and those in the Arab world over the past two years, since the latter can be summarised in the powerful but succinct slogan: "The people demand the overthrow of the regime" which echoed across Arab Spring states" [...] "In other words, the ceiling of demands of the youth in Taksim is no more than demands by youth in other European cities – namely better conditions for the political system, not dissolving or replacing the regime" [...] " Four, and most importantly, the success of the regime in Turkey – not its failure – is the main backdrop for protests, which is the opposite of what happened in the Arab world. The sustained success of the ruling party in Turkey has left negative political and psychological side effects on the opposition" [.....] "Five, the Islamist experience in Turkey is radically and fundamentally different from its counterparts in the Arab world. Unlike for Arab Islamists, the concept of integration and moderation succeeded in Turkey and greatly helped develop the discourse of the AKP, making it more of a conservative political party rather than a literally religious one"

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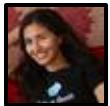


Juan Cole

Learning the Wrong Lessons from Tahrir Square: Erdogan Assaults Taksim in bid to break up Protests

"The technique of square occupation, used successfully by the Egyptian protesters at Tahrir Square in January-February of 2011, requires the establishment of a permanent presence in a large, central public space. That presence in turn requires the erection of barricades and the enlisting of Ultras or soccer fanatics as bodyguards. The constant presence of large numbers of demonstrators at the city center attracts press, encourages similar square occupations in other cities, discourages tourism and foreign investment, and puts pressure on the rest of the elite (including the officer corps) to dump the leader causing all the trouble. Erdogan moved to remove the occupiers by having the police assault them with heavy duty tear gas and water cannons, and using earth movers to remove the barricades, which were systematically dismantled. Erdogan observed Tahrir Square closely, and he and his advisers appear to believe that Hosni Mubarak made an error in letting that public space remain occupied. Likewise, Erdogan has vilified Twitter and has had 13 tweeters arrested on charges of spreading false rumors. Both on the front of meatspace and in cyberspace, he is attempting to raise the cost of protest"

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Esra Dođramaci

Not A Turkish Spring

*"Social media opportunists and even some media commentators and others caught up in the excitement of 'change' were quick to suggest this was a 'Turkish Spring'. But this is false. The only thing that the Arab Spring and these protests have in common is that they start as the sun is going down. This isn't a revolution nor is it just a riot. What started out as a peaceful movement against the removal of trees to make way for planned development morphed into a show of opposition against police force and then into antigovernment demonstrations. It has now changed into a movement seeking recognition for citizen opposition beyond the ballot box." [.....] **"It's important to remember that although demonstrations have cropped up around Turkey, this is far from a revolution, riot or uprising. For that to happen, efforts need to be sustained in the tens of thousands, with a clear goal in***



mind. Calling for the Prime Minister's resignation is not useful. It won't happen. He's a democratically elected leader on ever increasing majority votes. Protest areas in Istanbul and Ankara are confined to a few select streets and neighborhoods, thus the focal point or points is dispersed"

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Ziya Meral

Time to worry: Turkey is becoming USA!

Over the last ten years, we have seen countless articles and discussions, ranging from academic all the way to ridiculous, comparing Turkey to a wide range of countries. On the top of the list comes Iran. Turkey has been continually likened to Iran, in the sense that soon the conservative Muslim party would take over and declare a theocracy. Some saw, more of a slow approach and a sinister Islamization project. Then came the post-religious perspectives and argued that Turkey is now becoming a Russia with her own Putin, business and media relations and harsh clamp down on free speech. We are still waiting for hunting and bear-fighting pictures of PM Erdogan. There is one country Turkey has never been likened to, and yet, the more closely I follow the developments in Turkey, the more I see how valid it is to point out: Turkey is becoming like the USA after 10 years of AK Party rule" [....] "If you have been troubled by my straw man representation of both countries and shallow comparisons, you are right. **USA is not Turkey, Turkey is not USA. But you should have felt the same way for thousands of articles that told you Turkey is an Iran, Russia, Egypt if not Gaza. The bottom line is this; let Turkey be Turkey and start using its actual name, Turkiye**"

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The Reason Why: Growing Authoritarian Style, Censorship & The Police Action



Zeynep Tufekci

What do #occupygezi Protesters Want? My Observations from Gezi Park

After talking to the park protesters for days here is a very quick compilation of the **main complaints and reasons people say brought them to the park:** 1. **Protesters say that they are worried about Erdogan's growing authoritarian style of governance.** During the protests,

Erdogan called the protesters “riff-raff” (capulcu) which has now been adopted by the protesters—they jokingly call themselves the riff-raff party. They are offended but also decided that they will call just respond with humor. 2. **A very common and widespread complaint is about censorship in traditional. It is, indeed, much worse than I had thought. Unsurprisingly, social media, especially Twitter and Facebook have emerged as key protest and information conduits.** Turkey also has no equivalent to “Al Jazeera” which played a major role during the Arab Spring. Most protesters I talked with said that this just wouldn’t be possible without especially Twitter and Facebook. 3. **The police actions are a common cause of complaint among the protesters. The use of tear gas is quick and massive.** This is not the first protest that has been subjected to massive tear gas .

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The Myth of Moderate Islamism



Nervana Mahmoud

Turkey, the Arab world, and the myth of moderate Islamism

"Prime Minister Erdogan has achieved a great deal for Turkey, and he deserves applause and support; however, if he continues to listen only to his faithful supporters, he risks obstructing Turkey's progress, by aggravating the tense polarization that is currently pervading the country. In fact, by failing to provide a true liberal Islamic model, he can also indirectly doom the wider Middle East to a new form of illicit autocracy, which emerges through the ballot boxes" [...] **"Meanwhile, it's time to stop using the term “moderate Islamists.” Despite whatever happens or the outcome of the current crisis in Turkey, the flawed term is incorrect and frankly patronizing as it doom Muslims to accept less than perfect form of democracy** . In the Muslim world, like in the rest of the world, there are only either true democrats or undercover autocrats. The use of any other description would only be a travesty on every level"

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Hany Ghoraba

Turkey: The Middle East decisive battle for Secularism

"The real face of the Turkish Islamists is unveiled and their act of modernity and moderation is no longer sellable to the masses. Erdogan may have raised the standard of living for many Turks but he is demanding now that they pay the bill with their freedom and accept to be caged in a gilded cage with the key in his own pocket. The results of the current uprising in Turkey are unknown but one of the most certain results is that the halo around Erdogan is over and a clear message was sent to him and all Islamists in Middle East alike that even great economic achievements are not an excuse for any government to limit the people's freedoms or force a government endorsed pattern of life upon them regardless of how great it can be But one thing is for sure that many Middle Easterners have had enough of the Islamist rule and are opting for more open and liberal ideologies"

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