

Analysis of the Role of the Press in the Egyptian Revolution of 2011

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Abstract

The Egyptian Revolution of 2011, in fact was the result of crises in the Egyptian society; such as increasing social inequality and corruption and Mubarak's efforts to inherit the presidency. These crises by the help of the media –from the press to the social networks- provided the grounds for shaping anti-Mubarak social movements and eventually led to fall him. In this regard, one of the most considerable point, was the salient role of the press and the print media in the process of the revolution. Traditionally, there have been three types of journalism system in Egypt: the state-owned, independent and partisan (party-run) press. In this context, the researcher has tried to answer this question: how was the role and position of each type of these press systems in Egypt in the process of the revolution -especially since January 25th until February 11, the day that Mubarak resigned-, and how effective were these roles and positions on the Egyptian Revolution of 2011?

In this regard, in addition to detailed introduction of the newspapers of each press, the emphasis is to observe their views and positions accurately and portray the main discrepancies between the state-owned press with the independent and partisan papers.

As the findings of the research show, it seems in the Egyptian Revolution of 2011, the relative freedom of these traditional media in expressing their own views with the growth of the middle class, enabled Egypt to pass the Mubarak's thirty-year dictatorship by mobilizing their demands and forming powerful social movements.

Keywords: Egyptian Revolution of 2011, press, newspapers, social movements, Hosni Mubarak

1. Introduction

The Egyptian revolution of 2011, made by people who were under a dictatorship for many years and decades, surprised many politicians and experts on political issues. It seems that what caused the people to come to the streets and shout for freedom, was their ability to organize the public protests and form a dynamic social movement in the Egyptian society. In this regard, the media, from the press and satellite television stations to the Internet and social networks, had the basic role in assisting the Egyptians to organize the protests and social movements. In fact, in the Egyptian revolution of 2011, people used the media as a gift which globalization process had donated to them more than anytime. In other words, in the revolutions of the Arab world and especially Egypt, media and the social networks, in addition to the mobilization, took the responsibility of challenging the power of dictators and the transnational influences, too. For instance, the cyber networks, in fact created a new aspect of power versus monologue and monopoly of power in Egypt and even in the process of the downfall of dictators like Zine El Abidine Ben Ali (Note 1) and Muammar Gaddafi (Note 2) (before and after Mubarak), had a unique role and mobilized public opinion all over the world against these dictators.

It must be considered that various factors were effective in the downfall of the old leadership of Hosni Mubarak and this research emphasizes in introduction the various systems of the press in Egypt, and more important, the role of these papers during the January revolution and their positions in forming and organizing the Egyptian social movements is observed.

In this regard, during the Egyptian revolution, the media had an unmatched role in mobilizing people and organizing their protests and meanwhile the press took a distinguished role in forming these movements in this important country of the Middle East. The current study, not only shows the meaningful discrepancies between state-owned newspapers with the independent and party-run ones, but also examines the point that how the independent and partisan press and their journalists -despite the pressure of the dictator regime- had no concern but reflecting the reality, what caused the solidarity of the Egyptians, formation of social movements and

informing them regarding the ever-increasing tyranny of the Egyptian regime toward themselves. Overall, it must be said, although crises such as high unemployment, inflation, monopoly, lack of freedom of expression, inspiration of Tunisian revolution and etc. resulted in uprisings and protests in Egypt at both governmental and social level, what that resulted in solidarity of people and creation of social movement by different groups against dictatorship of Hosni Mubarak and the brotherhood government of Mohammad Morsi, was the undeniable function of the traditional print media which accompanying the new middle class of Egyptian society, what led to the success of the public protests in January 2011.

The importance of observing the Egyptian revolution is because that this country can be considered as a perfect sample in comparison with the others in the Middle East. From one hand, the downfall of Mubarak's regime could weaken the basis of many regional non-democratic governments, because many of the Middle Eastern leaders have comfortably sat on the thrones of power for many years or even decades like Mubarak. Now, witnessing the downfall of Mubarak's regime -which apparently was powerful and stable- they would see their bases of power more fragile than ever.

The purpose of the study is not only disclosing the profound differences between the independent and party-run newspapers in contrast to the state-owned and the other government-controlled press during the Revolution of 2011, but also their functions and abilities in reflecting the reality and motivating people in forming social movements and their battle to obtain their own legitimate demands.

2. Research Methodology

Regarding the role of the media in the Egyptian revolution of 2011, attempts -considering the Social Movement Theory- are made to show how the media and especially the press as one of its subcategories, influenced the social and human relations as a communicative phenomenon and became a social phenomenon itself, and created some opportunities for the social movements in Egypt and affected the processes of forming these movements.

The continuation of the thirty-year-old regime of Mubarak in Egypt, with the security atmosphere because of the emergency law and the electoral fraud, resulted in a confined space full of disappointment among Egyptians. In this situation, opposition elites like Ayman Nour (Note 3) and Mohammed El Baradei (Note 4), and the challenging parties like Al Wafd -as the only opposite party- Democratic Front Party and even Muslim Brotherhood, turned into the tractable oppositions in the grip of a powerful regime. In this regard, one of the most important factors was the state of emergency, which justified the increasing pressure, and suppression caused by Mubarak's regime when legally explained the violation of peoples' rights and freedom during three decades (Movasseghi & Attarzadeh, 2012).

Since the new media and the Internet came to the Egyptian society, they were hugely censored by the government. The efforts of the regime to provide the high speed Internet service in 2003, on the one hand enabled users to use the Internet and on the other hand increased the regime control on the cyberspace. As a result, Telecom Egypt which has been considered as the biggest Internet service company in the Arab world, enabled the regime to impose its will on the Egyptian users by using the smart filtering (Ibid).

Nevertheless, it could be concluded that the media had a prominent and noticeable role -if not the main role- in organizing the protests and mobilization of different groups in Egypt in the process of the downfall of Mubarak's regime.

In January 28, 2011 -announcement of martial law- Mubarak, finally was targeted by the organized protests of youth in Al-Tahrir square and his position began to weaken. This is one of the reflections of power of cyberspace in real space; "from Facebook to Al-Tahrir square and vice versa." At this time, the reflections of events and various currents in the cyberspace for Egyptians who have not access to the internet or could not use it, could be observed in the independent papers like Al Masry Al Youm and especially Al Shorouk Al Jadid and the partisan paper Al Wafd (El-Bendary, 2011).

In this regard, the international media and service providers who did their best to bypass the censorship of Mubarak's regime, by supports of the independent journalists, enabled the independent media, including papers, websites and social networks to continue the challenge against the regime and disclose the information about human rights violation. The media, from papers to the internet, by politicizing and mobilizing citizens and providing real and uncensored news, developed a domain for discussion, challenge, and debate about the regime and its suppressive behavior. A main function of social movements is encouraging and achieving a social integration in order to reach a common goal. In this regard, increasing the facilities of having access to the media can make this goal be possible in a short time. From this viewpoint, Egyptian revolution shows that portion of the media in social movements can be a valuable variable in the process of resource mobilization,

communication, education and presenting methods to accomplish this process (Movasseghi & Attarzadeh, 2012). A special attention must be paid to the important policy of Mubarak's regime towards the media; he ordered that television stations and private and half-private radio channels to be observed with stricture by the regime spies and in case of violation the redlines of the regime, they were smashed quickly and severely. But concerning the press, this policy was somehow different. The Mubarak's regime had an imagination about that the people gain their information more from radio and television and they refer less to the papers, so his regime took a more tolerant policy regarding these traditional media and had less control over them (El-Bendary, 2011). Therefore, Egyptian papers -independent and partisan ones- transferred the realities of the society to the Egyptian society in a more comfortable manner than the modern media. For example, the news of various movements that formed during the process of the revolution in social networks, was published by these papers for people who had not access to the internet. Of course, it should be noted that the street protests, as a determining factor in social movements, is formed during the time gradually. The media to some extent are newer resources in the hands of the people, which enable them to accelerate the process of mobilization and collective action. However, in many cases, if this arena -the media- presents chances for the movements, it can provide facilities for the regimes for controlling and restricting the people too.

3. The Media and Social Movements in Egypt

The technology of the modern media –social networks, mobile news, websites and weblogs – and all types of journalism, made this possible for Tunisian and Egyptian revolutions and consequently other Arab ones to occur one after another. The capability of the media for mobilizing people and supporting the revolution of January 25 was at a high level. From the moment that public protests initiated in Egypt, the protestors attracted the attention of many people all over the world in papers, weblogs, and social networks such as Facebook and Twitter. The independent journalists, in spite of the governmental pressure and censorship and even the threats of the regime's spies, were always seeking the publication of truth about the realities of the Egyptian society and events of the revolution period (El-Bendary, 2011). In this section, the aim is to observe the role of the social media in Egypt, emphasizing on the print media in forming the social movements and showing the realities of the society and reflecting the viewpoints of people by showing their influence in directing the events, social transformations and movements. In addition, the most important discrepancies between the independent and committed media with the government-affiliated media, which were only committed to their dictator, are also mentioned.

The media and especially newspapers in Egypt, which had more freedom of expression compared to other types of the media, recognizing various social damages and reporting them to social actors -in studying the Egyptian revolution social actors refer to the middle class of the society- warned about the expansion of corruption and discrimination; and consequently informed the social actors about these behaviors and incited subcultures to act on the basis of the publicly acceptable values and manners.

4. The Egyptian Press

The media in Egypt, in the term of structure, after judiciary, legislature, and executive branches, act as the fourth assembly. In this regard, radio and television was established in 1934 and 1960 respectively and the media broadcasting have always been government-controlled. That is why in the process of the January revolution, the Egyptians seeking the real pictures of what was going on across the country, received their news from the independent and party-run papers and trust less to the news of the Egyptian audio-visual media. It could be said that even papers and magazines, which were dependent on the government, rendered more realistic view of the events than the audio-visual media. Until the coup of 1952 -after on which Egypt was considered as a presidential system- papers and magazines supervised by the monarchy system and were owned by individuals. Egyptian papers in comparison with the other Middle East countries, has always been rich, advanced, and inspiring. They have a history that surpasses a century; for instance, Al-Ahram has established in 1876. In Egypt as mentioned, there are traditionally three types of the press. National or state-owned press -under the control of the government-, independent press -related to the private section- and party-run press. Almost all the magazines belong to the government. The state-owned press, which belongs to the Egyptian Supreme Council of the Press, established by Anwar Sadat (Note 5) and they are directed by the spokespersons of the Advisory Council, in relation to this, the Supreme Council holds all rights and responsibilities of the state-owned press (Information Service Egypt State, 2011)

Until the revolution of 2011, the Supreme Council of the Press held the power of rejecting or confirming the permission to the new publishers. This was considered as an instrument which the president and his governing party -since Anwar Sadat, the National Democratic Party- take advantage to put pressure on publishers and journalists to execute their own rules and censor the “problematic news”. This council had more than 12

directors, each of whom were in command for a renewable four-year period. Since Anwar Sadat, the Egyptian press had acted based on this pattern, though they bore small and diverse changes. Therefore, most criticisms of the regime were seen in the partisan papers since they were under the control of political parties and their coverage adopted an opposite position toward the government. In fact, these papers expressed their political party viewpoints, which were generally against the National Democratic Party.

The partisan papers were established decades ago –Al Ahrar and Al Wafd were respectively established in 1977 and 1984- while El Dostour, the oldest independent Egyptian paper began to publish in 1995. On the contrary to the state-owned press, the government had no power to appoint the board of directors and editors in the independent and party-run newspapers. The party-run and independent press achieved their benefits from advertisement and publication of newspapers. Al Masry Al Youm -the noticeable independent paper- had a circulation about 600 thousand copies (Kassem, 2011). The independent papers, unlike the party ones which inclined to censor their anti-regime articles, were dependent on their news coverage and often concentrated on social justice and corruption. Al Youm Al Saba'a, is another considerable independent paper which has begun its publication since mid-2011. Until 2011, Egypt had nine main state-owned press institutions: Al Ahram, Akhbar Al Youm, Al Tahrir, Al Hilal, Rosa El Yousef, Al Maarif, Al Taawin, El Shabab October and Middle East News Agency (El-Bendary 2010).

4.1 The State-owned Press

Through a brief study of the Egyptian state-owned press, it could be easily claimed that the methods of these newspapers to publish the 18-day protests -January 25 to February 11- was absolutely disappointing in many ways. These papers turned into instruments to make propagandas in favor of the government to inculcate that foreign forces managed protestors.

In fact, the governmental print and audio-visual media, overlooking the large number of protestors and police violence, showed the picture of the protests which was completely far from the reality in the Egyptian society. These media absolutely supported the regime. In the opinion of a famous professor of Communication Science at American University of Cairo, the Egyptian media were freed in February 11. However, their performance between January 25 to February 4 could be described embarrassing. He described it as a sign of scandal that remains for the government. He adds: “after those days, the media started gradually to come back to the correct path and after February 11, they achieved complete freedom (Hussein Amin, 2011).

During the first week of the revolution -until the conflicts of "the Black Friday" in February 2- the audio-visual stations worked more for the gratification of the regime and not for the viewers. They did not broadcast a real, neutral and objective coverage. In days close to the climax of the revolution, some journalists resigned from the Egyptian public broadcasting; In fact, they did not believe in the inculcation of stability in the country which was propagated by numerous state-owned stations; the media which rarely aired the conflicts between police and protestors or striking them by the security forces. They tried hard to introduce the protestors as hooligans who cause trouble and riots in the country. In these media, it was so hard to be seen that an Egyptian protestor is killed or injured. Was no one killed in the Egyptian revolution? Instead of that, the state-owned media were clamorous voice of the regime and the propaganda instruments of Mubarak's tyranny and the National Democratic Party. These malicious and unfair reports made protestors so angry as they -in the last days of the revolution- marched to the building of radio and television -Maspero television building- and threatened to destroy it: which of course, did not reach anywhere since the army interfered with it. On Saturday, January 29 and the day after Mubarak's lecture -as the Internet was cut off- people crowded to buy newspapers. In newsstands, the important independent papers such as Al Masry Al Youm, El Dostour and Al Shorouk Al Jadid and partisan paper Al-Wafd were sold out while no one asked for the state-owned newspapers (El-Bendary, 2011).

4.2 The Independent Newspaper

The Egyptian independent newspaper, like Al Masry Al Youm, Al Youm Saba'a, Al Shorouk Al Jadid and El Dostour had appropriate coverage of the revolution, though they bore discrepancies to some extent, especially El Dostour. Among many private television stations, -apart from ONTV (Note 6)- reflected the Egyptian protests, less than expected. The satellite Arab stations like Al Jazeera and Al Arabia, France 24 Arabic, BBC Arabic and Al Hurra, broadcast the police raids on the citizens, on the contrary to the governmental television stations which not only there were no similar coverage but also these media even accused the foreign stations to conspiring against the government. For example, the editor of Al Jomhouriah claimed that Al-Jazeera was not genuinely conscientious through the fair coverage of the Egyptian events. He states: “Al Jazeera is not an Arab television station, but the spokesperson of Qatar's foreign policy” (Ibrahim, 2011). Nevertheless, many Egyptians admired

these stations, especially Al-Jazeera and all the independent papers of Egypt affirmed them as far as El Fagr states: “the protestors in Al Tahrir on February 6 shouted long live Al Jazeera”. El Fagr admired this station because of supporting the political changes in the Arab world. While the governmental television channels considered traffic in the street quite normal, this Arab station, broadcast the furious protesters and dead bodies in the autopsy rooms. This independent paper emphasizes that such coverage angered the Mubarak’s regime to the extent that Nilesat –a government-controlled satellite- decided to suspend broadcasting this station on January 27 and Anas El-Fiqqi, the information minister of Egypt ordered to shut down all Al-Jazeera bureaus in Egypt three days later (Zahran, 2011); although in operation, Al Jazeera English channel was the only one which left the arena. Nevertheless, more than 12 other Arab stations broadcast the Al Jazeera programs. In addition, some of Al Jazeera journalists were temporarily arrested by the police and army or attacked by fans of Mubarak’s regime. The officials of Al Jazeera emphasized that their responsibility was nothing but complete coverage of the events by using a balanced and fair method (El- Bendary, 2011). The El Fagr writer adds: “History has shown that everywhere Egypt goes, the Arabs follow them, and it is not surprising at all that tyrant Arab rulers are shivering of fear by the huge influence of Al Jazeera in the Arab homes” (Zahran, 2011).

Since the revolution began, there was a continuous demand of public for renewing the organization of the state-owned media. Dina Abel-Fattah in the editorial of Al-Masry Al-Youm states: “now we want a responsible media.” She accused all the government-controlled media in all their forms of provoking people's rage and believes that they do it despite the claim of clarifying issues (Al Masry Al Youm, 2011). Essam Zakaria of Sabah El Kheir says in an interview with Al Masriya television station in March 25: “one of the main purposes of the revolution was purifying and improving the standards of the functioning of the state-owned media with changing their patterns; In any case, the media have not been entirely purified from their bureaucratic leadership yet” (Al-Masriya, 2011). In March 31, the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces announced new appointments for chief editor and executive positions in the state-owned media which appeased people to some extent.

4.3 The Party-run Newspaper

Egypt constitution declares the country as a multiparty system. But since 1976, the National Democratic Party, was the only legal party and was the owner of all major political newspapers. In 1977, President Sadat issued a law, which allowed the establishment of the separate parties. In addition, this law allows changes in the structure of the press and according to that, the political parties had the right to license one or more newspapers to publish without restrictions (Niakouei and Saboori, 2011).

In days of the revolution, the three key opposition parties were New Wafd Party, the Arab Nasserist Party, and The National Progressive Unionist Party -often called Tagammo. The New Wafd Party which published Wafd newspaper, was a powerful opposition party for years that adopted liberal nationalism policy. In addition, it was considered a representative of Egypt's upper classes to some certain degree. The New Wafd Party, firstly was founded in 1918 as the voice of Saad Zaghlul's (Note 7) Wafd Party, but it was annulled after the revolution of 1952. Secondly the party was founded in 1983 under the name New Wafd. It should be noted that coverage of the January 25 Revolution by Al-Wafd was equal to the independent newspapers such as Al Masry Al Youm, El Dostour and Al Shorouk Al Jadid. Although some persons have put party’s coverage in the months after the revolution under questions and claimed that, the party had intended to be coalesced with the Freedom and Justice Party to take seats in the legislative elections.

Arab Nasserist Party was founded in 1992 and published Al Arabi weekly for one year. From the beginning, this party has released several articles discussing the political future of the Jamal Mubarak's 26-year-old son whom believed that was training for his father’s succession. The party took its original ideas from political, economic, and social experiences of Nasser period and during the time has always carried a revolutionary concept. the party regards any distortion and derivation of these ideas in politics as a treacherous act. However, the party has not ignored the profound changes that Egypt has seen after the death of Nasser. In the 2005 legislative elections, the party failed to get even one single seat out of the 454-seat of the People's Assembly.

National Progressive Unionist is a leftist party and publishes Al-Ahali weekly. Before the current title, the party was known by the name of National Unity Progress. Principles of the party were founded according to what was considered in 1952 as the protection of labor rights and the care of social welfare programs. The party boycotted the 2005 presidential election and at the legislative elections that were held in the same year in which only gained two seats (Ibid).

At the first legislative elections after the downfall of Mubarak, the parties that could have the public acceptability and could contend against Muslim Brotherhood, contained New Wafd Party, the Arab Nasserist Party and The National Progressive Unionist Party and also new-established parties like Free Egyptians Party, as

it can be elicited from the results of legislative elections in late November 2011.

5. The Egyptian Media After Mubarak's Downfall

Meanwhile the downfall of Mubarak, many were surprised that how journalists in the state media, rendered their coverage completely in favor of the government and supported it. Most of television channels, shrank the number of protestors in Al-Tahrir square -at times reached to one million- to only one thousand by putting their cameras in other areas of Cairo. Therefore, criticism of the state media in the independent and parties' press was intensified and also mocking. New Wafd's banner headline -the most important partisan newspaper- equalized Minister of Information, Anas El-Fiqqi to Joseph Goebbels who was Reich Minister of Propaganda in Nazi Germany from 1933 to 1945 (Al-Wafd, 2011).

The most surprising matter in more than 20 state-owned newspapers in the days after the fall of Mubarak was that they were not focused on Mubarak's mistakes and they did not express clearly their happiness about his downfall. Of course it must be admitted that in four days before the abdication of Mubarak, signs of freedom and political openness that was available to the state-owned newspapers were seen -also Nile News television channel- to the extent that the high-ranking political officials were targeted by criticism, including the ministers and even Mubarak's family; in whatever way, criticism of the government in the independent and partisan newspapers was more severe than them. The state-owned newspapers did never release negative reports on the high-ranking government individuals and the National Democratic Party members such as Safwat El-Sherif -leading member of the National Democratic Party and chairman of the Advisory Council. It should be noted that prison sentences for journalists in the government-controlled media never stopped; Journalists who wrote very critically about powerful government figures, religious leaders, or the president himself, faced routinely with insult and slander due to the harsh regulations of publications and press law and the emergency law that was applied since the assassination of Anwar Sadat in 1981 (El-Bendary, 2011).

In February 14, the editorial of Al Ahram, published an apology to the Egyptians for what it called "supporting the corrupted regime" and promised that it would be voice of the people after on (Al Ahram, 2011). Similar apologies were also published by some state-owned publications. Concurrently, there were controversial debates regarding how to reconstruct the structure of the state-owned media where all Egyptians were watching how the government-controlled media cover the provisional governments of Ahmad Shafiq and Essam Sharaf, which were respectively established on February 21 and March 3. In fact, this was a serious challenge for the journalists of state-owned media who just learnt how to praise the sovereignty. Enjoyment of freedom in coverage counted certainly a valuable asset for the proficient journalists like Saad Abdel Latif El-Menaway, Lamees El-Hadidi and Amro Abdel Samea, who were working in the state-owned media before and after the downfall of Mubarak's regime (El—Bendary, 2010).

In the preceding time of the revolution, Egypt witnessed the birth of some television stations beside new independent and party-run newspapers among which the most important was Al-Nahar television and Al-Youm AL-Saba'a newspaper. Until then most Egyptian intellectuals and political elites argued that none of these media has relieved of connections and criteria or come out of the influence of the remnants of Mubarak's regime. In Egypt, it was the first time that a television channel was acting as a speaker of a political party (Al-Nahar, 2012). In the days after the downfall of Mubarak, in the state-owned media, especially television channels, they not only had problem by calling 'Mubarak' without the prefix of 'president' but also, they could not openly state that Mubarak had been driven out of the presidency or even forced to leave his position. It seemed as if the journalists were afraid of being punished or not being promoted by the editors of the Ministry of Information. Apparently, this was quite routine in the media working under the supervision of the former regime (El- Bendary, 2011).

Among the press coverage of three different systems of Egyptian press, there were clear paradoxes regarding the Egyptian revolution. In the first stages of the revolution until the downfall of Mubarak, the state-owned media tried so hard to delegatize revolutionists and decrease criticisms of Mubarak through using the resources donated to them by officials or supporters of the regime. For example, they were trying to identify the protestors as anti-revolutionists. They also publicized that there were mobs and hooligans infiltrated among the protestors. They showed an absolute opposite reflection in comparison with the coverage pattern of the independent and partisan media, which frankly criticized the regime, although -as mentioned- they also had slight differences in their press coverage (El- Bendary, 2011).

During the revolution, all the world -except for the Egyptian state media- had completely accepted the inevitability of the downfall of Mubarak. During the weeks after the downfall of Mubarak, a substantial difference was witnessed in the state-owned media coverage and their chief editors who were mostly opposed by

their employees that left no choice for them but to resign. During the provisional sovereignty of the army, reports were published on imprisoning and threatening of the independent journalists from the supervisors of human rights, Reporters Without Borders and Amnesty International. At this time, the freedom of speech was attacked in the internet and weblogs and ‘netizens’ who criticized the army were harassed and their authors and bloggers were even imprisoned.

6. Major Contrasting Subjects between the State and Non-State Media

The following subjects can be pointed out as the most important discrepancies in the state-owned, independent and party-run press:

Revolution: In observing the coverage of three systems, first it examines that which one of the press system, ascribed the protests to a revolution or start of a revolution: Out of 54 articles which were studied from three different systems, only 7 articles talked about a revolution in Egypt (12.96 %), Although it is a small number, it should not be measured trivial; especially when it was only four days passed from the first protests. 26 articles were observed of the state-owned press and sure enough, none talked about a revolution in the land of the pyramids. Among the independent papers, four articles out of 19 described the protests as a revolution (21.5 %). Out of nine articles of the partisan newspaper -Al Wafd- three articles (33.33 %) recognized a revolution across the country (El-Bendary, 2011).

Table 1 shows the results in brief:

Table 1. Is a Revolution Happening in Egypt?

Media Type	Yes	No	Total
State-owned	0 (0%)	26 (100 %)	26 (100 %)
Independent	4 (21.05 %)	15 (78.95 %)	19 (100 %)
Party	3 (33.33%)	6 (66.67 %)	54 (100 %)

Criticizing Mubarak: All articles in three systems of the Egyptian press criticized the regime and its policies resulting in the outburst of protests and among them, none of the state-owned press denounced president Mubarak. Five articles out of 28 observed ones in the independent and partisan papers criticized Mubarak himself (9.26 %). For details; out of 19 observed articles in the independent papers, three criticized the Egyptian president (15.79 %), while two articles (22.22 %) out of nine of Al-Wafd paper, criticized the president (El-Bendary, 2011).

Table 2 shows the results in brief:

Table 2. Direct Criticizing of Mubarak

Media Type	Yes (%)	No (%)	Total (%)
State-owned	0 (0%)	26 (100 %)	26 (100 %)
Independent	4 (21.5 %)	15(78.95 %)	19 (100 %)
Party	3 (33.33%)	6 (66.67 %)	9 (100 %)
Total	7 (12.96%)	47 (87.4 %)	54 (100 %)

Egyptian Youth Protests: Regarding this issue, the state-owned press concentrated on that the Egyptian youth have freedom for demonstration, but some governmental journalists accused the youths to provoke fights and commit vandalism until the security police had to interfere in order to stop them. Supporting the youth and their demands were strong both in the independent and partisan press. Al Shorouk Al Jadid states: “people of all ages, especially the youth, participated in the glorious and peaceful demonstrations.” El Dostour emphasizes: “The ones who led the revolution were the youth, a new generation of Egyptians” The editorial of Al Shorouk Al Jadid writes: ‘The wrong and dishonest promises of the regime either has not had positive response from the young generation and the activists who understand issues and act better than ‘the party’ and its leaders. This is a generation that receives information, knowledge, and political culture from the press, the internet like Facebook and Twitter and it is reliant upon huge resources of social and information networks (Salama, 2011).

As mentioned, praising the youth's role in founding the protests was also strong in the partisan press. Al-Wafd states: "protests were the product of youth who did not belong to any political groups" (Zaki, 2011). Al-Wafd comments: "people who came to the streets to protest on January 25, all love Egypt and the youth have expressed this love to their homeland in the best way by shouting for a better Egypt" (El-Tarabili, 2011). AL-Wafd adds: "The regime is not attentive that Friday of Rage transformed into 'the days of rage' and the regime neglects them." Al-Wafd concludes: "the viewpoint of Egyptian youths has changed regarding themselves and the regime. They have been humiliated like most of people by poverty, hunger, inflation and corruption" (Shafiq, 2011).

Inspiration of the Tunisian Revolution: The state-owned press strongly denied any effect from the Jasmine revolution (Note 8) on the initiation of the protests in Egypt, while a lot of commentaries in the independent and partisan press took a different viewpoint. In an article in Al-Ahram, Makram Mohammed Ahmed, the head of Egyptian Newspaper guild argues: "those who conspire against Egypt, think in a misleadingly way that what happened in Tunisia, can be repeated in Egypt. Despite the differences between two countries, some people with banners in hand have penetrated among the demonstrators and try to direct the wave of the furious youth to clash with the security forces" (Ahmed, 2011).

The independent press, were critical of Mubarak's regime for underestimating the influence of the Tunisian revolution on the Egyptian people. Al-Masry Al-Youm writes: "these words that some narrate that Egypt is not Tunisia is absurd" (Heikel, 2011). The newspaper state: "the protestors' demands for political reforms are seriously pursued because of what they received from the Tunisian people." Al-Masry Al-Youm concludes: "the lesson of the Tunisian revolution, was fresh and the officials never realized how informed and powerful the protestors are (Issa, 2011).

The Al-Wafd paper asks: "has there been any effect of the Tunisian revolution on the ignition of the protests in Egypt or not?" The paper reviews the events in Tunisia and believes that the protests in Egypt, was accompanied by a contradiction by the government official, because they underestimated the impact of the Tunisian revolution and ridiculed it (El-Nakqash, 2011).

Conspiracy Theory: Mubarak, alongside Omar Suleiman (Note 9) -his newly appointed vice president- claimed that 'foreign elements' were behind the protests and the state media following Mubarak, regularly promoted this message often by referring to foreign forces which were trying to provoke people to riot and insurrection. For instance, at the time the state-owned media reported that an Afghan has been arrested for looting in Cairo, Al Ahram Al Massai in its fourth page writes in large: "Friday of rage, left the power into the hands of thieves and looters and the army is seeking to restore security in the streets." Al Jomhouriah writes: "we as the nation of Egypt -despite the efforts to stimulate racial divisions among our people- have been always trying to come to the scene to remain united and cohesive, and we have always done this in a civilized manner, because we are in the land of civilizations" (Nawar, 2011). Al-Akhbar claims: "some elements are lurking to strike our homeland". It stresses: "the protestors did not emerge by accident, but they are the result of the organized plans that aim at disturbing the security and stability in Egypt (Hassan, 2011).

On the contrary to the state-owned press, the independent newspapers, all reject the conspiracy theory. For example, Al Shorouk Al Jadid argued that all must admit that the people are dealing with a big issue; therefore, it would be absurd to talk about a conspiracy and call the protests the product of hooligans or aliens who have distorted the demonstrations. It recommends the government officials to talk honestly with all political currents and pursuing political reforms such as: abolition of the emergency law, giving freedom and authority to establish political parties, amending the constitution, preparing for a clean and new presidential elections and real fight against corruption (El-Beblawy, 2011). According to Al Masry Al Youm, the Egyptian people are tired of the 'old usual Symphony' which suggests that protesters are motivated by aliens who infiltrated among the protesters or foreigners' fingers who are involved in the protests. The paper concludes: "It's a big lie, because all those who have participated in the protests are quite Egyptians; the people who are tired of the unjust rule. This is the time for change and of course change is the norm of life." (Abbas, 2011). There was no comment about the conspiracy theory in Al Wafd.

Foreign and Arab Satellite Stations: During the Egyptian revolution of 2011, the state-owned press, adopted a firm stance against the Arab satellite stations, specifically about Al Jazeera, for what they called the disproportionate and unrealistic exaggeration of the problem. Al Jomhouriah warns that Egypt is at stake, not because of the peaceful protests of the youth, but for the efforts of some hostile countries' media which are pursuing to damage Egypt (Nawar, 2011). The editor of the Middle East News Agency accuses the Egyptian, Arabic and independent media for exaggeration of the events. He accuses Al-Jazeera for inciting and fomenting discord among the Arabs

and accelerating the chaos in the region (El-Kot, 2011). On the opposite side, the independent press rejects the claim that the Arabic satellite stations feed the protests in Egypt. Al Masry Al Youm argues: “Sure enough, there will be individuals who claim that satellite stations are trying to exaggerate Friday of Anger’s events in order to encourage people to go to the streets (Heikel, 2011). Al Shorouk Al Jadid publishes: “These ‘free media’ stations – satirically addressing the state media- worked as guardians for protecting their colossal building of broadcasting in Cairo –Maspero- during the Friday of Anger and did not provide the protestors what they deserved; as if, those protestors, who had only a few meters away from Maspero, were not interesting news for the state apparatus and these media preferred to run after the events in Lebanon, instead.” He causes to remember that how Al-Masriya state television channel, searched for the enemies to blame them and aimed its finger specifically at Al Jazeera, because the Qatari satellite station, aired ‘the living image of the protests’ (Gamal Eddin, 2011).

7. Conclusion

In this study, first, the role of the print media in shaping social movements in Egypt was examined and then the discrepancies between the state-owned press with the independent and party-run press in term of the coverage of events and protests in Egypt was specified. In fact, in this study, the state-owned and non-state Egyptian press as a traditional symbol of the mass media, which were easily accessible for the Egyptian public, were investigated in details. It is also important to note that the study has tried to show that the print media –beside all modern means of communication- have played a fundamental role in the social movements and the political upheavals and changes during the Egyptian revolution of 2011; the traditional social media which had accelerated the Egyptian protests through reflecting the realities and forming the social movements during the days that lacked the reliable audio-visual media.

Egypt, as the most populous Arab country, has been among the most influential actors in the Middle East since decades ago. This country was under the rule of Hosni Mubarak and politicians of National Democratic Party during the last thirty years before the revolution. The widespread corruption of Mubarak’s regime, growing gap between rich and poor beside the lack of social justice, concentrated poverty and high unemployment rate which had humiliated a large part of the population and the lack of freedom of speech as a fundamental right for the Egyptian middle class, spread out public discontent nationwide in the land of the Nile. Hence, the Egyptian youth became aware of prevailing atmosphere of the country through the print media beside the modern communication tools and they shaped bolts of the wheel for the Egyptian revolution of 2011. At first, Mubarak’s regime tried to suppress public protests and opposition groups; but the protests spread to the major cities beside the capital as well as Alexandria, Giza and Port Said which led to demonstrations by millions of people, together with the inability of the regime in controlling them, the relative neutrality of the army and avoiding suppression of protests and also international pressure, eventually Hosni Mubarak had to step down from the presidency after 30 years in power as an undisputed president.

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Notes

Note 1. Zine El Abidine Ben Ali was the second President of Tunisia from 1987 to 2011, being in the position for 23 years. On 14 January 2011, following a month of protests against his rule, he was forced to flee to Saudi Arabia along with his family.

Note 2. Muammar Gaddafi, commonly known as Colonel Gaddafi, was a Libyan revolutionary, politician, and political theorist. He governed Libya as Revolutionary Chairman of the Libyan Arab Republic from 1969 to 1977 and then as the 'Brotherly Leader' of the Great Socialist People's Libyan Arab Jamahiriya from 1977 to 2011. He was initially ideologically committed to Arab nationalism and Arab socialism.

The deposed leader of Libya, died on 20 October 2011 during the Battle of Sirte, aged 69. Gaddafi was found hiding in a culvert west of Sirte and captured by National Transitional Council forces. He was killed shortly afterwards.

Note 3. Ayman Nour is an Egyptian politician, founder and chairman of the El Ghad party. He was the first runner-up in the 2005 presidential election with 7% of the vote according to government figures and estimated at 13% by independent observers. Following the fall of Mubarak in the 2011 Revolution, Nour intended to run for the now-vacant presidency, but was disqualified by the Presidential Election Commission.

Note 4. Dr. Mohamed El Baradei (1942) was Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) from December 1997 until November 2009. On 27 January 2011, ElBaradei returned to Egypt amid ongoing turmoil, with the largest mass protests in 30 years, which had begun two days earlier, on 25 January 2011. ElBaradei declared himself ready to lead a transitional government.

Note 5. Anwar al-Sadat born into a family of 13 children in 1918, was a senior member of the Free Officers who overthrew King Farouk in the Egyptian Revolution of 1952, and a close confidant of President Gamal Abdel Nasser, under whom he served as Vice President twice and whom he succeeded as President in 1970. He was assassinated during the annual victory parade held in Cairo on 6 October 1981.

The most important event of his presidency era was the Camp David Accords, signed by President Jimmy Carter, Egyptian President Anwar Sadat, and Israeli Prime Minister Menachem Begin in September 1978, established a framework for a historic peace treaty concluded between Israel and Egypt in March 1979.

Note 6. ONTV belongs to Naguib Sawiris the billionaire of Egyptian communication industry.

Note 7. Saad Zaghloul was the leader of Egypt's nationalist Wafd Party. He served as Prime Minister of Egypt from 26 January 1924 to 24 November 1924.

Note 8. The Tunisian revolution in which president Zine El Abidine Ben Ali was forced out of the presidency by popular protests was called the 'Jasmine Revolution' by many media organizations. The Arab Spring, which began with the Tunisian revolution, was also called the "Jasmine Revolution" by some.

Note 9. Omar Suleiman was an Egyptian army general, politician, diplomat, and intelligence officer. A leading figure in Egypt's intelligence system beginning in 1986, Suleiman was appointed to the long-vacant Vice Presidency by President Hosni Mubarak on 29 January 2011. On 11 February 2011, Suleiman announced Mubarak's resignation and ceased being Vice President; governing power was transferred to the Armed Forces Supreme Council.

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