

МЕЖДУНАРОДНЫЕ ОТНОШЕНИЯ, ПОЛИТИКА И ЭКОНОМИКА СТРАН АЗИИ И АФРИКИ

UDK 327

The Role of Bureaucratic Politics in Egypt's Africa Policies under Mubarak

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The decision-making process in Egypt at the ruling time of its fourth president Hosni Mubarak was dominated by the president and a very small core group composed mainly, but not exclusively, of advisers whom he appointed and dismissed. The level of their influence on his decisions was almost wholly dependent on their accessibility to Mubarak himself. Towards the end of his rule, President Mubarak was no longer capable of resuming his duties effectively. Therefore, several of these issues were brought under the responsibility of the ruling elite, whereas other issues were left to be handled by the relevant ministry. It became possible for some parts of the bureaucracy to make a significant impact on foreign policy, particularly on topics not of interest to the ruling elite. This should not negate the effect of the internal dynamics of the foreign ministry on the operationalization of the institution and subsequently on its ability to execute mandates efficiently. Also, some institutions and 'quasi-foreign policy agencies' had a role, however small, on foreign policy outcomes and competed with the foreign ministry. Thus, the argument remains that the bureaucratic institution, despite its subordinate role, is partly responsible for Egypt's foreign policy unhappy ending under Mubarak.

Keywords: decision-making process, bureaucratic politics, African politics, Egypt's Africa policies, Egyptian foreign ministry, president Mubarak.

Introduction

According to Allison's model of bureaucratic politics, the bureaucracy may have a role in limiting the nation's actions through pursuing policies that benefit organizations rather than national or collective interests [1]. Thus, studying the role of the bureaucracy in

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Egypt's Africa policies is essential to this analysis. By and large, an old and dutiful bureaucracy with long experience in policy execution has characterized the Egyptian state [2]. With regard to foreign policy, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs (which this paper will also refer to as the foreign ministry) is the main institution dealing with foreign policy matters. It is also responsible for coordinating with other departments that work on external issues. In fact, Egypt has a highly sophisticated foreign policy bureaucracy with wide diplomatic representation around the world. The Minister of Foreign Affairs should have been the president's senior advisor on all foreign policy matters. Since such huge diplomatic agency, in most cases, operates under the hegemony of the president [3, p. 14–96], therefore, the Ministry should permit Egypt's presidents to make more informed and effective policies were they willing to consult with it [4, p. 100]. However, notable occurrences in which the Ministry of Foreign Affairs has been deliberately 'depoliticized' by the presidency have been witnessed on various occasions [5]. Nevertheless, President Mubarak valued the opinions of some of his foreign ministers considerably and took heed of their advice on specific issues (e. g. Boutros-Ghali on matters relating to Africa and Latin America and Amr Moussa on Egypt's relations with the European Union) [6]. However, the Ministry was still relegated to a secondary role in other critical regional issues (e. g. Palestinian reconciliation, Sudanese affairs, relations with the Gulf States) [6]. Adding to the structural weakness of the foreign ministry was Mubarak's preference for a 'task force' comprised of members of the ruling elite, put in charge of diplomatic envoy missions. This reinforced the significant role of some members of the ruling elite, who participated in decision-making processes, and whom the president regularly consulted, endorsing their views in most cases. This, however, should not negate the effect of the internal dynamics of the foreign ministry on the operationalization of the institution and subsequently on its ability to execute mandates efficiently. On the other hand, some institutions and 'quasi-foreign policy agencies' had a role, however small, on foreign policy outcomes and competed with the foreign ministry, thus being still responsible for Egypt's foreign policy. Given President Mubarak's tendency to the West rather than to the South [7], the Egyptian bureaucracy was relatively free to participate actively in certain foreign policy issues, such as African affairs [8, p. 44, 45]. Moreover, certain ministries played a significant role in the foreign policy issues of a technical nature, a prime example of which is the role of the Ministry of Water Resources on the Nile Waters issue [9].

According to the conventional wisdom of foreign policy analysis, matters relating to the external environment should be the sole responsibility of the Foreign Ministry, which represents a formidable body in the making of policy and which could influence the decision-making process for various issues [10, p. 117]. It is for this reason that the largest part of this paper will examine the impact of Egypt's foreign policy bureaucracy on policy formulation. The second part of the paper concerns the rivals of conventional diplomats within the Egyptian bureaucracy. Foreign policy bureaucracy is no longer confined to ministries of foreign affairs, as it extends horizontally across several governmental departments. Now, foreign ministries find themselves in a situation of structural rivalry with domestic competitors and thus do not always succeed in rising to the new challenge of coordination [11, p. 82]. In Egypt, the foreign ministry is facing what scholars have termed 'bureaucratic' rivalry' [9]. In other words, the foreign ministry has ceded control over many external issues to other parts of the state bureaucracy and 'quasi-foreign policy agencies'. Therefore, a study of these institutions and agencies will, in addition, naturally,

to highlighting the phenomena of 'bureaucratic rivalry', will also emphasize the degree of each institution's responsibility for Egypt's Africa policy under Mubarak. In this context, this paper examines the role of the foreign ministry and other 'quasi-foreign policy' agencies in the decision-making process insofar that it was partly responsible for the failure of Egypt's Africa policies.

Theoretical background

Perhaps the simplest explanation for the bureaucratic politics approach is the one stating that the approach argues that policy outcomes result from a game of bargaining among a small, highly placed group of governmental actors. These actors come to the game with varying preferences, abilities, and positions of power. Participants choose strategies and policy goals based on different ideas of what outcomes will best serve their organizational and personal interests. Bargaining then proceeds through a pluralist process of give-and-take that reflects the prevailing rules of the game as well as power relations among the participants. Because this process is neither dominated by one individual nor likely to privilege expert or rational decisions, it may result in suboptimal outcomes that fail to fulfill the objectives of any of the individual participants [12].

In fact, Graham Allison's 1969 article *Conceptual Models and the Cuban Missile Crisis*, is viewed as the main contribution to the debate on bureaucratic politics which started by earlier writings of Charles Lindblom, Richard Neustadt, Samuel Huntington, and others. Allison provides an analysis of the Cuban missile crisis that presents, in a comparative perspective, three models of policy making [12]. Allison emphasizes that 'Model I (Rational Policy) examines the U.S. strategic calculus: the problem posed by the Soviet missiles and relevant U.S. values and capabilities. Model II (Organization Process) emphasizes organizational constraints in choice and organizational routines in implementation. Model III (Bureaucratic Politics) emphasizes the games, power, and maneuvers of the principal players within the leadership group. The alternative explanations that emerge illustrate the differences that result from the formulation of alternative frames of reference and the opportunities that such formulations offer the analyst in foreign policy research' [13]. In sum, Allison argues that policy-maker is not necessarily a rational, unitary actor, but rather a corporation of large organizations and political actors [13; 14, p. 208–228].

Literature review

The researcher conducted a literature survey of both English and Arabic sources, finding a clear scarcity of academic work on the foreign policy of the African states in general and Egypt in particular. Furthermore, very few works adopted a scientific analytical approach towards the examination of the issue. Among the few works that adopted precise and orderly methods for analyzing Egypt's foreign policy is Nael Shama's *Egyptian Foreign Policy from Mubarak to Morsi: Against the National Interest* (2013). Shama expands upon his PhD dissertation as he examines Egyptian foreign policy by investigating the relationship between regime security (as opposed to national security) and foreign policy decision-making. He outlines an extensive theoretical and historical framework, stretching from the 1952 Junta through the successive regimes of Nasser, Sadat, and Mubarak. The work culminates in an analysis of post-Mubarak foreign policies, both of the transitional

military government and of the deposed President Morsi's year of rule. For his theoretical framework, Shama employs realist Stephen Walt's refinement of 'balance of power' into 'balance of threat' and expands the theory to the domestic sphere, taking internal threats into account. He also includes Steven R. David's concept of 'omnibalancing', but criticizes the model's oversimplification of leader behaviour and the assumption 'that domestic threats are always more perilous than external threats'. Using this framework, Shama argues that regime security is the key factor to understanding Egyptian foreign policy and that consecutive Egyptian presidents placed the interests of the regime above state interests. He further argues that Egyptian foreign policy most often 'omnibalanced' by appeasing external threats while mobilizing against urgent internal threats, with responses and policies ultimately being dictated by the level of 'perceived' threat [15].

In their book *The Foreign Policy of Arab States: the Challenges of Globalization*, Bahgat Korany and Alei Eldin Dessouki (2008) analyze the foreign policies of a number of Arab states, including Egypt. They adopt what they term a 'holistic' approach, which consists of a fourfold structure: the domestic environment (geography, population and social structure, economic capability, military capability, and political structure); foreign policy orientation; the decision-making process; and foreign policy behaviour [16, p. 21–44]. Using what he terms a 'holistic' theoretical framework, Dessouki, therefore, presents an analysis of Egypt's foreign policy under Mubarak as he looks at the above-mentioned four elements. The chapter 'Regional Leadership: Balancing off Costs and Dividends in the Foreign Policy of Egypt' outlines Dessouki's argument that Egypt's foreign policy faces the challenge of how to meet the obligations of dynamism and efficiency with the power and means at its disposal.

Given the fact that realism is still one of the pillars of foreign policy theory building, Raymond Hinnebusch and others (2002) applied realist theory assumptions in their work *The Foreign Policies of Middle East States*. In this approach, the state is the main actor in the foreign policy of the Middle East, whereas the elite seek to maximize their autonomy and security. The condition of anarchy — in which there is no authority to enforce agreement, with disputes thus prevailing — appears strongly in the region in the form of intense conflicts such as in the Arab-Israeli and Gulf arenas. The Middle Eastern states are involved in contesting borders, and every single state feels threatened by its neighbour(s). Thus, the foreign policy of any state in the region can only be understood as the outcome of an interaction between the state, sub/transnational, and state-system levels. Two forces shape the state system in the region: The first is a series of forces (imperialism, nationalism, war, oil, Islam and globalization) and the second is the behaviour of each individual state. In their analysis of Egypt's foreign policy, Hinnebusch and others endorse the view that, while external constraints and capabilities have carried the heaviest weight in determining Egypt's foreign policy, presidential autonomy has enhanced the impact of the idiosyncratic factor on the way in which Egypt plays its cards in the larger game [4, p. 91–114]. However, in the second edition published in 2014, Hinnebusch states that 'in regard to Egypt's foreign policy, several realist, liberalist, constructivist assumptions remain problematic'. He therefore replaces the above-mentioned realist approach by a new theoretical frame of analysis that takes account of this complexity. The proposed framework includes multiple determinants of foreign policy, whereas the study is conducted on several distinct levels. On the domestic level, the decision-making process is examined. Within this context, the cognitive approach is used to examine the personality of the political leader because of the

phenomenon of consolidated presidencies. The ruling elite theory, the national interest and the bureaucratic politics are part of the analytical frame. On the external level, realism and its different versions are also used in the analysis [17, p. 75].

Identity and Foreign Policy in the Middle East, by Shibley Telhami et al (2002), is a unique book that attempts to analyze the region's foreign policy through the lens of the identity factor, which they claim acts as an ideological device for justifying self-interested policies. Ibrahim Karawan, in the chapter on Egypt's foreign policy, states that Egypt has never suffered from the challenge of communal cleavages. Instead, the nation presents a good example of ethnic and cultural homogeneity. Egypt has at least six identities (Egyptian, Arab, Islamic, African, Middle Eastern, and Mediterranean) in play. This multiplicity gives Egypt plenty of foreign policy choices: for example, Sadat changing the identification of Egypt from Nasser Pan-Arabism to Egyptian nationalism made the Camp David accords possible [18, p. 155–168].

Adeed Dawisha's study, *Egypt in the Arab World: The Elements of Foreign Policy* (1976), is considered a bedrock work on the politics of the Arab countries as part of the global south due to its strong theoretical foundation. Dawisha applies the previously discussed Brecher model of an input-conversion/output-feedback foreign policy system. This work is divided into two main parts: Part One follows the historical approach, to explain the various interactions between Egypt and the Arab countries through a chronological account of incidents between the years 1952–1970. Part Two applies the input-output approach in an attempt to explore the setting, the actors, the attitudes, and the process of Egypt's African policy under Nasser, while also providing a brief examination of Sadat's period. The categories employed are the capabilities of, and the constraints on, Egypt's African policy; the institutions and processes of Egyptian policymaking; the values and images of the decision-makers; and the objectives and instruments with which these objectives are implemented. In a separate stage of the analysis, the changes in Egypt's Arab policy objectives are examined in order to incorporate feedback concepts. In other words, the successive changing of policy targets occurred as a result of different influences and feedback effects generated by the operational environment (domestic or international) and interaction with the images and values (the psychological environment) held by the decision-maker, thus emphasizing both the continuous process of policy realignments and the dynamic nature of foreign policy [19]. Following Dawisha's path, Gamal Zahran (1987) has also adopted Brecher's model as he analyses Egypt's foreign policy under Sadat in his work *Egypt's foreign policy, 1970–1987*. For Zahran, Sadat's decisions to expel Soviet military envoys from Egypt and later to launch individual peace talks with Israel can better be understood by considering the variables that influenced the decision-maker and led him to act the way he did [20].

In *The Foreign Policy of Egypt* (1963), by J.E. Black and K.W. Thompson, Boutros-Ghali (in his chapter on Egypt) states several factors of great importance to Egypt's foreign policy: the necessity of controlling the Nile's water, employing Egyptian wealth to achieve the greatest economic benefits, maintaining the sense of security created by the physical isolation of the habitable land surrounded by the desert, concentrating the population that facilitated the control of the people, creating centralized rule, making the formulation of Egypt's foreign policy the prerogative and sole responsibility of the Chief Executive, and, finally, the geographic and cultural dimensions of the nation. Egypt's multiple identities and the unique geographical location are factors that create flexibility for the structure

of its foreign policy. Boutros-Ghali also examines Egypt's policies towards Africa, Islam, Europe, Arabism, and nonalignment. He concludes that constraints, such as economic problems, the insufficiency of capital, and the lack of modern techniques are hindrances to dynamic diplomacy. However, due to its unique geopolitical position, he claims that Egypt has to endorse a dynamic foreign policy. Thus, the real challenge will be how Egypt's foreign policy can meet these obligations while depending on the available power and means [21].

On the other hand, a number of works look closely at the ruler's personality as a means of understanding Egypt's foreign policy. For example, Hassanein Heikal's work *Nasser and the World* draws a detailed picture of Egypt's external relations under Nasser through cleverly narrating dozens of situations and incidents that took place between Nasser and international leaders. Although Heikal does not seek to examine Egypt's foreign policy during Nasser's time, as the main aim of the work is memorializing the leader, the main elements that determined Egypt's foreign policy in this phase are clearly reflected through the narration of the incidents, particularly with regard to adopting policies of anti-imperialism, non-alignment and Arab nationalism [22]. In addition, P. J. Vatikiotis (1978) considered his book *Nasser and his Generation* far from a biography of the leader, but rather an attempt to understand the thinking of a whole Egyptian generation. He argues that Egypt's foreign policy under Nasser could be thought of as a direct result of Nasser's persistent attempts to achieve personal power and leadership [23].

As a sub-topic of Egypt's foreign policy, the issue of Egypt's African policy suffers the same problems of literature scarcity and superficial analysis. *The Egyptian Policy in Africa: The Domestic Factors*, by Mustafa Elwi (1986), is among the few Arabic works that examine this topic. Elwi examines the domestic determinants of Egypt's policy towards Africa and the role of the institutions involved in the policy. On the other hand, Muhamed Fayege (1980) adopts a historical narrative approach on his book *Nasser and the African Revolution* Egypt's active policy towards African liberation movements during Nasser's time, based on the writer's testimonies of the events [24]. In addition, Ismael (1971) reviews the historical evolution of Egypt's African policy chronologically from early times until 1967. He then analyzes the main principles of the policy, its objectives, and the instruments used to implement it. Two case studies are presented: Egypt's engagement in both Sudan and the Congo. The author reaches a realistic conclusion, predicting that due to its basic interests in Africa, Egypt would resume an active policy with possible changes regarding the tools of this policy [25].

Some academic theses in Arabic have tackled Egypt's Africa policies, particularly the Nile Waters and Egyptian-Sudanese relations. For example, Ayman Abdel Wahab's *The Egyptian Policy Towards the Nile Basin Countries since 1981* (2003) applied the national interests approach to examine the place of the Nile Waters issue in Egyptian policy towards the Nile Basin states. This thesis studies the gap between Egypt's resources and capabilities and its national interests in the Nile Basin region. He concludes that the main problem is not lack of resources; in fact, the reasons for the weakness of Egyptian foreign policy in the region are the improper use of Egyptian national resources (particularly human capability), economic problems, and the emergence of regional powers [26]. Nasser Moslem (1992) in *Egyptian Diplomacy towards Africa Between 1952–1987* adopts Brecher's model to examine the changes in Egypt's foreign policy since 1952 until the early 1990s. His main assumption is that there is a direct relationship between Egypt's foreign policy deci-

sions and the personality and orientations of the president. Moslem believes that Brecher's model is the most appropriate for his analysis, as it is able to interpret the changes of Egypt's African policy as an effect of the changes in the Egyptian political system. He discusses the determinants, objectives, and instruments of the policy with special concentration on different types of diplomacy used in Africa. The research concludes that Africa will always enjoy an important position in Egypt's foreign policy for various reasons, among them the water issue, the economic benefits, and the Israeli threat [27].

On the whole, the following observation regarding the literature holds true: There is a general scarcity of literature on Egypt's foreign policy in general and on Egypt's African policies in particular. Most of the available Arabic literature suffers from a number of limitations. It is of a descriptive genre, weakly linked to rigorous conceptualization of foreign policy analysis. Most of it belongs to the tradition of diplomatic history or commentary on current events. Finally, it lacks a real treatment of how Egyptian foreign policy is actually made and implemented [28, p. 1–3].

In sum, it is clear that not so much work is available on the contemporary Egyptian foreign policy, let alone Egypt's Africa policies. Moreover, one can claim that studying the behaviour of the Egyptian bureaucracy and the role it has in foreign policy making and execution is quite rare in the literature except for the few previously mentioned works.

Research methodology

Given the fact that choosing the appropriate methodology depends on the research topic and the research question [29, p. 109–113], this work followed a qualitative methodology, in which no measurements or statistics were applied. In fact, most of the previous scholarship on Egypt's foreign policy has significantly depended on document analysis as a method of data collection. Since the period of study is a recent one, few written resources are available. Therefore, to demonstrate a significant empirical contribution to knowledge, the research employs several semi-structured and open interviews as possible. Given the relatively open atmosphere in the aftermath of the revolution of the 25 January 2011 that ousted Mubarak's political regime, most of the interviewees (especially the Egyptian diplomats) were open in their answers and comments. In understanding the reasons behind the unsatisfactory outcomes of Egypt's Africa policies, and having considered the assumption that under Mubarak, the conventional democratic decision-making process has been replaced by the president's hegemony over the process, and that the president's disinterest in certain foreign policy issues allowed the bureaucracy to play a central role in the policy, thus being partly responsible for the outcomes, this study heavily depends on interviews with members of different state institutions (the presidency, the military, the foreign ministry, and the Ministry of Water resources). Due to the sensitive nature of these institutions, most of the interviewees, particularly those still in service, are referred to by their initials. Because the Ministry of Foreign Affairs is the central bureaucracy in charge of foreign policy issues, a large portion of interviews was conducted with career diplomats. In addition to Egyptian senior officials, military and bureaucrats, interviewees have also included scholars, researchers, journalists and Organization of African Unity (currently African Union) officials.

Indeed, in its investigation, the research encountered a number of difficulties: namely, the ability to conduct objective interviews despite the fact that the researcher serves

at the foreign ministry. The threat of subjectivity included posing leading questions and comments. These might, in one way or another, have directed the interviewee to give specific answers, while ignoring other facts that could have led to a deeper exploration of the topic. To avoid such a problem, it was important to break the question down by preparing a number of follow-up questions that respond to all probable answers. Moreover, an expanded list of interviewees was utilized as a mean of verifying the information. Another difficulty preserving the ethical requirements of research to avoid harm or risk to interviewees while utilizing the data they related. The researcher had to keep reminding the interviewees that the content of the interview was to be used in a research project, and that the conversation was not a friendly discussion between colleagues. In some cases, interviewee reviewed transcripts before allowing the researcher to utilize the interview. On the other hand, gathering information on the role of the security agencies in foreign policy was restricted due to the confidentiality in the nature of these agencies' work. Therefore, to gather the needed material, the study utilized information from nearly twenty-seven interviews conducted through fieldwork in Egypt; most of these interviews took place in 2013.

Another important source of material was the national newspapers, for the Egyptian press has generally maintained the capability of critically discussing Egypt's African policies, especially in comparison to other foreign policy domains, where overt analysis was greatly restricted. This primary source is complemented by secondary sources, comprised of published books, articles, and seminar materials provided by key academic and research institutions such as the Institute of African Research and Studies at Cairo University, the American University in Cairo, Al-Ahram Centre for Political & Strategic Studies, and the Arab & African Research Centre. Finally, as a career diplomat, especially as one who has been working for the African Department and the Egyptian embassies in Djibouti and Rwanda, the researcher had greater opportunities to deepen the understanding of the political phenomenon in question.

The ministry of foreign affairs

Origins and structure

Egypt's foreign ministry has a history that goes as far back as 1837, when it was established as a *Diwan* (department) during Muhammad Ali's reign. It was abolished in 1914 when Egypt was proclaimed a British protectorate, and reinstated in 1922 after Egypt's independence [16, p. 184]. Naturally, the developments that took place in Egypt during the 1950s (the abolition of the monarchy and the elimination of British occupation, the eruption of international struggle for liberation of colonies in Africa and Asia, and the beginning of the Cold War) required a change in the administrative and organizational structure of the Foreign Ministry to respond to political developments. Thus, in 1955, law 453 was issued. According to this law, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs was 'an agency dedicated to serve Egypt's security and achieve its political, economic and cultural interests through external relations, as well as to emphasize the Egyptian identity and to enhance its capability within the international community' [27, p. 92]. Since that date, the internal structure of the foreign ministry has been subjected to various modifications according to political and economic environment, domestically and internationally [30].

What matters most to us is the modifications launched by Foreign Minister Amr Moussa in the aftermath of the end of the Cold War in the early 1990s and the emergence of new factors in world politics. Moussa used the organization of the US State Department as his model, including deputy secretaries, undersecretaries, assistant secretaries, and heads of offices. Therefore, the old structure, which had one person at the head of each department, was replaced with a new and more complicated one. In this context, the African department was composed of the Assistant Minister for African Affairs at the top, followed by the deputies for bilateral relations and African regional organizations. At the base of the pyramid come the geographic divisions: East and Horn of Africa, Central Africa, West Africa, and Southern Africa. This structure allows different opinions and views to be presented to the Foreign Minister (in addition to the views of the embassies which send first-hand information), who then chooses the most convenient to him. The second impact of this organizational structure was that it created an accurate system for following up on the reports sent by the embassies, as the head of the division carried out the role of 'desk-officer', working directly with a limited number of embassies, bearing in mind the fact that more than twenty-five percent of Egypt's diplomatic representation exists in Africa. As such, the ideal of 'specialization' (in which each diplomat specializes in a specific issue) is, to some extent, achieved [31].

Nevertheless, this organizational structure had negative impacts due to potential rivalries between the assistant minister and his deputies. For example, a skilled assistant minister who enjoyed good access to the foreign minister was more likely to have subordinate deputies. In other cases, the deputies' influence on the foreign minister's decisions exceeded that of the assistant minister. This would happen when the deputy assistant minister had strong personal contacts with the foreign minister, perhaps because of strong political analysis skills. Another important disadvantage of the new organizational structure was the increased paperwork. The foreign minister began to receive many more notes and memos after the head of the department was relieved of the duty of selecting the materials that deserved to be presented to the foreign minister's cabinet [31]. Furthermore, the new structure created duplication and overlaps in work (e. g. contradictory demands were sent to the embassies). Finally, this structure required a greater number of diplomats and administrative staff (bearing in mind that Egypt has nearly 162 diplomatic and consular missions and approximately 1,000 diplomats serving abroad and at the headquarters) [32], in addition to other logistics (e. g. fax machines, photocopiers, furniture, et cetera.) requiring additional funding [30].

Recruitment and training

Egyptian diplomats are recruited, by and large, through competitive examinations [4, p. 92, 93, 100], testing their language and analytical skills, and political, economic, and legal knowledge. Unlike many countries, where a good portion of ambassadors are educated at top-ranking academic institutes (for example, in France, 28 per cent of diplomats have been educated at Ecole Nationale d'Administration, or ENA, while 75–80 per cent of ENA's own recruits come from Paris's Institut des Etudes Politiques), and are thus of the highest calibre [11, p. 82], Egyptian diplomats, though they must have university degrees, need not have studied politics or economics. They are graduates of different schools: engineering, medicine, military academies, and even fine arts and physical education. It is

no wonder that their skills and capabilities vary, leading many of them to re-enrol in university in order to obtain higher degrees in law or political science and improve their job performance. In fact, the decline of the public educational service provided by most of the governmental educational institutions in Egypt has meant that the Foreign Ministry has encountered difficulty recruiting a sufficient number of outstanding candidates¹. However, due to the emergence of private education, a new generation of highly skilled graduates has existed since the late 1990s, few of whom have sought to join the Egyptian diplomatic corps. Ironically, working at the Foreign Ministry was no longer attractive. This can be attributed to the low salaries paid to diplomats during their stay at the headquarters. Therefore, a career in the diplomatic corps became neither lucrative nor guaranteed. The banks, private enterprises, multinational corporations, and international organizations became strong rivals to the Foreign Ministry in attracting skilled graduates. On the other hand, many young graduates refused to work for the Egyptian bureaucracy for political reasons, refusing to represent what they saw as the 'declining' political regime of Mubarak. It is interesting to mention that the candidates have to pass an exam on African politics. However this doesn't necessarily demonstrate their (candidates') sufficient African knowledge, for the proliferation of private institutes that provide preparatory courses for those who want to sit the Foreign Ministry exams has allowed graduates of various disciplines to join the diplomatic corps regardless the difference in the degree of their proficiency [33].

After nomination, theoretically, Egyptian diplomats receive professional training, in which the African affairs occupied a limited part, and career preparation that enables them to carry out their duties efficiently [30]. However, the actual operational results of these preparation programs have proved to be much less spectacular. Foreign Minister Ahmed Aboul Gheit, relates an interesting anecdote that endorses this view: My service in Cyprus rapidly revealed the points of weaknesses in my technical training ...I noticed that foreign diplomats representing big countries are rehabilitated and trained in a way that far exceeds what we do at the Egyptian Foreign Ministry... [34, p. 64]. I realized that in Egypt, and notwithstanding the noticeable efforts exerted by our diplomats in work and knowledge building, however, rubbing shoulders with Western diplomats or the Indians and the Pakistani, demonstrated that many of them beat us in the domains of languages, general knowledge and the information available to them at their countries. Yet with some effort to increase training and enhance language skills, we can overcome the weakness of our university graduates who join the Foreign Ministry every year [34, p. 72, 73].

In the Diplomatic Institute, new diplomats study the same subjects they have already learnt in order to sit the Foreign Ministry's examinations. Studying the same subjects again for a whole year can be seen as a waste of time and does not add to their knowledge. Furthermore, courses are taught classically. Long hours of theoretical lectures are provided daily, without a practical dimension. Ambassador Azmi Khalifa emphasizes: 'It [The Diplomatic Institute] should not only teach geography and history, you [new diplomats] do not even study diplomatic effects at the institute' [33] Moreover, one of the shortcomings of the training program is the absence of a 'capacity building' course. Khalifa stated:

'The diplomatic training has to be more developed than that, and the ministry has to think about how to provide its members with better skills in negotiations... Capacity

¹ This comment was made by Professor Aleieldin Helal Dessouki in autumn 1994 to students in year one at the Faculty of Economics and Political Sciences, Cairo University, as he was lecturing on Egypt's political system.

building is an excellent program which will not cost the ministry a penny... we [retired ambassadors] would do it to the ministry for free' [33].

By and large, it is therefore clear that by the end of the training program, diplomats graduated from the Diplomatic Institute without sufficient tools and skills. Undoubtedly, this analysis reflects on their (Egyptian diplomats') African knowledge.

The operational culture

As this paper will demonstrate, the past thirty years have seen the subordination of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and the hegemony of the presidency. Thus, the analysis of operational culture will mainly be an emphasis of the argument of Mubarak's central position in foreign policy decision-making. While it is true that the Ministry participated in the process of policy formulation and execution, its significance lay primarily in the ability to modify the outcomes of the president's decisions (depending on how accessible the foreign minister was to the president and on the Ministry's ability to control information channels) or in influencing the implementation process through the choice of particular methods [19, p. 113].

Therefore, an analysis of the operational culture/environment will elaborate the role the Ministry played in the foreign policy decision-making process. Moreover, this part of the analysis, while reinforcing the above conclusions, will further help us understand the weak points of the Egyptian diplomatic apparatus that not only restricted the Ministry's influence, but were also be responsible for undermining policy implementation.

Decision-making

The Ministry of Foreign Affairs was involved primarily in the day-to-day decisions and actions proceeding from foreign policy 'macro-decisions': the latter were the responsibility of President Mubarak alone [9]. This raises the question of how decisions were made inside the Ministry. Foreign Minister Ahmed Aboul Gheit emphasized the authoritarian nature of the process:

...similar to Amr Moussa and Ahmed Maher, I believe that the Minister has to dominate his institution and has to impose an iron hand on managing the Ministry's affairs... This school differs from the one adopted by other foreign ministers who preferred to manage through general supervision and guidance while leaving the rest [of the work] to their assistants [34, p. 127].

In this context, Aboul Gheit related the following incident:

In this issue [Security Council expansion], my Assistants presented to me a report that included all considerations and suggested Egypt's refusal to participate in the Urgent Summit and to declare that we are not committed to its decisions. So I gathered them to listen to them one by one, where they all agreed on the need to boycott the summit... I spent all night thinking... until I concluded that it is necessary to participate... [34, p. 214].

An interesting observation derived from the foregoing comments relates to the obvious linkage between the political atmosphere in Egypt and the one that dominated the bureaucracy [31]. The foreign minister (in addition to the minister's cabinet) reproduced a similar model within his own ministry to that adopted by President Mubarak (in addition to the Office of the Presidency) with regard to monopolizing decision-making [5]. In

all likelihood, this was the product of the 'Central State', in which a senior official worried about his position reacts by micromanaging his department. For example, dispatching diplomats to the embassies is a principal duty of the Foreign Ministry, generally accepted as falling within the domain of the Personnel Department. However, one of the clearest manifestations of centrality in the foreign ministry was the minister's continual intrusion in the department's work. It became normal for the minister to intervene in assigning the entire staff of the embassy, including the administrative attachés, security personnel, and manual labourers [31].

This centralization became an obvious constraint on the construction and implementation of foreign policy, as the ability of senior diplomats, including ambassadors and assistant ministers, to manage work was always tied to the prior approval of the foreign minister, who himself was subject to the president. While this attitude affected certain important African issues, the best demonstration of this scenario is the foreign minister's comment regarding an ambassador's report that included some recommendations for ways to enhance bilateral relations with a West African country: '[This country] is our rival. I do not want to see any recommendations from our embassy until the issue of Africa's nomination for the permanent seat in UN Security Council is resolved' [35]. Monopolization as a means of making decisions in the Foreign Ministry especially prevailed during the last decade of Mubarak's government. The final result was diplomats' compliance to the rules set by the minister and his cabinet. Interviews indicate that some diplomats were accustomed to making recommendations based on what corresponded to the minister's views. For example, a junior diplomat explained why the deputy assistant minister refrained from advising the Foreign Minister to attend the African Union meetings, even though he knew how important the Minister's attendance was for enhancing Egypt's position/influence at the organization: 'The Deputy Assistant Minister is very clever as he knows how the Foreign Minister thinks, thus he knows what are the things he can tell to the Minister and what he should not' [36]. This, of course, suggests that diplomats refrained from making proposals or initiatives that might not be accepted by the minister, and which might possibly have created confrontations with him, especially those related to African issues, as they knew that Africa was not placed on the top of Egypt's foreign policy agenda.

Such apathy blossomed in the Foreign Ministry partly because of the nature of bureaucrats, who usually prefer not to risk their careers. Accordingly, some analysts describe the Egyptian bureaucracy as 'flaccid and characterized by sluggishness and lack of initiative. Since the bureaucrat receives his monthly salary and will be promoted either way, there is no incentive to make him take initiatives' [37]. A stunning example related by a junior diplomat illustrates this analysis, concerning nominating the foreign minister's adviser for African affairs (a retired senior diplomat), to represent President Mubarak during the ceremonies celebrating the re-election of a president of one of the African states. Although the Egyptian ambassador to this country was very frustrated and embarrassed because of such weak representation, he did not request the Foreign Ministry reconsider the decision. 'He did not even dare to object', said the junior diplomat, who witnessed this incident [38]. Given the fact that the foreign minister suggests the nominees to be dispatched as ambassadors to the president (with the exception of a few who are chosen directly by the president), the vast majority of senior diplomats seek to appease the minister, as they aim to be dispatched to countries with a high standard of living.

Patterns of interaction among diplomats

A particularly noticeable issue in analysing the operational style of the Egyptian Foreign Ministry is the patterns of interaction among the diplomatic staff, or what can be seen as the impact of personal factors on the performance of the institution. Although it is a difficult issue to measure empirically, it is still important to discuss some of its manifestations. In the first place, the most striking issue is nepotism and kinship relations. Certain examples demonstrate the strong existence of such relations inside the Ministry. Dispatching diplomats should take place under strict regulations to ensure the application of the principle of equal opportunities. For instance, diplomats who have served in countries with low standards of living should be dispatched to developed countries in their next postings. Similarly, those who have served in a distinct 'A' mission (e. g. to the US, EU zone, or the UN) have to serve, at least once in their diplomatic career, in what is called 'C' or 'D': a hard posting, usually in developing countries located mainly in Africa and Asia. Ironically, the Ministry's regulations include a final paragraph that gave the foreign minister the right to appoint whom he deems appropriate to any Embassy. This, of course, offers the opportunity for many exceptions to the rules. Apart from this issue, there is also the question of the fairness of the countries' classification system. In other words, is it reasonable to classify both Madagascar and China as 'B', and to classify US and Namibia under 'A'? In such a system, it has become common to find diplomats who have never served in hard posts in their entire diplomatic career. Diplomats serving in specific departments (e. g. the minister's cabinet) and those who belong to the families of senior officials or who had good connections with them frequently enjoy such preferential treatment.

This double standard has created a deep sense of frustration among many diplomats, because they have served in areas with difficult living conditions but have not been rewarded with distinguished posts, while their colleagues who have never served in 'hard-living countries' have been dispatched to distinguished posts. In fact, the failure of the Ministry to present sufficient incentives (e. g. financial) to those dispatched to the 'hard-living countries' has increased the feeling of inequality among diplomats, which can be easily detected in their grumbling. One senior diplomat made an illuminating comment, which demonstrates the frustrations of some diplomats at this system, on the 'Lotus Group' online page:

Justice is to give to each colleague who served in a hard country the opportunity to serve at a distinct post. Also justice is not to limit the career of those who are privileged to distinct posts. The skin of all of us can bear the mosquito bites and the sunburn of sub-Saharan Africa, and we should all try, even for once, the Malaria infection. It is about time for those who became addicted to Saumon fume and Foie Gras to try Fufu (For those who do not know, Fufu is a popular food in West Africa)².

One important point, which contributed to the weakness of the dispatching system and triggered the dissatisfaction of some diplomats serving in hard countries (most of them were located in sub-Saharan Africa) was the weak interest of the Ministry and the Egyptian state in general in these countries. During the 1960s, only 'calibre diplomats' served in Africa. This situation changed with the state's continuous lack of interest to-

² Lotus is a Facebook group found by middle-rank diplomats in the aftermath of the January 25 revolution to facilitate communication and the exchange of ideas. Of 980 total group members, 808 are diplomats

wards the continent, as the priority became Egypt's relations with the US and European countries. Certain embassies in sub-Saharan Africa went as long as a year without receiving a single visit from the senior officials. Moreover, some regions became a place to which the ministry sent diplomats of limited skills, or those whom they wished to penalize. Thus, not only did diplomats serving in sub-Saharan Africa (with a few exceptions such as Sudan, Ethiopia, and South Africa), felt that they were being degraded; it appears that they were also sometimes seen as being punished by the Ministry [37; 34, p. 133].

A further factor that deserves examination is the relationship between the ambassadors and junior diplomats. Ambassadors are supposed to play the role of tutor, as they transfer their rich diplomatic experiences to subordinates and evaluate their subordinates' performances. Indeed, this role should have contributed strongly to the capacity-building process at the ministry. However, due to the previously indicated centralization nature that dominated the bureaucracy, in addition to the effect of some cultural norms deeply rooted in Egyptian society such as 'patriarchal control' and 'generations' rivalry', relations between junior diplomats and ambassadors are characterized by controversy. The most common complaint is that ambassadors ignore the views and initiatives that junior diplomats present at work. One junior diplomat related that the only opportunity for him to send his proposals to the Ministry was when the ambassador was absent on annual leave [39]. One commonly used means to put pressure on junior diplomats by some ambassadors is the assessment of professional performance, which each ambassador uses to write every year. Based on these reports, diplomats are punctually promoted. On the other hand, a poor assessment leads to sanctions (e. g. not being dispatched for external service, being dispatched to hard posts, being deprived of leadership positions). It is clear that the personality factor has its role to play in this regard, as the psychological makeup of the ambassador, and whether he likes or dislikes the employee, still colours the assessment process and causes trouble for some of those who are assessed [31]. Until very recently, this assessment was the only tool used to judge the performance of Egyptian diplomats below ambassadorial level. In addition to the direct harm caused by using this tool to put pressure on junior diplomats, such as creating tensions at the Ministry, this has also had an extensive negative impact by preventing some skilled diplomats from holding positions that suit their capabilities. Thus, the overall performance of the institution has declined as related to several issues including the African affairs [33].

Finance

Foreign ministries generally constitute a small amount of overall public expenditure (sometimes less than 1 per cent), and are less expensive compared to other sectors such as education, health, and social and public security. However, due to the less tangible nature of their outputs, foreign ministries are always subject to domestic criticism and calls for cutbacks [11, p. 80]. In Egypt, the annual budget of the foreign ministry is nearly \$200 million USD (about 1.2 billion EGP of a total 2008–2009 public budget of 1272 billion EGP) [41]. Consular revenues finance approximately \$70 million USD of the Ministry's budget. Therefore, the Ministry costs the public about \$130 million USD every year (less than 1/1000 per cent of public expenditure) [34, p. 131]. Indeed, Egypt's large permanent diplomatic representation creates real challenges for the restricted resources of the Ministry. For example, though there was a great need to improve the Ministry's com-

munication system in order to enable the scattered Egyptian embassies to remain in direct contact with headquarters, the cost of this would have exceeded the Ministry's financial resources. Although it is true that the Ministry suffers from limited resources, it also suffers from mismanagement of the resources it does have. In this context, there is a call to decrease the number of permanent missions, particularly in West Africa, Asia, and Latin America, which account for nearly one-third of Egyptian diplomatic representation [34, p. 130]. This, according to many analysts, will reduce public expenditure without causing harm to national interests, which can still be safeguarded with other foreign policy instruments. Nevertheless, a frequent argument is that shutting down the Egyptian embassies in some capitals will cause these countries to shut down their embassies in Cairo reciprocally [31]. In the case of the relations with Africa, shutting down the Egyptian embassies would have been viewed as a sign of disinterest [40].

Whilst the above argument is plausible, critics still argue that there are other examples of misspending the Ministry's available resources. One example is renting buildings abroad for the Egyptian diplomatic offices and residences, thus wasting millions of dollars every year. Another is the cost of the internal committees that issue recommendations/decisions on various minor issues that could have been settled without the need for a committee. Moreover, there is a notable difference in spending on Egyptian missions. In other words, the Ministry appears to prioritize spending according to the importance of the mission. For example, the financial resources allocated to the Egyptian embassies located in the European capitals far exceed those given to the embassies in Sub-Saharan Africa. Ambassador Massoum Marzouk thus asserted:

...The buildings of the Egyptian embassies in Sub-Saharan Africa became bad and poor. In the past, the governments of the newly independent African states used to give the best buildings and plots to Egypt. With time, due to the limited resources allocated for the purpose of renovation of these building and the absence of maintenance, the status of these buildings worsened [37].

The role of the ministry in policy formulation routine information-gathering

In any state, a wide range of varied and accurate information on issues in which it has a stake has to be collected and analysed. Although journalists now have better and quicker sources to learn about developments in wider society, there is no substitute for the first-hand knowledge of their interlocutors in host administrations that good diplomats possess [11, p. 77]. Perceptually, thanks to their good language and communication skills, Egyptian diplomats are capable of information-gathering. Egypt's wide diplomatic representation privileges information-gathering, as the Egyptian embassies provide the Ministry with supposedly accurate official information, thus keeping it well-informed on world developments [31]. However, the accuracy of the reporting is an important point that needs to be discussed, given the fact that this information is subject to the individual perceptions of the embassy members who collect it. Different stories are related about deceptive reports provided by some diplomats, thus leading the Ministry to inappropriate decisions. Sometimes inaccurate reporting happens due to the inability of the diplomat to interpret correctly the realities of the situation behind traditional words of courtesy. The diplomat's experience, and the extent to which he understands the environment in which

he serves, are the only things that lead him to correct analysis. Heikal would attribute the failure of Egypt's water policy to such a shallow understanding of the realities:

Throughout forty years... it was believed that irregular official visits, dispatching a delegation once every year, and reassuring statements... are a guarantee for interests... Interests can't be secured because of a visit, or a banquet, or exchanging medals and publishing photos in the newspapers and television channels [41, p. 63].

Similarly, political information and analysis should not be based on compliments given and verbal promises made during courtesy meetings. Extraordinarily, some embassies are dependent on these types of signs to report to the Ministry on a number of issues in which Egypt has interests. A diplomat relates an interesting story: Several Egyptian embassies in sub-Saharan Africa confirmed that the host country would support the Egyptian nominee in the elections for the Deputy Chairperson of the African Union Commission. However, not a single vote went to the Egyptian candidate, at the final phase of the elections [42]. A diplomat who served at one of the Egyptian embassies in Sub-Saharan Africa at the time of this incident stated:

The hosting country nominated someone for the same position of the Deputy Chairman of the AU. They promised us that they would withdraw their candidate.... The Foreign Minister was the one who gave me the promise, thus I reported this to the Ministry in Cairo. This Foreign Minister enjoyed excellent relations with the Egyptian Foreign Minister and the Ambassador as well. It happened that after the elections... the Minister [of the hosting country] lost his portfolio. We were surprised that they did not withdraw their candidate and broke their promise to Egypt [43].

Policy-making

After 1952, the role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Egypt in the decision-making process was naturally overshadowed by the presidency [16, p. 184]. This can be attributed to the nature of military regimes, in which the military agencies (e. g. the army and the security agencies) are the only institutions that can attain a measure of independence from the immediate control of the presidency. Thus, their influence on foreign policy became far greater than that of the Cabinet as a whole or of the Foreign Ministry. Moreover, multiple agencies and institutions were allowed to deal with matters that should have been the sole responsibility of the Foreign Ministry. This led to major structural weakness within the Ministry; as a result, the Ministry's power, prestige, and influence were severely restricted [19, p. 115–117]. Various examples emphasize this analysis. President Nasser tended to appoint military officers as ambassadors [9]. President Sadat used to engage in diplomatic activities including the exchange of messages and direct negotiations, whereas the foreign minister was not permitted to attend many of the president's meetings with foreign officials [44].

Some analysts believe that under Mubarak, the role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs expanded significantly. One of the clearest manifestations was that, apart from Kamal Hassan Ali, who was a former army officer, the remaining four men who assumed the position of foreign minister were career diplomats [16, p. 184–185]. Mubarak's seeming tendency to expand the Ministry's role was clearly illustrated in his decision to send diplomats as presidential envoys for the first time. Furthermore, he appointed diplomats to

hold positions such as political adviser, secretary for information, and spokesman at the Office of the Presidency. Accordingly, the Ministry enjoyed marked achievements in various foreign policy domains, such as leading successful efforts with the International Court of Arbitration to restore the Taba area [45, p. 31, 32]. Later in the 1990s, the Ministry played a vibrant role on the multilateral level, presenting significant proposals to international organizations, such as the Charter of Honour and Arab Cooperation to the Arab League, participation in the establishment of the African Economic Community in 1991, hosting the first meeting of the African Mechanism of Peaceful Settlement of Conflicts in 1993, participating in establishing the treaty of African Nuclear Weapon Free Zone, participating in establishing new groups such as the Damascus Declaration of 1991 [45].

It is clear, therefore, that the Ministry of Foreign Affairs operated in comparative freedom from the constraints of the presidency, particularly during the time of Foreign Minister Amr Moussa. For some analysts, the personality of the minister relates directly to the Ministry's impact on foreign policy. For example, the role of the Ministry in policy formulation during the time of Foreign Minister Ismail Fahmi exceeded its role under Foreign Minister Mahmud Fawzi [46, p. 455]. In the same context, the charismatic personality of Foreign Minister Amr Moussa, in addition to his efforts to modernize the Ministry's organizational structure, led it to operate actively. Although it is unusual for the foreign minister to enjoy popularity due to the external aspect of this position, Moussa was an exception, as no foreign minister in Egypt had enjoyed such extensive popularity [47, p. 270]. It is widely believed that Moussa was deliberately removed from his position, as his increasing popularity triggered fears from the ruling elite [48].

There was thus a trend for the presidency to constrain the role of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs after Amr Moussa left for the Arab League. Unlike his predecessor, Ahmad Maher lacked charisma and communication skills. Furthermore, serving as foreign minister at the age of sixty-six with serious health problems restricted his work capabilities, particularly when compared to Moussa, who was fifty-five years old when he assumed the post in March 1991. Some analysts think that appointing Maher as foreign minister was a psychological tactic to ensure the realization of Hermann's notion of 'positive reinforcement'. According to this notion, staff members tend to sympathize with their leaders' wishes and demands [16, p. 184].

In other words, bringing the retired, old-aged Ahmed Maher back to fame, prestige, and power in his new assignment would lead him to be extremely grateful and loyal to the president. His soft rhetoric and low-key diplomacy (compared to Moussa's sharpness and energetic style) would demonstrate the return to the old trend of the presidency overshadowing the Ministry [49]. This, of course, suggests that Maher's political instincts were always aligned with those of the presidency, especially concerning relations with the South and sub-Saharan Africa in particular. Besides, his deteriorated health conditions prevented him from conducting African tours.

Finally, we come to the time in which Foreign Minister Aboul Gheit led the Ministry until the end of President Mubarak's rule (2004–2011). During this time, the structural strength of the Ministry of Foreign Affairs decreased as the number of organs and institutions dealing with matters relating to the external environment increased. For example, the Ministry of Irrigation and Water Resources was responsible for the Nile water issue and handling relations with the Basin countries; the Ministry of Foreign Trade and International Cooperation handled relations with Europe and the United States; and the Gen-

eral Intelligence Service (GIS) was solely responsible for the Palestinian issue, Sudanese affairs, and relations with Iran and Iraq. Pictures and news of Omar Suleiman, the director of the intelligence service, and his official visits as presidential envoy to Sudan and Libya, topped local and foreign media coverage [50]. Foreign Minister Aboul Gheit goes so far as to say that the intelligence service should not have played a 'wide policy-implementation role' in external issues as it did under Mubarak [34, p. 42].

Quasi-foreign policy agencies

The national security agencies

The role of national security agencies in the state's politics closely relates to the process of preparing the state to defend its national security and to achieve the supreme objectives of survival, freedom, and welfare. For this purpose, there is a great need to utilize the state's entire capabilities: political, economic, social, military, cultural, scientific, moral, et cetera, and thus enhance the state's power to confront existing and possible threats and dangers. Within this context, the security agencies undertake special tasks that enable them, in the end, to assist the political leadership with making rational decisions. In general, security agencies are responsible for obtaining valuable information, analyzing it, and then proposing the most appropriate alternatives to the decision-maker. In addition, they are responsible for strategic planning, coordination between various bureaucratic institutions, and following up regarding the efficient implementation of decisions [51]. In Egypt, there are three main security agencies: the National Defence Council, the National Security Council, and the General Intelligence Service. Indeed, other agencies, such as Military Intelligence and State Security, have their roles as well; however, their influence with regards to foreign policy was, under Mubarak, limited to issues of military nature and internal problems, respectively. This work focuses on the GIS because of the central and influential role it played relating to Egypt's foreign policy which far exceeded the two aforementioned councils.

The General Intelligence is defined as a government body responsible for data-collection and information analysis in support of national security, war, defence, and foreign policy. The role of intelligence in decision-making is to gather information and to prepare analytical reports and political assessments on issues of vital importance to the state. Depending on the intelligence work, the decision-maker becomes fully aware of the domestic and external political developments and is capable of endorsing rational views and stances. In Egypt, the General Intelligence was created by the 1952 revolutionary regime as President Nasser was fully aware of the enormous challenges and threats that surrounded the new revolutionary regime and threatened its survival. As the regime faced internal and external threats, Nasser sought to achieve regional leadership and to support various national liberation movements in Africa. Therefore, the need emerged for a qualified intelligence agency capable of discovering the intentions and competencies of external powers, especially those who were adversaries of the regime [52, p. 39–51]. In this context, the General Intelligence Service (GIS) was established as an independent body under the supervision of the president. Its main concern is to achieve the safety and security of the state and the ruling regime. It is noteworthy that GIS recommendations to the state's institutions are binding due to the nature of these recommendations, which are often linked

to activities affecting the state's security. Under the 1952 regime, the GIS has participated in various clandestine activities related to foreign policy issues most significantly were in Africa (e. g. arms smuggling to Algerian resistance fighters against the French colonization, and supporting African national liberation movements through training and arms supply) [53].

The GIS continued to play an important role in the Egyptian foreign policy under President Sadat; however this role was expanded under President Mubarak. Arguably, of all the state's institutions, only the GIS succeeded in attaining a considerable degree of autonomy, virtually consisting a sub-elite within the government. Its influence on foreign policy became far greater than that of the cabinet as a whole, including the Defence Ministry [6]. Unlike Nasser, who considered the army his 'parliament' (demonstrating its powerful role on the decision-making process) [19, p. 115], Mubarak did not depend on the army to be his political advisor. Instead, he depended on the GIS for many important foreign policy issues. Perhaps what enhanced this tendency is the military nature of the GIS, for the majority of its members come from the armed forces and the police. This is, of course, not to suggest that the Defence Ministry is no longer involved in foreign policy, for the existence of the Military Attaches in many countries (e. g. US, UK, France, Saudi Arabia, Emirates, Sudan, DRC) demonstrates that the military is still engaged in foreign policy. What is relevant here is that the GIS had a significant and influential position in decision-making because of Mubarak's tendency to endorse its views over those of other institutions [6].

Another factor contributing to the privileged position of the GIS is the primacy of the president's safety in the aftermath of the 1995 assassination attempt in Addis Ababa. For example, analysts argue that the GIS was responsible for Mubarak's decision to refrain from visiting African countries due to security concerns [54; 34]. In the same context, General Omar Suleiman, Director of the GIS, was considered one of the closest officials to President Mubarak. Suleiman's influence increased dramatically after the assassination attempt due to his insistence, over Foreign Ministry objections, that the President should take his armoured limousine on his visit to Ethiopia [52, p. 171]. After that date, Suleiman became one of the 'most trusted' advisors of the President. Mubarak strongly relied on Suleiman, and on the GIS, to help facilitate a number of foreign policy issues of critical importance to Egypt (e. g. security cooperation with the US, the Palestinian issue, Egypt's relations with Sudan and Libya). Foreign Minister Ahmed Aboul Gheit confirmed this analysis:

Omar Suleiman became very close to President Mubarak since his nomination as Director of the Intelligence in May 1991. His influence was rising cleverly and quietly. The 'traditional' influence of the GIS has increased with regard to Sudan, Libya, Israel, Palestine and the Horn of Africa. When I became the Foreign Minister in 2004, I realized that the influence of the GIS is not due to institutional reasons only, but mainly because of General Suleiman's character (his preciseness) and because the President trusts his opinion and his work. I also noticed a new phenomenon... which is that he [Suleiman] meets Foreign Ministers and senior officials visiting Cairo on a regular basis... his views became influential and he became very powerful in foreign policy [34, p. 43].

The cabinet and other bureaucracies

The most striking feature of the Egyptian cabinet throughout Mubarak's rule was its relative technocracy nature. Thus, of the cabinets that spanned the period between Mubarak's assumption of power in October 1981 and his ousting in February 2011, the

prevailing membership of the cabinet consisted of technocrats or civilians. This structural uniformity contributed to the eventual limited and subservient role of the cabinet in politics [8, p. 44, 45]. As previously indicated, Mubarak's confidence was primarily given to the military and security agencies, rather than to civil institutions [6]. Moreover, the Egyptian cabinet was characterized by a heavy emphasis on specialization. Thus, while individually, cabinet ministers could exert more influence on the president in matters relating to their own specific departments, collectively, they became less effective in influencing broad policy matters, particularly in the foreign affairs sector. Consequently, the cabinet as an independent decision-making institution was weakened. The president encouraged this trend by dealing directly with each minister and therefore 'bypassing' the prime minister, who sometimes was not informed of issues taking place in a department. The cabinet, therefore, was merely a collection of the heads of specialized departments that influenced policy decisions only insofar as those decisions related to the department's domain [6].

Of the cabinet departments, there are some ministries that maintain official representation in key capitals of the world, including the African capitals, such as the ministries of defence, interior, trade and industry, information, higher education, water resources, and Al-Azhar Al-Sharif. Technical officers from these ministries operate in coordination with the diplomatic mission [16, p. 185]. The contribution of these ministries to foreign policy has increased as a result of launching technical aid programs to African countries in the 1980s and to the former Soviet Islamic Republics in the 1990s. Nevertheless, based on the fact that the president and a few members of the elite dominated the process of policy formulation in Egypt, analysts agree that the role of the aforementioned ministries was pivotal in policy execution, rather than formulation [8, p. 46].

Conclusion

Having outlined the importance of Allison's bureaucratic politics in addressing the role of the bureaucracy, of limiting the nation's actions through pursuing policies that benefit organizations rather than national or collective interests, this paper argued that: Given President Mubarak's disinterest in Africa, the Egyptian bureaucracy (the foreign ministry) and its rivalry, the quasi-foreign policy agencies (e. g. GIS) played a central role in Egypt's Africa policy and is, therefore, partly responsible for the failure of this policy. The paper discussed the view that the Egyptian Foreign Ministry, though not allowed to play an influential role in foreign policy decision-making, still bore some responsibility for policy outcomes, especially as related to policy implementation. In fact, there were a range of issues in which the presidency had no interest, thus making room for active diplomacy. Foreign Minister Amr Moussa seems to endorse this view:

Some foreign policy issues did not 'provoke' the President, such as the Egyptian engagement in Africa... as this region did not give to the Foreign Minister political or propaganda glamour. The same can be said about Egypt's relations with Asia, Latin America, East Europe, the Non-Aligned Movement, the Islamic circle, etc. So the Minister's activities did not concern the President because these issues were not in his orbit... Thus, the Minister could act freely if he wanted to [41].

Boutros-Ghali is a clear example of the minister's capacity to act decisively in regions in which the president gives the foreign minister a free hand [55]. In fact, this quote per-

ceptively illustrates Moussa's responsibility, as foreign minister of Egypt (1991–2001), for the decline of Egypt's influence in sub-Saharan Africa during the time of his mandate. Firstly, Moussa was behind President Mubarak's decision to abolish the position of Minister of State for Foreign Affairs. Boutros-Ghali had held this position for ten years and brought about impressive results from Egyptian diplomacy on multiple Egyptian policies regarding Africa. Secondly, Moussa certainly lacked an interest in African issues compared with his active diplomacy on Egypt's relations with the West or the Middle East [56]. As such, the foreign ministers of Egypt under Mubarak (with the exception of Boutros-Ghali) seem to have adopted a low profile towards, rather than actively working for, diplomacy in sub-Saharan Africa. This too weakened the Ministry's opportunity to play an influential role in Egypt's foreign policy concerning this region.

The same may be said when analysing the remaining functions of the Foreign Ministry. Christopher Hill placed 'routine information-gathering' at the top of the list of the vital functions that foreign ministries still perform worldwide. In addition, even in the most autocratic regimes where foreign policy emanates almost exclusively from the previously mentioned decision-making groups, rather than being a product of a complicated process in which institutional bureaucracies play a major role, there is still heavy dependence on the Foreign Ministries in the day-to-day implementation of decisions reached by the presidency [9; 10]. The line of analysis throughout this paper suggests that the Egyptian Foreign Ministry exhibited technical incompetence related to the capabilities of its diplomats, the patterns of interactions among them, the organizational structure of the Ministry, and its financial resources. One important point, which contributed to the Ministry's weakness, was that the institution found itself in a situation of structural rivalry with domestic competitors. This led to the Ministry's ceding control of many external issues to other parts of the state bureaucracy. As a result, the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in Egypt under Mubarak, though it seemed to have finally become a modern, professional organization, it has become an exemplar of the 'fake modernity' due to its structural weaknesses [5; 57]. On the other hand, with the exception of the GIS and the ministry of water resources, the role of the remaining 'quasi-foreign policy agencies' was subordinate to the president [8, p. 45–46]. The contribution of these institutions (however small) lay primarily in their ability to modify decisional outcomes, either through their control of information channels, their access to the presidency in an advisory capacity, or through a position that afforded them influence in the choice of a particular method of implementation [10, p. 113].

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Бюрократический аппарат и внешняя политика Египта на Африканском континенте при Мубараке

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Принятие решений в Египте во время правления четвертого президента Хосни Мубарака осуществлялось преимущественно им самим и небольшой ключевой группой

советников, которых он назначал и распускал преимущественно, но не исключительно, по своему усмотрению. Уровень их влияния на его решения определялся практически полностью тем, насколько хороший у них был доступ к самому Мубараку. Ближе к концу своего правления президент Мубарак уже не был способен достаточно эффективно выполнять свои обязанности. Поэтому часть вопросов была отдана на откуп правящей элите, тогда как другими вопросами могли заниматься профильные министерства. Бюрократический аппарат получил возможность существенно влиять на внешнюю политику, особенно в тех областях, которые не представляли особого интереса для правящей элиты. Вместе с тем эта возможность не должна отрицать существование влияния внутренней динамики в министерстве иностранных дел на его практическую деятельность и, как следствие, на его способность эффективно выполнять круг установленных обязанностей. Также некоторые организации и «псевдovedомства, занимающиеся вопросами внешней политики» играли пусть и маленькую, но роль во внешней политике. Они также соперничали с Министерством иностранных дел. Таким образом, продолжаются споры о том, что бюрократический аппарат, несмотря на свое подчиненное положение, является частично ответственным за неудачные результаты внешней политики Египта во время правления президента Мубарака.

Ключевые слова: процесс принятия решений, бюрократическая политика, политика в Африке, политика Египта в Африке, Министерство иностранных дел Египта, президент Мубарак.

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