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Terrorism in the Middle East: Implications on Egyptian Travel and Tourism

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Evolution and Impact of Terrorism in the Middle East: Implications for Egyptian Travel and Tourism

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This paper attempts to shed the light on challenging issues affecting travel and tourism industry especially in the Middle East such as political, socio-economic and security instability. Due to its geopolitical and historical importance, the paper focuses on the situation in Egypt as a descriptive case study. The methodology relies on historical review and impact assessment to understand the roots and extended branches of instability in the Middle East that led to the Arab Spring, by focusing on the Egyptian case in the last half century. The assessment explains the negative effect of Western and Egyptian policy on extending the contemporary Middle East crisis by using militarization over sustainability. The assessment not only shows the consequences and risks for the local population and visitors, but also suggests potential corrective actions.

Key Words: peace-building, de-radicalization, sustainable tourism security, religious tourism, risk assessment, war on terror, Islam, neoliberalism

Redefining Sustainable Tourism Security in Post Arab Spring Context:

Tourism Security and the Arab Spring: Background

First of all, tourism has a great effect on the cultural, social, economic, developmental and environmental aspects of society as it contributes to the advancement of dialogue among people and civilisations in addition to promoting business and industries. Moreover it helps to preserve relics, monuments, historical treasures, heritage, traditions and folklore as well as the environment (i.e. ecotourism). Because security is a prerequisite for steady tourism growth, countries are keen to achieve comprehensive security in general and tourism security in particular (Al-alkamy, 2012).

The problems that tourists usually experience include theft in hotels and airports, food poisoning, natural and industrial disasters, violent crimes and aggression, biological hazards, wars and terrorist incidents; all influenced and moderated by media, which risks threatening the tourism image. Since tourism has unique properties associated with the broader security system, more attention should be given to all political, socio-economic and techno-scientific considerations. In this context, the Middle East region has suffered from serious problems related to security, including colonialism, corruption, and instability (Shobr, 2007). Several studies and articles emphasise the role of terrorism as a major global security threat causing not

only loss of lives and instability but also hindering socio-economic sustainability and political development, that can negatively affect the travel and tourism sectors, especially in the Middle East region after the 9\11 terrorist attack (al-Marri, 1999; Althnayan, 2012; Baker, 2014; Elena, 2016; Haddad & Hakim, 2008; Lutz & Lutz, 2015; Pizam & Smith, 2000; S. Sönmez, Apostolopoulos, & Tarlow, 1999; Yap & Saha, 2013). The 9\11 terrorist attack affected global tourism negatively, impacting both Eastern and Western tourists, and created not only economic loss by the huge drop of Middle Eastern tourists visiting Western countries and vice versa, but also the culture of fear the clash of civilization that it prompted - which in turn hindered global peace (Steiner, 2010:12).

According to 2014 data, the total number of tourists in the world was 1.2 billion, among whom only 250 million are involved in the Middle East. The World Bank reported that tourism revenue in 2010 in Tunisia, Egypt, Yemen, Libya and Syria was about $24.5 billion, among which Egypt had the largest share at about $13.6 billion. At the same time, Syria had $6.3 billion with 12% contribution to the national income of the country from the tourism sector, providing job opportunities to more than 14% of the workforce. Tunisia holds third place in revenue, with about $3.4 billion while Libya had the lowest revenue of only 170 million dollars. Due to the recent political and security instability in the aftermath of Arab Spring, terrorist

attacks caused tourism income to drop by more than 41% in Tunisia and 43% in Morocco. As a result, in 2014 tourism revenues in Tunisia, Egypt and Yemen have fallen by 55% ($24.5 billion in 2010 to $11 billion in 2014) (Rowayeh, 2015).

There are a few studies referring to the impact of security and political instabilities on the travel and tourism industry in the Middle East after the Arab Spring. These refer to sustainability issues that need to be solved through proactive risk management if stability is to be restored in the region (Abd El-Jalil, 2013; Abeyratne, 2011; Avraham, 2015; Hanna, 2013; Lafferty & Youssef, 2015; Nasr, 2016; Perles-Ribes *et al*., 2016). However, this paper discusses the recent evolution of political and security instabilities in Egypt with special reference to terrorism and its impact on the travel and tourism industry.

In recent decades, numerous events and crises in the Middle East have caused serious risk and threatened the political, economic and social stability of several Arab countries including Tunisia, Yemen, Algeria, Iraq, Egypt, Arabian Gulf, Jordan and Syria. Consequently these countries were affected dramatically, especially their tourism sectors, one of their major income sources (Rushby, 2015). Egypt, Tunisia and Turkey were favourite destinations for many tourists coming from Europe looking for exotic and cheap recreational experience, but those countries were hit by the strongest wave of security and political instabilities sweeping the Middle East. The failure to stabilise security, especially in the travel and tourism sectors was due to expanding terrorism, Arab Spring' political instabilities, conflicts, and the effect of refugees. Such factors and issues require deep examination and root solutions to recover peace and security in the Mediterranean and Middle East regions (Dewan, 2016).

The shadow of global terrorism extends from the Middle East to impact Europe, where the Paris attack of November 2015 led to a big loss for the travel and tourism sectors - in France this attack was estimated to have cost €2.3 billion due to distrust and fear of tourists regarding their safety. On the other hand, the open skies agreement, which ease some commercial aviation restrictions, may be modified for the Middle East and Gulf countries after recent security and political instabilities. Moreover, some U.S. airlines push their government to investigate and put pressures on airlines operating in Arab countries, which may trigger distrust (Nageh, 2015). To understand the security instability in the Middle East and Egypt as well as implications for travel and tourism, it is important to first understand security in the context of sustainable travel and tourism.

Redefining Security for Sustainable Travel and Tourism

Basically, safety refers to protection from threatening random unwanted incidents occurring by coincidence and out of a person' control, such as natural and human-made disasters; while security can be defined as protection from threatening intended incidents due to deliberate and planned human acts such as crimes and terrorism (Idsø & Jakobsen, 2000). The basic definition for security is 'The state of being free from danger or threat' (Oxford Dictionary, 2017); while the concept of comprehensive security can be defined as: the wellbeing of people aside from the threats disturbing or restricting their rights, freedoms, convenience, spiritual and social needs, through a system of socioeconomic justice (Al-alkamy, 2012).

Tourism security is classified under the category of economic security, which is part of comprehensive security in a country or destination. Thus, tourism security's objectives and efforts should provide all the necessary conditions and recreational needs for tourists to feel safe and happy. The concept of tourism security involves: the availability of security and safety in various tourism facilities including criminal security; a culture of warm reception and hospitality; professional tourism regulation (i.e. security rules for tourism companies) and; tourism related environmental security (Al-alkamy, 2012).

Post-9\11 tourism security is typically extended beyond the traditional criminal concept - terrorism is normally politically driven, unlike other criminal acts that are mainly economically driven. Many countries and their tourism destinations now suffer from terrorism due to growing political instabilities worldwide. However, issues of tourism safety and security lack extensive discussion by professionals, and this may be to avoid scaring customers. However, terrorism has now become a serious global threat that cannot be ignored by countries in general and the tourism sector in particular, especially after 9\11. One important consideration in defining tourism security in the context of terrorism is that tourists are one of the most vulnerable and targeted groups by terrorists and need a special security measures and specialised personnel to secure them. Terrorism aims at destroying a state's prestige and image, leading to a severe damage to reputation and economic loss, especially in tourism destinations. In order to deal with a more

comprehensive range of threats, the term tourism surety covers both security and safety threats and relies on risk mitigation and management to proactively minimise such threats.

Before 9\11, tourism policing and safety was introduced in Texas, for instance, by considering a comprehensive set of issues such as customer service, ethnic diversity, cultural awareness, and community policing. However, since 9\11 the international media and right wing parties especially in the U.S. have been taking a dangerous path towards a more radical and risky security policy based on what is called 'yellow journalism by perception'. Influenced by misleading media, the public became dissatisfied with extant risk mitigation approaches and thus, support more extreme security deterrence, seeking what they overestimate as a 'zero-risk' outcome. Hence, the media has become an additional problem in the equation as an ally to the criminals and terrorists by intensifying the perception of risk and thereby harming the tourism industry (Tarlow, 2014).

Sustainable Tourism Security: Towards a Comprehensive Definition

In general, research and practice consider tourism as not yet being close to sustainability. Although travel and tourism are important sectors for sustainable development, there are some dimensions of sustainability other than the economic aspects, which need to be considered, such as the social and environmental conditions that are under increased pressure with the growing issues of population, social welfare, security and pollution. The tourism industry can solve or minimise those issues by considering comprehensive sustainability dimensions and adopt more sustainable business models and strategies such as eco-tourism (Buckley, 2012). Sustainable development dimensions should also be consistent and integrated with social, economic and environmental security aspects (Lankauskienė & Tvaronavičienė, 2012). However, if tourism does not abide by sustainability requirements, it can be part of the problem rather than the solution. For instance, many projects in developing countries are influenced by globalised capitalism of unequal development and are not consistent with social, environmental and economic sustainability. Such projects are adding more suffering and insecurity for poorer societies through environmental degradation, political and economic corruption.

Moreover, many contradictions exist when it comes to sustainability and security, even in the context of travel and tourism. Sustainability is hindered when politics is played unfairly between developed and developing countries. For instance, the US can ban travel and tourism activities for certain countries opposing its interests and ideology, while allowing other allied countries, even if the level of risk for tourists and travellers in those countries is high, as in the case of Egypt amid terrorist attacks and political instabilities in the 80s and 90s. Hence, if tourists in developed countries want to enjoy travel and tourism in less developed countries, incorporating the diversity of cultures, wonders of ancient civilizations, food, nature, adventures and places; then sustainability challenges must first be resolved through appropriate measures which consider global civil society, activism and the issues of developing nations rather than from the perspective of their corrupted non-democratic governments and their supporters from the developed world capitalists (Mowforth & Munt, 1998).

Risk and crisis management is considered in tourism as a post-cold war approach to achieve sustainability for the industry in the face of the new evolving security, political, economic, social and environmental threats. Developing comprehensive and systematic measures to deal with such issues is crucial to proactively mitigate the risk as much as possible. It is also important to consider the indicators and issues triggering crises in tourism either from within the industry or the external factors such as terrorism, financial or environmental crises. However, very little attention in research and practice is given to the triggers of risk and the wider internal and external factors and indicators that influence tourism sustainability. The unique nature of tourism as being vulnerable to a wide range of crises requires proactive monitoring and quick response for all sustainability issues and related factors. However, such system requires ongoing regulatory and policy enhancements to foster resilient communities and economy as well as improve media relations and competitive diversification of travel and tourism products (de Sausmarez, 2007).

Based on the previous review, sustainable tourism security can be briefly defined as:

> *preserving and securing the tourism destination, its facilities and inhabitants from any danger or threat by maintaining proactive risk mitigation and prevention measures based on social, cultural, religious, administrative, economic, environmental, political, legal, security, information, communication, technological, infrastructure and international support.*

Religious Tourism and Terrorism: The Egyptian and Islamic Context

Religious Tourism and Religiously-motivated Terrorism

Generally speaking, religions call for peace and goodness rather than evil and vice, therefore it is misleading to associate certain religion with wicked phenomena such as terrorism. One of the key issues related to religiously motivated terrorism is the lack of academic consensus and discrepancies among experts in defining and explaining it. The media coverage of terror attacks associated with religious tourism sites includes Sinai as a destination for Christian pilgrims. When it comes to religiously motivated terrorism, media usually plays a negative role, especially when referring to Muslims and Islam as the main enemy by focusing on extreme cases while having a very limited coverage to reveal the many positive aspects or potential solutions. Creating such misunderstanding, panic and enmity with so called 'Islamophobia' has led to a generalised confused image that Muslims and Islam represent terrorism, which complicates the situation even more. On the other hand, international organizations and legislations try to foster the respect and protection of religious rights and holy places. For instance the Organization of the Islamic Conference relies on international instruments and UN resolutions to work against the defamation of religions. Hence, sanctuaries or destinations of religious tourism should be protected from harm such as acts of war or terror attacks (Chowdhury *et al*., 2017).

Religious tourism attractions refer to sacred sites with religious importance, attracting tourists and worshipers, including environmental sites (i.e. mountains, islands) and human constructions and structures such as St. Katherine's Monastery in Mount Sinai in Egypt. Terrorism is one of the growing challenges threatening religious tourism attractions by negatively impacting the economy, security and travel, including reduction in the number of visitors to religious attractions and more restricted travel regulations. However, religious and other tourism attractions would likely continue to recover with more resiliency against such economic and security instabilities by considering the application of crisis and proactive risk management (Fyall, 2008).

The issue of defining terrorism and terrorist is very controversial due to the influence and bias of imperial countries, especially America. Therefore, there is yet no consensus among UN members on the definition. The academic definitions also vary due to some being biased towards perceptions of either Western or Middle Eastern sides as the victim. For instance, various authors have labelled either the opposition entities, the resistance or freedom fighters as terrorists if they are for or against occupation or military aggression - for examples, see reference the American and Israeli actions in the Middle East. On the other hand, the less biased and more general definition includes both state and non-state actors who terrorise and threaten civilians with violent acts to serve their political objectives. Other less balanced definitions include the one by the CIA that excludes state actors, or the Bush Doctrine that labels any state or entity 'suspected' of funding or supporting 'terrorists' knowingly or not. Such politically biased influence in defining terrorism as a serious phenomenon threatening global stability, increases the problem, especially by creating false stereotypes about Muslims as the new enemy of Western liberalism. This leads to more anti-Muslim attacks and on the other hand feeds the growth and appeal of radical terrorist groups (Zarembka, 2009).

Based on the previously mentioned literature, religiously motivated terrorism can be understood as the manipulation of religion by radical entities, either state or non-state actors, to serve their political agenda and objectives by promoting religious based clashes of civilisations and justifying violence as a mean to harm and terrorise targeted countries and their people.

Roots and Causes of Terrorism in Muslim Countries

The ties between US imperialism and terrorism are not something new. There have been several instances of US support for terrorist organisations either directly or indirectly. In today's world politics, imperialism is a fact not only for the US that exercises its power to expand its hegemony over world continents, but also, in the Middle East, rising powers such as Russia, France, China, and India, enforce their power over weaker states. In this context, terrorism increases with the growth of imperial hegemony, as in the case of Al-Qaida which was originally nurtured by the US to fight and expel the Soviets from wealthy Afghanistan. Oil is a key factor - imperialist countries are attracted to control and destabilise the oil-rich countries in the Middle East, Central Asia and Africa for their own economic interests. Western imperialists led by America learned the lesson after the oil crisis associated with the Arab-Israeli conflict. Consequently, they try to install and support authoritarian dictatorships in Muslim countries that crack down on Islamists. Those who oppose the

imperialists are seen as the new enemy or competing force, after the Soviets, and thus aggressive approaches are used to control them instead of the peaceful option of coexistence. On the other hand, Western oil companies secure unfair deals with those unstable countries at the expense of socioeconomic and environmental sustainability. Such policies create the conditions in which terrorism thrives, thus, the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan was not only triggered by the 9\11 terrorist attack, but also the drive for oil that led to more complicated situations of political chaos and security instability and the global expansion of terror networks (Harshe, 2008; Shipley, 2007). The recent controversial statement by Saudi crown prince Mohamed bin-Salman, who is now authorised to rule the kingdom by his father king Salman illustrates the view of historical interference as perceived by the Arab world. He claims that the West ordered their allies to spread and foster radical and extremist groups over moderate Muslims, to serve their interests against the soviets, and this became a factor for the later nurturing of terrorism (De-Young, 2018:1).

Following western imperialist perspectives, it is thought that Gulf countries' support, especially that of Saudi Arabia and the Emirates, for Arab dictatorships such as Mubarak, seeks to keep the region and in particularly their own countries, away from democratic reforms which may threaten their regimes. Therefore they supported the Egyptian military commanders to overthrow the democratically elected president Morsi in the wake of Arab Spring revolution. Demonising the Muslim Brotherhood movement as terrorists after the overthrow of it's president (Morsi) is also seen as part of the political chaos in Egypt, as they are considered the largest organised and active Islamic movement in the world (Filkins, 2018).

The roots of terror are the key approach to finding the causes and solutions. After WWII, the western allies became the world superpowers, and this continued in the post-cold war era. However, their remaining enemy was the Islamic societies, especially in the Arab countries which opposed western imperialism. The problem intensifies when those countries encounter chaotic political, socioeconomic, and security crises in the post-colonial era, resulting in the contemporary vacuum of failed states and the related consequence of radical terrorism. The ineffective western efforts to support failed states in their former colonies through foreign aid are proven to be not reliable, especially in the post-cold war period where the United Nations is often unable to solve the crises, which continue to grow in unprecedented ways. The western-led capitalist system with the World Bank and the International Monetary fund cannot solve the world socioeconomic crises, rather they appear to get even worse. Furthermore, western military intervention in the Middle East, Afghanistan, and Africa has resulted in devastating failure and chaos (exemplified in the current War on Terror (WOT)), because there is no serious attention focusing on root solutions and causes of the problems, instead the various actions perpetuate the problems (Mallaby, 2002).

One example which helps to explain how the WOT was orchestrated to further serve western imperialism, is the US relationship with its Israeli ally. This axis has nothing to do with protecting American and western liberties from what they brand as Muslim enemies and terrorists opposing their liberal values. Instead this relationship seeks to extend imperialism worldwide, especially in Muslim countries, while on the other hand strictly tightening national security in western societies, to over-control people and make vast fortunes out of their fear, through more militarisation. This plan was coordinated at the end of the 20th century by the Israeli Likud and Republican Bush Sr. regimes, and further implemented in the reign of Bush Jr., coordinated between Dick Cheney and Benjamin Netanyahu, who launched a military and media campaign of WOT to control and subjugate the Muslim world, while exercising their hegemonic power worldwide. This campaign demonises those opposing the interests of western Zionism and imperialism as radical Muslims, with the emerging terrorism trend linked to the WOT, while labelling those who serve western interests as friendly moderate Muslims. This malicious strategy tries to install western loyal puppet regimes in the Middle East, to keep the region under their control, even if they have to sacrifice this very same regime latter on, as in the case of Sadam Husain in Iraq, and similarly Al-Qaeda. This unethical technique is not exceptional in the American history of world politics as it has happened often in other parts of the Middle East, including the supported coup by MI5 and CIA to place the Shah as leader of Iran as well as in other parts of the world such as Latin America (Zarembka, 2009).

It is suggested that western imperialists, through the deceptive WOT where media, intelligence, and politics in America and Europe fabricate perceptions about the Middle East and Muslims, can justify and legitimise their continuous wars such as the invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan post 9\11. In another instances, despite the fact that US-Euro Command officers are not quite

familiar and clear about the context and situation of Saharan North Africa, the command leadership still collaborates with Algerian military to suppress Islamist opposition. They support corrupt authoritarian regimes in Africa and the Middle East to avoid the democratic scenario that may bring Islamists to power. However, such militarised solutions intensify the problem by sustaining repressive regimes, contributing to socioeconomic and security failures and radical terrorism. Hence, US and European interests are focusing more on sustaining their hegemony over those countries' resources rather than sustaining their security and development (Keenan, 2005). The latest airstrike by the US-backed Afghani military was reported by the media to be another massacre, which added to the high record of civilian causalities by NATO in Afghanistan, in which US policy supports unethical operations leading to instabilities rather than security (AFP, 2018; Gul, 2018; Lamonthe & Salahuddin, 2018; Latifi, 2018; News Desk, 2018; Staff, 2018).

Another interesting example is the current events of Saudi-US crisis amid the escalation of Saudi-Emarati war on Yemen supported by the U.S. military and causing one of the worst humanitarian catastrophes in modern world history. Such a war ignores all ethics, leading to highest levels of, current estimates reaching 80,000 fatalities. Other figures mention 85000 children who have died from starvation and diseases. Moreover, the naval and areal blockade has led to the worst famine in 100 years that threatens 14 million Yemenis, thus, about two-thirds of the population rely on humanitarian aid and about 22 million people live in poverty and desperate need. The Machiavelli western strategy in international politics, especially in the Middle East, often compromise ethics to serve their economic interests of war rather than the comprehensive sustainable approach that can be achieved through peace. The Yemen war has been condemned by the international community and organisations for a long time. Western support for Saudi Arabia in this war has also been criticised in vain and while large amounts of weapons are being sold, the world is turning a blind eye to human rights and humanitarian crimes.

The recent shift in the American strategy to withdraw from such wars is not due to ethical awakening or the conscience of policy leaders; but because the top political leadership in Saudi Arabia and America, represented in President Trump and the Saudi Crown Prince have over-reached with their reckless policies and actions. They have now lost control and threatened

the strategic interests of the American state after they were exposed in international public opinion. This exposure is mainly due to Turkish pressure and international peace activists raising the case of Jamal Khashoggi's assassination, in addition to other related crimes and scandals, and thus, strained business relations between America and Saudi Arabia. (Hohmann, 2018; sputniknews, 2018; Stern, 2018; SyndiGate, 2018). Interestingly, an Israeli role in the Khashoggi crisis is also evident in their unprecedented support for the crown prince despite international condemnation, because he has become one of the many Arab leaders serving the Israeli agenda in the region. (Bybelezer, 2018; Cypel, 2018; Hearst, 2018; i24NEWS, 2018; Pick, 2018; Rogin, 2018).

Furthermore, the American-Israeli campaign has extended to gain supporters and recruits beyond officers and media personnel, by involving academics, advisors, politicians, and lobbyists. The plan is evident in the Project for New American Century (PNAC) and the Defence Planning Guidance (DPG) which aims at global dominance by the US, not only over weak countries but also over the rising powers including Europe and Asia. Other reports by think-tanks and decision-making organisations such as Rand confirm this plan for global US imperial dominance and its need to control oil resources to guarantee and maintain power superiority. The consequence of such policy is not only the expansion and intensification of terrorism but also unprecedented attacks against civil liberties and privacy in the west. Thus, those who warn about Muslims targeting western freedom are themselves the ones causing the attacks on it. This interpretation relies on the opinions and analysis of experts, scholars and policy makers who support the claim that 9\11 was used by the US government to justify the orchestrated and pre-planned WOT. However, this war is targeting whole Muslim nations and has brought more chaos and destruction than stabilisation as is the case in Iraq and Afghanistan. Moreover, the western Islamophobic media campaign conjugated with the WOT is fuelling more hatred and violence on both sides and causing an endless clash of civilisation, in order to continue producing oil and military-based profits, at the expense of fundamental human rights, including the right to live (Zarembka, 2009).

The orchestration of the so-called 'WOT' in the aftermath of the September attacks 2001 and the invasion of Iraq in 2003, triggered a profound change in the mentality of Islamic militias opposing what they considered Western imperialism in the Middle East with the help of corrupted Arab regimes. Their violent

approach against Western civilians as a justifiable response of what they consider aggression against Muslims in the Middle East has been condemned by mainstream Muslim scholars condemning as being against the Islamic principles. However, Western foreign policy failed to utilise this as an opportunity to build peace in the region or change their troublemaking approach. This has led to a more intense generation of terrorists who call themselves the Islamic State, despite being condemned by almost all segments of Muslims including those who used to support violence against civilians in the past (Ashour, 2009; Dalrymple, 2007; Dudouet, 2014; Phillips, 2009). Another viewpoint suggests not only was 9\11 used to orchestrate the WOT, but also that the new generation of terrorist organisations such as ISIS are orchestrated and managed by western imperialists either directly or indirectly, to serve their imperial agenda and global hegemony (Davidson, 2017).

The growing trend of western powers promoting Islamophobia and anti-Muslim sentiment contributes to the growth of global terrorism as it reaches new levels in promoting and justifying the clash of civilisations. There has been a strong critique by some biased western academics and public figures who distort any positive essence of Islam, by spreading faulty stereotypes and misunderstandings, such as the notion of civilisation clash by Samuel Huntington - which is proven to be not accurate. According to research and surveys, Muslims, in general, do not oppose democratic reform or freedom if it is not causing harm or vice, but oppose religious or cultural alienation and diversion. Unlike many in western societies turning away from religiousness as an ethical way of life, due to the influence of secular and materialistic capitalism; Muslims on the other hand generally resist such transformation into agnostic societies. They can still however, cope and coexist peacefully and positively in a multicultural environment without compromising their culture and religion. Western societies and governments react by contradicting their democratic values of freedom, enforcing a secular and liberal lifestyle on Muslims while, for instance, respecting the religious sanctity of Jews who are also strict and conservative. Such double standards is a result of political and socio-economic reasons that can only be understood by examining the long and complex history of the relationship between the west and Islam, where imperialism plays a key role in suppress competing civilisations which have strict ethical values that go against modern capitalism (Inglehart & Norris, 2008; Mahdavi & Knight, 2012; Marranci, 2004; Said, 2001; Sheehi, 2011; Wa Baile, 2011).

The fear culture associated with contemporary counter-terrorism policies has consequences other than fear, such as the spread of a vice ridden culture full of hate, violence, bigotry and racism, fostered by right-wing groups and organisations who influence at the highest levels of western policymaking and therefore impact on western and global policies towards more extreme neoliberal capitalism and terrorism. Such unfortunate transition create serious divisions within western societies leading to more instabilities and identity crises for minorities, especially Africans, Arabs and Muslims living in the west. The increase of Islamophobic attacks against Muslim minorities in the west is a serious consequence of such a crisis that can only be beneficial for terrorist organisations who then recruit desperate and persecuted people (Ahmed, 2015; Coles, 2017; Kinnvall, 2014; Kumar, 2012; Lean & Esposito, 2012; Lukacs, 2006; McMichael, 2017).

Religious Tourism and Terrorism in Egypt: Sinai as a Risky Destination

Since the cradle of civilizations, Egypt has had the potential to provide leadership in the Middle East, as the richest and most advanced superpower. This has always placed it under attack by various civilisations, including the Persians and Romans (Bunson, 2002). Although, Egypt was invaded on different occasions by different civilisations, the Egyptians were always politically and militarily active in resisting imperial aggression until the Islamic conquest of Egypt which was documented as smooth and more appealing for Egyptians due to the flexible and lenient political and economic governance, compared to previous rulers who looted and persecute the Egyptians (i.e. the Romans) (Kennedy, 2008). Egypt's historical importance in medieval history was again as a leaders, whereby Muslim rulers relied on Egypt as their stronghold and capital under the likes of Saladin and the Mamluks, in their defence against the crusades and Mongol invasions. In addition to Egypt's cultural and intellectual richness, Al Azhar added tremendous value as a pioneer establishment for both Islamic and scientific enlightenment not only in the region but worldwide. Moreover, The Turks contributed to transforming Egypt into a modern state with an organised military system under Ottoman rule, which utilised Egypt's rich resources under a centralised government system to establish many urban foundations. In modern history, Egypt was inspiring and supported other nations in the resistance against western colonialism. Egypt also has a geostrategic position as the link between east and west as well as the African south and Europe in the north (Richmond, 2013; Sowell, 2004, Goldschmidt, 2004).

This paper is limited to the impact of terrorism on tourists and tourism destinations rather than on locals in the Middle East who suffer the biggest toll in terms of death and destruction. For instance, the terrorist attacks that happened in Egypt between 2014 and 2016 totalled 1165 incidents, mostly impacting locals. It is worthy of note that such an unprecedented and rapid leap of terrorism happened after the military took over power in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, while the largest number of incidents were located in Sinai at the eastern boarders with Israel (Beheri, 2017). Public safety and security are not the only concerns when attempting to preserve religious tourism sites, there are also considerations regarding sustainability in religious destination management which are crucial. In this context, St. Katherine in Sinai could negatively be impacted by un-managed tourists causing damage and environmental degradation (Poria *et al*., 2003). St. Katherine Protectorate in southern Sinai is a World Heritage Cultural site involving Egypt's highest mountains, ecological significance and bio-diversity, as well as historical monuments including St. Catherine's fortress monastery. The site has been serving pilgrims since the fourth century and received attention from the Egyptian government to utilise it for religious tourism since 2002. However, the over-exploitation of this religious site with its valuable resources, culture, heritage and religious sanctity, led to much damage, that could have been avoided or mitigated with more sustainable destination management (Mallarach i Carrera *et al*., 2008).

The social dimension of sustainability is crucial. In the context of Mt. Sinai, the role of site administrators, especially monks, is important to preserve the sanctity and order at the religious destination. However, the negative practices of tourists can distract pilgrims seeking to feel the peaceful and spiritual sense of the place. Overcrowding, noise, taking photos and breaking the rules of the religious site, as well as the inappropriate moral conduct, including the dress code and camping in huge numbers with immoral acts such as alcoholism, drug use and sexual activity are all just as harmful for the religious destination as the environmental and physical damage (Timothy & Olsen, 2005).

Research has highlighted key aspects regarding religious tourism in Egypt, where tourism companies are key players in developing this sector, in collaboration with local agencies such as government security authorities as well as foreign agencies and businesses. Although there is no specialised programs

for religious tourism in Egypt, tours to religious attractions are made within conventional programs, including, St. Catherine's Monastery in Sinai, or Wadi El-Natrun Monastery west of the Nile Delta.

The key challenges facing Egyptian tourism in general and specifically religious sites include decline in the number of visitors for tourism due to recent economic instability and stagnation, as well as continuous terrorist attacks, especially against tourism destinations linked to religious tourism. Religious conflict, wars and terrorism are the main barriers to the growth and development of religious tourism. Moreover, there has been no consensus regarding religious tourism in Egypt among politicians and religious parties. At the time of President Morsi, the government was more open to develop religious tourism programs including Iranian Shi'a visitors to their holy sites in Egypt, however, some controversial Salafi Islamists such as those in the El-Nour party were against these ideas and quite opposed to many of the Muslim Brotherhood's thoughts (Ali, 2013).

Developing and improving religious tourism in Egypt requires more support from the government, especially the ministry of tourism and the ministry of the interior. Establishing a system to coordinate between those authorities to share information about tourists and their related issues is important for more proactive assessment and crisis management. The government should also work hard to foster and facilitate more convenient systems for tourists to visit religious sites in Egypt. They need to deal with various issues to encourage more visitors, such as the increased poverty and begging phenomenon at religious and tourism sites as well as the deterioration of service quality and routine issues for entry visas. Moreover, developing a system for religious tourism should include adequate information and orientation for visitors regarding religious sites, their history, and importance. In order to increase the revenue from religious tourism in Egypt, the overall tourism industry should be improved. In general this includes service quality and innovation, tourism facilities and infrastructure, transportation and information support, as well as better marketing and advertising (Ali, 2013).

Historical and Socioeconomic Impact Assessment: The Egyptian Case

Application of Transition Lifecycle for Historical Impact Assessment

First of all, this paper adopts a critical approach rather than positivist view, whereas the analysis is part of a research contribution to generate new social reality rather than empirically proving the existing reality. This is due to the lack of studies researching critical topics in this specific context. Therefore, the paper aims to understand the root causes and impacts of terrorism in the Middle East by examining Egypt as a case study with appropriate historical, political, security, and socioeconomic evolutions. The case study not only describes the situation but also tries to analyse it by piecing together the puzzle and looking at the big picture, based on reports, historical data and existing literature.

This paper relies on transition curves as a method of assessing historical evolution with reference to the Egyptian case of instabilities during the last century and their impact on travel and tourism industry. Transition curves in their various forms are useful in illustrating the process via critical points at the bottom or catastrophic level, when people fail to resolve their issues, up to positive transitions, which happen after people consolidate their efforts to overcome crisis, struggling to rehabilitate, recover, reform and reconstruct towards the peak of stability and success (Adams *et al*., 1976). Figure 1 projects the situation in the Middle East by focusing on the case of Egypt from 1967 to 2017, highlighting the political-security

transition points and their impact on the travel and tourism industry especially after the Arab Spring. It is clear that critical transition points happen when the accumulation of various crises and incidents reach their peak (see Table 1 and 2).

The regimes in Egypt since Nassir and his fellow Free Officers seized power have been in constant struggle to sustain power and rule. The biggest competitor has been Islamists especially the Muslim Brotherhood. Nassir dealt with them by forming an alliance at the beginning and then supressing them. Similarly, Sadat thought that taming Islamist groups would strengthen his political position against communist, Arab nationalist and secular opposition, but he didn't know they would turn against him when he adopted a liberal transformation policy after he shifted his allegiance to the capitalist West and signed a peace treaty with Israel. In general, militarised and security solutions against terrorist groups intensified the situation and backfired with more extreme radicalisation, especially during the time of Mubarak, specifically from 1990 to 1997 when terrorist attacks and insurgencies thrived as a response to the Egyptian state which excluded them from political life. Mubarak adopted a similar approach to his predecessors when he first used political alignments with the Islamists to contain them. He slowed down his liberalisation transformation not only to cool down his Islamist opponents, but also to be handle the serious socioeconomic problems. He tried negotiating to disarm the Islamist militia in return for maintaining Islamic identity as integral part of the state, but not as the main ruling factor. This phase proves that negotiation and peacemaking is very effective to contain opposing political demands in

Figure 1. Historical Transition of Egypt's instability during the last half century
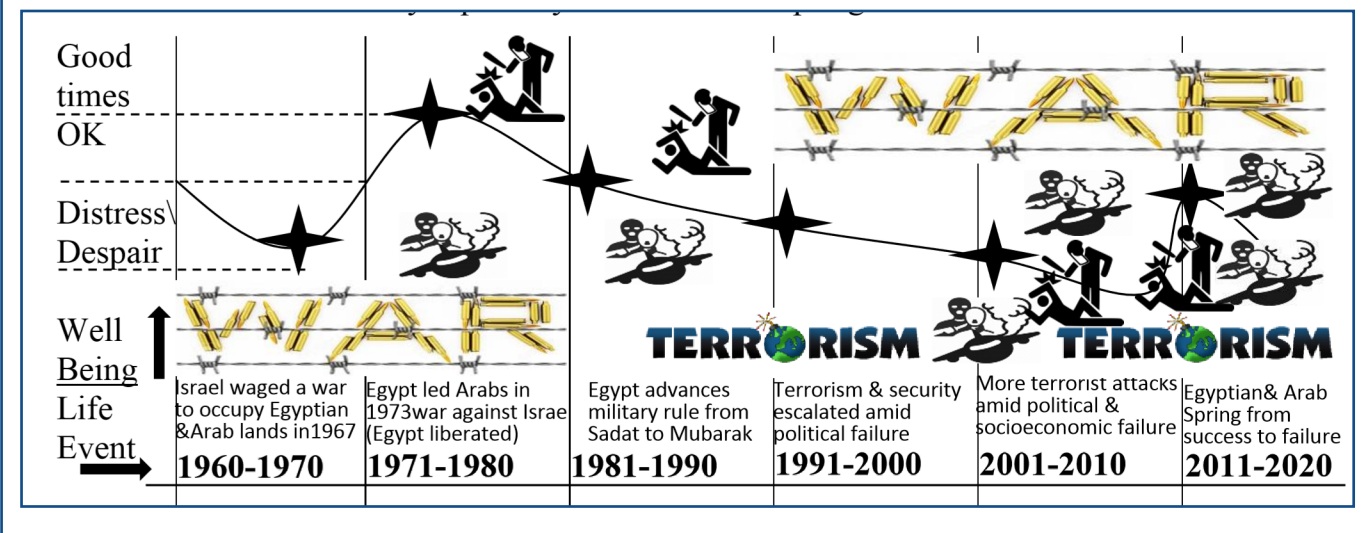
Table 1: Security Crises History in Egyptian Tourism		
Year	**Event**	**Assessment**
1985	Egyptian solider shoot Israeli tourists at the Ras Bur-qa resort in Sinai, after the controversial 1979 peace treaty to normalise relations with Israel	After the incident led to 7 Israelis killed, Israel put political pressures on the Egyptian state to follow security and dip-lomatic deal including hosting and caring for Israeli tour-ists coming to Egypt (Yaakov, 2014).
1986	Riot by 2000 Egyptian state security forces due to socio-economic and political issues in Mubarak re-gime	Burning hotels at pyramids area. Disturbances, explosions and shooting spread to reach Cairo International Airport and tourists were evacuated (Ross, 1986) .
1989	The impact of Persian Gulf war on Egypt's tourism when Iraq invaded Kuwait and threatened Gulf countries	The war slammed the industry with a $2.5 billion loss in canceled contracts.(Ahmed, 1991).
1990	Terrorists opened fire on a tour bus to oppose Egyp-tian Israeli Peace treaty and their security and politi-cal cooperation.	Operation led to killing 8 Israelis and wounding 17 others (Cowell, 1990).
1992-1995	A series of terrorist attacks targeted tourists through-out Egypt. (usdivetravel, 2016)	While the biggest casualties were Egyptians; almost a dozen of foreigners were killed and more wounded.
1996	Terrorists opened fire on Greek and Australian tour-ists boarding a bus outside a Hotel near pyramids.	Killing 18 Greeks and wounding 16 more. (CNN, 1997).
1997	Terrorists opened fire on tourists in Cairo's Tahrir square. In the same year, a major terrorist attack against tourists marked a massacre in Luxor.	Cairo attack resulted in killing 9 tourists including 7 Ger-mans and wounding 19, while in Luxor 62 tourists were massacred and terrorists were shot dead by the police (usdivetravel, 2016).
2004-2005	In the light of political and socioeconomic instabil-ity, terrorists resumed their attacks against govern-ment and tourism after a long truce.	In 2004 Taba attack killed 34 people. In 2005 sharm el sheikh attacks killed at least 88 persons and hundreds in-jured, mostly locals. Other terrorist attacks in Cairo down-town wounded 6 tourists (usdivetravel, 2016).
2009	Terrorists attacked a resort in Sinai	bombing killed 23 tourists (usdivetravel, 2016).
2014	terrorist attack against tour bus in Sinai	At least 2 south Korean were killed (usdivetravel, 2016).
2015	Egyptian security forces mistakenly opened fire on tourism convoy in western desert	12 civilians were killed including two Mexicans which led to diplomatic crisis with Mexico(usdivetravel, 2016).
2016-2017	Stabbing incidents in Hurghada resorts happened twice in 2016 and 2017	The first stabbing incident in 2016 wounded one Swedish and two Austrian tourists. In 2017 the second incident re-sulted in two Germans and a Czech, were stabbed to death and wounding 3 more. (Daily News, 2017a)

times of political and socio-economic instability. However, if governments ignore the political problems of their oponents, especially the armed ones, it often leads to continuous violence and instability (Ashour, 2009; Beitler & Jebb, 2003; Dawoud, 2001; Gerges, 2000; Kienle, 1998; Phillips, 2009; Sönmez, 1998; Zahid, 2010).

Usually changes in political, security and economic policies including war decisions have destabilising impacts on travel and tourism, and this is especially evident in the aftermath of the Egyptian liberation war of 1973. This conflict weakened the economy, that was already declining due to decades of military rule, and led to the famous bread riots and civil unrest in 1977. Similarly, the political change which successfully toppled the Mubarak dictatorship during the 2011 revolution, was not strong and organised enough to sustain itself in the post-revolution period, and it backfired in 2013 when the Egyptian military ousted the democratically elected president. By examining those two critical transition points we realise that a stage of decline lasted for a number of decades after the first critical point during the mid-70s. This eventually resulted in another transition point of change with the spark of the Arab and Egyptian Spring, which started in the early 2010s (Cleveland & Bunton, 2016).

In 2004 a paper by Mansfeld and Winckler presented an Israeli perspective regarding the potential of tourism development in Egypt, offering optimistic expectations that the future potential of growth in this sector was very promising, despite the growing threats of terrorism and political instabilities. One reason for such promising potential was that Egypt had finished its costly phase of conflict with Israel, paving the way for sustainable peace and internal political stability. Another reason wss that Egypt is part of a rich Arab region and has religious tourism attractions which form part of the world's cradle of civilisations. The authors suggest that Egypt at the time should consider the tourism service industry as a priority over other sectors (Mansfeld & Winckler, 2004).

However, one year after the previous article, reality proved otherwise where political and security instability went out of control. In 2005 the political parties and ordinary citizens were outraged by what they deemed fake democratic reforms introduced by the Egyptian state in the form of constitutional amendments to allow people compete in the presidential elections for the first time. The Egyptian state was under growing criticism by media and civil society for the devastating condition of human rights violations, corruption and the dictatorship. Therefore, the controversial democratic reforms sought to somehow alleviate the outrageous image that was disturbing Egypt's Western allies and their public opinion. On the other hand, many Egyptians considered the approach as a big scam and a retreat from the real promises of democratic reforms which were expected from the Egyptian government. The resumption of terrorist attacks in this period reflects the disappointed state of armed Islamists who believe they had been fooled and betrayed by the Egyptian state who transgressed against their pledges (Ashour, 2007; Hassan, 2007; Human Rights Watch, 2006; Wood, 2011).

The Israeli viewpoint of Mansfeld & Winckler, (2004) is quite different from the Egyptian viewpoint. Both academic and industry based Egyptians emphasised the fact that the country had been suppressed for a long time after the peace treaty with Israel, research and development in science and technology had declined a lot, in addition to increased corruption in research and educational institutions. At that time, Egyptians bemoaned their peer nations who started to experience industrial revolutions such as South Korea, Taiwan and China, while Egyptian scientists and professors were paying from their own finances to fund simple experiments, as the big money was in the hands of the military who owned the majority of the economy. Egypt under the reign of Mubarak shifted to the service industries, mostly comprised of small businesses or large government enterprises lacking efficiency and innovation. One of the key motivations for the Egyptian revolution and Arab spring was to revive a suppressed civilisation that was buried at the hands of corrupted regimes. Therefore the revolution called to reform all aspects of education, science and technology to achieve genuine renaissance and sustainability and not only rely on the service industry. Moreover, the relationship with the former ally, Israel, also shifted from the previous norm that involved industry and scientific interactions into a more independent and competitive relationship (Lawler, 2011).

The 2011 revolution came as a result of accumulated failures by the Egyptian government and Western allies who supported dictatorship rule under the excuse of WOT. Revolution was turned from an opportunity to a threat, when secular and religious segments of Egyptian society failed to create a common ground under the first democratically elected president Morsi who strongly favoured his Muslim Brotherhood party. Such an instable situation allowed the Military to regain power in ousting President Morsi with the help of his opponents in 2013. Consequently, Egypt went into a devastating phase of socioeconomic, political and security failures under the military supported regime led by President El-Sisi, where terrorist attacks reached a peak and the tourism industry collapsed (Colombo & Meringolo, 2013; Dudouet, 2014; Harrous, 2016; Kabalan & Kotb, 2016; Mari & Issa, 2016; McDonnell, 2016; TIMEP, 2015).

Various experts and scholars warn about the current Egyptian and Western policy to combat terrorism through (mis)implementing de-radicaliation and (mis) using excessive force against armed and non-armed opposition in order to depive the Islamist movement of its political leadership. Both the Mubarak regime and his Western allies worried about allowing Islamist opposition to be politically active, and consequently empowered them to succeed in seizing power with the big support they received from a wide segment of Egyptian society. The Western and especially American interests were in favour of the Mubarak regime, despite his crackdown against his opposition, persecution, human rights violations and breaching of the law. On the other hand, excessive use of force and iron fist approaches fail to stabilise the situation, rather they have more serious consequences. A better and more effective alternative for the west, would be to empower and support civil society and secular

opposition for gradual democratic transformation and reform, and thus to avoid the scenario of Islamic government transformation in the future (al-Rashed, 2016; bloomberg, 2016; Dudouet, 2014; Gerges, 2000; Harrous, 2016; Kabalan & Kotb, 2016; Mari & Issa, 2016; McDonnell, 2016;Politico, 2016; Reuters, 2016; Ross, 2016; Salim, 2016).

Due to increasing tensions, crises and incidents in the aftermath of the Arab Spring, change is expected in the near future. These crises and issues must be handled peacefully with effective solutions addressing the roots of the problems not the symptoms. The implications for global security are serious, if the next transition point has stronger negative consequences. Based on historical review and assessment, it could be concluded that either Egypt is allowed to establish stability and sustainability in the region to bring about positive effect on travel and tourism, or Egypt will be a major problem in the face of regional and international security, which would lead to more deterioration for travel and tourism in the region.

Egypt's Tourism Industry: Socio-Economic Instabilities and Impact

The tourism industry in Egypt has benefited from the many facets of the country's heritage, ranging from its deep-rooted civilisation, intellectual capital, multi-cultural influences, and other aspects that shaped its diversity such as historical events, educational processes, religions, and ecological elements. The weather and geography add more diversity, providing a multitude of benefits to Egypt as a magnificent tourism destination in all seasons. The Egyptian economy relies heavily on tourism with significant importance for GDP; however, recent political instabilities have led to a big drop in the industry. Data collected betwen 1995 and 2014 shows the huge potential and demand for Egyptian tourism where tourists come from 49 countries. On the other hand, the data show the key factors impacting tourism demand including the political situation, GDP per capita, price index, distance, and marketing efforts such as word of mouth (Faragalla, 2018).

Individual marketing initiatives and relying on word of mouth are not enough to revive the Egyptian tourism industry in the shadow of crisis, if government efforts are misdirected. For instance, current marketing campaigns and government officials, including the tourism ministry, ignore political and security instability in their advertisements, claiming that resorts and tourist destinations are secured regardless of instabilities happening in other places that could be

close to the destinations. The other problem is they are following a 'business as usual model' instead of working under a 'crisis model', thus it is suggested that the Egyptian government negligent in managing and resolving the crisis (Avraham & Ketter, 2016).

The dominant feature of all Egyptian tourism crises is low occupancy rates in the tourist facilities, including airlines. The events of the 1st Gulf war in Iraq affected the tourism sectors in several countries of the Middle East, including Egypt, with a decrease in tourist numbers by 14.8 percent, while tourism income dropped from 2.07 million dollars in 1989 to 1.99 million in 1990. Terrorist attacks and political violence in September 1992 reduced the number of tourists by 22% in 1993, and the number of tourist nights by 30%, while income declined by 2%. Such events had a direct negative effect on the Egyptian national economy, with the country being denounced worldwide as an unsafe and unstable destination (Shobr, 2007).

The number of tourists was nearly 15 million before the 2011 revolution and dropped to nearly 8 million by 2014. Such a decline has happened repeatedly since the Egyptian state already has a long history with security and political instabilities, demonstrating an accumulation of failures and inability to provide any lasting and effective solutions. Consequently, major countries are losing trust in Egypt as a tourism destination including their biggest two markets - Russia and the UK. While foreign tourism companies such as Thomas Cook have suffered major financial loss due to issues in Egypt, the biggest loss indeed is for the Egyptian economy (Saleh and Ram, 2015).

An empirical study reveals that the recent wave of political and security instabilities in the middle east and Mediterranean region, especially after the Arab Spring, has had negative consequences and impacts on tourism growth (Perles-Ribes et al., 2016). Another study examining such consequences in the aftermath of the Egyptian revolution, notes that many tourism professionals and businesses are considering leaving the industry or even the country (Elshaer & Saad, 2017).

However, it is a mistake or misunderstanding to consider the Arab Spring in itself as a negative and harmful transition, because it simply represents the natural call for reform after corruption and persecution had reached its peak in the Middle East. However, the post-Arab Spring stage has backfired due to corrupt ruling elites supporting by the deep seeded problems from the inside and linking with neoliberal capitalist western allies.

The image represented in the international media is that the Arab Spring brought instability to the region, while the Western governments were trying to support the corrupt military-backed regimes as the only way to stabilise the situation. Since early history there is ongoing propaganda to support the continuity of status quo, just to prevent democratic reforms from happening in the Middle East that could revive a civilisation that would compete with the west. Such neoliberal capitalist policy is presented in the media as angelic aid but it actually causes damage. For instance, the financial loans of the IMF were given to Egypt even though the government was corrupt and spent to increase persecution and repression against opposition reformers. Such loans led to heavy debt, poverty and misery. Foreign investors were able to own Egyptian assets and control the local economy through privatisation and other neoliberal capitalist policies. The Egyptian pound became worthless, while inflation reached a peak. Salaries for middle and low classes remained low while the elites dominated the economy through monopoly, corruption, and favouritism. Moreover, the excuse that corrupt and militarised regimes can stabilise security does not make any sense because terrorism and security failures increase dramatically in a systematic manner where there is poverty and political persecution.

The destruction of the economic sector in Egypt (including tourism) started long before either the Arab Spring or when Egypt won the war against Israel and secured a deal to be an ally with the west by maintaining good bilateral relations based on neoliberal capitalism. These transitions led to increased security, political and socioeconomic failures despite the Arab Spring claiming to be a reforming process. Although neoliberal capitalists are persistent in maintaining their political economic order in the Middle East, the Arab Spring also seems to be continuously evolving into a tougher wind of change, as a natural transition and reaction to the deteriorating situation (Abul-Magd, 2016; El Tarouty, 2015; Joya, 2017; Shenker, 2016; Springborg, 2017; Teti *et al*., 2017).

Egypt's Travel Industry: Evolutions and Impact of Instabilities

The economic crisis in post-revolution Egypt casts its shadow on the flag carier Egyptair, which is already suffering a huge collapse. The losses incurred by the airline have reached EGP 4 billion in 6 month as a response to a currency floating decision. The government is supporting the airline all the way, but the airline seems to have no strategy other than to

continue ineffective and naive strategies such as increasing their prices, instead of undertaking truly reforming initiatives. (Cairoscene, 2017).

The deterioration of the security situation facing travel and tourism in the aftermath of the 2011 revolution in Egypt was harshly criticised as a failure, a weakness, and incompetent. It formed part of an ineffective strategy dealing with the overall governance crises. (Aboulenein & Kasolowsky, 2016; Alexander *et al*., 2015; Associated Press, 2015; Daily Sabah, 2015; Engel, 2015; Fahim *et al*., 2015; Karasik, 2016; Levin & Strohm, 2015; MacAskill *et al*., 2015; Matthews, 2016; Meky, 2015; Porter, 2016; Russia Today, 2015; Slack, 2015; Topham, 2016; Townsend & Beaumont, 2015; Vick, 2016; Youssef, 2015). The Egyptian state has come under criticism due to lack of transparency regarding aviation accidents especially after the 1999 Egyptair incident in the USA. There have been different responses from the counties impacted by such occurrences. For instance, France under president Holland was more flexible in accepting the potential threats of terrorism facing Egypt under president El-Sisi. On the other hand, Britain and Russia reacted more firmly by suspending flights to Sharm el-Sheikh (Walsh & Fahim, 2016).

It is very dangerous to manipulate attitudes and opinions using tragedies such as civil aircraft accidents; global attention from media, governments and the supporters of accident victims can exert huge pressures that may add great economic burden, as well as legal, political and reputational damage. For instance, recent investigations into the Malaysian airline accident MH17 revealed that the plane was shot by a Russian missile and this led the victims' families to sue president Putin and his government, while Russia was also criticised for not backing a UN investigation into the incident, making the situation worse. Ironically, a strong similarity exists between this case and the Egyptian case where a Russian jet was hit by a terrorist attack in Sinai; the cases were handled by the Egyptian and Russian governments in controversial and secretive manner (Smyth, 2016).

The Russian government reacted to the latter case by becoming hesitant when considering the travel and tourism security of their citizens in Egypt. A series of airport security checks and inspections by Russian experts were agreed in Egypt before lifting the Russian ban. Although the airport security in Egypt tried to improve their measures, tools and techniques, the Russian experts were not fully satisfied. Despite improvements, there were several shortcomings,

especially those demonstrated by the smuggling of a fake bomb into an airport. The airport security personnel in Egypt were able to detect the explosives, but they couldn't apply appropriate measures of emergency management after the detection, without endangering the safety of passengers and causing massive flight delays (Russian Aviation, 2017). A week after the last Russian airport security visit to Egypt, two power cuts occurred in Cairo airport within 48 hours. Such incidents certainly affected the ongoing negotiations between Egyptian and Russian governments on lifting the travel ban (Daily News, 2017b). The second power cut lasted for 2 hours and airport authorities didn't restore supply quickly using emergency generators. This kind of problem could be a security catastrophe, facilitating the smuggling of suspicious or dangerous people, as a direct result of political and security instabilities. In addition to posing a major security and economic threat, it led to travel delays, panic and inconvenience to travellers (Hashish, 2017).

On the other hand, Britain refused to lift their travel ban on Egypt's most attractive tourism destination in Sharm El-Sheikh, even after security measures and technologies were introduced by the Egyptian airport authorities. The UK consider the Egyptian government to be incompetent in dealing with the endless security instability and not tracking and punishing the culprits and defaulters of security failures. (Gardner, 2017).

Table 2 summarises a number of the key security crises in Egypt's travel sector over the past 45 years. It is clear from these data, and those presented in Table 1 that the instabilities facing the travel and tourism industry in Egypt usually happen during a period of political, security and socio-economic crises as illustrated in Figure 1, which illustrates that more and more extreme incidents happened after the Arab Spring was intensified after military rule.

In assessing the causes and effects of terrorism, instability and conflict in the Middle East, there are several causes and effects as illustrated in Figure 2. The causes need to be examined in future quantitative studies, with indepth sociological, geopolitical and statistical analysis. As an initial offering, Table 3 outlines the relationship between the potential instabilities facing Egypt, interrogating the relationships between intensity and frequency using risk impact assessment methodologies for assessing travel and tourism.

Table 2: Security Crises History in Egyptian Travel		
Year	Event	Assessment
1973	Cairo-bound plane crashed in Cyprus	killing the 37 people on board (Keneally, 2016)
1976	EgyptAir' flight heading to Bangkok and crashed there	killing all 52 people on board and other19 on the ground (Keneally, 2016)
1976	EgyptAir' domestic flight hijacked demanding to be taken to Libya	law enforcement successfully raided the plane and arrested the hijackers
1985	EgyptAir' Athens-bound flight 648 was hijacked, and landed in Malta	a raid led to the deaths of crew members, 58 of the 95 passengers and 2 of 3 hijackers (Keneally, 2016)
1999	EgyptAir' Flight 990, Boeing 767 crashed off the coast of Nantucket, USA	Killing all 217 people on board. (Keneally, 2016)
2002	EgyptAir' flight to Tunisia crashed upon landing	14 of the 62 people on board died. (Raseef22, 2016)
2004	Flash airlines flight 604 from Sharm ElShiekh to Charle De Gaulle crashed due to pilot error.	135 passengers and 13 crew members killed (Raseef22, 2016)
2015	A321 airbus flight from Sharm elSheikh to St Petersburg was blown of by a bomb in midair over Sinai	ISIS claimed responsibility, the 224 Russian passengers and crew died (Raseef22, 2016)
2016	EgyptAir' Cairo-bound plane was hijacked to Cyprus	the hijackers let passengers leave and was eventually arrested (Keneally, 2016)
2016	EgyptAir' flight MS804, plunged into the eastern Mediterranean en route from Paris to Cairo.	Traces of the explosive material were found in the debris but crash cause remains under investigation.

Figure 2. Cause-Effect Diagram for Terrorism in the Middle East
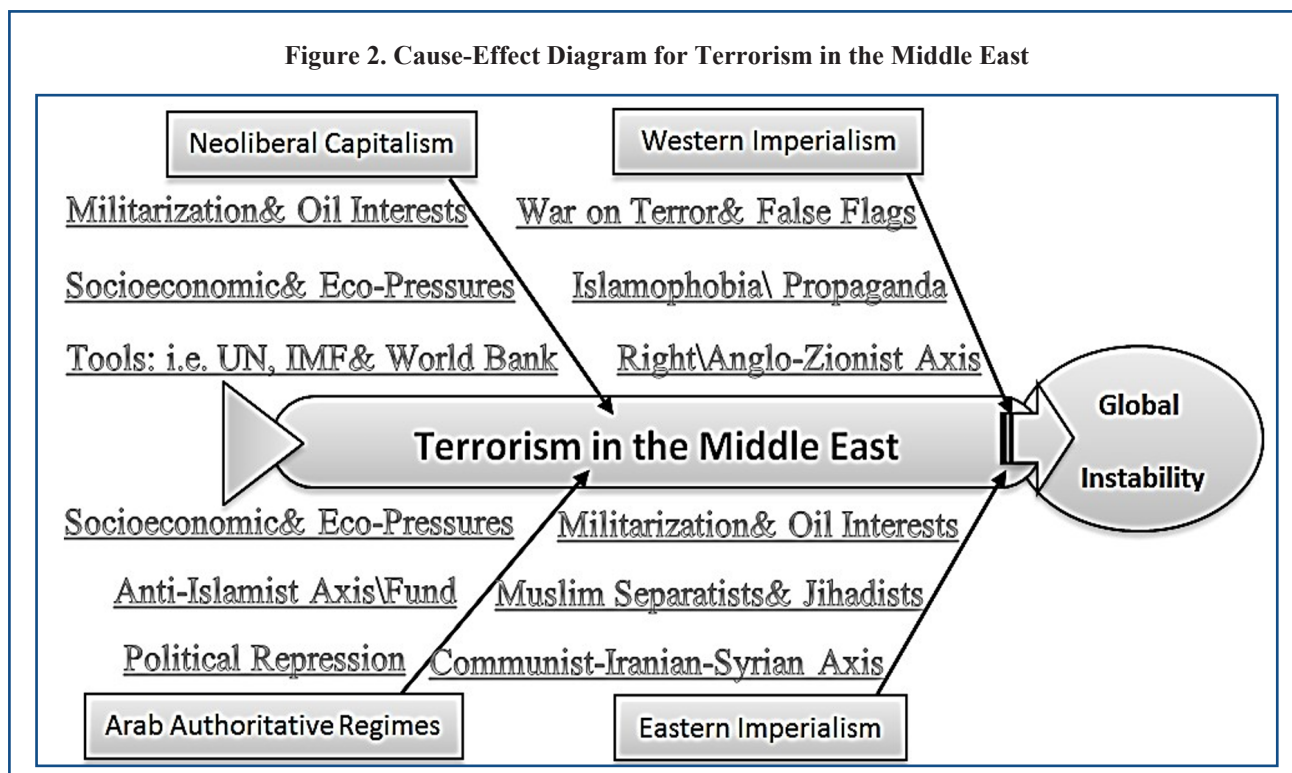
Concluding remarks

For Millenia, the Middle East has been the centre of attention from both east and west for its ideal geopolitical and economic potential, making it one of the most threatened regions with regard to global security. Moreover, Egypt has constituted the region's corner stone of stability throughout history. The relief, recovery, reconstruction, and rehabilitation of this country in the aftermath of recent political and security instability is crucial for regional and global stability. Egypt has suffered continuous attempts to minimise its regional leadership through collaboration between anti-Islamist countries or from western imperialists (i.e. USA) or the Arabian Gulf (i.e. Saudi and UAE) who all seek to exert influence and secure their interests. On the other hand, Arab nations still cling to democratic reforms while respecting their Islamic identity, even though they are divided between liberals and Islamists.

This paper discusses inter-disciplinary issues where religion can play a crucial role in economic and security stabilization. For instance, religious tourism relies on the deep-rooted cultural heritage and religious

Probability	Impact			
	Minor	Moderate	Major	Catastrophic
Rare	animal rights' abuse in Egypt	Western political crisis	aviation emergencies	war against neighbours \ West
Unlikely	drop in cultural\ education exchange	Western economic crisis	infrastructure damage in Egypt	terror \ insurgency against neighbours \ West
Moderate	media \ image criticism for the West	environmental crises in Egypt	rise of Muslim \ Western hate & cultural clash	terror\ insurgencies in Egypt
Likely	media \ image criticism for Egypt	refugee flux to Europe	organised crime i.e. trade in arms, drugs & artefacts	socioeconomic\ public health crisis in Egypt
Very likely	expertise migration	women \ children at risk in Egypt	failed travel& tourism services\ business	political& religious repression in Egypt

Table 3. Terrorism Risk Assessment in Post-Arab Spring (Egyptian Case)

monuments to bring economic and political benefits. On the other hand, religiously motivated terrorism and conflicts could lead to security and economic disasters not only nationally and regionally but even globally.

Egypt is at the top of the wish list for many tourists worldwide, due to its precious cultural heritage treasures, its historical and ecological sites. All countries must collaborate to protect such places not only through dealing with the effects of the threats facing them but, through addressing the causes and roots of such risks in preventive and proactive manners. Baseline information and impact assessments explain the links between security and political instability and how this influences socio-economic developments; in particular this paper considers how the travel and tourism industry can suffer dramatic losses. In the case of Egypt, historical assessment demonstrates the strong links between political and security failures and tourism, particularly after the controversial peace treaty between Egypt and Israel. Such instabilities reached their peak in the late-90s with the growth of radical terrorism; then started to decline after the Egyptian state changed its strategy to negotiation. However, such peacebuilding initiatives ended in failure in the mid-2000s and kept deteriorating until the Arab Spring sparked social unrest seeking reform and change from political and socioeconomic failures. Yet, the reaction to demands for positive change was bloody and destructive, since democratic reforms were replaced by corrupt militarised regimes and their western imperial supporters.

The historical review shows that western countries who supported dictatorships such as Mubarak in countering terrorism have been continuously failing to achieve stability by using excessive force. Therefore, it is time to use wisdom and peacemaking rather than more force under the guise of WOT to solve this problem for the common good of global peace. Major Islamist militias in Arab countries have revised and abandoned their old violent approach against tourists and governments to follow mainstream scholars of Islam who condemn any terror attack against civilians, while encouraging peaceful activism for political reform. On the other hand, the latest and most extreme generation of terrorist organisations such as ISIS have evolved as a result of the orchestrated WOT in post-9/11 and the subsequent invasion of Iraq.

Such terrorists require careful measures to counter them, ideally by de-radicalising their recruits through dialogue and collaboration with major and mainstream

Islamic groups and scholars. Terrorism since 9/11 is seen in several studies as being associated with the orchestrated WOT to control the region's resources and to serve Western imperialism rather than the Islamic cause (Ashour, 2015; Forster, 2016; Iltis, 2016; Kreig, 2016).

Western imperialist policies use the WOT as a new cover-up after the unjustified and aggressive Iraq invasion. They seek to return the rich Middle East region to an endless cycle of chaos; in order to exploit its resources through corrupt regimes, while providing a plausible excuse to win global public opinion. However, Western countries are in a dilemma because they cannot trust the Arab states and their authorities to stabilise their tourist destinations because those same Arab countries sustain their corrupted dictatorship rule by sustaining security failures in the so-called WOT. In this case, mitigation of security and political crises could be disastrous, since the continuous conflict assists in perpetuating the status quo (Ashour, 2007; Byman & Moller, 2016; Forster, 2016; Hassan, 2007; Kofas, 2016; Mari & Issa, 2016; Marshall, 2015; Tripathi, 2012; Wildangel, 2015).

It is obvious that Western right wing politics play a dangerous role in the Middle East, by using media, lobbies, and grassroots to keep the region destabilised for their interests and agendas. They influence the general public in western countries to vote for warlords and fascist policies which shift the attention of the economy towards security instead of social welfare. The Western wars against Arab and Muslim countries create more threats than they mitigate. On the other hand, growing awareness in the west, especially after the Khashoggi scandal, has led to successful pressure against right wing politics and hopefully will continue to address more comprehensive solutions for the Middle East crisis through sustainability and peacebuilding, rather than civilisation clashes and politics of fear. Islamists are not the only dominating power in Arabic societies, and therefore not a serious threat against Western countries, since there could be a better scenario where a stable civil state could be achieved without being ruled by military or religious entities.

The old-fashioned 'WOT' strategy is proven to be continuously failing and causes serious consequences not only impacting the Middle East but also global security. Therefore, without building a peaceful sustainable approach to counter terrorism in the Middle East, it would be almost impossible to expect peace and stability, and thereby facilitate worldwide travel.

There is also a misconception that, relying on the tourism sector more than other industries could be enough for sustainable development. Although the tourism sector can contribute a lot to GDP and the economy, other sustainability aspects should be considered such as the social and environmental dimensions. Achieving social welfare and security are core objectives of sustainable development. Therefore, tourism cannot be sustainable if it only serves the interests of the rich in a corrupted system, especially in the case of neoliberal capitalism where developed countries try to maintain unequal development in developing countries, resulting in poor industrial and socioeconomic conditions while supporting fancy tourism facilities to host the rich. These socioeconomic issues also lead to the intensification of political and security instability in developing countries, as in the case of terrorism in the Middle East.

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