



The Importance of Revolutions: The Case of Lebanon in the 2019 October Revolution

POL499H: Senior Study

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Abstract:

Due to corruption, sectarianism, state negligence, lack of basic public services, lack of transparency and accountability, economic collapse, and many other issues that increased the discontent of the population daily, Lebanese citizens decided to revolt against the current corrupt political system on October 17th, 2019. During the revolution, protestors wanted to remove all political leaders, overthrow the system, and change the regime entirely. However, post-revolution, the protestors' demands were not achieved, and the government was not overthrown. The literature tackles the failure of the revolution without mentioning the positive changes that did happen, even if the revolution was not successful. This senior study will tackle the following research question: Why was the 2019 Lebanese October Revolution important to happen, despite its failure? This Senior Study will aim to provide answers to this case study by indicating the positive outcomes of the revolution, which are completely neglected because of the overall failure of overthrowing the system. These positive changes would not have happened without the eruption of the revolution, which explains its importance, despite its failure.

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Introduction:

On October 17, 2019, thousands of Lebanese citizens decided to go to the streets and revolt against the government with the slogan of “Kellon Ya’ne Kellon”, meaning “All of them, means all of them”. Behind this revolution is a multitude of reasons that were accumulated and unresolved over the years: corruption, sectarianism, state negligence, lack of basic public services, and many other issues (Khatib, 2022). These reasons infuriated the whole population to the point where the discussion of a WhatsApp Tax was enough to trigger the revolution (Azar, 2019). As such, during the revolution, protestors wanted to remove all political leaders, overthrow the system, and change the regime entirely, as they advocated for the resignation of the Lebanese President of the Republic, the Parliament, and the Cabinet, and demanded social, economic, and political reforms. However, post-revolution, many articles, such as Khatib (2022) and International Crisis Group (2020) have called this revolution a "failed revolution", as all the protestors' needs were not acquired, and the government was not overthrown. The literature tackles the failure of the revolution without mentioning the positive political changes that did happen, even if the revolution was not successful. The positive political change in this paper corresponds to a small positive shift that happened in the political realm in Lebanon due to the revolution, which would not have occurred if the revolution did not happen in the first place. These unprecedented positive shifts were the long-awaited awakening of the people, the walls of fear breaking down, the mobilization of hundreds of thousands of people, the revival of the Lebanese population’s relationship with politics, the spread of hope and optimism, the achievement of collective anger toward the government, the reclaimant of public spaces, and the undeniable role of women and the youth. The objective of this study is to delve into and analyze the importance of this revolution despite its failure. As such, this topic will help us highlight the aforementioned positive outcomes in detail

that make this revolution important, even if the revolution was not able to overthrow the whole system and achieve the protestors' needs. It is of paramount importance to tackle this topic, as it can help us analyze the positive outcomes of the revolution that would not have been achieved if the revolution did not occur. Hence, even if the revolution did fail, this topic will showcase the importance of the Lebanese revolution, as it did achieve some positive political change, keeping in mind the corrupt and sectarian structure of the Lebanese political system and the difficulty of shaking this 30-year-old system. The timeframe selected for this research study is between 2019, including the start of the Lebanese October Revolution, till 2022, to assess the outcomes post-revolution.

Research Question and Hypothesis

In order to achieve the objective of the paper, the following research question was formed: *Why was the 2019 Lebanese October Revolution important to happen, despite its failure?* This question is essential to ask because when we attempt at understanding the dynamics of the Lebanese political system and the revolution that occurred in October 2019, we can better analyze the unique positive consequences that did happen in Lebanon due to the revolution, despite the rigidity of the Lebanese political system and the difficulty of shaking the government as a whole. That being said, we can understand the importance of this revolution in breaking the wall of fear that the whole Lebanese population had and their attempt at mass mobilization in order to counter the strong regime that is in power for over 30 years. The revolution did fail, as the regime did not fall and was not overthrown, however, we should not neglect the positive attributes that were unique to this revolution. As such, this research proposal is expected to answer the subsequent hypothesis: If the Lebanese revolution was not able to overthrow the system and achieve the protestors' needs, then the positive changes that did happen due to the Lebanese revolution are more likely to be

neglected because the overall revolution failed. This means that my argument is that the Lebanese revolution resulted in positive changes, which are completely neglected because of the overall failure of overthrowing the system. These positive changes would not have happened without the eruption of the revolution, which explains its importance, despite its failure. The independent variable is the failed Lebanese revolution, which led to the dependent variable, neglecting the positive changes and outcomes. This means that, because the Lebanese revolution failed and was not able to achieve its goal of overthrowing the system, the political changes that did happen due to the revolution were completely neglected, in turn, neglecting the importance of the whole revolution. Thus, despite the failure of the Lebanese revolution, the unique positive changes that did happen due to the revolution showcase the importance of this revolution, even if it failed as a whole.

For this paper, it is crucial to define the concepts that are used throughout the entirety of the paper. First, revolution is a widely contested term with no definite universal definition. However, for the sake of the research paper, the definition of Goldstone (2014) will be used: “Revolution is the forcible overthrow of a government through mass mobilization in the name of social justice to create new political institutions”. Also, Goldstone (2022) includes elements that should have been achieved for a movement to be called a revolution. He states that a revolution should have the following elements: mass mobilization, revolutionary methods, and deep underlying discontent with the regime. To define the October Lebanese revolution and assess whether the term “revolution” could be used to express this movement, this paper will attempt to see if the elements of a revolution were included in the Lebanese movement. The Lebanese population mobilized from many sects and regions because of their discontent and took over the street for a forcible overthrow of the Lebanese government. That being said, this paper will consider the Lebanese

October movement as a “revolution”. As the revolution was unable to achieve its goal of overthrowing the current system and replacing it with a new democratic system that is made by the people and to the people, this paper, in accordance with many articles such as that of Khatib (2022) and International Crisis Group (2020), will consider the Lebanese revolution as a failed revolution. To define the positive political change that occurred due to the Lebanese revolution, positive political change in this paper corresponds to a small positive shift that happened in the political realm in Lebanon due to the revolution, which would not have occurred if the revolution did not happen in the first place. The discussion section will thoroughly explain the small positive political changes that did occur during the revolution, which were neglected because of the overall failure of the revolution.

Methodology

This paper is a case study design, as it specifically studies the case of Lebanon and why the Lebanese revolution was important to happen, despite its failure. The results of this study cannot be generalized to explain why every revolution is important to happen and is specific to only one country, proving that it is a case study. With this one entity being examined, a more complete understanding can be projected. To fulfill this study’s purpose, the research will rely on secondary resources to determine the situation in Lebanon pre-revolution, during the revolution, and post-revolution to understand the dynamics of the political structure of Lebanon and the outcomes post-revolution. Moreover, quantitative and qualitative data will be used to assess the importance of this revolution, despite its failure. In this manner, the secondary data will be used to derive previous research made by scholars to identify the gaps I aim to fill in my research paper. These secondary data about the Lebanese situation will be attained by researching in JSTOR and Google Scholar to establish the literature in regard to this topic.

Literature Review:

This paper aims to identify the positive changes that did happen due to the October Revolution in Lebanon but were neglected because of the failure of the revolution. Through establishing the aforementioned, it could be concluded that the revolution was important to happen. To do so, the literature review will describe Lebanon's situation pre-revolution, during the revolution, and post-revolution.

Lebanon pre-revolution

Lebanon's situation pre-revolution was a crisis and deadlock scenario, as sectarianism, corruption, lack of basic services, lack of transparency and accountability, and many other issues led to a dysfunctional system. First, the political system in Lebanon is a sect-based power-sharing political system, where political authorities are decided according to their religious affiliations, as specified in the 1989 Taif Agreement, which is the accord that ended the civil war in Lebanon. This sectarian system that persists in practice for over 30 years is considered one of the reasons behind Lebanon's problems (Collard, 2019). To elaborate, job opportunities in the government and the public sector are distributed and prioritized among sects and are not generally based on competence and merit (The Economist, 2019). Moreover, as the state is unable to provide basic services to its citizens, such as drinkable water, electricity, public healthcare, and free education, sectarian elites and their political parties have taken advantage of this situation to provide some of these services to themselves and to their connections only (BBC, 2020). As such, favoritism and clientelism are not only restricted to this issue but are dominant in every aspect of the public sphere, where the citizens who have relations and connections to the sectarian elites or their political parties are prioritized over any Lebanese citizen.

Regarding the economic situation, Lebanon was the third most indebted nation worldwide (Shawish, 2019). The latter is the result of years of accumulated debt, with no proper rescue plan by the government. The situation was aggravated by the mass emigration of the Lebanese population to countries with better standards of living. Moreover, tourism declined due to the instability faced nationally and regionally. Also, in 2018, the CEDRE international donor conference occurred in Paris to enhance Lebanon's economy. The latter pledged to conditionally donate over \$11 billion if the Lebanese government implements specific reforms (Amnesty International, 2019). As the government was not able to implement these reforms, aid was not granted to the government. The debt-to-GDP reached 152% and the Real Gross Domestic Product (GDP) growth corresponded to -6.9%, based on the International Monetary Fund (IMF, 2019). Hence, the Lebanese cabinet, headed by Hariri, declared "a state of economic emergency" due to the deteriorating and stagnating economy in the country.

Alongside all these issues, two events occurred prior to the revolution and were considered triggers to the October 17 Lebanese Revolution: the wildfires and the WhatsApp tax. According to the Lebanese Civil Defense, on October 13, over 100 wildfires unexpectedly broke out all over the country (Relief Web Report, 2019). The previous literature is in accordance with one another, where scholars agree that the government's inability to halt the expansion of the fires due to the lack of proper equipment and lack of emergency readiness augmented the citizens' discontent and anger toward the government (Rackickaja, 2019). The second event was on October 17, when the Lebanese cabinet declared a state of economic emergency and proposed harsh measures to increase the state's revenue. The ministers declared a set of taxes on tobacco, petrol, and a 6\$ monthly charge on WhatsApp, Facebook Messenger, and Facetime (Amnesty International, 2019). Moreover, the ministers declared that the government will soon discuss a bill to increase value-

added tax by 2% in 2021 and an extra 2% in 2022, meaning a total of 15% value-added tax (Deutsche Welle, 2019). The literature considers that these harsh fiscal measures increased the anger of the Lebanese population to the point where they decided to go to the streets on the same day to demonstrate and protest in Beirut (Mordecai, 2020).

Lebanon during the revolution

The literature discussed that due to the deteriorating situation in Lebanon pre-revolution and the inability and unwillingness of the Lebanese government to deal with the state's political and economic crisis, a large protest erupted in Lebanon on October 17, 2019, demanding the withdrawal of the new taxes, alongside the resignation of all political authorities and a new independent technocratic and functional government. Moreover, according to Chehayed and Sewell (2019), the people also demanded new parliamentary elections to occur, which were grounded on a new electoral law. Additionally, they demanded the removal of the political authorities' banking secrecy and demanded the formation of an independent investigation in order to feature the stolen and abused public funds. Although some scholars stated that the protestors had common goals, however, the literature also presents that many protestors also disagreed and were not united when it came to other demands, such as Hezbollah's weapons, the creation of a civil state, and the need for changing the entire political system (Rackickaja, 2019). Vohra (2020) argues that the reason why the demands of the people were diverse, not fully united, and lacking a clear vision and an organized plan of action is due to the leaderless nature of the revolution, as the revolution had no leader.

These demonstrations were not only in Downtown Beirut but were widespread across the entire country, where the people went to the streets and held onto the public spaces to revolt against the system. Tripoli in specific, being one of the most deprived cities in Lebanon, hosted a large protest

and was referred to as “the bride of the revolution”. The demonstrations across Lebanon were peaceful in general. The repertoire of contention was known amongst the Lebanese population: people were burning tires and blocking roads, they were also carrying the Lebanese flag up high while chanting the Lebanese anthem; and were dancing and singing traditional Lebanese songs (Dahrouge, Nammour, Lotf, et al., 2019). However, some protestors resulted to violent means when they started to damage buildings and shops. It is also crucial to note that the protestors also staged sit-ins and human chains in these public spaces as other forms of the repertoire of contention. Many tents were placed in these public spaces, as the people claimed these places and turned them into a location for resistance- a state within a state that is free from the authority of the current regime.

The people were able to mass mobilize and revolt in hopes of overthrowing the current system. The wall of fear was broken and men, women, students, LGBT groups, syndicates and labor unions, intellectuals, and civil society went to the streets to oppose the current political system (Social Watch, 2019). It is worth mentioning that women were at the front of this movement. They actively demanded their rights as Lebanese citizens and as women. They were also able to create shields at the forefront to prevent violence from occurring. Moreover, they prepared meals for the demonstrators and took charge of cleaning these public spaces (Social Watch, 2019).

In response to this mass demonstration, several ministers withdrew from the government (Al Jazeera, 2019). Moreover, Prime Minister Saad Hariri resigned on October 29, which increased the hopes of the Lebanese in overthrowing the current system (The Guardian, 2019). Regarding the position of the army, some believe that the army remained neutral, while others assert that the army supported the regime and did not side with the revolutionaries (Azhari, 2019). After several weeks, the revolution lost its momentum and was not able to sustain itself.

Lebanon post-revolution

It is evident that the revolution was not able to overthrow the system and achieve the wants and needs of the people. Despite the huge unprecedented momentum in the beginning, the revolution failed to address and solve the numerous demands that the protestors had. Moreover, scholars agree that the situation in Lebanon post-2019 is even worse than the situation pre-revolution (Walker, 2020). Human Rights Watch (2020) stated that Lebanon underwent multiple crises after 2019, which are the COVID-19 pandemic, the August 4 Beirut Explosion, and the economic full collapse with the deterioration of the Lebanese Lira.

COVID-19 hit Lebanon in February 2020, when the Lebanese citizens were still revolting, but were starting to divide and fragment. In March, Lebanon initiated a full lockdown, which stopped citizens from going to public spaces and protesting. Comaty, in an interview with the Lebanese Center for Policy Studies (LCPS), stated that the pandemic benefited the government, as it helped the government to restore order, repress individuals from protesting, and regain lost control over these public spaces. Schoorel (n.d) stated that a revolution is impossible to unfold without access to the streets- the pandemic was the main reason behind the halt of the October revolution; it also catalyzed the rapidly deteriorating political and economic conditions.

On August 4, 2020, an explosion erupted in Beirut, which was caused by the release of 2,750 tons of ammonium nitrate that has been improperly stored in the Port of Beirut. Around 200 people were killed, 6,500 were injured, and approximately 300,000 people were left homeless (Maalouf, 2021). The government stayed idle and not a single entity was held accountable up to this point (The United Nations, 2022). Only a few protests occurred, despite the possibility that this tragedy could have reignited the anger of the Lebanese population to revolt again and give the 2019 Lebanese Revolution a second chance.

Moreover, another issue that occurred post-revolution is that the Lebanese Pound lost more than 80% of its value. The black market value of the Lebanese pound (LBP) has fallen from 1,500 LBP against the US dollar to an unparalleled low of 40,000 LBP in 2022 (Chehayeb, 2022). The depreciation of the Lebanese pound has augmented the percentage of the population living under the poverty line and has aggravated the already-critical economic situation in Lebanon.

Lebanon witnessed the 2022 Parliamentary elections in May, where scholars were eager to see whether the revolution has had an impact on the citizens' voting preferences. In practice, the May 15 elections did not have a substantial difference or change in the number of seats per political party. However, the result showed a beacon of hope, with 13 newly elected independent candidates. Professor Imad Salemeiy told Al Arabiya (2022) that the Lebanese political system, for the first time, is seeing candidates that are non-confessionally affiliated. Another noteworthy difference is that Hezbollah and its allies lost several seats in comparison to the 2018 parliamentary elections (Dakroub, 2022).

Gaps:

The literature review showed that the revolution has failed to achieve the demands of the people. Moreover, the literature did cover how the current situation in Lebanon is worse than the pre-revolutionary situation in Lebanon prior to October 2019. However, no study to date has discussed the importance of the revolution, despite its failure. This means that each study present has neglected the importance of the revolution because of its failure and because the situation now is worse than before. That being said, previous research has not tackled all the positive changes that happened due to the revolution that would not have happened without this event, even if it failed in general. Moreover, the previous research presents causation that the worsening of the situation post-revolution is due to the Lebanese October Revolution. Thus, my paper will attempt to fulfill

this gap in the literature by exploring how, despite its failure, the revolution did achieve unprecedented positive change that would not have occurred without it and should not be neglected. Taking into account the structure of the Lebanese system and its difficulty in shaking it, my paper will show how the revolution should be considered as an important event with positive outcomes, even if it failed.

Analysis:

This Senior study's argument is that the Lebanese revolution resulted in positive attributes, which are disregarded because of the overall failure of overthrowing the system. These positive changes would not have happened without the eruption of the revolution, which explains its importance, despite its failure. As such, the analysis of this Senior study will first tackle the structure of the Lebanese political system and the difficulty of shaking the entire system. Second, this paper will analyze the international community's role and how the latter acted as another barrier to the success of the revolution. Then, it will focus on how the political and economic situation worsened post-revolution, but the aforementioned is not a causal relationship. Lastly, the paper will analyze the positive outcomes of the revolution that would not have happened if the revolution did not occur. The analysis shown is based on the literature reviewed and according to primary documents and reports.

The Structure of Lebanon's Political System: Difficulty in Shaking the Entire System

This section will analyze the roots of the current Lebanese system to show its difficulty in shaking the entire structure that has been in place for around 80 years. During World War II, specifically on November 22, 1943, Lebanon gained its independence. As a result, an unwritten national pact was formulated by the religious political authorities that placed the foundations of a political

sectarian system and reinforced this ideology (Harb, 2006). The National Pact divided the high-level posts in government based on a confessional ground, meaning the distribution of political power according to religious communities. By a portion of six to five, Christians outnumbered Muslims. Also, the President's seat was reserved for an individual coming from a Maronite Christian background, the Prime Minister was reserved for a Suni Muslim, and the Speaker of the House was for a Shi'ite Muslim (Khazen, 1991). Moreover, other government posts, such as the "commander in chief of the army, leader of military intelligence, and leader of internal security" were also reserved for Maronite Christians. According to Khazen (1991), this unwritten agreement was a reflection of the interests of the religious elites and disregarded the concerns of the people. According to Bahout (2016), it is surprising that the foundations of political sectarianism survived the Lebanese civil war and were reaffirmed in the Taif Accord of 1989, even though the conflict rose initially due to political sectarianism in part. He also explains that Lebanon "is a laboratory highlighting the dysfunctions and limitations" of sectarianism. The Taif Agreement, which was created in 1989, revitalized the notion of a confessional power-sharing system and is still in place till today. In specific, the Taif Accord is considered to be the first revision of the pact, where it legitimized the provisions that were made in the National Pact but altered the representational formula in order to make it more equal between Muslims and Christians in the Parliament (Abul-Husn, 1998). It also transferred the executive power from the President to the Council of Ministers. Thus, Lebanon's political system has been on sectarian grounds for years now. This means that shaking the entire system and removing sectarianism is not an easy process.

Delving deep into the regime itself, it is known that the same men who led militias during the civil war of 1975 still hold power in the government and lead most of the parties in the parliament (Bazzi, 2020). Moreover, Bazzi (2020) stated that, till now, due to the confessional system in

Lebanon, the country is still reliant on sectarian leaders who have inherited their position from their family members, most notably their fathers. Following the civil war, in 1990, the previous militia leaders seized power over a number of government departments and public organizations, expanding their networks throughout the state (Young, 2018). These same people still have influence in the country today. Hence, the regime has been in place for over 30 years with the same men or families ruling the country, in turn, showing the power they hold. It is indeed clear that overthrowing the system and removing these strong rulers that are in power for years is a difficult process.

Moreover, in *the Routledge Handbook of Arab Spring: Rethinking Democratization*, Sadiki (2016) discusses the difficulty of removing the old regime. He elaborates by saying that removing the ruler is not enough during a revolution, as the state should go through a full transition. That being said, purging the state from the old guards who are loyal to the old regime and might and will obstruct the transition process, ending the corruption and nepotism in the government, ending the resilience of the oppressive apparatus, and presence of new social actors, are all factors that should happen in order to change the system. Taking into consideration the difficulty of achieving the latter, especially in a state like Lebanon, shows the difficulty of completely overthrowing this system during the October revolution.

International Influence

Due to globalization and the media, the world has become more interdependent, where the actions taken by the international sphere affect the national borders and vice versa. In the case of Lebanon, another factor also comes in, as Lebanese leaders rely on international powers for direct and indirect support in order to expand their influence and power within the national borders. To be specific, every sectarian authority is backed by an external power. The latter has been a pathway

for international interference in national affairs. In this case, the actions of the international actors also play a role in the realm of the October Revolution. These actions could either stand as a barrier to the success of the demands of the people or facilitate the process.

First, after the Arab Spring in 2011, Lebanon was perceived as resistant to the wave of revolutions that occurred in the Arab world. However, Lebanon was influenced by the Arab Spring indirectly, as the YouStink Movement took place in Lebanon in 2015, and then in 2019, eight years after the Arab Spring, the October Revolution erupted across the country (Fakhoury, 2019).

Regarding the October Revolution, many international actors have decided to support the Lebanese government, rather than the protestors (Hodges, 2019). For instance, after former-PM Hariri suggested economic reforms on the fourth day of the revolution, the European Union (EU) expressed confidence, in a communiqué, that they are determined that the government would carry out these economic reforms (Fakhoury, 2019). Moreover, other states including the US, the UK, Germany, Italy, France, the Arab League, Russia, and the United Nations also endorsed these reforms and believed that the government will enact these reforms (Hodges, 2019). Moreover, Russia was against the formation of a new cabinet because it disagreed with the exclusion of the traditional political authorities in Lebanon. On the other hand, the United States, a critic of Hezbollah, Iran, and Russia, was with the formation of a new cabinet that corresponds to the needs of the protestors. Despite the aforementioned statement which shows the US' support for the protestors, the States gave mixed signals on their stance regarding the October Revolution. To elaborate, at first, the US decided to freeze its aid to the Lebanese army- an aid of \$105 million specifically. However, the US then continued to neglect its prior decision on any permanent freeze to the Lebanese military (Hodges, 2019). Additionally, Hodges stated that, if the US freezes its aid, the capability of the Lebanese military will weaken, strengthening Hezbollah, Iran, and Syria.

It is noteworthy to include that, also according to Hodges (2019), it is risky for the international community to back the revolution and support the protestors because doing so might increase the accusations coming from Hezbollah and Amal regarding outside interferences. Hence, it could be summarized that the international community did not play a big role to bolster the protests, which made it even more difficult for the protestors to achieve their demands without its support.

Situation in Lebanon worsened post-2019: not due to the revolution

The literature has stated that the current situation in Lebanon is worse than the situation pre-revolution (Walker, 2020). However, it is vital to understand that the current situation has not deteriorated because of the revolution; meaning that there is no causal relationship. In an interview with Brussels International Center, Haytayan (2022) explained that the revolution overlapped with the full collapse of the state, however, this does not mean that the revolution was the reason behind the state's collapse. To elaborate, the country underwent the COVID-19 pandemic, LBP depreciation, electricity cuts, and the Beirut Explosion after 2019. For instance, the LBP depreciation, the lack of basic services and infrastructure, and the Beirut Explosion are events that occurred as a result of the corrupt government that is not able to properly govern the state. In regard to the COVID-19 pandemic, despite the start of the pandemic which was due to globalization, the spread of COVID-19 was largely due to the government as well. This means that, even though the revolution did happen before all these events, which might instigate a causal relationship, however, the revolution should not be blamed for the collapse of the state. However, it is clear that the revolution in general, and its positive outcomes, in specific, are disregarded and neglected by the people because of the current situation in Lebanon.

Positive outcomes of the Revolutions

The revolution achieved some positive outcomes that would not have happened if the revolution had not taken place. Hence, even if the revolution did fail and was not able to overthrow the whole system, Lebanon saw some unprecedented positive outcomes due to the revolution. For instance, the revolution gained unprecedented and unparalleled momentum (LCPS, 2021). Hundreds of thousands of people went to the streets and demanded an end to the ruling elites, an end to the current regime, and an end to corruption. The walls of fear have broken down and a long-awaited awakening was demonstrated by the people. They have gained the power to challenge and confront the authorities that have been in the government for over thirty years.

The revolution was able to revive the Lebanese population's relationship with politics, in comparison to the pre-revolution, where it was filled with political apathy and disdain (Khatib, 2022). That being said, Geha (2020) stated that the people who were silent and voiceless became demonstrators that "adopted a language" that showcases the political class as the "enemies of the people and as corrupt warlords" who have destroyed the country. To elaborate, when talking about the elites, the people were cursing and using slur words, which cheapened the politicians' names and their reputations forever. The revolution was a movement to challenge all the layers of oppression in the country, in hopes of replacing them with more competent names. On that note, the Lebanese population became optimistic and hopeful that they can mass mobilize to counter the regime. Moreover, Nassar (2019) stated that the revolution indicated levels of unity and decentralization, which showcases the collective anger of the population toward the government. The slogan "Kellon Ya'ne Kellon", meaning "All of them, means all of them", is proof that there are no exceptions- the revolution is against all political authorities.

Moreover, the citizens reclaimed public spaces during the revolution, which has a very powerful and symbolic meaning. The public spaces in Lebanon became a state within a state- spaces that

are free from the domination and oppression of the regime. These mass demonstrations showed the centrality of public spaces and resonated with chants and slogans that demanded change. The people also blocked highways and roads, organized sit-ins, and burned tires- which are all common repertoires of contention that assert the protestors' power in disrupting the state.

Also, it is undeniable that the role of women and the youth were also apparent in the demonstration. As the literature discussed, due to the revolution, women felt powerful and strong and, in turn, were at the forefront of the revolution and played a vital role during the protests- proving that Lebanese women are not passive when it comes to politics and democracy (The Social Watch, 2019). The youth skipped school and university classes and decided to go to the streets to advocate for their rights as well.

Despite the failure of the revolution and the deterioration of the situation in Lebanon, the revolution was able to result in 13 newly elected independent candidates after the 2022 Parliamentary elections. These new independent members of the parliament are called newcomers and gave hope to the Lebanese, as a first step, that their demands can slowly be accomplished, especially since change takes time. Because the revolution was not able to fully overthrow the system, the Lebanese population neglected and disregarded the above-mentioned unprecedented positive outcomes.

Conclusion:

This study argued that the Lebanese revolution resulted in positive changes, which are completely neglected because of the overall failure of overthrowing the system. These positive changes would not have happened without the eruption of the revolution, which explains its importance, despite its failure. In fact, the Lebanese revolution was able to mass mobilize hundreds of thousands of people and demanded the removal of all political leaders- with the slogan of "Kellon Ya'ne

Kellon”, meaning “All of them, means all of them”. The barriers of fear have fallen, and the public has finally woken up that change could happen. They had the ability to question and criticize the decision-makers who have served in the administration for more than 30 years. Also, Men, women, children, LGBT groups, labor unions, syndicates, and civil society together from all around Lebanon, from the North to the South, went to the streets and reclaimed public spaces. Optimism and hope proliferated in the streets of Lebanon for the first time. The people sang and danced to Lebanese traditional music while hoping to achieve change- to overthrow the system and replace it with a secular democracy. Despite not being able to shake the entire system, the revolution was able to show the political elites that the population does not want them anymore. It showed the world that the Lebanese population is willing to challenge the rulers and demand their rights and freedoms for the first time.

This paper also tackled the structure of the Lebanese political system and the difficulty of shaking the entire system. Also, it discussed the role of the international community and how the latter acted as another barrier to the success of the revolution. It also focused on how the political and economic situation worsened post-revolution, even though it was not caused by the revolution. The aforementioned statement showed how the revolution was blamed for the deterioration of the situation. Taking into account the structure of the Lebanese political system and its difficulty in overthrowing the system and replacing it with a new one, the role of the international community which also made it difficult for the people to achieve their wants, and the deterioration of the situation in Lebanon after the revolution, the people neglected the positive outcomes that happened due to the revolution and neglected the importance of the revolution.

My paper thoroughly discussed the positive outcomes of the revolution that would not have happened if the revolution did not occur, showing its importance. These unprecedented positive

outcomes should not be neglected. The revolution should be regarded as the first step in fighting to achieve change because change does not happen overnight and takes a lot of time- especially changing a system like the one in Lebanon.

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