CHAPTER ONE

SADAT'S POLITICAL ORIENTATION
After Sadat came to power in 1970 momentous changes took place in the Egyptian foreign policy. From being a close ally of the Soviet Union under Nasser, Sadat began to slowly steer Egypt away from its close Soviet connexion to becoming a close ally of the US. From leading the Arab world in its confrontation with Israel, Sadat ended the armed conflict and concluded peace with Israel in stages culminating in the Camp David agreements of 1978-79. From being the most influential Arab country under Nasser, Egypt came to be isolated and ostracized under Sadat. A variety of factors contributed to the break with Moscow, friendship with US, peace with Israel and isolation from the Arabs. In order to understand these and other factors an understanding of Sadat's personality, his life experiences which shaped his world view, and the functioning of political structures in Egypt is essential. This chapter makes an attempt to highlight Sadat's personality traits and style in the light of his actions.

Sadat under Nasser

One of the important factor which shaped Sadat's personality was his experience since the 1952 revolution. In the wake of the 1952 revolution he was not immediately given any high position by Nasser in the government and this prevented Sadat from building close ties with his fellow free officers. He also failed to win their respect and in fact Salah Salem ridiculed Sadat with Nasser also joining.¹

Mohamed Heikal in a penetrating enquiry, in his *Autumn of Fury*, of Sadat's multi-dimensional personality comments on the aptness of the title of Sadat's autobiography (*In Search of Identity*) thus:

His early life left him with a feeling that he belonged nowhere. He feared his father but could not love him, he could not respect his unfortunate mother and had come to resent the badge of colour which he inherited from her. He longed for sympathy and understanding, and this eagerness to please and to be accepted which remained with him throughout his life, is one of the most attractive aspects of his character. It meant that he was ready to give his allegiance to a stronger personality when he came into contact with one, and that he knew how to accept rebuffs and humiliations. But it also meant that somewhere inside him was the need to seek revenge for his sufferings. Meanwhile, the only road of escape was into the world of dreams and fantasies.2

Sadat's relations with Nasser were never close, but marred, according to his own testimony, by the "latter's deep suspiciousness and aloofness from others".3 Although Sadat was loyal to Nasser and his colleagues, he could not have been happy over the assumption of leadership by Nasser of the free officer's movement Sadat had established. Sadat saw himself as having taken personal risks and won popular acclaim as a result of his role in the AminOsman case and believed Nasser and the other free officer's suspected his ambitions

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3. Anwar el Sadat, *Revolt on the Nile* (New York: 1957), pp. ; Sadat in early 1950's had complained to an American Journalist that "the West hates the Arabs because they think that we are negroes"; Edward R.F. Sheehan, "Step by step in the Middle East", *Foreign Policy*, 22, Spring 1976, p. 7.
and were envious of his credentials as a nationalist hero.\footnote{Sadat, n. 1, p. 118.}

Whether from jealousy or disdain some of his colleagues treated him with little respect and after suffering several rebuffs, when he tried to take the initiative, Sadat withdrew to the periphery of the ruling group.\footnote{Ibid, p. 122; But Nasser was not ungenerous in acknowledging Sadat's contribution to the revolution. In 1957 he was to write in his foreword to Sadat's Revolt on the Nile, "(Sadat's) military virtues, courage and coolness, loyalty and devotion, force of character and disinterestedness and finally his love of Justice, destined him to play a leading role in the Egyptian revolution of July 23, 1952".}

This pushed him into establishing close ties with people like Sayed Marei and other conservative families. These friendships, to a certain degree, shaped Sadat's biases against the policies pursued by Nasser in the 1960's at the expense of the wealthy. Of course, Nasser made him a member of the RCC because of his role in the free officer's movement. "But Nasser most frequently used Sadat to give a pseudo significance to positions actually far from the real centers of power in Egypt. It was a clever strategy and Sadat appeared to fill the role amiably".\footnote{R.W. Baker, Egypt's Uncertain Revolution under Nasser and Sadat (London: 1978) p. 123.}

First Sadat was editor of \textit{Al-Jumhuriyah}, the government newspaper and then he was, in 1955, appointed Secretary-General of the Islamic Congress and Nasser's adviser on Gulf and Peninsula affairs.\footnote{The Washington Post (24 February 1973) revealed that Kamal Adhem had during the 1960's "provided Sadat with a steady income", Heikal, n. 2, pp.30-31 and 43. It was during this phase that Sadat developed close friendship with King Faisal and his adviser Kamal Adham, reinforcing his conservative outlook.} Then he was elected as Deputy Speaker of the National Assembly in 1957. Later Sadat was Secretary-General of the party organization named as National Union. In 1960 he was elected as Speaker of the Federal National Assembly of the UAR. As
Speaker, he led a parliamentary delegation to Moscow in May 1961 to attend the May Day celebrations. This was a significant visit in the sense that it gave Sadat a better and deeper insight into the working of the Soviet leadership. It was on this visit that he had a heated discussion marred with pronounced ideological overtones with Khrushchev. This was Sadat's first duel with the Soviet leaders. Sadat along with his wife Jehan also visited US as Speaker in 1966 at the invitation of the US Congress and was impressed by the American way of life, democracy and other values. Despite being incharge with Egypt's ties with Moscow since the 1967 war Sadat appears to have never seriously developed any rapport with the Soviet leaders. Towards the end of his reign, in December 1969, Nasser appointed Sadat as Egypt's Vice-President. After Nasser's death in September 1970, Sadat became Egypt's third President, but many of Sadat's colleagues believed that Sadat would be an interim President. But Sadat was not without political ambition or ideas and when he took over the Presidency he felt "full of challenge" to put an end to the several deviations made during Nasser


10. Ismail Fahmy, Negotiating for Peace in the Middle East (Cairo: AUC, 1983) p. 11. According to Fahmy, Sadat never understood, liked or trusted the Soviets and this attitude was amply reciprocated by the Soviets.
Sadat's reversal of many of Nasser's policies was at least partly motivated by an element of personal resentment against Nasser, a desire to undo the injustices inflicted on him and his friends and to leave his imprint on Egypt. For if his Presidency was to be more than a mere pale imitation of Nasser's he would have to do things very differently. Once in the seat of power Sadat proved quite different from the yes-man lacking a taste for politics. Almost as if he sought to erase the humiliations of the Nasser period, he set out to show himself as a man of action and decisiveness, unconcerned about the views of the lesser men who worked with him. According to Heikal Sadat "was to prove a much more resourceful and original President than anyone expected and in nothing was his personal style to be more forcefully demonstrated than in his dealings with the Soviet Union." Sadat projected himself as a pragmatist and he even called pragmatism "Arab logic". Above all, he stressed the objectivity and realism of his own peace policy towards Israel. He knew that since America's special relationship with Israel could not be weakened it would have to be accommodated and that since Egypt could no longer afford war she must make peace.

Sadat's Social Background

Sadat was also influenced politically by his class background. Sadat came from a well-off peasant family; his father owned a plot of two and half acres and had obtained the General

12. Ibid., pp. 206-14.
Certificate of Primary Education (GCPE) - an important qualification at that time which enabled him to get a job as civil servant with the British. This background is compatible both with Sadat's anti-feudalism and his respect for private property, although he never fully lost a certain populist identification with the common man from whose ranks he rose. But Sadat's populism never had the keen edge of indignation against injustice or the dislike of the wealthy which characterised Nasser.15 His short experience as a driver, journalist and as a petty entrepreneur "probably disposed him to those with the enterprise to do well with money". But Sadat's rapid mobility soon distanced him from his modest origins. Sadat's divorce of his first wife, a village girl, in favour of the educated and sophisticated Jihan was a milestone in his ascent.16 An educated and polished Jihan was to be of immense help to Sadat. She not only helped him in several ways but encouraged him regularly. Sadat's streak of submissiveness was compensated by Jihan's tremendous energy. Since Sadat was by nature lazy, Jihan did her best to make up for his weak points.17 But what attracted her in Sadat was his personality. "I respected Anwar Sadat because he was so dedicated - this is the main thing that attracted me. He wasn't a rich man, he wasn't good-looking, he wasn't from a very high family. It was his personality".18

Sadat was soon transformed from a fire-brand nationalist conspiring against the status quo into a man of moderation and

16. Ibid, pp. 73-74.
17. Heikal, n. 2, pp. 37-38
urbanity with a taste for the good things of life. In sharp contrast to Nasser who remained throughout very modest in lifestyle and refused to move in the fancy circles of the Egyptian or international social elites, Sadat gradually assimilated their life style and worldview. He acquired an overlay of cosmopolitanism which pulled him away from his own modest social and cultural roots and made him vulnerable to the blandishments of the rich and powerful inside and outside of Egypt. According to Heikal "as Sadat's fame grew, he became increasingly conscious of the contrast between his origins and his later power and glory and it was a contrast which obsessed him". 19

Whereas Nasser remained to the end little removed from his modest background and a rebel against the rich and powerful, Sadat was mainly disposed in a conservative direction and was a realist adaptable to the domestic and international power structures in which he would have to operate and where he sought acceptance. As he steered Egypt he had a range of options. He chose a 'rightist' course, conservative, stabilizing adoptive, pro-Western, while imparting to the Presidency a strongly traditionalist character. Sadat took pride in trying to lead and shape events caring little for few legal limits or the resistance of organized interests. 20

19. Sadat in a particularly revealing incident tells us how due to acute financial problems he had once thought of selling his jacket to a second-hand shop but had to change his mind due to fear that he might be branded as having stolen "such a smart garment", Heikal, n. 2, p. 7 and 30-31; R.A. Hinnebusch, Egyptian Politics Under Sadat (New York: 1985), p. 83.

Impact of Village Culture

Perhaps the most important factor which shaped Sadat's personality was the village. The village was the first polity Sadat knew. The village culture in which Sadat was brought up had a lasting impression on his personality. When he became President, he urged on his fellow citizens to imbibe "the values of the village" and helped to make peasant virtues, part of the Egyptian national character. In Sadat's perception Egypt was "one big family" in which social and political conflicts were ruled out and peace, harmony, and stability prevailed which in turn led "to contended lives the villagers lived".21 This produced in Sadat a conservative impatience and indifference to inequality. His patriarchal style of rule is an extension of Egyptian village headmanship to the national level. Perhaps the most crucial impact of village culture on Sadat was his personalization of political ties.

Vulnerability to Flattery

Sadat's shrewd adaptability is a trait often attributed to the Egyptian peasant. Throughout history, in the face of superior foreign power, the Egyptian fellah accepted defeat and submitted, but he also slowly tried to deflect harm and win favour through flattery and deference.22 This feature was pronounced in Sadat's personality throughout his career. An expert at political survival Sadat rose from a peasant to become Vice-President under Nasser largely due to

his deference to the latter. More relevant to our study is Sadat's adaptation to the hard realities of Israeli military power coupled with strong US support to Israel's policies. Sadat decided to work for friendship with the US and peace with Israel because he could not weaken US-Israeli connexion and defeat Israel. From making venomous attacks against US leaders Sadat worked to persuade the US to provide diplomatic, economic and military support to Egypt with the shrewd realism of an Egyptian fellah. This was in sharp contrast to Nasser - a proud Saidi (of upper Egypt) whose sense of honour would never let him surrender before the US or Israel.  

In most of Sadat's speeches before the 1973 October war, one can discern a combination of open defiance of the US, bewilderment at US support to Israel and fervent pleas to America for a change of heart towards Egypt. The early Egyptian success in the October War and the successful use of Arab oil weapon during the war which forced the West to reconsider their policies towards Arab-Israeli Conflict (AIC) replaced resentment with friendship towards the West. For Sadat this apparent change of heart by the West and particularly by the US was enough to satisfy the claims of his nationalism and the wrongs inflicted on Egypt. As Fouad Ajami observed, inspite of the emotional nationalism which moved Egyptians like Sadat, a thorough

23. According to Egyptians the fahlawi personality found among the peasantry is clever, adaptable, flattering to authority in its presence, but contemptuous of it in its absence. The Saidi of Upper Egypt and of Bedouin blood is supposed to be prideful, vengeful, straightforward and stubborn, Hinnebusch, n. 19, pp. 80-1 and 304; M.S.Bornstein,"From Revolution to Crisis", Ph.D., Princeton, 1986.


cultural revolution which could free Egypt from the shackles of colonialism and cultural dependency had never been carried through. This colonial hangover left Sadat highly vulnerable to the flattery heaped on him by the West.26

An instance of how vulnerable Sadat was to Western flattery came to light during Kissinger's first visit to Cairo in November 1973 soon after the October war. In his first meeting with Kissinger, Sadat confronted him with a plan for Israeli withdrawal from Arab lands and asked for Kissinger's reaction. In Kissinger's words:

I did not think it wise to begin by rejecting one of the President's ideas, however, unrealistic. And I had no wish to play the bull to Sadat's picador. So I changed the subject. Before we talked about the business at hand, I said, would the President tell me how he had managed to achieve such stunning surprise on October 6? That had been the turning point, what we were doing now was in a way its inevitable consequence. Sadat narrowed his eyes, puffed again on his pipe and smiled. He understood that I was paying him a compliment and establishing his status. He was not negotiating from weakness; he was not a supplicant; he had earned Egypt's right at the conference table, he had in short, restored Egypt's honor of self-respect ... slowly at first, but with growing animation, Sadat told his tale of lonely decisionmaking .... 27

In this way Kissinger succeeded in side-tracking the main issue and gained an insight into Sadat's personality and managed to persuade him to accept his step-by-step diplomacy instead of a comprehensive settlement. It is from this moment that Sadat became

a great hero and was lavished with great honour and praise in the West. This acceptance of Sadat and glorification of his "boldness" made Sadat ridicule the Arab leaders who opposed his peace policy and in this he adopted what Ajami called "second-hand colonial imagery". They became dwarves in place of brothers, and the Arab world an area of barbarism, darkness and disorder over which Egypt would play the role of sentry on behalf of the civilised world.

Ajami adds: "The world's mightiest power - and a civilised one as well - becomes Egypt's full partner. Libya, Syria, Iraq fade into cosmic insignificance. Egypt and her President break out in grand style". 28 In all this, Sadat perceived himself to be rescuing Egypt from the disastrous/runious evils of war and kindling in the Egyptian people a longing for peace and economic prosperity.

Kissinger's first visit was described by correspondents as resulting in love at first sight between Sadat and Kissinger. The American quickly became "my friend Henry" after one meeting. By Sadat's own account he certainly lost no time in seizing up the man he was dealing with. "We began our meeting with caution in what we had to say; but after an hour of discussion I was convinced that Kissinger was a man to be trusted; he spoke logically, his perspective was clear ...." Sadat was soon as lavish in his compliments as he had been relentless in his censure before the war. He said Kissinger was "a strategist and a man of vision, imagination and, perhaps most important of all, trust". He was the first American official to prove himself to the Arabs as "a man of integrity - direct, frank and farsighted. I trust him completely". 29


Not surprisingly Kissinger was moved at once by Sadat's urbanity and charm. He reciprocated to Sadat with his own style of flattery. Kissinger, himself flamboyant, effusive and a showman like Sadat, considered this to be a crucial part of his diplomatic style. Kissinger quickly realized that his new friend was peculiarly susceptible to such things like flattery. Kissinger is reported to have told Sadat in the presence of Ismail Fahmy, that the former (Sadat) was the first to beat him (Kissinger) at strategy. Naturally, Sadat was very proud of being called a strategic thinker and such a compliment from a self-proclaimed strategist himself must have had the disarming effect doubtless intended.30 Despite Kissinger's devious methods in extracting concessions from Sadat on behalf of Israel Sadat continued to praise Kissinger because after the October war he "developed a taste for listening to praises of his qualities and genius". If Kissinger praised Sadat as a man of strategy "this was sure to go to his head".31 Sadat reciprocated by heaping praises upon others in subsequent years.

Another instance of how Sadat had become addicted or vulnerable to flattery was clear during his meeting with the Israeli leader Shimon Peres in Austria on July 9, 1978. Towards the end of his talks with Peres, Sadat was shown the draft of a declaration the Israeli leader had prepared for the Socialist International. Sadat was unhappy with the first clause which urged Egypt and Israel to

30 Ibid, p. 175.
31 M.I. Kamel, The Camp David Accords: A Testimony (London: 1986), pp. 119-20. Sadat in his tete-a-tete with Kissinger told the American:"Do you think I am going to argue about the ceasefire lines of October 22 or about disengagement? No, Dr. Kissinger, you are a man of strategy, I am a man of strategy. I want to talk to you at the strategic level". Heikal, n.2, p.67; Sadat after his first meeting with kissinger said he got along very well with Kissinger: "For the first time I felt as if I was looking at the real face of the US.... Any one seeing us after that first hour in al-Tahriah Palace would have thought we had been friends for years". Sadat, n.1, p.291.
renew contact without interference. Peres immediately suggested to change it to read "to renew the Sadat initiative without interference". According to Peres, Sadat's face lit up and he approved the clause. 32

The Israelis through Kissinger and others learnt how they could get things done by profusely complimenting Sadat. Ezer Weizman, the Israeli Defence Minister, through his numerous meetings with Sadat learnt about the secrets of his personality, decision-making procedure and set about manipulating him like how Kissinger did during Sinai - I and II. They were aware of Sadat's liking to be praised for his courage, daring and boldness. 33 Sadat's swarthy features broke into a scowl whenever compliments started pouring from the Israeli hawk. Ezer wrote: "He is not a man to keep his feelings to himself; they are immediately evident in his expression as well as in his voice and gestures". Furthermore, the Israeli minister told Sadat that in the Knesset's Foreign Affairs and Defence Committee he had compared his journey to Jerusalem to man's first landing on the moon. Such a cosmic comparison obviously flattered Sadat. Finally Ezer told Sadat: "You are a courageous man. You have already proved yourself capable of making courageous

33. Weizman wrote: "Mr. President I want to speak frankly. You have no idea what a measure of affection and admiration you enjoy in Israel. Everyone regards you as a leader of courage and stature ... It would be a pity if you lost the affection of the Israeli in the street. Here and there, incidentally, there are already voices complaining that you demand far too much. There are people who say: What is this? Just because he came to Jerusalem do we have to give him everything!" Ezer Weizman, The Battle for Peace (New York: 1981), p. 164.
decisions. I am sure that you can explain this to your people."

Weizman was pleading that Sadat allow Israel to retain Israeli settlements and airfields under its control in Sinai after its withdrawal. Thus, the Israelis heaped compliments on Sadat and extracted concession after concession from a person who liked to be praised and flattered.

*Revulsion for Paper Work*

Sadat's role as President was of a different nature than Nasser's. As President Sadat was much less activist, interventionist, one requiring less leadership of and less domination of those around and below him. This was partly due to differences in personality. Nasser was hard driving, dynamic, domineering and suspicious; he was personally a source of enormous energy at the top of the regime, pushing the elite into motion, keeping tight control and a close watch over it. Sadat was much more relaxed and tolerant person. Far from riding herd on the elite, he rose late, took extended vacations and as Marei wrote "did not believe in trying to catch his assistants in mistakes". According to Heikal, after Sadat became President no official photographs were ever released showing him sitting at a desk. Compared to Nasser who was a voracious reader, Sadat protested at the large number of reports brought to him: "Don't ever bring all this paper to me. I'm being smothered by a mountain of paper". Sadat was much more magnanimous toward opponents too;

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34. Weizman, n. 33, p. 165.
35. Hinnebusch, n. 19, p. 85.
36. He would also complain "they are killing me with work". Sadat was also a restless traveller, spending less and less time in the presidential office. Heikal, n. 2, pp. 37-38 and 171; M.K. Charreybe, "Determinants of foreign policy decision-making in an unincorporated Authoritarian System", Ph.D., Missouri-Columbia, 1987.
he had a genuine abhorrence of police repression and unlike Nasser kept his rule relatively free of the executions, mass imprisonments and torture common during the latter's regime. This relaxed control over opponents and reduced demands on his subordinates gave Sadat's rule a benevolence which perhaps accurately reflected his personality. But these distinctions also resulted from the very different uses to which Nasser and Sadat put presidential power. Nasser wanted to transform Egypt even if it meant riding roughshod over vested elite interests; and much of his interventionism and reluctance to share power was a response to the tendency of elites to evade his demands. Sadat's goals were peace through negotiation and economic prosperity through private enterprises; and these required far less application of political power in society and far from threatening elite interests, advanced them.

Kissinger whom Sadat had called a friend, resorted to several ingenious tricks and in fact plain cheating to extract concessions from Sadat and manipulate him. Towards the end of the Sinai-I talks Kissinger fully certain that his "insidious and devious style would work" resorted to it. According to Fahmy due to his

37. According to M.I. Kamel, "Sadat compared his own personality with that of Gamel Abdel Nasser. The latter thrived on tension, cared nothing for the joys of life and did not appreciate the blessings God had bestowed upon him. He was suspicious of everyone, including his assistants. His motto was to suspect people until he was proved wrong. Sadat hated tension, and could think only in a quiet atmosphere. This explained his love of the countryside and the fact that he lived outside Cairo at the Barrage or other quiet areas, areas with natural beauty, thanking God for all His blessings. His principles, unlike that of Nasser, was to have faith in people until such faith was shown to have been misplaced." Kamel, n. 31, p. 43.

alertness he discovered Kissinger's "ruses and attempts to manipulate Sadat and thereby harm Egypt". This can be illustrated with an example. From the very outset of the peace talks Israeli objective had been to secure in writing an end of belligerency from Egypt. Kissinger who was mainly working towards this Israeli objective strived to include words like "ending of belligerence" to which Sadat gave his approval. When Fahmy discovered this he promptly deleted all references on this issue. In Fahmy's words: "I expected that Kissinger would complain about my deleting the words or atleast that Sadat would notice that his own words were missing. To my surprise neither happened."39

Learning about Sadat from Kissinger, the Israelis played the former's weaknesses on a much bigger scale than what Kissinger did during Sinai-I and II. The Israelis fairly early discovered that Sadat is above details and is fond of talking overall plans. Whereas the Israelis were keen to discuss the minutest detail but Sadat could never bring himself to devote time or attention to what he perceived as trivial and minor details. Sadat was fond of declaring "I think bi-i-ig"! As Ezer Weizman wrote:

My talks with Sadat taught me that he attached little importance to details. In Jerusalem I had witnessed the breadth of his vision, with its historical dimensions, though I had not

39. According to Fahmy Kissinger apparently knew that it was easy to manipulate Sadat but he also understood that there was no point in insisting. I and the rest of the Egyptian delegation had been alerted. Sadat, for his part, was too oblivious to details to notice that he was being manipulated or that the result of the manipulation had been undone. Fahmy, n. 10, p. 75. Fahmy was frequently irritated by Kissinger's attempt to manipulate Sadat and take advantage of his trust and impulsiveness to extract major concessions from him.
understood it then ... As I came to know Sadat better I began to comprehend his political philosophy. Sadat sees things in their overall historical perspective. My meetings with him and my analysis of his tactics have taught me that he is not a man to fumble with details - Those he delegates to his aides. In effect, Sadat sets down the main line, leaving his advisers to deal with its ramifications. I have never seen him working with papers or referring to figures or memoranda. Unlike super bureaucrats, he works with his personality and his grasp of principles.  

Undoubtedly as President, Sadat had to have the overall picture of the situation, leaving the details to his subordinates. But unfortunately the same situation prevailed at the lower levels of the bureaucracy as well.  

Unique concept of Friendship

As briefly seen earlier the most significant impact of village culture on Sadat was his personalization of political ties. At the very apex, he built a personal following reinforced by blood ties - as with Osman Ahmad Osman, Sayed Marei and others. More significant was his desire to personalize foreign relations and shaping Egypt's foreign policy according to his personal relations with foreign leaders. Under Sadat foreign policy was the private domain of the President and his close advisers. Sadat centralized and personalized the process of foreign policy decisions, thereby circumscribing the role of various structures in the political system.

40. According to Weizman, "Be that as it may, I was surprised when the Egyptian lower echelons - the War minister and his aides and advisers - similarly avoided any discussion of details and engaged exclusively in key issues and points of contention", Weizman, n.33, p. 359.

41. Ibid, p. 96.
Thus, Sadat's instant friendship, trust, confidence in "My friend" and later "my brother", Dr. Henry Kissinger was crucial in putting Egypt on a pro-US road. In the process he deluded himself that this friendship could make Israel withdraw from Arab lands. On the other hand, Sadat allowed his strained personal relations with the Soviet leaders result in a greater deterioration of Egypt's relations with Moscow than the calculus of national interest would have warranted. Despite their humiliation in July 1972 and Sadat's attempt to enlist US help after the October war, Moscow was still willing to support Sadat. But Sadat ensured total exclusion of Moscow from all aspects of the peace process. The Soviet Union supported the peace effort carried on by Kissinger as long as it did not categorically ruled out participation by both the Super Powers. Instead of insisting on full Israeli withdrawal from Arab lands Sadat meekly agreed to Kissinger's step-by-step diplomacy because according to Kissinger "Sadat had fallen victim to human weakness. It was the psychology of a politician who wanted to see himself - and quickly - riding triumphantly in an open car through the city of Suez with thousands of Egyptians cheering him". Soon after the conclusion of Sinai-I as Kissinger left Aswan on January 19, 1974, Sadat kissed him beneath the mango trees. "You are not only my friend", he said "you are my brother".

44. Hirst, n. 29, p. 185. See also Anwar al Sadat, Those I Have Known (New York: Continuum, 1984). Sadat overturned several cabinet decisions "as a favor" to his American friends. Moreover, Sadat made key decisions, alone, in private meetings with American and Israeli leaders.
Despite Kissinger's attempt to cheat Sadat, the latter continued to heap praises on him and others and this is reflected in the friendship he bestowed upon people at his first encounter with them. Sadat was fond of talking of his friends Kissinger, Nixon, Ford, Carter, Ceaucescu, Discard, Kreisky, Begin, Weizman, Peres and Journalists like Walter Cronkite and so on.

Soon after the October war Sadat had hoped for a quick Israeli withdrawal from Arab lands. He had put his entire trust on Kissinger and Nixon, which made him say "this man (Kissinger) is the only person alive who can say to this woman (Golda Meir) get out and she will have to get out". But Sadat seemed to be unaware that Kissinger was mainly working for Israel. Nixon was forced to resign in August 1974 over Watergate and after the defeat of Ford, Kissinger also left the scene leaving Sadat with only a few kms. of Sinai and robbing Egypt of her military option and isolating it from Moscow and the Arabs. Moreover, Sadat who had embarked on an economic crossing through infitah found out from the violent 1977 January food riots that far from economic recovery, his policies had led to a deterioration in the economy, rising cost of living and

45. Heikal, n. 8, p. 264.

46. This is clear from his talk to the Israelis soon after the collapse of talks for Sinai-II in March 1975. Kissinger told the Israelis: "We have attempted to reconcile our support for you with our other interests in the Middle East, so that you would not have to make your decisions all at one ... Our strategy was to save you from dealing with all those pressures all at once. If that was salami tactics - if we wanted the 1967 borders, we could do it with all of world opinion and considerable domestic opinion behind us. The strategy was designed to protect you from this. We have avoided drawing up an overall plan for a global settlement ... I see pressure building up to force you back to the 1967 borders - compared to that, 10 kms. is trivial. I am not angry at you and I am not asking you to change your position. It is tragic to see people dooming themselves to a course of unbelievable peril", Edward R.F. Sheehan, The Arabs, Israelis and Kissinger (New York: 1976) pp. 161-62.
growing reliance on foreign aid which had increased its external debt.

Sadat's desire for a quick settlement with Israel led him to be excessively courteous and open-handed. He also made many open-ended promises. For instance in his very first meeting in April 1977 Sadat promised President Carter to help him in future peace process and said "I will not let you down". This made Carter regard the day of his meeting with Sadat as "my best day as President". Sadat went to great lengths to cultivate friendship with US President. Sadat perceived Carter as a sincere man whose missionary zeal for peace in the area could be harnessed to Egypt's cause. Hence he went to great lengths to cultivate Carter, embracing him as "a great statesman", "a sweet man", "an inspiration", and stressing the similar backgrounds of the peasant farmer from Plains, Georgia and the fellah from Mit Abul Kom. At the end of his visit to US in April 1977 Sadat declared that although differences remained, he had "complete confidence" in his "close friend", who had "entered my heart immediately". When Sadat assured Carter that he will not let him down, he did not ask for similar promise from Carter. With

Egypt in the pocket, Carter was busy trying to persuade other Arabs and Israel of his idea for a comprehensive peace. As for Sadat's faith in America's sense of justice, this was not so much misplaced as inappropriate since Carter's concern for justice lay more with the Palestinians than with Egypt. 49 According to Martin Indyk:

Sadat's personal lever involved unforeseen risks. It was predicted on a naive theory of international relations - that leaders will take decisions on the basis of love and friendship rather than out of a cold, hard calculation of self-interest. While Sadat may have considered, that this was the best way to approach a man as self-righteous as Carter - indeed Carter was immediately impressed by this approach - he may not have understood that its use obligated him much more than it obligated the American President. When he promised Carter never to let him down, he was committing himself to the fulfilment of Carter's bidding, but he was not committing Carter in a similar fashion. The personal lever might have been devised to encourage the American President to live up to his own self-image, but it was more likely to create an expression in Carter's mind that Sadat could be relied upon, thereby reinforcing on the personal level the strategic notion that Egypt could be taken for granted. Similarly, his efforts to gain the trust of Carter through this personal relationship seems inevitably to have drawn him into trusting Carter, so that when the American President made him a promise, Sadat was prepared to accept it, believe in it, and act upon it. Butros Ghali has noted: "Sadat was impressed by presidential promises. He was also impressed by the might and power of the United States. He did not understand that Americans make a lot of promises but they rarely fulfil them". Sadat's direct contacts with American Presidents led him to believe that a personal commitment was all that mattered. 50

49. Ibid, (Indyk) p. 25.

50. Ibid., p. 25. Kissinger noted: "He (Sadat) made us look good. Only he made it seem too easy, too natural, so that we took him too much for granted. And when he was no longer with us and we had to journey toward peace alone, it was starkly clear how much we needed him." Kissinger, n. 27, p. 650.
Sadat, banking on US support in the peace process, was disillusioned over Carter's unwillingness to come up with a peace plan and for his lack of pressure on Israel. In order to help his "dear friend Jimmy", Sadat decided on a truly extraordinary way to solve his friend's dilemma. He decided to visit Israel to break the psychological hindrances towards the convening of GPC. Sadat's too naive and simplistic ideas on such a critical national issue shocked his Foreign Minister Fahmy, who inquired "what is the purpose of this visit?" To which Sadat replied simply "Just to go to Jerusalem and deliver a speech and we come back."

Sadat ignored Fahmy and went ahead with his visit to Jerusalem. Undoubtedly, for the Israelis the event was of great historic importance. Since he landed in Israel he was the main focus of Israeli attention. Sadat proclaimed instant friendship with Begin. While in Israel he assured Begin that the October war would be the last war, once again making an open ended promise with nothing in return.

As Sadat found Begin adamant towards the concessions which he expected after his visit to Israel, he assumed that Begin's government would collapse soon and that the opposition leader Shimon Peres would be the next leader. So Sadat tried to cultivate friendship with Peres which further hardened Begin's position. Sadat met Peres in Austria on July 9, 1978 and opened the talks with words of praise to Shimon Peres. "I believe you without

reservation. You have proved that you conduct yourself as a statesman and a responsible man. I am sure that with you, Shimon, I would reach agreement on every thing ..."52

Sadat's unique concept of friendship is best reflected in his special relationship with the Israeli Defence Minister Ezer Weizman. This may perhaps have been due to the fact that Weizman was Defence Minister or Sadat genuinely believed that he would be the new Israeli Prime Minister in the event of Begin's resignation or collapse of his government. Sadat had predicted Begin's fall soon in view of the latter's poor response to his peace initiative. According to Kamel

Sadat described his relationship with Weizman as one of friendship and I do, in fact, believe that Sadat actually felt genuine affection for Weizman. This may have been due to several factors: there was Weizman's open and cheerful personality at odds with the usual Israeli closed, cautious nature. Then there was the genuine zeal he professed in the search for peace. He was convinced, too, that Israel had to pay a price for that peace, though I am unaware how far he would have been prepared to go in that respect. However, he certainly appeared more flexible than the obdurate Begin who wanted peace and the Arab territories as well ... Sadat believed he could use Weizman both to convey a particular message to Begin and to sound out Israeli thinking. He kept him in reserve, so to speak, against crises, with Begin. I must add that Sadat nursed the hope that Begin would be brought down as a result of his hardline policy, or would die or retire for health reasons. He hoped Weizman would succeed him as Israeli Premier or at least occupy an influential post. If this happened, Sadat's relationship with Israel would become much easier and possibilities for agreement closer.53


Personality Traits

Another important trait of Sadat's personality was his "willingness to give his allegiance to a stronger personality when he came into contact with one", as Heikal put it. 54 We have seen how Sadat was impressed by Kissinger, Carter, Nixon, Peres, Weizman. According to Sadat it was Ceausescu who informed him that Begin was a "strong man" and could take bold steps. This played an important role in Sadat's decision to visit Jerusalem as he thought Begin would reciprocate in a grand style similar to his decision.

Sadat in one of his meetings with Peres (July 1978) told him that he would have preferred to conduct the negotiations with Golda Meir rather than Begin. "She is a brilliant woman and I admire her enormously!" About Ben Gurion he said "I could wrap everything up with him. He was a man of great decisions." 55 All this Sadat said when he found Begin adamant towards the concessions which he expected after his visit to Jerusalem.

Personalized Decision-making style

The exaggerated self-importance which led Sadat to ignore the advice and opinions of many of his advisers/ministers is also a typical personality trait. Soon after the October war during Kissinger's first visit to Cairo in early November 1973 without discussing with his ministers or with anyone in Egypt Sadat decided to accept Kissinger's step-by-step diplomacy instead of insisting on

full and complete Israeli withdrawal from 1967 territories. Says Kissinger:

... he astonished me. He did not haggle or argue. He did not dispute my analysis. He did not offer an alternative. Violating the normal method of diplomacy - which is to see what one can extract for a concession - he said simply that he agreed with both my analysis and proposed procedure ... He would gamble on disengagement across the canal. He would accept my strategy, he said. 56

Moreover, Sadat in his very first meeting which was a tete-a-tete of several hours without even a note taker, talked about common strategy between Egypt and the US which he elaborated in terms of removing Soviet influence from the Middle East. Sadat expanded his strategic vision to conceive of a local triangular hegemony in the Middle East, an axis of the three predominant anti-communist powers: Egypt, Saudi Arabia and Iran. 57

Kissinger through his meetings during his first visit concluded that to a very great extent Sadat was Egypt as Sadat ignored all his ministers including the newly appointed foreign minister Ismail Fahmy. Although Heikal (upon Sadat's request) had suggested either a fairly large team of negotiators including besides himself, his Vice-President for Foreign Affairs, Dr. Mahmoud Fawzi, his

56. Kissinger, n. 27, pp. 637-41.

National Security Adviser Hafez Ismail and the foreign Minister Ismail Fahmy, or a small delegation with just one of these. But Sadat preferred to have a tete-a-tete with Kissinger.\(^5\) According to Ismail Fahmy soon after the war Sadat was impressed by the several measures which he had suggested to be taken in talks with US and Israel. Sadat was "happy" and "utterly convinced" and asked Fahmy to give it a written shape.

Sayed Merei came running to me. He had just seen Sadat and was worried because the President was planning to take 'the intransigent position you have suggested to him'. President Sadat was so impressed by my expose, Merei told me, that he was going to implement it to the letter. I was not as confident as Merei that Sadat would follow that strategy. I knew him to be a very unpredictable person, always impressed by the last person he saw. I told Merei "If President Sadat was so impressed, I hope he will abide by fifty per cent of what we have agreed upon". I was, alas, far too optimistic.\(^5\)

Soon Sadat agreed to sign the first disengagement agreement on January 18, 1974 with Israel. Fahmy, Gamassy, Heikal and many others were unhappy with the terms of the agreement. In fact Sadat didn't want the Defence Minister to be present at the talks in Aswan and negotiated all by himself overriding his advisers' opinion. Sadat projected Sinai-I as a great victory to Egyptian diplomacy and to his own efforts and decision-making ability.\(^6\)

In the talks Sadat chose to ignore his own foreign minister and

\(^5\) Heikal, n. 2, pp. 66-7.
\(^6\) Fahmy, n. 10, pp. 69-70.
\(^6\) Hinnebusch, n. 19, p. 87.
since then there was no way to check him in any manner. Both Fahmy and Gamassy being professionals and lacking a power base were helpless and Sadat was free to decide on the strategy he wished to implement. Ismail Fahmy lamented that "if Sadat had stuck to his brief and acted as agreed, he would have kept all his strong cards and prevented the Israelis from achieving their goals". Sadat in "his eagerness to sign with the Americans put aside his most important cards", thereby weakening Egypt's position and in fact the entire Arab cause. To Fahmy it was "beyond comprehension that Sadat should have conceded every point after agreeing with my evaluation of the situation. But this he did, yielding to Kissinger who knew a delay was not in Israel's interest".\textsuperscript{61}

Sadat's eagerness to sign Sinai-I with Israel was due to the Israeli military pressure on the Egyptian army from their presence on the West Bank of Suez Canal. This counter crossing had badly shaken Sadat who was now "ready to make concessions".\textsuperscript{62} Fahmy has revealed some of the important incidents in the course of the talks for Sinai-I which throws light on Sadat's personality as a

\textsuperscript{61} Fahmy, n. 10, pp. 70-71. According to Mahmoud Riad Sadat used to keep all decisions with himself. He never used to tell even his closest advisers including Prime Minister and foreign Minister or others. He used to carefully listen, nod his head, giving the clear impression that he shares or agrees with the assessment of others during the meetings/talks but do just the opposite sometimes and go too far to negate what has been agreed or discussed. He never seriously consulted anybody or sought views or informed them. From the very outset of his Presidency Sadat began to take unilateral decisions always involving the element of surprise. Sadat was too naive and did not understand the dynamics of power politics. Based on interview with Riad.

\textsuperscript{62} Ibid, p. 71.
decision-maker and also as a poor negotiator, besides showing how Kissinger on behalf of the Israelis tried to manipulate Sadat at various stages of the negotiations. Kissinger during his second trip to Aswan apparently submitted "an innocently-phrased Israeli formula" which in practical terms would have ended belligerency with Israel. In the words of Fahmy

The document appeared logical enough at first sight and it was carefully drafted, with a very precise choice of words. As usual Sadat looked at it and gave it his consent. Then he passed it to me, but I realised that in a proposal of barely five lines, the Israelis had managed to use enough different expressions to end belligerency between Egypt and Israel at least five times, without saying so.63

Ismail Fahmy who was already irked by Sadat's refusal to adhere to the agreed strategy was determined to prevent Sadat from signing anything with serious political implications in view of Sadat's impulsiveness to accept whatever Kissinger suggested. After going through the formula which Sadat gave Fahmy drew Sadat's attention to Kissinger's tricks and deviousness in making him agree to end belligerence. Sadat looked at Kissinger "sorrowfully" and changed his decision to accept the formula, complaining "oh, Henry I thought you were my friend. Fahmy is correct. This ends belligerency five times!" Naturally this was embarrassing for Kissinger who quickly hastened to disassociate himself from the proposal saying it was an Israeli formula which he had neither told Sadat or Fahmy at the start which shows his bias towards the Israelis. This incident clearly reveals Sadat's weakness as a decision-maker. He had no taste for details and reading papers with the result Sadat would consent automatically not after reading the papers but upon

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looking at the person who had brought the proposals. All this he did without even consulting his advisers. This arbitrary and unilateral way of decision-making was to prove detrimental to Egypt's interest in the immediate and long run. Despite this instance which revealed that Kissinger was not the honest broker he always claimed, Sadat continued to lavish praise on Kissinger calling him publicly "my brother Kissinger".64

Sadat took most of the crucial decisions especially in foreign policy all by himself and disregarded the views of his advisers. In his Autobiography Sadat describes his own decision-making approach. He wrote, "I always know what I am doing and calculate all the possible consequences of every step I take".65 Heikal in his assessment of Sadat wrote: "He likes to take time to listen to an argument, but in the end the decision he reaches will be entirely his own. Everyone should give him plenty of time to see and hear things for himself". The expulsion of the Soviet advisers in July 1972 fell in this category. Despite his close ties with Sadat during that period Heikal points out that "even after studying all the documents in the case and talking to all the people most closely involved I am still unable to decide exactly what it was that triggered off the President's decision."67

64. Ismail Fahmy wrote that Kissinger "always tried to hide his bias by cursing the Israelis and constantly making funny and unflattering remarks about the Israeli leaders, to convince us that he was on our side. Unfortunately, his rather obvious ruses were fairly effective with Sadat, who tended to take decisions on impulse, without consulting other members of the Egyptian delegation. This combination of Kissinger's manipulations and Sadat's impulsiveness was very damaging for Egypt". Ibid, pp. 72-73.


Thus instead of discussing in the Cabinet or National Security Council or debating in the Parliament Sadat took this momentous decision in Egypt's foreign policy alone by himself even disregarding the views of his own Defence Minister who had been a consistent critic of Soviet presence. Later Sadat was fond of boasting: "I am only speaking as a peasant from the Nile Valley but I ordered 17,000 Soviet advisers out in one week". Since then it became a regular theme for Sadat to tell many of his friends how he achieved this great feat, which made the Israeli Defence Minister Weizman to write that Sadat's decision to expel the Soviet advisers was "etched in his memory as one of the most outstanding of his life". Though outraged, the Soviets were left with no choice except complying with Sadat's decision. They withdrew quickly and quietly. Thus, Sadat achieved this without any difficulty and in fact the Soviets later rewarded Sadat by giving him the sophisticated weapons whose denial partly precipitated the eviction decision. This was another turning point in Sadat's life as it made him self-confident and willing to take risk against heavy odds. But Mahmoud Riad viewed Sadat's decision as yet another glaring instance of Sadat's personality, his liking for unilateral decision, to keep for himself the ideas, decisions and without proper consultations, negotiations, he took decisions in a shortsighted manner. In one clean sweep Sadat had overturned the balance of power. US aim had been to remove the Soviet Union from Egypt (and the area) and Sadat

68. Hinnebusch, n. 19, p. 84.
70. Weizman, n. 33, p. 67.
did it for US in return for nothing that too in an election year in US. Sadat's hope of bringing a change in US policy remained a dream. Sadat subsequently went on to do several things which the US wanted him to do thereby making himself dependent on the US and slowly isolating himself from the Soviet Union, Arabs, and the non-aligned countries. 71

Moreover, according to Mahmoud Raid Sadat had no idea how to negotiate with the Americans as he had never dealt with them in any capacity. Sadat assumed that he could do everything alone all by himself. Sadat's propensity to blindly accept whatever the Americans said and brought was too great. He never questioned, scrutinised or bothered to carefully study them. To Riad Sadat never understood American maneuvering and Kissinger's slimy methods in their dealings and blindly put all faith on Kissinger and Americans. His inexperience and naivety led him from one disaster to another disaster and from one folly to another.

The Israelis, Kissinger and many other Americans and visiting journalists to Cairo made a thorough study of Sadat's personality. They learnt many things and "they analysed Sadat's personality, put it to the test, and discovered the keys to his character". 72 Two instances convinced the Israelis that Sadat could be manipulated. Firstly, Golda Meir was thrilled to learn from Kissinger (through Sisco and Saunders) that Sadat had accepted the waiving of a return to the October 22 lines which she described as


"a fantastic achievement". Secondly, during the Sinai-I talks Kissinger had argued the Israelis all along that Sadat could not possibly settle for less than 250 tanks in East Bank of Suez Canal but Sadat agreed initially to reduce to a mere 30 and later as a gift agreed to withdraw even these 30 tanks. Kissinger found out that Sadat being the supreme ruler of Egypt (and Egypt being the leader of the Arab world) it was easy to get concessions from him directly. His success in dealing with Sadat during Sinai-I pushed him to work harder for Sinai-II and for more concessions. During his abortive attempt in March 1975 for Sinai-II when Kissinger found Rabin dragging his feet in giving a clear cut reply as to whether Israel would withdraw from Sinai Passes, Kissinger told Rabin "President Sadat always gives me an immediate reply". Sadat asked Kissinger during Sinai-I: "Tell me seriously what Israel can and cannot accept, and for Egypt I tell you the same". According to Sheehan

Sadat treated his subordinates as Kissinger treated Sisco - as mere technicians, to be entrusted only with details. Fahmy was deeply vexed to be excluded from tete-a-tetes, but Kissinger craved privacy with the President to convince him of his views - above all, the narrow perimeter of the possible.

The Israelis concluded that "democracy in Egypt is an abstract concept". For them Sadat's character was in harmony with the regime.

77. Ibid., p. 112; See also Bahgat Korany, How Foreign Policy Decisions are made in the Third World: A Comparative Analysis (Boulder, Co. Westview, 1985).
he headed whereas the Israeli Prime Minister has to consult Cabinet or Knesset and in every case they require approval and ratification and hence many constraints, but Sadat to a great extent was free of such constraints. The Israeli Prime Minister Rabin wrote:

Since it was apparent that Sadat alone made the decisions in Egypt, I concentrated on studying his character and intellectual concepts. In addition to going over his speeches, I also tried to glean impressions from anyone who had met him—particularly Americans. One American visitor summed up Sadat's most prominent trait for me by saying "the fear of war is in his bones". Others defined the Egyptian President as a "treacherous man". I was wary of such generalizations, but Sadat's past actions did give me reason to view him as fickle.  

In fact for Rabin there was a long list of Sadat's past actions which made him uneasy about Sadat's unreliability. Ever since he started supporting Hitler and Nazi Germany Sadat's career had been consistently marked by sharp and sudden shifts from one spectrum to its opposite, from warm friendship to violent hostility. Before the revolution he secretly worked for the Palace. At one time, he worked as a liaison man between Muslim Brotherhood and Free Officers' organization; but after the revolution he presided over a tribunal in 1954 sentencing many Muslim Brothers to death and life imprisonment.  

As President, Sadat signed a friendship treaty with

78. Weizman, n. 33, p. 162.
Moscow in May 1971 and in July 1972 expelled the Soviet advisers thereby publicly humiliating the Soviets and soon after the October war aligned with the US, abandoning the Soviets completely. Soon after the war when Kissinger visited Cairo Sadat talked about common strategy against the Soviets in his very first meeting and called Kissinger friend and brother despite having attacked him only few weeks before. Sadat had asked King Feisal to treat the Egyptian Defence Minister General Sadiq as himself and very soon he sacked Sadiq. In October 1973 Sadat went to war in cooperation with his "brother” Assad and then consented to a ceasefire despite the latter’s opposition. Later he signed Sinai-I leaving his "brother" in the lurch. For Rabin,Sadat’s conduct at the 1974 Rabat summit was an eye opener. Before the summit Sadat had supported King Hussein’s right to negotiate on the future of West Bank with Israel but at Rabat he abandoned King Hussein and instead switched over support to PLO.81

Since he came to power Sadat led - even defied - rather than followed his advisers opinion. Like during Sinai-I talks Sadat excluded during Sinai-II also his top military and foreign policy advisers from key bargaining sessions with Kissinger and then overrode their objections to many details of the agreement. Two instances throw additional light on Sadat's poor negotiating skills. According to Fahmy, Sadat in the presence of Kissinger asked him to prepare in writing a formula for a Sinai-II with Israel. Kissinger in his capacity as mediator should have prepared

Moreover, to the shock of Fahmy and other members of the Egyptian delegation, Kissinger and Sisco informed the Egyptians a bare 10 minutes before the formal meeting (details about the US-Israeli memorandum) in which the Sinai-II was to be signed. Kissinger wanted Sadat to sign the Sinai-II documents himself and as usual Sadat welcomed the idea. When Fahmy advised Sadat against signing the papers the latter said in astonishment — "why Ismail, I have already signed the first disengagement". When he was reminded that he had not signed with Israel but American proposals, Sadat then changed his mind: "Yes Henry, Fahmy is correct. I did not sign any papers with Israel, only American papers". When Fahmy refused to sign Sinai-II documents in protest over Kissinger's double-dealing, Sadat called for Prime Minister Mamduh Salem.

Salem came and Sadat told him in front of Kissinger and me "Fahmy does not want to sign any paper. You sign instead of Fahmy". The Prime Minister stiffened to attention, said "Yes Sir, and signed on Egypt's behalf".83

Sadat's blind faith in and acceptance of America eventually led to a separate peace. He was never prepared to give a critical eye to whatever Kissinger was suggesting, instead he chose to accept it obediently — making himself more and more vulnerable to US manipu-

82. But to Fahmy's amazement Sadat told him he wanted him to do it because Kissinger had no idea where to start and in which direction to go and that Kissinger himself had told Sadat that I should be in charge of this task. I don't know whether it is true that Kissinger had told Sadat he had no idea where to start but if he did, it was just a tactic on his part to find out the Egyptian position from the outset. Fahmy, n. 10, p. 160.

83. Ibid, pp. 165-66.
lations. Soon after Sinai-II Sadat went on a trip to US and he believed that he could expect nothing from Moscow and so decided to abrogate the friendship treaty in March 1976. Again Sadat alone decided on this important step and informed Fahmy in a meeting.  

As early as in January 1977, and even before the food riots, Sadat was planning to take another calculated risk for peace. He said:

...the current Egyptian political move for realizing just settlement in the Middle East is a calculated risk as the decision (he) made in 1973 to cross the Suez Canal .... When I launched that attack in 1973, a lot of people thought I would drown myself in the Suez Canal in the first two hours. Well I did not and I am taking another calculated risk now to get peace.

Now Sadat was planning the biggest adventure of his life - his visit to Jerusalem. Although there may have been many reasonably compelling reasons for this, but the most decisive one was his belief that his surprise visit would unlock the deadlock and lead to a quick Israeli withdrawal or peaceful settlement. It is interesting to note Kamel's assessment as to how Sadat used to arrive at decisions. According to him Sadat was by nature a romantic person with a vivid

84. It was a tete-a-tete meeting and in his rambling fashion Sadat started to tell me how he had trouble sleeping the previous night. He was very tense, he told me, although he did not know why. Then in the early hours of the morning the idea came to him that it was time to abrogate the Treaty with the Soviet Union. After that, he had slept peacefully. He added that, he had not informed anybody of his decision and that I should maintain the secret. Why Sadat had reached the decision at this time, I am not sure. Ibid, p. 172.

imagination. He was a lover of nature and was inclined to solitude - perhaps as a result of the many years Sadat spent in solitary confinement. Usually he spent lengthy and frequent periods away from Cairo at one of the several government rest houses. After his meetings Sadat would usually sit alone in shade or out in sun undisturbed by anyone for hours.

It was at such moments that his imagination would roam unrestrained far and wide. His experience of life had shown him that nothing was impossible and it was at such times that he would ponder new roles of greatness and fame for himself in one sphere of life or another. Sadat sometimes pictured himself as a war hero, a prophet of peace or even as a simple fellah. At other times he saw in himself a clan chief, head of the Egyptian family, a Czar, a paragon of democracy or even Omar, Saladin or Richard the Lion Heart.86

Because of his frequent meditations Sadat disliked details and had developed revulsion towards developing the negotiating skills. He thought he is a supreme decision maker and needs no advice. Despite his assistants hard work in preparation of background papers, memorandums and other necessary material Sadat would only glance at it and ignore. The result was Sadat was not fully prepared and with his own limited knowledge compounded blunder after blunder.87

86. Kamel, n. 31, pp. 118-19.
87. Ibid, p. 121. According to Kamel "I recall that my excellent foreign ministry staff and myself worked ceaselessly leaving nothing to chance. We systematically provided the President with information and developments and submitted reports to him. Unfortunately, enough time was not always at his disposal. He would content himself with a quick glance at these reports, or at other times simply dispense with them altogether relying on his flair". Ibid, p. 122.
Since Sadat had such terrible weak points and hence a poor negotiator which the Americans discovered fairly early, they sought a *tete-a-tete* with Sadat, during which he could be persuaded and brought around to their view point.  

Sadat had a number of meetings with important leaders like Nixon, Ford, Carter, Kissinger, Vance, Peres, Weizman, Begin and many other leaders. But he would not even take a note taker let alone an assistant or foreign minister. Usually after such meetings he would be busy with some appointment or other or else he would go to bed. Sadat perceived US Presidents as similar to himself in making decisions. For Sadat the authoritarian structure of political system power in Egypt meant that to a very large extent, Sadat was Egypt, but he naively believed, that that would be so in the US and other countries (especially Israel) overlooking the active and assertive democratic structures, pressure of public opinion, a vibrant mass media and many other constraints from which Sadat was largely free.

Once Sadat decided to visit Jerusalem he concluded that by his visit Israel would be obliged to reciprocate which could in turn bring quick peace and he could then present it to the Arab summit for approval. When Sadat remained adamant about his decision to visit Jerusalem Ismail Fahmy wanted to know from Sadat whether Egypt is a democracy or dictatorship. To which a surprised Sadat answered "A democracy of course". Then Fahmy suggested Sadat to hold a meeting of top officials to discuss his initiative or decision to visit Jerusalem and if he found opposition he should reconsider

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88. Fahmy, n. 10, pp. 216-17.
his decision. Naturally for a person like Sadat who ruled like a dictator under the mask of democracy this was a grave provocation and an open challenge to his authority. Naturally Sadat became furious and screamed: "whom do you want me to consult. I will not discuss it with anybody. I don't care for anybody's opinion. I will not do it".90

Anyway Sadat went ahead with his visit to Jerusalem ignoring the advice from all quarters against the visit. He found Begin as unyielding as before. He had exposed all his cards and was now open to manipulation by the Israelis. This started from the Ismailia summit when the Israelis systematically went about manipulating him through brilliant tactics. According to Fahmy:

I believe that Sadat simply allowed himself to be wooed and manipulated by the Israelis until he was forced in a position where he would have either to admit he had made a mistake or sign a separate peace on Israeli conditions. The Israelis had chosen their man well when they focussed on Sadat. He was the President of the most important Arab country. The Israelis studied Sadat's personality thoroughly and understood his huge ambition to be a major actor on the international scene. They must have known his weakness for the grand gesto, for the unprecedented step and the dramatic move made regardless of risk .... Sadat responded to their lure because it seemed to offer a possibility of accomplishing something on a personal basis ... in his desire to become an international hero he conceived the ill-fated idea to become the heroic peace-maker.91

Sadat believing himself to being a master of strategy of course, was fully aware that the Israelis would manipulate him to their ends due to his weakness "but he thought he was clever enough to

90. Fahmy, n. 10, p. 274. Fahmy wrote: "Sadat never explained the reasons behind his initiative. The National Security Council did not debate the initiative and did not approve it". For details regarding how he retracted on his November 9, '77 speech see Ibid, p. 267; Heikal, n. 2, p. 97; see also his joint inter-

91. Ibid, pp. 283-84. 
manipulate the whole situation to his own advantage". As Kamel observed: Sadat was clever, shrewd, bold, courageous, pragmatic but he was no match to the Israeli shrewedness, cunning, deceit, and duplicitations behaviour. Sadat was utterly naive and easily the Israelis fooled him as they knew that if they remained stubborn Sadat would offer concessions to Israel. They were convinced that Sadat cannot hold fast and ultimately he cracks. To the end Sadat was convinced that he could outsmart the Israelis.

On the one hand Sadat fervently stood for Arab cause and what was agreed at Arab summits. But secretly he continued to make several concessions to Israel in order to goad her to vacate Arab lands and make his peace initiative a success. Sadat did his best to please the Israelis through several means to get a commitment for Israeli withdrawal. The Israelis now clearly identified that their attention has to be fully concentrated on Sadat. This made Ezer Weizman conclude that Sadat

is very isolated at the pinnacle of power. The full burden of responsibility rests on his shoulders. I have the impression that some of his most fateful decisions were adopted without his sharing his thoughts or calculations with another soul ... his thinking has never been swamped in an ocean of papers nor were his decisions reached in smoke-filled back rooms. Almost all his decisions were the

fruit of inner contemplation. That may explain his periodic withdrawals to one of the many homes he has scattered throughout Egypt.  

During the Camp David talks Sadat like before had a private meeting with Weizman to break the deadlock. As usual he did not divulge the contents of the meeting to Kamel or other members of the Egyptian delegation. Weizman wrote that Sadat told him that he was entitled to conclude a separate treaty and that if no Arab leader joined in the negotiation, he would carry on alone. Naturally Weizman felt happy with this "encouraging sign" and redoubled his efforts to isolate Sadat from his advisers especially from the foreign ministry whose "ideological convictions did not permit them to accommodate new ways of thinking".  

94. Weizman, n. 33, pp. 161-62. According to Adel Safty, Sadat seemed to have reached an exaggerated assessment of the perspicacity of his strategy. This led him to claim that his policies had given Egypt a new stature in the world and earned him a well-deserved reputation as an important world leader. The more the western media courted him, the more he felt that he had transcended to a position of world leadership, and the more he credited himself with extraordinary achievements. He told the Egyptian people that he and his policies were to be given credit for "overcoming the dangers of the cold war, the easing of international tension, the elimination of colonialism, furtherance of the war against racial discrimination and the promotion of democratic conception of international relations whereby all countries can take part in the achievement and maintenance of a balance of power in all parts of the world", Raphael Israeli, Man of Defiance, p. 157 and Adel Safty, International Studies, vol. 28, no. 4, 1991.  

Not only Sadat took crucial decisions unilaterally by himself but any sign of assertiveness was quickly suppressed and rarely did he realize the folly of not allowing dissent. According to Fahmy Sadat "lacked the patience and tenacity to follow through to the end, often making split-second decisions out of frustration, thereby wrecking a delicate balance achieved during delicate, painstaking negotiations, if not totally reversing direction". Of course, the Israelis made every effort to find out all about Sadat’s personality much before he came to Israel. But in this process they were assisted by the Americans who soon after the October war through Kissinger and others made a penetrating study of Sadat’s personality.

As Moshe Dayan pointed out,

The Americans I talked to were of the opinion that the character of Sadat, no less than his reasoning and his calculation, was a factor in his decisionmaking. He was very independent and he stuck to his chosen path with great determination, even when his top advisers and those closest to him in the highest echelons differed from him. He took no account of the views of other Arab leaders.

Concerning Sadat’s decision making style perhaps the best explanation came from when the Israeli leader Shimon Peres asked Sadat "How do you make decisions?" Sadat’s answer provides a clue not only to his personality but also his way of decisionmaking. He said: "I must think alone. A habit from prison, from the solitary confinement the British subjected me to. Even if my wife is present, it is difficult for me to think — though I am a family man ...”

According to David Hirst:

... the more an individual, as opposed to the institutions over which he presides, is the maker of policies, the more personal psychology is likely to impinge, in their making, on objective political reality. Sadat was by no means the world's most absolute ruler, but his career illustrated, in a remarkable way, how far the personal can predominate over the political and when the personal is as peculiar as it was in him, what perversities, in the name of policy, can then ensue. Sadat the man had certain shallow gifts. He was an actor. He had the gambler's flair. But above all, he was the consummate opportunist. For ... there was no deity that he would not dethrone, no principle that he would not abjure, no direction change, friend abandon, enemy embrace. He struck no attitude of which, in his real self, he was not the antithesis. He was constant only in his inconstancy. The politics changed, and out of recognition; only the person, his rhetoric, his very words remained opportunistically, mendaciously the same.99

One may legitimately ask how could Sadat remain in power for so long and decide single handedly most issues concerning Egypt's peace policy. The most significant factor which enabled Sadat to have his way was the political culture inherited from the Nasser period. After nearly eighteen years of Nasser's authoritarian rule, most of the top elites had become accustomed to and in fact accepted the rules and customs of an authoritarian Presidency. The deference of the elite to the office gave Sadat a great advantage. Moreover, Sadat's accumulation of enormous power benefitted greatly from the post-1967 decline of the Free Officer's Movement and more significantly the accompanying de-politicization of the military. After his victory over the Ali Sabri group in May 1971 Sadat felt free to create his own elite and he naturally preferred technocrats or special political

credentials and who being his creatures, were beholden to him, and could be easily dismissed. Take the several instances when Sadat fired Generals Sadiq, Shazly, Fawzi and brought in such non-political figures as Ahmad Ismail Ali, Mohamad Ali Fahmy, Gamassy, Ahmad Badawi, Kamal Hassan Ali and others. The ubiquitous security apparatus deterred elite efforts to organize against Sadat. No less than three separate intelligence services were at the command of Sadat and his team: each watched the elite, above all the army, and each watched and checked the other. Sadat's tolerance of elite self-enrichment and corruption was also a control mechanism. But the most decisive factor in Sadat's ability to stay on top owed much to the fact that when leading the elite in new policy directions, Sadat did so step by step and in an incremental manner. Whether from calculation or because his course evolved gradually, Sadat was never so far in front of elite opinion as to precipitate a broad elite consensus against him. Most of the unilaterally imposed decisions by Sadat were in the field of foreign policy and he kept a low profile in domestic affairs compared to Nasser. To the end, Sadat believed that whatever he had done was for the betterment of Egypt.

Novel Conception of Authority

Another feature of Sadat's personality was his unique concept of authority which was expressed in patriarchal terms.

101. Saad el Shazly, The Crossing of Suez (London: 1980), p. 120.
Actually his patriarchal style of rule is an extension of Egyptian village headmanship to the national level. For him Egypt was an authoritarian patriarchal family writ large with himself as the 'father' entitled to respect and obedience. In contrast, to Nasser who addressed Egyptians as 'brothers' Sadat was fond of addressing Egyptians as "my children". An instance would show Sadat's perception of himself as head of the Egyptian family and the reaction of his sons. After the resignation (in November 1977) of Ismail Fahmy and Mohamed Riad from the foreign ministry over Sadat's visit to Israel, on the eve of the Ismailia summit on December 25, 1977 Sadat decided to appoint Muhammad Ibrahim Kamel who was ambassador in Bonn as Foreign Minister. Although Kamel was in Cairo, Sadat was unaware of his presence in Egypt and had assumed that he is still in West Germany. Sadat told an astonished Kamel that "he had taken the liberty of appointing me without prior consultation because I was like a son to him".103

There was also a patrimonial quality in Sadat's rule. Very often Sadat spoke as if the Egyptian political system were his personal property referring to 'my constitution', 'my political parties', 'my opposition' (to refer to an opposition party that he himself set up) 'my army' and seemingly regarding political right as favours he might grant or withdraw on good behaviour in his

103. (Sadat was nine years older than Kamel). Later Sadat told the US ambassador in Cairo Eilts that Kamel was "one of his boys". When Eilts mentioned this to Kamel, the latter obviously was angry and told Eilts "we were in prison together. I was never anyone's boy and never will be". Kamel, p. 31; see also Amuli S., "Foreign Policy Making in the Arab Republic of Egypt: The Role of the Leadership in Decision Making, 1970-72", Ph.D. Thesis, University of Pennsylvania, 1982.
effusive use of the word 'I' he spoke as though nothing happened in Egypt which was not his doing. In contrast to Nasser's austere simplicity, there was much of the style of royalty in Sadat's deportment: his pompous uniforms (made by Cardin and other tailors in London and Paris), the entourage, barber, masseur valet that accompanied him, the numerous luxurious presidential residences, the repossession of King Farouk's Abidin palace, Sadat's informal adoption of the title al Raisal Mumin, reminiscent of the caliphate in his use of religious authority against opposition and in his displays of public piety there was a blending of religious and political authority typical of the Islamic monarchy. Sadat's decision to reopen the Canal provides a clue to his thinking and perception. It also shows Sadat's anxiety for his own personal image and grandeur. In order to make his mark in history and impress the people and world Sadat was keen to have a grand opening and to personally lead a big convoy of ships through the Canal. His decision to reopen the Canal on June 5, 1975 on the 8th anniversary of the 1967 defeat, was to demonstrate that he was the hero who had brought Egypt from the humiliation it suffered under Nasser's leadership. Although Fahmy urged Sadat not to reopen then because it could be used as an additional card in order to pressure Israel during negotiations for Sinai-II but "Sadat could not be swayed and ordered us to implement his decision". Fahmy wrote that Sadat "was not a

105. Heikal, n. 4, p. 181; Shukri, n. 80, pp. 34-35; Sadat, n. 17, p. 7.
107. Fahmy, n.10, p.81.
steadfast person, capable of staying on course at all times, but was easily swayed by other opinions and advice.108

Sadat's view of himself as a ruler who was bringing democracy to his people had some effect on his style. It is true Sadat held that the will of the people was 'sovereign' and that the leadership was accountable to it; but he claimed that as President he expressed the true wishes of the people who had deposited their trust in him at his election. He insisted that the people were overwhelmingly behind him and spoke as if he believed the 99.9% outcomes of his frequent plebiscites were accurate representations of public opinion and dissidents a mere handful of trouble-makers. Interestingly abject devotion to the President or any ruler is deeply imbedded in Egyptian political culture. It comes through numerous proverbs which venerate authority and confuse public authority with the person of the head of state. Absolutism seems natural to the peasants who form bulk of Egypt's population. Peasant respondents to the questions posed by Atif Fuad, a researcher from Cairo's Ain Shams University were unquestioning in their attitude to the President as father of his people. 'Rais is all in all' said one. 'He has the right to do whatever he wishes. It's our duty to obey Rais and depend on Allah and on him'. Another respondent made his personal underst-

108. Ibid., p. 102; See also Dale W. Burkart, "President Anwar al Sadat's Operational Code and Egypt's Foreign Policy Decision Making", M.A. Dissertation 1980, Carleton, University of Ottawa, Department of Political Science.
anding of the nature of political authority equally clear. "As long as Sadat exists it does not make a difference whether we have or have not legislatures, political parties and local Councils".109 Sadat wanted Egypt's political structures - the Cabinet, Parliament, Judiciary - to function freely, but if they deviated from the public interest for which he spoke, it was his prerogative to intervene and set them right. It was very clear that Sadat wanted to have democracy but he also wanted to keep his power and policy free from challenges; when he was forced to choose, he invariably opted for authority over democracy.110 Soon after the October war when Sadat's prestige was high he had promised the Egyptians:

As I ponder on the greatest task I ought to devote myself to, after liberation of our land is completed, I can think of only one: to hand over this revolution to its owner, the people. The people is its own master, it possesses the right to determine its own future and to choose the way of life it likes. All we have to do is to afford it the freedom to make that choice.111

Sadat was fond of saying "I know my people. They are a good people. If you convince them, they will follow you all the way. They have a sense of humor".112

At the Camp David talks when Sadat found the going difficult he threatened to withdraw from the conference whereupon Carter intervened and persuaded him not to do so by offering a suggestion that any

110. Hinnebusch, n. 19, pp. 85-86.
111. Israeli, n. 24, p. 670.
112. Weizman, n. 33, p. 67.
agreement he signed would be dependent on the approval of the Egyptian People's Assembly. President Sadat said: "President Carter is a great man and extremely intelligent. He solved the problem with the greatest of ease, and I am completely satisfied". When he was told by Kamel that what was important was what sort of agreement he was going to sign. To this he angrily said: "I shall sign anything proposed by President Carter without reading it; no, I shall sign it without reading it". To Kamel and other members of the Egyptian delegation this was the height of his autocratic behaviour. 113 The Egyptian Foreign Minister found Sadat's behaviour and reckless statement outrageous and resigned because he come to the conclusion that:

The real problem was to be found neither in the intransigent Israeli attitude nor in America's spineless surrender to Israel. The real problem was President Sadat himself. He had capitulated unconditionally to President Carter who, in turn, had capitulated unconditionally to Menachem Begin. Any agreement concluded now would prove disastrous to Egypt, the Palestinian people and the entire Arab nation. I was at a loss to explain his objectives, conduct and behaviour. Perhaps he had allied himself too strongly to the US so that he found it difficult at this stage to extricate himself. 114

Moreover, at the Camp David talks Dr. Butros Ghali, one of the members of the Egyptian delegation, had advised M.I. Kamel who was

113. Kamel sadly concluded: "I no longer understood what was going on in his mind; nor did I understand his strange behaviour and fickle and totally unexpected moods. I told myself that were such a person the head of a small family, the family would have taken prompt action to revoke his legal competence. Would not such action be more imperative if that person happened to be President of Egypt with the fate of forty million people in his hands? Could he possibly be as naive as he seemed. Or had he lost his senses? And why does he become so amenable to any request from Carter?" Kamel, n. 31, pp. 356-57. When Weizman came to Sadat with a request to enlarge the Israeli force to be stationed in the Israeli DMZ, Sadat as usual in his grand style and without consulting anybody unilaterally asked him: How many battalions do you want? Weizman replied "Three battalions of our border guard" Sadat in his characteristic manner said "All right Ezer. For you, four battalions". Weizman, n.33, p. 374. Emphasis added.

outspoken and did not hesitate in openly voicing his disagreement with Sadat: "Please, Mohamed, don't argue with the President in the delegation's presence! It is best to say what you want to say when you're alone with him. I've noticed he becomes angry when you speak to him in front of us". 115

Fascination for TV and Media Publicity

Soon after the October war when he opted for friendship with US through his friend and brother Kissinger, Sadat found himself the object of the kind of attention which gratified him most. Sadat soon became a strong addict and ultimately a victim of television diplomacy. The US TV networks like ABC, NBC and CBS paid particular attention to Sadat by asking for frequent interviews and giving wide publicity coverage to his speeches and movements. According to David Hirst:

There was no greater yardstick of prestige than the ballyhoo to which, as America's great new friend and ally, Sadat, too, was now to be entitled. He was certainly to have a much better chance to display his qualities of urbanity, charm and elegance through association with the media-conscious leaders of the western bourgeois democracies than with the dour apparatchiks of the Kremlin. 116

Once Sadat decided to visit Israel in the face of criticism at home and denunciation in the Arab world, from that moment on Sadat became the most sought after man by the world's famous journalists for interviews and TV coverage especially the American, in which he was the star. As it is Sadat was greatly enamoured with the sound of his own voice and with the contemplation of pictures of himself.

Granting interviews and making statements became Sadat's favourite pastime. Of course, Sadat was loquacious by nature. By every ordinary standard of loquacity, he talked too much. He loved to 'ad-lib' and to give unscripted interviews. His conversation especially with press interviewers, if one-sided, was always calculated to communicate charm as well as more specific messages. He tended to say not only what he wanted to say but also what he thought his audience wanted to hear. This injudicious verbal generosity is almost an Egyptian national vice. It sometimes provokes misunderstandings.\textsuperscript{117} According to Heikal

The Egyptians thought Sadat's decision to visit Jerusalem was another example of Sadat the actor being carried away by his own words and not to be taken seriously. Every family in Egypt was watching a superstar at work - a superstar of their own - and they could not but hope that his incredible performance was going to benefit them all. Sadat was going to bring Egypt not only peace but prosperity. There would now be no need for all the money to be spent on armaments no need to maintain such a large army. The Americans were certain to be generous and so would the Jews everywhere - and were not they the richest people in the world? Prices were now sure to come down. A new life was about to begin.\textsuperscript{118}

Since the US TV networks are under heavy Jewish influence it was hardly surprising that Sadat after his trip to Jerusalem was projected as an international Hero of Peace. The Jews fully understood Sadat's weakness and fascination for TV appearances and Photos for his inner desire when he was young was to become an actor, but was turned down probably due to his colour. In fact Sadat without any hesitation told the Israelis: "if they like to televise it (his

\textsuperscript{117} Armesto, n. 14, p. 65.
According to Ismail Fahmy:

After Sadat's visit to Jerusalem the media, fed by Israeli and Zionist propaganda, started to invent stories and anecdotes to build Sadat's prestige. The Israelis were particularly skillful in manipulating Sadat's image with specific concern for peace with Israel so that he should not feel he had committed a serious mistake which might lead to his own demise. Sadat was basically a simple man, proud of being a common villager and he was easily taken in by the Israeli campaign.

Theories like the visit removed psychological barriers 'shock treatment' and electric shock diplomacy theories were simply invented after Sadat's visit to Israel by American Israeli TV commentators especially Barbara Walters of ABC, John Chancellor of NBC and Walter Cronkite of CBS. These and other correspondents tried to give it an aura of philosophical foundation in order to influence public opinion favourably. Sadat's ever increasing public appearances and the torrent of his quasi-daily statements triggered the interest and concern of friends and foes alike in an attempt at ascertaining what would be his next step.

A meeting with Sadat and a photograph with him were among the major events marking any visit to Egypt. Later Sadat's meetings took in non-political figures as Elizabeth Taylor and Julio Iglesias. Priorities as to who deserved to be met were rather confused. Anyway Sadat had been transformed into something

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119. Sadat's Speeches and Interviews on the Occasion of his Visit to Jerusalem (Cairo: n.d.) p. 127.
120. Fahmy, n. 10, pp. 280-1.
121. Ibid.,
122. Kamel, n. 31, p. 120.
of an American hero. Time magazine named him Man of the Year (1977) and an American committee proposed him as its candidate for the Nobel Peace Prize (1978). Finally, Carter called him one of the bravest men on earth, and the world's foremost peace-maker. 123

**Propensity to take Risk**

Sadat's political style was characterized by initiative, surprise moves, unexpectedness, and shock treatments, he once described it as one of "electric shocks". His political skills included talent for patience, strong will, readiness to take risks, confidence in himself and a sense of destiny. For Fahmy Sadat very often tended to act "on his (Sadat's) initiative, taking decisions, which I considered to be very ill-advised". 124 The series of victories which Sadat boasted to have achieved since his success over Ali Sabri group in May 1971 and later due to the October war led to a "massive cult of personality being". In fact, this style often translated into an impulsiveness and lack of careful calculation in decision-making and a disregard for the views of his advisers. But Sadat did seem to enjoy a self-confidence which was at times an asset in governance. He apparently kept a cool nerve in the show-down with Ali Sabri. His decision to expel the Soviet advisers in July 1972 and abrogate the treaty in 1976 was taken with due preparations for probable Soviet retaliations. His decision to go to war in October 1973 was taken against

123. Sadat shared the Nobel Prize for peace with Begin. Hirst, n. 29, pp. 296-7.

the fears of top generals that Egypt was not prepared. Later his trip to Jerusalem, taken in the face of the opposition and incredulity of advisers and allies alike showed that, for better or worse, he had the inner certitude to take risks.\textsuperscript{125}

Sadat's policy of surprise was mainly due to his association during the inter-war period with many organizations and associations including some which practised terrorism. Sadat never completely rid himself of the mentality, methods and techniques commonly associated with a member of an underground organization. As Heikal pointed out Sadat "after a miserable childhood, spent his adolescence and early manhood in underground adventure, and once learned, conspiratorial habits are hard to shake off".\textsuperscript{126} Interestingly this personality trait continued to largely dominate Sadat's character even when he was President.\textsuperscript{127} The element of surprise was part of this association with organizations in which conspiratorial spirit of hiding one's thoughts, secretive, sly and deceitful nature prevailed. Thus, for Sadat to consult, discuss and rely on sound bases or on anything else outside oneself was almost nonexistent. Hence, his political conduct was mostly based on the idea of change through surprise. Interestingly the idea of surprise originates in the complete elimination of any participation in decision making. "A policy of surprise gives birth to a violent desire to save time by making precipitate changes which give no time for reflection".\textsuperscript{128} Although most of Sadat's decisions like his

\textsuperscript{125} Hinnebusch, n. 19, pp. 84-5; Fahmy, n. 10, p. 14 and 282-3; Sadat, n. 1, p. 248.
\textsuperscript{126} Heikal, n. 2, pp. 62-63.
\textsuperscript{127} Kamel, n. 31, p. 121.
\textsuperscript{128} Shukri, n. 80, p. 36.
February 1971 peace initiative, Soviet advisers expulsion, abrogation of friendship treaty with Moscow, union with Libya and later his decision to visit Israel, all these were taken without proper consultations and were part of his nature to surprise his rivals, adversaries, but they can also been interpreted as initiatives which was another feature of his personality.

Sadat's historical stature is guaranteed by two qualities that he showed through his statecraft: his ability to take initiatives that transcend the force of circumstance and change the entire shape of things and his "ability or power to surprise to perform some arresting coup de theatre which enlivens the political process, quickens change and leaves participants and observers gaping". These elements of initiative and surprise gave in the political arena a "challenging freshness and originality". These elements of initiative coupled with surprise made Sadat an important and enthusiastic person who longed for quick success with the result he would set out on a path without the minister's knowledge in the real hope of achieving the objective he would set for himself without too much delay. Related to this was Sadat's penchant to set deadlines and make it a matter of prestige like his Year of Decision in 1971 without consulting the Soviets as per the treaty which annoyed them, insisting on prompt deliveries of Soviet arms within the deadline.

129. Armesto, n. 14, p. 172. He further argues that Sadat's quality of initiative is a mark of real greatness recalling Napoleon's apothegm that greatness consists in the ability to master fortune. His policy of surprise is more of a quality of conspicuous brilliance, which made Sadat one of the best known of modern statesmen. Through these 2 features Sadat created a new kind of practical political philosophy of the unexpected by inverting staatspolitik and putting morality and integrity first; see also Sadat, n. 1, pp. 87-89.
Likewise he fixed 1977 as the year in which the issue of peace with Israel should be decided either way. Sadat's sense of urgency in these matters was interpreted by others as desperation and hence he was open to manipulation and exploitation by others. In his desire to see things (or ensure success) completed within the stipulated time of the deadline he would arbitrarily and unilaterally fix, Sadat would make a series of concessions and thereby weaken his negotiating position.

Sadat who was banking on US support in the peace process was disillusioned over Carter's unwillingness to come up with a peace plan and for his lack of effective pressure on Israel. Instead Sadat decided to take the initiative. In an informal session with Vance in August 1977 without any sides and without telling his Foreign Minister Sadat provided him "with a paper, in better English than Sadat's own, outlining Egypt's proposals for a peace treaty with Israel".\(^{130}\) Apparently it resembled the Rogers Peace plan but more importantly, Sadat's proposals came very close to acceptance of full peace and normalization of relations with Israel. Sadat swore Vance to secrecy and then asked him to obtain a similar peace proposal from Israel. He also told Vance what his fall back positions would be, entreating him not to reveal these to Israel. From that point on, Carter knew what Sadat's terms would be for a settlement with Israel.

\(^{130}\) Indyk, n. 48, p. 31. 
Impatient for Quick Results

Since 1970 Sadat had taken many risky steps and in most of them he had succeeded, which made him believe in his own personal good fortune. Sadat considered himself to be very lucky and fortunate because he had prevailed over many formidable dangers. The phrase he very often repeated to the effect that he was "naturally inclined to be optimistic", is perhaps a reflection of his faith in his good fortune. His faith in his good fortune had perhaps developed in him a tendency to adventurism and a proclivity for gambling. Sadat was fond of repeating the miscalculation made by US and Britain when they thought Sadat will not stay in power for more than 4 to 6 weeks.

Well, here I am after 7 years and after my first term had expired and I am now serving the second term as President when I started dealing with Dr. Kissinger, President Nixon and then after that Ford and after that Carter and Vance, they said the same thing: that I am gambling. Even some of my friends in the US who were in Nixon's entourage when they came here in Egypt, they were very pessimistic and I told them "no, I am optimistic! From time to time there are always attacks on me, especially from the Soviet Union that I am gambling, that I shall lose, so and so". well, in 7 years, I did not lose any battle.

Sadat wrote that "no problem should ever be regarded as insuperable. There are always solutions to everything". He also said: "it is not in my nature at all to be on the defensive". Coupled with this optimistic/positive outlook the detente policy gave

133. Sadat, n. 1, p. 76.
134. Ibid., p. 78.
Sadat the chance of a life time. He viewed detente, and explained it to the Egyptians, to mean an alliance between the two Super powers. It followed that there was no difference between US and USSR in their attitude towards the Arab-Israeli conflict and therefore the shift from the Soviet Union to US which Sadat was contemplating even before the October war, appeared less difficult. Easy success in one step led Sadat to believe that he could take bigger risks. Soon he launched the October war in coordination with Syria against Israel despite the fears of his own Defence Minister and other top generals who were skeptical about success and even said Egypt was not prepared for war. Even Sadat expected 80,000 dead just to cross the Canal. But surprisingly the Egyptian soldiers not only successfully crossed the Canal but stormed the Bar Lev defence line and established themselves on East Bank in a short period at negligible cost. Sadat later said that his decision to launch war was a calculated risk: "when I launched that attack in 1973, a lot of people thought I would drown myself in the Suez Canal in the first two hours, well I didn't". The credit he won from the October war gave him a tremendous boost to his personal legitimacy in the eyes of the people. More than anything else, the Egyptian success in the war made Sadat a great hero and enabled him to come out of Nasser's shadow. According to Heikal, by the successful crossing of the Suez Canal "Sadat had built an almost unassailable position for himself", but he also sadly says that "but this was to prove not so". The Israeli counter crossing towards the end of the war badly undermined early Egyptian success and for Sadat it was a terrible blow because it

appeared to rob him of all the fruits of his victory. His position was desperate and the Egyptians were not officially told of the massive Israeli presence on the West Bank of the Canal which threatened the Egyptian armies that had crossed the Canal. Sadat refused to believe or at least he pretended that the Israeli crossing had been inconsequential. So he concluded that the victory for Egypt in the war had given "enough weight to get its own terms and that was what he opted for". Sadat could have honestly confessed the truth about the Israeli counter crossing and consequently he needed the US help to save the Egyptian Third Army. But Sadat did not do it because he was haunted by the 1967 defeat. Having worked since then to rebuild the military with such huge sacrifices and then to concede that the war had ended unfavourably was simply unthinkable at that juncture. In Ajami's words

The national pride of the society, the maneuverability of the state, and Sadat's leadership were at stake. The October war was his war, a source of his own legitimacy, his own great act, a chance to be something more than Abdul Nasser's accidental successor - the meek, inheriting political power. And as the October war took an almost mythical dimensions, Sadat was called upon to make good on the promise of October - his new order of peace and prosperity. This dictated his policies. He had become a captive of his own promises. 137

According to Heikal despite the qualified victory and the enormous boost it gave to Sadat's image, Egypt suffered reverses in the post-war diplomacy.

Part of the trouble was Sadat's own character. He had never had the education - or, indeed, the time - to give serious consideration to the

137. Ajami, n. 26, p. 100.
problems which were going to confront him. He had no real understanding of Egyptian history. He enjoyed the trappings of supreme power without appreciating the responsibilities which go with it. Nor did he understand the true nature of Egypt's relations with the rest of the Arab world. He saw that Egypt was a natural leader among the Arabs, but assumed that wherever she led the others would follow. The subtleties of leadership, the inevitable give-and-take demanded of it, completely eluded him.\textsuperscript{138}

Soon after the October war these shortcomings became obvious. Despite the Israeli countercrossing Sadat failed to recognize the importance of the initial victory Egypt had gained. He held most if not all the trumps. The Arab oil embargo was beginning to bite the US and had led to strain in US-NATO relations with West Europe quickly supporting Arab cause more forcefully than ever. It had led to an unprecedented show of Arab solidarity and Arab public opinion fervently supported Sadat besides world opinion which was favourably disposed. Moreover, despite their humiliation in July 1972 the Soviet Union was still willing to support Sadat. As Heikal wrote: "But he turned his back on all this. Instead, he opted for the victory parades and the cameras, and, ignoring his Arab allies and friends, resolved that he would rebuild the area lone with his new friend, Henry Kissinger". Instead of insisting on full Israeli withdrawal from Arab lands Sadat meekly agreed to Kissinger's step-by-step diplomacy because according to Kissinger "Sadat had fallen victim to human weakness.\textsuperscript{139}

\textit{Anyway, Sadat was very optimistic about Israeli response to his peace initiative. He imagined the Israelis would be as}

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\textit{\textsuperscript{138} Heikal, n. 2, p. 62 & 63.}\n\textit{\textsuperscript{139} Ibid., pp. 62-63.}\n\end{flushleft}
magnanimous as himself. Soon after his return from Jerusalem in 1977 he summoned Ahmed Bahaeddin, Editor of *Al-Ahram* and Sadat told him:

All you journalists are going to find yourselves with nothing to do. You have lost the one theme which has been keeping you going all these years. Now everything has been solved. It is all over. You poor people - you will have to find something else to write about. The editor said he could understand the President's optimism over Sinai, but what about the Palestine issue - the West Bank and Gaza? 'Oh that is all finished too', Sadat protested. 'Arab Jerusalem, Mr. President?' asked the editor. 'In my pocket', said Sadat.  

To sum up, it was first and foremost Sadat's unique personality that gave Egypt's peace policy the shape it took. His highly personalized decision making style led him to make commitments from which he would find it difficult to extricate. His poor negotiating skills led others to believe he could be manipulated. His unique concept of friendship convinced his friends that more could be expected of Sadat. Despite repeated rebuffs and hardline stance from US and Israel Sadat continued his interest in the peace process. Kissinger and the Israelis discovered Sadat's exaggerated notion of his own greatness. By flattery and heaping compliments they extracted concessions after concessions. Sadat's revulsion for paperwork and his sense of exaggerated self-importance led him to ignore the advice given by his assistants. Moreover, his fascination for TV and media publicity led him to believe that whatever he does is widely acclaimed and applauded. It also made him an optimist.

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140. Ibid., p. 104. According to Heikal, Sadat in his eagerness to convince Arab leaders of the validity of his assessment and of his political powers and strategy, he sent Tuhami to tell Saudi leaders, "we have been given a written pledge from the Israeli about the return of Arab Jerusalem to Arab sovereignty". pp. 104-5.
besides convincing that if he takes initiatives and greater risks he could achieve his goals. This also made him impatient for quick results. Above all Sadat through his strange view of himself as a ruler believed that whatever he did was for the upliftment and prosperity of Egypt. As he was fond of saying: "Each step I have taken over the years has been for the good of Egypt and has been designed to serve the cause of right, liberty and peace". In the final analysis Sadat explained that all the intricate and complex international maneuvering, surprises decisions, risks, initiatives, friendships, negotiations were aimed at improving the life of the Egyptian people. In short, only Sadat could have done what he did as far as Egypt's peace policy is concerned.