WARRING DEMOCRACIES

The Army, the Muslim Brotherhood & the Rest in Egypt post 2011

Dalia Wahdan

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LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS AND ARABIC TERMS

SCAF: Supreme Council of Armed Forces
ERSAP: Economic Reform and Structural Adjustment Program
Feloul: Arabic for Residual elements. A term coined after the deposition of Mubarak to refer to members of his regime who re-emerged. It also referred to their supporters
Hizb el-Kanaba: Couch Party: reference to those who did not join the uprisings in 2011 or subsequent protests
Al-Ikhwan: The Muslim Brotherhood
Kifaya: "Enough" The Egyptian Movement for Change
Kolona Khaled Said: We are all Khaled Said
Intifada: Uprising
Lagnet el Hokama: Committee of Wise Men, established in Tahrir Square on February 5, 2011
CAPMAS: Central Agency for Public Mobilization and Statistics (*al-gihaz al-markazy lil-ta'bia al-ama wal-ihsa)*
NDP: National Democratic Party
RETAU: Real Estate Tax Authority Union
EFITU: Egyptian Federation of Independent Trade Unions
Askar Kazeboon: Army men Liars
SCC: Supreme Constitutional Court

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

A. SUMMARY OF THEORETICAL FRAMEWORK

In Egypt, becoming a civic state that provides its citizens' demands for "Bread, Freedom, Social Justice and Human Dignity" is a protracted process. A process that depends on many factors and actors. The nature of this process, whether democratic or otherwise, is a function of multiple forces and interests of local, national, regional and international scales. This study is an attempt to analyze and explain this process.

Legions of scholars have established famous theories about the nature of the state in Egypt. For example, Karl Wittfogel's theory of the hydraulic society argued how perennial agriculture necessitates a large bureaucracy, which in turn requires a despot on top to control, regulate and possibly, expand the empire. His *Oriental Despotism* was a famous reference to some historians (Ayubi, 1980) and continued to inform several analyses of the ruling regimes in Egypt for quite a while. Robert Springborg, for instance, characterized consecutive ruling regimes post the 1952 coup d'état that led to political independence as hybrid authoritarianisms (Springborg, 2009). While all post-independence presidents came from the military ranks, those regimes were amalgams of military and secular dictatorships, with mixed political economies.

There is no doubt that those esteemed scholars had based their analyses and characterizations on valid evidences. Nevertheless, their arguments are variations upon ecological determinisms that posited Egypt's geographical location and the River Nile as the ultimate determining factors that configured the Egyptian statehood since times immemorial. The present study does not claim that such factors do not figure into the equation of the statei Egypt. They do. However, their relative importance fluctuates in response to other forces - or as this study claims - other vectors i.e. forces with measurable strengths and identifiable directions.

What are the vectors that determine the relative importance of location and topography and eventually the nature of the state? This study identifies the main vector as Capital: private national capital, regional capital, transnational capital, as well as state capital. That is to say, there are multiple capitals – and, as will be duly shown below, even state capital cannot be conceived of as a single homogenous capital, but as multiple capitals. The other vector is collective action and organized activism. Similar to Capital, there are multiple forms of collective action and organized activism.

This anthropological study analyzes the dynamics between multiple state capitals and multiple forms of collective action immediately before and during the regime of the deposed president, Hosni Mubarak. The objective is to reveal how those vectors interacted and shaped the nature of the ruling regimes after the January 2011 uprising. The study claims that just as we identify multiple forms of capitals and multiple collective actions, we also identify multiple states within the State. The possibility or impossibility of fulfilling the demands of 'the People' reside in the potential strength of particular forms of collective actions to continue their struggles against the agendas of multiple capitals, and of competing state institutions. These struggles will continue to re-invent the processes of democratic and civic statehood, but their outcomes are not foreseeable yet. We will continue to ask what Alexander & Bassiouny pose, "would the people remake the state in their image, or the state remake the people?" (2014, Kindle version)

This sort of analysis is a bit difficult because both vectors (capitals and collective actions) are not homogenous or static. Whether national, regional or transnational, multiple forms of capitals continue to perceive Egypt's geographic location, its topography, demography and forms of collective action and organized activism not only as profit-generating resources, but also as tools for negotiation and twisting the arms of their adversaries. One glaring example is how the leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood mobilized the grievances of the urban poor to mobilize them against the army generals immediately after

the uprising. Another example concerns how General Abdel Fattah El-Sisi exploited the frustrations of large sectors of liberals to raise support for the war on terrorism and pass the anti-protest law in 2014. Those discursive factors are difficult to capture theoretically and empirically, and render anthropological analysis difficult.

Existing theories of social movements and collective action are inadequate to account for or explain the prolific dynamics of twenty-first century capitals, collective actions and states. Therefore, this study uses theories of social movements and collective action with qualifications. Beside the analysis of forms of collective action and organized activism, it examines formal policies and subtle signals in order to identify the interests of neoliberal capitals within and outside sovereign state institutions. Similarly, it analyses the invasive discourses and propaganda of fear of terror, chaos and collapse of the state, society and the economy, which followed the uprising, and lastly, it assesses the dilemmas of modern welfare-warfare statehood in Egypt during and after the two democratic Presidential elections in 2012 and 2014 respectively.

B. SUMMARY OF THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

In order to achieve the objectives above this account will be organized in such a way as to answer the following sets of questions:

a) What was the nature of the states in Egypt under Mubarak? What, if any, are the common factors between Mubarak regime and its predecessors in how they related to collective action?
b) Who are the main collective actors under Mubarak? What were their respective patterns of collective action and their ideologies? When has there been cross-ideological collaborations or rivalries and over which demands and agendas?
c) What were the factors that led to the eruption of the uprising in January 2011 after thirty-one years under Mubarak regime? What is the nature of the uprising and was it the sole force behind the deposition of Mubarak?
d) How did events unfold after the depositions and what are the lessons that activists and state agents have learnt from each other and from their own trial and errors?
e) What are the confrontational events that, when analyzed, would help us understand the direction and nature of the transformations in State structures and dynamics and in the modes and intensities of collective action? When put together within the economic context how would this lead to an understanding of the nature and process of statehood in Egypt post uprising?

f) Is there a general loss of faith in the state?
g) What is the current state of revolution in Egypt and what are the possibilities for an emancipatory statehood that delivers the demands of the People?

A corollary set of questions concern the theoretical conceptual tools that anthropologists use in understanding social construction of statehood. Anthropology has often been accused of theoretical and methodological inadequacy in the analysis of states. Validity of such accusations notwithstanding, the uprising and the events that followed lend themselves to the contemporaneity of anthropology's theories and methods. This particular point will be elaborated in the sections on the analytical framework as well as following section on data and research methods.

C. SUMMARY OF FINDINGS

I. COLLECTIVE ACTION BETWEEN MULTIPLE STATES & MULTIPLE CAPITALS

Even as a British colony, the state in Egypt has always sided with capitalist forces or sought to act as a capitalist force in its own right as a sovereign power. The case of Bank Misr stood out as stark evidence.

Under Gamal Abdel Nasser, the military establishment wrestled power from other state institutions and emerged as the defender of the state from predatory private capitals and the protector of society from religious fundamentalist forces. In its quest for popular and public (state sector) legitimacy, the free officers established a patron-client structure of relations between the state and the people on one hand and in-between state institutions on the other. On one hand, handling continuous welfare services to the people. While on the other, securing capital-investments in the hands of state-owned and run public utilities. However, with successive military defeats in 1956 and 1967, the military establishment was unable to sustain such arrangements and a steady stream of disinvestment emerged, leading to the re-consolidation of private capitals in the national economy.

Meanwhile, collective action was brutally crushed by pervasive intelligence policing, which targeted every ideological hue and the Muslim Brotherhood – the only organized form of activism – in particular. Formal democratic institutions (political parties) were forced to come under the banner of the Socialist Union - the only formally legitimate forum for political activism. Even Al-Azhar and the authority of religious endowments came under the control and payrolls of the state.

Under Anwar el-Sadat, nuanced state-capitals emerged. One such capitals concerned the transformation of state-run utilities into a category known as Economic Authorities. This came into being in the seventies to give state-owned and run utilities a novel space or 'Open Door' to profiteer from regional and international liberal markets. Simultaneously, Sadat abolished the Socialist Union and cautiously allowed formal political institutions and collective action. He released the Muslim Brotherhood hands to counter any potential for a communist revolt.

Under Hosni Mubarak, and particularly after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990-1991, successive rounds of economic reform and structural adjustments (ERSAP) had placed the Egyptian political economy within the orbit of transnational capitals. ERSAP had also consolidated Egypt's position of multiple dependencies on annual grant-in-aid from the United States of America, loans from the World Bank under conditions of the International Monetary Fund and grants from oil-rich neighboring countries. These adjustments created diverse capitals with foothold in the Egyptian political economy. The large portion (almost 40%) of such capitals rested with the military establishment, either as sole or joint owner of capital and stocks.

In terms of social movements, the Muslim Brotherhood has meanwhile diversified their operations through two distinctive strategies: a militant wing and a preaching or *Da'wa* wing. The first helped in terrorizing any secular and leftist currents within society, and providing logistical support to international fundamentalist movements such as the Taliban movement in Afghanistan. Whereas the second wing had stealthily, yet steadily Islamized society and state institutions at once.

Earlier, Sadat's investment laws of the seventies had allowed members of the Muslim Brotherhood, who had previously fled the country under Nasser, to invest in-home and to operate through an expansive networks of institutions to provide social services such as education, health care and media, i.e. services that the welfare state has grown increasingly unable to provide or sustain. At the same time, Sadat's relative easing of state control over formal political activism, allowed members of the Muslim Brotherhood to participate and win elections of student unions and professional syndicates. It had also allowed them to access multiple positions in state ministries and other public institutions.

However, after the militant wing of the Muslim Brotherhood succeeded to assassin Sadat in 1981, his deputy, Hosni Mubarak, declared a state of emergency and started a tight crack down on Islamist militants. At this historical junction, global market transformation, compounded by the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait were followed by successive

round of ERSAP, a slew of annual budgetary deficits, and spiraling internal governmental debts. All such factors had pushed Mubarak to consolidate the security state apparatuses, to decrease financial and legal supports to state-run utilities and economic authorities. Expanding security state apparatuses had direct implications on national, regional and transnational capital investments. More importantly, it had direct implications on collective action and organized activism and social and political movements.

In brief, those vectors have given Egyptian statehood particular features as follows:

- Financially and economically weakened state-run utilities vying for private acquisitions to meet successive rounds of the economic reform and structural adjustment program
- Strengthened political and economic powers of the military establishment, which eventually succeeded to acquire or buy-out economically unviable state-run utilities
- A President who drew his legitimacy from military prowess (factual and imagined) compared to a homogenous state that drew legitimacy from welfare services and bestowing social rights to citizens
- A predominantly Islamized society with weak collective action and fragmented activism
- Brutal security apparatuses that violated human rights
- Ideologically diverse capitalist elites - secular, military and religious.
- A clique of businesspeople and politicians, which constituted a capricious Presidential regime and dominated the Parliament
- Regional (Gulf) state and private capitalists vying for joint ventures with the ruling elite and the military establishment
- Diligent activists with diverse and often, irreconcilable motivations and resources.

In summary, the main discourse of the deposed regime vis-à-vis activists and citizens in general had consistently been that *of fear and violence: fear of terror, chaos, collapse, insecurity and disintegration of the mythically unified society, economy and the Egyptian state.*

II. REPERTOIRES OF COLLECTIVE ACTION AND SOCIAL MOVEMENTS

Egypt – like several post-colonial nation-states has had myriad forms of collective action and multiple trends of social and political activism, some were short-lived while others were protracted and assumed versatile trajectories. One of the powerful examples of protracted and

organized collective action in Egypt has emerged within institutions of higher education. Universities in general and public ones in particular have frequently turned out to be vibrant spaces of student activism, where the interests of the state, multiple capitals and the 'people' clashed.

Student movements and activism have repeatedly emerged as powerful vectors in social and political transformations since 1919 (Abdalla, 2008). The transition from private to mass free for all higher education in the sixties had itself become an arena of struggle over social rights ever since then. Students have repeatedly demonstrated to demand fair access to the amenities and the benefits of education in terms of degrees, income and employment.

During the seventies - as the late President Anwar Sadat favored Islamists in his war against Nasserists and communists - institutions of higher education had, again emerged as fertile grounds for activism albeit, what is generally known as political Islam. With several Islamist students and faculty members dominating elected and appointed positions in academia. This has helped Islamists interject the state by controlling curricula, university governance and elections of student unions and professional syndicates. It is even argued that Islamist activists "acquired their first political skills during the 1970s while working with other student activists at Egyptian universities." (Michaelle Browers (2007: 76) as cited in Soudias, 2014:55).

In the nineties, the tight state of emergency had brought multiple strands of activism under ostensibly a single banner. Faculty members of public universities and several students spearheaded the Egyptian Movement for Change - the first movement to make explicit demands for political change in the 1990s.

Another protracted domain of collective action is labor and workers activism. Although this account does not tackle this long and complex sector, however, it stresses the importance of labor activism in shaping Egyptian statehood, particularly under Gamal Abdel Nasser and his projects to build a nation-state on the precincts of nationalization and on the shoulders of Egyptian workers.

Those examples defy the Orientalists and neo-orientalists' views that Arab and predominantly Muslim communities are either, docile and obsequious to elders and rulers, or endemically mired in a culture of tribal rivalry, violence, rioting and vandalism. The present account offers a different perspective. One that highlights collective action and political activism and tracks how they intersect and engage with formal state institutions.

One of the most organized forms of protracted activism is the Muslim Brotherhood. The movement has its origins in the Islamic

reform movements of 1875 – 1940s (Gasper, 2009). Since its inception in 1928, and unlike other activists and social movements, the Brotherhood has persistently redefined its strategies to coalesce, confront or ally with their opponents. They have repeatedly shifted their demands and objectives in response to capitalist imperatives and regional forces. Sometimes they succeeded to establish sympathetic or loyal constituencies among diverse sections of the population through long-term strategies within existing social institutions. At other times, they followed short-term tactics within formal political structures and succeeded to penetrate state structures and institutions. Through persistent struggles to 'Islamize' society and to infiltrate state institutions since the 1920s, the collectivity of 'political Islam' has managed to Islamize polity and redefine the meanings and shape of the struggles for bread, freedom, social justice and human dignity that eventually erupted in January 2011.

Other movements, contemporary to the Muslim Brotherhood have also carved their distinctive paths towards modern political subjectivities. Those include the communists, the leftist, the nationalists, in addition to the Nasserists. Nonetheless, since the later years of the nineties, other movements emerged. Those were mostly extra-parliamentary coalitions between individuals, established movements, non-governmental organizations and political parties. The Egyptian movement for change (Kefaya) is an example as well as the March 9 movement for Academic Freedoms, the Egyptian Anti-Globalization Group and the March 20 movement are examples of such strands of organized activism (Abdelrahman, 2009).

Still other movements operated outside those classical categories, such as the massive welfare associations working through churches and mosques and the celebrity-preachers' circles of religious education such as Amr Khaled and Khalid al-Jindi as well as few other female preachers since the early 2000s.

Across the spectrum of political ideologies, most of pre-uprising activism has been in response to successive economic reforms and structural adjustments. The diverse and multiple forms of activism have consistently been in dialectical relationships with the imperatives and dynamics of diverse and multiple forms of capital.

The shift to an explicit demand for political change was stealthy and broke out when the National Democratic Party and the Presidency took unequivocal measures to prepare Gamal Mubarak, son of Hosni Mubarak for presidency. Those measures brought diverse and often antagonistic activists and social movements together. Since 2000, multiple voices collectively demanded regime change alongside the repeated demands for economic and social rights.

On 25 January 2011, Egyptians took to the streets demanding the deposition of the ruling regime and the ousting of the former president Hosni Mubarak. Having raised the national flag and chanted slogans of nationalist hues, several commentators argued that the uprising was non-religious i.e. it was not inspired or instigated by Islamists. During the days of the uprising, protesters represented various ideological hues and many could not even be aligned with any particular political or ideological current. On the streets, religious and secular groups and individuals had joined forces under the common banner of "bread, freedom, social justice and human dignity."

III. THE RESILIENT REGIME AND ITS DIVISIVE DISCOURSES

The events that transpired during the eighteen-day uprising, with regards to the solidarities among protestors and the brutalities of the security forces and police-hired thugs towards protestors could, at best, serve as chronological fodder for an anthropological account. Although listed in due course in this paper, they would not make a critical sense except when placed retrospectively into the contexts of structural and relational factors. That is to say, after the white heat of the uprising had subsided. Some of those forces predated the uprising, with their logical origins in the protracted state of emergency - declared upon the assassination of Anwar Sadat and the ascendance of Mubarak to power in 1981. Whereas, other factors arose in the aftermath of the uprising. Both sets of factors reveal the extent of the regime's resilience and the structural predicaments of the Egyptian statehood.

The first factor concerned the divisive discourses of state-run media and state-loyal scholars regarding the uprising and activism that predated it. One discourse from state-owned Al-Ahram Centre for Political and Strategic Studies claimed that activists were divided into two categories namely, movements that seek political change and movements that make specific social and economic demands. The latter were labeled "*matlabiya,*" to refer to the demands (*mataleb*) of one or more sectors of the population. This study argues that this division is arbitrary and has no theoretical or historical basis. Firstly, this distinction denies the fact that under the repressive regime, the very act of protesting was itself a manifestation of the demand for political participation. The same divisive discourse has repeatedly used in state-run media after the uprising in order to demonize protests and portray protestos as opportunists who sought personal gains at a time when the country has passed through taxing times.

Secondly, empirical evidence supported the argument that the distinction between the political and the *matlabiya* collective actions

and movements was regime propaganda. As early as the nineteen nineties, there has been a vocal resurgence of labor activism particularly in the industrial manufaturing sectors. Around the same time, a cross-ideological and cross-class mode of student activism has also emerged. By the late nineteen nineties, both labor and student activism were joined by other sectors of the population namely, slum dwellers, employers and employees of small and medium enterprises and the self-employed.

Collective action among employees of the public services sector constituted 12.4% of the total number of recorded cases of protest in the nineteen nineties. Ironically, those were the very sections of employees whom the deposed regime used to mobilize in support of its policies. In addition, 80.9% of recorded protests happened outside and independent of the traditional frames of political participation i.e. outside political parties and NGOs, with their distinctinctive ideological hues. In addition, most protests were predominantly carried out by persons who were not experienced activists. Lastly, the demands raised at the majority of protests were not limited to protestors' respective occupational or class related consumption, instead, they represented multiple inspirations and desires for political and intellectual freedoms, anti-repression, anti-corruption, and anti-profiteering.

The divisive discourses of the regime supporters in media and research centres seemed to capitalize, instead, on the discrepancies between the protestors' declared demands and the principles that guided their collective actions and movements. Those discrepancies do not necessarily mean contradictions between demands and principles. They rather constitute an important analytical premise that is often overlooked by many analysts of revolutions and social movements, yet one that is oganic to the present study in its attempt to argue that activism in Egypt is experiencing a state of permanent revolution.

Some radical scholars did record such distinction/discrepancy between declared demands and underpinning principles. Abdelrahman (2009) recorded it while studying the rapproachment between leftists and Islamists after the second Palestinian Intifada in 2000. She observed how pre-uprising activism was cross-ideological and fluid. While maintaining their individual and institutional differences of principles, in their alliances, "none of [the movements acted as] a single, homogenous, united front representing a monolithic political camp... [Rather, many, if not all, were characteristed by] internal conflicts and subgroups and divisions" (ibid., p. 38).

She demonstrated how diverse movements, even arch-enemies displayed remarkable fluidity in alliances, raised various related demands and rallied around multiple issues. One of the starck examples

was the Egyptian Popular Committee in Solidarity with the Intifada (uprising). This was a national initiative that began as a campaign to donate blood and money to Palestinians in their uprising against the Israeli violations of human rights. The movement developed into a rally demanding explicit political reform of the Mubarak regime. Out of this committee came the annual "Cairo Conference" where non-partisan opposition forces came together under anti-war (US-UK invasion of Iraq in 2003), anti-neoliberalisation (IMF and World Bank structural adjustments of the Egyptian economy) and a bit later anti-inheritance of presidency (against Mubarak renewal of term and his son's succession) banners (Browers, 2007).

Besides – an in spite of - fluidity, most social movements were internally dynamic and sometimes discordant. Whether parties or movements, leftists, for instane, have often had endemic divisions over ideological principles, orientations and programs, and strategies and tactics. Before the uprising, this camp included the Tagammu party, the banned communist party, the Revolutionary Socialists movement, the People group, and the Democratic Left group (Abdelrahman, 2009).

Long before the uprising in 1976, the Tagammu had already morphed into the National Progressive Unionist Party (NPUP) to include socialists, communists, Arab nationalists and Nasserists. Compared to others in this camp, the Tagammu party was able to sustain favorable relations with the Political Parties Committee appointed to oversee political parties in Egypt under Mubarak (Stacher, 2004). After the uprising, Refaat Al-Saeed, president of the party had not supported the popular movement, compelling 73 of the party's committee members to resign in March 2011(Choucri, 2011).

Islamist activism is no less fluid and in fact presents us with a case that would expand theoretical renditions borrowed from advanced democratic contexts. Within the expansive literature on this large category of activism, sometimes called political Islam, Islamic activism is conceived of as urban protest movements that accommodated yet resisted established worldviews and oppressive regimes (Macleod, 1991; Al-Sayyid Marsot, 1984), as social services organizations by and for the middle classes (Bayat, 1998), as a means of suppressing and mediating social conflicts and a means for capital accumulation (Beinin, 2005).

In addition to the potential discord between demands and principles, the regime's divisive discourse also capitalized on the fragility of the alliances between diverse activists and movements. As mentioned above, cross-ideological alliances had already been effective among university students particularly while organizing for independent student unions and mobilizing against state security intervention in

campus and university affairs since year 2000. They were created to capture opportunities or face threats made by the state and its multiple sovereign agencies (See Shehata & Stacher, 2007 for analysis of *Al-Azhar Militia* event). However, once the physical threat of state repression subsided, most alliance dissipated, thus strengthening the 'old' regime's divisive discourses.

Although alliances consumed substantial energies and time, cross-ideological forums became learning mechanisms that generated networking and experiential repretoires. Mobilizing for alliances was generally premised upon the shared belief that movements were subject to similar threats and that cooperation in a plural milieu was more productive than waring as rivals, under the umberella of opposition. This plurality created "imagined solidarity" (Bayat, 2005) whereby individuals and groups internalized such "generalized believes" and "shared values" around which their "collective mind" worked (Tarrow, 1988). This imagined solidarity contributed to the appearance of protestors as a popular front movement and gave impetus to "We the People demand the fall of the regime" ("*Al-Shaab Yorid Isqat al Nizam*"). It was this "cognitive liberation" (Tarrow, 1988) that sustained the uprising and bestowed upon the days that immediately followed it the appearance of anarachy and arbitrary self-rule.

IV. WARRING DEMOCRACIES: MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD AGAINST STATE SOVEREIGNTY

The speed and discursiveness of events that followed the deposition of Mubarak rendered the nature of the emerging statehood elusive, and made the transition period appear as moving target for any reliable critical analysis. Two instances stood out as particularly critical. The first concerned the behavior of the military during the eighteen day uprising, and the second concerned the behavior of Mubarak's Minister of Defense, General Abdel Hameed Tantawi, who directed the Supreme Council of Armed Forces (SCAF) towards the leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood in 2011.

- Throughout Tahrir Square sit-in, the military stood in support of the people. They exercised self-restraint from violently crushing the uprising. They did not support the President, who was simultaneously the Supreme Head of Armed Forces according to the Egyptian Constitution.
- Mona El-Ghobashy (2012) argued that SCAF and the leaders of the Muslim Brotherhood exchanged the post-uprising Presidency for safe exit of the army generals who supported Mubarak and were implicated in corrupt frauds. The deal culminated in the

election of the Brotherhood's candidate, Mohammed Morsi, who in turn absolved General Tantawi from his duties without trails.

After the deposition of the regime and its parliament, there was political vacuum. Nonetheless, several sovereign state agencies remained almost intact. The Supreme Constitutional Court, the Highest Administrative Court, and the General Prosecutor were cases in point. Other agencies boosted their powers such as the military, whereas others reshuffled but retained massive sway over public opinion such as state-run media.

Since Nasser's time and unlike Weberian conceptions of rational, neutral bureaucracies, those agencies have rarely, if ever, been outside the purview of the "political." Once in power in 2013, the Muslim Brotherhood had staged a sit-in that locked-in and locked-out simultaneously, several members of the Supreme Constitutional Court at the headquarters of the court in the eastern part of Cairo. They staged another lock-in of several media persons in Media City, in the Sixth of October governorate south-west of Cairo for several days. Those two sit-ins were sufficient evidence of belligerence between the democratically elected President and democratic institutions of the state, i.e. warring democracies that engaged in a brute dialectics of violence.

V. DIALECTICS OF FEAR AND VIOLENCE: STRUCTURAL PREDICAMENTS OF STATEHOOD

The belligerence between the Muslim Brotherhood and sovereign state agencies was not the only dialectic of violence. Immediately after Mubarak stepped down, jubilant, enthusiastic and self-confident activists had organized around rebuilding state structures. Ground activities had re-energized and expanded geographically into rural areas. Several coalitions and alliances had forged particularly between members of diverse youth groups, collectively labelled the "revolutionary youth" camp. Immediately after the deposition of Mubarak, a joint statement by thirteen Egyptian NGOs submitted a draft plan of transition to SCAF. The plan delineated a blueprint for the gradual activation of economic, social and cultural rights that meet the demands of the uprising.

SCAF had systematically ignored the pan. In response, several activists demonstrated regularly in Tahrir Square and mounted makeshift stages from which representatives and spokespersons addressed the public, presented programs or listed names of trusted figures while audiences walked around listening and debating. One of the dear demands that went unheeded concerned the formation of a national committee of civilian and military figures to draft a new constitution

based on transparent criteria of selection of participants. Instead, or in deliberate neglect, SCAF announced a referendum on the old and defunct 1971 constitution and in March 2011, people took to poll stations against many activists and intellectuals' intuitions.

In the immediate aftermath of the referendum, many spots across the country witnessed violent clashes between Coptic-Christians and Muslims- the two main religious ethnicities. SCAF and state-run media took advantage and portrayed the clashes live examples of how things could turn out if Egypt emerges into an Islamist state with religion as basis of full citizenship.

Conversely, rumors spread anxieties over the alleged immoralities – like the legitimization of alternate sexualities - associated with *the* secular state that separates religion from politics. This period - between the referendum and Parliamentary elections in 2011- witnessed the resurgence of violence reminiscent of the deposed regime perpetrated against activists by military police, the state security forces, renamed national security forces, and hired thugs in civilian attire.

Activists responded by escalating protests and diversifying activities as well as establishing several vigilance groups to follow up events and campaign against the rule of the military raising the slogan "Down with the Rule of The Junta" *"Yasqot yasqot hokm al askar."* Kazeboon (liars) was a particularly vocal campaign organized by media specialists and university professors who relied heavily on short videos, rappers and visualizations of street fights to scandalize brutalities.

Sovereign state agencies such as the Supreme Constitutional Court (SCC) and the Supreme Administrative Court came forcefully into the dialectic of fear and violence. In June 2012, SCC ruled out the law that the Parliamentary had passed earlier in April 2012, barring members of the deposed regime from high politics. The court had later dissolved the Parliament and transferred legislative powers to SCAF.

Meanwhile, SCAF issued a unilateral constitutional declaration that disallowed the President from declaring war without SCAF's approval. The army could then intervene to quell any domestic instability and the council assumed the powers to form its own constituent assembly in the event of obstacles emerging in the draft of a new constitution. In addition, the generals acquired the power of veto over the existing assembly.

This particular paradox must be seen in light of the structure of the Egyptian bureaucracy and of sovereign state agencies. Historians of the Egyptian bureaucracy and technocracy vouch that few agencies operated with the objective of servicing citizens. Instead, many were machines and mechanisms of capital, status and power accumulation (Mitchell, 2002; Waterbury, 1993). This has shaped the manners each

agency aligned in differential patron-client compacts with the deposed regime and especially with the apex institution of the presidency.

The deposed president, his *diwan* and small coterie of businesspersons selectively favored and disfavored one or the other sovereign agencies and certain factions within each. This partly explained why none of these agencies was monolithically unified. It was a presidential discretion to appoint incumbents or to indirectly establish and mobilize mechanisms within sovereign agencies such as the Committee of Political Parties to achieve specific goals or many times to deploy outright intimidation through security services (Brown, 2012). With the absence of the presidency with its omnipresent discretionary powers, many agencies are currently engaged in battles for survival and consolidation of gains.

Beside established social movements and popular committees, there are thousands of interest groups who emerged to mobilize around specific consumption issues such as "We want to live", "We will not pay," and "Clean Land" (Gamal, 2012). The first two are groups of slum dwellers organized around protesting the failures of the government to provide them with basic necessities, while the third is a protest initiative sponsored by the *The Muslim Brotherhood* as an alternative solution to the same failures. "Youths Who Love Egypt" is another intiative that resembles "Clean Land" yet is organized by students of Al-Azhar university. I observed a fine yet important distinction between these initiatives: spontneous initiatives whose members act independent of any sponsor usually resort to street tactics such as sit-ins and strikes or tactics of last resort such as hunger strikes compared to sponsored initiatives who predominatly operate virtually through online campaigning.

While on one side protests are more organized and strikes could now last longer than before the uprising and are nationally coordinated as compared to site- or workplace-specific, such accusations usually polarize public opinion into sympathizers and adversaries and divert the energies of protestors as they are pushed to explain their actions. For instance, in its coverage of the national strikes of public university staff, public transport workers and medical staff of public health institutions in September 2012, ON TV, a private satellite channel, interviewed Mustafa Al-Beheiry, the intern at Aga Public Health Unit, who had just completed five days on hunger strike. In response to accusations read by the host, Al-Beheiry explained the misery of medical staff and listed their demands which included clear budgetary suggestions to improve and increase public relays to the Ministry of Health, the restructuring of the latter and stressed that improved and regular salaries were the last on the list.

Thrusting a discourse of binaries on acitvism is nothing new. It is not even sheer state propaganda. It is part of the dialectic of violence that underlies state-society dynamics and is integral to the idea of the modern state. The social compact between citizens and the modern state regarding equality, freedom and justice is built upon the belief that citizens are predatory by nature and that the state is the neutral arbiter to set and settle boundaries (Lummis, 2010). Part of the functions of the state is to divide in order to rule. This is the gist of modern law through which the state can classify subjects into dangerous criminals, traitors, offenders, dissenters, radicals and moderates (Asad, 2012; Nandy, 2010). It is not drastically opposed to the basic premise of the *umma* in Islamic jurisprudence in its submission to divine sovereignty through the righteousness of its "wise men" who constitute the council of shura or consultative body (Rutherford, 2006).

Binaries of sinners and gooddoers, of the faithful and the apostates are few representations of the language of power spoken by hierarcial institutions where truth/power resides unequivocally with those on the top. This is the language spoken by all sovereign state agencies Egypt has known since 1952 and by most if not all faith-based social movements like the *The Muslim Brotherhood*, the Ansarul-Sunna organization and Al-Da'wa Al-Salafiya in Alexandria. It is the language used by the deposed regime as it contrasted itself with "Islamic fundamentalists" and begged international acceptance as *the* secular protector of the region from the horrors that they could leach. This binary was uncritically picked up by Islamists who "In contrast, for many of those sympathetic to Islamist social and political currents, the most pressing danger to Egyptian society came in the form of rampant secularization, the erosion of the society's Islamic character under the impact of Western cultural forms. This oppositional logic—either secular or religious—had long schematized the political terrain in Egypt" (Hirschkind, 2012, p. 2).

Classification and forcing invididuals and groups into tight categories is a form of violence that characterised the campaigns before the referendum and parliamentary elections, then informed public discusions of Wathiqat Al-Azhar (Al-Azhar Document) on the principles of a civil state in June 2011 and later Ali Al-Salmi's document on basic constitutional principles in September 2011. The current discussion of the role of Shar'ia versus secular criminal and personal status laws in the draft of the new constitution is cast along binaries of "seculars" versus "fundamentalists;" defenders of the modern nation state versus defenders of Islamist ideas of a state compliant with Divine will.

This violence of binary oppositions color the discourses of formal democratic institutions. The political parties formed after the uprising need to grabble with politics of exclusion and inclusion based upon identities. The state of uncertainty that surrounds the status of Coptic citizens, has been created and reproduced over time by sovereign state agencies. The military's brutal killing of Coptic protestors in Maspero demonstrations in October 2011 was no anomaly. The difference between this incidence and earlier cases of ethnic violence under the deposed regime such as the explosion outside Al Qiddisseen Church in Alexandria on new year's eve of 2011, is that this time the culpability of the state is undisguised. The removal of a regime that posed as the defender of "religious peace" (Asad, 2012), does not mean that the strategies of divide and rule is gone.

VI. EL-SISI COUP D'ETAT BETWEEN MULTIPLE CAPITALS AND MULTIPLE STATES

However, since the Open Door policies (*Infitah*) in the seventies, Egyptian statehood has been continuously constructed around *dialectics of fear and violence* between a president drawing his legitimacy from military prowess (factual and imagined), brutal security apparatuses, multiple and overlapping sovereign state institutions, regimes of elite neoliberals, and diligent activists with diverse often irreconcilable motivations and resources.

This study traces how the dialectics of fear and violence have left an indelible mark on the modes of post-uprising activism and on their potential for establishing a state that delivers the demands of "the People." This potential is not exclusively a function of the resources mustered by activists; it is also circumscribed by basic dilemmas in the idea of a modern state and by the contradictions between the exigencies of democracy and national identity, especially when the latter is predominantly defined along religious lines.

It is repeatedly argued that militant Islamism has lost its sway in Egypt and elsewhere and that we might be living in a post-Islamist era (Bayat, 2007; Stacher J. A., 2002). Designations of this sort seem a luxury in the current situation where violence and brutalities have intensified since the uprising and where protests still revolve around basic necessities of "consumption," women's and minority rights, and competing value and belief systems.

Two main vectors seemed to intensify the violence through which these constituencies related to each other. The first was successive economic restructuring and structural adjustments of the economy and the second was the oppressive regional contexts (Israeli and American occupations and "Gulf Oil") that legitimated diverse forms

of Islamic activism – at times militant that is capable of inflicting damage on apex institution (late president Sadat's assassination) and on economic infrastructure.

Social movements are, basically, collective actions that aspire to effect change in society and polity through sustained engagements. This study shows how successive protest cycles and confrontations since the nineties have taught activists and state agents novel tactics and strategies. Over time, those cycles have eventually resulted in deep structural transformations and reconfigurations of what constitutes the Egyptian statehood.

Working with social movement theories and political opportunity structures (McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly, 2007), this study shows how particular modes of political activism, made possible under the deposed Mubarak regime have – for good or bad - put in place specific structures of opportunities and constraints that shaped subsequent forms of activism and statehood.

In conclusion, post-uprising activism has evolved within a political system that is simultaneously "open" compared to pre-uprising eras and characterized by conspicuous antagonism between members of the elite (*The Muslim Brotherhood*, SCAF and "dregs") – at least during the transition to a civilian government. Nevertheless, once in charge SCAF and later the *The Muslim Brotherhood* resorted to the same old school of repression through direct violence and social control of protest by deploying plainclothes security personnel to beat and dispense crowds and by public demonization of protest through restrict legislation and the media. Theories of resource mobilization and relative deprivation argued that such measures will eventually increase frustration and push activism to radicalize (cf Beinin and Vairel (2011) and Bayat (2005) criticism of "relative deprivation " theory. ; the degree of repression and radicalization are gauged only by the perceived threat and opportunities on the part of both the state and activists. The question then becomes: are we expecting another uprising similar in magnitude or stealth fundamental change or a return to normalization of oppression?

There is no definite answer to this question but we can begin to figure out the possibility of each scenario by looking at the contradictions of the modern (civic) nation state, the violence upon which it sustains itself whether in its technocratic structure, law, science, and discourses of economic growth and development and by looking at who are actually involved in shaping statehood or possess at least a rudimentary vision of statehood in Egypt now?

We can begin at the idea of modern nation-state. It is constructed by maintaining tight association between an institutional

technocratic structure (the state), "organized nationalism, mega-science and the growth of an urban-industrial society" (Nandy, 2010). This association is possible only by differentiation i.e. the inclusion of some classes, sexes, and ethnicities and the exclusion and/or marginalization of others. This covers the marginalization of other forms of non-western, pre-colonial organizational and associational forms or freezing them into ideal types such as "oriental despotism," "tribalism," "Islamist *Umma*."

Like most of its post-colonial counterparts, Egypt has known the nation-state as the clue to the West's economic and scientific power and the idea of a native nation-state was seen as the panacea of all ills. After the military coup of 1952, Nasser forced the structure of a secular and technocratic state upon a sprouting yet ambiguous Islamic idea of a nation. The latter was wrought by Islamic reformers and "modernizers" of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (Gasper 2009) and the *The Muslim Brotherhood* beginning in 1928. There is no doubt that neither group had formulated a tangible program for an Islamic alternative compared to - and partly because of his repression - Nasser who managed to give shape to a "native" form of a modern state albeit contradictory and dysfunctional (particularly after the defeat against the Israeli-British forces in 1967).

With regards to activism, Nasser's charisma and nationalist disposition, helped nurture "indigenous" versions of socialism and an avant guard – mostly from the middle classes who were supposedly well versed in the discourses of the modern nation state and capable of instilling their political sensibility upon the rest. Contrary to Marx version of historical development, the vanguards failed to "wither away" the state to which they owe their existence and instead spent most of their active lives in its jails. They failed to mold a state of freedom, equality, justice and dignity however defined.

Members of the leftist intelligentsia were given one blow after another. From the failure of the Nasserist project to the open door *(Infitah)* policy of his successor Anwar Sadat. Sadat leached the Islamists to fight the Nasserists. More damaging, he supported their ascension to the apex of the economy. "A substantial faction of the *Infitah* class had an Islamist cast. By 1980 elders of 8 of the 18 families who dominated Egypt's private sector were affiliated with the *The Muslim Brotherhood*. Economic enterprises linked to the society, many concentrated in real estate and currency speculation, Islamic banking channeling workers' remittances may have constituted as much as 40 percent of the private sector" (Beinin, 2005, p. 120). Three of the general guides, *murshid* of the organization came from wealthy families namely, Hasan Al-Hudaiby, Umar Al-Tilmisany and Mustafa Mashhour (Ibid.).

The story of his assassination on the hands of the Islamists has been well documented (Bayat, 2007) but upon his death, the Egyptian nation state had to contend with a militant political Islam and a weakened leftism. The activism of the vanguards of Nasser days had hibernated only to "atomize" under Mubarak. Under the latter, the Egyptian state had no space for leftist intellectuals especially in light of the disintegration of leftist formal organizations and repression by the deposed regime. The remaining leftist political party was "vampired" by internal strife and the hegemony of the Political Party Committee (Stacher J. A., 2004). The leftists' desire to maintain a feeling of independence has driven them to the line of least resistance by writing opinion columns in state-run press or holding discussions in private locations and writing fiction (Duboc, 2011).

The deposed state also had no place for militant Islamists, who after succeeding to deter what they called "secular" forces through a series of assassinations and attacks across the country had been clamped down by the pervasive security apparatuses and prolong the rule of emergency (Bayat, 2007). Incidentally, many of those militants were pardoned and released from prisons after the election of Mohammed Morsi as President in 2012. They have now formed formal political wings such as the Jama'a Islamiya. By early 2000s the Egyptian state has been successfully Islamized. Religion has become integral to the "indigenous" nation-state and to formal politics.

Besides Al-Azhar, Ministry of Endowments and other religious sovereign state agencies, religions is shaping the "indigenous" nation state like never before. Whether through the Renaissance Project of the Muslim Brotherhood or through contestations of Sharia in the constitutional committee by members of the Salafi front, the Islamist has recently emerged as the only fragment of vision of a nation state and as the contestant against equally loose visions of the Nasserist, leftist, and socialists (the popular front) or the non-Islamist liberals who believe in capital (the bloc). The latter forces and trends are now forming the coalitions and fronts that I discussed above even though they are not internally coherent.

What plagues the left plagues the rest and lies in the contradictions of what everybody seeks from the modern nation state. The Movement for Academic Independence is a glaring example (will elaborate later). The Islamists are pushing for a nation state that aligns with what they perceive as the essence of the Islamic way of life and the "authentic soul of the Egyptian family" as stated in the draft constitution released in October 2012, while the liberals seek a state that best reflects the middle class aspirations of "life style" modeled around western notions of freedom and human rights. The leftists in their zeal to connect

to the larger masses try to argue for a state that delivers basic necessities for human survival.

While fragments of diverse incomplete visions of the modern nation state manifest in ideological debates in the media, the parliament and headquarters of new-founded political parties, workers, peasants, the unemployed and the under employed are fighting their own *battle* on the streets through vibrant, protracted and nationally well organized strikes and sit-ins. They zealously establish and run independent syndicates, unions and federations to have direct "voice" oblivious of the law that attempts to ban it (labor law of 2003). It is a fundamental change that has already succeeded through the uprising to prize open the institution of the presidency, nothing less. Their vision of the Egyptian statehood seems to be drawn in direct contrast to the "specialized coercive apparatus [and] private business venture" (Nandy, 2010, p. 295) that was the state under the previous regimes. It is also and at once a class struggle. The radicalization of the demands and of protests posed existential questions to all activists on the ideological battle field.

Going back to the question of possible scenarios, it is clear that the answer lies in the extent of the marginalized to continue the struggle against the nation state and harness their experiential repertoires of recent mobilizations, muster the organic leadership and the "density of the social networks that have been mobilized" in order to "generate sufficient mutual trust to overcome decades of fear instilled by authoritarian regimes (Beinin and Vairel, 2011, Kindle Edition). Nandy has previously underscored how the paradox of the nation state "has ensured that organized political power cannot easily be mobilized, even in the Southern world, to resist the pathologies of the modern state. Either the resistance has to come from the fringes of the polity or it has to legitimize itself in the language of the mainstream. The vested interests which have grown up around the idea of the modern state define, thus, not merely the mainstream but also most of the popular concepts of dissent. Ashish Nandy (2010)

It is also their capacity to sustain their presence on the streets and in forums while constantly aware of free riders. Writing from an activist perspective, Anne Alexander exhorts the left to grasp the political and organizational opportunities opened up by the exposure of the Islamists that has resulted from establishing a formal political system, "It is worth reflecting on how a lack of understanding of the nature of mass Islamist organizations, and the social contradictions within them, could have sent left wing activists [….] into the trap of pursuing an abstract political battle with the Brotherhood framed around the question of "Islamism" versus "secularism" instead of developing a

strategy of using the social struggle in order to deepen the Brotherhood's internal political crisis, and thus give the left time to build and organize. (Alexander, International Socialism, 2012). It is through the struggles of the people and continuous interactions that people will begin to realize that the "ideological pronouncements can be analyzed as effects and not predictors of [leaders'] political experiences" (El-Gobashy, 2005, p. 375).

There is definitely the threat of social fatigue and demobilization. Charles Tilly's (1978) idea that people mobilize more easily and quickly if they perceive a threat as opposed to opportunities is definitely valid but it fails to account for the situation of despair and the state where people have nothing else to lose. When demonstrators in Tahrir Square improvised the song that went "viral" on the internet chanting, "our rights are paramount and hunger does not bother us anymore," they were setting the threshold of their struggles. The possibility of a civic state that delivers their demands seems to reside in the politics of their presence even when as in the words of Anne Bogart, "the spirit of liberty is the spirit that is not too certain it is right" (Bogart, 2007, Kindle Edition).

Nonetheless, the following table – compiled from statistical figures documented chronologically by The Egyptian Center for Economic and Social Rights and uploaded on the center's website Wikithawra (Rights, n.d.) indicates how state brutalities have increased under the democratically elected President Al-Sisi.

		Tahrir Uprising	SCAF	MB – Morsi Rule	El-Sisi
Deaths	*Civilian*	1022	406	399	2927
	Police	49	24	52	226
	Military	4	8	19	95
	Total	1075	438	470	3248
Injured			16806	9228	18535
In Custody				4809	41163

Meanwhile, as of May 2014, Egypt's fiscal deficit reached LE189.4 billion, or 9.3 percent of Gross Domestic Product. At the same time last year, the deficit recorded LE204.9 billion, or 11.7 percent of GDP. Government expenditures hit LE519.7 billion between July 2013 and May 2014, up by 9.6 percent from LE 474.3 billion in the same period a year earlier. This increase was largely driven by increases in

employee wages and compensation, with rose by LE28.9 billion to reach LE151.9 billion, and rising interest payments, which reached LE139 billion, an increase of LE14.3 billion compared to the previous year. This increase came despite decreases in spending on subsidies, grants and social benefits, which stood at LE140.7 billion, down by LE9.4 billion. On the revenue side, the Ministry recorded LE337.8 billion, compared to LE271.3 billion the previous year. This figure includes LE51.5 billion in grants, including LE21 in cash from the Arab Gulf, as well as an allocation of LE29.7 billion worth of dollar denominated deposits from the Central Bank. Taxes on domestic salaries amounted to LE17.5 billion, while taxes on industrial and commercial profits amounted to LE30.6 billion, including settlements made in December 2013 and January 2014. Property taxes, largely on Treasury bills and bonds reached LE14.2 billion. Meanwhile, total government debt, both foreign and external, rose to LE1.9 trillion, or 93.9 percent of GDP, by the end of June 2014. The previous June, that figure stood at LE1.6 billion, or 93.8 percent of GDP[1].

1 http://www.madamasr.com/content/despite-slow-growth-finance-ministry-sounds-optimistic-note Accessed on September 4, 2014

PRELUDE

On 25 January 2011, Egyptians took to the streets demanding the deposition of the ruling regime and the ousting of the former president Hosni Mubarak, who presided over the country for thirty-one years and who have declared a protracted state of emergency upon his ascension to power in 1981. Protestors raised the national flag and chanted slogans of nationalist hues. They had even raised the flag of the crescent and the cross – an emblem of the unity between Muslims and Coptic Christians of Egypt carried earlier during the 1919 revolution. Observing this, many western media analysts thought that the uprising was an instance of anti-regime mass demonstrations without any religious, class or ethnic undertones. During the days of the uprising, protesters had indeed come from variable ideological locations and in the midst of the sit-in one could not easily distinguish between a liberal, secular or a *Salafi*[1]. Political, social, and ideological currents mingled in Tahrir. On the streets, religious and secular groups and individuals had joined forces under the common banner demanding "bread, freedom, social justice and human dignity," (*Aish, Horriyya, Adala Ijtimaiyya, Karama Insaniyya)!*

1 Scripturalists who advocate a literal interpretation of Islamic religious texts, mainly the Holy Quran and the Prophets' Sayings.

The success of the popular uprising to depose the regime on February 11, 2011 however, left Egypt in a state of uncertainty, exposed to various and competing economic, political and ideological vectors. Some of the latter were underway much before the uprising, whereas others emerged during and after the mass sit-in, in response to re-alignments of states, elites and capital on the national, the regional and international scales. For months after the uprising, exhilarated activists and demonstrators worked around the clock, not only to literally, clean Tahrir, but also to continue vibrant social and political dialogues over the future of society, economy, polity and the state. Understanding the complexity of this period and the sheer momentum of such vectors is essential to any assessment of future possibilities, particularly the possibility of a state-hood that meets the demands of the "People."

This ethnographic account is based on three main engagements with collective action and activism in Egypt since 1985 up until 2014. The first source of engagement are reflections of the experiences that the author acquired as a citizen, born and raised in Egypt. Those experiences concerned the transitions from state socialism, under late President Gamal Abdul Nasser in the sixties of the past century, to the liberal turn and Open Door policies of late President Mohammed Anwar Sadat. The transitions that Sadat initiated following the Arab-Israeli confrontation in 1973 that had profound impacts on the social organization and political dispositions of the people of Egypt. Those transitions have also had indelible impacts on the political economies of the Arab region.

The second source of engagements with collective action and activism emerged as a college student in Egypt in the eighties and nineties of the past century, after the assassination of Sadat by Islamic Jihadists in 1981 and the accent to presidency of Mohammed Hosni Mubarak. That period marked the declaration of a state of emergency from 1981 up until Mubarak's deposition in February 2011 as well as the imposition of successive rounds of economic reform and structural adjustment policies. The nature of the engagements with collective action and activism over that period were relatively more direct than the previous period, forged through participation in student and later faculty activism.

The third source of engagements with collective action and activism emerged during the eighteen days of the uprising in Tahrir Square in Cairo in January and February 2011 and the events that ensured since then until June 2014. That period covered the deposition of Mohammed Hosni Mubarak in February 11, 2011 and was followed by a period of transition under the Supreme Council of Armed Forces. As

will be argued below, instead of stirring the country towards democracy through an interim phase of "transitional justice," the council succeeded to divert events towards a counter-revolution. The engagement as observant participant also covered the events around the first multi-candidate presidential elections in 2012 and the accent to presidency of Mohammed Morsi, the Muslim Brotherhood candidate.

Yet, this account is neither a memoire nor personal reflections. Instead, it is an anthropologist's analytical account of the main forms of social and political collective action between 1981 and 2014. It examines such forms with the aim to describe how various actors and groups engaged in them and to explain how both collective action and state action mutually constitute each other. The event that triggered this analysis was the uprising of January and February 2011. The basic problematic was to understand the pre- and post-uprising events in retrospect and to explain the forces and vectors that shaped collective action before, during and after the deposition of Mubarak's thirty-year old regime.

Nevertheless, since an understanding of collective action by default begs questions of the response of state apparatuses. Therefore, this account also examines the nature of the state, albeit with a conceptual twist. The first conceptual tool that this account uses is that of 'statehood.' Instead of a single homogenous *State*, this account reveals how the state in Egypt has often assumed multiple avatars. Just as there are multiple forms of collective actions and actors, and multiple forms of capital, there are multiple forms of state. Egypt has developed post-colonial socialist-Nasserist version of state-capitalism as well as a neo-liberal profit-seeking state that competes with civilian entrepreneurial classes as will be elaborated below. Those forms of states emerged and still emerge in time-space in relation to multiple forms of capital at the national and regional scales. Similarly, since capital is a dynamic mode of production, exchange and consumption, so are the relations it produces and reticulates with the states. This dynamism could be analyzed through the concept of statehood, the process of social and political formation of states and collective actions (*cf*. Alexander & Bassiouny, 2014).

Both components of the analysis – that of collective actions on one hand and of states and capitals on the other - when combined, could nudge actors and scholars alike to transcend rigid concepts of Activism, State and Capital. It could also allow scholars a more nuanced understanding of the processes of statehood and of the conditions whereby institutions become porous and mutually constitutive of one another. More importantly, it has a normative disposition! It intends to enrich our capacities to think through the quagmire of the

present state of violence, disappointment and despair. The events that ensued after the deposition of Mubarak in 2011 took the turn of a solid counter-revolution and in 2014 the almost complete restoration of aspects of the old regime. This analysis intends to help us discover and imagine the possibilities of realizing the demands of the people for Bread, Freedom, Social Justice and Human Dignity through an emancipatory statehood.

THE SCOPE OF THE STUDY

This study focuses on the dialectical relationship between sovereign state agencies and collective activists and seeks to understand the vectors that shape this relationship over time in order to identify the challenges that face citizens in their struggle to establish a statehood that continuously reflects their aspirations for Bread, Freedom, Social Justice and Human Dignity. It argues that a statehood that fulfills those aspirations is function of the ability of citizen- activists to sustain and expand their struggles against three vectors. *Firstly, the interests of neoliberal elites (private and state-capitalists) within and outside sovereign state institutions. Secondly, the invasive fear of 'terror,' chaos and collapse of the state, society and the economy and lastly, the dilemmas of modern welfare-warfare statehood in a globalizing context*.

In order to achieve the objectives above this account will be organized in such a way as to answer the following sets of questions in order:

a) What was the nature of the State in Egypt under Mubarak? What, if any, are the common factors between Mubarak regime and its predecessors in how they related to collective action?
b) Who are the main collective actors under Mubarak regime? What were their respective patterns of collective action and

their ideologies? When has there been cross-ideological collaborations or rivalries and over which demands and agendas?

c) What were the factors that led to the eruption of the uprising in January 2011 after thirty-one years under Mubarak regime? What is the nature of the uprising and was it the sole force behind the deposition of Mubarak?

d) How did events unfold after the depositions and what are the lessons that activists and state agents have learnt from each other and from their own trial and errors?

e) What are the confrontational events that, when analyzed, would help us understand the direction and nature of the transformations in State structures and dynamics and in the modes and intensities of collective action? When put together within the economic context how would this lead to an understanding of the nature and process of statehood in Egypt post uprising?

f) Is there a general loss of faith in the state?

g) What is the current state of revolution in Egypt and what are the possibilities for an emancipatory statehood that delivers the demands of the People?

A corollary set of questions concern the theoretical conceptual tools that anthropologists use in understanding social construction of statehood. Anthropology has often been accused of theoretical and methodological inadequacy in the analysis of states. Validity of such accusations notwithstanding, the uprising and the events that followed lend themselves to the contemporaneity of anthropology's theories and methods. This particular point will be elaborated in the sections on the analytical framework as well as following section on data and research methods.

NOTES ON METHODS: DIFFICULT TIMES FOR AN ANTHROPOLOGY OF REVOLUTION AND CHANGE

This study would not have been possible without a South-South Grant under supervision of International Development Economics Association (IDEAs) in Delhi, India. The idea of the study began with the researcher's interest to reflect on social and political transformations in Egypt a year after the January 25, 2011 uprising. Having participated in several sit-ins and protest marches as a student of Economics at Cairo University and later as a student of Anthropology at the American University in Cairo since 1985. It was imperative for me to understand why after a popular uprising that deposed a thirty-one year old despotic regime, there were brutal attacks on activists and why in June 2012 there were only two presidential candidates: one of them a member of the deposed regime and the other a member of the Muslim Brotherhood. I wanted to understand what makes a revolution and what does it take the revolution to be resilient in the face of counter-revolutionary forces. Along with hundreds of other activists from the broad category of the critical Left mass, who continue to dream of dignified citizenship, I sought to understand the possibility of such an ideal.

The research grant made it possible to travel to Egypt for data collection, observation and participation in post uprising citizens' activism between February and July 2014. This has helped me gather data

from Cairo and Alexandria – the two main cities in terms of population size and GDP and sites of major protests and social movements. Data from this field leg corroborated data gathered earlier between January 2011 and July 2012. Both field legs transpired during turbulent times and in particularly violent settings. Participant observation of activism implies tangible dangers of injury, harassment, and death or security police retaliation. This has made it difficult to take notes, interview people or record 'events' as and when they happen. Similarly, searching for and access to secondary data and government documents took longer than during 'ordinary' times – if it were allowed at all.

Other complications ensured. The Supreme Council of Armed Forces (SCAF) crackdown on four American pro-democracy research and advocacy organizations in January 2012[1] in the absence of rights to information law made it difficult for researchers – Egyptian or otherwise - to navigate and access information and data. Similarly, the 'war on terror' following the military coup that ousted Mohammed Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood in June 2013 established ended the possibility of access to data. It successfully established an emergency-like situation, even without any official statement declaring a state of emergency. This has placed – and still does – severe limitations to social researchers and journalists' capacities to undertake field studies[2]. Finally, the anti-protest law passed under the interim transition government in 2013 put restrictions on activism and related inquiries.

These factors are important not only for their implications on research methods but also as findings in their own right. While at one level, they indicate the continuation of Emergency era state intolerance of pro-democracy forces. At another, they indicate a break away from Mubarak's cosmetic tactics to pose as the defender of human rights in the eyes of international media and observers. Similarly, whereas the anti-protest law passed in 2014 gave a blow to collective action, yet years of progressive human rights activism supported by the use of internet resources gave rise to a number of research and documentation initiatives such as Center for Economic and Social Rights and The Egyptian Center for Public Opinion Research (Baseera). The latter make available data and documents that were inaccessible if not unimaginable otherwise.

This brings us to another important point namely, the reliability of sources of data. WikiLeaks, social media and the internet

1 http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2012/01/30/egypt-military-scaf-ngo_n_1242884.html Access on July 10, 2014

2 http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/06/egypt-finds-al-jazeera-journalists-guilty-201462373539293797.html Access on August 10, 2014

technologies in general are increasingly assuming precedence over other modes of documentation and communication. Their capacities to record and instantly spread text and multi-media messages cannot be overemphasized. Their role in social mobilization before, during and after the Tunisian and Egyptian uprisings have been the subject of several studies (Ghannam, 2011; Cottle, 2011; Tufekci & Wilson, 2012; Hamdy & Gomaa, 2012). Nevertheless, two aspects of internet media are particularly pertinent to social science research and methodologies namely, reliability and ethics. Although a thorough discussion of both aspects is important not only for the present study but also for the entire range of social science studies in the twenty-first century. However, literature on either is dearth. At this point I want to raise three questions that affected the present study namely, how can the researcher verify videos and audios recorded on personal mobile phones? How can one ensure the safety of individuals both those who appear on multi-media and those recording them? How to use such sources without jeopardizing their copyrights?

Concerning the first question, I followed the 'classical' method of triangulation whereby I would search online for multiple sources of the same event or incidence. I would then corroborate those with print media and published academic sources, if any. Blogs were also another type of data source. Whenever any blog appeared important for this study, I would either contact the blogger(s) or again verify through triangulation. Regarding the second and third questions of safety and copyrights, I did not insert any video or audio recordings into the content or text of this study that would jeopardize the safety of those involved. Similarly, I included only open source materials with explicit statements of the sources and date of access.

Finally, while the study has started with the objective of understanding activism in general, during the course of fieldwork, activism in institutions of higher education emerged as a powerful vector in the transformations underway. Universities turned out to be vibrant spaces where state policies and citizen activism intersect, and higher education emerged as an integral arena in the struggles over justice, political participation and freedom. Faculty members of public universities and students

Spearheaded the Egyptian Movement for Change - the first movement to make explicit demands for political change in the 1990s. Historically, public universities have been sites of vibrant student activism since 1919 (Abdalla, 2008). Since the 1970s however, they have increasingly become fertile grounds for political Islam to interject the state by controlling curricula, university governance and elections of student unions and professional syndicates. It is even argued that

Islamist activists "acquired their first political skills during the 1970s while working with other student activists at Egyptian universities." (Michaelle Browers[3] (2007: 76) as cited in Soudias, 2014:55). For the above reasons it was deemed necessary to explore the history and dynamics of student and faculty activism[4].

3 Browers, Michaelle. 2007. "The Egyptian Movement for Change: Intellectual Antecedents and Generational Conflicts," Contemporary Islam, I (I): 69-88.

4 This study does not analyze labor activism in detail but it highlights incidences that are most relevant to the analysis of the uprising and the citizens-state relationship.

ANALYTICAL CONCEPTS: ACTIVISM BETWEEN MULTIPLE STATES & MULTIPLE CAPITALS

To understand collective action one need to find answers to the questions: what is the nature of the state in Egypt? Why have citizens repeatedly revolted against successive regimes? And, is there a general distrust of the State among the People? In this section, I will attempt to answer the first two questions by delving into the roles that the Egyptian state and successive regimes have played in supporting the People versus supporting a faction of them namely, private (national, regional, and transnational) capitalists. I will then explain how successive regimes have resulted in what Alexander & Bassiouny (2014) called multiple states and capitals and how those have intersected to define the Egyptian statehood after the uprising and People's sentiments towards the State.

Legions of scholars have established famous theories about the nature of the state in Egypt. For example, Karl Wittfogel's theory of the hydraulic society argued how perennial agriculture necessitates a large bureaucracy, which in turn requires a despot on top to control, regulate and possibly, expand the empire. His *Oriental Despotism* was a famous reference to some historians (Ayubi, 1980) and continued to inform several analyses of the ruling regimes in Egypt for quite a while. Robert Springborg, for instance, characterized consecutive post-independence ruling regimes as "hybrid authoritarianism" (Springborg, 2009).

There is no doubt that those esteemed scholars have based their analyses and characterizations on valid evidences. Nevertheless, their arguments are premised upon ecological determinisms that posit Egypt's geographical location and the Nile as the ultimate determining factors of the nature of the state since times immemorial. The present study does not claim that such factors do not figure into the equation of the state in Egypt. They do. However, their relative importance fluctuates in response to other forces - or as this study claims - other vectors i.e. forces with measurable strengths and identifiable directions.

The Egyptian state has always been supportive of bourgeois capitalism. In 1919 and 1920, the state protected the fledgling Bank Masr by erecting tariff duties, buying locally made products and setting railway rates favorable to the bank's national subsidiaries enterprises (Tignor, 1977). Tal'at Harb, the founder of the bank and its manager, believed in state support to national capitalism. He had assessed that the Egyptian bourgeoisie was not adequately capable of transforming the Egyptian economy and had accordingly advocated cartelization as a means for the fledgling Egyptian industrial and commercial firms to establish themselves "In 1919, the vast majority of large-scale Egyptian financial, commercial, and industrial establishments were foreign financed and run. The estimated foreign holdings of shares and debentures in companies operating in Egypt amounted to LE 71, 250,000 in 1914. An additional LE 85,680,000 of the public debt was held abroad. The total foreign commercial investments in Egypt were in excess of LE 200,000,000, the annual payments on which amounted to LE 9,000,000." (Ibid. 181)

The Egyptian state support to national and foreign capitals continued after independence even though the Free Officers, who led the coup against the British and their monarchical allies had declared a socialist agenda premised upon massive nationalization of capitals. Nasser's attempts to capture surplus from the colonially affiliate landowning classes and siphon it through state owned and run utilities fluctuated over the period between 1952 and 1968. Several scholars captured the transition in policy and argued that there were basic continuities between Nasser socialist and Sadat capitalist regimes in the ways the state supported private capital flows (Wahdan, 2007; Hosseinzadeh, 1988; Cooper, 1979). Cooper (1979) highlighted how during the pre-1967 aggression, although the Egyptian economy witnessed a two-gap stagnation – a savings/consumption gap and a foreign exchange gap, there were "real gains" for the 'masses.'

Nevertheless, due to the post-coup political vacuum (referring to state of formal and popular political organizations) Nasser's regime

used the state to create a political base. Appeasing the 'masses,' particularly the lower and upper level bureaucrats through socialist policies had emerged as the regime's most assured strategy to establish legitimacy and to further capitalist agendas without dissent. While under Nasser, the regime was a "form of semi populist, state capitalist, developmental nationalism" (Ibid. 482), *that* had not deterred economic liberalization, which jump-started in 1968. The 30 March Program of 1968 was a clear policy shift that targeted the educated middle classes, to which the Free Officers belonged. The outcomes of that shift eventually materialized into a powerful class of entrepreneurial bureaucrats and state capitalists, in addition to a strengthened class of private businesspersons involved mainly in capital-intensive and commodity imports (Mitchell, 2002).

Two of the most important strategies and – at once – outcomes of the policy shift concerned first, the rebuilding of the armed forces, not only as a crucial nationalist force but also as a capitalist enterprise with investments in capital assets and a broad network of sub-contractors. The second strategy and outcome concerned the strengthening of capital flows from the 'conservative' Arab states. Although during the pre-1967 period a number of the Gulf monarchies were at odds with Nasser due to his support of anti-monarchy movements, this was rectified in the post-1967 period with Nasser's defeat.

The shift of policy from a near-complete state control of nationalized assets and economy towards class-based state capitalism managed by elite bureaucrats and high-level army personnel had not passed without resistance. Especially after the 1967 defeat, with the army fragmented, and students and workers angered, "the expansion of the state was an effort to routinize the amorphous popular support it had enjoyed [pre-defeat]" (Cooper 1979: 486). The regime could no longer tout populism. Instead, the about-facing of policy to *buy* the core groups was more efficacious. It was also accompanied by brutal policing of dissent, particularly from the then well-organized Muslim Brotherhood movement.

A thorough political economy analysis of how that policy shift had empirically affected capital value generation in terms of trade balance, resource use and income distribution is beyond the scope of this study. The main concern of this section though is to emphasize the concept of multiple capitals that resulted from Nasser and later from Sadat and Mubarak's policy regimes. Similarly, the concept of multiple states within the state is equally important for subsequent analysis of activism and statehood in the post-uprising context.

Nasser's policies have thus left Egypt with a state structure that is at once capitalist, etatist, populist and developmental. "What [was]

genuinely etatist about the structure [was] not that the new elite [was] located in the state, but that the new lower middle and upper working classes, in addition to the subproletariat, [were] dependent on that state" (Cooper 1979: 515). After Nasser passed away, Sadat inaugurated the *Infitah* or the Open Door Policies in his October Working Paper of 1974 (Wahdan, 2012). Those sets of policies helped expand the range of 'elites' within the state by consolidating what Nasser's 30 March Program had instilled within public sector units namely, the imposition of 'economic' criteria on those units. Sadat sanctioned the establishment of what later under Mubarak came to be known as 'economic agencies.' These were public sector utilities, which operated according to 'scientifically rational' profit making principles albeit within the state structure. Sadat also targeted the growing numbers of Egyptian laborers who migrated to the oil producing Gulf States, Libya and Iraq as well as Arab capital. His were policies of open market and trade that resulted in the consolidation of the state entrepreneurial-bureaucratic class and the emergence of a comprador capitalist class – both Islamists and secular with variable relationship with the state (Beinin, 2005). Soliman (1998) analyzed the structures of both the industrial and the commercial capitalist classes in Egypt under Sadat and Mubarak and the modes of interactions they maintained with both regimes. However, a critical political economy analysis of how multiple factions of both state and private capitalists interface and on which scales (national, regional and international) is yet to be attempted.

Alexander & Bassiouny (2014) attempted to reveal the multiple forms of state capitalisms in their recent *Bread, Freedom, Social Justice: Workers & The Egyptian Revolution*. They focused on how those forms and their respective classes related to state-controlled as well as independent labor activism(s), under the deposed regime and after the uprising. Their analysis is critical and normative and they argued that Egypt is currently in a state of permanent revolution. The present study shares this claim and argues that the possibility of a statehood of freedom, justice and dignity depends heavily upon the capacities of various forms of collective action to understand and interject the various forms of state and private capitals. Notwithstanding the importance of labor activism, this study examines multiple states and capitals in Egypt on one hand and the dialectical relations between them and multiple forms of collective action. Included in this analyze is an examination of leftist and more importantly Islamist activism particularly the *Salafi* or scripturalist and the Muslim Brotherhood.'

NEOLIBERAL EGYPT 2010: PEOPLE'S EGYPT '11: ISLAMIC EGYPT '12: MILITARY EGYPT '14

To begin to understand the uprising and the transformations that followed, we will take a look at the social, economic and political indicators over the period under the deposed President Mubark i.e. between 1981 – 2011. Although abstract and reductionist, statistics is becoming a universal means of communication.

Egypt's economy has often depended on oil. The oil economy is not only a matter of oil reserves. In fact, the latter have rarely, if ever, been a resource for exports. Nevertheless, Egypt's oil economy encompassed direct investments in oil exploration and development as well as the remittances of multiple million Egyptian workers in oil-rich Gulf countries (Moench, 1988)

According to Euromonitor on 18th December 2014, Egypt's real GDP growth in 2010 was 5.1%. This has dramatically dropped in 2011 to 1.8%. Earlier, in May 2014, Egypt's fiscal deficit reached LE189.4 billion, or 9.3 percent of Gross Domestic Product. At the same time last year, the deficit recorded LE204.9 billion, or 11.7 percent of GDP.

Government expenditures hit LE519.7 billion between July 2013 and May 2014, up by 9.6 percent from LE 474.3 billion in the same period a year earlier. This increase was largely driven by increases in employee wages and compensation, with rose by LE28.9 billion to reach LE151.9 billion, and rising interest payments, which reached LE139 billion, an increase of LE14.3 billion compared to the previous year.

This increase came despite decreases in spending on subsidies, grants and social benefits, which stood at LE140.7 billion, down by LE9.4 billion. On the revenue side, the Ministry recorded LE337.8 billion, compared to LE271.3 billion the previous year. This figure includes LE51.5 billion in grants, including LE21 in cash from the Arab Gulf, as well as an allocation of LE29.7 billion worth of dollar denominated deposits from the Central Bank.

Taxes on domestic salaries amounted to LE17.5 billion, while taxes on industrial and commercial profits amounted to LE30.6 billion, including settlements made in December 2013 and January 2014. Property taxes, largely on Treasury bills and bonds reached LE14.2 billion. Meanwhile, total government debt, both foreign and external, rose to LE1.9 trillion, or 93.9 percent of GDP, by the end of June 2014. The previous June, that figure stood at LE1.6 billion, or 93.8 percent of GDP[1].

Those numbers have changed drastically in 2011 with the immediate decline and subsequent entire collapse of the tourism industries. The table below illustrates the sources of Egypt's oil economy since 1981, the year Mubarak took Presidency.

Table 1
Sources of National Revenues ($billion)

Source	1981/2	2010	2011/12	2013	2014
Total Exports	4.4	26.99	25.07	26.98	26.11
Suez Canal	0.9	5.05	5.20	5.03	5.36
Tourism	1.0				
Remittances	3.7	3.29	4.06	4.72	5.39
Total Imports	10.5	54.09	59.21	57.68	59.82

While in 2013 particularly after the military coup that toppled Muhammed Morsi, of the Muslim Brotherhood, United Arab Emirates stepped in to help Egypt restore stability. Year 2014 was the year of Emirati support with a stimulation bundle of US$4.9 billion and later

1 http://www.madamasr.com/content/despite-slow-growth-finance-ministry-sounds-optimistic-note Accessed on September 4, 2014

with another US$2.5billion Both governments established an office for coordination in Egypt, headed by Sultan Ahmed Sultan Al Jaber. The office sponsors developmental projects worth US410 billion. Two billion of which is a no-interest grant deposited at the Central Bank of Egypt to help stabilize the Egyptian pound.

CHRONOLOGY OF EVENTS, INSTANCES AND THRESHOLDS

The table below is a compilation of 'events' since 2000 related to political activism along with incidences deemed important from the periods during and after January 25, 2011 uprising. The list is not exhaustive nor does it represent a detailed chronology of particular forms of activism. Rather, the selection below has three specific purposes. Firstly, it shows that the uprising in 2011 has built upon the experiences of at least five rounds of protest cycles that started in 2000 and continue until date. Secondly, it indicates that multiple parties have been involved in violence and brutalities against civilians. Violence has not necessarily been perpetrated by the police and security forces only. As will be indicated below thugs hired by the policy and security forces as well as Islamist supporters and militias have also been involved. There were also incidences of brutalities and massacres meted out by the army upon civilians (both revolutionary groups and Islamists).

Equally important the dates of some events and incidences listed below are specifically significant as they represent anniversaries of earlier events. For instance, February 1, 2011 witnessed fierce battles in Tahrir Square between thugs on camels and protesters. While the final verdict over the culprit remains in the hands of an ongoing court panel of judges and while police investigations are currently underway, however, many activists who witnessed the event - later

nicknamed "The Battle of the Camel" argue that perpetrators were thugs hired by the police and security forces of the deposed Mubarak regime. On February 1, 2012, members of police and security forces as well as thugs dressed in civilian attire closed down the Port Said City main football stadium immediately after the match between Al-Ahly and Al-Masry Clubs was over and meted violence and brutalities upon supporters known as the Ultras killing 77 young men. Again, the final verdict on the culprits remain an open debate in court. However, the event was well documented in state media and on cameras of personal mobile devices.

It should not be inferred from the chronology below that there has not been any forms of activism, protest or social movements in Egypt before 2000. This is far from the truth however; a chronology of activism before 2000 lies beyond the scope of this study unless deemed relevant to the present analysis. As will be indicated below, thirty years under a state and law of emergency in Egypt since 1981 have made it dangerous to protest or raise voices for political reform. Citizens could protest peacefully and demand anything *but* changes in the ruling regime. The President, his family members, the closely-knit circle of clientele and advisors were a taboo. Nonetheless, students and workers protested, organized sit-ins, strikes and marches – sometimes violent – since the early years of the 1980s. Those have been synchronic with successive economic reform and structural adjustment agreements between the World Bank, the International Monetary Fund and successive governments under the deposed President Hosni Mubarak. Equally important were the massive protests in response to the Palestinian Intifada (uprising) in 2001.

Moreover, the list combines general dates (year) and specific dates (day of incidences) in order to cover specific thresholds along with more general factors that affect the trajectory and thus the analysis of activism and citizens-state relations.

1991	Inauguration of the Economic Reform and Structural Adjustment Program (ERSAP) under guidance from the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund Passing of Law 203/1991 specifying the privatization of several public-sector undertakings and firms
2000	Protests in solidarity with the Palestinian Intifada
2001 – 2002	Cairo University students march daily to the Israeli embassy and class with security forces
	Coptic Christians demonstrate against discrimination pertaining to legal restrictions over building new churches and renovating old ones.

	Unemployed youth demonstrate in 16 governorates for several days culminating in protests in Part Said governorate.
	Mass demonstrations in Tahrir Square commemorating the anniversary of the Palestinian Intifada .
	Emergence of the coalition of opposition movements and groups under the title of Egyptian Popular Committee for Solidarity with the Palestinian Intifada (EPCSPI) also known as the Popular Committee or *al-Ligna al-Sha'biya*
	9000 demonstrators, mostly Muslim Brotherhood affiliated students of Alexandria University marched outside campus gates. Security forces used rubber bullets and buckshot to disperse the crowds
2003	Inauguration of the second round of ERSAP Massive demonstrations protesting the war on Iraq. The aim was to push protests further unto public squares and outnumber riot and security police forces
February 2003	Government declares the floating of the exchange rates. This resulted in a 40 percent loss of value of the Egyptian Pound vis-à-vis the US Dollar and a steep rise in prices of commodities
February 15, 2003	Thousands of Egyptian riot police cordon 500 antiwar protesters in downtown Cairo then follows them through street corners
March 2003	Anti-war demonstrations erupt in all university campuses in Cairo and protesters occupy Tahrir Square for 12 hours (El-Hamalawy, 2011) Another massive demonstration in front of Al-Azhar Mosque with estimated 55,000 protesters (Hassan, 2003) First debut of explicit anti-regime slogans and banners with "Mubarak! Leave! Leave!"
2004	Cabinet reshuffling and Mubarak appointing six businesspersons as ministers. More privatization measures and stricter imposition of Emergency Law The Egyptian Movement for Change also known as Enough Movement or *Kifaya*
2005	Parliamentary Elections swept by members of Mubarak's National Democratic Party and Muslim Brotherhood running for elections as independent. The MB was yet a movement without formal political party
2006 – 2007	Food prices rose between 33 to 146 percent for meat and chicken without concomitant increase in wages and the revival of labor strikes (Beinin & Vairel, 2011)
2007	Relay of labor strikes; estimated 500,000 workers within months across the country (Ibid.) 55,000 Property-Tax Collector Nation-wide Strike

2008	Emergence of April 6 Movement in Mahala Kobra Governorate (site of textile manufacturing industries)
2009 – 2010	Relay of labor strikes. Brutal subduing of a call for general nation-wide strike (Carr, 2008) A spate of "terror arrests" *
December 2010	21 killed in bomb at church in Alexandria where Christians had gathered to mark the New Year
January 25, 2011	Tahrir Square Uprising
February 11, 2011	Mubarak Steps Down
February 14, 2011	A Six-Months Plan
February 25, 2011	Supreme Council of Armed Forces Takes Charge of Transition and crushes new protests
March 9, 2011	Protesters Arrested – Around 150 male and female protesters tried and convicted in military courts
May 2011	Mamdouh Shahin, Official Spokesperson of SCAF announced that the military should not be under any Presidential whim (Martin & Taylor, 2011)
July 2011	SCAF controlled the drafting of the constitution under the pretext of establishing and protecting a secular state
October 9, 2011	Maspero Massacre: Armed forces, Islamist militants and the deposed regime thugs crush Christian protestors outside the National Television and Radio Building near Tahrir Square
November 28, 2011	Muslim Brotherhood sweeps Parliamentary elections
February 1, 2012	Police and security forces kills 77 young men during a football match between al-Ahly and a I- Masry Clubs in Port Said City Stadium in retaliation for al-Ahly Ultras' (fans of Ahly Club) participation in January 25, 2011 uprising.
May 23, 2012	Presidential Elections between two finalists: Mohammed Morsi of the Muslim Brotherhood and Ahmed Shafiq, the last Prime minister under Mubarak
June 15, 2012	Military shuts down the parliament under a Supreme Court ruling
June 30, 2012	Morsi sworn in as President
August 12, 2012	Morsi orders top generals to retire in return for 'safe exit'; he chooses Abdul Fattah El-Sisi, former head of military intelligence as Minister of Defense

* http://m.bbc.com/news/world-africa-13315719 Accessed on August 30, 2014

November 21, 2012	Morsi decrees all Presidential actions above constitution
November 29, 2012	Islamists under tutelage of the Muslim Brotherhood drafts a new Constitution
December 4, 2012	More than 100,000 protestors march towards Itihadiya Presidential Palace in Heliopolis, around 20 kilometers from Tahrir Square
January 25, 2013	Protesters celebrate two-year anniversary of the uprising in 2011 by gathering in Tahrir Square; brutalities of Islamists thugs lead to injuries
February and March, 2013	More protests in major cities
April, 2013	Tamarod Movement (Rebel) emerges petitioning for impeachment of Mohammed Morsi
June 21, 2013	El-Sisi warns Morsi after Tamarod gathers around 22 million impeachment signatures from eligible voters
June 29, 2013	A concession between Sisi and Morsi; the latter revokes
June 30, 2013	Million protesters return to the streets
July 1, 2013	Military gives ultimatum
July 3, 2013	Military coup removes Morsi from office
July 4, 2013	Adly Mansour, Supreme Court Chief Justice steps in as interim president
July 8, 2013	Morsi supporters gather in Cairo and Alexandria; police guns them down leaving at least 50 recorded deaths
July 9, 2013	United Arab Emirates and Kingdom of Saudi Arabia pledges
July 26, 2013	Massive rally for El-Sisi to take over as President
July 1,2013	Muslim Brotherhood declares an open-ended camp in front of Rabia Al-Adawiya Mosque in Cairo, protesting the military coup and the ousting of Mohammed Morsi
August 14, 2013	After several ultimatums, the military bulldozes protesters in what is known as Rabia Massacre
August 22, 2013	Mubarak released from prison but remains under house arrest
September 1, 2013	Morsi and most top members of the Muslim Brotherhood who were arrested and in police custody are charged with “committing violence and inciting the killing of innocent civilians”
September 5, 2013	Mohammed Ibrahim, Minister of Interior survices a deadly car bomb

September 10, 2013	Start of a popular campaign to encourage El-Sisi to run for presidential elections
September 11, 2013	The military declares the beginning of an offensive against Islamists militancy following two suicide car bombs blasting one of the office branches of the Egyptian Intelligence
2013 – 2014	Successive cabinet reshuffling; mostly unwelcomed by revolutionary groups yet celebrated by what came to be known as counter-revolutionary forces and regimes
April 2014	Passing of Anti-Protest Law
August 2014	Political Prisoners Start Indefinite Hunger Strike

CONTEXTUALIZING CHRONOLOGY: SOCIAL AND POLITICAL ACTIVISM

The chronological order above is useful as it imposes a linear trajectory on events. It also lists the broad range of collective action in different parts of Egypt over decades. It has become a 'theoretical habit' to resort to social movement theories and theories of political opportunity structures to explain episodes of collective action (McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly, 2007). These theories can explain few movements in Egypt such as the Muslim Brotherhood or the Egyptian Movement for Change but they fail to explain other forms of collective action and counter-action adequately. In the latter case, theories of political opportunity structures constraining social movements and/or collective action as well as theories of the mobilizing structures that enable them become pertinent.

It cannot be denied that modes of political activism, made possible under the deposed Mubarak regime have – for good or bad - put in place specific structures of opportunities and constraints and specific mobilizing structures that shaped subsequent forms of activism and of statehood. For instance, the ascension of Islamists namely, the Muslim Brothers to the seats of political power in 2012 was not sudden and should not be seen as a surprise. It was wrought out of persistent and protracted struggles to 'Islamize' society and to infiltrate state institutions since the 1920s. The collectivity of 'political Islam' has managed to Islamize polity and redefine the meanings and shape

of the struggles for bread, freedom, social justice and human dignity that erupted in January 2011.

However, can the former theories explain the uprising? When the uprising erupted gradually and protestors began to occupy Tahrir Square, several international media referred to the scene as a revolution. Protestors elated over such news while many were skeptical. Questions about the nature of the uprising still preoccupy analysts; was it an instance of venting out frustrations that built up over years of oppression or a full-fledged revolution with deeper and more profound change in society, economy and polity?

Similarly, can such theories explain the forms of collective action that ensued afterwards? Such as the brutalities and violence of the Supreme Council of Armed Forces in 2012 or the sudden appearance of Mohammed Morsi and Ahmed Shafiq on the political stage as contenders for Presidency, who, until then, were relatively obscure figures? Can such theoretical frames explain the striking failure of the democratically elected Muslim Brotherhood President and his Islamist-backed government to gather enough support from long-term activists, the neoliberal elite (also known as *felool* or remnants of the deposed Mubarak regime) or even from apolitical citizens (nicknamed Couch Party)?

The answer is no. They equally fail to explain adequately the success of the impeachment campaign organized to support a military coup in 2013 or the subsequent 'war on terror' and war on activism. Media sensationalism and emotional over-charging notwithstanding, a genuine attempt to explain the nature of the transformations by looking at the forms and sequencing of collective action is not sufficient. A thorough understanding of the framing processes i.e. how protesters make sense and give meanings to the structures of opportunity and constrains and to their experiences could supplement analysis and give a better perspective.

However, meanings are socially constructed[1]. Individuals, groups and institutions construct them at once, historically and geographically as well as diachronically and synchronically. Therefore, in order to understand the meanings of "Bread, Freedom, Social Justice and Human Dignity" or for that matter the meaning of activism and of the uprising or revolution, the analyst must begin to draw the history and the geography of resistance and power that underlie and lead to the uprising and beyond. She must also begin to trace the changes in both

1 The importance of framing processes as an addendum to the theoretical framework came after a blog post by Ahmed Bakr on the website of the Revolutionary Socialists on September 9, 2014. Revsoc.me/politics/30532

the historical and geographical or spatial modalities that give collective action its forms, magnitudes and meanings (Pile, 1997).

If the protracted activism listed chronologically above is conceived of as resistance to the domination of the state and its oppressive regimes and if power is heuristically defined as the ability to enforce ones' will on others. Then can resistance imply power? Can it affect domination? If yes, then what forms of resistance can best impact upon forms of domination? Steve Pile (1997) suggests we study the histories and geographies of resistance by uncoupling them from domination and focusing on the tactics and the meanings that groups and individuals give to their multiple modes of resistance(s). He urges us to understand how geographies of resistance need not necessarily reflect geographies of domination or read as mirror images of domination. Instead, resistance can very well be towards change in any form.

"Spatial technologies of domination – such as military occupation or, alternatively, urban planning – need to continually resolve specific spatial problems, such as distance and closeness, inclusion and exclusion, surveillance and position, movement and immobility, communication and knowledge, and so on. This is to say that authority produces space through , for example, cutting it up, differentiating between parcels of space, the use and abuse of borders and markers, the production of scales (from the body, through the region and the nation, to the globe), the control of movement within and across different kinds of boundaries and so on… Nevertheless, these spatial practices of oppression do not mean that resistance is forever confined to the authorized spaces of domination. Indeed, one of authority's most insidious effects may well be to confine definitions of resistance to only those that appear to oppose it directly, in the open, where it can be made and seen to fail" (Pile 1997: 3).

These words rightfully depict much of the tactics of activists in Egypt under emergency and later after Mubarak. The theoretical frame suggested by Pile also seems to imply methodological suggestions. To render resistance visible, the analyst can begin to draw a mental map of the positioning of individual activists and groups in circles of engagement with each other and with dominant authorities. In other words, analysis should yield a description of the map of unequal and multiple power relationships. This step facilitates the identification of relative proximity of activists to each other and to authorities.

Since more or less powerful people are active in the constitution of relationships, resistance can mean resistance to change of positions, to progressive and radical politics and to social transformation. Resistance can be understood by thinking about the ways in which spaces of resistance are distinct from the spaces of domination. "It

can be understood by thinking about the distinct spatialities of resistance and by suggesting the resistance may involve spatialities that lie beyond power!

Similarly, the intentions of political acts of resistance are not straightforward and need not necessarily coincide or justify the specific nature of the act. For instance, the intention to emancipate and empower might be brought forth through acts of violence and aggression. In Egypt of the 1950s and precisely in 1952 when a military coup ousted the Egyptian Monarch and declared independence from the British rule. The path towards empowering the poor passed through brutal dispossession and annexation of the lands and properties of the rich. Fascism is roughly understood in those terms i.e. "sickeningly sadistic regimes can be grounded in emancipator values" (Ibid.4). This methodological tip will prove useful in understanding the popular support of the military coup that ousted the Muslim Brotherhood and declared them as a terrorist organization in 2013.

This discussion is at its base a discussion of structure and agency. The positions that individuals and groups occupy are socially constructed. At one level, social forces construct a structure of relationships that gives rise to positions and locates them vis-à-vis each other. It also defines their functionality within the overall structure. The analyst needs to identify the underlying logic of that structure. This study supposes that collective activists and social movements occupy multiple positions in their dialectical relationships with the state and oppressive regimes, whether socialist or neoliberal. They also occupy multiple and changing positions vis-à-vis each other. The logic that informs the state is, ideally, that of social stability, economic prosperity and territorial sovereignty.

The logic that informs social movements is different. For instance, the Muslim Brotherhood in Egypt, striving to establish an Islamic *Umma* that transcends state territoriality and national affiliation have often worked on maintaining loyal followers of a politicized set of doctrines enshrined in religious language. More importantly, they have often followed the principle known in Islamic jurisprudence as "*Al-Taqqiya*" (secrecy for self-protection against enemies). In both cases, the rationale that guide actions and resistances is analytically important for figuring out positions in the overall structure.

It should not be inferred from the above discussion that the state and social movements are internally homogenous entities, without divisions, or that they occupy non-changing positions in the overall structure of relations. In Egypt, the state has often succeeded to conceal the divisions within i.e. between its sovereign institutions, and appear as homogenous, and even omnipresent. Thirty years of

Emergency have successfully shielded the state from exposing its divisions and thus vulnerabilities. Ditto, the Muslim Brotherhood as the largest organized movement in Egypt at the time of the uprising. This study presents evidence that persistent activism up until the uprising and beyond, has exposed such vulnerabilities, even when national, regional and international media have consistently portrayed activists as fragmented and non-cohesive.

Since positions are socially constructed, therefore, they change actively or reactively in response to changes in the logics that inform the social structure. The analyst must be able to read the changing map of positions in light of such logics. The present study seeks to understand positions of resistance in light of multiple logics. The macro logic of economic reform and structural adjustments. The positions taken within the political opportunity structures under successive hybrid authoritarian regimes. The logic of fear and terror perpetuated by the state and Islamists and the logics, if any, of activists.

The logic of divide and rule has often been successful to sustain vulnerability. People remain vulnerable where they cannot organize and agitate in defense of their own interests and where alliance cannot be formed with groups sharing common interests. As will be shown below, the 2013 anti-protest law and the strict enforcement of its articles is premised upon the same logic and ensures the perpetuation of such vulnerabilities. The strategy of benign non-action or neglect has also served similar purposes. The relative marginalization of revolutionary youth as rash, badly educated, unskilled and unemployed i.e. as a threat to the recovery and development of the national economy. Similarly, albeit from another angle, the anxiety of media over "haybat al dawla" (State Prestige) in light of street collective action and uprisings are examples of how the analyst could read the scene.

In conclusion, the present analysis of activism follows social movement theory, the new social movements' theory; theories of political opportunity structures, mobilization structures and framing processes to explain the nature and trajectory and dynamics of activism that lead to the 2011 uprising. However, when it comes to understanding and explaining post-uprising activism, this study benefits from the theory of geographies of resistance to explain the logics that reconstruct relations of oppression and hegemony. Nevertheless, as will be demonstrated below, the same theory i.e. geographies of resistance, will reveal the ebb and flow of revolutionary activism in Egypt and might allow us to imagine future visions of a just and dignified citizenship in a civic state for Egyptians. Moreover, over the course of the analysis, I will provide definitions of any concept that arises outside this short exposition of the theoretical frame of analysis.

THE UPRISING: A SUCCESSFUL PROTEST WITH SEEDS OF COUNTER-REVOLUTION!

On 25 January 2011, Egyptians took to the streets demanding the deposition of the ruling regime and the ousting of the former president Hosni Mubarak. Having raised the national flag and chanted slogans of nationalist hues, several commentators argued that the uprising was non-religious i.e. it was not inspired or instigated by Islamists. During the days of the uprising, protesters represented various ideological hues and many could not even be aligned with any particular political or ideological current. On the streets, religious and secular groups and individuals had joined forces under the common banner of "bread, freedom, social justice and human dignity."

The success of the popular uprising to depose the regime left Egypt in a state of uncertainty. The country became exposed to various and competing political and ideological vectors, which have been oppressed under the protracted state of emergency - declared upon the assassination of Anwar Sadat and the ascendance of Mubarak to power in 1981, or have sprung up in response to the novel circumstances. For months after the uprising, exhilarated activists and demonstrators worked night and day not just to clean Tahrir Square, but also to continue vibrant dialogues while multiple forces competed and coalesced. Understanding the complexity of this period and the sheer momentum of such vectors is essential to any reliable interpretation of the shape of the post-uprising Egyptian state.

Several commentators sought to figure out the features of the seeming chaos and uncertainty. Bert Olivier articulated it as a manifestation of "modernity as crisis;" a period that possessed an equal potential for the emergence and the death of democracy. On one hand, the revolt was an instance of the release of "socially immanent, creative forces of social and political change, and on the other the reactionary powers of order" (Olivier, 2011). His evidence, among others, was the inability of Egyptian and Western governments to identify leaders for negotiations over the shape of things to come. This and the lack of the classical tangible manifestations of liberal democracy made him argue that the situation immediately after the uprising possessed the potential of an anarcho-democracy where the state was rejected as a frame of reference and "the people" were able to organize and self-rule, even innovate an alternative structure altogether.

What followed the uprising particularly the military takeover under directives of the Supreme Council of Armed Forces (SCAF) was to Olivier the counter-revolutionary scenario and the triumph of the forces of order endemic to modernity-as-crisis. While there is little doubt that the period between the uprising in 2011 and presidential elections in 2012 had tinges of anarchy but to argue that it represented a living case of modernity-as-crisis we need to consider more factors than its leaderless revolutionary groups and counter-revolutionary maneuvering.

The uprising was not a revolution; protestors might not have even imagined it to be. It was however, built upon decades-long social movements and mobilization efforts. Retrospectively, SCAF and members of the deposed regime and their allies saw the uprising as a sign of revolutionary change sweeping the national territories and launched counter measures, but it is through activists' responses to these measures that a genuine revolutionary change might take shape albeit within palpable survival, political and economic constraints.

Bayat distinguished between social and protest movements. Compared to social movements, which are protracted processes of mobilization for change, protest movements are brief insurgencies that "directly challenge the political authority" and might accomplish their goal or get crushed (Bayat, 2007). By this definition, the uprising was a successful protest movement and the question becomes what are the potential for it and the challenges facing it to evolve into a revolution i.e. "a rapid, fundamental, and violent domestic change in the dominant values and myths of a society, in its political institutions, social structure, leadership, and government activity and politics"? (Samuel Huntington's definition of revolution as quoted in Bayat (2007, p 214 endnote 20).

Whether rapid or otherwise, this study attempts to answer the above question by identifying the strengths and the challenges that face those who protested in making fundamental changes to statehood in Egypt. Based on observations and participation in demonstrations and collective activities intermittently between January 2011 and July 2012, I will reflect on these experiences through the lenses of social movement theories in order to understand the current Egyptian statehood – defined as the process of dynamic interactions between formal institutions of the state (legislative, executive and judiciary) on one hand and non-state actors (social movements, collective actions or informal citizen groups) on the other.

Although classical social movement theory (SMT) such as McAdam, Tarrow, & Tilly (2007) does not explain how popular uprisings develop into revolutions or even into interest groups that seek fundamental change, applying some of SMT tenets to the case of post-uprising activism in Egypt is informative. It explains several features of pre- and post-uprising activism; the case would expand the theory's conceptual repertoire and further demystifies the tenacious assumptions that Arab and Muslim majority societies are essentially unique (Beinin & Vairel, Introduction: The Middle East and North Africa Beyond Classical Social Movement Theory, 2011; Bayat, 2007) and 'their' politics are either a matter of "a culture of rioting" or a "culture of deference" (Vairel, 2011).

Egypt has known social movements[1] since the late nineteenth century working within and outside state institutions towards instilling 'modern' political subjectivities. While some movements infused such subjectivities with religious sensibilities such as the Islamic reform movements of 1875 – 1940s (Gasper, 2009), including the Muslim Brotherhood of 1928 and its affiliates of militant Islamists such as the Egyptian Islamic Jihad and al-Jama' a al-Islamiya of 1990s as well as its revised version following the path of preaching and social services or what global media like to call the "moderate" path (El-Ghobashy, 2005; Bayat, 2007).

Other movements carved a different path towards political subjectivities such as the communists, the leftist and nationalists, and the Nasserists. Since the late 1990s and early 2000s, another form of movements emerged. These were mostly extra-parliamentary coalitions between

1 Social movements are collective actions that aspire to effect change in society or polity through sustained engagements. They usually identify opponents or targets for change and work to establish sympathetic or loyal constituencies through long-term strategies within social institutions or short-term tactics within formal political structures.

individuals, established movements, non-governmental organizations and political parties. The Egyptian movement for change (Kefaya) is an example as well as the March 9 movement for Academic Freedoms, the Egyptian Anti-Globalization Group and the March 20th movement to mention few (Abdelrahman, 2009). Other movements operated outside these classical categories such as the massive welfare associations working through churches and mosques and the celebrity-preachers' circles of religious education such as Amr Khaled and Khalid al-Jindi as well as few other female preachers since the early 2000s.

Writing before the uprising, many scholars had rightfully questioned the success of those movements to change authoritarian regimes, some had argued in reference to non-militant Islamists that their goal was stealth regime change through moral rectitude of society and gradual constitutional changes (Bayat, 2007; Rutherford, 2006). Others have traced democratic transition and questioned the possibility of democratization through civil society organizations; not through partisan politics (Langohr, 2004). Nevertheless, almost everybody acknowledged that Egypt witnessed vibrant political activism, the "*extra-ordinary*, extra-usual practices which aim, collectively or individually, institutionally or informally, to cause social change" (Bayat, 2005, p. 894 emphasis in original).

Now that Mubarak had stepped down and a non-military president elected – albeit with major qualifications over how elections were conducted, has this vibrancy been sustained? If yes, how far is activism able to effect fundamental changes and realize a state that provides the demands of protestors in Tahrir? In other words, how far is post-uprising activism able to transform into a revolution to build a "modern civic state"? There is little doubt that levels of activism upsurged in Egypt after the uprising accompanied by relentless efforts to document it by activists and observers. In fact, almost everybody has turned into a historian of sort. However, while many wait and watch, a number of social scientists have made bold attempts to theorize the transformation through the lens of social movement theory (Beinin & Vairel, 2011; Shehata, 2011). In all instances, scholars look at the past to assess the present modes of activism. In this and the following section I will discuss few selected examples of activism in the past and make a number of theoretical reflections as well as pave the way for an assessment of its potentials for fundamental social and political change.

PRE-UPRISING ACTIVISM: FLUID AND NETWORKED AGAINST REPRESSION

By way of classification, Fawzy (2011) divided pre-uprising activism and movements into two categories namely, movements that seek political change and ones that rally behind the demands of one or more sector of the population, which he titled *"matlabiya"* or demand-oriented movements. This is an arbitrary distinction at best because under the prevasive repression of the deposed regime the very act of protesting was itself a manifestation of the demand for political participation. This distinction resurfaced after the uprising in state-run media in order to demonize protests by several sections of the population and portray them as opportunists seeking personal gains when the country passes through critical times. I do not wish to deny that demands vary from movement to the other but rather to register a tendency to conflate declared demands and undeclared motives of protestors in theory and in practice. Understanding the differences between the two and for that matter between 'rights' and 'principles' is important in analyzing the potential of post-uprising activism to develop into a revolution.

A more empirically valid distinction however, is drawn between activisim through traditional institutions such as political parties, charity organizations, NGOs and human rights organizations on one hand and activism that emerged forcefully during the 2000s of more

fluid nature. In 2004 alone, 250 prtotests were recorded; this was estimated as 200 percent increase compared to 2003 (Soudias, 2014). Essam Siyam (2011) conducted a survey of random days between October 1st 2005 to Januray 31st 2009 and analyed protest activities reported in three diverse newspapers on selected days. Statistical analysis indicated that 58.6% of reported protest activities took place in provincial cities and towns outside the two prime cities of Cairo and Alexandra (together counted for 41.6%). The distribution of who protested was such that 84.8% of protest activities was undertaken by collectivities and groups not necessarily related by blood or ideology compared to 8.4% by individuals, 4.4% by members of single families and 2.4% by groups of families (Siyam, 2011).

The study indicated other emerging patterns such as the resurgence of labor activism particularly in the textile and industrial manufaturing sectors as well as the emergence of cross-ideological and cross-class student activism. However, most notable was the engagment of slum dwellers, employers and employees of small and medium enterprises and the self-employed in public protests. Equally impressive was activism among public services sector employees, predominantly of ministeries and institutions of education and higher education, which constituted 12.4% of the total number of recorded cases of protest over the study's random period. These were the very sections of employees whom the deposed regime used to mobilize in support of its policies. It was noticeable that 80.9% of recorded protests happened outside and independent of the traditional frames of political participation i.e. political parties and NGOs; it was incited by the protestors, not by experienced activists (Ibid.). In constrast to Fawzy's argument, except for few instances, the demands raised in the majority of protests were not limited to protestors' respective occupational or class related consumption, instead, they represented multiple inspirations and desires for political and intellectual freedoms, anti-repression, anti-corruption, anti-profiteering.

Similarly, while studying the rapproachment between leftists and Islamists that occurred after the second Palestinian Intifada in 2000, Abdelrahman observed how pre-uprising activism was cross-ideological and fluid. While maintaining their individual and institutional differences, in alliances, "none of [the movements acted as] a single, homogenous, united front representing a monolithic political camp... [Rather, many, if not all, were characteristed by] internal conflicts and subgroups and divisions" (Abdelrahman, 2009, p. 38). She demonstrated how diverse movements, even arch-enemies displayed remarkable fluidity in alliances, raised various related demands and rallied around multiple issues. The Egyptian Popular Committee in

Solidarity with the Intifada was a national initiative that began by campaigning for blood and money to Palestinians then rallied around political reform. Out of this committee came the annual "Cairo Conference" where non-partisan opposition forces came together under anti-war (US-UK invasion of Iraq in 2003), anti-neoliberalisation (IMF and World Bank structural adjustments of the Egyptian economy) and a bit later anti-inheritance of presidency (against Mubarak renewal of term and his son's succession) banners (Browers, 2007).

Besides fluidity, most social movements were internally dynamic and sometimes discordant. So, if we take a look at leftists as an established category in the literature, we would see how - whether parties or movements, leftists in Egypt have often had endemic divisions over ideological orientations, programs, strategies and tactics. Before the uprising, this camp included the Tagammu party, the banned communist party, the Revolutionary Socialists movement, the People group, and the Democratic Left group (Abdelrahman, 2009). Long before the uprising in 1976, the Tagammu had already morphed into the National Progressive Unionist Party (NPUP) to include socialists, communists, Arab nationalists and Nasserists. Compared to others in this camp, the Tagammu party was able to sustain favorable relations with the Political Parties Committee appointed to oversee political parties in Egypt under Mubarak (Stacher, 2004). After the uprising, Refaat Al-Saeed, president of the party had not supported the popular movement, compelling 73 of the party's committee members to resign in March 2011(Choucri, 2011).

In contrast, Hamdeen Sabahi's explicit antagonism of Mubarak's regime had cost him the suspension of formal registration of Karama party until after the uprising and not to mention persecution and imprisonment. Similarly, Revolutionary Socialists were forced to operate as an underground movement whose members were frequent inmates of the national security forces prisons. So, there are discrepancies between leftists in how they related to Mubarak regime and to the uprising. Several defectors from the NPUP were already politically active outside the party platform, through formal and less formal movements and initiatives. In fact, multiple memberships in social movements and initiatives outside restrictive party memberships, has increasingly been the norm of political activism since the early 2000s.

Islamist activism is no less fluid. Within the expansive literature on this large category of activism, sometimes called political Islam, Islamic activism is conceived of as urban protest movements that accommodated yet resisted established worldviews and oppressive regimes (Macleod, 1991; Al-Sayyid Marsot, 1984), as social services organizations by and for the middle classes (Bayat, 1998), as a means

of suppressing and mediating social conflicts and a means for capital accumulation (Beinin, 2005). Beyond description, Islamic activism remains open-ended. Scholars from diverse hues continue to examine this broad category and "only by induction can one construct a Muslim political philosophy" (Hicks, 1989, p. 32). Figuring out the main featues of this philosopy would enlighten our understanding of Islamist activism and might presents us with a case that could expand theoreties of activism from advanced democratic contexts.

Beinin associated Islamist activism with the defeat of Arab armies against the Israeli, British and French's in 1967, successive global economic stagflations since the 1970s till late 1990s, and the decline of Arab nationalism as a rallying project. Earlier, Hicks had alluded to the same point. He stated, "onto [the] Islamic core with its emphasis on morality and justice, all other concerns such as national independence, Arabism, economic progress, social justice and political equality were easily grafted." (Hicks, 1989: 34). Hicks was referring to the origins of the Muslim Brotherhood in the 1920s.

In a manner similar to how the British betted the Muslim Brotherhood against movements and agitations calling for independence, the neoliberal turn in Egypt under Sadat, however, implied betting on Islamists against leftists, Nasserists, socialists and communists. By the time Mubarak was in power, Islamic activism had bifurcated into militants and preachers, both rich with petro-dollars and massive human capital of young people who were deeply enculturated into diverse versions of a mythical Islamic essence, way of life and disposition yet marginalized by inefficient governments. Both factions made a dent on Egyptian statehood. Whereas the violence of the first faction forced the state to retaliate and justified its pervasive repression and inflated security measures, the activities of the second faction managed to Islamize state discourses (Bayat, 2007; Beinin, 2005).

It is beyond the scope of this paper to recap the ideological, strategic and tactical transformations of either factions of Islamic activism or to list how the state was socialized into integrating religion into its discourses. Instead, I will briefly discuss the Muslim Brothers as an illustrative example of pre-uprising activism i.e. fluid, cross-ideological, internally dynamic and networked. El-Ghobashy (2005) demonstrated how the Muslim Brothers have transformed over years of interaction with other activists, with the regime as well as intergenerationally in ways that deviated from its trademark ideology after establishing a faith-based state built upon morally correct nation (*umma*).

Since its emergence in the 1920s as a diligent movement seeking moral rectitude, the *The Muslim Brotherhood* have consistently

adapted to changing contexts. From door to door recruitment to its cause and a militant paramilitary wing capable of inflicting violence onto the state to a pervasive movement that molded its ideologies and organizational tactics in tandem with the exigencies of capital and in reaction to state economic programs and repression. This versatility allowed them to infiltrate several state institutions such as student unions, professional syndicates, social clubs, schools and higher education institutions and mosques and to strike alliances with liberal (al-Wafd) and left-leaning (Labor) parties to wrest their way into Parliament (Stacher J. A., 2004, 2002).

Their Guidance Bureau (*Maktab al Irshad*) has often brought radicals next to advocates of women's rights in public posts; militants next to preachers. Even as a banned organization, they spared no political opportunity to play the "dual game" characteristic of partisans viz. between hitting at the regime's legitimacy and mobilizing voters alternately or simultaneously. Finally, what started as an attempt to "win Egyptian hearts and minds for an austere Islamic state and society….was .. irrevocably transformed into a flexible political party" one that "confirms that it is the institutional rules of participation rather than the commandments of ideology that motivate political parties" (El-Ghobashy, 2005, p. 390). El-Gobashy wrote this before the uprising and the official formation of the *The Muslim Brotherhood*'s Freedom and Justice Party in 2011. However, she meant to demonstrate that they manifested features similar to other non-religious activists and argued that they need not be theorized as a unique anomaly.

It is partly this fluidity and networking that brought together Islamists, nationalists, Nasserists and leftists before the uprising as a popular front. Abdelrahman (2009) and Browers (2007) underscored three principles that guided such rapproachement. Firstly, partnership in the alliance was not restricted to institutions but left open on individual basis in order to avoid institutional clashes and ideological antagonism. Secondly, movements drew upon tactics learnt through interacting with global networks of activism which necessitated and was premised upon the use of advanced communication technologies. Thirdly, alliances were premised upon negotiation and reaching a consensus over issues, tactics, slogans, types of confrontational action and alternate plans in response to state repression. Fourthly, activists agreed over "differential coordination," whereby partners in an alliance would maintain a unified front while simultaneously keeping their differences in dealing with their respective constituencies. Notwithstanding their differences, it was implicitly agreed that negotiationsn were between equals thus networks were predominantly "acephalous" (Abdelrahman, 2009).

Cross-ideological alliances have already been effective among university students particularly while organizing for independent student unions and mobilizing against state security intervention in campus and university lives since 2000. They were created to capture opportunities or face threats made by the state and its multiple sovereign agencies (See Shehata & Stacher, 2007 for analysis of *Al-Azhar Militia* event). Although it consumed substantial energies and time, alliances and networking were learning mechanisms that generated experiential repretoires. Mobilizing for alliances was generally premised upon the shared belief that movements were subject to similar threats and that cooperation in a plural milieu was more productive than waring as rivalries under the umberella of opposition.

This plurality created "imagined solidarity" (Bayat, 2005) whereby individuals and groups internalized such "generalized believes" and "shared values" around which their "collective mind" worked (Tarrow, 1988). This imagined solidarity contributed to the appearance of protestors as a popular front movement and gave impetus to "We the People demand the fall of the regime" (*"Al-Shaab Yorid Isqat al Nizam"*). It was this "cognitive liberation" (Tarrow, 1988) that sustained the uprising and bestowed upon the days that immediately followed it the appearance of anarachy and arbitrary self-rule.

However, was this extra-ordinary activism the actual force that deposed Mubarak? As much as one would wish it, there were several factors behind Mubarak's decision to step down and behind deterring the military and security forces from crushing the uprising violently, even though they tried. Those factors were exterior yet supplementary to the sheer force of protestors in Tahrir. Yet in terms of momentum, there was surely one faction of activists powerful enough to propel other forces and make them come to work in the direction of regime change, these were the workers unionized independently over years and in several strategically important sectors of the economy such as the Suez Canal Authority. This paper does not focus on their activism although extensive studies have analyzed it, instead in what follows I will turn to the transitional period between Mubarak's deposition and the election of Mohammed Morsi, member of the Muslim Brotherhood and the first non-military President since 1952.

WARRING DEMOCRACIES: MUSLIM BROTHERHOOD AGAINST STATE SOVEREIGNTY

The period that immediately followed the uprising was turbulent and seemingly messy. It was characterized by daily street confrontations between activists and remnants of the deposed regime, particularly thugs and police and security forces. It was also a period of incessant intimidation of revolutionary groups by state-run media loyal to the deposed regime and by private media owned by businesspersons of the deposed regime as well as by Islamists (both Salafi organizations and /or by the Muslim Brotherhood.) It was also the period during which the public image of the January 25 uprising, particularly of activists from outside the Islamist camp was subjected to deliberate distortions. Explicit accusations of 'clientelism to the West,' 'apostasy,' and 'treason' were purportedly heralded at activists such as members of the April 6th Movement, Wael Ghoneim, Executive Director of Google Middle East and Mohamed El-Baradei, Nobel Laureate and former Director General of the International Atomic Energy Agency.

Nevertheless, strikes erupted on daily basis along with an expansion of pervasive forms of resistance[1]. One of the most prominent forms was the emergence and spread of independent federations and

1 "Labor protests on the rise," Al-Masry Alyoum, Monday 17/09/2012.

syndicates such as the Independent Federation of Trade Unions. The latter was distinctively democratic and in conflict with the state-run Egyptian Trade Union Federation. There were calls for similar independent unions across the broad spectrum of formal and informal occupations[2].

Focusing predominantly on labor activism, Anne Alexander tracked the developments that transpired over the period between February and October 2011 in the forms of activism, the demands raised and the lessons learnt. She divided the period into three phases. The first was between February and March, during which sit-ins in workplaces spread. The second lasted March through August and witnessed the growth of workers organizations such as the abovementioned independent federation. The third covered September to October and was characterized by repeated, coordinated, large presence strike episodes. Those were coordinated on the national scale and were sometimes entire or sector-wide strikes such as the nation-wide school teachers' strike. (Alexander, International Socialism, 2012)

Alexander notices how labor activism has made advances during this transition period. For instance, strikes lasted longer than before the uprising and involved representatives, directly elected from the crowds. She adds that the state no longer resorted to direct repression measures. Instead, the government institution or the employer in question sent delegates. In the process of negotiating demands, workers' representatives acquired experiences not available to them before. Similarly, one of the advances made over this period concerns the organizational and democratic experiences acquired by labor activists throughout the process of organizing a strike, from its initiation until building independent organizations.

Although resorting to less direct repression measures has reduced, the state however, follows the strategy of benign neglect such that when a strike begins, state institutions do not respond thinking that protesters would disperse after fatigue. To the contrary, the slow response often intensified demands and forms of activism. In the cases that Alexander reviewed, it has escalated workers' demands from "generalized social demands with a degree of common purposes" to those of social justice against the imperatives of neoliberalism and the purging of public institutions from corrupt authoritarianism (Ibid.).

This dynamic was repeated during the strike organized by university non-teaching staff unions. A relatively neglected group within institutions of higher education, public universities' staff has often been

2 Alexander (2012) stated that in October 2011, Egyptian Federation of Independent Trade Union claimed membership of 1.4 million workers.

discriminated against in terms of work conditions and pay scales. When the staff of Cairo University organized an indefinite strike inside the university campus in September 2011, the Dean of Faculty of Economics and Political Science (FEPS - seat of several Mubarak loyalists) responded – after days - by arbitrarily transferring twenty-six staff members and employees from their positions in the Faculty administration to the central administration. In response, protesters escalated their demands to include the de-militarization of the university. A similar protest was organized by the staff of Beni Suef University in Upper Egypt. In this case, top administrators neglected the sit-in until students joined the protesters and anti-administration slogan were raised. When the President of the University requested a member of the teaching Faculty to represent the striking staff, the latter refused and the university top administration requested security police to disperse the crowd by force[3].

Equally significant yet unseen since 1952, was the call for civil disobedience. The Egypt Revolutionaries' Alliance – a coalition of over fifty activist groups, including the country's six most prominent revolutionary movements — along with university and school students and independent workers' unions campaigned for the initiative. Among the political groups which participated were the January 25 Revolution Youth Coalition, the April 6 Youth Movement, the Youth for Freedom and Justice Movement (a Muslim Brotherhood affiliate), the Revolution Youth Union, the Wasat Party and the Ghad Al-Thawra Party. The Egyptian Cinema Syndicate and some Coptic groups, such as the Maspero Revolutionaries, have also backed the call. SCAF responded by deploying more security and army tanks in several squares in major cities. [4]

It is important to note at this point that the responses towards labor activism organized and sustained through the independent trade unions differ from the responses towards the strikes by university staff. While the former triggers antagonism from government institutions and state-sponsored workers' unions, regional governors as well as the ruling military junta, SCAF. The latter triggers resentment from three class categories namely, students and parents, teaching staff and top administrators. While activism intensified, so did resentment to repeated blockades causing daily hustles and damaging economic conditions.

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3 The strategy of neglect intimidates protesters yet it could prove counter-productive. The longer the sit-in, the more sympathy protesters could elicit from the public.

4 http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/34104/Egypt/Politics-/Egypt%E2%80%99s-experimental-steps-to-civil-disobedience.aspx

Nevertheless, the rapid transition and developments taking place during this period had exposed how networks and positions within the structure of political opportunity and the structures of mobilization were continuously redefined. The rapid rate of events, almost hyper-activity, did however, impose an empirical as well as a methodological imperative namely, that of identifying and readings signals sent by actors in the political opportunity structure. Meyer and Minkoff (2004) had made a slight modification to the classical theory of political opportunity structure. They distinguished between *structures* of the political system and the *signals* that the system sends to its various components, including protest movements and collective action[5].

This theoretical tweak became pertinent to this period in particular during which both activists and analysts were busy identifying and deciphering signals not only emitted by SCAF or state-run media but also by other groups, who participated in pre-uprising activism and were present in Tahrir and other squares in Egypt during the eighteen days. There were also rapid changes within the government such as the appointment of four consecutive cabinets over a single year. Cabinet reshufflings included incumbents, who were members of the deposed regime. This development had sent 'uncomforting' signals to the broad spectrum of activists.

On the other hand, the rapid rate of economic deterioration justified why the Supreme Council of Armed Forces urged a speedy transition period by suppressing activism, at least street activism and intimidating non-governmental organizations and human rights advocacy initiatives[6]. Meanwhile, state-owned media as well as privately owned media began a discourse of crisis and fear of total collapse of the economy. A spate of unverifiable news about the economy, polity and even regional geo-strategic transformations were significant weapons of the 'counter-revolution.'

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5 David Pratten (2006) argues that analysis of activism must cleverly distinguish between tactics and strategies. The former are predominantly associated with the "poor" or those who lack power, whereas the latter is reserved from the strong.

6 The arbitrary clamp down of four US-funded think tanks was already mentioned in the section on data and research methods above.

MULTIPLE STATES + MULTIPLE CAPITALS = MULTIPLE SOVEREIGNTIES

After deposing Mubarak and his Parliament, there was no formal existent political system as such. However, several sovereign state agencies remained almost intact such as the Supreme Constitutional Court, the Highest Administrative Court, and the General Prosecutor – against the dismay of multiple revolutionary groups including the Muslim Brotherhood and their supporters. Other agencies boosted their powers such as the military, whereas some agencies underwent reshuffling yet retained substantial influence over public opinion such as the state-run media – albeit in competition with privately owned media - print, social media and satellites. While the Muslim Brotherhood seemed content with those developments, the revolutionary youth and groups became increasingly wary of an impending restoration of the old regime. Activists interpreted these developments as signs that the uprising succeeded to depose Mubarak yet did not result in dismantling his entire regime.

State institutions in the Egyptian context have always been politicized and rarely, if ever, been outside the purview of the "political." Therefore, by highlighting a select number of agencies, I seek to illustrate how the political system is reconfiguring and how could this be a sign of deviation from the dialectics of violence that characterized the relations between state and activism under the deposed regime.

One of the concepts that could assist in this task is that of signals. Modifications to the classical political opportunity structure theory brought signals sent by the political system as an umbrella concept to refer to state policies. The latter were found to be diverse and multi-dimensional. Policy could be the formal recognition of a social movement or sanctioning state budgetary relays or passing or amending laws. State policies in Egypt have often come in fluid forms; sometimes in the form of speeches made by a state official. After the uprising it has become more fluid hence the usefulness of the concept of signals in understanding the dynamics between state and activism in the post uprising period. I also wish to underscore how the "transition" was a learning mechanism that disillusioned activists, politicians, statesmen, the "public" as well as social scientists on exigencies and dilemmas of modern civic statehood.

Immediately after Mubarak stepped down, in the white heat of the uprising, jubilant, enthusiastic and self-confident, activists started organizing around rebuilding state structures. Ground activities were energized and extended geographically and many coalitions and alliances were forged particularly between members of what was lumped later as the "revolutionary youth" camp. A joint statement by 13 Egyptian NGOs immediately after deposition of regime called on the transitional government to draft a clear plan for the gradual activation of all economic, social and cultural rights to meet the demands of the uprising.

Articulate demands and suggested plans for restructuring state institutions were systematically raised to SCAF generals who systematically ignored them. In response several activists demonstrated regularly in Tahrir and mounted makeshift stages from which representatives and spokespersons addressed the public, presented programs or listed names of trusted figures while audiences walked around listening and debating. One of the dear demands that went unheeded concerned the formation of a national committee of civilian and military figures to draft a new constitution based on transparent criteria of selection of participants. Instead, or in deliberate neglect, SCAF announced a referendum on the old and defunct 1971 constitution and in March 2011, people took to poll stations against many activists' and intellectuals' intuitions and wills.

Although it did not escape many activists and intellectuals that SCAF was deliberately creating a constitutional void, the results of the referendum were informative in many ways. Egyptians were asked to accept or reject amendments to the articles on the president's authorities and terms in office; no amendments on the article that stated the Shari' a as the principle source of legislation – which was antagonized

by "secular" intellectuals. Nevertheless, 41.19% of 45 million persons who are eligible to vote (18,537,954 persons out of a total population of around 85 million[1]) turned out at poll stations. 77.2% voted in favor and the rest were against (El-Labbad, 2011).

These figures can make sense only in context of the campaigns that preceded the referendum. Three main strands of discourses ran through the campaigns. The first was a state-run media strand that roughly spun around 'voting as a national obligation and a first-time taste of democracy.' The second was an Islamist strand, where 'No' was Haram (sinful) and 'Yes' was the duty of a true Muslim. The third was a critical strand that tried to spread the word that a defunct constitution cannot be patched. Meanwhile, SCAF had been actively spreading fear of a constitutional and security vacuum and of economic collapse.

The highest rates of "yes" came from remote provinces, which were relatively neglected from the purview of political activists over years, compared to Cairo, Giza and Alexandria with the lowest rates of approval. The provinces with powerful labor movements and those with large Coptic Christian populations had predominantly opposed the amendments. El-Labbad (2011) interpreted voting patterns according to the relative strength or weakness of Islamic activism on one hand and the historical economic structures of each province on the other. So, provinces of the Suez Canal zone, along the Israeli-Egyptian borders, which have suffered protracted neglect by state development programs and had heavy presence of *The Muslim Brotherhood* and other Islamist activism, had more support and less opposition to the amendments. Similarly, the majority of approvals came from provinces that were previously the main constituencies of the defunct National Democratic Party (Ibid.).

In the immediate aftermath of the referendum, many spots across the country witnessed violent clashes between Coptic-Christians and Muslims- the two main religious ethnicities. SCAF and state-run media took advantage and portrayed the clashes live examples of how things could turn out if Egypt emerges into an Islamist state with religion as basis of full citizenship. Conversely, rumors spread anxieties over the alleged immoralities – like the legitimization of alternate sexualities - associated with *the* secular state that separates religion from politics[2]. This period - between the referendum and Parliamentary

1 By that time, the infrastructure for non-resident Egyptians (estimated as 6.5 million persons in 2008) had not yet been installed.

2 Random and informal personal communications with members of the public on several occasions in Tahrir Square between May – July 2011.

elections in 2011- witnessed the resurgence of violence reminiscent of the deposed regime perpetrated against activists by military police, the state security forces, renamed national security forces, and hired thugs in civilian attire. Activists responded by escalating protests and diversifying activities as well as establishing several vigilance groups to follow up events and campaign against the rule of the military raising the slogan "Down with the Rule of The Junta" *"Yasqot yasqot hokm al askar."* Kazeboon (liars) was a particularly vocal campaign organized by media specialists and university professors who relied heavily on short videos, rappers and visualizations of street fights to scandalize brutalities[3].

Atef Said articulated the paradox of this period by analyzing the ambivalent location of the military as a sovereign state institution in society. Although it is a sovereign agency, the army is organically social, drafting around 75% of Egyptian youths. It historically symbolizes Egypt's modern statehood and gives it legitimacy particularly after the 1952 coup and the 1973 war. It is at once an economic empire controlling from 15 – 40 % of the national economy and operating as a military-industrial-business-commercial complex in partnership with the American military industrial complex (Said, 2012, p. 399). Kinninmont (2012) added that as an economic empire, the army's interests in maintaining land and property prices and in the growth of tourism cannot be overemphasize. Similarly, it would be unlikely that the army would look favorably on economic liberalization especially if the latter brings greater competition. Over years, for SCAF economic reforms meant social unrest and foreign debt equaled loss of national sovereignty. Therefore, "the military is likely to oppose protests and strikes as economically and politically disruptive and to avoid reforms that challenge its privileges and scrutinize its budgets" argued Kinninmont (2012).

This ambivalence notwithstanding, Said did a better job of refreshing our memories of how the army was deployed to suppress riots and the revolt in 1977 and 1986 respectively and how this affected the image that the army enjoyed in society then. What I am trying to stress here is that during the "transition" the military tried to rely on its "credit of good deeds" among the people and to constantly tap into its role in "protecting the revolution" during the uprising. A claim that worked well with several factions of Egyptians particularly those who did not participate in the uprising but failed to convince protestors

3 http://www.arabist.net/blog/2012/1/14/the-kazeboon-campaign.html; http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Kazeboon

especially when it came in stark contradiction to the violence with which the army dealt with them and in light of SCAF deliberate neglect of demands from Tahrir.

Other sovereign state agency such as the Supreme Constitutional Court (SCC) and the Supreme Administrative Court came forcefully into the dynamic, also projecting ambiguous if not outright contradictory signals. Particularly significant was SCC's ruling out the law passed by Parliament in April 2012 to bar Mubarak-era figures from high politics and its subsequent dissolution of Parliament and the transfer of legislative powers to SCAF in June 2012. SCAF issued a unilateral constitutional declaration that disallowed the president from declaring war without SCAF's approval; the army can intervene to quell any domestic instability and the council had the power to form its own constituent assembly in the event that obstacles emerge in the draft of a new constitution plus the generals had the veto over the existing assembly work.

This particular paradox must be seen in light of the structure of the Egyptian bureaucracy and of sovereign state agencies. Historians of the Egyptian bureaucracy and technocracy vouch that few agencies operated with the objective of servicing citizens. Instead, many were machines and mechanisms of capital, status and power accumulation (Mitchell, 2002; Waterbury, 1993). This has shaped the manners each agency aligned in differential patron-client compacts with the deposed regime and especially with the apex institution of the presidency.

The deposed president, his *diwan* and small coterie of businesspersons selectively favored and disfavored one or the other sovereign agencies and certain factions within each. This partly explained why none of these agencies was monolithically unified. It was a presidential discretion to appoint incumbents or to indirectly establish and mobilize mechanisms within sovereign agencies such as the Committee of Political Parties to achieve specific goals or many times to deploy outright intimidation through security services (Brown, 2012). With the absence of the presidency with its omnipresent discretionary powers, many agencies are currently engaged in battles for survival and consolidation of gains.

Picking the thread from Said (2012) even the military had its internal divisions and those who populated them were not "equal clients" to the autocratic patron. The same applies to the cases of the Supreme Constitutional Court whether in the instance mentioned above or historically (Moustafa, 2007). Even while projecting a self-composed image, SCAF sent ambivalent signals when it unexpectedly raided a number of US research NGOs in December 2011 and when it careened in selecting its preferred presidential candidate (from Omar

Sulaiman, former director of the Egyptian Intelligence Agency and spokesperson for the deposed president to Ahmed Shafiq a fellow military man who headed the Egyptian Agency for Civil Aviation). SCAF did not even quell the fears of the public and revolutionary forces over an alleged pact with the *The Muslim Brotherhood* over the presidential candidates (El-Ghobashy, 2012; Said, 2012; Stacher J. , 2012).

Earlier Madgi Khalil (2006) had argued that the "[Egyptian armed forces] have no quarrel with the Islamists –quite the opposite in some cases—however, this is a power conflict and not an ideological one … The armed forces will not concede power, and would wage war on any potential competitor" (p. 52). Similarly, SCAF's position regarding the law on barring members of the deposed regime from political participation and its appointment of Kamal Al-Ganzoury who was a member of the deposed regime as prime minister. Virginity tests were another action loathed by many. All these signals contributed to cracking the aura of awe that surrounded the military. Instead of deterring protests, they emboldened young protestors to confront the generals and urge the public to "Say it and Don't be Afraid: SCAF must leave" "*Oul - matkhafshi: el Askar lazem yemshi*."

Signals aside, state-run media consistently bombarded audiences with manufactured anxieties over the deteriorating economy, a rapid decline in national monetary reserves, the collapse of services and utilities, and absence of security on the streets. All the while intimidating and farcical trials of members of the old regime were staged[4]; rumors about the size of Mubarak's fortune and the possible retrieval of the stolen money were spread even though no court case or official requests were made on behalf of the government[5]. Similarly, farcical announcements were made about some US$ 6 billion kept in 4,737 "private funds" or treasuries installed by the deposed regime in many sovereign state agencies outside the purview of official budgets[6].

There is no doubt that turbulence would reflect economic indicators, however, the persistent lack of transparency makes it difficult to verify those fears. Kinninmont discussed the results of a poll conducted by Gallup Abu Dhabi in 2011 which asked people to respond to feelings of safety versus the actual experience of crime in a number of provinces in Egypt. The results showed that it was the former that

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4 Interview with Galal Amin, Professor of Economics at the American University in Cairo by Yousri Founda

5 http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-19459177 accessed on October 20, 2012.

6 http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/3/12/35554/Business/Economy/Private-funds-to-enter-state-budget,-says-Egypt-fi.aspx accessed on July 10, 2012.

has significantly increased even as the latter remained constant (Kinninmont, 2012, p. 10).

Nonetheless, there are palpable anxieties over societal divisions. Compared to the referendum that divided votes into Ay and Nay, the presidential elections divided the "nation" into three seemingly neat camps: "dregs" i.e. those who supported or sympathized with the deposed regime, the "revolutionary forces" an umbrella label for activists including Nasserists, liberals, nationalists, socialists and communists, and the Islamists of all hues whether loyal to the *The Muslim Brotherhood* or followers of the so called Salafists. Earlier, the Parliamentary elections have produced "two parallel universes: one of the transition and one of revolution" (Stacher, 2012, p. 2) with SCAF playing them against each other while violently suppressing street politics.

Writing immediately before the presidential elections, Stacher diagnosed the situation as fragmenting. "The protesters [have become] the wild card ….they appear weakened [yet] for the time being, they will have to channel their energies into defeating single items on the SCAF and Muslim Brother agendas as opposed to trying to dislodge an incumbent. This task will keep them relevant, but the question remains whether the protesters can mature into a more reliable and cohesive political actor" (Stacher, 2012, p. 2).

VIOLENCE OF BINARY OPPOSITIONS

What are the possibilities of becoming "more reliable and cohesive" now that a civilian elected president is in charge? The discussion at the beginning of this paper of the nature of social movement activism before the uprising contains much of the answer to this question. The Egyptian Movement for Change (*Kifaya*) movement in particular is worthy of closer inspection. Years of diligent involvement of its founders with the regime have given them the experiential repertoire not only of how to mobilize but also how to do so across ideologies. The movement comprised of Islamists, Nasserists, nationalists and leftists. Many members were at once public employees (university faculty members, judges, journalists etc.) and insiders of sovereign state institutions. These factors had at least three consequences. Firstly, they produced participatory democratic involvement within the movement that spilled over to other realms of activism through the members' mobility between movements. This is detectable in the way some post-uprising initiatives such as independent syndicates of informal labor are run.

Secondly, it exposed activists to the broader connections between phenomena. This awareness reflected in how activists articulated demands and programs for political, executive and judicial reforms as will be demonstrated below. Thirdly, and most importantly it rendered

obsolete the binaries that the regime deployed to categorize activists and activism such as between "radicals" and "moderates" and hence manufactured easy targets for oppression and repression. This last consequence is illustrated by examples of Kifaya members who defected or were forced to defect from the *The Muslim Brotherhood* such as Abdul Moneim Abul Fotouh, Assam Sultan, abu Al Ila Madi and formed what some scholars uncritically label "Wasatiya," post-Islamist or center-moderate activism (Stacher J. A., 2002).

Similarly, membership in Kifaya and the involvement with mobilizing for alliances and setting of explicit principles for coordination and action have nurtured a "political sensibility" that transcended the religious-secular binary characteristic of modern political rationality. This sensibility could partially explain why group prayers in Tahrir during the uprising did not intimidate seculars or cause fissures between protestors throughout the eighteen days (Hirschkind, 2012). This sensibility is a positive force that cannot be reduced to instances of "imagined solidarity," which - some scholars argue- results from successive "protest cycles," though it could definitely contribute to it. It is a socially produced sensibility through protracted processes, which if harnessed a nuance democratic statehood wary of ethnic/identity popular politics would be made possible.

Before the uprising, there were around 14 movements and initiatives (Abdelrahman, 2009) after the uprising, there were around "10 to 20 million activists"' (Asad, 2012). Regardless of numbers, the use of advanced communication technologies and associations with global movements in addition to ground confrontations with the military police and anti-riot forces have sparked activists' ingenuity and skills to organize diverse forms of protest and mobilization such as general strikes, hunger strikes, riots, sit-ins, and recently calls for civil disobedience[1]. There are also other forms such as the popular committees. These are spontaneous groups that started by residents of apartment houses or neighbors of houses in single streets to defend their properties and public utilities during the uprising and in response to news that criminals were deliberately released from prisons.

Based on observation, these committees continued after the uprising in some streets in Imbaba, Sayda Zeinab and Heliopolis neighborhoods but were reorganized such that young people predominantly school and college goers took charge to undertake short-term community activities such as cleaning of streets, whereas others have come

1 From Tariq Al-Bishry's Call for Civil Disobedience in 2004 to Rabab El-Mahdi http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=O2lAdwAE2Gc accessed in October 27, 2012.

together to form popular coalitions such as in Ard Il-Liwa.[2] Few such committees deliberated campaigns to cleanse local government units from remnants of old regime and have formed vigilance groups of individuals with no particular ideological affiliation who invest most of their time and energy monitoring day-to-day events in their respective lesvigilance signals out as potentially repressive, contradictory, hypocritical or corrupt.

If need arises, members of this vigilantes would travel to across the country to report in response to informants' messages. Hundreds of Facebook pages attest to this cross-class vigilante activism. Similarly, professionals have joined in the vigilante band wagon such as the Egyptian Initiative to Prevent Corruption. This is a group of lawyers working together to draft anti-corruption legislation to present to the new government as well as a group of journalists active in drafting rights to information law (Kinninmont, 2012)

However, some commentators have pointed out a palpable fragmentation of networks of activists after the uprising in response to some "logic of fear" and suspicion of isolation and marginalization of Islamists and the "revolutionary forces" respectively (Asad, 2012, p. 272). This is apparently valid when juxtaposed to the polarization of voting patterns in the March 2011 referendum and in subsequent parliamentary and presidential elections. It is also predictable in the context of the anti-revolutionary activities of sovereign state agencies and the signals they emit. Fear and suspicion are manufactured and are part of the dialectics of violence that regulates the relationship between state agencies on one hand and between the state and citizens in general and activists in particular.

After the uprising, state-run media has consistently attempted to demonize "disruptive" protests activities; at times using religious discourse – inviting popular Islamic preacher Amr Khaled to campaign the return to stability. Many activists during the "transition" and later have made decisions in response to state agencies' signals as well as in response to the actions of other activists and in light of their own resources. When SCAF decreed the new political party law in 2011, social movements had to make a practical decision of an existential nature: to go the partisan way or to remain fluid?

The passing of the law was sobering to many activists; it stipulated that in order to register a party must have 5000 members with at least 300 members from 10 governorates out of the 26. In the rush

2 http://groundtruth.in/2012/09/18/cairo-urban-grassroots/ accessed on October 27, 2012.

to register before parliamentary elections of October 2011, many activists found this condition prohibitive. Although many were active much earlier than the uprising and had outreach to substantial constituencies, none was able to secure the threshold in such a short period especially against the more established Islamist social movements with larger social bases and better funding.

Although several leftist political parties were announced such as the old Communist Party, the Egyptian Socialist Party, the Workers' Democratic Party and the Socialist Popular Alliance Party, they could not register. The Workers' Democratic Party formed by well established activists such as Kamal Khalil, Hosam El-Hamalawy, Aida Seif El-Dawla and Alaa Awad, could not meet the conditions and thus did not register (Choucri, 2011). Meanwhile, the Socialist Popular Alliance Party (SPAP) emerged as a platform for diverse trends. Its membership consisted of defectors from the Tagammu Party, activists from the Socialist Renewal Current, Revolutionary Socialists and other individual sympathizers[3]. While SPAP was able to register, until October 2011 it was pending approval (Ibid.).

Unlike many Islamist and "secular" liberals, funds were a major constraint for most leftist activists for many reasons. Successive and relentless tarnishing campaigns since the 1970s have historically restrained fund raising initiatives. Similarly, restrictive laws regulating funding of non-governmental organizations have been strained after the uprising (Choucri, 2011). The condition set by the new political parties law of announcing the party program and members'list in two national newspapers was also prohibitive. Aware that mobilization through party politics is difficult in the tumultous situation after the uprising forced those who failed to register under the new law to form larger alliances sometimes with groups of compatible ideological hues and other times with diamterically different ones. For instance, on 11 May 2011, the Egyptian Communist Party, the Egyptian Socialist Party, the Workers' Democratic Party and the Socialist Popular Alliance Party formed the Front of Socialist Forces. On 14 August 2011, the Tagammu party, the Socialist Popular Alliance, the Egyptian Communist Party and the Egyptian Socialist Party in addition to a number of independent syndicates joined a number of liberal groups to form the Egyptian Bloc (Choucri, 2011).

The difficulty is not only of funding or of the capacity to mobilize minimum thresholds for registration, it is rather in the transformation into a party. I have discussed above how social movements have

3 Revolutionary Socialists website: http://www.revolutionarysocialists.org accessed on September 20, 2012.

emerged into fluid networks since the 2000s and how as such they were able to flexibly form alliances and jointly mobilize against the repressive regime. This flexibility would not be feasible when movements take the formal legal stature of a political party. Brown depicts this challenge with reference to the *The Muslim Brotherhood* and its Freedom and Justice Party (FJP) (2012). As a movement, the *The Muslim Brotherhood* can afford to debate their ideological bends and turns over a long time span and can present these changes in transient programs for societal and political change and in shifting alliances with other forces and movements as need arises. This flexibility is unafforded to political parties, which must carefully calculate costs and benefits of alliances and coalitions almost around the clock.

Another concern is the capacity to address larger constituencies. Social movements advocate and represent the interests of specific groups or particular issues such as students, contractual factory workers, housemaids etc. and many activists I observed were satisfied working with clearly defined sectors of the population. They were aware of the magnitude of organizational and financial resources required to reach out, attract and build larger constituencies i.e. compete within the imperatives of electoral politics (Langohr, 2004). When the *The Muslim Brotherhood* extended their capacities into FJP, their organization found itself in a situation where it "does not generally have to give final answers to political questions. Instead, it can feint in several ideological and programmatic directions at once" (Brown, 2012, p. 544). This augments the aura of secrecy that has tagged the organization since its years under Nasser and could jeopardize their public credibility. It is yet to be seen how factions of the "revolutionary forces" would behave as political parties in the future although history leaves us with grim cases such as the Social Democratic Party during the inter war period and more recently the Bündnes 90/Die Grünen (Alliance 90/The Greens) in Germany (Jahn, 1997).

Beside established social movements and popular committees, there are thousands of interest groups who emerged to mobilize around specific consumption issues such as "We want to live", "We will not pay," and "Clean Land" (Gamal, 2012). The first two are groups of slum dwellers organized around protesting the failures of the government to provide them with basic necessities, while the third is a protest initiative sponsored by the *The Muslim Brotherhood* as an alternative solution to the same failures. "Youths Who Love Egypt" is another intiative that resembles "Clean Land" yet is organized by students of Al-Azhar university. I observed a fine yet important distinction between these initiatives: spontneous initiatives whose members act independent of any sponsor usually resort to street tactics such

as sit-ins and strikes or tactics of last resort such as hunger strikes compared to sponsored initiatives who predominatly operate virtually through online campaigning.

This distinction is not significant in itself as it could be tightly associated with the immediacy of the issue that motivated protest. However, the distinction is important in the reaction it induces from state agencies. State-run media has actively demonized spontaneious initiatives and protests that raise specific-demands through street tactics. The spate of strikes that ensued over September and October 2012 is particularly illustrative. Doctors, public transport workers, university staff (not faculty members and senior administrators), students of Nile University, and workers in several locations across the country have striked, supported by the impressive network of independent professional and non-professional syndicates and uions and by their equally impressive independent national federations. At one level media accused protestors of disrupting daily life, at another they were charged of rallying behind sectoral i.e. selfish demands at critical economic times. This is no light charge. The state-run media is accusing protestors of anti-nationalism, when it is exactly the failure of the state to provide its "nationals" with basic necessities that is being protested.

While on one side protests are more organized and strikes could now last longer than before the uprising and are nationally coordinated as compared to site- or workplace-specific[4], such accusations usually polarize public opinion into sympathizers and adversaries and divert the energies of protestors as they are pushed to explain their actions. For instance, in its coverage of the national strikes of public university staff, public transport workers and medical staff of public health institutions in September 2012, ON TV, a private satellite channel, interviewed Mustafa Al-Beheiry, the intern at Aga Public Health Unit, who had just completed five days on hunger strike. In response to accusations read by the host, Al-Beheiry explained the misery of medical staff and listed their demands which included clear budgetary suggestions to improve and increase public relays to the Ministry of Health, the restructuring of the latter and stressed that improved and regular salaries were the last on the list.

In reporting on strikes, it has become standard media tactics to confuse protestors' demands with their motives and to portray citizens' rights as secotral claims. It forces an image of protestors as "bad" citizens who disrupt and divert the energies of state officials away from their diligent efforts to get the economy's wheel spinning and contrasts

4 At the time of writing, the national strike of medical staff of public health institions has successfully completed its twenty-sixth day.

them with a hollow image of "good" citizens who are patient and content with what the great Egyptian revolution has achieved. It is however dangerous because it forces the public to see activists - who are part of the public, thus to see - itself in opposites of good or bad and imposes an artificial stereotyping unto diversity and multiplicity thus producing an uncritical mass. It gives statesmen and government officials peace of mind that their persistent neglect of the protests is legitimate.

Thrusting a discourse of binaries on acitvism is nothing new. It is not even sheer state propaganda. It is part of the dialectic of violence that underlies state-society dynamics and is integral to the idea of the modern state. The social compact between citizens and the modern state regarding equality, freedom and justice is built upon the belief that citizens are predatory by nature and that the state is the neutral arbiter to set and settle boundaries (Lummis, 2010). Part of the functions of the state is to divide in order to rule. This is the gist of modern law through which the state can classify subjects into dangerous criminals, traitors, offenders, dissenters, radicals and moderates (Asad, 2012; Nandy, 2010). It is not drastically opposed to the basic premise of the *umma* in Islamic jurisprudence in its submission to divine sovereignty through the righteousness of its "wise men" who constitute the council of shura or consultative body (Rutherford, 2006).

Binaries of sinners and gooddoers, of the faithful and the apostates are few representations of the language of power spoken by hierarcial institutions where truth/power resides unequivocally with those on the top. This is the language spoken by all sovereign state agencies Egypt has known since 1952 and by most if not all faith-based social movements like the *The Muslim Brotherhood*, the Ansarul-Sunna organization and Al-Da'wa Al-Salafiya in Alexandria.[5] It is the language used by the deposed regime as it contrasted itself with "Islamic fundamentalists" and begged international acceptance as *the* secular protector of the region from the horrors that they could leach. This binary was uncritically picked up by Islamists who "In contrast, for many of those sympathetic to Islamist social and political currents, the most pressing danger to Egyptian society came in the form of rampant secularization, the erosion of the society's Islamic character under the impact of Western cultural forms. This oppositional logic—either secular or religious—had long schematized the political terrain in Egypt" (Hirschkind, 2012, p. 2).

Classification and forcing invididuals and groups into tight categories is a form of violence that characterised the campaigns before

5 For a run on Salafi social movements, see http://www.aucegypt.edu/gapp/cairoreview/pages/articleDetails.aspx?aid=217

the referendum and parliamentary elections, then informed public discusions of Wathiqat Al-Azhar (Al-Azhar Document) on the principles of a civil state in June 2011 and later Ali Al-Salmi's document on basic constitutional principles in September 2011. The current discussion of the role of Shar' ia versus secular criminal and personal status laws in the draft of the new constitution[6] is cast along binaries of "seculars" versus "fundamentalists;" defenders of the modern nation state versus defenders of Islamist ideas of a state compliant with Divine will.

The debates over women's status in the draft constitution is indicative. El-Mahdy[7] succinctly analyzed the debate as one pitched between "defenders of divine Shar' ia" and "defenders of women's rights" trapped as they are in binaries that predate the emergence of political Islam, yet recast colonial modernity's basic dichotomy between tradition versus modern. A trap that blinds members of the Constitutional Committee - established unanimously by SCAF generals to draft the new constitution but rejected as unrepresentative by most "revolutionary forces."

This violence of binary oppositions color the discourses of formal democratic institutions. The political parties formed after the uprising need to grabble with politics of exclusion and inclusion based upon identities. The state of uncertainty that surrounds the status of Coptic citizens, has been created and reproduced over time by sovereign state agencies. The military's brutal killing of Coptic protestors in Maspero demonstrations in October 2011 was no anomaly. The difference between this incidence and earlier cases of ethnic violence under the deposed regime such as the explosion outside Al Qiddisseen Church in Alexandria on new year's eve of 2011, is that this time the culpability of the state is undisguised. The removal of a regime that posed as the defender of "religious peace" (Asad, 2012), does not mean that the strategies of divide and rule is gone.

According to political opportunity theory, the potential of post-uprising activism to continue the struggle for bread, freedom, social justic and human dignity, is tied to the challenges of the opportunities openned by the formal political system. While formal institutions of democracy are now openned up yet they operate according to the same logic as under the deposed authoritarian state system. This could mean two things: that activism should continue to engage

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6 For a comprehensive feedback on the draft constitution see: http://khoyout.wordpress.com/2012/10/24/ accessed on October 24, 2012.

7 http://www.shorouknews.com/columns/view.aspx?cdate=24102012&id=2282882c-6ba0-41d3-b18b-5f051ce960c9 accessed on October 24, 2012.

with the dialect of violence based as it is upon binaries or it could disengage with it altogether and amass more resources to force fundamental transformation in the discources of the political system . This means that activism should struggle to instil a functioning state that provides basic necessities for its citizens and to produce a political sensibility that transcends binaries even the binary between state and its subjects.

This was beginning to happen through the fluid networked mobilizations of the Egyptian Movement for Change in the 2000s. Nevertheless, "since the end of the 18-day uprising, which culminated in the resignation of Hosni Mubarak, divisions between the secular and the religious have returned and proliferated within the field of Egyptian political contestation. Large street protests continued to be held, but they are frequently limited either to self-declared secularists or Islamists, with one contingent refusing to participate in the other's event. This divisiveness has once again served to exaggerate differences and render the many commonalities that exist across such divisions difficult to recognize. Admittedly, there are also movements in a contrary direction, aiming to build on the experiences of political engagement and solidarity forged during the January 25 uprising to create a new political discourse outside of secular–religious oppositions. The outcome of these efforts, however, is far from clear at present" (Hirschkind, 2012, p. 52).

Nonetheless, the following table – compiled from statistical figures documented chronologically by The Egyptian Center for Economic and Social Rights and uploaded on the center's website Wikithawra (Rights, n.d.) indicates how state brutalities have increased under the democratically elected President Al-Sisi.

		Tahrir Uprising	SCAF	MB – Morsi Rule	El-Sisi
Deaths	*Civilian*	1022	406	399	2927
	Police	49	24	52	226
	Military	4	8	19	95
	Total	1075	438	470	3248
Injured			16806	9228	18535
In Custody				4809	41163

Source: compiled by the author from Wikithawra

ANTI-PROTEST LAW AND REPRETOIRES OF EXPERIENCE

In November 2013, Adly Mansour, the interim President passed the anti-protest law which gave both the military and security police the right to crackdown on collective actions and gatherings and required Egyptians to take advance approval for holding demonstrations in public spaces. Immediately after the interim President passed the bill several protest actions took place. Protesters burned posters of the Minister of Defense, who was believed to run the affairs of the state behind Mansour and who later became the elect President in June 2014. The photo below is downloaded from al Jazeera website and taken few days after the passing of the bill.

This is not the first anti-protest law in Egypt. Earlier in 1979, the late President Anwar Sadat had passed a law confining student demonstrations to the vicinity of their respective university campuses (Schemm, 2003). Nonetheless, that did not deter students from pushing their protests out unto the squares and streets surrounding their campuses. More importantly, successive rounds of anti-protest laws and anti-riot police practices have educated protesters on how best to push for physical expressions of discontentment and distress and how best to claim rights and make demands within tight security state regimes while enciting minimal retaliation and brutalities from the latter.

Successive cycles of protests and confrontations between protesters and security forces have also educated the regime on how best to

retaliate without causing much damage to its image as supporter of democratization on the international scale. Although international exposure and vigilance from international organizations such as Human Rights Watch or Transparency International would not have been made possible without the forms of activism that emerged during and after the global anti-globalization/WTO protests and later the anti-US Iraq invasion protests.

The repertoires of experiences reveal themselves in two fronts. The first in how activists locate themselves on the continuum of forms of social protest and social movements. The second is in how they frame their opposition demands. The Egyptian Movement for Change or *Kefaya* presents us with a valid case. Since its conception as an opposition movement outside the formal political structures, members of the movement understood well their ultimate goals and have explicitly stated them in their mandate. Those demands were clearly geared to end Mubarak's regime's monopoly over the formal political structure through his National Democratic Party, which he headed for thirty years and which his son Gamal had inherited as head of the Policy Committee of the same party.

The second demand was to put an end to the protracted state of Emergency and its consistent renewal through adjustments to the Emergency Law. This demand in itself posed tremendous difficulty to group members when they sought to design tactics of protest on the ground. This was because the law itself prohibited any forms of public protest and subjected protesters to extreme brutalities from state security forces. The third unequivocal demand of Kefaya concerned a set of constitutional amendments of the powers vested in the President, the length of his tenure, the conditions that regulated presidential elections and the separation of powers. Since all those demands were explicitly political i.e. not anti-war or anti-globalization in nature, it was difficult for Kefaya members to succeed in rallying mass-support.

Those demands have also given the state security forces enough leeway to suppress Kefaya physically through spates of "terror arrests," physical intimidation and harrassments during demonstrations and outright incarcerations. On occassions the regime would also organize counter demonstrations and pay to arrange massive rallies of purchased support. On such occasions, those rallies would cause emotional damage to Kefaya members and portray the movement as weak thus deterring any potential support from the larger populace. Besides the consistent strategy of 'divide and rule' strategy, the strategy of massive counter rallies proved useful as proactive measrue as well as in terms of controlling physical protests and demonstrations.

Source: http://www.aljazeera.com/news/middleeast/2014/04/activists-defy-egypt-anti-protest-law-201442623202032213 4.html

Nevertheless, one of the most valuable lessons learnt during the short yet persistent tactics of Kefaya concerned the location, movement and duration of protests, marches and demonstrations. While the security forces have often tried to restrict demonstrations away from public squares and vital roads, demonstrators learnt that it was possible to demonstrate in non-allowed spaces albeit in short episodes. They have also learnt to combine demonstrations in central squares with side streets of multi-million cities such as Cairo and Alexandria. Another valuable lesson concerned the slogans and chants. Protesters learnt that explicit anti-regime slogans should be introduced after more regional demands such as Freedom to the Palestinians. This was mainly because anti-regime slogans would definitely lead to immediate brutalities.

Another equally important lesson however, concerned the challenge of mobilization across ideological divides. As I stated above, pre-uprising activism have thrived on fluidity, flexibility and cross-ideological coalitions between Islamists, Leftists, Secularists and Nationalists. This has not been without challenges. One of those challenges concerned respect of words and promises on the part of different parties in the coalition. Prior to the uprising and during the

eighteen days of Tahrir Square, supporters and members of the Muslim Brotherhood were active in street demonstrations. This proximity has allowed various activists to note various methods of mobilization and leadership. It has also revealed important manners of collective action. The latter proved valuable in post-uprising activism. More precisely, it has contributed to self-imposed actually existing divide and rule among factions of activism.

In conclusion, post-uprising activism has evolved within a political system that is simultaneously "open" compared to pre-uprising eras and characterized by conspicuous antagonism between members of the elite (*The Muslim Brotherhood*, SCAF and "dregs") – at least during the transition to a civilian government. Nevertheless, once in charge SCAF and later the *The Muslim Brotherhood* resorted to the same old school of repression through direct violence and social control of protest by deploying plainclothes security personnel to beat and dispense crowds and by public demonization of protest through restrict legislation and the media. Theories of resource mobilization and relative deprivation argued that such measures will eventually increase frustration and push activism to radicalize (cf Beinin and Vairel (2011) and Bayat (2005) criticism of "relative deprivation " theory. ; the degree of repression and radicalization are gauged only by the perceived threat and opportunities on the part of both the state and activists. The question then becomes: Are we expecting another uprising similar in magnitude or stealth fundamental change or a return to normalization of oppression?

HUNGER STRIKE: SELF-EMULATION ACTIVISM

"The revolution did not create its modern prince, whereas the enemies of the revolution possessed multiple princes. They played the game of history cleverly; the same game that we did not care to understand its rules. They were able to stop Time; we did not learn how to move it. It is 'natural' then that coming back to consciousness from anesthesia turns into despair.. into withdrawal symptoms .. victory is not inevitable comrades.. the revolution is not – by its nature – continuous. Today police arrests you for protesting. Today your parents inform you that your clothes and staying out late are the real causes of sexual harassment … I look at the historical destruction that accumulated in front of us with resentful and scared eyes .. I desire to act but I do not know how .. and I do not notice any glimpse of the future towards which I walk, against my will, giving it my back not my front" Ahmed Bakr (September 9, 2014)[1]. With these words, Ahmed Bakr curtly expresses the state of mind of many young persons who participated in collective action and social movements over years and who euphorically occupied Tahrir Square repeatedly since the uprising.

Few days before Bakr wrote those words, six activists, sentenced to periods ranging from three to 15 years in prison for violating the latest anti-protest law had declared an indefinite hunger strike. Their families and friends joined from outside prisons and as this is written their

1 Revsoc.me/politics/30532. Translation from Arabic to English is mine.

sympathizers and friends are running campaigns to mobilize support[2] However, the potential impact of hunger strike as a mode of activism on effecting policy change if a function of several vectors. One of the vectors concerns the threat that youth poses for the stability of the regime. While another concerns the instrumentality of youth for political campaigning and as vote banks.

There was a time – immediately after the uprising – when several young persons volunteered in, what was then known as, popular committees. The latter acted as vigilance groups who performed multiple functions in the vacuum created by the withdrawal of police forces and traffic police from the streets of most cities in the aftermath of the uprising. Some committees regulated demonstrations and sit-ins in public spaces such as Tahrir Square throughout 2011 and well into 2012, while others ran rounds of street beautification in several neighborhoods. Those committees died out as the state gradually regained its presence on the streets and in government offices. The momentum from the success of the uprising ignited a sense of belonging and empowerment among many young persons. This force quickly diminished under the weight of media-led criminalization of protests. Many young people got trapped between the urge to create and innovate new statehood on one hand, and media and state-sponsored brutalities on the other. Others were co-opted by patrons aspiring to benefit from the formalization of multi-party system (cf. Pratten, 2006)

One of the vectors that are increasingly shaping the strength of youth and their powers to inflict change concerns societal perceptions of youth activism. Hunger strike has recently triggered three discourses. The first is framed in religious morality and claims that hunger strike is a form of self-emulation and could potentially lead to suicide. Two anti-religious practices. The person who is on hunger strike is thus an apostate or *Kafir*.

The other is benign negligence on the part of the state and *feloul* or remnants of the old Mubarak regime. The third is compassionate yet careless as those have always been outside political participation. In a situation where hunger strikes have not been part of the repertoires of political activism (yet) and within the context of a society that has not flinched to daily sights of hungry citizens on urban streets and in international development reports. One is left to doubt the possible effectiveness of hunger strike as a strategy premised as it is on inciting public shaming. If the 'general public' and the 'state' have rarely shown signs of shame over persistent poverty, hunger and violence – even under international vigilance, how does one expect them to move now?

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2 http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/1/64/110190/Egypt/Politics-/Antiprotest-law-activists-begin-hunger-strike-at-E.aspx

BEYOND ACTIVISM: VISIONS OF MODERN CIVIC STATEHOOD

There is no definite answer to this question but we can begin to figure out the possibility of each scenario by looking at the contradictions of the modern (civic) nation state, the violence upon which it sustains itself whether in its technocratic structure, law, science, and discourses of economic growth and development and by looking at who are actually involved in shaping statehood or possess at least a rudimentary vision of statehood in Egypt now?

Let us begin from the beginning i.e. the idea of a modern nation-state. It is constructed by maintaining tight association between an institutional technocratic structure (the state), "organized nationalism, mega-science and the growth of an urban-industrial society" (Nandy, 2010). This association is possible only by differentiation i.e. the inclusion of some classes, sexes, and ethnicities and the exclusion and/or marginalization of others. This covers the marginalization of other forms of non-western, pre-colonial organizational and associational forms or freezing them into ideal types such as "oriental despotism," "tribalism," "Islamist *Umma*."

Like most of its post-colonial counterparts, Egypt has known the nation-state as the clue to the West's economic and scientific power and the idea of a native nation-state was seen as the panacea of all ills. After the military coup of 1952, Nasser forced the structure of a

secular and technocratic state upon a sprouting yet ambiguous Islamic idea of a nation. The latter was wrought by Islamic reformers and "modernizers" of the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries (Gasper 2009) and the *The Muslim Brotherhood* beginning in 1928. There is no doubt that neither group had formulated a tangible program for an Islamic alternative compared to - and partly because of his repression - Nasser who managed to give shape to a "native" form of a modern state albeit contradictory and dysfunctional (particularly after the defeat against the Israeli-British forces in 1967).

With regards to activism, Nasser's charisma and nationalist disposition, helped nurture "indigenous" versions of socialism and an avant guard – mostly from the middle classes who were supposedly well versed in the discourses of the modern nation state and capable of instilling their political sensibility upon the rest. Contrary to Marx version of historical development, the vanguards failed to "wither away" the state to which they owe their existence and instead spent most of their active lives in its jails. They failed to mold a state of freedom, equality, justice and dignity however defined.

Members of the leftist intelligentsia were given one blow after another. From the failure of the Nasserist project to the open door *(Infitah)* policy of his successor Anwar Sadat. Sadat leached the Islamists to fight the Nasserists. More damaging, he supported their ascension to the apex of the economy. "A substantial faction of the *Infitah* class had an Islamist cast. By 1980, elders of eight out of eighteen families who dominated Egypt's private sector affiliated themselves with the *The Muslim Brotherhood*. Economic enterprises linked to the organization - many concentrated in real estate and currency speculation, Islamic banking channeling workers' remittances - may have constituted as much as 40 percent of the private sector" (Beinin, 2005, p. 120). Three of the general guides, *murshid* of the organization came from wealthy families namely, Hasan Al-Hudaiby, Umar Al-Tilmisany and Mustafa Mashhour (Ibid.).

The story of his assassination on the hands of the Islamists has been well documented (Bayat, 2007) but upon his death, the Egyptian nation state had to contend with a militant political Islam and a weakened leftism. The activism of the vanguards of Nasser days had hibernated only to "atomize" under Mubarak. Under the latter, the Egyptian state had no space for leftist intellectuals especially in light of the disintegration of leftist formal organizations and repression by the deposed regime. The remaining leftist political party was "vampired" by internal strife and the hegemony of the Political Party Committee (Stacher J. A., 2004). The leftists' desire to maintain a feeling of independence has driven them to the line of least resistance by writing

opinion columns in state-run press or holding discussions in private locations and writing fiction (Duboc, 2011).

The deposed state also had no place for militant Islamists, who after succeeding to deter what they called "secular" forces through a series of assassinations and attacks across the country had been clamped down by the pervasive security apparatuses and prolong the rule of emergency (Bayat, 2007). Incidentally, many of those militants were pardoned and released from prisons after the election of Muhammed Morsi, the new president in 2012. They have now formed formal political wings such as the Jama'a Islamiya. By the early 2000s the Egyptian state has been successfully Islamized. Religion has become integral to the "indigenous" nation-state and to formal politics.

Besides Al-Azhar, Ministry of Endowments and other religious sovereign state agencies, religions is shaping the "indigenous" nation state like never before. Whether through the Renaissance Project of the Muslim Brotherhood or through contestations of Sharia in the constitutional committee by members of the Salafi front, the Islamist has recently emerged as the only fragment of vision of a nation state and as the contestant against equally loose visions of the Nasserist, leftist, and socialists (the popular front) or the non-Islamist liberals who believe in capital (the bloc). The latter forces and trends are now forming the coalitions and fronts that I discussed above even though they are not internally coherent.

What plagues the left plagues the rest and lies in the contradictions of what everybody seeks from the modern nation state. The Movement for Academic Independence is a glaring example (will elaborate later). The Islamists are pushing for a nation state that aligns with what they perceive as the essence of the Islamic way of life and the "authentic soul of the Egyptian family" as stated in the draft constitution released in October 2012, while the liberals seek a state that best reflects the middle class aspirations of "life style" modeled around western notions of freedom and human rights. The leftists in their zeal to connect to the larger masses try to argue for a state that delivers basic necessities for human survival.

While fragments of diverse incomplete visions of the modern nation state manifest in ideological debates in the media, the parliament and headquarters of new-founded political parties, workers, peasants, the unemployed and the under employed are fighting their own *battle* on the streets through vibrant, protracted and nationally well organized strikes and sit-ins. They zealously establish and run independent syndicates, unions and federations to have direct "voice" oblivious of the law that attempts to ban it (labor law of 2003). It is a fundamental change that has already succeeded through the uprising

to prize open the institution of the presidency, nothing less. Their vision of the Egyptian statehood seems to be drawn in direct contrast to the "specialized coercive apparatus [and] private business venture" (Nandy, 2010, p. 295) that was the state under the previous regimes. It is also and at once a class struggle. The radicalization of the demands and of protests posed existential questions to all activists on the ideological battle field.

Going back to the question of possible scenarios, it is clear that the answer lies in the extent of the marginalized to continue the struggle against the nation state and harness their experiential repertoires of recent mobilizations, muster the organic leadership and the "density of the social networks that have been mobilized" in order to "generate sufficient mutual trust to overcome decades of fear instilled by authoritarian regimes (Beinin and Vairel, 2011, Kindle Edition). Nandy has previously underscored how the paradox of the nation state "has ensured that organized political power cannot easily be mobilized, even in the Southern world, to resist the pathologies of the modern state.

Citizens are perpetually trapped in a duality vis-à-vis the state; the elites are domesticated and banalized by excess and largess while the marginalized are criminalized. Either the resistance has to come from the fringes of the polity or it has to legitimize itself in the language of the mainstream. The vested interests which have grown up around the idea of the modern state define, thus, not merely the mainstream but also most of the popular concepts of dissent. Ashish Nandy (2010)

It is also their capacity to sustain their presence on the streets and in forums while constantly aware of free riders. Writing from an activist perspective, Anne Alexander exhorts the left to grasp the political and organizational opportunities opened up by the exposure of the Islamists that has resulted from establishing a formal political system, "It is worth reflecting on how a lack of understanding of the nature of mass Islamist organizations, and the social contradictions within them, could have sent left wing activists [….] into the trap of pursuing an abstract political battle with the Brotherhood framed around the question of "Islamism" versus "secularism" instead of developing a strategy of using the social struggle in order to deepen the Brotherhood's internal political crisis, and thus give the left time to build and organize. (Alexander, International Socialism, 2012). It is through the struggles of the people and continuous interactions that people will begin to realize that the "ideological pronouncements can be analyzed as effects and not predictors of [leaders'] political experiences" (El-Gobashy, 2005, p. 375). There is definitely the threat of social fatigue and demobilization. Charles Tilly's (1978) idea that people mobilize more easily and quickly if they perceive a threat as opposed

to opportunities is definitely valid but it fails to account for the situation of despair and the state where people have nothing else to lose.

What the above analysis of activism has attempted to demonstrate is that in Egypt, there was at least three warring democracies in the past three years. Despite claims that Egyptians are still trapped in pre-democratic traditions and that they are still unfit for democracy – an argument that the deposed Mubarak repeatedly made to consolidate his dictatorship and to ensure what he termed 'stability.'[1] Nobody could ever deny that the experiences of public participation in politics and activism since the early years of the twenty-first century left a mark on a large swathe of the population – including non-resident Egyptians. In terms of electoral organization and turn-out, the three referendums on the constitution in 2011, 2012, and 2014 in addition to two Presidential election and one Parliamentary election – all have passed international inspection and approval testify to the capacity of the Egyptian population to practice that form of democracy.

However, democracy cannot be reduced to electoral forms only. The modes and trajectory of activism presented above, have also sensitized activists and their networks of friends, families and acquaintances over issues of differences of opinions and beliefs. The euphoric experiences of the uprising itself were exemplary moments of democratic participation. When viewed historically, the fact that when the Muslim Brotherhood came to power, they facilitated free elections. When General Abdul Fattah El-Sisi opted to run for Presidency, he went through fair and democratic elections. The insistence of young people to protest peacefully or resort to hunger strikes. All these patterns unequivocally indicate that Egyptians do not lack democratic sense. Rather, they seem to have experienced three – not a single form of democracy, albeit the three are at logger heads; they are warring democracies.

It seems that when demonstrators in Tahrir Square improvised the song that went viral on the internet chanting, "our rights are paramount and hunger does not bother us anymore," they were setting the threshold of their struggles. Even though they were uncertain about their steps towards a civic state that delivers their demands. Yet, isn't "the spirit of liberty is the spirit that is not too certain it is right[?]" (Bogart, 2007, Kindle Edition).

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1 http://www.youm7.com/story/2013/11/20/%D9%84%D8%A7_%D9%8A%D8%B5%D9%84%D8%AD_%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1_%D8%B3%D9%88%D9%89_%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B3%D9%8A%D8%B3%D9%89!/1355138#.VBH5iWfYeP8

APPENDIX:
ECONOMIC PROFILE OF EGYPT
FROM 2011-2014*

The tables above and below show a select set of economic indicators of the Egyptian economy over the three years 2011-2013

Crops in Agriculture- cotton, rice, corn, wheat, beans, fruits, vegetables; cattle, water buffalo, sheep, goats.

Major Industries- textiles, food processing, tourism, chemicals, pharmaceuticals, hydrocarbons, construction, cement, metals, light manufactures.

Primary Exports- crude oil and petroleum products, cotton, textiles, metal products, chemicals, processed food.

Countries- India, Italy, Saudi Arabia, Turkey, Libya, USA - Italy Highest (7.9%), Libya Lowest (4.9%).

Primary Imports- machinery and equipment, foodstuffs, chemicals, wood products, fuels.

Countries- China, USA, Germany, Russia, Ukraine, Turkey, Italy (In descending order - 9.5%-5%).

Public Expenditure		
Value & Rank	$ 80.4 Billion	Ranked at 38 in terms of global expenditure

* https://www.cia.gov/library/publications/the-world-factbook/geos/eg.html

Last 10 years growth	665 (%)	
Egypt during the Great Recession	$ 39.5 Billion	
Egypt since the end of the Great Recession	Negative Growth of 39.5%	
Egypt during the 2011 Egyptian revolution	Negative Growth of 58.5%	
Egypt since the end of the 2011 revolution	Positive Growth of 198%	

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South-South PROGRAM

In Egypt, becoming a civic state that provides its citizens' demands for "Bread, Freedom, Social Justice and Human Dignity" is a protracted process. A process that depends on many factors and actors. The nature of this process, whether democratic or otherwise, is a function of multiple forces and interests of local, national, regional and international scales. This study is an attempt to analyze and explain this process.

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