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The Rupture in State-Society Relationships and the Prominence of Youth Activism in Egypt

Opportunities, Strategies and New Models of Mobilization

Ahmed Tohami Abdelhay Mohamed

Thesis submitted in fulfilment of the requirements for the degree of
Doctor of Philosophy in Political Science

2013

School of Government and International Affairs
University of Durham

Declaration

No material in this thesis has been previously submitted for a degree at this or any other University. The work is solely that of the author, Ahmed Tohami A. Mohamed, under the supervision of Professor Emma Murphy and Professor Anoush Ehteshami. Material from the published or unpublished work of others which is used in the thesis is credited to the author in question in the text.

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Abstract

This thesis examines the development of youth activism in Egypt as key social actors during the latter years of Mubarak's presidency (from 2000) and leading into the tumultuous events of the Revolution in January 2011.

The assessment draws on social movement theory to provide an analytical framework, specifically the political process model. It first offers an analytical narrative of the political structures which have developed within Egypt in the modern era and which have provided the structural context within which such movements have emerged and developed, notably cycles of contentious politics. The narrative identifies the impact of early Nasserist hegemony, the subsequent embedding of corporatist structures for socio-political organisation, and the inhibiting effects these had on the development of autonomous social movements until the contemporary period. Youth and Student movements remained key political actors during specific historical periods but even these were severely constrained after 1979. This provides the structural scene setting for our in-depth study of contemporary youth activism.

In attempting to explain the contemporary re-emergence of youth activism during the January Revolution, the thesis proceeds to examine the political opportunities which were presented to social movements in general, and youth activism specifically, during the era of Mubarak's rule, and with an emphasis on the period from 2000-2010. Developments in Egypt are analysed through the ordering devices offered by SMT, including the progressive rupturing of the state-society relationship, the high level of grievances among the population, the level of institutional access, and divisions among the ruling elite. The thesis adds an additional category – the role played by transnational and external factors – which emerged as an important influence in the preceding narrative of Egyptian political development but which have traditionally been neglected by SMT.

The thesis further uses the analytical tools of SMT to examine two particular forms of youth mobilisation; the student movements and the April 6th movement. Successive chapters examine the strategic choices, organisation, framings and mobilisation strategies of these movements, drawing heavily on intensive semi- and un-structured interviewing and data collection, both in person and through the formats and devices of the social movements themselves (such as Facebook, Twitter and movement websites).

The thesis demonstrates that these youth activism are better understood as New Social Movements (NSM) rather than conventional social movements. They have developed through horizontal networking rather than vertical and hierarchical organisations. They have drawn

substantially on the political opportunities offered by transnational and external factors. In both these aspects, they have made good use of new informational and communications technologies, specifically the Internet, which create communicative linkages but do not offer a clear route to the next stage of formal political organisation (explaining in part the limitations of these movements). Finally, they demonstrate the importance of generational politics in Egypt, the grievances of which lie at the core of the rupture between state and society.

Introduction

Egyptian politics in the modern era (since 1952) have been marked by cycles of mobilization and reform. However, these have become a great deal more intensive over the last decade which has been marked by a recurrence of long waves of social and political protest. The period between 2000 and 2010 was the most astonishing, witnessing inspiring waves of mobilization – the most profound seen since the 1967 war as various generations and social forces joined hands to bring about the historical change of 25th January 2011. Hosni Mubarak's regime faced an ultimately overwhelming challenge from the convergence of counter-hegemonic forces, social movements and new activism which launched a long campaign and framing process to delegitimize the regime and its policies. Over the period, the regime lost its hegemony over society and suffered from the lack of support of its own previously loyal networks and social bases which became less willing to defend the old regime. Youth, labour, students, new political parties and Islamists united to challenge the regime and security forces before and during the revolution. All these agents of change acted together in harmony to organize and coordinate the protest and mobilization under different umbrellas and coalitions.

Aims of the thesis and research questions:

This thesis seeks to shed light on one part of this story of agency; the rise and role of the youth activism which were so prominent in the January 2011 Revolution. It takes as its starting point the analytical frame which is offered by Social Movement Theory (hereafter SMT). It tells a story of agency in times of both constraints and opportunities in Egypt, explaining the recurrent waves of social and political mobilization in the form of protest movements, specifically the youth activism. The specificity of the Egyptian context is developed through combining the tools of SMT with the theoretical insights gained from academic literature about the state and society in Egypt, together providing an elaboration of the political opportunities structure in Egypt both before and subsequent from 2000-2010.

The three basic empirical questions are thus: (1) What conditions shaped the mobilization of youth activism which has taken place in Egypt during the period of study? (2) What can the application of SMT tell us about youth movements; do they indeed conform to the formats of social movements and how are they different from conventional social movements in Egypt; Finally, (3) what does the study of contemporary youth activism in Egypt – their organisations, mobilizing strategies, and framing - tell us about the wider realm of Egyptian politics and state-society relations?

The recent years have witnessed a proliferation of youth activism in Egyptian politics, although this has frequently been manifested outside of the established formal political structures and traditional political parties. In this regard the youth activism in this thesis refers to those "young people engaging in a practice that emphasizes direct vigorous action, especially in support of or opposition to one side of a controversial issue" (Giles, 2008, p.11). The youth activism engaged in the contentious politics in Egypt includes various categories, particularly independent youth networks, "student movements" and "youth chapters" of political parties and social forces. The research focuses on the ways the youth activism of what we may call the Millennium generation engaged in contentious politics through a fully-fledged youth movements. The April 6th Youth Movement, Al Ghad and Youth for Change etc., all represent broad swathes of youths who perceive their interests to be unrepresented by existing political structures and their needs to be unrecognized and unmet.

It is worth noting that the number of approaches to the study of youth activism already exist drawing on theories and methods in sociology (such as generational studies), cross-cultural or historical analysis. The most widespread approach, and therefore the one adopted here – is the use of Social Movement Theory. The theoretical point of departure for this theoretical position is that the entry of youth activism into the public arena can be seen as a process of social mobilization.

Chapter One elaborates on the main concepts, categories and arguments of Social Movement Theory. It identifies the role of social movements in contentious politics, as opposed to party or lobby politics. It examines the various approaches which have developed within the broader range of Social Movement Theory, ultimately acknowledging the Political Process Model (PPM) as the most useful for the purposes of this study. The PPM offers the research three clear dimensions of social movements which can be studied: the (responses to) political opportunities, mobilising structures and framing processes and culture. A further dimension which is suggested for study is the impact of external and transnational factors. How these dimensions interact (referred to in the thesis as the reciprocal relationship) determines the two stages of first the emergence, and second the development and outcomes, of social movements. Key to this process is the role and strategies of the state and how it responds to social forces such as social movements. The chapter acknowledges the deficiencies of the approach, specifically the weakness or lack of consensus over definitions, and more immediately the appropriateness of the approach for non-Western contexts with different historical and cultural contexts.

Chapter Two therefore addresses how the approach will be applied in the context of Egypt, setting out the methodology of the thesis. In order to acknowledge the specificity of Egypt,

the study builds upon close examination of the historical evolution of political structures, the state-society and state-social movement relationships until the contemporary period (Chapter Three). The thesis is subsequently structured to identify the political opportunities which emerged in the period of study (2000-2010), and the responses within social and youth activism (the reciprocal relationship) (Chapters Four and Five). The methodology then requires moving from the macro to the micro level. In order to assess the organisation, mobilisation strategies and framing process of youth activism, the thesis zooms in to study two specific formats of youth activism, student movements and the April 6th Movement (Chapters Six and Seven). The methodology for these studies is devised to allow the youth to speak for themselves through the communications methods which they favour and which shape the activism itself. The researcher extensively engaged with youth activists through not just face-to-face interviews, but also through Internet-base chat rooms, Facebook and other forms of web-based communication. How this was done will be elaborated on in Chapter Two.

Chapter Three sets out the evolution of the state-society relationship in Egypt in the modern era in order to provide the political structural context in which social movements in general and youth activism in particular emerged and developed, and with what outcomes. The chapter shows that youth activism responded to varying political opportunities (and alternatively periods of political closure) resulting in cycles of contestation between themselves and the regime. Youth activism came in waves, the scale and intensity of which depended upon the particular political opportunities of the moment. If the early years after the July 1952 Revolution featured lively youth activism (coming out of the contestation surrounding the end of the monarchy), the consolidation of the Nasserist regime in the late 1950s and 1960s saw the regime containing youth activism within its own corporatist and hegemonic structures. The next major wave of activism came with the defeat of 1967, continuing through until the period of Sadat's rule although at this point the activists were less divided by ideology, and more united in their nationalist outlook (indicating the importance of transnational and external factors). During Sadat's rule, the ideological hegemony of Nasser diminished; leading social movements to fragment once more over ideological lines (principally Islamist, Leftist, Nasserist and Liberal) while the political opportunities were reduced by Sadat's growing authoritarianism. Mubarak's rule suggested initially a continuation of these limited political opportunities resulting in stagnant and polarised youth activism in the 1980s and 1990s.

Chapter Four identifies the period from 2000 to 2010 as one of expanding political opportunities, using indicators of political opportunity drawn from the Political Process Model and which the researcher demonstrates are particularly appropriate to the Egyptian context. The chapter demonstrates that during this period not only was the state-society ruptured by growing social and economic grievances, but the state itself was weakened by its loss of hegemony, internal divisions, the internal contradictions of the competitive authoritarian political model which had developed and the impact of external and transnational factors (such as a Palestinian Intifada, the War in Iraq and American democracy promotion in the region). The environmental opportunities rendered the established regime vulnerable to change by identifying and deepening cracks and fissures in the regime, particularly through the interaction between pressure from the bottom and the survival strategy at the top.

Chapter Five examines how social movements responded to these opportunities, notably in the longest wave of political mobilisation and protest since 1967. It argues that conventional corporatist youth arrangements were unable to capture or express this mobilisation and those consequently new formats for activism outside of organised structures began to emerge.
This chapter highlights the various cycles of mobilization 2000/2010, which contributed to the emergence and development of various kinds of social and youth activism. And then it explores more specifically the formal structures and official corporatist arrangements which the regime tightly controlled through various mechanisms.

Chapter Six shows how this was particularly the case within student activism. Using data drawn from interviews, websites and internet-based communications with activists, the chapter demonstrates how the regime-control of campus-based student union activism, and the reluctance of traditional political party student wings to challenge this directly, led students to mobilise outside the structures of established youth activism. This wave of student activism was less ideologically divided, creating new forms of cooperation like the Free Student Union.

Chapter Seven uses similarly rich youth voices to examine the mobilisation of youth into the April 6th movement, its organisation, strategies and framing processes. Indeed, April 6 developed a more stable structure and collective identity and strategic choices compared with other youth networks such as Youth for Change but still needed to be articulated in more complex and specific terms and concepts.

The close examination of these two formats for new youth activism leads to Chapter Eight, in which the researcher elaborates on the cross-ideological nature of the new activism, the common strategies of non-violent direct protest rather than electoral participation or engagement in the conventional political arena, and the shared reliance on new forms of internet based communication to communicate with and mobilise participants. Despite enormous success in mobilising large numbers of youth to engage in the wave of protest activism, the political structures which formed the context of contentious politics necessitated that they ultimately had to create more formal organisations with whom other socio-political actors could engage. However, as they sought to develop these more formal organisational structures, they were rapidly weakened and fragmented, often losing the flexibility and fluidity which had given them such appeal in the first place. As movements formalised, they lost their ability to reflect the aspirations of the younger generation. Substituting vertical forms of organisation for the horizontal and more inclusive networks of the protests led to a loss of dynamism and a loss of the focus on a single shared goal which had enervated them towards the January Revolution.

In conclusion, the thesis argues that the youth activism of contemporary Egypt is best understood as New Social Movements rather than conventional social movements. They are particularly characterised by their use of, indeed reliance on, social media formats which shape their mobilization, organisation and framing processes. While this sustains horizontal networks, it translates poorly into formal vertically-structured organisations and has begun to diminish the power of this latest wave of activism, although new forms of social mobilization may yet emerge since Egyptian politics remain highly contentious.
The second feature of these New Social Movements is the way they reflect the generational dynamic in Egyptian politics. What has variously been called the Millennium or Digital Native Generation, which has been excluded and failed by the politics of successive Egyptian regimes, has found a voice in these movements which is unlikely to disappear.

In this regard, Social Movement Theory is seen to provide the researcher with the relevant concepts and tools to explain the emergence and development of the new youth activism in Egypt. Political opportunity, mobilizing structures, framing processes and New Social Movements prove to be useful concepts for exploring and explaining the emergence and development of youth activism in a different context from the normal Western context in which it is used. It is also useful in illustrating and understanding the larger state-society relationship in Egypt.

The thesis argues, in sum, that the youth activism which developed in Egypt during the period 2000-2010, and which featured so prominently in the January 2011 Revolution, are New Social Movements which represent, or derive from, a rupture in state-society relations which has developed over a more prolonged period of contentious politics, but was invigorated by specific political opportunities arising after 2000.

Issues of researcher objectivity are discussed in the methodology chapter later in the thesis. However, it should be recognised that the youth activism being studied here were leading the extraordinary events of 2011 which culminated in the toppling of the Mubarak Regime. The researcher, being Egyptian, was not immune to the momentousness of events, which offered him alternately visions of being unable to return home, threats to the security of livelihood of his family and friends, his studentship being put in jeopardy, and then the joys and excitement of freedom and change. He was not just a researcher of this phenomenon – he was a part of it. While every effort has been made to maintain academic objectivity, he recognises that at times the research takes implicit positions but with the ambition always that this does not affect the academic judgement.

Chapter One:

Theoretical Framework: Social Movements Theory

1.1 Introduction

The perspectives developed by Social Movement Theory (SMT) particularly the political process model, are valuable in illuminating the intrinsic aspects and characteristics of youth activism and explaining their prominence in specific contexts and periods. This study treats youth activism as agents of change and adopts the standard of a social movement questionnaire to provoke questions about young activism in Egypt. As youth activism is treated as a kind of social movement, the theory offers various explanations of the conditions under which youth mobilization emerges and develops. In this regard the political process model (PPM) assumes that movements emerge as a function of some combination of opportunities, resources and framing, however, the way in which these variables are defined differs from case to case and from one context to another. None can be generalized to explain all cases.

The purpose of this chapter is to reassess certain parts of SMT and particularly the political process model in order to provide and construct analytical frames to be used for the study of Egyptian youth activism. Our starting point in studying youth activism reflects the underlying assumption of the PPM. But the study considers the other theories and approaches since the scholars categorize four main perspectives in the analysis of social movements: collective behaviour, new social movements, resource mobilization and political process model.

This chapter addresses the main questions and basic definitions of the main concepts of SMT such as PO, MS and FP, and then illustrates the importance of transitional and external factors in the emergence and development of social movements. It also explores some efforts to utilize SMT in a Middle East and Egyptian context and discusses the limitations of the applying of theory to non-western contexts which are often characterized by political control and limited means for communicative action.

1.2 Defining Social Movements in the Contentious Politics

There are plenty of definitions of social movements, which reflect the essence of the concept and distinguish it from other concepts. Tarrow (1994, p. 4), for example, produced a rather abstract definition describing them as “collective challenges, based on common purposes and social solidarities, in sustained interaction with elites, opponents, and authorities”.

Zirakzadeh's definition (2006, p. 5) focused on the aim and level of change as "a group of people who endeavour to build a radically new social order, involving political activity by non-elite people from a broad range of social backgrounds employing a mix of socially disruptive tactics and legal tactics".

What is common between different definitions is that SMs call for change in certain aspects of societal order and their interaction with other actors, in order to achieve this goal, with some sort of opponent or authority that they feel is unjust (Tarrow, 1988). This, plus certain other interesting features, can be found in the definition provided by Della Porta and Diani (2006, p. 20) stating that social movements are a distinct social process consisting of the mechanisms through which actors engaged in collective action are involved in conflicting relations with clearly identified opponents, are linked by dense informal networks and, finally, are characterized by a distinctive collective identity.

In this regard contentious collective action serves as the basis of social movements because it is the main and often the only recourse that most ordinary people possess to demonstrate their claims against better-equipped opponents or powerful states. This means that the role of ordinary people in contentious politics is the most remarkable element to distinguish social movements from other civil society groups, market relations, lobbying, or representative politics. Indeed they bring ordinary people into confrontation with opponents, elites, or authorities (Tarrow, 2011, p. 8). Another distinctive aspect of social movements is their sustainability, which means that isolated incidents of contention, for instance, a riot or a mob, do not represent a social movement, because the participants in these forms of contention typically have no more than temporary solidarity and cannot sustain their challenges against opponents. It is not a movement unless it is "sustained." However, mobs, riots, and spontaneous assemblies may be an indication that movements are in the process of formation rather than movements themselves (Tarrow, 2011, p. 11).

These definitions are useful in studying youth activism and social protest groups as actors which have been involved in contentious politics in Egypt. They are inclusive and allow for exploring a variety of groups, using different methods to achieve their goals. These wide definitions and perspectives also make it possible to observe interesting variations in the mobilization processes of different groups.

It is noteworthy that there are various theoretical explanations of social movements. These theories could be seen as the building blocks of the sociology of social movement because they represent socially constructed images/perceptions of reality, which trigger off collective action (Sociology of Social Movements, p.1310). As noted by Della Porta and Diani (1999)

these theories are rather fluctuant as in many cases concepts and ideas overlap and change over time. Scholars categorize four main perspectives in the analysis of social movements: collective behaviour, new social movements, resource mobilization and political process. This chapter discusses and reassesses the political process model in order to provide and construct analytical frames to be used for the study of Egyptian youth activism.

1.3 The Political Process Model

The political process model stressed the crucial importance of expanding political opportunities as the ultimate spur to collective action (McAdam et al, 1996, Bayat, 2005, p. 892). It shares with resource mobilization theory a rational view of action, but pays more systematic attention to the political and institutional environment (Della Porta, Donatella and Mario Diani, 2006), p. 16).

Our starting point in studying youth activism reflects the underlying assumption of the political process model. It is widely agreed that the political process model (PPM) is currently the 'hegemonic paradigm among social movement scholars'[1]. It "dominates the field of social movement research by powerfully shaping its conceptual landscape, theoretical discourse, and research agenda". Its domination of the field makes Goodwin and Jasper declare that it "may be criticized, but it cannot be ignored" (Goodwin and Jasper, 1999 p. 28).

The political process model emphasizes the importance of three broad sets of factors in analyzing the emergence and development of social movements. This approach considers social movements as a combination of a movement's organizational strength, providing the means for taking action; their shared cognitions, which presents the ideological motivation that inspires people to collective action, group identity and group action; and, finally, political opportunities, highlighting the political context within which groups can engage in contentious politics (McAdam, et al, 1996, p. 2 ; Davenport,2005).

PPM proponents claim that although social movements usually conceive of themselves as being outside of, and opposed to, institutions, acting collectively inserts them into a complex policy network and thus within reach of the state. That is, movements develop in response to

1 The political process approach was introduced by McAdam as a result of his tracing of the development of the American civil rights movement (1982) although, as McAdam mentioned (1982: 36), he took the term from an article by Rule and Tilly (1975: 28) , See McAdam, Doug, (1999) Political Process and the Development of Black Insurgency, 1930–1970. Second edition. Chicago: University of Chicago. Most social movement researchers have since then followed in McAdam's footprints.

an ongoing process of interaction between movement groups and the larger socio-political environment they seek to change (Della Porta & Diani, 2006, p. 17).

Political Opportunities

Political opportunity is a concept that deals with the complex environments that the movements face. As Tarrow (2011, p. 6) pointed out, "contentious politics emerges in response to changes in political opportunities and constraints" which "create the most important incentives for triggering new phases of contention" (Tarrow, 2011, p. 12). However, the broader set of political constraints and opportunities is unique to the national context in which they are embedded **(**McAdams et al**,** 1996, p. 3).

Tarrow identified a number of types of political opportunities and was followed in doing so by other authors (like McAdam 1996 p. 10, Goodwin, 1999, p. 32, Bedford, 2009, pp. 35, 36, Donatella and Diani, 2006, p. 17). These types include[2]:

1- The degree of openness or closure of formal political access;
2- The degree of stability or instability of political alignments;
3- The availability and strategic posture of potential alliance partners and political conflict within and among elites;
4- The state's capacity and propensity for repression.

The main emphasis in the model has been on highlighting the various opportunities opening up to social movements. Collective action is structured by the available political opportunities. The activists can be expected to be encouraged by "relaxation in social control, the granting of electoral access, cleavages in previously stable governing alliances and the routine electoral transfer of institutional power from one group of incumbents to another who interpret the transfer of power as granting them new elite allies" (McAdams et al**,** 1996, pp. 10, 11).

Plenty of researchers focused on two particular dimensions of opportunity structure that are considered most relevant. Firstly, "the formal aspects of the institutionalized political system that involves institution and legislation that enable or prevent movement mobilization". Secondly, "the informal identifying attitudes of, and practices pursued, by the political establishment in regards to opposition" (Bedford, 2009, p. 35; Esman, 1994).

2 Chapter 4 will discuss in details these concepts and indicators that explain the political opportunities in the Egyptian context.

There are many critical points of view to classify these four dimensions and the concept of political opportunity in general. First of all one could note that a number of recent studies suggest additional dimensions to the political opportunity concept (Donatella & Diani, 2006, p. 17). Several authors do not restrict themselves to this "consensual" list; they added other political opportunity variables. Goodwin & Jasper (1999, p. 32) argued that the four variables cannot by themselves "explain the rise of social movements nor could any other specification of political opportunity". They concluded that political opportunities cannot be well defined because they suffered the fate that 'resource' often did within the resource mobilization model: "virtually anything that, in retrospect, can be seen as having helped a movement mobilize or attain its goals becomes labelled a political opportunity" (Goodwin & Jasper 1999 p. 36). They emphasised that "there may be no such thing as objective political opportunities before or beneath interpretation or at least none that matter; they are all interpreted through cultural filters" (Goodwin & Jasper, 1999, p, 33).

On the other hand, Tarrow (2011, p. 12) responded to such criticism by confirming that "objective opportunities" do not "automatically trigger episodes of contentious politics or social movements, regardless of what people think or feel". He added that "individuals need to perceive political opportunities and to be emotionally engaged by their claims if they are to be induced to participate on possibly risky and certainly costly collective actions; and they need to perceive constraints if they are to hesitate to take such action".

It is also worth noting that even though the definitions of these dimensions may or may not cover a political context ranging from facilitative to repressive towards social movements, the studies of political activism in "partial democracies feature an inopportune political environment which, from the outset, hardly offers any openings for social movement mobilization"[3]. As suggested by Wickham, rather than relating political environment to improving political opportunities, "authoritarian empirical contexts call for a greater focus on how institutions and legislation shape and restrict movement mobilization" (Rosefsky-Wickham, 2002, p. 13). The concept still faces some ambiguity in the definition and ability to interpret all aspects of political and social structure and environment that face the movements. "As a result of the difficulties relating to the narrow political opportunity thesis, political process theorists added social/organizational and cultural factors to the latter's political ones" (Goodwin & Jasper, 1999, p. 41).

3 See for example Foweraker (1995); chapters 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10 in Bayes, Jane H and Nayereh Tohidi (ed.) (2001) Globalization, Gender and Religion. The Politics of Women's Rights in Catholic and Muslim Contexts. New York: Palgrave or Singerman (2004).

It is worth noting that the collective behaviour perspective, as one strand of Structural Theory, concentrated on strain as the root cause of social movements and on the individual and social psychological reasons for contention (McAdam et al, 1996). Consequently, social movements were considered a product or at least a manifestation of the social structure (Sociology of Social Movements, p.1309). But critically, however, Wiktorowicz (2004, p. 9) states; "Structural strain and discontent may be necessary, but they are not a sufficient causal explanation".

In the Egyptian context, the four types of political opportunities produced by Tarrow are far from enough to provide the comprehensive explanations for the emergence of 'social' youth activism. Notwithstanding that a specific kind of social structure has a specific kind of social movement, it is important to revise the Middle East political literature to discuss and analyze the political opportunities according to the different approaches and theories about the state-society relationship. In addition to this, the following chapters will test and apply some of the assumptions and arguments of the structural approach about grievances and relative deprivation in the Egyptian context.

Mobilizing Structures

Political process theorists emphasise the importance of mobilizing structures. If the political contexts shape the prospects for collective action and the forms movements take, their influence is not independent of the various kinds of mobilizing structures through which groups seek to organize. In this regard mobilizing structures means "collective vehicles, informal as well as formal, through which people mobilize and engage in the collective action" (McAdam et al, 1996, p.3) As McAdam illustrates, "these vehicles include the micro-level groups, organizations, and informal networks that comprise the collective building blocks of social movements". In other words, this factor refers to "the level of organization within the aggravated population" or "degree of organizational readiness" within the community in question McAdam (1999 p. 40). This concept focuses on the means available for a group to turn their efforts into an organized campaign of social protest and the effects of organization on the movements' capacity for contention. Tarrow (1994); McAdam (1999). Bedford (2009, p. 27) identified certain factors which are crucial to social movement mobilization: members, networks, social relationships, leaders and free spaces.

It is worth noting that resource-mobilization theory focuses on the critical role of resources and formal organization in the rise of movements. This approach defines social movements as conscious actors making rational choices. Donatella and Diani (2006, p. 15) emphasized the organization and the effectiveness with which movements use the resources to obtain their

goals (McAdam et al, 1996). The emergence of social movements cannot be explained simply by the existence of tension and structural conflict, as structural theory confirms, but it is important to explore the conditions which enable discontent to be transformed into mobilization. The capacity for mobilization depends on the material resources (work, money, concrete benefits and services) and/or non-material resources (authority, moral engagement, faith and friendship) available to the group (Donatella and Diani (2006) p. 15). Consequently, social movements arise when people who are aggrieved or discontented are capable of mobilizing resources sufficiently to take action toward addressing their problems (Sociology of Social Movements, 1311).

Framing Process:

Frames and framing processes in the study of collective action have come to be regarded, alongside mobilizing structures and political opportunities, as "a central dynamic in understanding the character and course of social movements" (Benford & Snow, 2000, p. 611). The shared meanings and definitions that people have to bring to their situation can be considered as a mediator between opportunity, organization, and action. They need to feel both aggrieved and optimistic to act collectively, and it is highly unlikely that they will mobilize even when afforded the opportunity if these perceptions are missing or not considered as sufficient to motivate them (McAdam et al, 1996, p. 5). In this regard Tarrow (2011, p. 12) argues that "objective" opportunities do not automatically trigger episodes of contentious politics or social movements, regardless of what people think or feel. Individuals need to perceive political opportunities and to be emotionally engaged by their claims if they are to be induced to participate on possibly risky and certainly costly collective actions; and they need to perceive constraints if they are to hesitate to take such action.

According to the political process model, framing refers to "the conscious, strategic efforts by groups of people to fashion shared understandings of the world and of themselves that legitimate and motivate collective action" (McAdam, McCarthy, and Zald, 1996b, p 6).

In other words, McAdam (1999, p. 40) believes that the framing process represents the "level of insurgent consciousness" or the "collective assessment of the prospects for successful insurgency". The cultural factor deals with the moral visions, cognitive understandings, and emotions that exist prior to a movement but which are also transformed by it (Goodwin & Jasper, 1999, p. 29**).** Bedford (2009, p. 31) identifies two major parts of this process: the formation of a collective identity for the movement's participants and the employment of certain frames in order to facilitate this formation.

The sustainability of collective action is generated from cultural and meaningful factors which occur in social solidarity, common purposes and collective identities. Tarrow (2011, p. 12) pointed out that, “People do not risk their skin or sacrifice their time to engage in contentious politics unless they have good reason to do so”. It takes a common purpose to motivate people to run the risk and pay the costs of involvement in contentious politics. The most common denominator of social movements is “interest”, but interest is no more than a seemingly objective category imposed by the observer. It is a participant’s recognition of their common interests that translates the potential for a movement into action (Tarrow, 2011, p. 11). Notwithstanding this, individuals are often slow to appreciate that opportunities exist or that constraints have collapsed. The leaders, entrepreneurs and founders of the movement play major roles in defining the opportunities and creating or stimulating consensus in the movements (Tarrow, 2011, pp. 11, 12).

It is worth noting that leaders and entrepreneurs can create a social movement only when they tap into and expand deep-rooted feelings of solidarity or identity. This is almost certainly why nationalism and ethnicity or religion has been more reliable bases of the organization of movements in the past than the categorical imperative of social class (Anderson 1990; C. Smith ed. 1996). In this regard, Tarrow (2011, p. 11) noted that some scholars take the criterion of common consciousness to an extreme. Rudolf Heberle, for example, thought a movement had to have a well worked-out ideology. But others, such as Melucci(1998), think that movements purposefully “construct” collective identities through constant negotiation.

The social movement research can elaborate on the relationship between cultural change and structure because movements arise out of what is culturally given, but at the same time they are a fundamental source of cultural change. Melucci (1995, p. 31) confirmed that the relationship between collective involvement and personal engagement is the key to trying to understand how a group is formed. He argued that “the movements are viewed as processes of identity formation and as social actors struggling to define history: both the subjective motives for action and the ideology of the group are significant”. In the literature it is often indicated that social movements start out of what is culturally given, finding its position in the political landscape by utilizing pre-existent rhetoric and symbols.

The movement consciously utilizes culture to recruit members and realize its goals. Social movement theory seems to carry a fairly instrumental view of culture, assuming that social movements are not only shaped by culture, but also contribute to shape and reshape the culture themselves. Culture is, according to this point of view, seen as a set of instruments. Social actors, relying on these cultural instruments, make sense of their own life experiences

by adopting symbols, values, meanings, icons, and beliefs and moulding them to fit the movement's objectives Porta & Diani (1999).

External and Transnational Factors

One could acknowledge the possible importance of transnational actors and the international context in which the movements operate. However, Bedoford (2009, p. 38) argues that this factor is neither a part of the political process model nor commonly found in social movement literature in general. (Maney, 2001, pp. 1, 2) confirms that, "by and large, theories of social movements have neglected the role of both transnational structures and external actors in contributing to domestic political conflict". The impact of international governmental organizations on domestic protest has received less attention (Maney, 2001, p. 28). While more frequently acknowledging, on an *ad hoc* basis, the importance of international factors, those working in the political process tradition, until recently, did not devote significant attention to the impact of international factors on their primary subject matter and structures of political opportunity (Maney, 2001, pp. 2, 3).

Considering that much previous research focuses on the countries' strategic geographical location specially Egypt, it could be expected that external influence has played a certain role in shaping the internal continuous politics and mobilization (Bedoford, 2009, p. 38). Systematic comparison across cases and regions reveals that direct contact with international feminism played a critical role to the mobilization of social movements like women and youth in democratic transitions (Baldez , p. 255).

Some scholars offered an approach that linked the political process-based framework with external factors. Maney (2001, p. 5) argues that the political process models are constructed with the assumption that external and internal processes, institutions, and actors contribute, separately and in interactive combination, to the origins, trajectories, and outcomes of domestic protest. In the political process model, the international institutions and the direct interventions of external actors spark protest by altering both the vulnerability and receptivity of elites to challenges from those excluded from the polity and the likely costs and benefits of extra-institutional collective action. The same transnational factors could shape structures of political opportunity (Maney, 2001, p. 31).

It could be argued that PO (opportunities and constraints) are more homogeneous at the national level (one centre of power) while at the international level they are heterogeneous. And when internal opportunities are closed, social movements seek and benefit from international alliances and institutions to create opportunities and generate new resources. It is

worth noting that the outstanding trend in Middle East scholars proclaims the interaction between external and internal determinants as, "key to any prospect for democratization in Egypt: (a) freedom and strengthening of civil society and (b) international pressures and incentives, especially from the United States as the hegemonic power in the region" (Brownlee, 2002; Brumberg, 2002; Langohr, 2004). It is also noteworthy the growing international connection between authoritarian regimes which has arguably increased their durability and adaptive capacity to face the political protests.

In this regard the transnational structures and external factors can be argued to have had profound implications for the political opportunities and constraints in the Egyptian context that need to be fully understood and explained. This study acknowledge different kinds of extrinsic influence that will be identified in the following chapters such as direct involvement, particularly USA foreign policy, globalization and the diffusion of ideas and international civil society activism, and the regional conflicts in the Middle East.

There are other certain parts of SMT that should be discussed in order to provide and construct the analytical frames to be used for the study of youth activism:

First: The new social movements perspective highlights the role of the distinctive material and ideological contradictions in post-material society in helping to mobilize new political constituencies around either non-material or previously private issues. This approach focuses on the movements that emerged in the 1960s and 1970s, which were considered representative of a new type of contention set on ideological changes in society rather than political power (McAdam et al, 1996). This approach makes a clear analytical distinction between the so-called old social movements that existed in industrial society (pre-1950 for instance) and the new social movements, which exist in the contemporary post-industrial society. The process named alternatively 'new modernity', or 'post modernity' led to the emergence of the development of the New Social Movements (NSM).

Following Roxborough's claim that to each form of economic development, a particular form of politics and form of state apparatus would correspond, for capitalist industrialization, the nation-state becomes the political apparatus; the argument of Roxborough could be extended by saying that to every political system a form of collective action and social movement corresponds(Tür Kavli, 2003, p. 20). Up until the 1970s, the components of "modernity", industrial capitalism, nation-state, and class identity continued to dominate western societies. Then changes in political economy and a decline in class identity occurred. If class movements were associated with modernity, the New Social Movements (NSMs) are associated with post-modernity (Ibid, pp. 23, 31).

The common characteristics of these new movements could be divided into four general areas: goal orientation, forms, participants, and values (D'Anieri, 1990, 446)

Regarding goal orientation, there are two primary strands. Firstly: seeking state action, or establishing alternative, non-institutional means of reaching their goals. Secondly: the interests of a particular group or class, or promoting goals that will benefit all members of society (Ibid, 449). In relating to form, NSMs have had a non-hierarchical and participatory nature of movements, as well as consensual and decentralized decision-making. Thirdly, new social movement theorists assert that participation in new social movements is not based on class cleavages. Fourthly, NSMs focus on "life-chance" concerns. The theorists suggest that recent movements are not driven by traditional materialist values such as higher wages, safer working conditions, and voting rights, but instead are motivated by qualitative values.

The weakness of this approach could be its failure to establish the precise origin of social movements in different societies. The sociology of the social movements encyclopaedia highlights that “Habermas’s contention that new conflicts arise in the areas of cultural reproduction, social integration, and socialization, while insightful, loses sight of the fact that the Euro-American nations do not represent the entire globe and that even where conflicts arise over the political system, such a conflict may equally be driven by the struggle for the control of material or economic resources of society” **(**Sociology of Social Movements, p.1309).

Second: The political process model has a great importance in social movements study because it provides two functions. Firstly; it takes into account that social movements emerge not just when political opportunities are expanding, but also when would-be "insurgents have available to them 'mobilizing structures' of sufficient strength to get the movement off the ground" and "feel both aggrieved about some aspect of their lives and optimistic that, acting collectively, they can redress the problem" (McAdam et al., 1996b, pp. 5, 13). Secondly; the model explains “how and why movements decline or disappear, political opportunities shrink, mobilizing structures weaken or disintegrate, or cultural frames come to delegitimize or discourage protest” (Goodwin & Jasper, 1999, p. 42).

Third: The social movement involves different types of interactions with other actors particularly the state and political parties to achieve its goals. Other actors develop perceptions about the organization’s goals and if they represent a threat to their interests or opportunities. “Thus the mix of opposition and support enjoyed by a given SMO is conditioned by the perception of threat and opportunity embodied in the group goals”

(McAdam et al., 1996, p. 15). Bedford, (2009, p. 44) refers to two main factors influencing state-movement interaction:

1- *The degree of threat a movement is believed to pose to the state.*

2- *The state's strategies towards this threat.*

1.4 Theoretical Criticism

Criticism of the PPM has come from two groups of authors; one of them is the sympathetic critics of PPM like Jasper (1990) and Goodwin (1999), and the other is the pioneers and founders of the model like Tilly himself. The first group of critics admits that they do not offer another or better model than the political process model, "but rather a more expansive set of concepts and distinctions". The political process theorists themselves such as McAdam and Tilly pointed out most of the crucial critical remarks in their works, "however, these criticisms have not had a radical impact on PPM" (Goodwin & Jasper, 1999, p. 29). The criticism can be summarized by the inability to reach a minimum consensus about the definitions of the basic concepts and the causal capability of the model and its universality. It is worth focusing on these points:

First, political process theorists have been unable to reach a minimum consensus about the definitions of the basic concepts, most notably that of political opportunity structures, leading at best to conceptual confusion (Giugni, 2005, p. 402). Consequently, the PPM could be applied in diverse settings because of its imprecision which hindered the testing and refinement of theoretical propositions. It sometimes seems as if there were as many political process approaches as theorists (Goodwin & Jasper, p. 28). Goodwin and Jasper assume that PPM is "tautological, trivial, inadequate, or just plain wrong" (Goodwin & Jasper, p. 29, Giugni, 2005, p. 402). However, they think that PPM "provides a helpful albeit limited set of 'sensitizing concepts' for social movement research" (Goodwin & Jasper, p. 28).

Goodwin & Jasper, (1999, p. 46) argue that the notion of cultural framings, political opportunities and mobilizing structures are overly broad, subsuming a variety of factors that are potentially contradictory in their effects and that need to be carefully disaggregated, including collective identities, grievances, goals, repertoires of contention, and the sense of efficacy or empowerment (Goodwin, James M. Jasper, p. 46).

Second, the causal capability of the model: A lot of criticisms have been raised about the causal capability of the model. Many authors criticize the search for "invariant models of

social movements" (Giugni, 2005, p. 402). Such an invariant and trans-historical theory is simply not possible and should, therefore, not be the goal of research (see Tilly, 1994, 1995). Goodwin and Jasper criticize the implicitly frequent promises of the political process theorists to provide, "a causally adequate universal theory or model of social movements" (Goodwin, Jasper, p. 28).

Tilly, (2004, p. x) declared that the theorists did not think that there is, "no sufficiently coherent body of theory concerning how social movements exist". The explanations – that involve specification - of how and why the three factors - mobilizing structures, framing process and political opportunities – "behave and interact as they do. At least for the moment, no available theory provides general specifications of how and why" (Tilly, 2004, p. x).

There are no plausible regularities and generalizations or causal models that can interpret and account for sorts of PO, MS and FP (Tilly, 2004, p. xi). For example, how and why does the governmental repression diminish or accelerate mobilization?

Third; structural and non-structural factors: The model undergoes a strong bias in favour of metaphors of structure (Goodwin, Jasper, p. 28). The theorists tend to emphasize "structural" factors (i.e., factors that are relatively stable over time and outside the control of movement actors) more than non-structural factors which are often analyzed as though they were structural factors (Goodwin & Jasper, 1999, p. 29).

Although the original term "political opportunity structure" (POS) has generally given way to apparently more fluid concepts such as "process" and "opportunities," these are still usually interpreted in unnecessarily structural ways. A number of factors have been added to political opportunities in recognition of the influence of non-structural variables but without being accurately theorized as non-structural. These include strategy, agency and culture (Goodwin & Jasper, 1999, p. 29). Process theorists tend to wash the meaning and fluidity out of strategy, agency, and culture so that they will look more like structures. According to Gugni, the dominant paradigm "has at worst overlooked the role of strategy, agency, and culture, or at best defined these concepts so that they look more like structures" (Giugni, p. 402).

The two main categories that process theorists have added to political opportunities are "mobilizing structures", which contain much that is not structural, and "framing", which is their effort to include culture, but actually leaves out most of culture (Goodwin, Jasper, p. 29).

Fourth: the focus on the leaders, their discourse in analyzing the movements and neglecting the members. One should go beyond mere discourse, language and symbols, especially those of the leadership, taking both multiple discourses (Bayat, 2005,: p. 892).

1.5 Limitations of Applying of Social Movement Theory to the Middle East

It is widely acknowledged that the focus of the study of social movements has been on Western Europe or North America, as this is where a majority of social movement researchers originate from. SMT has not been extensively applied beyond the Western context. Indeed, the effort to apply the theory in non-western contexts raises a number of questions and criticism that could be summarized in three key issues particularly: the western democracy bias, neglecting specific aspects of social movements such as the silent resistance and the uncritical application of the model of social movements theory in the Middle East.

First of all one could note that, until recently, "only a minority of empirical research in this field of study has been conducted in contexts that do not possess fully developed plurality of parties, unions and alliance structures ensuring citizens' access to the political system"[4]. The social movements - like the new social movements - are "rooted in particular genealogies, in the highly differentiated and politically open societies, where social movements often develop into highly structured and largely homogeneous entities - possibilities that are limited in the non-Western world" (Bayat, 2009, p. 4). Tilly pointed out the historical specificity of "social movements" which emerged and developed in Western Europe and North America after 1750. In this historical experience, what came to be known as "social movements" combined three elements: an organized and sustained claim making on target authorities; a repertoire of performances; and public representations of the cause's worthiness, unity, numbers, and commitment (Tilly, 2004, p.7). Deployed separately, these elements would not make "social movements", but some different political actions (Bayat, 2009, p. 4).

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4 Different authors discussed this issue such as Bayat, Asef. (2009). *Life as Politics: How Ordinary People Change the Middle East.* Stanford: Stanford University Press. Cf. Wolff, Kristin (1998), '*New* New Orientialism: Political Islam and Social Movement Theory', in A.S. Moussalli (ed.), *Islamic Fundamentalism: Myths & Realities* (Reading: Ithaca), 41-73. Or in a different context (Latin America) but raising many of the same issues: Foweraker, Joe (1995), 'Theories of Social Movements', in Foweraker, *Theorizing social movements* (Boulder: Pluto Press), 24-35.

Kurzman (2004) argues that this has contributed to giving certain features of social movement theory a "core democracy bias". It is worth noting that the increase in social movement activities in non-democratic or democratizing countries during the last decades has, moreover, led to concerns about the viability of generalizations from findings and conclusions in this field. The theory and its assumption should be adapted to be appropriate for the study of social movements and mobilization in a political environment that, despite certain progress, still cannot be said to possess fully developed democratic societal norms and values. Given that the dominant social movement theories draw on western experience, the research on social movement in the Middle East should take into consideration the limitations of the prevailing social movement theories - those grounded in the technologically advanced and politically open societies – "to account for the complexities of socio-political activism in contemporary Muslim societies, which are often characterised by political control and limited means for communicative action" (Bayat, 2005, p. 891). A key question here is to explore what extent using SMT can help us to "understand the process of solidarity building or the collective identity, in politically closed and technologically limited settings?"(Bayat, 2009, p. 4). To deal with this shortcoming, the thesis adopts a wide definition of the structure of political opportunities to include new elements that explain the process of the creating such collective identities and borrows some concepts from the field Middle East studies such as hegemony and competitive authoritarianism...etc which provide an opportune context for social movements[5].

Secondly, the social movements theory used to be neglected in the Middle East literature and research or applied partially, without critically questioning the main assumption and propositions when applying it in the Middle East context. Bayat (2009, p. 3) argues that there is a tendency to exclude the study of the Middle East from the prevailing social science perspectives. The social sciences did not pay attention and delayed in studying such phenomena until the appearance of Islamic movements in the 1970s. Even Middle East studies in the West did not pay attention, but were too late to apply the theories of social movements to study Islamic and political movements.

In recent years, a number of new scholars have attempted to use the social movements theory in the Egyptian context such as Abdel Rahman (2009), in her contribution about Kefaya and El Mahdi (2009) and her study about the labour movement, but they were still partial studies and did not engage in discussion about the main concepts and propositions of the theory.

5 For further discussion see the methodology chapter and chap. 8

Bayat criticized a growing trend in recent years among "local" scholars in the Middle East who often tend uncritically to deploy conventional models and concepts to the social realities of their societies, without acknowledging sufficiently that these models hold different historical genealogies, and may thus offer little help to explain the intricate texture and dynamics of change and resistance in this part of the world, for instance, considering "slums" (Bayat, 2009, p. 4). Roy warns against the kind of comparison that takes "one of the elements of comparison as 'norm' while never questioning the "original configuration" (Roy, 1994, pp. 8-9).

It is noteworthy that some sociologists such as Ibrahim (1980) have used some of the concepts and processes of social movements to explore the Islamic activism but not in a systemic way or from a comprehensive social movements perspective which hindered the scholarship from progressing. Over recent years, a handful of scholars and research have attempted to bring Islamic activism into the realm of social movement theory (Wiktorowicz, 2004;Meijer, 2005 Bayat, 2005). However, these scholars tend largely to "borrow" from, rather than critically and productively engage with and thus contribute to, social movement theories (Bayat, 2009, p. 4). It is important to take into account this dilemma relating to the dichotomy that appeared in the literature about Middle East politics in general and particularly Islamic movements. "The literature based on Western experiences has still not completely grasped the logic and reality of Middle East social movements" (Schmidt, 2004, pp. 401, 402). Kurzman interprets this as a result of, "the eyes of the subjects and the researcher don't line up" in the literature about Islamic movements (Kurzman, 2004, p. 207).

Thirdly; as every social and political structure has a form of collective action and social movements correspond, the social movement theory is biased not only toward some kinds of movements that should be studied, but also in the activities observed and explained in those movements, for example there is neglect of counter-cultural movements and practices (Goodwin & Jasper, 1999, p. 35). The collective action in the Middle East subsumes different types of activities and protestations like the silent resistance and bypassing of authority, day-to-day forms of resistance or evading practices of power. There is a tendency to minimize or obscure the political meanings of those movements (Beinin & Vairel, 2009). In other words, more research is need to explore certain aspects and unconventional forms of agency and activism that have emerged in Egypt and the Middle East that do not get adequate attention, because they do not fit into the political process model and its conceptual imaginations. In this regard the thesis addresses questions such as the pre-existing phase of social movements and how the ordinary young activists engaged with contentious politics. It also discusses how the

protest and social movements are inclined to work through the networks and not through hierarchical organization as a result of regime repression and internal disputes.

1.6 Theoretical Summary: The Social Movements in the Egyptian Context

It is widely agreed that the focus of the study of social movements was on Western Europe or North America, as this is where a majority of social movement researchers originate from. This chapter briefly discussed some efforts to utilize the theory in a different context and analyse a number of questions about its democratic bias, Middle East's silent resistance and Islamic movements. It points out some limitations of the prevailing social movement theories to account for the complexities of socio-political activism in contemporary Egypt which was often characterized by political control and limited means for communicative action. For example, the concept of political opportunity in the Middle East certainly seems different from that in Western countries, however, as much as the focus on liberal (Western) democracies and authoritarian (Arab) regimes is helpful when one is trying to understand social activism in its diversity (Schmidt 2004, p. 402).

Therefore, another aim of this thesis is to elaborate on the conditions surrounding movement mobilization in non-democratic contexts. This aim will be approached through the theoretical problem which this thesis addresses: under what conditions may movement mobilization in non-democratic contexts occur?

The study about youth activism and social movements in Egypt should take into account the following concepts and processes and elaborate them to be more relevant and helpful in explaining the prominence of youth activism:

1- The classification of the four dimensions of the concept of political opportunity has been discussed and developed to be appropriate for political context ranging from facilitative to repressive.

2- The possible importance of the international context and transnational factors in which the movements operate in the Middle East and Egypt.

3- In addition to that the study will discuss the dilemma of culture and framing process which reflected the effort to include culture in the political process model, however, it roughly leaves out most of culture.

4- The study also tested the validity of new social movement approach in Egypt according to the four major characteristics which theorists argue are uniquely characteristic of contemporary social movements; goal orientation, forms, participants, and values.

In conclusion, it is important to adapt and improve the social movement analysis through: rejecting invariant modelling, beware of conceptual stretching, recognize the diverse ways that culture and agency, including emotions and strategizing, shape collective action. It is also important to realize the limitation of utilizing the theory in different contexts.

Chapter Two:

Methodology and Methods

2.1 Introduction

This thesis will demonstrate that approaches and concepts developed in the realm of social movement theory can nonetheless be valuable in illuminating the intrinsic aspects and characteristics of social and youth activism in Egypt. It introduces fresh perspectives to observe, a novel vocabulary to speak, and new analytical tools to make sense of specific realities. A fruitful approach would demand an analytical innovation which raises a number of theoretical and methodological questions as to how to look at the notions of agency and change.

Our starting point in studying youth activism reflects the underlying assumption of the political process model. In this regard, social movements theory is utilized in two ways; the instrumental use to explain the Egyptian case and the critical use and discussion with the theory propositions. The theory provides a theoretical framework, but it also makes sets of assumptions that might not help to explain the prominence of youth activism and social movements without integrating an understanding of the specificities of the Middle East. For this reason the thesis will explore theoretical approaches to understanding the political structures of the Middle East, including an appreciation of the region's history, international relations and transnational factors. This comprehensive approach yields useful frameworks for analysing the structure of political opportunities and its impact on youth activism and political protest in Egypt. For this reason Chapter Three specifically reviews Egyptian political history through the lens of existing research literatures, ultimately drawing upon theories of hegemonic ideology and corporatism to explain how and why the political structures which formed the environment for the emergence of social movements in Egypt emerged. This will offer a distinct analytical framework for the following analysis of the political opportunity structures that governed the emergence and development of social movements in Egypt, and then more specifically youth activism, which forms the basis of Chapters Four and Five.

Having used the SMT concept of political opportunity to project a narrative of the emergence and development of social movements in general, and youth movement in particular, it is

necessary to explore in detail the features of these youth activism through the categories offered by SMT, and specifically the political process model. This is done empirically through deep study of two key youth activism; the students' movement (Chapter Six) and the April 6th movement (Chapter Seven).

2.2. Defining youth and youth activism in Egyptian context:

Youth can be either be understood as a demographic (biological age and % of population) or as a social construction (a stage of life, a set of expectations, and an understanding of social roles, etc).

The thesis provides demographic statistics about the youth bulge in Egypt but its main aim is to focus on youth activism which is not only about biological age or demographics but about stalled transition, political exclusion and generational effects. This demographic 'youth bulge' brings with it specific political and economic challenges for regimes (Murphy, 2012, p.5). Consequently it is the current generation, the youth, who find themselves excluded and marginalized, socially, economically and politically. Their transition to adulthood is, as it were, 'stalled'. Dhillon &Yousef (2009)

In this regard, the total number of young people represents a large amount of population which increasing every year. The following two tables provide a data over time to highlight the percentages of youth within the Egyptian population. It is noteworthy that the definitions of youth and children in youth policies in Egypt overlap due to the type and the set up of ministries and agencies responsible for youth such as: Education, Higher Education, Youth and Sports. According to NDP youth policy paper, young people are between the ages of 18 and 35 years old. However, it also mentions those who are between 6 and 18 years old. On the other hand, a document issued form the Supreme Council for Youth and Sport in May 1996 considered youth as being from 6-30 years old. The NCY differentiates between two groups: the age group from 6-18 years old (teenagers and children) and from 18- 30 years old (Youth) (Gharbouch, 2006, p. 921).

In its youth policy paper, the National Democratic Party (NDP), the ruling party, defines youth as the age group from 18 – 35 years old. This long period of time is due to the fact that large sectors of young people between 18 and 35 in Egypt usually face the same problems and challenges, such as unemployment, poor education, low health awareness and limited access to training, educational, volunteering and job opportunities. (Tohami, 2009, p.10)

The population statistics collected by the Central Agency for Public Mobilisation and Statistics (**Algehaz Almarkazy Letta'bi'a Ela'mahh Wa El-ehssa'a**) illustrate that in demographic terms, the number of people aged between 15 -35 reached 30.4 million out of 80 million in 2011 according to CAPMAS. They represent more than 37.8 % of the total population[6].

Table (1): Estimated Midyear Population by Age Groups (2011) in thousands[7]

Total	80 410
Less than 5 years	8 535
-5	8 452
-10	8 535
-15	9 437
-20	8 695
-25	7 057
-30	5 255
-35	5 141
-40	4 516
-45	4 055

6 Some observers raise questions about the credibility of the statistics, given how CAPMAS routinely undercounts those who live in the ashwaiyyat for example. See Sabry, Sarah, (2009) Poverty Lines in Greater; Cairo Underestimating and misrepresenting poverty. http://pubs.iied.org/pdfs/10572IIED.pdf

7 http://www.capmas.gov.eg/pdf/Electronic%20Static%20Book_eng/population/untitled1/pop.aspx

-50	3 377
-55	2 499
-60	1 880
-65	1 317
-70	872
+75	817

Table (2): Estimated Midyear Population by Age Groups (2002-2005-2008-2011) in thousands and percentage:

Year/age	2002	2005	2008	2011
15-30	20844 31.3%	22165 31.3%	23566 31.3%	25189 31.3%
15-35	25169 37.8%	26764 37.8%	28456 37.8%	30414 37.8%
Total	66531	70748	75299	80410

These demographic statistics show that Egypt is going through a period in which the total number of youth is significantly high, a so-called “youth bulge” (Dhillon & Yousef, 2007,

p3). This demographic transition represents both an opportunity and a challenge[8]. It is obvious that not all members of youth activism are in the age category of 18-29. A number of people who are younger or older than that age consider themselves young, or join youth movements.

Youth activism in the Egyptian context:

The term has been variously defined. For instance, Wikipedia defines youth activism as when youth voices "engaged in community organizing for social change"[9]. It also refers to young people engaging in a practice that emphasizes direct vigorous action, especially in support of or opposition to one side of a controversial issue (Giles, 2008, p.11).

This definition is particularly relevant to the aims of the thesis discussion. Youth activism therefore takes place, when young people are involved in planning, researching, teaching, evaluating, decision-making, social working, advocating and leading actions on environmental issues, social justice, human rights campaigns, supporting or opposing issues like abortion, anti-racism, anti-homophobia, anti-homosexual, war or ethnic cleansing, etc, all with particular reference to bringing about a social change. Students, it has been observed by many researchers, are often at the forefront of youth activism especially through student unionism (Kayode, 2011, p.3).

The thesis has adopted a definition of youth activism that refers to the youth engagement in the contentious politics in Egypt. It includes various categories, particularly independent youth networks, "student movements" and "youth chapters" of political parties and social forces. (However, as will become clearer through the course of the text), these youth activism cannot ultimately conceptually be separated from the reclaiming of youthfulness and the particularity of a specific generation (Bayat, 2009, p. 18). Nonetheless, as a working definition this is inclusive of the wide variety of movements and networks of youth activism, including both new and conventional social movements (such as the Muslim Brothers' young wing and political parties). This perspective makes it possible to observe interesting variations in the mobilization processes of different movements. It is also worth noting at this point that the evolution of student movements cannot be entirely separated from that of youth activism more generally because the constraints on the former have forced much student activity into broader youth activist groups and away from the campuses.

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8 For further discussion about the socio-economic conditions and grievances among youth see chap. (4)

9 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Youth_activism

Excluding and controlling youthfulness is likely to trigger youth activism which can take different aspects and ways. The research focuses on the ways the youth activism of what we may term the Millennium generation (those who are young during the start of the new century) engaged in contentious politics through a fully-fledged youth movement.

The recent years have witnessed a proliferation of youth activism in national politics, although this has frequently been manifested outside of the established formal political structures and long-established political parties (Murphy, 2012, p.11). Youth movements articulate interests of people which has less things to do with biological age. The April 6th Youth Movement and Youth for Change in Egypt, all represent broad swathes of youths who perceive their interests to be unrepresented by existing political structures and their needs to be unrecognized and unmet (Assad & Barsoum, 2007).

For Roel Meijer (2000), the Arab street is the location in which 'alternative lifestyles and modes of thought and action falling outside the family and the state' are played out. With the diminishing functionality of the family and the failures of the state to live up to its promises of provision, the street has assumed a new significance for Arab youth. It has become a spatial home for broad coalition social movements in which ideological affiliation is secondary (or even irrelevant) relative to membership of this politically, economically and increasingly socially excluded generation (Murphy, 2012, p.11) Evidence suggests that 15–25 year olds, often termed late adolescents or early adults, are more engaged with the new technologies than any other age group and

For as much as the demographic statistics are significant, the percentage of youth activists is not representing the majority among youth. It is noteworthy that young people who interested in political activism considered a minority among the younger generation, although they have a great influence on the political and social structure. For example, the majority of blogs and accounts on Facebook are not mainly political, but personal pages which touch on politics to varying degrees (Elting, et. al., 2009, p. 10). The Egypt Human Development Report (2010, P. 106) showed that political participation was a concern for just 7% of youth. Although they represent a minority in this term, youth activism comprised the largest structural cluster that mobilized and engaged in continuous politics during the different cycles of mobilization. It is obvious that this minority of activists used to have an incredible effect on the public sphere and represent a big challenge to the hegemonic discourse of the regime either during Mubarak era or after the revolution.

The political opportunity structure triggered different cycles of political and social activism since 2000 as large segments of the younger generation from both middle and lower classes

found that “there was no reason why political participation should be further postponed, for example, no developmental projects (economic or political) for which democracy should be sacrificed” (Rutherford, 2008).

2.3 Critical Reading and Applying of the Theory

The research seeks to explain certain aspects and unconventional forms of agency and activism that have emerged in Egypt and the Middle East but which did not get sufficient attention until the Arab Spring, because they did not easily fit into the political process model and its conceptual imagination on the one hand and the conventional approaches of political sciences that focus on institutions and ruling elites on the other hand. The thesis is seeking to help in the developing of new practices and approaches in the discipline and field of politics and Middle East literature.

The social sciences did not pay attention to explore and explain the emergence of political and social movements in the Middle East and, until recently, the scholars delayed in exploring and explaining their roles from the perspective of social movements.

Many of the local scholars pursued partial studies and did not engage in discussion about the main concepts and propositions of the theory. The thesis avoids the ideological reading and vision of the theory which tend to focus on a number of social movements which reflect the same ideology of the researcher, such as labour movements when studied by leftist scholars. A proper literature and theory is needed to understand and analyze the phenomenon emerged in the Egyptian socio-political context which is completely different. In this regard, El-Shorbagy (2010, p. 115) argued that “Kefaya has been misunderstood widely in the West, as well as among the Egyptian elite, due to the adoption of Western social science rankings”. El-Shorbagy also emphasized that “The literature about Kefaya was a selective ideological vision which described Kefaya as a secular leftist movement reflected the revival of the left in Egypt; while other writers amplified its strength and its popularity”. It is true that Kefaya was characterized by a number of characteristics highlighted by the literature of the new social movements according to Adel Rahaman(2009), however, it was not a society-oriented movements that focus on values and identity issues, nor was it centered around a single issue; both being important features of the new social movements. The approach of the new social movements remains valid to analyze many of the features of Kefaya as a protest movement composed of loose networks and small groups of activists, horizontal structure and cooperation across ideological lines.

It could be argued that the dilemma is not linked to the perspective of social movements itself but in the reductionist vision and ideological lens that limited it to particular networks and frames while ignoring other parts of the whole picture or considering it irrelevant. When the lens is not wide enough to include the most significant aspects of the phenomena, it will yield to wrong interpretations. In this regard the theory and approaches connected to the social movements produce a wide range of concepts and approaches that could be applied as a whole or in specific cases. It is a challenge for individual researchers to digest and apply the whole theories and apply them in different specific areas which means that there is a need for accumulation in the field and teamwork efforts.

It is worth noting that the thesis tends to avoid the dilemma of uncritical deployment of the conventional models and concepts to the social movements without acknowledging sufficiently that these models hold different historical genealogies, and need to be improved to offer explanations to the dynamics of change and resistance in this part of the world.

The thesis's contribution could be is to apply SMT and to test the political process model in the Egyptian context from a comprehensive approach which includes the proper theoretical propositions relevant to a non-Western context and the empirical fieldwork to prove the argument and provide accurate evidences. The empirical research has been conducted in contexts that do not possess fully developed plurality of parties, unions and alliance structures ensuring citizens access to the political system.

Therefore, another aim of this thesis is to elaborate on the conditions surrounding movement mobilization in competitive authoritarian regimes. This aim will be approached through the theoretical problem which this thesis addresses: under what conditions may movement mobilization in such competitive authoritarian contexts occur?

The viability of generalizations from the findings and conclusions could be extended to other social movements in Egypt or in the Middle East. The suggested frame for defining the political opportunity and new social movements and networks, cultural framing and new media impact could be extended to other contexts in the Middle East. They could account for the complexities of socio-political activism in contemporary Muslim societies.

The study about youth activism and social movements in Egypt should take into account the following concepts and processes and elaborate them to be more relevant and helpful in explaining the prominence of youth activism.

Political opportunity

The concept of political opportunity in the Middle East certainly seems different from that in Western countries. However, as much as the focus on liberal (Western) democracies and authoritarian (Arab) regimes is helpful when one is trying to understand social activism in its diversity, Tarrow (1988, 1994, 2011), identifies a number of types of political opportunities, including: 1) institutional access, 2) unstable political alignments, 3) divided elites, and 4) the presence of support groups and allies. Additional opportunities can be added to this list, notably diminished repression by an authoritarian state.

The classification of the four dimensions of the concept of political opportunity has been discussed and developed to be appropriate for political context ranging from facilitative to repressive. In the Egyptian context, these types of political opportunities are far from enough to give the comprehensive explanations for the emergence of social and youth activism. Notwithstanding that a specific kind of economic and social structure has a specific kind of social movement, it is important to revise the Middle East political literature to discuss and analyze the political opportunities according to the different approaches and theories about the state-society relationship. In addition to this, the following chapters will test and apply some of the assumptions and arguments of the structural approach about grievances and relative deprivation in the Egyptian context. The high levels of grievances among citizens generate tension and intense protest that could create political opportunities like that which triggered the intense social and labour protests in Egypt in 2007-2010 when networks of activists found recourse in street politics.

Consequently, the study will place stress on some indicators of political opportunities that are considered most relevant to the emergence of new agents of change and political networks. There are plenty of approaches and theories that need to be tested and these can be summarized into five sets of factors that seem most relevant to the Egyptian context from 2000-2011:

1- The rupture in state-society relationships

2- Socio-economic conditions and high levels of grievance: pressure from the bottom

3- Institutional access and ruling elite strategies

4- Division among the ruling elite and patronage networks

5- External and transnational factors

The transnational structures and external factors and actors used to have deeper implications on the political opportunities and constraints in the Egyptian context than the social movement theory used to stress. This means that the possible importance of the international context and transnational factors in which the movements operate need to be fully understood and explained. The study will focus on different kinds of extrinsic influence that will be identified in the following chapters such as direct involvement, particularly US foreign policy, globalization and diffusion of ideas and international civil society activism, and the regional conflicts in the Middle East

Framing and culture

The study discusses the dilemma of culture and the framing process which reflected the efforts to include culture in the political process model. The thesis highlights certain aspects of cultural opportunities, hegemony and counter-hegemonic blocks to explain the prominence of political activism, in addition to the process of constructing collective identity and social solidarity generated from the public and sub-culture and ideologies in the society. However, a further discussion about different components of culture, ideology, collective identity is worthy of future research.

In the conclusion, a study about youth activism and social movements in Egypt should take into account the following concepts and processes:

The classification of the four dimensions of the concept of political opportunity.

The importance of the international context and transnational factors

The dilemma of culture and framing process

The validity of new social movement approach

2.4 Methods and Techniques

To achieve the aims of the thesis and prove its arguments, fieldwork was very important to address the questions which emerged from the theoretical framework. The official data or statistics gives the general picture and map about youth conditions but would not be much help in knowing the details about the perception, frames and networks of the youth activism and its internal mechanisms. This research engages specifically in an empirical method which combines active observation and semi-structured interviewing of youth activists themselves. These methods, which give voice to the agents themselves, illuminate the concealed and

unknown parts of the phenomena which have been neglected by top-down elite-level studies. Close engagement with activists themselves allows new viewpoints from within the movements to emerge and be discovered, and is particularly important in unveiling the cultural attitudes and framings of the youth.

The researcher used a number of different techniques to collect the required data to address the questions posed in the thesis.

Active observation via new social media

Active observation is a kind of participant observation research method for data collection typically done in qualitative research projects and which includes direct observation, participation in the life of the group and collective discussions. As the thesis will demonstrate, the Egyptian youth activists have used new social media extensively and (in generational terms uniquely) to debate and discuss controversial issues, to support or oppose policies and actions both in internal and external arenas, to connect with other youth activism at home and abroad, and to develop and disseminate counter-hegemonic discourses. How better to access the youth than to speak to them through their own medium, to be a part of the movements themselves in terms of joining their internal conversations. It should be noted that, as an Egyptian who likes to think of himself as still 'young', this kind of participation is also a part of the researcher himself, and he of it. This has benefits in terms of the researcher's ability to interpret or translate the meaning of conversation, but equally the researcher must acknowledge the subjectivity that comes with active participation and being a part of the phenomenon that he is studying. While familiarity with context meant that the researcher might, for example, know which conversations or "chat rooms" were more significant than others, on the other hand his own ideological or political preferences could shape his relationship to prominent bloggers or party websites.

This participant observation included active observation of a large number of activists' web pages and profiles on Facebook and Twitter, focusing on their posts, comments, videos and links they use to share, to explore and analyze their views and ideas, in addition to the groups they established and taking notes about their attitudes and engagements.

Most of the activists speak and write Arabic which is the mother tongue for them and for the researcher who became a virtual friend with hundreds of activists on Facebook and began to interact and observe their behaviour, discussions and debates. During the days of the revolution, the researcher acted as an activist himself, (thus becoming participant – or 'researcher-activist') and engaged in the online activities as a participant and not only a

researcher. The researcher used the snowball technique by adding a number of famous activists whom he knew personally, then by including mutual friends' feature on Facebook, thus more and more activists became friends of the researcher. This enabled the researcher to carry out the online interviews for the thesis in the later stages in order to collect the data for the research. Of course, the very term 'friend' implies a subjective relationship, although the nature on on-line 'friends' is somewhat more transitory and superficial (or non-committed) than normal friendship. The researcher was conscious of the ethical dimensions of this, of the trust which such a relationship implied but did not make explicit, and thus afforded anonymity in the thesis where necessary to protect on-line discussants.

This kind of methodology was combined between what amounted to a novel on-line form of focus groups and observation techniques. When an activist wrote a note or posted his ideas various feedbacks and comments began to emerge, some of them supporting or rejecting, depending on the political views and different ideologies and networks that worked together or were involved in clashes. This enabled the researcher to examine and test the assumptions through observing the online behaviour and debates about different subjects and rectify the false information that might emerge from interviews. For example the researcher observed a long discussion on Facebook between Asmaa Mahfouz and other activists who accused April 6 of getting a foreign funding or another conversation about the activists who travelled to America to attend a Freedom House course and Ahmed Maher.

Second: Semi-structured interviews

In this regard the field work was conducted in three phases. The first phase, at the beginning of 2008, included interviews with some activists representing a sample of student and youth activism. It was part of a fieldwork project to explore the youth policy and student movements in Egypt. The semi-structured interviews with student activists in Egyptian universities aimed to comprehend and analyze the structure of the student movements and formal or informal networks. The collected information was about the financial and human resources, membership, leadership and collective identity which helped the researcher to respond to the questions raised by the social movement theory. The samples have been chosen by the snowball techniques and covered most of the student networks in Egypt from different universities. It included Al-Ghad, Revolutionary Socialist, Kefaya and Muslim Brothers student wing, in addition to a number of independent activists who were active in the formal student unions.

The second phase was conducted in September and October 2010 and the sample included activists representing the new activism that had emerged such as the ElBaradei campaign and

the Facebook activism. These interviews were mostly exploratory to identify the new phenomenon. The researcher used the snowball techniques and active observation for Facebook to choose the activists. The observation showed some activists who used to have influence and their pages reflected their leadership skills. Contacts were made and phone numbers obtained before returning to Egypt to conduct the fieldwork. The interviews were carried out either in activist's workplace or in popular cafes. At this stage the police repression was high before the rigged parliamentary election in 2010 but the activists were resisting and keen to build their organization using the social media and by benefiting from the social protest wave and the return of ElBaradei. At this stage focus was on the ElBaradei campaign, independent and social media activists and Muslim Brother Activists.

The third phase included interviews carried out through Skype and Facebook 'chatting' in January and February 2012. The sample included both old and new networks of activists that had emerged after the revolution and aimed to fill the gaps and respond to the main questions of the thesis. Unlike normal semi-structured interviews, these could often take place through discussion over a prolonged period of time and would progressively lose their structure and follow their own course. The benefits were obvious – a relationship of mutual trust would develop, the interviewee might become more willing to express difficult positions, and subjects could be returned to for clarification.

During this stage focus was on the perception, culture and new opportunities that emerged during and after the revolution, seeking answers to the questions that the SMT raised about the recognition of the political opportunities and the framing process they followed in addition to the reasons behind the splits and divisions among young activists and their weak performances in the election.

The use of interviews through Facebook and the choice of the samples came after the researcher engaged with activists on Facebook to support the Egyptian revolution from abroad as part of the roles played by Egyptian Diasporas around the world particularly in Europe and the United States. This engagement created a kind of sympathy and mutual trust between the researcher and activists and, in later stages, some activists sought to recruit the researcher into their new movements and parties. The researcher spent time engaging with the activists on Facebook in their discussions and debates commenting on their ideas from an academic viewpoint. The researcher at all times retained integrity in his own responses, did not pretend political sympathies, or suggest untrue positions. He also, at all times made it clear that he was simultaneously a researcher and that the discussions would be used in his thesis. This never generated a negative response.

In this regard, there was no time limit for carrying out the interviews as both the researcher and activists were always there and could return back to the thread on Facebook to revise the responses and verify the answers and generate new questions.

One striking issue from the participant/active observation and the interview process, in many stages, was to see how the activists developed their views over time and moved from their original positions and movements to engage with new networks and construct new positions. Here, the contentious politics was vivid and changeable and the ideas were modified and developed, including the building of new connections and networks and constructing of new identities. The trajectory of young activists could be traced to see how the consciousness and connections developed over time aiming to reach a point of equilibrium and stability.

Sample selection

The initial selection of a sample of young activists was based on the experience of the researcher and his networks as he had prior personal knowledge of many activists through various researches that had been previously conducted[10]. As a researcher in the National Center for Sociological and Criminological Research in Cairo, we keep on preparing fieldwork research that included different aspects and categories of young people in Egypt. Interviews were conducted with a sample of 50 activists representing a wide variety of networks and groups. The interviews with the activists should take into account the representation of the most prominent orientations and movements. In this regard, the snowball technique was useful in knowing and getting contacts with more activists.

The sample included activists from these movements and networks:

- April 6 youth activism
- Muslim Brotherhood young wing
- Altyyar Party
- Kefaya activists
- Democratic Front Party
- Al-Ghad

10 Two empirical studies have been conducted by the researcher before and during his Ph. D; a published study about “Youth Policy in Egypt”, 2009and “the Generational Mobility in Egypt”, 2009.

- Al-Amal (Labour) Party
- ElBaradei campaign
- Facebook activists: anonymous activists who hide their identity.
- Socialists movement
- Copts activists
- Civil society and non-governmental organizations:
- Researchers and experts who have experience in working with youth

The field work helped the researcher to address the questions that emerged from the theoretical frameworks and illuminate the unknown sides of the phenomena such as the personal motivation for engagement in contentious politics, the social and political experience of the leaders and members and specific reasons behind the splits and divisions in the networks. The thesis is focusing on the kind of continuity and changes in these movements and networks which were born from the womb of existing groups or networks and the role of the generational gap in this process.

As the political opportunity is not something objective, the active observation and interviews with leaders and members illustrates how and why they recognize any event or series of incidents to be a chance or opportunity for mobilization and protest. Interviews with leadership and ordinary members could point out the perceptions and shared definitions of the situation. The leadership and entrepreneurs play a big role in defining the opportunities and creating consensus in the movements. “Objective” opportunities do not automatically trigger episodes of contentious politics or social movements, regardless of what activists may think or feel. The empirical work is carried out to explore individual perceptions and emotions about the political opportunities and constraints to explain their engagement in the continuous politics which is risky and certainly can be costly actions. It was also helpful in discovering that some historical events create new networks and groups while other events did not help in developing such networks and groups. For example, April 6 2008 Strike created new movement such as April 6while Kefaya began to decline after the 2005 election.

The fieldwork presented several arguments and conclusions that could help in understanding the process of building solidarity and the collective identities of the social movements and political actors. The interviews and comparisons between the sources could give a clear vision

about the real power and resources available to these networks and movements apart from propaganda and media images.

Themes

There were main elements and big themes prepared before the semi-structured interviews, with a flexibility for discussion with the respondents to show points of interest and political expertise and socialization. This flexibility was very important to shed light and open serious dialogue about new issues that had not been clear in the basic scenario of the interview. In this regard, the discussion and open questions contributed to the development of themes proposed for discussion. These elements and responses could be converted into a quantitative study in the future through the design of a form of questionnaire to be distributed for wider representatives of the activism society.

Interviews aimed to get answers about: culture, framing, perceptions of the political opportunities and the networks and the internal mechanisms such as the level of centrality, membership and internal democracy. The interviews also sought to explore the various activisms' recognition of their common interests and their definition of political opportunities and constraints and the bases for cooperation across ideological divisions.

The active observation and interviews were important in exploring the framing process these movements pursue and why they move from focusing on external issues like Palestine and Iraq to internal issues. They also sought to explore the cultural grounds upon which they built their opposition to the regime (internal culture or external); what were the political and cultural problems that led to the splits in these movements and why they cannot continue for a long time and the political pragmatism and the lack of ideological grounds which make it easy for activists to move from movement to another.

The open questions

- The perception and the awareness of the existence of a political opportunity.
- The development of organizational and logistics capacity of the youth activism. Drafting revolutionary intellectual and cultural frames against the regime.
- Constructing the collective identity of groups.
- Class and social affiliations of the activists.
- Reasons for the decline of youth activism

- Funding problems and divisions.
- Relationship with other actors in the political game.

Limitation

It is important to acknowledge the limitations of the techniques of using Facebook and Skype in the interviewing of activists. Some interviews carried out through chatting and dialogue on Facebook and Skype could fulfil the aims of fieldwork while others, through the use of video calls, allowed the opportunity to observe the body language, facial emotions and noting the conditions of the place. However, due to the nature and aims of this research, which focuses on the ideas, perceptions, knowledge and experience of respondents, this method was adequate and conducive to the objective of the research, in addition to reducing the extra costs. This, of course, is different from anthropological studies and case studies that require the kind of cohabitation and description of the surrounding environment.

Chapter Three:

The State Society Relationship and the Cycles of Rise and Decline of Youth Movement: 1952-2000

3.1 Introduction

The Egyptian political history is marked by the prominence of youth and political activism when the political arrangements and institutions organizing the state society relationship failed or proved to be inefficient. Over the last six decades, several historical events which coincided with a politically opportune context witnessed the dramatic emergence and spread of youth activism and other social movements. This chapter attempts to set out a narrative of the political history and state-society relations to compose a synthesis explaining and analysing the conditions in which the youth activism emerged and developed resulting from the social changes and the political arrangements which organized state society relations in Egypt between 1952 and 2000. In other words, this chapter focuses on a post-independence Egyptian political history to work out the rules that governed the emergence of the youth activism in these five decades in order to develop an analytical framework to explain the similar experience that emerged and developed from 2000 to 2010.

In other words, the purpose of this chapter is to provide a narrative of Egypt modern history which identifies the political opportunities which enabled youth activism to emerge or decline. In each historical stage, explanations are offered about how social movements might then be contextualised within a study of post-independence Egyptian political history, linking the process and concepts raised from the social movement theory to show how the Egyptian context complements or accommodates them. For example, the political process model gives great attention to the political opportunity structure that leads to the emergence of social movements. It is important to examine its assumption in the Egyptian context to understand and analyze the factors that worked together to lead to the emergence and development of the youth activism. This chapter discusses the elements of the political opportunities and institutional context, in which the social movements emerge such as a less repressive climate, splits within the ruling elite, or the presence of influential allies or supporters (Tarrow 1989).

It is noteworthy that the literature about Middle East offers several theoretical approaches and concepts to achieve this goal and this chapter attempts to mark them out as social pact,

corporatism, hegemonic state and competitive authoritarianism. It has to be clear that these propositions developed over different stages. In post-independence political life: social pacts, corporatism and hegemony theories belong to the era of populist post-independence regimes. Competitive authoritarianism relates to a more recent phase marked by political reforms, the end of single-partyism, and a corresponding bid to broaden the political base of the regime in an era of neo-liberal economic reforms which undermine the old social pacts.

3.2 Youth Activism and Power Struggle in Egypt 1952-1954

Youth, particularly university students were an important player in Egyptian politics during the liberal period (1919-1952). Youth mobilization emerged and developed against the backdrop of British colonialism and in support of constitutional rule and became a mainstay of Egyptian public life. The students in universities became integrated part of the political movements of the time such as Al Wafd party, the Muslim Brothers, Young Egypt and the Communist Movement. Youth activism during that period was often an extension of the political forces outside the universities. The youth activism and other civil society organizations were very active and vibrant during the liberal era in the 1940s. However, they were parts of the political and ideological movements and parties that sought for independence and political change.

All these groups and networks accumulated their efforts with the Free Officers to produce the 1952 upheaval. As a result an immediate replacement in the political ruling elite took place between 1952-1954 but the youth activism continued to flourish because of the less repressive climate and splits within the new ruling elite. As soon as conflicts within the Revolutionary Command Council and the Free Officers escalated (Springborg, 1974, 65), youth activism became gradually part of the power struggle that took place in Egypt and ended up in 1954 with the beginning of the Nasser era.

The revolution of 1952 inherited a political system in which the universities played an important role both in the national movement and in the struggle for power. However, to consolidate its power at the outset, the military regime had to win over a politically active student body which, in common with other political groups, had become accustomed to the liberal framework of political activity and found it difficult to come to terms with the rule of the armed forces. Students and workers were seen as a potential source of political disturbance (Abdulla, 2009, p. 119). The confrontation with universities, both teachers and students, resulted directly from the conflict between the liberal intelligentsia and the autocratic tendencies of the military rulers (Abdulla, 2009, p. 120).

The domination of the young Free Officers in Egypt after 1954 did not only exclude the old ruling political elite which linked to the Palace and traditional political parties, but also isolated the younger generations and activists of the other ideological political factions who supported the revolution. Thus, if the generation of the free officers reflected the aspirations of new generations in post-independent Egypt, in fact it excluded other generational units represented by the various political and social movements. It is interesting to consider that members of the Revolutionary Command Council, who left the council early - voluntarily or involuntarily - were of those who had distinguished themselves as members of Islamist or Leftist trends, which no doubt explains the political arrangement formulated by Nasser (Lachin, 1992, p. 69).

3.3 Youth Activism in the Nasserist Era: the Hegemonic State

The end of the liberal experiments that Egyptian society had engaged in briefly before and immediately after 1952 and new regime emerging led to the decline of independent youth activism. The Nasser era was marked by the emergence and rapid consolidation of the corporatist arrangements which successfully included the social and economic forces through a single party system that incorporated the main interests in society and helped the state to allocate the resources in a way that gained the support of social classes and forces especially workers and peasants as well as the middle class. A populist social pact organized the state and society relations in ways that decreased any social protest. The regime gained more power and legitimacy as the bureaucracy expanded to include millions of Egyptians, and the military establishment enjoyed a high profile in society. Nasser's charismatic personality jointly with the Pan-Arab ideology provided a strong base for state hegemony over the society and decreased the appeal of counter hegemonic ideologies like that of the Muslim Brothers and the Communists.

The following section discusses the structure and features of the Nasser regime using hegemony, social pacts and corporatism, patron-client networks theories belonged to the era of the populist post-independence state which was marked by the decline of the autonomy of youth activism.

First: ideological hegemony of the state

The state, according the hegemony approach, "rules and manages social and political actors in the society not through coercive means but through the expansion of social forces consent and the common beliefs and values system" (Gramsci, 1971, p. 159). Hegemony exists as "a consensus concerning the 'naturalness' of existing relations of power, backed by the coercion

of the state apparatus (the police, courts, etc.)". This consensus is diffused through the institutions of civil society, for example, voluntary associations, the education system and the media (Gramsci, 1971, pp 12, 161, Pratt, 2004, p. 318). Using Gramscian concepts, it could be argued that Nasser became hegemonic in two ways: 'leading' and 'dominating'. Nasser led the regime and the social forces which were its allies, and dominated those which were its enemies (Gramsci, 1971, pp. 55-57, n. 5; Ayubi, 2001, p. 6). It could be further argued that the Nasser regime consolidated itself by incorporating support through a combination of nationalism (anti-imperialism) in foreign policy, curbing the weak agrarian capitalist oligarchy through nationalizations and land reform, and a populist social contract (Hinnebusch, 2012, p. 2**).**

It is worth noting that the Gramscian concept of hegemony is "broader than the Weberian concept of legitimacy because it does not confine itself to the processes according to which political structures are accepted by the system's agents, but delves as well into the area of cultural and ideological consent, and emphasizes the role of state as educator" (Ayubi, 2001, p. 7). In this regard the regime constructed a synthesis of ideas and principles which concentrated on social justice, socialism, Arab nationalism, the resistance of the Western colonization and Israel. This ideology also emphasized the corrupt nature of a monarchial regime before the revolution, and the party system and parties. In addition to this, the people expressed their emotional attachment to Nasser and his charismatic personality (Tohami. 2009, p 85). The regime overcame the counter-hegemonic groups and discourse which became weak and did not manage to compete with the regime ideology.

It is worth noting that consent may also be secured "through material realities, such as, the creation of certain political institutions, state provision of services and cultural rituals" (Eagleton, 1991, p. 112). However, the 'ideological' and the material aspects of the hegemonic state "cannot be separated but, rather, constitute two sides of the same coin, the one reinforcing the other" (Eagleton, 1991; p. 114 & Ayubi, 2001, p. 8). In the Egyptian context, the new populist regime gave the state an expansionist socio-economic role to get this consent. An explicit or implicit "social pact" was forged, under the terms of which "the state was to effect development, ensure social justice, satisfy the basic needs of its citizens, consolidate political independence, and achieve other national aspirations e.g., Arab unity, the liberation of Palestine". In return, citizens were to forgo, at least for a while, the quest for democracy and participation. In this regard "Pan-Arab nationalist and socialist ideologies were used to popularize this social contract and to generate political mobilization in support of the ruling regimes. The majority of citizens accepted or acquiesced" (Ibrahim, Liberalization and Democratization, p. 36).

Second: Corporatist state/structure of ASU which integrated interests including youth

The hegemonic regime consolidated a "distinctive model for the organisation of mass politics" which could be called the corporatist regime. The regime organized and established its formal institutions and incorporated the interests on the basis of corporatism. Ehteshami & Murphy, (1996, p. 755) argued that in this corporatist regime, "A generals/civilian technocrats alliance defends the control of the authoritarian bureaucratic regime, while a corporatist political structure provides the channels for mobilisation through which it can operate" [11]. Ayubi discriminated between two ideal types of corporatism which range between a more 'organic', solidaristic and communicatarian strand at one end of the spectrum, and an interest-based and populist/mobilisational strand at the other end (Ayubi, 2001, p. 3). It could be called the authoritarian strand of corporatism (Ayubi, 2001, p. 19). In such 'corporative-state' arrangements, the state is "compelled to play a driving role in the social development" in the absence of earlier democratic traditions (Busi-Gluckmann, 1980, p. 284ff) [12]. Heydemann considered that the emergence of that "centralized, hierarchical, and tightly regulated corporatist structures of interest representation" was one of the significant indications of the rise of the national populist social pacts during the 1950s and 1960s (Heydemann, 2007, p. 32).

In the corporatist regime, a single party became the intermediary between state and interest groups as in this corporatist model, interests are negotiated and incorporated into the state's decision-making processes (Ehteshami & Murphy, p. 754). Indeed, one-party rule became the dominant pattern of governance worldwide assuming that it played the major role in the processes of nation building and national integration (see Apter 1955 and 1965, pp. 179-222; Coleman & Rosberg 1964; Huntington 1968; Moore 1962; Schachter 1961; Wallerstein 1960; Zolberg 1963 and 1966).

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11 Corporatism, according to Perlmutter, is a type of political domination by a coalition of politicians, technocrats, military men and bureaucrats, with the military as the ultimate arbiter and source of elite recruitment, in which different more or less organized and more or less autonomous social groups are linked to the state and its bureaucracy via patrimonial-clientelistic structures of control (Perlmutter 1981, 38 and 117). Corporate regimes (the military is still the most powerful group, but rule is exercised by a coalition of the military and bureaucrats) (Perlmutter 1981, 129).11 The balance between technocratic and military roles changed over time and between different stages. (O'Donnell 1973, 30-31)11 . Kevin Koehler and Jana Warkotsch, Putting Institutions into Perspective: Two Waves of Authoritarianism, Studies and the Arab Spring, 2011, pp 6,7

12 Ayubi illustrated that, "This stems from the fact that in these societies neither 'philosophical individualism' nor social classes have developed well enough to allow for the emergence of politics as we see it in Western capitalist societies". Ayubi, 1995 , p. 3

The corporatist structures provided the blueprint for relations between the state and a wide range of other collective interest groups, including peasants, labour, students, women, and various associations (Heydemann, (2007) p. 32).

Apart from the state apparatus, Nasser's vision was against any political or ideological organizations, against the idea of the organization itself. The face of this new system of popular organizations was not conducted on the basis of the difference in the content of politics and ideology adopted by each organization, but was fundamentally about the notion of being party or organization itself (Al-Shalg, 1992, p 80). In this single-party system, the Arab Socialist Union (ASU), which was supposed to be the popular political organization, shifted over time to an administrative technocratic body more than a political party (Al-Shalg, 1992, pp 105,106).

The key attribute of the Socialist Union was its expansion to include the entire electorate, where the values of democratic competition and respect for the other opinion were rejected. Indeed, the plurality of opinions even within a single political organization was not permissible either, and the widespread belief among that leadership was that political participation was equivalent to mobilizing of the masses behind the national goals and policies (Abou-Zeid, 1996, pp. 70, 71). Nasser regime acted as a kind of national-populist social pact to, "incorporate interests, absorb oppositions, co-opt competitors, build flexible coalitions, articulate cross-cutting and seemingly inconsistent policies, reconstitute privileged social networks, restructure property rights, and accommodate the emergence of new institutions" (Heydemann, 2007, p. 35).

The regime offered to do away with the parliamentary system in return for providing a number of social achievements which the previous system had notably failed to produce. While the promises of social change appealed to large sectors of the intelligentsia, the accompanying political restrictions provoked their vivid animosity. As some authors such as Awad put it "any people thought they could have a republic and agrarian reform and at the same time keep the classical forms of liberal democracy" (Abdalla, 2009, p. 120). In this regard, The University was one of the three platforms (the other two being the lawyers' and journalists' syndicates) from which the intelligentsia could voice its opposition to the military regime (Abdalla, 2009, p. 120).

Third: Stunting of an embryonic civil society

The populist social contract had, among other things, a detrimental impact, not only on traditional political parties, but also on other organizations of civil society. The latter were

either prohibited or severely restricted by an arsenal of laws and decrees or were annexed outright to the single party in power (Ibrahim, 1995, p. 36).

The boundaries between the state and civil society have long been blurred and the two 'spheres' are much more interrelated than are currently depicted. For example, civil society actors, such as trade unions and business organizations, have long been involved in state policymaking in many countries through corporatist arrangements (Schmitter, 1979; Pratt, 2004, p. 317). Law 32/1964 organized civil associations into a strict, monopolistic hierarchy, with the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) at the apex of the pyramid (Ibid, p. 321). The Explanatory Memorandum of Law 32/1964 identified the ideological intentions of the Law as being an instrument of state-directed modernization (Ibid, p. 322).

In other words, under populist rule, civil society organizations lost all or much of their autonomy. As a result, many of these organizations withered away due to aging membership and the disinterest of younger generations. Some became merely paper organizations, and only a very few adapted to the new populist formula and managed to remain active within the existing political constraints (Ibrahim, 1995, p. 36).

Fourth: Patron-client and informal networks

The regime developed clientelism and patron-client relations to ensure the coherence and loyalty of the elite and social forces. The corporative regime and its national-populist social pact "not only can be defined by formal institutional arrangements but also by closely related informal modes of governance and resource allocation" (Heydemann, 2007, p. 22).The informal networks within and across formal institutions and public sectors were not only dominated by members of the single party (ASU) but also included senior officers, bureaucrats, union elites, and senior officials in other semi-public associations (Heydemann, 2007, p. 33). The formal political and administrative institutions "provided fertile breeding grounds for patron-client relationships" (Springborg, 1974, pp. 86-88).

Springborg deepened our understanding of the informality and networks that the regime effectively worked through. The concept of political clientelism has been used to refer to "the glue that held the political system together for long time" (Ibid, p. 87). Springborg illustrated that the informal organizations included Family, Dufaa "graduating class" and Shilla "close friends". This means that small group of people work together to obtain individual goals (Ibid, p. 104).

In this model the formal organizations worked as vehicles through which personal connections were established (Ibid, p. 104). In addition to this, the civil or nongovernmental associations' leaders were considered brokers between the sources of patronage (ruler, ministers or ministerial secretaries) and their organization's membership, and were evaluated by their followers largely in terms of the amount of patronage they funnel down into the organization (Ibid, p. 86).

The main characteristics of the informality arrangements could be summarised as follows:

First, access to these networks typically was controlled by the political elites who dominated formal institutions. Second, both informal networks and formal institutions depend on and contribute to the survival of the system of rule that produces them. Third, the proliferation of informal modes of governance and resource allocation contributes significantly to the adaptive capacity of regimes by expanding the opportunity set so that incumbents can exploit themselves in power. The availability of new resources might come from internal mechanisms like the nationalisation of private and foreign projects or through external financial or material support (Heydemann, 2007, p. 34).

The formal and informal networks such families and dufaas "graduating class" serve main two functions for the regime; first as communication centres and, second, as centres for the recruitment process. It is personal connections and loyalties that open the channels of upward mobility (Springborg, op.cit, pp. 104, 105).

Collective action and youth activism

The literature about collective action and youth activism and student unions shows that they have long been involved in state policymaking through corporatist arrangements in Egypt. Most youth unions and organizations were integrated into the state structure or the ruling party, resulting in the arrangement where ASU and the formal student unions (Etihad E-Talaba) would represent them. These authoritarian corporatist institutional forms became the only available form for collecting and organizing interests (Heydemann, 2007, p. 30). Indeed, the corporatism reflects Waterbury's (1993) sense of having been delivered by elites rather than fought for by their members. This model diffused potential grievances against, and challenges to, the regime. When interest groups attempted to protest or express their grievances outside of this system, "the regime would claim that they challenged the national consensus and interest and so could legitimately be suppressed" (Ehteshami & Murphy, 1996 p. 755). In the context of post-independence Egypt there was a hegemonic consensus around the subordination of civil society to 'national interests' (Pratt, 2004, p. 319). The authoritarian

vision which dominated the political culture suspected that autonomous civil society or youth activism could be a threat that should be "suppressed before the colonialists could exploit it for their own purposes and the autonomous individual seemed to resemble an enemy that should be subjugated" (Al-Arawi, 1983, pp. 29-36, 107, Ayubi, 2001, p. 24). In other words the hegemonic regime ideology has led to "demobilization of the populace, or at best selective and controlled mobilization of certain pro-government segments of the population" (Bayat, 2000, p. 2). All civil associations, syndicates and youth centres were part from the corporatist arrangements. The political activism was highly restricted and oppressed, and youth mobilization was restricted to state sponsored organizations such as the Youth Organization (Munazzemet Al-Shabab) and the Youth Vanguard which were parts of the ruling party (ASU) (Eissa Mohamed, 2008, pp. 33-34).

The formal Student Unions (Etihad E-Talaba) emerged as entities belonging to ASU after the formation of the General Federation of Arab Republic of students in 1960. However, the University Guards oversaw the activities of students and the approval of the security services became a prerequisite for candidates in student elections (NCSCR, 1983,p. 158). It is true that large segments of the young people in the 1960s joined ASU and its Youth Organizations, for being in power, not for revolution. However, the regime excluded the political parties from practicing any contribution to the political socialization of the youth (Al-Shobky, 2002, p. 84). Counter-hegemonic movements could not emerge or challenge these arrangements and remained outside the public sphere.

Thus the implication of the 1954 confrontation between the regime and youth activism marked the 1950s and 1960s which represent a long period of hibernation for the student movements. Zakariay, a famous author, criticized the youth apathy in 1960s by saying "the young men on whom the future of the country depends are bossed with an opium called football" (Zakariay, 1966, p. 42 quoted from Abdalla, 2009, p. 123). The demobilization and demoralization of what had been an autonomous political movement was engineered through a combination of coercion and socialization. The scholar Amos Permutter went so far to say, "The problem of Egypt is not a crisis of political participation. The problem is "the suspension of politics as an autonomous goal" (Abdalla, 2009, pp. 124, 138).

In sum the youth activism during this period were marked by three characteristics:

First: a lack of tolerable ideological diversity with only regime organizations having permission to exist.

Second: a loss or absence of structural/organizational autonomy.

Third: a weak and inability to mobilize except trough informal and formal networks tied to the regime.

However, the collective action and youth engagement took different forms to adapt to the hegemonic regime and its corporatist arrangements. A number of scholars have noted that even these highly controlled forms of corporatism created their own possibilities for agency, bargaining, and negotiation by the groups that they sought to contain (Bianchi 1989; Goldberg 1992; Posunsey 1997, Heydemann, 2007, p. 32). It is worth noting that the regime unintentionally created social forces which represented what could become fertile soil for a new wave of political activism like, large groups of educated youth as well as working and middle classes that would later confront the state (Bayat, 2000, p. 2).

The 1967 Defeat and the revitalization of social movements

These arrangements were strongly shaken after the defeat of 1967 and the failure of the state's developmental projects. Most segments of society such as the intelligentsia and young generation lost their trust and confidence in the governing elite. They realized that they were mistaken to think the state and its leadership were qualified to protect the society and defend the national security. Consequently the hegemonic power of the state diminished and important groups of young people began to challenge the ruling elite through demonstrations and strikes. The corporatist arrangements faced a strong challenge due to the fact that the protest actions basically came from the Youth Organization (Munazzemet Al-Shabab) which was a part of the ruling party (ASU). The students, those oft-invoked 'Sons of the Revolution', turned out to be its prodigal sons. They discovered that their own hoped-for share in political power could not be realized without direct confrontation with the regime (Abdalla, 2009, p. 212).

The younger generation began to seek different solutions and this led to the flourishing of diverse ideological and religious movements. Indeed, university students and workers were the first to mobilize against the Nasserist regime in the wake of the 1967 defeat. They staged demonstrations in 1968 calling for the strict penalization of those responsible for the 1967 defeat, and for the restoration of political rights and freedoms. The Nasser regime responded by issuing harsher sentences against some military officers, and by promising limited political liberalization within the ranks of the ruling party (Eissa, 2008, 33-34). There were not student unions in the sense of trade unions before 1952, but there was a political current that was active. In 1960 the General Federation of Students was formed, and student unions emerged as entities belonging to the ASU Youth Organization. In the wake of the massive student demonstrations in September 1968, the regime modified the student regulations to allow the

formation of a political action committee as one of the four core committees of the formal student unions (NCSCR, 1983, p. 158).

The political role of the young people who grew up in the era of Nasser and the revolution changed in the wake of the defeat of 1967, when the rebellion of large segments of this generation emerged. It is astonishing that this generation was brought up in the organizations of corporatism, but at the same time they rebelled and sharply criticized the leadership of the regime (Al-Shobky, 2002, p. 84).

The events of 1967 were distinctive and showed the failure of the populist social contract and the anti-imperialistic ideology seeding the erosion of state hegemony and creating disputes among the ruling elite particularly between the president, Nasser, and the General Leader of the Army, Abdel Hakiem Amer about who should bear the responsibility about the defeat which ended with the suspicious death of the latter. This lack of coherence in the ruling elite provided the youth and protest movement with the context for a new opportunity to emerge.

The regime attempted to temporarily cope with this wave of protest when Nasser declared the 30th March Statement which called for more responsibility and democracy. The regime realized that there was an urgent need to respond to the crisis through some changes in the way of political governing. Consequently, the Statement of March 30th 1968 pointed out the shortcomings in the performance of ASU which been attributed to the appointment as a way to choose the leaders of ASU, thus the regime endorsed the elections. It also stressed the need to transform society to be more open society and to offer an opportunity for expressing other opinions (Abou Zied, 1996, p. 72-75). However, a new phenomenon began to emerge that reflected the apathy among some members of this generation. After the 1967 defeat, discontent increased among the intellectual elite, and there was a growing trend for migration of the educated and intellectuals, and the period 1968-70 had highest rates of emigration which were concentrated in the age group of 20-40 years (Isaac, 2002, p. 71).

The most significant implications of the 1967 events were that they sowed the seeds for the development in the longer term of ideological possibilities in Egypt and the Arab political arena. According to Dessouki (1973), the Arab intellectuals who explained al-Nakba (the defeat) in terms of historical and long-term factors, who saw the wider significance and who made sincere attempts at self-analysis and self-criticism, could be classified into three groups:

1- Representatives of the secular liberal response who stressed the importance of education, science, technology, planning and secularization.

2- Representatives of the Islamist response who advocated a return to Islam as the only solution.
3- Representatives of the revolutionary socialist response who advocated the complete modernization of society along revolutionary lines.

Most observers of the Egyptian scene agree that the rise of these religious movements dates back to the aftermath of the Arab defeat of 1967(Ibrahim, 1980, p. 425).

3.4 The Sadat Era: Survival Strategies and the Prominence of Youth Ideological Oriented Activism

The regime crisis after the 1967 war, followed by Nasser's death in 1970, created a growing awareness among the elite and intellectuals that the old populist social pact and hegemonic ideology were not able to continue and there was a need to create a new model stressing political and economic openness as the March Statement in 1968 had illustrated. The laws issued in 1971-1972 came to allow the participation of those who had been politically isolated under Nasser (Abou Zied, 1996, pp. 72, 75). The expansionist role of the state had reached its peak in the 1950s and 1960s. After that, the course of socio-political events internally, regionally, and internationally forced the state to retreat from several socio-economic functions (Ibrahim, 1995, p. 37). This led to the emergence of a new form of social pact that organized mass politics in Egypt which some authors thought "might give way to more participatory democratic forms of rule" (Heydemann, 2007, p. 21).

Liberalising the state from the top

The beginning on the path of transition to democratic rule in the late sixties and the first half of the seventies occurred as a kind of crisis management to diffuse the pressure coming from society and social forces especially students and workers who called for more political and civil liberties as well as other groups such as intellectuals and judges. The economic liberalization, associated with political openness in the seventies, connected with the convergence with the United States (Abou Zied, 1996, p. 76). An alternative foreign policy emerged which shifted the anti-imperialistic approach and alliance with the USSR toward a new alliance with the west and the USA.

Ehteshami & Murphy (1996, p. 764) argued that the democratisation came as "a strategy of survival from the top" as the president and his elite sought to renew the political legitimacy. Sadat searched for other alternatives and embarked on a different articulation of the relation between state and society to compensate for his lack of charismatic and revolutionary

legitimacy - at least in the early years of his rule - compared with Nasser who had dominated the state and society. The fiscal crises after the war also shaped the social pact between the state and citizens. Sadat attempted to compensate for the lack of hegemonic bases through a democratic legitimacy using both traditional and religious legitimacy.

After the achievements in the 1973 war, Sadat renewed his legitimacy as a confident champion leader and decided to rearrange the political and economic system. The economic opening policies "Infitah" of 1974 was accompanied by an apparent political opening. At first the single party, the Arab Socialist Union (ASU), simply evolved into three permitted factions; centre, left and right, which were later allowed to operate as distinct political parties in 1977 (Ehteshami & Murphy, 1996, p. 761). This led to a kind of loose form of corporatism which allowed for pluralism and different social forces to compete together in elections. Egypt formally resumed its second democratization process in 1976, after a quarter of a century of corporatism and populist state ideology under Nasser (Ibrahim, 1998, p. 381).

However, several counter forces impeded the process, including the inertia of the authoritarian legacy (1952-1976) and the continued restrictive law of associations (Law 32 of 1964), which stunted the flourishing of Egyptian civil society (Ibrahim, 1998, p. 381).

The loose corporatist arrangements

The state was forced to assert its autonomy from the party in order to ensure the liberalization strategy and reducing resistance from within. However this created a dilemma for the corporatist arrangements: "The state could not afford simply to ditch the ruling party, not only because it represented the ideological source of regime legitimacy, but also because it provided the route for co-opting society through its position as intermediary between state and corporate groups" (Ehteshami & Murphy, 1996, p. 760). In addition to this, "the level of fusion between personnel in the party and state further complicated matters because the head of state was usually the party leader as well" (Ehteshami & Murphy, 1996, p. 760). The authoritarian legacy ingrained in the executive branch of the government and the practice of election rigging in favour of the ruling party spread; the latter has bequeathed the political parties weak cadres and an impotent political infrastructure (Ibrahim, 1998, p. 381).

The labour and trade unions that benefited from the corporatist system were against the dissolution of the ASU the only body which could have stood in the way of Sadat's economic liberalisation measures. Actually Sadat, having destroyed the party as a centre of power, now established the power of the centre. He demolished the ASU to establish the National Democratic Party (NDP) which was led by his loyal supporters and got rid of his enemies.

Sadat, followed by Mubarak, decided to gather two important positions together to become the head of the state and head of the NDP which became the dominant party in the political system until the 25th January revolution.

In fact Sadat's survival strategy did not weaken the presidential position or the hegemonic party as the centre of power. Ehteshami & Murphy (1996, p. 761) emphasized that this transformation did not "mean the dismantlement of corporatism, merely the decapitation of the corporatist organisations to prevent vested interests from interfering with his economic policy". During the Sadat era a new balance in the corporatist arrangements between military and bureaucracy was representing a decrease in the military character of the Egyptian elite (Abdalla, 1988, p. 214). This created a relatively more civilian ruling elite, especially in the cabinet and at provincial levels.

Sadat established a new type of political contestation where some parties play the role of real opposition and others of loyal opposition. The content of political action remained the same and did not differ from the foundations of what was ruled by the political process in the period of Nasser. Sadat created a loose form of corporatism shaped by "restricted pluralism to serve a particular function in his project which attempted to be applied in Egypt" (Nafaa, 1988, p.47). In this restricted pluralism, a certain number of parties were legalized while the formation of others was rejected, in addition to measures restricting the participation of radical groups, either directly or indirectly (Abou-Zeid, 1996, pp. 70-75). The liberalization was thus aiming ultimately towards liberalization in the economic arena rather than heading towards the democratization of the political arena.

The regime felt threats coming from the Left which began to exercise its role as a real opposition party, refusing to remain part from the façade democratic structure, and succeeded in attracting many members of the Nasserists, Nationalists and Marxists groups. The regime responded by narrowing the channels of political participation not only against political parties, but also civil society and student movements. It should be noted that Sadat used both force and legislations to eliminate or to weaken the Left, but these options ironically contributed to the strengthening of the Islamic movements at the expense of other political forces, in spite of the continuation of the ban on the formation of Islamist political parties (Abou-Zeid, 1996, pp. 78-82).

Collective action and political opportunities:

The Sadat era was marked by a number of elements that led to a new prominence of youth activism. They include the power struggle after Nasser, liberalization and the privatization

process which created tension within the regime, the high level of grievances and the fiscal crises.

First; The power struggle and lack of coherence in the ruling elite:

Clientelism and patron-client relations ensured the coherence and loyalty of the elites and social forces. The golden age of the interests of informal networks had been in the fifties and sixties. With the beginning of pluralism and economic openness, political resources multiplied and it became essential that the alliances be reinforced on the basis of common economic interests and harmony of political visions (El-Sayed, 1991). After Nasser's death different factions either declared loyalty to new leader or rejected him on ideological and interest grounds. Some of the main formal and informal networks within the regime defied Sadat as the legitimate president. Sadat was Nasser's vice president and the second in command according to the succession rules, but he lacked much of Nasser's charisma and therefore seemed less qualified as a president (Rashed,2012).

The powerbrokers within the ASU forced Sadat to accept limits on his own presidential authority in return for accepting him as president in 1970. The most important of these was a stipulation that he rule collectively, which meant that he would have to secure the agreement of the ASU's Supreme Executive Committee and the Central Committee on all major policy initiatives (Cook , 2012). By May 1971, however, Sadat had cultivated enough support, especially among the military and police officers, to oust these power centres and prominent figures[13] by what has been called the "Rectification Revolution". The confrontation weakened the ruling elite cohesion, but these forces failed to challenge to the official president. They broke down due to lack of legal cover for rebellion, however, this confrontation encouraged the emergence of protest movements in the streets opposing Sadat's policies particularly the student movement in 1971-1972.

Second: Liberalization and the privatization process created tension in the regime networks

The move from Nationalist populism and a state-led economic development strategy to economic liberalization during 1970s deepened the lack of coherence in the ruling elite. It is worth noting that the change in the strategy of the regime to pursue economic liberalization and the privatization process created tension in the regime networks. Some of them were

13These prominent figures include: General Sharawi Guma, the interior minister; Sami Sharaf, the minister of state for presidential affairs; Ali Sabri, the head of the ASU; and General Mohamed Fawzi, the minister of war.

excluded and new networks would benefit. Thus for both the functional reason of economic necessity, and because the liberalizing elements of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie needed to cement their alliance with their commercial counterparts, as Ehteshami & Murphy (1996, p. 760) pointed out, "political liberalising -and what amounts to power-sharing came onto the agenda". Such a process created new alliances between networks in the regime bureaucracy and business. "This would be fiercely resisted by those elements of the bureaucratic bourgeoisie who believed that power-sharing represented power-loss and who were more interested in preserving their existing privileges than risking all for accumulatory possibilities. The most threatened group of all in this situation are the core elements of the single party who recognise that multiplicity of parties means the loss of their own monopoly on power. (Ehteshami & Murphy, 1996, p. 760).

Thirdly: Grievances in the society and among younger generations

The advent of liberalization and marketization unleashed important socio-economic changes, (Bayat, 2000, p. 2), and increased grievances in the society and among younger generations that began to challenge the regime. In the absence of a well developed civil society, and without established channels for the diffusion of these explosions of popular angst, the regime was faced with political chaos, instability and a threat to itself. For the sake of self-preservation, and to resist pressures to alter the economic policies, it used the means available to it, the security forces, to re-impose its authority (Ehteshami & Murphy, 1996, p. 764). The regime security apparatus launched attacks in "efforts to crush the opposition which has emerged with political liberalization or social forces unleashed by the economic crisis and the policies of economic liberalization which have been undertaken to remedy it" (Ehteshami & Murphy, 1996, p. 763).

Youth activism and political activism in the Sadat era

These conditions and the relative openness led to the emergence of social movements and ideological trends. And the youth activism expanded in the universities in the 1970s. The civil society associations obtained the required formal licence to work due to the fiscal crisis which shacked the social pact and a new class of businessmen emerged while the labour class began to complain and protest especially after the price rises in January 1977 which led to a spontaneous explosion and violence in city streets but the Leftists and younger generation of Nasserists took the opportunity to participate and gain revenge over Sadat who got rid of Nasser's elite and heritage. After the Camp David agreement Sadat lost the rest of his hegemonic power, while the Iranian revolution pushed the Islamist's younger generations to become more violent and ambitious to capture the state.

For the student of social movements, these two conditions: deterioration of the social pact and the creation of new political opportunities triggered activism and protest (Bayat, 2000, p. 3).

The main features of the youth activism in the 1970s could be identified as follow:

- They were dominated by the ideological divisions compared to 1967 wave of protest.
- The growing organizational capacities and skills.
- They involved in confrontation with the state which represent strategic mistake justifying the regime coercive repression
- The youth movement particularly the Left lost momentum by the end of this decade.

The study identifies three waves of youth activism during the 1970s:

The first wave of student activism:

This wave of activism was sparked off by the President's speech in which he excused his failure to keep his promise to make 1971 a decisive year (Abdalla, 2009, p. 178). The youth activism during 1971-72 became more active, criticizing the delay in liberating the occupied land. In 1972-1973, Leftist students gained momentum and formed a number of independent clubs and associations on university campuses and staged a series of demonstrations to press the Sadat regime to wage war to reclaim Sinai Peninsula (Eissa Mohamed, 2008, pp.34-36).

These protestations represented the glory days of the leftist and nationalists student movements, when demonstrations of thousands occupied the Tahrir Square in Cairo. Students were “ostensibly urging the then Sadat to go to war with Israel to wrest back occupied Arab land, but after the 1973 war the protests continued, focusing more on Egypt's lack of democracy and economic hardship” (Schemm, 2002).

In the universities, the growing waves of political activism were beginning to develop into a fully-fledged movement. Students published a multitude of 'Wall magazines' on the buildings, organized numerous student clubs and held frequent conferences. The formation of a variety of clubs provided students with a platform for collective activities and dicussions. Where some were primarily social and cultural gatherings, usually called Ossar 'studnet clubs' and supervised by a member of the teaching staff, others were overtly political and did not ask for formal approval (Abdalla, 2009, p. 176).

The most prominent political group was the Club of the Supporters of the Palestinian Revolution (SSPR) in Cairo University's Faculty of Engineering. In addtion student activism through the public meetings, youth activism started to take a unique form called the 'Student Conference'. An earlier indication of students' growing interests in political affairs was the attempt by a number of leftist candidates to politicize the usually non-political contest for Studnet Union seats (Abdalla, 2009, p. 177). The students chose actively to challenge the regime through these embryonic opposition movements which gradually dominated the student activism (Abdalla, 2009, p. 213).

The criticism of the regime focused on three distinct issues which Abdalla (2009, pp. 189-190) identified as: The Israeli occupation of Egyptian and other Arab land, the question of democracy, and the socio-economic demands. The most radical issue was the demand that the highest income should not exceed a multiple of ten times the lowest income. It represented the socialist ideology which spread among the student movement during this period.

Fearing the growing student radicalization in 1971, the regime made some concessions including the abolition of administration to oversee the activities of student unions and the university police guards (NCSCR, 1983, p. 158).

The second wave: The 1977 confrontations

During 1977, however, Egypt witnessed three major events that had collective political implications. The first was the occurrence in January of massive food riots, which were blamed on leftist elements and communist organizations and which were followed by a multitude of repressive measures against all kinds of political opposition - right, centre, and left (Ibrahim, 1980, p 424). The Leftist students were active participants in the January 1977 bread riots which were the largest that Egypt had seen since the dissolution of the monarchy and the establishing of the republic in 1952 (Eissa Mohamed, 2008, pp. 34-36).

The second event was a bloody confrontation in July 1977 between the regime and the members of a militant Islamist group labelled in the mass media as the Repentance and Holy Flight group (RHF). While the third event was President Sadat's historical decision to travel to Israel in search of peace (Ibrahim, 1980, p 424).

The three events were, in a curious way, intertwined. The riots reflected the mounting frustrations of the lower classes and lower-middle classes vis-a-vis the negative pay-off of Sadat's socio-economic policies. The bloody confrontation in July between a religious group and the government reflected the growing despair of the most volatile element of the

population – the youth of the lower-middle and working classes - who sought salvation in Islamist militancy. Sadat's visit to Jerusalem was motivated as much by these mounting internal problems as by a genuine desire for peace (Ibid, 424).

The deterioration of the leftist ideology as a main force in attracting the young people

To counteract activism by leftist and Nasserist students, the Sadat regime had actively encouraged the emergence of Islamist student movements on university campuses during the second-half of the 1970s. By the end of the 1970s, the Islamists had successfully marginalized leftist student groups and had succeeded in dominating formal student unions in most of the principal Egyptian universities through election (Eissa Mohamed, 2008, pp. 34-36). Having been challenged by a popular uprising earlier in 1977 that was officially blamed on leftists and Al-Tagma'a party, the regime was in an embarrassing position in blaming the Islamists. Indeed, the regime made a reconciliatory gesture toward these Islamist from 1970 to 1973 to counterbalance what perceived as a Nasserist-leftist opposition (Ibrahim, 1980, 425).

Salimi (1999, p. 32) suggested various reasons that led to such deteriorations such as internal ideological and organizational conflicts and divisions and political battles and confrontations between the left and Islamist groups which impacted on the status of youth organizations in political parties, universities and high schools.

The leftist and youth organizations in this stage of the seventies were affected by psychological conditions of the Marxist and Pan-Arab ideology which served as a reference to some of the trends based on youth. The setback of the student revolt in France had negative repercussions, which was also caused by the fall of the French student movement which was led by Trotskyite groups and involved in the political battles that were governed by actors beyond the aims of the student. For example, the use of the trade union movement and organizations of the French left-wing student groups in the confrontation with the French government at the time. On the Arab level, the 1967 defeat had a psychological impact and ideological negativity on Left student movements (Salimi, 1999, p. 32). The long term impact of 1967 defeat weakened the socialist Nasserist ideology and revived competition between the Islamist and liberal ideologies in the universities and society. As stated before the left involved in a bitter confrontations with other movements backed by the Sadat regime in 1970s.

At the time when it occurred that youth activism associated with the left parties, in the case of the disintegration and divisions, the formal political institutions represented in the Parliament, local groups and parties newly established showed a greater capacity to absorb the energy of

the young and their use in political, economic and social contexts, but these dynamics did not maintain continuity and sustainability. This led to led to the disintegration of number of youth organizations and a subsequent declining role (Salimi, 1999, p. 32).

Third wave: confrontation with Islamist resurgence

The rising tide of Islamist resurgence was further evidenced by the landslide victories of Islamist groups in the students unions from 1975 to 1979 - a fact that prompted the government to dissolve these unions by presidential decree in the summer of 1979 (Ibrahim, 1980, p 425).

In 1979, the government clipped the students activism by passing a new university bill which forbade political activity by students - effectively confining student demonstrations to the campuses. Battles between students and police were no longer fought in the main streets of the capital, but at the university gates usually far away from the rest of the population (Schemm, 2002). The bill came after the intensification of tension between Sadat and the student movement, as evidenced in his meeting with the well-known leaders of student unions in 1977 particularly Abdel Moneim Aboul Fotouh from the MB and the Nasserist Hamdeen Sabahi. However, after Sadat's visit to Israel, and the subsequent signing of the Camp David accord and the peace treaty with Israel, Islamist student groups began to join their leftist counterparts in criticizing Sadat's foreign policy orientations. As opposition to the Sadat regime began to increase, the regime passed a new bill regulating student activities. The 1979 bill continued to be in force during Mubarak's reign, and allowed the university administration to interfere directly in student elections by excluding candidates. It also re-established the special security unit known as the University Guard which was given the authority to operate inside university campuses to ensure their 'security'. The 1979 bill also prohibited political parties from operating inside university campuses[14].

3.5 Mubarak Era (1982-2000): Stagnant Polarized Youth Activism

Mubarak took charge of Egypt following the assassination of Sadat in 1981 and his regime survived over three decades in the face of regional and international challenges and democratic waves worldwide until the beginning of the Arab Spring in 2011. Mubarak's regime in his first decade (1980s) pursued similar political and economic strategies to those of Sadat focusing on liberalization of the economy and limited political openness but without great success. Mubarak's foreign policy witnessed a continuation of the strong ties with the

14 For further discussion about 1979 bill and other regulation, see the student movement chapter.

West in addition to the restoration of Egypt-Arab relations. Civil society began to revive and establish itself as counter-hegemonic forces such as the Islamists and Leftists penetrated syndicates, trade unions, NGOs and human rights movements which would represent a challenge to the regime in later stages.

The context in the 1980s provided appropriate opportunity for civil society organizations to develop marginally under the "twin poles of Islamist activism and secular intellectualism" (Abdel Rahman, 2004, p. 56). However, other "organizations outside these vaguely tolerated groups were largely marginalized or disallowed" (Paul Rowe, 2009, p. 111). Mubarak's regime sought to control and dominate the civil society associations and over time it tried to "re-adjust its control in response to changing conditions at the global and local level" (Zubaida, 1992). These conditions encouraged civil society organizations to press for greater liberalization to balance the state's failure to meet the citizens' socio-economic needs and, later, for its reluctance to respond to their quest for political participation (Ibrahim, 1998, p. 378). These associations emerged to fill the vacuum created by the absence of the state because of the new liberalism (2000, p. 17). The regime made some concessions in response to the society's demands for democratization but did not fully respond to these demands in the 1980s. Its response to the mounting discontent was promises of economic and political reform (Ibrahim, 1998, pp. 42, 43).

The relatively liberal corporatist arrangements in the 1980s allowed for Islamists and secular movements to compete with representatives of the state through elections of parliament, syndicates, student unions, social and sports clubs. However, the regime realized the threat coming from these elections and their impact on the corporatist institutions particularly the NDP and its youth branches in universities and syndicates. The regime representative became incapable of competing with the growing social forces in free elections. These movements generated significant challenges to the regime and the bureaucracy. However the regime still controlled the legal and political keys to stop the whole process and decided in later stages to freeze all these political activities and elections either by law or by force. It is noteworthy that restrictive Law of Associations stunted the flourishing of civil society. Along with a host of socio-economic problems bedevilling the Egyptian society at large and the middle class in particular, a potent opposition force to the regime has been Islamic activism (Ibrahim, 1988, pp. 632-657; Ibrahim, 1998, p. 381).

The retreat and De-liberalization 1990-2000

The process of de-liberalization marked the Egyptian politics in the 1990s as a result of the bloody confrontation with increasingly militant Islamists groups and the social protests

against the economic reforms programme. The regime was faced with the growing threat of both Muslim Brothers winning the professional syndicates elections and the increasing influence of secular groups in civil society organizations. In such circumstances, the regime developed into something that might, at best, be called competitive authoritarianism, rather than a fully-fledged liberal democratic regime[15]. Egypt has experienced a substantial degree of political deliberalization which defies the notion of a blocked transition to democracy. The high level of mounting collective action and civil society activities represented a real challenge to the loose corporatist arrangements. The regime was forced either to progress in liberalization and democratization or in retreat to repression and authoritarianism and ultimately the regime's response was repression. As a result, a growing body of literature argued that "liberal assumptions about the democratizing effects of civil society are erroneous because they have failed to take into consideration the state's ability to limit civil society activities" (Kleinberg and Clark, 2000, 78).

The sluggish performance of the state vis-a-vis the demands of the society led many marginalised young people of lower and middle class to espouse Islamic militancy as a mode of protest against the alienation and discontent. During the 1990s, "there were three-way races to maintain or seize power among autocratic regimes, Islamic activists, and civil society organizations" (Ibrahim, 1998, p. 378).

The state lost its ideological 'mission' without any hegemonic ideology such that of Nasserists' hegemonic state ideology in the 1950s and 1960s. The Egyptian army participation in the international coalition against Iraq in the 1990s to liberate Kuwait led to a dramatic deterioration of the basis of legitimacy built on "nationalist foreign policy" (Hinnebusch, 2012, p. 2). The regime seemed to be enjoyed neither electoral nor traditional legitimacy in the eyes of counter-hegemonic movements. This was reflected in increasingly frequent violent confrontations between the regime and one or more of the major socio-economic formations.

Restrictions of liberties in Egypt in the 1990s have been viewed largely as the effects of the conflict between the regime and armed Islamist groups (Kienle, 1998, p. 221). As the confrontations with the militants escalated in 1992-94, the government sought the support of civil society organizations. As soon as it regained the upper hand over the militants, it turned its back on the secular organizations of civil society and in 1995-97 began to arrest the

15 Concepts such as 'illiberal democracy' (Zakaria 1997), 'defective democracy' (Merkel 2004), or 'delegative democracy' (O'Donnell 1994), all have one
fundamental point in common in that they serve to highlight a specific regime' democratic deficits by adding a negative adjective that signals in which area the respective regime fails to reach democratic standards

Muslim Brothers activists. With the domestic situation well under government control in 1994 and 1995, it fell back into the same authoritarian practices, rigging elections (ICER, 1995), arresting members of the Muslim Brother prominent figures, and alienating many aspects of civil society. After the boycott of most opposition parties to the 1990 elections, "the 1995 election turned out to be the worst since the first elections, in 1866" according to Ibrahim who observed the election as sociologist and director of Ibn Khaldoun Centre (Ibrahim, 1998, p. 381).

Repressive amendments to the penal code and to legislation governing professional syndicates and trade unions as well as unprecedented electoral fraud were only some of the indicators. Though related to the conflict between the regime and armed Islamist groups, the erosion of political participation and liberties also reflects other factors, including attempts to contain opposition to economic liberalization under the current reform programme (Kienle, 1998).

In 1993, legislation was passed that gave the regime greater powers to invalidate elections in the professional syndicates (Kienle, 1998 p. 220). The election of officials had simply been replaced by appointments in the state bodies such as syndicates councils, university faculty deans who used to be elected and Umdas (village chiefs) were no longer elected but appointed (Ibid, p. 228).

The opportunities for formal representation and participation through elections have been restricted rather than simply stopped from expanding. One of the better-known examples was that of the parliamentary elections of 1995 (Ibrahim, 1998, Kienle, 1998). Management from above of the general elections in 1990 and 1995 was certainly aimed at excluding the opposition from parliamentary representation (Kienle, 1998, p. 234).

The confrontations on the state–society level expanded to NGOs and civil society organizations. While the confrontation between the regime and Islamists, "secular political activists, human rights workers, and voters had all been increasingly targeted by the end of the 1990s". This trend could be viewed as "an indication of the increasing insecurity of an authoritarian regime determined to maintain its monopoly on power" (Kassem, 2004; Paul Rowe, p. 112). Norton (1995, p. 12) emphasised that, "active associational life, civil society was undermined by a deficit in political toleration and constricted by arbitrary government regulation".

Pratt (2004) argued that both subsequent laws of civil society organization: Law 153 in 1999 and Law 84 in 2002 were very similar to the Law 32 in 1964 belonging to Nasserist era and, therefore, represented "a continuation rather than a departure from the hegemonic consensus".

The 1964 law organized civil associations into a strict, monopolistic hierarchy, with the Ministry of Social Affairs (MOSA) at the apex of the pyramid (Pratt, 2004, p. 321). “The organization of civil associations into compulsory, non-competitive, hierarchically ordered and functionally differentiated categories, which were controlled by the state, approximates to the typical model of corporatism, as defined by Philippe Schmitter” (1979, p. 13). The ideological aim of such regulations was to subordinate the civil associations to be “an instrument of state-directed modernization” (Pratt, 2004, pp. 32, 322).

The NGOs protestation against the 1999 law constituted “probably one of the most intensive moments of civil society mobilization and activism in Egypt”. The NGO-led campaign against restrictions was significant because it brought together NGOs working on human rights with those working in less politically-sensitive areas of social welfare and development” (Pratt, 2004, p. 324).

On the other hand, there were hopeful features in Egypt in the late 1990s, mainly improved economic performance and a flourishing media, consisting of more private newspapers and satellite cable TV, which the government could not censor or control (Ibrahim, 1998, p. 382).

Socio-economic grievances and social protest

The government began to implement the World Bank and International Monetary Fund (IMF) policies to adjust the economy in 1991 (Bayat, 2000, p. 2). Thus economic crisis and reform were determining factors for political deliberalization and social protest (Kienle, 1998, p. 234). Privatization and public sector reform were a major concern of trade unions. The implement of the reform programme to adjust the economy had negative sides that led the United States Agency for International Development (USAID) in 1993 to warn of the deteriorating social conditions in Egypt (1993:2) (Bayat, 2000, p. 2). Thus the regime sought to control the trade unions through 1995 amendment of their law consolidating the NDP majority (Kienle, 1998, pp. 234, 235). Ballot rigging of trade unions and syndicates elections spread to install loyal leadership connecting with the ruling party. These developments were significant enough for the regime to anticipate discontent and protests from those most threatened or affected by them. The "bread riots of 1976" had not yet been forgotten (Kienle, 1998, p. 233). The advent of these policies unleashed important socio-economic changes. Reported strikes rose from eight in 1990, to 26 in 1991, to 28 in 1992, and to 63 in 1993. In a major strike at Kafr al-Dawwar in September 1994, three people were shot dead by the police and many others were injured (Kienle, 1998, 233). A human rights organization reported 70 strikes in large companies in Egypt during 1998 (Bayat, 2000, p. 8). One of the outstanding collective actions in this decade was “the farmers’ protests across isolated villages in 1998 but

this failed to modify a new policy that ended farmers' land tenure" (Bayat, 2000, p. 6). In the absence of opportunities and free activities, the political activism was forced either to exit the political scene at least temporarily or to go underground (Bayat, 2009, p. 10). However, militant Islamists in the 1990s resorted to subversive revolutionism largely because open and legal political work was limited (Bayat, 2009, p. 11), but they failed and could not defeat the state apparatus.

Mubarak regime and youth activism

In spite of the severe restrictions imposed by the 1979 Mill on student activism, the Mubarak regime pursued a relatively tolerant attitude towards non-violent student activism. Since the mid-seventies the influence of Islamic movements was growing rapidly and they took control of the student unions in the universities. The state responded by attempting to curb religious movements and the imposition of state control over unions. In the 1980s, the MB became the strongest force on the Egyptian campus, whereas usually the Brotherhood had been more interested in spreading its influence by providing social services and encouraging a specific way of life among students and not focusing in stirring up protests on the street. They were able to mobilize more students to create a bigger demonstration just inside universities, but they would not clash with police (Schemm, 2002). It is worth noting that the political activism during the tended to focus primarily on cultural and foreign policy issues rather than on domestic issues. Islamist students attempted to uphold a strict moral code on university campuses and to implement gender segregation and to ban musical and artistic activities that were seen as un-Islamic (Tohami, 2009, 70).

The regime succeeded in isolating and silencing the radical youth activism and effectively prevented the student movements from connections with society and labour movement. The youth activism was stagnant, excluded, organizationally weak. Large segments of young activists initiated a framing process that would divert attention from the state toward society or social values and ignore the political change as happened with Amr Khaled and Salafi for example, but this did not prevent the regime corruption which reached unprecedented levels.

During the nineties the influence of political and ideological trends gradually deteriorated within the universities. Also most of official student unions came under the full control of the regime and universities' administrations which supported only NDP students who respect the rules drawn up by the regime.

Formal student unions and their activities came under the control of students who were backed by the State. These developments happened when the regime adopted a more

aggressive strategy towards the Muslim Brothers and other Islamist groups and the restrictions on student activism stipulated in the 1979 bill were actively enforced.

During the 1990s, Islamists and other opposition students were barred from contesting student union elections and students loyal to the regime were placed by the university administration at the head of student unions. Moreover, during the 1990s, the NDP began to establish a number of clubs on university campuses in the hope of winning back the support of university students. Furthermore, the University Guard became a more visible presence on university campuses and students from the Islamist and also from the non-Islamist opposition were frequently monitored and harassed. As a result of these restrictions, which were parts of a more general crackdown on the Egyptian opposition, "youth mobilization was highly circumscribed during most of the 1990s" (Shehata, 2008, p. 4). The strict restrictions imposed by the regime on student activism, coupled with tight restrictions on the activities of political parties and movements significantly weakened the links between university students on the one hand, and political parties and labour movements, on the other. Moreover most parties and movements, including the MB, experienced internal divisions partly "as a result of the continued domination of an aging leadership and the marginalization of younger activists with more moderate ideas" (Shehata, 2008, p. 6).

3.6 Conclusion

Social change and political transformations in Egypt have created a political opportunity structure that triggered specific waves of contentuous politics in different occasions leading to the emergence and development of youth activism. The prominence of youth activism and the adaptive capacity of the regime marked the different stages of Egyptian political history from the post-independence regime until the 25th Jan. 2011 Revolution.

This chapter has identified the political opportunities at each stage and the collective action of youth activism. The structural, organizational, ideational elements have been linked together to explain not only the emergence of youth activism but also the adaptive capacity of the regime that enabled it to continue in the face of demands or to make some reforms to absorb the pressure from youth and social movements. The successive regimes re-adjusted their control in response to changing conditions at the global and local level to reach a new equilibrium which did not last for long due to the emergence of another wave of youth and social protests.

The Nasser era was marked by consolidation of the corporatist arrangements which successfully included the social and economic forces through a single party system. A

populist social pact organized the state and society relations in ways that decreased any social protest. Nasser's charismatic personality jointly with the Pan-Arab ideology provided a strong base for state hegemony over the society and decreased the appeal of counter hegemonic ideologies like that of the Muslim Brothers and the Communists. However, the collective action and youth engagement took different forms to adapt to the hegemonic regime and its corporatist arrangements which unintentionally created social forces and fertile soil for a coming wave of political activism like, large groups of educated youth as well as working and middle classes that would later confront the state after the 1967 defeat. The younger generation began to seek different solutions and this led to the flourishing of diverse ideological and religious movements.

The process of integration and interaction featured the framing dynamics of youth activism when the regime hegemonic ideology became ineffective particularly after the 1967 defeat and absence of a charismatic leader. Youth activism flourished and mobilized for a general national cause, however in the following stages, the ideological forces took the momentum and the polarization between Islamists and Leftist escalated in the universities until the Sadat crackdown in 1979. The socialist movements attempted to delegitimize the regime policies toward Israel and the west, while the Islamists pursued framing processes condemning the regime for not applying Islamic principles. At later stages, political activism adopted a democratic discourse criticizing authoritarianism and repression.

The relatively liberal corporatist arrangements in the 1980s allowed for Islamist, Nasserist and Leftist activism to become active in universities and to compete with representatives of the NDP in the elections of the formal student unions. However, Mubarak's regime realized the threat coming from these elections and their impact on the corporatist institutions, particularly the NDP and its youth branches in universities and syndicates. In the 1990s the regime imposed strong restrictions on youth activism which weakened the links between students and political parties. The University Guard played a major role in the campuses and activists were frequently monitored and harassed.

Chapter Four:

Expanding Political Opportunities in Egypt 2000-2010

4.1 Introduction

The Egyptian political arena was marked by political opportunities and constraints and a high level of grievances that shaped the prominence of the youth activism which became some of the significant agents for change. The social movements and youth activism mounted up in the years which preceded the 25th of January Revolution and led to the fall of the president Hosni Mubarak. It is worth noting that the revolution did not emerge from nothing, or take place in a social or political vacuum, but reflected the accumulation of long-term events which occurred as a result if the prevailing social structures and systems of power. Moreover, this generation of youth activism has experienced a particular context that changed their awareness and mobilized them in specific ways to represent such a great challenge to the ruling elite.

The political process model and social movement theory, in addition to the literature about the Middle East, provides an appropriate explanation for the political opportunities structure in Egypt from 2000-2011. The first decade of the twenty-first century witnessed significant social and historical changes such as not only the shrinking role of the state as a result of the collapse of the old social pact and the erosion of the regime legitimacy, but also the profound effects of globalization accompanying new social and digital media which promoted new counter-hegemonic and democratic discourses. This evolving of socio-economic context has presented a distinctive opportunity for youth activism to emerge and become the main agent for change. The loose corporatist structures and the statist order were undermined by prolonged economic and social crises which weakened key institutions of state control, particularly the public sector, the subsidy system, political parties and student unions.

These internal developments led to a dramatic change in the structure of political opportunities which were further exposed through the regional political challenges as a result of escalating tension and conflicts in the Middle East. As the dramatic increase in political opportunities materialized, so too did recurrent waves of social and political actions such as youth activism, workers, peasants protests and Islamist groups. In fact, the middle of the first decade of the twenty-first century witnessed one of the longest waves of social and political activism as these transformations created opportunities for competing movements and ideologies to emerge and grow into meaningful alternatives to the declining regime.

This chapter explores the causes and structures of opportunities that explain the emergence of social and youth activism in the Egyptian context during that period. The theoretical framework established that the indicators of political opportunity are state-society ruptures, elite splits, high levels of grievances and external factors, and so this chapter will now assess how evident each of these were during the time period under examination.

4.2 The Indicators of Political Opportunity in the Egyptian Context

Political opportunity is concept that deals with the complex environments in which movements grow and operate. It represents the broader set of political constraints and opportunities unique to the national context in which they are embedded (Goodwin, 1999, p. 27; McAdam, 1996, p. 3). The political process model asserts that political opportunities present themselves when elites become vulnerable or receptive to movements by groups excluded from the polity. Such "challenger" movements usually make demands for the redistribution of social rewards and increased institutional access (Maney, 2001, p. 13). The dilemma in the Egyptian context was how youth and political movements could prepare for such opportunities when the authoritarian regimes exhibited a great intolerance toward organized activism? Indeed this requires a political opportunity in itself when the political authorities and the mechanisms of control are undermined by transnational or internal transformations (Bayat, 2009, p. 9).

The PPM identifies the sources of political opportunity as follows: medium-levels of and/or increased institutional access, unstable political alignments, divided elites, influential allies and support groups and diminished repression by authoritarian states.

It is worth noting that the political process indicators are not sufficient to give a comprehensive explanation for emergence of social and youth activism in the Egyptian context without revising the Middle East political literature that offered various approaches and models about the state-society relationship. On the other hand, it is important to apply the assumption of the structure approach about grievances and relative deprivation because the high level of grievances among citizens generated tension and social protest that created political opportunities like those triggered by social and labour protests in 2007-2010 when "networks of activists found recourse in street politics, expressing grievances in public spaces and engaging in contentious politics to challenge the regime" (Bayat, 2009, p. 11).

This chapter is going to focus on the political opportunities that are considered most relevant to the emergence of new agents of change and youth networks. They could be summarized in

five broad master variables relevant to the Egyptian context (2000-2011) which could explain the uprising as follows:

6- The rupture in state-society relationships

7- Socio-economic conditions and high levels of grievance: pressure from the bottom

8- Institutional access and ruling elite strategies

9- Division among the ruling elite and patronage networks

10- External and transnational factors

4.3 Rupture and Alienation between State and Society

The rupture between state and society extensively deepened as the ideological and hegemonic state mission of the Nasser and Sadat eras was dramatically undermined by Mubarak's foreign and internal policies. Authoritarian corporatist arrangements turned into façade structures that sought to serve the incumbent regime and its allies. The social forces and movements abandoned them as a result of their corruption and lack of representativeness. In this regard Hinnebusch (2012, p.3) argues that opportunity structures for protest emerged as result of change in the relative power balance between state and society. This changed balance can be traced to the Mubarak regime's lack of hegemony and legitimacy, the façade democratic and corporatist arrangements, the collapse of the social pact and the difficulties of upgrading the competitive authoritarianism.

Mubarak regime's lack of hegemony and legitimacy:

The hegemonic state of the Nasser era dramatically deteriorated until it lost the remainder of its legitimacy while the counter hegemonic groups gradually penetrated the society and the public sphere and their discourse became appealing to the majority of social forces in the society.

The Egyptian state under Mubarak's regime became less representative of the large segment of social forces and did not reflect their demands and express their ideology in its foreign and internal policies. This paved the way for the ideological and political movements like Islamist and nationalist to demoralize the regime hegemony and legitimacy. The rupture between state and society deepened the vulnerability of Mubarak's regime. The social and political protest under the umbrella of the new social movement gradually undermined the bases of the

legitimacy and abilities of Mubarak's regime. By the end of the Mubarak era the social and political transformation undermined the hegemonic state ideology and turned it into a security and police state under the hegemony and dominations of police and intelligences while social and media networks began to uncover the police brutality.

The weakness of the hegemonic block and lack of ideology compared with the Nasser era prompted a kind of authoritarian corporatist arrangement that attempted to seek a democratic legitimacy without great success and when the legitimacy has been challenged by counter hegemonic political and social movements the state resorted to the coercive tool. The Egyptian state particularly under the Mubarak regime exhibited elements of strength in terms of repression capacities. However a closer comprehensive look reveals that it is a relatively "weak" or "soft" state, lacking certain basic capabilities to penetrate, not to mention dominate, society (Migdal, 1988; Springborg, 1982; Waterbury, 1983). Ayubi (2001) illustrated many signs of the weakness such as lacking certain abilities to collect taxes or building a 'hegemonic' power block or an ideology that provides a strong basis for legitimacy that would help to decrease the coercive and 'corporative' level and foster the moral and intellectual sphere of the state. Actually other writers argue that this kind of state attribute with "high degrees of nondemocratic legitimacy" created through "symbol politics, elaborate patronage systems and control of the rules of the political and economic games, are all instrumental in keeping incumbent elites in power" (Bill and Springborg 1994; Richards and Waterbury 1996, Schlumberger, 2007).

Understanding these limitations and the requirements of building a postcolonial "modern" state, different Egyptian regimes have combined the use of coercion with some sort of legitimacy of performance and elements of state-corporatism in a matrix of "flexible authoritarianism" to consolidate their ruling pact (El Mahdi, 2009, p. 1021). However, the absence of social compacts and an increasingly narrow social base, quoting Joel Midgal (1988), make the regime inherently weak (Schlumberger, 2007, p. 11).

The Egyptian state under Mubarak's rule could be considered a soft type of the Nasser's corporatist state that corresponded to the Gramscian categories of 'gendarme-state' and 'corporative-state' (Busi-Gluckmann, 1980: 284ff)[16]. This kind of regimes is "obsessed with power and strength, and it may indeed be strong in terms of its body". This state reduced its

16The state in terms of its 'law and order' functions and the state in terms of its economic interests and functions. (cf. wrong) By contrast, Gramsci's concept of the 'integral state' or the 'state in its totality'is not confined to the government but includes certain aspects of the civil society and is based on hegemony and leadership. The concept of the 'integral state' is thus often linked to the 'ethical state' or the state as educator-through the schools and the courts (Busi-Gluckmann, 1980; Ayubi, 2001, p. 7)

mission, function and roles under Mubarak to a loose and weak model of corporatism in which the violence was in reality an indication of its weakness and fragility. Indeed the repressive and coercive apparatus may be powerful but the state as whole is weak "because it lacks rationality and because it lacks the necessary moral, ideological and educational supports" (Al-'Aeawi, 1981, 146-58; Ayubi, 2001, p. 23).

In this regard Mubarak's regime suffered from a lack of hegemony over the society and lack of legitimacy when compared with Nasser and Sadat. Enjoying neither electoral nor traditional legitimacy, Hinnebusch **(**2012 p.2) argued that "legitimacy in the populist authoritarian regimes was contingent on a nationalist foreign policy and delivery of jobs and welfare". However, in more recent years, the neoliberal policies like privatization and encouraging foreign investment led to the abandonment of the populist social contract. In addition, efforts "to achieve integration into the world capitalist economy has led to the abandonment of the anti-imperialism". It is worth noting that Mubarak's regime did not enjoy any kind of the revolutionary legitimacy compared with Nasser or Sadat who were the heroes of 1952 movement. The crisis of the democratic legitimacy worsened and came under tremendous suspicion because of rigging of the parliamentary elections which increased in the mid-nineties until the 2010 parliamentary election which preceded the revolution and was one of its main triggers. The regime was forced to face the growing influence of the counter-hegemonic forces as both Islamists and secular represented a threat to the regime legitimacy on religious and nationalist bases or on its dependency on the US and Israel which would be further discussed by focusing on the second Palestine Uprising and the Iraqi war in 2003[17]. The dramatic change in the structure of political opportunity was further exposed through the regional political challenges as a result of escalating tension and conflicts in the Middle East since 2000, particularly the Palestine Intifada, September 11 aggressions and the war against Iraq which reflected the impact of the external opportunities in the emergence and development of social movements. The International Crisis Group report (2003, p.7) confirmed that these regional and international developments sparked general "debates regarding the regime's ability to uphold national interests". The youth activism arose from the protest movements and demonstrations in October 2000 and April 2002 and March 2003 as the mood of young people became more militant. The counter- hegemonic movements launched political and ideological campaigns to demoralize the regime and its policies and security apparatus which had grown increasingly demoralized. The regime came under growing pressure and criticism because "what was seen as a weak or compliance role in the region during the second Intifada and during the American invasion of Iraq" (El-Mahdi, 2009,

17 For more details see chapter five

p. 1022). In this regard, number of Leftist and Islamist activists criticized the regime policy after the Iraqi war. They claimed that the regime was "friend with the US" that "occupied another Arab country... being their servant in the region". Moreover, "The American invasion of Iraq would not have been possible without Mubarak's help" (El-Mahdi, 2009, p. 1023).

The "weak fierce state", echoes Ayubi (2001, p. 23) faced huge challenges coming from the growing counter hegemonic networks and youth activism, as well as the lack of ability of the regime to manage the pressure coming from social, political and ideological movements especially after they began to develop cooperation across ideological divides. The regime's adaptive capacity (Heydemann, 2007, p. 26) to accommodate external and internal pressures and to respond to the grievances from these counter-hegemonic forces dramatically deteriorated. Similar examples took place during the Sadat era when the youth activism as part of the counter-hegemonic and ideological trends challenged the president's policies over ideological and cultural issues because of his approach to the peace process with Israel and the West. The social movements that emerged in the Egyptian context after 2000 included a counter-hegemonic movements which, borrowing Eagleton term (1991, p. 114), did "not only focused on the grievances and material issues in confrontation with the regime but they also contested the whole arena of "culture", defined in its broadest sense" (Ayubi, 2001, p. 8). It is worth noting that Gramsci was interested in the trenches in which social forces would establish their "war of position" (Gramsci, 1971: 229–38). In this regard for Gramsci "civil society is not only the sphere through which hegemony is diffused, but also the terrain upon which resistance to hegemony, or counter-hegemonic projects, can be formulated" (Pratt, 2004, p. 318)[18]. In the following sections and chapters, the study is going to illustrate that between 2000-2011 liberals, Islamists, young activism and political movements like Kefaya launched a framing process constructing a counter-hegemonic discourse to demoralise and delegitimize the regime. The social movements and social media helped to overturn the hegemony of the regime and triggered the established regime becoming vulnerable to change.

The loose corrupted corporatist arrangements and façade structure

From a theoretical perspective the corporatist state provides official channels for pursuing grievances and mediation between state and society, and strong links between the state and powerful societal groups reducing the potential for social movements (Zapata 1977, Eckstein 1989). In the last years of Mubarak's reign, the corporatist arrangements served as a

18 Gramsci never used the term 'counter-hegemony'. This term is generally used to describe the creation of an alternative hegemony on the terrain of civil society in preparation for a 'war of position'. For a development of the concept of 'counter-hegemony', see Boggs (1984).

democratic façade to cover the alliance between military and bureaucracy bodies which dominated the regime without electoral authority to govern the population. The regime became vulnerable to challenges from those either not represented officially or not represented to their satisfaction. It could be argued that the weak intermediary organizations such as political parties, trade and student unions and civil associations under the authoritarian regime prompted sectors of society to express their views outside of the state institutions (Fawzy, 2010, p. 29).

Table (3): The façade democratic structure and controlling the opposition parties (1981-2010) [19]

No	Party	The date of establishing	The way of establishment	The legal statues
1	Al-Tajamu party	1976	Party Affairs Committee	Active
2	Al-Ahrar	1976	Party Affairs Committee	Divided and marginal
3	NDP	1978	Party Affairs Committee	The ruling party (78-2010)
4	Al-Amal	1978	Party Affairs Committee	Suspended but active
5	Al-Wafd	1978	Party Affairs Committee	Active
6	Al-Ummah	1983	Court verdict	Marginal
7	Maser Al-Fattah	1990	Court verdict	Divided and Marginal

19 The data is collected from different sources such as (Shukr, 2002 pp. 18-19, Soliman, 2005, Wikipedia and news papers)

8	The Green	1990	Court verdict	Marginal
9	Democratic union	1990	Court verdict	Marginal
10	Egypt Arab Socialist Party	1992	Court verdict	Marginal
11	Democratic people	1992	Court verdict	Marginal
12	Arab Nasserist	1992	Court verdict	Active
13	Social Justice	1993	Court verdict	Marginal
14	Social Integration	1995	Court verdict	Marginal
15	National consensus	2000	Party Affairs Committee	Marginal
16	Maser 2000	2001	Court verdict	Marginal
17	New Generation	2002	Court verdict	Marginal
18	Maser youth	2002	Court verdict	Marginal
19	Al-Ghad	2004	Party Affairs Committee	Divided but Active
20	The Democratic Front	2007	Party Affairs Committee	Active

21	Al Karamah	1996	Rejected	Active
22	Al-Wasat	1996	Rejected	Active

The corporative state, in terms of its economic interests and functions, suffered from high levels of corruption and the violation of law from the ruling elite. It turned into what Galal Amin (2011) called the "soft state" which was produced to explain the reasons behind the 25th January revolution. The "soft state" theory developed by Gunnar Myrdal is one that is unwilling to perform its main functions – namely preserving law and order - leaving mediocrity and lawlessness to prevail. "In such a state there is no respect for the law, and breaking legal codes is the cultural norm which connected with the deterioration of the education and health systems, among other symptoms of the so-called soft state under Mubarak" (Amin 2011, pp 7, 8).

The state transformed from the populist corporatist state to an authoritarian corporatist state in the 1990s which was marked by loose corrupted form of corporatist arrangements. The authoritarian corporatist arrangements turned into façade structures that sought to serve the incumbent regime while social forces and new activism denied their corruption and lack of representativeness as most of their leaders were either directly appointed or positioned through the rigging of elections as used to be the case in the formal student unions and trade unions.

Consequently, the ineffective state apparatus did not succeed in delivering the required services to the citizens and lost the capability to achieve their functions. Thus, the society and social forces began to create and develop their own agencies and institutions to fill the gap through establishing various kinds of organizations which could be called "parallel structures" either for lobbying and political purposes, such as the independent trade and free student unions (see chapter 6), or for delivering health and educational services like private tutoring or for a more informal economy. In later stages these parallel structures established alliances among social forces that had high levels of grievances through cooperation and networking.

For example, the formal trade unions which remained in the grip of corporatism attempted to defend workers' rights and their traditional social contract (Bayat, 2009, p. 9). But, as a result

of their corruption and non-elected leadership they failed to protect workers in the face of the neoliberal policies and the growing business class. Where trade unions have failed to serve the interests of the majority of the working poor, workers have often resorted to illegal strikes or mass street protests. Indeed, this was apparent in the 2006, 2007, and March–April 2008 spate of mass workers' strikes in Egypt's public and private sectors (Joel Benin, 2012, Bayat, 2009). The workers established the first independent union which the Ministry of Manpower and Migration unexpectedly decided to recognize in April 2009. It was the first trade union independent of the regime in over half a century. Independent unions of health-care technicians and teachers were also founded before the end of 2010 (Beinin, 2012, p. 5).

Moreover, the professional middle classes (teachers, lawyers, pharmacists, engineers, and doctors) deployed their fairly independent syndicates both to defend their professional interests and to carry out political activities since traditional party politics remained, in general, corrupted and ineffective. Thus, it was not uncommon to find a number of "professional syndicates to serve nationalist or Islamist politics - a phenomenon quite distinct from the conventional trade unions which remained engaged chiefly with economic and social concerns" (Bayat, 2009, p. 8).

The failure of corporatist arrangements triggered new political opportunities for activists because the political discourse of the regime was forced to announce the acceptance and existence of such vehicles and allowed the demonstrations and protests seeking social and private demands for specific groups as long as they did not include political claims or directly threaten the regime. It was clear that the ruling elite would agree to pay the required cost in many cases to satisfy such groups and stop the growing protests. The aim of this strategy was to prolong the regime survival which came under the threat of ongoing and increasing social and economic and cultural unrest and grievances. This discourse and rhetoric about political openness promoted the formation of new youth and social movements and the subsequent restrictive security policies in dealing with activists did not prevent the mobilization but just slowed it down.

The collapse of the social pact:

The social pact, as a mechanism to organize the state-society relationship and arrange mass politics in Egypt, dramatically deteriorated. The regime was no longer able to honour the terms of the old social contract or forged a new participatory social contract for the fear of being toppled from power (Ibrahim, 1995, pp. 41, 42). However, Heydemann, (2007, p. 21) and Rutherford (2008) expected that the erosion of the old social pact would make the democratic bargain feasible.

In the post-independence period, the regime attempted to mobilize civil associations, workers, peasants and middle-class professionals as a 'popular' coalition of working people in support of national development (Richards & Waterbury, 1991, p. 27). The trade unions, professional associations, peasant associations and other groups were incorporated into the state through corporatist arrangements. The regime also extended socio-economic benefits (such as, universal healthcare and education, guaranteed employment, subsidized food and rent controls) to all citizens (Bianchi, 1989; Ayubi, 2001).

This corporatist model and statist order created during the Nasser era could not survive because of economic crises, economic restructuring, and integration into the global economy which weakened key institutions of state control, particularly the public sector and the subsidy system. They have also eroded the ideology that legitimates the regime (Rutherford, 2008). With the vigorous implementation of neoliberal policies since 2004 - which the Mubarak regime was very slow and cautious in implementing during the early 1990s - including depreciation of the Egyptian currency, the resultant price hike, and speeding up of privatization schemes, a large section of the middle class and popular sectors were further marginalized. The regime's attempts to withdraw certain benefits, such as oil and bread subsidies, were faced by fierce public opposition, demonstrating society's belief in the legitimacy of the post- independence hegemonic consensus. For example, from 1991 onwards, public sector workers have struck against privatization and tenant farmers have staged protests against the removal of land rent ceilings in 1998 (Pratt, 2004, p.323, 324).

These policies triggered a new wave of political and social activism as young people became more vulnerable to economic shocks and volatility because of the erosion of the old social contract that once guaranteed employment and social protection for whole citizens (Dhillon & Yousef, 2007, p.2). Past generations had benefited from this state-led social contract, which provided public sector employment and protected workers. But the current generation faced a two-fold challenge: "State institutions are no longer able to meet their expectations for employment and social protection, and private sector jobs remain an elusive reality" (Dhillon & Yousef, 2007, pp.7.8). This led to a change in the "political opportunity structure" as large segments of the younger generation from both middle and lower classes found that "there was no reason why political participation should be further postponed, for example, no developmental projects (economic or political) for which democracy should be sacrificed" (Rutherford, 2008).

It is worth noting that the advent of new social media and advances in telecommunication exposed young people to international norms. This exposure raised the expectations for

consumption and living standards and created a new sense of exclusion. Young people became at the heart of a process of political change and emerged as agents of change (Dhillon & Yousef, 2007, pp. 7.8). This situation created opportunities for competing ideologies and institutions to emerge and develop in the middle of the first decade of the twenty-first century. Rutherford (2008) stressed the importance of two categories of ideologies and groups; a liberal conception of law within the judiciary and an Islamic conception of governance within the Muslim Brother in addition to the reformist trend among the business community and the ruling party. He considered that the two categories' approaches to constitutional order had grown into meaningful alternatives to the declining statism of the regime. "These two alternatives share important features; their agendas converge around a core set of reforms that embody the key features of classical liberalism, including constraints on state power, strengthening the rule of law, and protecting some basic rights".

4.4 The Socio-Economic Crisis and High Level of Grievances Among Youth

The failure of the corporatist structure and the collapse of the social pact associated with the socio-economic crisis raised the grievances and the sense of relative deprivation to unprecedented levels. Grievances generate tension and intensify the social protest that created political opportunities like those that triggered the intense social and labour protests in Egypt 2007-2010. Hinnebusch (2012, p. 3) argued that "where grievances are high and the opportunity structure shifts to society, mass mobilization can be rapid and effective". He emphasised that the opposite is also right: "Where grievances are low and the opportunity structure is low, because the state-society balance favours the regime, there should be no uprising".

The social protest was the main response from social forces to the grievances and relative deprivation. The socio-economic situation triggered street politics and motivated ordinary young people to express grievances in public spaces and engage in civic campaigns, or resort to what Bayat (2009, p. 11) called "social non-movements" that interlock activism with the practice of everyday life.

The middle of the first decade of the twenty-first century witnessed a new wave of social and political movements because the "situation has created opportunities for competing ideologies and institutions to emerge" Rutherford (2008). The neoliberal policies, such as accelerating the privatization programme, pursued by the Egyptian regime since the formation of the Government of Ahmed Nazif in 2004 have resulted most of the social disorder slides and

affected social classes in recent years, which resulted in a tidal wave of protest movements and demonstrations during the period from 2007 to 2010.

It was obvious that the regime was no longer able to honour the terms of the populist state social contract or to forge a new democratic social contract. The economic liberalization policies failed to "redistribute economic power significantly and to replace state hegemony with an economic polyarchy more prone to competition and more favourable to political conflict and pluralism" (Kienle, 1998, p. 236).

Table (4): The socio-economic indicators 2010 [20]

Population (millions)	81.5
GNI per capita, PPP (current USD)	5,470
GDP (current USD) (billions)	162.3
GDP composition by sector	Agriculture-3 Industry- 28 Services- 69
GDP growth rate (%)	7.2
% below poverty line (%)	16.7
Inflation (%)	18.3
GINI index	32.1
Adult literacy rate (%)	66.4

20 World Bank. (2010). Retrieved from World Bank: http://data.worldbank.org/indicator

http://epri.org.za/wp-content/uploads/2011/03/15-Egypt.pdf

Overseas development aid per capita (current USD)	17
Net official development assistance 2005 (USD millions)	993.6
Remittances as % of GDP	6
2009 Human Development Index (HDI) ranking	123/182

Evidence suggests that the implementation of Economic Reform and Structural Adjustment since the 1990s has caused large changes in social policies; "with adverse impacts on the foundation of human development, in the areas of health, education, housing, and the supply of adequate food". Market-oriented policies "have drastically undermined the principle of equity, that is, equal access to life-chances" (Bayat, 2009, p.37). Nazif's mandate in 2004 was to accelerate the neoliberal transformation of the economy and the sell-off of the public sector. These policies were promoted by the International Monetary Fund and World Bank who enthusiastically praised Egypt's efforts at economic "reform" and repeatedly designated it a top-ten "most improved reform"[21]. However the state bureaucracy and corruption hindered economic performance and discouraged investment. Predominance of market-oriented policies and the mingling between power and wealth promoted the sense among Egyptians that this relationship between money and politics has severely hurt the concepts of public interest and public good and spread patterns of consumer culture as well as the excessive use of money in political life and elections (Fawzy, 2010, p. 29).

These policies have had a huge impact on the Egyptian people, particularly the youth, and motivated the various waves of social and political protest. The statistic shows that the total number of young people represents a large amount of population which increasing every year. Egypt is going through a period in which the number of youth population is increasing

21 World Bank, Most Improved Business Reformers in DB 2008 &World Bank, 2009; Most Improved Business Reformers in DB 2009.
D.C.: World Bank, 2010; "Most Improved Business Reformers in DB 2010," Washington, D.C.: World Bank, 2011.

significantly, a so-called "youth bulge" (Tohami, 2009, Dhillon & Yousef, 2007, p. 3). The previous tables in chapter two provided a data over time highlighting the percentages of youth within the Egyptian population.

The demographic transition represents both an opportunity and a challenge. Once this youth population reaches working age, its ratio to the older and younger non-working populations will shrink, potentially constituting a "demographic gift." Until then, these youths will put enormous pressures on the educational system and the labour and housing markets (Assaad & Barroom, 2007, p. 8). This is the challenge of youth inclusion, defined as "the provision of opportunities that enable youth to fully participate in normally prescribed roles and activities". These include receiving quality education, decent employment, affordable housing and the power to shape their communities (Dhillon & Yousef, 2007, p. 1).

The dangerous situation of exclusion can be measured in numbers. The cost of youth unemployment, early school leaving, adolescent pregnancy, and youth migration is significantly high. The total cost of youth exclusion can reach a staggering 17.4% of GDP in Egypt. The cost of youth exclusion in Egypt is as high as the total value-added of Egypt's agricultural sector, close to 17% of GDP (Chaaban, 2008, p. 18).

Education in Egypt has witnessed big improvements as school enrolment has remarkably increased. Illiteracy among youth has also fallen significantly. There has been a dramatic expansion in the education system. More children go to school and more children stay in school for longer periods. According to the World Bank (2006a), the net enrolment rate in primary education increased from 83.7% in 1985 to 98.3% in 2003. Gross enrolment rates in secondary school were 61.4 % in 1985 and rose to 87.1% and higher education enrolment from 18.1% to 32.6% in the same period. While the figures show rapid growth in school enrolment at all education levels and near-universal enrolment in primary schooling, there are still those who are excluded (Assaad & Barsoum, 2000, p. 10). While educational enrolment has increased dramatically in recent years, the quality of education has not improved. Early school drop-out and non-enrolment persists for certain groups in certain parts of the country, particularly for girls in rural Upper Egypt. Some factors hinder good education such as overcrowding in classes, teaching by rote, private lessons, and the wide gap between education and job market requirements. Households try to compensate for the limitations of public education through private tutoring (UNDP, 2006, p. 28). These figures highlights that the social and political cost of deterioration in the educational system and unemployment. They have had a significant impact on society and mobilization because of the high levels of grievances. Consequently, new patterns of social crimes emerged as well as political problems

such as alienation and lack of participation through the formal structure which associated with the erupt of protest against the regime and its policies.

The International Labour Organisation (ILO) report on the economic trends in the Mediterranean region for the year 2002, suggests that the unemployment rate in Egypt amounted to 10.8% in 1995. The number of unemployed males and females accounts for 95.5% of the new entrants in the labour market (UNDP, 2006, p. 49). Between the late 1970s and early 2000s, the number of new entrants to the labour market more than doubled, to about 850,000. Currently, they constitute the greatest percentage of the unemployed. The unemployment rate declined from 11.7% in 1998 to 8.3% in 2006. The total number of unemployed youth in Egypt in 2006 was about 1.6 million. Eighty-three percent of the unemployed were in the age group of 15-29 and 47% were between the ages of 20-24. Although declining, the unemployment rate among those aged 15-29 is still much higher than the overall rate. Youth with a secondary education or above made up 95% of youth unemployment in 2006, up from 87% in 1998 (Assaad & Barsoum, 2007, p.19). Unemployment rates at the end of the 1990s were highest for those with a technical secondary education, followed by post-secondary institute graduates, then by university graduates. This pattern changed by 2006, with university graduates having the highest unemployment rates among young men and post-secondary institute graduates having the highest rates among young women. In fact, university graduates are the only educational group whose unemployment rates increased since 1998 (Assaad & Barsoum, 2007, p.19).

The governmental figures about the decline in unemployment were marred by the growth in what the World Bank terms to be “bad jobs.” These are essentially low-paid jobs that provide little in terms of social insurance, stability, and potential for advancement (Ibid, p. 20, 21). The high unemployment rates of young people led to multiple negative consequences, both for the young people themselves and their society. Statistics showed that unemployment represents a suitable environment for committing crimes, for example, 44% of thieves were unemployed (Galbi: 2006, p. 637). Poverty is increasing in Egypt in recent years, and the brunt of this poverty is mostly borne by youth. Poverty affects rural zones, especially young farmers. Poverty in urban areas is largely attributed to deprivation and economic deterioration in rural areas, as people are consistently moving from there to urban areas (UNDP: 2006, p.27). As a result, high desire for emigration is emerging due to widespread feelings of frustration with both economic and social conditions. According to the 2002 Arab Human Development Report, 51% of Arab youth and 45% of younger adolescents expressed a desire to emigrate, clearly indicating dissatisfaction with current conditions and with future prospects especially in rural areas (UNDP: 2006, pp. 30, 31).

The following tables offer various economic and social indications associated with the exclusion and grievances that contributed to different cycles of mobilization among youth.

The GDP per capita, Gini coefficient, wages of poor households in 2003/2004 reflect the socio-economic problems. The neoliberal policies since the formation of the Government of Ahmed Nazif in 2004 have resulted most of the social disorder slides and affected social classes, which resulted in a tidal wave of protest movements and demonstrations during this period.

Table (5): The status of income distribution, poverty, and social investment in 2005[22]

N.16 Income Distribution, Poverty and Social Investment

GDP per capita (LE)		2003/04	6142.0
Income share of lowest 40%:	total	2004	20.3
	rural	2004	25.3
Ratio of highest 20% to lowest 40%:	total	2004	5.4
	rural	2004	3.2
Gini coefficient*:	total	2004	35.2
	rural	2004	23.2
The poor (as % of total population):	actual	2004	20.7
	ultra	2004	4.7
Wages of poor households:	% of their income	2004	42.0
	% of total wages	2004	8.64
Total public expenditure spent on (%):	education	2003/04	14.7
	health	2003/04	5.2
	social security	2003/04	11.4
	defense, security & justice	2002/03	13.8
Public expenditure on education (% of GDP)		2003/04	5.1
Public expenditure on health (% of GDP)		2003/04	1.8
Social security benefits (% of GDP)		2003/04	4.0
Public expenditure on defense (% of GDP)		2002/03	4.9

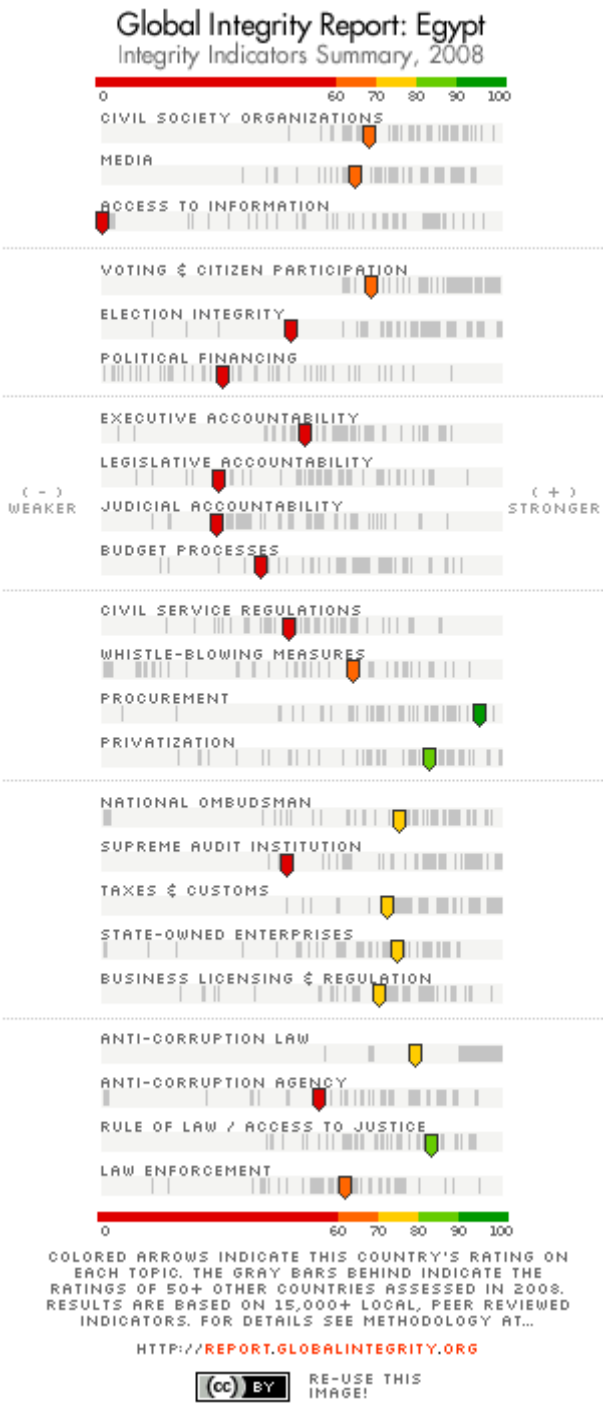
* Calculated by taking the average of Gini Coeff. of the Upper Rural and the Lower Rural

The neoliberal policies and the shrinking role of state have had significant results in the development of a two-tier system of social provisions where high-quality private but expensive social services (in schooling, hospitals, food supply, air quality, entertainment, living environment) stand against the deteriorating state provisions. The expanded NGO sector in the region partially fills the vacuum of the shrunken involvement of the state in offering social services to the needy. Yet not only do NGOs fragment their beneficiaries, they may also reinforce communal cleavages. For unlike the state, which dispenses welfare

22 Egypt Human Development Report 2005, UNDP, p.207

provisions to all citizens irrespective of their communal affiliations, NGOs can function on ethnic lines, extending services to a particular community while excluding others (Bayat, 2009, p.37).

Table (6): The global integrity report: Egypt (2008) [23]



23 World Bank (2009) Egypt Governance Brief 2008, p. 7

4.5 Institutional Access and the Ruling Elite Strategies

The Political Process Model asserts that political opportunities emerge when the ruling elite become vulnerable or receptive to movements by groups excluded from the polity. Such challenger movements usually make demands for the redistribution of social rewards and increased institutional access. They are more likely to seek the overthrow of the regime and could deploy protest and violence. It is worth noting that here are different kinds of relationship between inclusion/exclusion and mobilisation. It could be argued that the more inclusive, democratic political systems minimize exclusion while the more exclusive, authoritarian regimes that deny political rights, raise the costs of visible, large-scale mobilization (Maney, 2001, p. 13). The Egyptian regime as kind of competitive authoritarian regimes with high level of political exclusion led to the emergence of large-scale mobilization such as social and youth activism outside the official corporatist arrangements such as student unions and political parties. The mixture of openness and closure make such regimes particularly susceptible to challenges from those either not represented officially or not represented to their satisfaction. The following pages discuss the nature of the Egyptian regime, the institutional access, and the level of repression which provided political opportunities for counter-hegemonic power and social movement to emerge and spread.

Institutional access and opportunity for changes:

The Egyptian regime since the 1990s could be classified as kind of "competitive authoritarianism"[24]. Levitsky and Way (2002, p. 52) identified the 'competitive authoritarianism' as a hybrid political regime that "combined democratic rules with authoritarian governance". In this model "formal democratic institutions are widely viewed as the principal means of obtaining and exercising political authority". However, incumbent regimes "violate those rules so often and to such an extent" that "the regime fails to meet conventional minimum standards for democracy."

Due to the persistence of meaningful democratic institutions in the competitive authoritarian regimes, arenas of contestation exist through which opposition forces may periodically challenge occasionally autocratic incumbents. Four such arenas are of particular importance: 1) the electoral arena; 2) the legislature; 3) the judiciary; and 4) the media (Levitsky and Way, p. 54). For example; the media are often a central point of contention in competitive

24 Scholars began to develop new classificatory tools to deal with the allegedly novel (or hybrid) nature of a number of post-third wave regimes, ranging from so called 'adjective democracies' to 'hybrid regimes' and 'new authoritarianisms' (see Collier & Levitsky 1997; Diamond 2002; Levitsky & Way 2002 and 2010; Schedler 2002 and 2006).

authoritarian regimes. Independent media outlets often play a critical watchdog role by investigating and exposing government malfeasance (Levitsky and Lucan A. Way, p. 57).

In relating to the electoral arena, the executive branch of the government continued to practice election rigging in favour of the ruling party (NDP); and the legal regulations and security constrained has bequeathed the political parties weak cadres and an impotent political infrastructure (Ibrahim, 1998, p 381). This "electoral authoritarian regime" using Andreas Schedler's (2002) characterization, is a regime "in which opposition parties lose elections". The democratic rules were violated systematically in Mubarak's regime which without, however, completely eliminating formal political competition. This violation of democratic rules could be noticed in the Party Affairs Committee and Court decisions which rejected the establishing of a number of active political forces for long time such as Al Karamah and Al-Wasat (see table 2). The formal rules were violated to such an extent as to prohibit effective contestation for power through official channels (Kevin Koehler and Jana Warkotsch, 2011, p.15). In addition the formal institutions were manipulated to serve the informality and interest networks within the regime.

This model created growing contradictions in the regime during the last decade of Mubarak's rule. It might be seen as a classic example of stable authoritarianism, where the regime controlled much of the media, dominated political life, and suppressed its opponents with a vast array of legal and extra-legal tools. It also carefully monitored and manipulated civil society groups and political parties. On the other side, Egyptian political sphere included several features that suggested a democratic picture particularly during the phases of political mobility in 2005-2006 and 2010-2011 mobility. The independent judges' movement was vibrant through the assertive Judges' Association (the Judges' Club) that openly confronted the executive and lobbied for legal and political reform (Rutherford, 2008). There were also large and well-organized Islamist organizations particularly the Muslim Brother as well as other youth networks and social movements such as Kefaya.

The prominence of these social movements revived the inherent tension in the regime. The coexistence of democratic rules and autocratic methods aimed at keeping incumbents in power created an inherent source of instability. The presence of elections, legislatures, courts, and an independent media created periodic opportunities for challenges by opposition forces. Such challenges created a serious dilemma for autocratic incumbents. On the one hand, repressing them is costly, largely because the challenges tend to be both formally legal and widely perceived (domestically and internationally) as legitimate. On the other hand, incumbents could lose power if they let democratic challenges run their course.

Periods of serious democratic contestation thus bring out the contradictions inherent in competitive authoritarianism, forcing autocratic incumbents to choose between egregiously violating democratic rules, at the cost of international isolation and domestic conflict, and allowing the challenge to proceed, at the cost of possible defeat (Levitsky & Way, p. 59).

Structure of contestations:

Lust-Okar (2007, p. 39) showed how the regime learned to rule by selectively including and excluding political and social forces from participation in "semi-competitive" or "authoritarian" elections . She focused on "the fundamental distinction that lies in the extent to which opposition groups are given equal opportunity to participate in the formal political sphere, or structure of contestation". The regime created institutions that either include or exclude opposition groups. "In contrast to Sadat's strategy to exclude the left, Mubarak created divided structures of contestation as he granted moderate secular opponents greater political space than they had under Sadat, drawing them closer to the regime". Islamists parties remained banned. Although they were sometimes permitted to run on the ballots of secularist parties, and indeed to win seats, they were formally excluded (Lust-Okar, 2007, p. 40).

The regime strategy was furthermore to enable a passable opposition presence in the parliament. In order to reach this objective the NDP needed a complicit counterpart within the opposition prepared to play the role of sparring partner to the NDP's heavyweight parliamentary presence (Teti & Gervasio, 2011). The regime's broader strategic concern was to avoid reforms that would impose a democratic set of rules of the game. Heydemann (2007, p. 28) showed that in recent decades "pressure to impose singular and transparent rules of the game has originated largely with two groups of actors: Islamists and democrats which represent a symmetrical threat to regimes". The strategic options available to these groups of opposition were to participate in elections and/or to pursue protest campaigns even as both were singled out as targets of extensive regime violence.

The regime faced election difficulties when it granted greater subsystem autonomy by allowing formal organizations such as syndicates, trade and student unions more freedom in selecting leaders. This freedom resulted not from a basic change in the character of those organizations but from the regime decisions from the top (Springborg, 1974 , p. 86.) when the opposition particularly the Islamists penetrated the syndicates, student unions and youth clubs through election , the regime decided to stop it.

The elections have been conducted in ways that ensure large parliamentary majorities for the ruling party (NDP). Thus, the opportunities for formal representation and participation through elections had been restricted or simply stopped from expanding (Kienle, 1998, p. 220; Ibrahim, 1998, p. 381). For example the parliamentary election in 1995 turned out to be the worst since the first elections in 1866 (ICER, 1995: pp. 179-222). However, new opportunities for reform through election emerged in the 2000 and 2005 elections following the Supreme Constitutional Court's verdict to confer full supervision of election onto judges. This verdict made the electoral fraud either hard or easy to be uncovered and reveal. This led to an increase in the number of opposition groups in parliament to contribute 100 members in 2005. However, the context associated with this election and the rigging vote generated a tension between the state and judges which led to a wave of political protestation in spring of 2006 (Shehata; 2008, p. 5).

Table (7): The parliamentary representation of political parties (1979-2010) [25]

Election/ Party	1979	1984	1987	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010
NDP	339	390	348	384	417	390	330	420
MB	-	8	30	-	1	17	88	-
Al-Wafd	-	50	35	-	6	7	5	6

25 The data is collected by the researcher from different sources such as (Shukr, 2002 p. 27, Soliman 2005) and Wikipedia and Newspapers)

http://ar.wikipedia.org/wiki/%D8%A7%D9%86%D8%AA%D8%AE%D8%A7%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%AA_%D9%85%D8%AC%D9%84%D8%B3_%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%B4%D8%B9%D8%A8_%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1%D9%8A_2010

Al-Amal	23	-	26	-	-	-	-	-
Al- Tajamu party ’a		-	-	5	5	6	1	5
Al-Ahrar	3	-	4		1	1	-	-
The Nasserist	-	-	-	-	1	2	-	-
Al-Ghad	-	-	-	-	-	-	1	1
Independent and marginal parties	1	-	5	55	13	21	19	72
Total	366	448	448	444	444	444	444	504

Table (8): The dominant position of NDP in the elections[26]

1- People’s Assembly Elections

2010	420 seats (not including 53 NDP-affiliated independents)
2005	311 seats (including 166 “independents” who joined the NDP after the election)
2000	388 seats (including 218 “independents”)
1995	417 seats (including 99 “independents”)

26 http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2011/09/22/national-democratic-party

1- People's Assembly Elections	
1990	386 seats
1987	339
1984	394
1979	347
2- Shura Council Elections[27]	
2010	80 seats (out of 88 seats available)
2007	84 seats (out of 88 seats available, including 3 seats won by NDP-affiliated independents
2004	70 seats (out of 88 seats available, with NDP-affiliated independents winning another 17)
2001	74 seats (out of 88 seats available)
1981	140 seats (all elective seats, the president appointed the remaining 70 members)

27 http://egyptelections.carnegieendowment.org/2011/09/22/national-democratic-party

3- Local Elections

2008	95 percent of roughly 52,000 council seats
2002	97 percent of council seats

Table (9): The low turnout in election and the exclusion of ordinary people (Apathy)[28]

Year of election/ turnout	1984	1987	1990	1995	2000	2005	2010	2011
Population (millions)	47	50	53	59	65	71	81	82
Numbers that have the legal right to vote (millions)	28	29	31	34	38	41	49	50.4
Registered numbers (millions)	13	14	16	20	27	32	41	50
Turnout (millions)	5.4	7.8	7.5	10	7.4	8.1	5-25	32
Turnout (% of the registered)	43	54	46	50	27.5	25.3	5-25[29]	60
Turnout (% of who	19.8	26.6	24	30.8	19.7	19.6	5-25	60

28 The data is collected by the researcher from different sources such as (Shukr, 2002 p. 27, Soliman 2005, p. 159, Wikipedia and Newspapers)

29 Contested percentages 25% according to the Government and 5% according to opposition and between 15-20% according to observers

have the right to vote)								

These tables highlight the fluctuation of opposition figures in election comparing with the NDP that dominated the parliament by not less than a majority of two thirds. The election of 2005 featured a significant decline of both NDP and opposition parties comparing with MB's rise as they succeeded to get a historical percentage reached to 20% of seats. On the other hand the representation of the traditional political parties particularly Al Wafd which considered the main opposition party since 1980s has sharply declined to become a marginal party in the parliament with only 6 seats in 2005 comparing with 50 seats in 1985. This means the official political structure was not able to absorb the movements and ordinary people desire to participate particularly when the regime decide to design the 2010 parliament election by excluding the main political movements such as youth movements and MBs. The following table shoe the low turnout in the elections because of the exclusion of most ordinary people and the lack of trust in the political structure.

Table (10): Turnout between urban and rural regions[30:]

Region	Percentage of turnout in Localities' Elections[31]	Percentage of turnout in Parliamentary Elections
Urban Governorates	10.2	17.3
Lower Egypt	50.9	25.8
Upper Egypt	41.7	25.4
Frontier Governorates	30.4	31
Egypt	42.4	24.1

30 Egypt Human Development Report 2005, UNDP, p. 230

31 Some could argue that these formal figures were not accurate as the local elections were comprehensively rigged

The elections, even rigged ones, continue to be sensitive issues for the regime. The revolution on 25th January 2011 was to large extent prompted by the results of the 2010 parliamentary election which extensively undermined the regime rhetoric about democratic legitimacy. The new activism managed to uncover and document the violations, fraud and rigging in this election using the digital and social media to spread and publish. Election polls were marred by massive fraud and there was no illusion that other parties would pose a significant threat to the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP). The NDP was widely expected to engineer a strong reduction in the Muslim Brotherhood's presence, while allowing the share of other opposition groups to rise in order to provide, at least, a fig-leaf of pluralist politics in Egypt. But in the end, the NDP won 420 seats (81.1%), and NDP 'independents' won 53 seats (10.2%) for an NDP total of 91.3%. This election put on display the techniques of political control of so-called façade democracies to strip democratic institutions of any significance. The uncovering of such practices undermined the notion that 'liberalised autocracies' have some sort of democratic elements behind their façades (Teti & Gervasio, 2011). The parliamentary elections of November 28th and December 5th 2010 witnessed an intensive use of the social networking technologies which became the heart of the media battle coinciding with the election campaign. Given state control of state media and the self-censorship practiced by private newspapers and satellite channels, these networks emerged as the most prominent developments in the election. They became a real alternative that allowed the investment of time and effort to produce great achievements without considerable financial cost in areas of both publicity and observation. El Barqy, a former activist from MB youth wing, emphasized that “there were preparations to launch a wide protests such those which followed the Iranian elections in 2009 but the MB leadership hesitated to become involved in such confrontation with the regime at this time” (El Barqy, Interview, 2012).

The regime strategy and upgrading authoritarianism

The regime attempted to utilize the dynamics of the political mobility in order to make the most of the contradictions and disputes among political and social forces. There is no doubt that such polices were useful in attempting to give a democratic shape to the competitive authoritarian regime to matters related to ensuring an acceptable degree of political legitimacy and avoid external pressure and provide a positive image about Egypt which depends heavily on tourism, remittances and foreign assistance.

The regime allowed some degree of freedom of action for some political and social forces as part of its efforts to remain in power. The regime demonstrated a quality that was described

by Heydemann (2007, p. 26) as "bounded adaptiveness" which means "a capacity for adjustment and accommodation that is produced by the interaction of formal and informal modes of conflict resolution, bargaining, and coalition management". This adaptive capacity refutes the assumption that authoritarian regimes are highly resistant to change. In this model, rulers have to get into a rich opportunity array of alternative strategies for securing their interests (Heydemann, 2007, p. 28)

The regime works efficiently through two mechanisms of consolidated formal and informal modes of governance; firstly, the formal institutions that are available play a significant role in resolving what Wintrobe (1998) described as "the dictator's dilemma" which means "the inability of an authoritarian leader to make minimally credible commitments and to be held minimally accountable for them". (Heydemann, 2007, pp. 26, 27). The structure of the Egyptian state system showed that the executive branch was headed by the President Hosni Mubarak (1981-2011), and the last head of the government, Ahmed Nazif, (2004-2011). The cabinet, with the prime minister at its apex, was also appointed by the president; an additional feature of an even higher degree of centralization of political power. In accordance with the constitution, the president was the centre of power[32]. The Parliament has the power to legislate and to nominate the president, and other branches of government, which were responsible to the assembly. But, in practice, it had never actually exercised such constitutional checks on the executive. It is important to note the prime minister and his cabinet could be considered scapegoats and responsible for the regime's failure or lack of achievements and were easy to be sacked or replaced by the regime as happened during the 25th January when Mubarak fired Nazif to ease the pressure of the protestations.

Secondly, the informal modes permit leaders selectively to operate outside formal institutional arenas: "to make side payments, to bypass formal commitments, and to manage access to informal economic and political networks as a way to reward supporters and sanction opponents" (Heydemann, 2007, p. 27). The formal institutions such as the ruling party and parliament and non-governmental organizations such as trade and student unions, professional associations and opposition parties occupy an important position that cannot be completely disregarded in this model (Heydemann, 2007, p. 27). Authoritarian persistence cannot be explained by coercion alone and indeed, the logic of authoritarian rule is to include some social forces in order to exclude others (Hinnebusch, 2012, p.3). Mubarak's family sought to upgrade the authoritarian regime since 2004 by diminishing the role of the old guard and

32 http://64.233.161.104/search?q=cache:Uy9sBCBHxucJ:www.country-studies.com /egypt/ government-and-politics.htm

empowering his son Gamal and his inner circle. The regime used privatization as a source of patronage to build new bases of support to substitute for the old populist coalition (Kienle, 1999; Hinnebusch, 2012, p.3).

Hinnebusch (2012) argued that such strategies of change and the upgrading of authoritarianism could be identified as the seeds of the uprising, "even though it framed them in terms of their positive contribution to authoritarian upgrading. The underlying deep change was a movement from an originally populist form of authoritarianism to "post-populist" or neo-liberal versions" [33] . The seeds of rebellion are to be found in this transition. The neoliberal policies adopted by this strategy weakened the corporatist arrangements and networks dominated by the ruling party (NDP) which sought to disempower and demobilize rather than mobilize workers, peasants and youth (Hinnebusch, 2012, p.3). This version of authoritarianism generated high levels of mass grievances. On the other hand the "authoritarian upgrading, although meant to contain and compensate for these negative side effects, also had their own negative side effects. They had cumulative costs, which, indeed, contained the identifiable seeds of the uprising" (Hinnebusch, 2012, p.3).

The level of repression:

Declines in the repressive capacities of previously highly repressive states provide a window of opportunity for movements to mobilize broadly and openly with a lower risk of beatings, incarceration, torture, and/or death; and, in the case of revolutions, a better chance of seizing power. Political process theorists usually envision an inverted 'U-shaped' relationship between regime repressiveness and political conflict. Fluctuating and sweeping repressive measures can also alienate broad segments of the population, triggering rebellion (Jenkins & Schock 1992, p. 43). Consequently, the competitive authoritarianism does not rely solely on the coercive power of the state but it needs to create an effective balance between repression and co-optation. There are a broad collection of instruments available for the regime which "quite apart from a coercive capacity that is simply too blunt an instrument to account, on its own, for the resilience of authoritarian rule" (Heydemann, 2007, p.27). Some could argue that the Egyptian regime's capacity to launch a comprehensive war against the Muslim Brothers was limited because it was not that kind of totalitarian regime or stark authoritarianism such as the Saddam Hussein regime for example.

33 Raymond Hinnebusch, "Liberalization without Democratization in 'Post-populist' Authoritarian States: Evidence from Syria and Egypt," in Nils Butenschon, Uri Davis and Manuel Hassassian, Citizenship and the State in the Middle East, 2000); Martha Pripstein-Posusney Labor and the State in Egypt: Workers, Unions and Economic Restructuring, 1979); Anoushiravan Ehteshami and Emma Murphy, "The Transformation of the Corporatist State in the Middle East," Third World Quarterly 17, 4], 1996);

In addition to this, there were stages that were marked by a diminishing in repressive capacities due to political reasons. The regime turned a blind eye on mobilizations in specific period such the first wave of Palestinian uprising demonstrations and the compromise strategy with social protest wave. During the 2000-2002 demonstrations, the regime turned a blind eye to the support for Palestine in order to use it as a tool against western support for Israel and to renew the Egyptian formula of a moderate nationalist role in the region. The regime tolerated the protests as long as they could be contained and managed. The external pressure in 2004 and 2005 created another cycle of tolerance and diminished the repression. The stage between 2007- 2010 was marked by police relaxation in the face of social protest while continuing to exert pressure on Muslim Brothers. It is noteworthy that the security forces did not oppress these demonstration as long as they avoid sharply condemning the regime. The student activism for example benefited from the regulations that prevented the police forces from invading the university campuses. Compromises and negotiations took place to emphasise the limits and red lines imposed by the police on demonstrations such as preventing demonstrations from crossing the campuses to streets. It could be said that the repression succeeded when the regime directed pressure against one group in attempting to isolate it from the spectrum of political activism like the left in the 1970s, militant Islamists in the 1990s and the Muslim Brothers from 2005-2011. However the repression failed if the opposition groups worked together across ideological divides particularly Islamist and Leftist groups and because of their ability to use the social media to reveal the scandals of torture There is a third possible dynamic when increasing repression triggered further protests and fuelled mobilisation, for example the police measures in April 6 2008 enabled young activists to get more support and sympathy from media and society which led to the formation April 6 youth movement.

Activists gained the right to protest through supporting the Palestine and Iraqi causes and during the political mobility in 2005. But the period 2005-2010 witnessed different levels and stages of repression, depending upon the regime's objectives and threats. Since 2006, repression focused selectively on prominent and influential activists particularly from the Muslim Brothers and the activists since the abortion of demonstrations to support judges in 2006 and the military trial for MB leaders, while authorities have tolerated the emergence of non political-oriented actions. In general, the regime has expressed little tolerance toward sustained collective dissent. Amnesty International report (2007, p. 51) cited police violence against peaceful protestors calling for political reform, the arrest of hundreds of Muslim Brotherhood members, and the detention, without trial, of thousands of others suspected of

supporting banned Islamic groups. Torture and ill-treatment in detention continued to be systematic.

With the return of ElBaradei and the launching of Khalid Saeed Facebook page in 2010, security forces were obliged to ease their grip on political protests taking place under the ElBaradei umbrella with efforts to defuse protests before they happened. The role of social media on YouTube and Facebook, which revealed several actions of torture and brutal scandals, alerted the regime and security forces to be more cautious and avoid such scandals. The police atrocities and corruption have been well-documented in human rights reports and new media outlets which in return created a limitation on the coercive capacity of the regime. The regime faced the paradox of exerting high levels of police atrocities to keep its stability and the ability of social media to uncover these atrocities and show them to the international community. Transnational and internal organizations focusing upon human rights played an increasingly important role in constraining regime repression of political and social movements (Sikkink 1993, p. 75). The new activism networks relatively shielded participants and members from retribution by the states whose policies they challenged by "manipulating intersecting dependencies, tapping into the increased salience of human rights norms, and utilizing the international media to generate negative publicity for states engaged in human rights violations" (Coy 1997, Pagnucco 1997, Maney, 2001, p. 21).

4.6 Divisions among the Ruling Elite and Patronage Networks

Shifting alignments and political competition among elites triggers opportunities for political access and the emergence of social movements. Jenkins (1983, p.547) argued that, "If the polity is closely divided, members have lost their normal coalition partners, or members find themselves in jeopardy for want of resources, the normally risky strategy of supporting the entry of a movement is more likely to be adopted".

The patron-client relationship and the adaptability and flexibility of the clientelism guaranteed a high level of Egyptian regime resiliency and durability during periods of stability. Springborg explained how the political clientelism became "the glue that held the political system together for a long time" (Springborg, 1974, P. 87). The clientelism could be considered an integrative, stabilizing force on the periphery of the regime instead of the absence of a clear hegemonic or ideological block. These established personal ties have been "as, or more, powerful in contributing to policy outcomes than organizations with formal, legal existence" (Springborg, 1994, P. 104). El-Sayed (1991, pp. 379) confirmed that "the golden age of the interests of informal networks was in the 1950s and 1960s". The ruling elites were established on a military-civilian coalition and various key officials started to run

private businesses using their special access to information and power (Adly, 2012, p.3.). Similar patterns of patronage networks were established with the beginning of pluralism and economic openness since the 1970s and the following decades but on the basis of common economic interests and harmony of political visions (El-Sayed, 1991). Waterbury (1992) emphasized the beginning of the transformation of Nasser's state "bourgeoisie" into a business since the first partial liberalization that took place under Sadat in the mid-1970s. Skafianakis (2004) coined the concept of “networks of privilege” to explain the cronyism and corruption networks during the Mubarak era. The corruption and cronyism connected with “the abuse of state power in issuing laws, decrees and regulations that would allocate public assets or ensure favoured market positions to a politically selected few” (Adly, 2012, p. 2-3). In this regard the “ruling elites used pressures for privatization from international financial institutions to appropriate public sector assets for themselves, to enrich presidential families and ministers and private investors allied with them in “networks of privilege” (Heydemann, 2004). The cronyism takes four forms (Adly, 2012, pp.2-3): The Sultan’s inner circles (Mubarak ruling family networks), Mamluk fiefdoms (state apparatuses particularly military, intelligence and the ministry of interior, claim certain economic sectors), oligarchs (businessmen make their way from economics to politics by occupying executive and parliamentary positions) and junior partners (partnership of businessmen with key officials and their family members).

During the stages of political and economic transformations, tension and conflicts of interest emerged in the regime networks, bureaucracy and ruling elite. Some were excluded, others benefited. The concept of power sharing came onto the agenda (Ehteshami & Murphy, 1996, p. 760, Waterbury, 1992). The privatization and liberalisation of the economy, to some degree away from direct interference by the state, has often transferred assets, or the control thereof, to actors and groups close to the state. This process is likely to produce not only winners but losers as well. These losers realize that they would be “excluded from the political game and removed from existing corporatist arrangements” (Kienle, 1998, p. 236).

In this regard the divided elites and the destabilization of political coalitions as a result of conflicts among elites during times of political and economic crisis make certain elites more willing to support challenger movements (Piven & Cloward 1977, p. 23). Even if such support is not forthcoming, a lack of unity translates into a less coordinated and resource-laden opposition to insurgents (Skocpol, 1979, Maney, 2001, p. 19).

It is worth noting that the conflict among ruling elites over resources and policies heightened in a number of occasions in Egyptian history (Brownlee, 2002, p. 6). The lack of coherence

among elite groups emerged in the regime because the patron-client model is connected to what Springborg identified the regime dilemma of "the organizational vacuum". The political clientage failed in certain events and crises to provide sufficient cohesion within the elite (Springborg, 1974, p. 87). While rulers such Mubarak may appreciate their relative freedom of action, "the organizational vacuum over which they preside actually sets real and narrow limits on their governing scope". In other words, "the Egyptian rulers can be authoritarian but, in the absence of means of organizing mass behaviour on a permanent rather than a temporary basis, they are incapable of establishing either totalitarian government or government based on a system of checks and balances between institutions" (Ibid, p. 86). Moreover, clientelism does not provide a sufficient organizational basis for a leader to enforce unity of purpose within the elite, nor for him to reach down effectively into the population to extract or distribute resources (Ibid, p. 106).

These clientalist networks provide the foundations of an authoritarian regime, not a totalitarian one, allowing the opportunity for the emergence of social movements. The clash between the informal and formal networks might have a great impact on the coherence of the ruling elite and provide an appropriate context for the emergence or developing of social movements. Heydemann (2007, p. 28) illustrated that the possibility of the ruler to exploit multiple sets of rules could be undermined when the formal institutions and practices are discarded entirely in favour of informal, selective, and arbitrary modes of governance. The next table shows that standards of transparency and good governance were very weak in Egypt comparing with other Middle East and North Africa countries.

Table (11): The corruption perceptions index and international transparency (2008)[34]

Egypt and MENA compared

County Rank	Regional Country Rank	Country/Territory	CPI Score 2008
28	1	Qatar	6.5
35	2	United Arab Emirates	5.9

34 World Bank, 2008, Egypt Governance Brief, June 2009, p. 6

41	3	Oman	5.5
43	4	Bahrain	5.4
47	5	Jordan	5.1
62	6	Tunisia	4.4
65	7	Kuwait	4.3
80	8	Morocco	3.5
80	8	Saudi Arabia	3.5
92	10	Algeria	3.2
102	11	Djibouti	3
102	11	Lebanon	3
115	13	Egypt	2.8
126	14	Libya	2.6
141	15	Iran	2.3
141	15	Yemen	2.3
147	17	Syria	2.1
178	18	Iraq	1.3
Average			3.705555556

Egypt fell in the 20th lowest percentile bracket on WBI's 2008 World Governance Indicators (WGI) and compares unfavourably within MENA and with other countries with similar income levels. The 2008 Freedom House report ranks the country as "not free." Government accountability has been rated low and witnessed a modest decline over the last year according to WGI. The 2008 Global Integrity report notes that no mechanism or appeals process exists in Egypt for citizens who are denied access to basic information. The 2008 World Bank CPIA index rated Egypt below the region's average in the area of transparency and accountability. With regard to corruption, WGI shows an overall deterioration in the country's anti-corruption efforts over the last decade and the 2008 Transparency International's CPI index ranks Egypt below the regional average. The same pattern also stands out with respect to the country's regulatory and bureaucratic quality[35].

In this regard, the last years of Mubarak's regime were marked by factional and interest conflicts among the ruling elite, which lost its coherence and harmony and became an old-age, corruption-riddled elite. The regime manoeuvres to upgrade after 2004 heightened the tension between the former old guard which gradually excluded by Mubarak's son Gamal and his inner circle of businessmen constituencies. The regime denoted the tactical techniques by which regimes tried to manage this transition without destabilizing their rule. Heydemann and Kniele illustrated how a regime such as the Mubarak's "used privatization as a source of patronage to build new bases of support substituting for the old populist coalition and elites" (Kniele, 1998, p. 199; Hinnebusch, 2012, p.3).

The replacement of the old guard with Gamal Mubarak's figures deepened the conflicts while keeping the same dilemma within the ruling elite. The change of prominent figures among the ruling elite did not mean that reform in the autocratic regime was taking place as the newcomers to the political arena preserved the same rules and practices. The neoliberal policies of the Nazif government (2004-2011) provided the space for the expansion and sophistication of the growing new networks of businessmen which became involved in disputes over policies and resources with the old networks. Under Nazif's government, "many businessmen were brought into the cabinet and joined the economic team while others joined the NDP-dominated parliament: a classical revolving-door situation" (Adly, 2012, pp. 3.4).

Indeed with the advent of the neoliberal phase in Egypt, and the subsequent rise of Gamal Mubarak into the apex of the NDP and the political spectrum, a new taxonomy of political

35 World Bank, 2008, Egypt Governance Brief, June 2009, p. 1

elite was in the making. The ascendance of the business community into the higher levels of the Egyptian polity was, in effect, a reflection of a set of social and economic changes that the country went through in the aftermath of the Open Door policy adopted by Sadat in the mid-1970s. “About one decade after economic liberalization, the first echelon of businessmen started to appear in politics during the mid-1980s. One decade later, with the beginning of privatization, they increasingly interfered in formal politics. Generally speaking, they substituted those personalities in parliament that came from the public sector” (Kavli, 2003, p.6).

These changes and such processes created new alliances and tensions between different networks of bureaucracy, business and military. It is worth noting that privatization and the distribution of wealth creates divisions within the state and among the ruling elites. The austerity policies also created tension as some officials might have concerns that these programmes “erode national sovereignty, lower state revenues and capacities, worsen living standards, produce recession, and lead to economic and political instability” (Maney, 2001, pp. 19,20). The policies of the new guard around Gamal Mubarak were fiercely resisted by those elements of the bureaucracy and military who considered it as power-loss and who were more interested in preserving their existing privileges (Adly, 2012, pp.3, 4). The business tycoon Ahmed Ezz, the prominent figure in Gamal’s inner circle and Organizational Secretary of NDP, owned the Steel Rebar's Company (Al-Dekheila) which dominated 70% of the market (Shawqi, 2001, p.45). Opponents accused the government of helping Ezz overtake the Alexandria Iron and Steel Company. Ezz was also accused of using his influential role in the ruling party to become the main shareholder and board chairman of Al-Dekheila Company. Thus he monopolized the iron and steel market in Egypt. A number of MPs raised concerns that Ezz would improperly manipulate the Anti-Trust and Competition Protection Commission (ACPC). They accused Prime Minister Ahmed Nazif's government of being in cahoots with the business community, and the only way to ensure ACPC's independence was for it to be affiliated to the Central Auditing Agency (Essam El-din, 2007).

These clashes among the ruling elite were also part of political successions arrangement preparing for Mubarak’s departure from office. Since the rise of Gamal Mubarak and the formation of the “Policy Committee” which dominated the NDP, much has been said about the crises that recurrently characterized the regime internal networks. Observers and activists noted the implicit and hidden tension over issues and policies among the ruling elite e.g. disagreement between old and new guards, the doubt about the military establishment position regarding the political succession and the conflicts to control the resources emerged on various occasions revolution such as the Agrium projects (Tohami, 2010), the nuclear

reactor project in Eduba'a and the conflict between two prominent figures in the NDP, Ahmed Ezz and Hesham Mustafa. Such a crisis developed into a fully-fledged rift, which could be beyond repair until the revolution. There was a mix of closed institutions infused Wit over lapping loyalties on one hand and growing military control that had tried to replace Mubarak and his party's men since 25th January on the other (El Sirgany, 2012).

The power struggle and internal contest between the 'old guard' and Gamal Mubarak's new generation of businessmen-politicians forced the NDP to field two sets of candidates in the 2010 election which reflects the kind of loose corporatist arrangements. In fact, in some places, the NDP even fielded one or two additional 'independent' candidates, for a total of over 800 candidates in 508 constituencies. The run-off competitions often saw competing NDP candidates jostle for election, with many of the same dirty tactics being turned on their party colleagues (Teti & Gervasio, 2011). The internal dispute in the NDP posed a serious obstacle to the NDP's objective of a enabling a passable opposition presence in parliament. After NDP won of over 90% of available seats, the other parties decided to boycott the elections and withdrew their candidates. In any case, these deep splits demonstrate not only the temptation of collaborating with the regime, particularly for businessmen-politicians, and the frailty of the regime's pluralistic 'cover', but also the deep rift between party leaderships and their members (Ibid). Indeed, this election was significant because the experiment in electoral engineering sponsored by the new guard (Gamal's men, particularly Ezz) failed to provide the regime with a façade of democratic legitimacy, failed to resolve internal factionalism and impose party discipline, and the withdrawal of most parties after the first round of voting suggests that this time most opposition parties – though not necessarily their MPs – refused the regime's offer to act as mere sparring partners (Teti & Gervasio, 2011).

Another outstanding aspect of these conflicts was between the military leadership and Gamal Mubarak's Policies Committee around the issue of economic policies and privatization. The Army and retired generals hold administrative posts, and many sectors now feature more officials with direct links to the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF). A number of senior officers were appointed as governors of provinces, managers of towns, or heads of city councils, or heads of factories or companies owned by the state or the military (El Sirgany, 2012; Abul-Magd, 2012). The conflicts of interest emerged and created a rivalry between SCAF and some of the top NDP leaders over privatization policies and political succession which played an important role in explaining the SCAF position during the revolution which asserted it as the "primary political force" (El Sirgany,2012).

4.7 Transnational and External Opportunities

The outstanding trend in the literature review about the Middle East proclaims the interaction between external and internal determinants as "key to any prospect for democratization in Egypt: (a) freedom and strengthening of civil society and, (b) international pressures and incentives, especially from the United States as the hegemonic power in the region" (Brownlee, 2002; Brumberg, 2002; Langohr, 2004). It could be argued that social movements have revitalized in the last decade due to this interaction between internal, regional, and international factors. In this regard, when internal opportunities are closed, SMs might seek to benefit from international alliances and institutions to create opportunities and generate new resources.

On the other hand, the leverage of external and transnational factors were not addresses as an independent factors in the social movement theory compared with PO, MS and FP. Maney (2001) argued that "by and large, theories of social movements have neglected the role of both transnational structures and external actors in contributing to domestic political conflict" (Maney, 2001, pp.1, 2). He showed that, "While more frequently acknowledging, on an *ad hoc* basis, the importance of international factors, those working in the political process tradition, until recently, did not devote significant attention to the impact of international factors on their primary subject matter - structures of political opportunity" (Maney, 2001, pp 2, 3).

It could be argued that the political process model is "constructed with the assumption that external and internal processes, institutions, and actors contribute, separately and in interactive combination, to the origins, trajectories, and outcomes of domestic protest" (Maney, 2001, p. 5). It could also be argued that opportunities and constraints are more homogeneous in the national level (one centre of power) while on the international level; they are heterogeneous, which lead to differential mobilizing of networks both at national level and international levels.

This section is going to address the issue of external and transnational opportunities and constraints which emerged from 2000-2010 by focusing on three main factors: the impact of globalization and internet-based communication, USA foreign policy, and regional conflicts in Middle East

The Impact of Globalization and Internet-based Communications:

The global economic change, developments in media and communications technologies, and the growth of transnational networks contributed to reshaping the opportunities and constraints facing social movements and regimes. Some forms of authoritarianism, such as totalitarianism and bureaucratic authoritarianism, have become more difficult to sustain. Although several new (or partially new) nondemocratic regime types took on greater importance in the 1990s, including competitive authoritarianism (Levitsky & Way, p. 63), globalization and new media contributed to the democratization in Middle East countries. In this regard the new transnational types of political, economic, social and cultural actors and processes resulting from globalization led to a global redistribution of power (Pratt, 2004, 314). Henry and Springporg argued that the way globalization impacts on political regimes in the Middle East depends on the regime type which range between three major types :praetorian republics, monarchies, and, lastly, democracies of varying degrees of institutionalized competitiveness. They classified[36] the Egyptian regime under Mubarak as a praetorian republic ruled by "bullies" as there were some elements of both civil society and rational-legal legitimacy, which in turn reduce, but do not altogether eliminate, the importance of violence and coercion in political life. The structural power of capital, although negligible in praetorian republics governed by bullies, is noticeably greater than in bunker states, where security of property is insufficient to permit capital accumulation. Consequently the "bully" responses to economic globalization are less brutal than those of the bunker states. The limited capacities of the "bully" states, however and the structural weakness of capital within them have severely constrained their efforts to globalize (Henry, Springborg, 2010, p. 63).

In addition to this, globalization strengthens "national/regional/political or other identities by bringing people together across time and space" (Yamani, 2001). The process of globalization has facilitated intercultural exchanges which enable new combinations of identities to be created, resulting in a hybrid culture (Nederveen Pieterse, 1995). In some cases, these new identities can become a resource for the creation of transnational social movements or a movement for 'globalization-from-below' (Keck and Sikkink, 1998; Falk, 1999; Al-Ali, 2001; Pratt, 2004, pp. 315, 316). The blurring of hegemonic national cultures that represent the national community as homogeneous, may empower previously suppressed or ignored social groups, based on class, gender, ethnicity, religion, sexuality or other identities (Held and McGrew, 2000; Al-Ali, 2001; Pratt, 2004, 315, 316).

36 They considered that Egypt, Tunisia, and prospective Palestine comprise the "bully" states of the MENA, while Algeria, Iraq, Libya, Sudan, Syria, and Yemen are the bunker states.

In this regard, state autonomy is challenged from below by NGOs and other non-state actors. NGOs for example, "have been encouraged into this role by the increasing amount of aid channelled to them by Northern donors over the last decade." (Fowler, 1992; Pratt, 2004). The interdependence relationship between the Egyptian NGO campaign for democratization and transnational NGOs emerged as the former not only mobilized local support, but it also had the backing of international human rights, NGOs and many foreign governments and donors (Pratt, 2004, p. 330).

The growing international civil society contributes to the creating of the opportunity for the emergence and extension of social movements. It is widely agreed that the role of transnational social movements and civil society organizations gradually expanded and surged with the globalization and the Iraqi war in 2003. Various groups from civil society and NGOs from different ideological trends have strong ties with the civil society in the western countries. Abdel Rahman (2009, p. 40) argued that "the success of the worldwide anti-war movement has given support to the nascent Egyptian movement whose members are closely linked with this global umbrella". In response to this challenge the regime advocated executive supervision of fund-raising abroad and attempted to delegitimize transnational linkages by representing 'foreign funding' as a threat to the nation (Pratt, 2004, pp. 326, 327).

In addition to this, globalization plays a role in democratization through the extension of new information and communication technologies (ICTs), which provide activists with new ways to challenge the authorities **(**Ibid, pp. 315, 316).

The internet-based communications helped social movements to establish "counter-public spheres" (derived from Habermas's 'public spheres'), whereby this technology provides protesting and marginalized groups with a new and inexpensive means to establish a sphere of media discourse that accompanies their forms of organization and protest (Downey and Fenton, 2003, pp. 185-202). These groups and individuals developed the use of such technology to become significant channels for voices, minority viewpoints, and political mobilization, and challenge the elite control of public sphere and mass communication. The online media, under a variety of regimes, has significantly contributed to expanding the scope of freedom of expression and to breaking official organizations' monopoly of channels of communication (UNDP, 2010, p. 114). Increasingly, these developments comprise an emerging networked public sphere, in which the power of elites to control the public agenda and bracket the range of allowable opinions is seriously challenged (Etling, et al., 2009, p.7).

The benefits of media convergence, bringing together print, video and broadcast in cyberspace, best explain how sub-state groups can circumvent their marginalization in

mainstream media outlets. Ajemian argues that intersecting and complementing existing transnational media would allow for dissident groups and their sympathizers to tap into the mainstream. In addition to this, online media best demonstrate how media convergence empowers individuals to shape media counter-public spheres (Ajemian, 2008). Morozov (2009) discussed the change of the meaning of activism; he argued that "anyone can be one of the activists joining a Facebook group, posting to a blog, or setting up a Twitter account would count as activism".

Despite the historical control over the media, through many entities such as the Egyptian Supreme Press Council, which has been enhanced by the renewal of the state emergency law, the economic and political reform plans and the modernizing process since the mid-nineties, convinced the regime to consider the availability of information and knowledge one of its priorities, programmes that provide labour market information and employment services began emerging on the internet especially on the websites of the National Council for Youth and the Ministry of Manpower and Migration (Tohami, 2009, p. 23).

These developments led to a revolution in the use of the internet and new social networking technologies and created a new dilemma for the authorities that were able to effectively move against the traditional media while finding it difficult to silence the increasing numbers of elusive protest voices playing out on new technologies which spread around the country. For example, the circulation for newspapers and magazines is just one million a day. But there are 60 million cell phones that can send a SMS. To the government this can be a dangerous issue that needs to be under control (Flieshman and Hassan, 2010). The infrastructure of digital networks is beyond the reach of the state. The government can easily cut power off to television stations or restrict the supply of newsprint, but cannot easily control digital networks when the servers that host political conversations are located overseas, and the internet service providers and mobile phone operators are privately held businesses (Howard, 2010). These days regimes cannot ban ideas and political debates; they just drive them on to the internet (O'Donnell, 2010).

It is worth noting that the youth are the main group who use internet-based technologies. Indeed, the growing numbers of educated young people looking for new chances has become the age group benefiting the most from these transformations. They constitute the largest number of current internet users and have developed channels for alternative means of engagement. According to population estimates prepared by the Central Agency for Public Mobilisation and Statistics (CAPMAS, 2008) the youth population between 15-35 years old is about 23 million out of the total population of 76 million in 2006 (30%). And the youth

represent the biggest category using the internet as a source of information because it is one of the cheapest and fastest tools at hand.

The youth culture enjoys a visible presence and certain acknowledgement from society and media that was unseen in the 1980s or 1990s. Egyptian youth activists in recent years found new independent sites for their activism in the emerging blogosphere and Facebook which became platforms of political and cultural expression for some, as well as a mode of social and political networking, campaigning and organization for others. Blogging remained a platform for cultural expression and networking (Tohami, 2009, pp. 12-13).

The statistics about internet-based technologies usage illustrate that the number of internet users in Egypt is estimated at about 13 million to date, according to available statistics. That is, almost two out of eight citizens go to the internet for information, business and personal usage. This is an increase of almost threefold compared to 2005 - and for many, 'logging in' has become a daily practice. It means, for example, that the number of daily Internet users in Egypt is much higher than that of newspaper readers. These figures are expected to rise to cover more than 50% of Egypt's population in the next ten years (EHDR, 2010, p. 114).

The number of computer users among the youth was over six million, of which 57% were male and 43% female; (CAPMAS, 2008). More than 80% of Internet café clients in Egypt were young people (IDSC, 2006, Internet Mania).

The number of Facebook users sharply rises every day and reached more than 4 million of the residents in Egypt in October 2010. This number represents around one third of Internet users in Egypt and will continue to increase in future years. Facebook occupied the second most visited website after Google, and Egypt came number eighteen between the countries that use Facebook. Consequently, the protesting youth found it to be the best arena to publish and mobilize through composing groups or through personal profiles (Shorouk, 2010).

We should take into account how young people deal with these new technologies as a new avenue to achieve their goals and dreams and how this reflects on the public sphere or otherwise. The World Development Report (World Bank, 2006) shows a higher prevalence of computer use in Egypt. The young people have access to the Internet through cyber cafes that are in Cairo and other urban centres. But technology use among youth is limited to chatting, downloading songs, and access to religious sites (Assaad & Barsoum, 2007, p. 15; Tohami. 2009, p. 13).

For as much as these developments are significant and worth noting, the percentage of active youth is not representative of the majority. It is striking that the youth who are interested in political and cultural activities is considered a minority among the younger generation and the number who are practising as members of social movements is small, although they have a great influence on political and social issues (Elting, et. al., 2009, p. 10). In relating the political and cultural impacts, it is obvious that this minority of activists has an incredible effect on the public sphere and represent a big challenge to the hegemonic discourse of the regime.

Online activists and bloggers, as well as participators in 'Facebook' and 'YouTube' were behind the political action in Egypt. The UN Human Development Report confirmed that "the extent of success of the so-called 'electronic democracy' rests largely on young people" (UNDP, 2010, p.113). The importance of the Internet lies in the fact that it may be the only online means available for measuring youth's political participation. And it has become a tool with huge weight in calling for any activity, as the events of 6th April 2008 demonstrated (UNDP, 2010, p. 114).

The American Policy and the democratization process :

Several authors writing on Middle East politics argue that the political opportunity that helped the emergence of social movements fundamentally originated from external pressure. The supporters of this trend concentrate on the authoritarian nature of the regime and its unity while the opposition is weak and divided, so the international context plays the decisive role in the emergence of the new movements. Abdelrahaman (2009, p.40) argued that the external pressure, "such as that applied by the USA, on Mubarak's regime has certainly played a major role in creating new openings for domestic social forces which have seized the opportunity for action" (Abdelrahman, 2009, p. 40). Indeed this view was widely accepted in research about the transition to democracy in Egypt. For example, Brownlee (2002, p. 6) confirmed that "unless domestic and - perhaps more importantly - international actors compel the Egyptian president to cede power to other branches of government and to allow civil society organizations to operate independently, the outlook for organized political contestation in Egypt will only continue to dim".

The United States' policy underwent a significant change after the attacks of September 11, 2001 subsequently aiming to bring about the issue of democratization in the Arab world as one of the priorities of the region. It is widely agreed that prior to September 11, U.S. policy makers assumed that stable and friendly authoritarian regimes in the Arab world were the best guarantee of American security and economic interests (Tawfiq Ibrahim, 2003, p.7). The

relationship between the US and Egypt is based on strategic interests, in particular, oil, Israel, the Soviet Union (until 1991), radical Islamic movements and the eagerness to maintain the peace treaty between Egypt and Israel and (to extend the peace to other Arab countries). American economic and military assistance to Egypt had extended to approximately $62 billion over the previous thirty-one years by the end of 2006. Consequently, a common understanding developed as democratization was a subordinate to the strategic concerns that shape the US-Egyptian relationship. Democratization took a back seat to core strategic concerns (Rutherford, 2008). In the wake of the September 2001 attacks, the American political elite concluded that "terrorism by radical Islamists was partially a result of the repression and economic stagnation of Arab dictatorships" (Rutherford, 2008). The Europeans adopted a similar conviction, though less effusive and preferred more diplomatic tools to create democratic change in the Middle East. The international context, after 11 September, made the issue of democratization in the Middle East one of the priorities in the region. In other words, democratization became not only an extra goal but also a strategic objective in itself. "True, it is only one objective among many. But it now carries significant weight among policy makers in the United States and Europe. Major Western governments now argue with increasing conviction that the absence of democracy in the region has a direct impact on regional and global security" (Rutherford, 2008).

However, the rise of contentious politics in Egypt vehemently defied those predictions. When in come to the reality, the policy of democratization witnessed a lot of complications and contradictions that made some scholars conclude that what really happened was, "strengthening authoritarian rule through Democracy Promotion" Durac & Cavatorta, (2009). They discussed the Bush administration hesitation and unease over supporting democracy in Egypt. US officials were worrying about how to react "because political transformation in Egypt presented a policy puzzle with no simple solution". On the one hand, Mubarak's regime was profoundly unpopular but "the opposition was thin on democrats and liberals and heavy on leftists, Nasserists, and Islamists, all deeply opposed to the United States, and divided along fault lines" Durac & Cavatorta, (2009, p. 15). There was great doubt that they could remove the regime and that external pressure alone could lead to any result without a strong movement on the ground. The paradox of democratization policy appeared when the interests of the United States contradicted with the requirement of democratization similar to what happened after the Egyptian and Palestine elections in 2005 and 2006 respectively. The Muslim brothers and Hamas increased their influence in the political system and parliament through the democratic tools which became a pretext for the regime to launch a repression campaign against the Islamists and the prodemocracy movement. The Bush administration

turned a blind eye because the U.S. still needed the regime mostly for strategic reasons relating to the situation in Palestine, Iraq and the War on Terror. El-Mahdi (2009, p. 1019) argued that, "Although the United States was ready to pay lip service to democratic transition in the region, it could not risk exerting real pressure to destabilize one of its biggest allies in the region". Some activists criticized what they considered as, "immorality of the American position which ignored the repression in 2006-2009" after encouraging political and social movements to challenge the regime then left them to their fate.

The young activists became more radical and sought to get support from the American administration. Some of the radical activists like Ahmed Salah, who claimed to represent April 6 youth movement and a former member of Kefaya, attempted to convince the American officials with their goal to "replace the current regime with a parliamentary democracy prior to the 2011 presidential elections". However, the American embassy analysts in Cairo assessed it as an "unrealistic goal" without a "roadmap of concrete steps". They also mentioned that, "Most opposition parties and independent NGOs work toward achieving tangible, incremental reform within the current political context, even if they may be pessimistic about their chances of success". They add that, "such an approach places him outside this mainstream of opposition politicians and activists (Scobey, 2008). This illustrated that the American diplomats' assessment did not welcome such radical change and preferred the reformist approach which lost its credibility and effectiveness. The Americans focused on helping and cooperating with the weak opposition parties and NGOs which worked under the existing constraints imposed by the regime. The dilemma increased because whatever strategies Western governments use to facilitate democratization such as strengthening civil society "have been half-hearted in their scope or misplaced in their intent, since their apparent effect in their current guise has been to simply reinforce the Egyptian regime" (Teti & Gervasio, 2011). Meanwhile the governmental media waged a propaganda war against the opposition leaders and groups like Ayman Nour and Sa'ad Edien Ibrahiem and accused them of being agents for the west who received foreign financial and political support. The activists themselves criticized Western policy towards reform in the Arab World which ElBaradei described as, "It has not been based on dialogue, understanding, supporting civil society and empowering people, but rather it's been based on supporting authoritarian systems as long as the oil keeps pumping" (Shenker, 2010).

Most worryingly for Egyptian activists during their campaign against the regime was what they considered as the West's muted reactions to the corrupt rigged elections and repression, one prominent activist said that they "expect little support from Western governments for their own democratic dreams". After the rigged parliament election in 2010, there were plenty

of “disappointing statements” put out by various Western governments such as the U.S. State Department. “The EU only managed a strongly-worded statement by the head of its Parliament while Council and Commission have thus far felt unable to produce even tokenistic condemnation” (Teti & Gervasio, 2011). The dilemma continued and appeared on different occasions particularly with ElBaradei’s ambitious to compete in the presidential election. His return to Egypt in February 2010 raised questions about the role of Washington in the political reform in Egypt. While some observers have argued that, “ElBaradei’s return has produced a situation in which Washington can play a positive role in advancing the cause of reform”, others were cautious for different reasons, first because such a role may imply a statement that, “the Egyptian public cannot help itself and has no agency, interests, or politics of its own, thereby requiring Washington to intervene”. Secondly, “Egypt’s close relationship with the United States has become a critical and negative factor in Egyptian politics. The opposition has used these ties to delegitimize the regime, while the government has engaged in its own displays of anti-Americanism to insulate itself from such charges” (Cook, 2010).

The regional effect and the erosion of legitimacy

The external factors are not related just to US policy but also to regional conflicts like the Arab- Israeli conflict and the Iraqi wars in addition to transitional ideologies and movements like pan-Arab and Islamist. In this regard the defeat of Arab regimes at the hands of Israel in 1967 and successive reversals, culminating in the 1990-1991 Gulf crisis, led to the discrediting of the populist social contract and the steady erosion of the legitimacy of successive regimes. Clinging to power, many populist regimes escalated their oppression; others engaged in external adventures, while some did both. Some engaged in the token or substantial revision of their systems of governance (Ibrahim, 1995, p. 36). The Palestine and Iraq issues since 2000 not only paved the way for street protests but also challenged the legitimacy of the regime. It could be argued that the legitimacy of the Egyptian regime used to be tested in its regional and Arab policy as well as its ability to protect the national security.

These regional conflicts, particularly in Palestine and Iraq, contributed to the decreasing of the legitimacy of Arab regimes and led to the emergence of radical social movements that challenged the independent and anti-imperialistic bases of legitimacy. In this regard the regional political developments in the Middle East since 2000 played an important role in the strengthening the youth activism. The second Intifada in Palestine in 2000 and the American invasion of Iraq in 2003 were critical moments that pushed the activists to demonstrate and mobilize. The absence of an influential pro - Arab role was a critical blow to the nationalist

dimension of the regime's legitimacy (El-Mahdi, 2009, p. 1022). Angry protests were directed by Islamists and Nasserist against the West and Israel, and less against their own repressive regime to commit to a democratic order (Bayat, 2009, p. 2). A big shift took place since 2003 and during the Gaza 2008-2009 crisis where the demonstrations were connected between protests against Israel and Mubarak at the same time.

A larger shift in Egyptian policy occurred in the late Mubarak era when looking for ways to make himself useful to Washington in confrontation with Iran, besides tangling with Hamas, participating in renditions of terrorist suspects, and being the occasional facilitator for talks between Israelis and Palestinians (Cook, July 19, 2012). It is worth noting that Mubarak's regime used to get foreign resources that contributed significantly to its adaptive capacity (Heydemann, 2007, p. 34). The American aid began to the Sadat regime after the peace agreement in 1979 and continued throughout the whole era of the Mubarak regime with both western and Arab support for the Mubarak regime particularly after the Iraqi invasion of Kuwait in 1990 and confrontation with terrorist groups. These foreign resources continued in the period from 2000-2010 however they were not enough to face the new social and economic challenges and grievances.

These policies promoted the counter hegemonic movement effort to delegitimize the regime where a significant aspect of legitimacy was contingent on a nationalist foreign policy. Hinnebusch (2012, p.2) stressed that enjoying neither electoral nor traditional legitimacy, legitimacy in these populist authoritarian regimes was contingent on a nationalist foreign policy and delivery of jobs and welfare. However to achieve integration into the world capitalist economy, the regime abandoned anti-imperialism. The main sources of aid/rent were in the West, which required forfeiting nationalist legitimacy by foreign policy alignment westward and peace with Israel (Hinnebusch, 2012, p.2).

Another case in point was the roles played by the Arab satellite channels such as Al-Jazeera in creating similar identities and challenges to the regimes as well as pan-Arab movements and ideas that have mutual influence and impact in the Arab public sphere such as the birth of the Arab Human Rights Organization and similar civil formations (Ibrahim, 1995, p. 56). The Jasmine Tunisian revolution had a great impact on the Egyptians as the successful ousting of autocratic president Zien El Abidien Ben Ali struck a chord with many young, angry Arab

populations ready to protest. And in return the Egyptian one has a similar impact on other Arab revolutions[37].

4.8 Conclusion

This chapter focused on the structure of opportunities that were considered most relevant to the emergence of new agents of change and protest networks among young Egyptians. It has discussed the different aspects of the political opportunities associated with the consequent waves of youth and political activism since 2000 until it reached its peak in the 25th revolution. It concluded that the structures of opportunities emerged as a result of the rupture in state-society relationships which could be traced to the regime's lack of hegemony and legitimacy, the façade of corporatist arrangements and the collapse of the social pact, in addition to the high level of grievances as a result of the deterioration in the socio-economic conditions and the impact of the neoliberal policies which triggered an unprecedented wave of social protest particularly from 2007-2010.

Moreover, the Egyptian regime as a kind of competitive authoritarianism created growing contradictions and the coexistence of democratic rules and autocratic methods created an inherent source of instability. The presence of elections, legislatures, courts, and an independent media created periodic opportunities for challenges by opposition forces. The regime also faced the paradox of exerting high levels of police atrocities to keep its stability and the ability of social media to uncover these atrocities and show them to the international community. In addition to this, the latter years of Mubarak's regime were marked by faction and conflicts of interest among the ruling elite, which lost its coherence and harmony and the failure to resolve internal factionalism and impose party discipline exposed the vulnerability of the regime in the face of strong pressure from society.

This was further exposed through transitional factors and the regional political developments in the Middle East which played major roles in creating new opportunities other than the social movement theory proposed. This change in the political opportunity structure agitated Egyptians against the regime and provided a suitable environment for youth activism to emerge and develop. The Palestine and Iraqi issues since 2000 not only paved the way for street protestation for political reasons but also challenged the legitimacy of the regime. In later stages the American support for democratic policies decreased the repressive capacity of

37 For more details see, http://latimesblogs.latimes.com/babylonbeyond/2011/01/arab-world-how-tunisia-revolution-changed-politics-of-egypt-and-region-.html http://www.huffingtonpost.com/2011/02/01/egypt-tunisia-arab-revolution_n_816695.html

the regime to oppress the political mobility in 2004-2006 and paved the way for the emergence of new movements and networks like Kefaya, Al Ghad and Youth for Change.

Chapter Five:

Chronological Developments and Formal Structure of Corporatist Arrangements in the Universities 2000-2010

5.1 Introduction

The outbreak of the Intifada in Sep/Oct. 2000 was a turning point for the Egyptian youth activism. It was the spark that announced the beginning of a new round of activity after a period of calm and apathy. The impacts of the Palestinian Intifada and Iraqi war mobilizations resulted in turning youth activism against the regime, criticizing its failure and the absence of effectiveness. The youth activism began to shift towards internal issues and launched various initiatives since 2004. The high levels of grievances became more visible and intense after 2007 and the strains triggered more waves of social protest which was encompassed in the 6th of April 2008 strike**.** The accumulation of these experiences over the years was added to the new opportunities connected with the preparation for the parliamentary elections in 2010. This mobilization represented a qualitatively and quantitatively different stage from other waves of protest since the 1970s. The participation of millions of young ordinary people in universities and schools reflected a new awareness and engaged the younger generation with continuous politics against the main strategy of the regime to exclude the majority of young people from politics.

On the other hand, the formal structure governing the student activities was marked by significant constraints. The official corporatist arrangements such as student unions and youth centres were suffering from a crisis of credibility and efficacy as serious doubts about their legitimacy and representativeness of the youth emerged and increased. The independent student movements had experienced a severe security pressure from the mid-1990s which was marked by the waves of terrorism and violence in which students represented a significant element. Conflicts have also raged between the students of the Muslim Brothers and students of the National Democratic Party which was backed by the security forces which ended up with expulsion of opposition candidates from election, failure to hold the elections or the appointment of the representatives of students unions by university administrations. Notwithstanding this, the universities experienced unprecedented levels of mobilization and violence as demonstrations erupted every year following the rigging of elections while the streets around the universities began to resemble like semi-military barracks.

The purpose of this chapter is first to highlight the various cycles of mobilization 2000/2010, which reflected the emergence and development of various kinds of social and youth activism. Second, it aims to explain more specifically the formal students' structures and official corporatist arrangements which the regime tightly controlled through various mechanisms.

5.2 Chronological Developments of Social and Youth activism 2000-2010: The Cycles of Mobilization

The first decade of the twenty-first century was marked by various cycles of protestations and demonstrations connected with internal and external issues. This new wave of contentious politics contributed to, and reflected, the emergence and development of various kinds of social movements. The regime adopted a tolerant approach toward the popular feelings to support the Palestinian and Iraqi causes. However, the protests generated more complicated responses, crossed the red lines imposed by the regime and triggered a new wave of continuous politics in Egypt.

In later stages, the social movements emerged and developed in an opportune context as a result of the American pressure for democracy after September 11th aggression and relaxation of repression before the 2005 presidential and parliamentary elections, exemplified the rise of political movements like Kefaya. The period between 2007 and2009 was distinguished by the eruption of economic and social protest as a result of the neoliberal policies and corruption, while 2010-2011 featured the return of political struggle and the preparation for the election which was connected with the return of ElBaradei and the large rigging of the 2010 election which paved the way for the 25th revolution.

The Resurgence of Youth Mobilization 2000-2002:

During the period 2000-2002, young people participated in various kinds of activities and demonstrations in support of the second Palestinian Intifada which had been triggered by the visit of the Israeli prime minister to the Al-Aqsa mosque in Jerusalem on 28 September 2000. Large numbers of students and youth participated in demonstrations and joined the Egyptian Popular Committee for the Support of the Palestinian Intifada (EPCSPI), which was created by a number of the middle-age generation from different ideological backgrounds.

The demonstrations were originally organized by EPCSPI and comprised of various NGO activists and representatives of the different political forces and opposition political parties

(Schemm, 2002). The activists from the Seventies generation[38] formed the EPCSPI and with strong participation from the younger generations, launched various demonstrations in Tahrir Square in downtown Cairo for the first time since the 1970s, and organized a boycott campaign of American and Israeli goods, and collected donations and sent aid caravans to the Occupied Territories. In this regard, the Egyptian government's approach toward the EPCSPI and activists moved from cooperation to tension. They received cooperation from the Foreign Affairs Ministry to coordinate with the Palestinian embassy, but there were sometimes security attacks on participants in demonstrations. EPCSPI's aim was to expand the shelter available for legal movements in front of any activity of a political nature in Egypt (Agati, 2010, p. 100). The state media was not against the committee or its demonstrations; indeed it was relatively sympathetic. The situation became more complicated as the regime not only allowed the state media to cover the activities of the EPCSPI, but also promoted its activities abroad. On the other hand, the security forces tightened their grip on demonstrations (Agati, p. 100). The regime's security bodies were always concerned about any kind of popular gathering. Demonstrations have been forbidden under emergency laws in force since 1981. However, the regime's strategic aims during these events were more complicated. Firstly, the regime sought to use the internal protests in order to support the Palestinian leadership and exert pressure on the United States and Israel to make more concessions in the Arab-Israeli conflict. Secondly, the regime sought to renew its internal legitimacy and the Egyptian regional role which had dramatically declined in earlier decades.

It is worth noting that there were two rounds of protestations; the first round was in 2000 and the second in 2002. The outbreak of the Intifada in October 2000 was the spark that initially announced the beginning of a new round of activity. Hundreds of thousands of university and school students demonstrated across the country took to the streets clashing with security forces during attempts to reach the Israeli embassy that was located in a street close to Cairo University. However, a rapid decline in protests occurred until September 2001. Then EPCSPI organized the first demonstration in Tahrir against America and Israel. It took place on September 10th, 2001, a day before the 11th of September (Abdalla, 2003, p.21). Khalil (2003) considered it a new birth of the demonstrations held in the capital's main square, marking the beginning of a rise within the movement.

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38 The middle-age political generation represents an extension and continuitycontiguity of the students' movement generation that emerged in the seventies decade of the last century. In the nineties, and the beginning of the twenty-first century, this generation re-emerged strongly in the opposition political elite, now their ages are between 35-50 years. This generation always attracted the attention because of its role in the students's movement and the political skills and capabilities that it has. For more details see (Tohami, 2009)

With this second wave of Palestine Intifada, which began after the Israeli re-occupation of West Bank cities in March and April 2002, Egyptian youth activism continued to gain momentum. This was marked by another wave of demonstrations that were stronger and more serious lasting for more than two weeks on a daily basis. The demonstrations of April 1st were angrier than the previous wave in October 2000, as the university students merged with preparatory and secondary school pupils, all together involved in a violent fight with the security forces. This was followed by massive arrests and detentions. Some observers estimated that tens of thousands of young people demonstrated in hundreds of gathering in separate locations across the country during this period. The largest of these demonstrations was the massive one in front of Cairo University, and included tens of thousands of demonstrators (Khalil, 2003, p.3 & Abdalla, 2003, p .21 & Tohami, 2009, p. 180). The security forces attacked the students of Alexandria University on April 9, which resulted in the death of student Mohammed Al Sakka and injured hundreds (Schemm, 2002). These demonstrations were the largest that Egypt had seen since the bread riots of 1977, and the students' protest cycle was the longest in Egyptian student activity since the Gulf War in 1990-1991, and possibly before that (Shehata; 2008, p. 4,5).

The spirit of struggle and militancy among students and young people was intensive and deeper than most of the protests that had taken place during the rule of President Mubarak. It is important to take into account that while the protests began against the Israeli invasion of the West Bank, they soon turned to criticism of the Egyptian regime as well, and the absence of the Arab armies on the front, and featured slogans such as "O Mubarak, you coward, you American agent," "I've been an activist for years," said one student, "and I've never seen them attack Mubarak so directly" (Schemm, 2002). The militancy represented a qualitatively different stage from other waves of protest since the 1970s, especially when the protestors' slogans started to criticize the regime itself. The state security apparatus changed their tactics toward the protest from turning a blind eye to the use of strong and harsh tactics when they became out of control and went beyond the red line (Schemm, 2002). In 2002, when protests spread around the country and spontaneous student demonstrations suddenly erupted, the security forces responded violently suppressing demonstrations, because the regime realized that the protestations exceeded the red lines that been allowed at the time, and a new phase of predominantly repressive control began (Agati, 2010, p. 101). After the confrontations in Alexandria and Cairo, this round of protests subsided but the militancy and anger remained as the students were waiting for another opportunity to organize and network. "The objective conditions for another outburst are there, but you never know when the spark will come," said an activist. These protests forced the government to announce it would downgrade

government-to-government relations with Israel (though not diplomatic ties) and also halted Egypt Air flights to Tel Aviv. These gestures came in response to the street protests (Schemm, 2002).

The spontaneous anti-war demonstrations 2003

The most significant incident that took place after the attack of Iraq was the occupation of Tahrir Square on 20th of March 2003 for the first time since the student movement had done so in 1971-1972. It was a symbolic occupation which represented a dream for all activists from different ideologies for a long time. Notwithstanding this, the security forces succeeded in ending the demonstration on the same day after 12 hours of occupation. It was an inspiring event that the 25th January activists repeated in a more organized way, continuing controlling the square for two weeks until the toppling of Mubarak.

Despite the significant decline in the events and demonstrations relating to the Palestine uprising, the invasion of Iraq showed the vitality and spirit once again of the youth movement, after the spontaneous demonstrations that started against the war in 19-20 March, 2003 which confirmed the entry of new players on the scene: young ordinary people not belonging to any political organization but thirsting for an effective political voice.

Several demonstrations were organized in solidarity with Iraq and Palestine in the beginning of 2003 until March 2003 during the preparation for the war against Iraq. The beginning was the demonstration in front of the Embassy of Qatar in Cairo in protest at Qatar's reception of the central headquarters of the American forces in the Gulf. This was followed by the demonstrations of January 18th and February 15th at Sayeda Zeinab Square; in Cairo, in alliance with the International Solidarity Movement against the War on Iraq, and in solidarity with the Palestinian Intifada. In addition to this, a demonstration was organized at the Cairo International Book Fair on January 31st, as well as two demonstrations in front of Cairo University on February 22nd and March 15th. These demonstrations included all political forces and popular committees. They were besieged by massive numbers of the central security forces so as to prevent them from interacting with the public. The participants in the demonstrations insisted on continuing the movement in order to achieve concrete objectives. First, was considered these demonstrations as the beginnings of a movement aimed at gradually reclaiming the people's right to demonstrating. Second, was the awareness that these besieged demonstrations and the small numbers of participants with the inability to break through the security cordons surrounding them could turn into a spark interacting with the people's anger and fury against the regimes (Khalil, 2003, p. 7).

The protests reached a peak on 20th and 21st March when, for the first time since 1977, thousands of protestors unaffiliated to any organized political movement attempted to protest in Tahrir Square. They broke through security cordons and filled the square and repeatedly tried to march on the nearby American and British embassies. They occupied Tahrir Square from Thursday noon till midnight 39. A poster of Mubarak was torn down, and slogans expressing hostility to him were shouted (International Crisis Group, 2003, p. 6). While the demonstrations managed to occupy Tahrir Square on March 20th, the demonstrations of March 21st marched all over the streets of Cairo; thousands of Egyptians took to the streets to protest. But the government subsequently refused to allow similar protests to be staged without prior security permit (Hamdi Al Husseini, 2003). Other demonstrations took place in Al-Azhar and Cairo Stadium with the participation of many political powers such as the NDP, Nasserists, leftists and Islamists, although the Muslim Brothers were the main organizers.

A new tradition emerged; represented in the weekly Friday demonstration at Al-Azhar mosque in Cairo, witnessing the constant attempts of the people to walk from the mosque into the streets. Al-Azhar demonstrations gathered demonstrators from the youth and middle-age generation from the Islamic groups like Labour party and Moslem brothers, and the Nasserists (Islamonline.net, April 13, 2002).

It is worth noting that most demonstrations not only blamed the American and Israeli policies, but also slammed the government for allowing the spread of corruption, some of them chanted, "Down with Mubarak, and ‘No’ for grooming his son to leadership," (Abdel Halim, 2003). In addition to this, plenty of anti-war demonstrations were coordinated by young people through the new medium of cyberspace. Email and mobile phone text messages circulated the previous day instructing protestors to converge on the square as soon as the first bomb hit Baghdad. A protest organiser said, “We can’t claim to have brought more than 3,000 people to the square that day, the rest was spontaneous. But together we showed that we can break the fear and confront the government” (International Crisis Group, 2003. p. 6).

Internal political mobility sparks political and youth activism (2004-2006)

This new wave of continuous politics created new opportunities for competing ideologies and political movements to flourish and attract large groups of young ordinary people. The American pressure for democracy and relaxation of the regime repression before the 2005

39 Estimates of the number of protestors ranged from 10,000 to 20,000, to what organisers claimed were 40,000 people. See Paul Schemm, “Egypt struggles to control antiwar protests”, Middle East Report Online, 31 March 2003. Other observers raise the number to 100,000 demonstrators, see; close the spaces between lines for consistency Mustafa Abdel Halim, Egyptians Protest Israeli Aggressions, Arab Weakness, slamOnline.net, September 28 2003

presidential and parliamentary election associated with the rising of political movements like Kefaya and Al-Ghad. By 2004 Egypt politics included not only veteran activists who had developed their mobilizing structures during the previous cycle of protestation and initiated the new pro-democracy protest movement but also a large part of the intelligentsia and middle-class professionals who have been classically tied to the state. Figures like ex-Prime Minister Aziz Seddki, ex-Minister Yehia El-Gamal, and a number of columnists in state-owned newspapers became associated with these movements (El-Mahdi, 2009).

Rutherford (2008) suggested that various significant political actors, specifically, the Muslim Brothers, the judiciary, and the business sector, could work in parallel, if not exactly together, to influence the Egyptian politics. The opportune context triggered social and political movements amid ideas such as "a liberal conception of law within the judiciary and an Islamic conception of governance within the Muslim Brotherhood". The middle-age generation of Muslim brothers cooperated with other activists from various ideological backgrounds and developed a new democratic view toward other political forces which was clear in the electoral programme of the group in the 2000 election (Ouda & et al, 2001). Rutherford expected that "these new approaches to constitutional order have grown into meaningful alternatives to the declining statism of the regime". He also added that there were other social and political groups which supported this set of reforms, particularly parts of the business community and the reformist wing of the ruling party. The hope for reform was reinforced by the emergence of Kefaya, Al Ghad and the reasonable gains of the opposition in the election. In this regard, Mubarak had opened the political sphere a little bit, so 88 members of the Muslim Brotherhood had been elected in the parliament. Ayman Nour, a Middle Age politician and the leader of Al Ghad party, was running, and had actually gained reasonable support, against Mubarak in the first presidential election in Egyptian history in 2005 (Radsch, 2011).

These transformations sparked demonstrations calling for political reform. They continued between 2005 and 2006 and emphasized the new shift in both issues and mobilizing structure. The new agenda of the youth movement featured a shift from the priorities of the previous phase that had tended to focus on regional causes to domestic and internal grievances. The activism began to shift towards internal issues from 2004 and the activism launched many initiatives and platforms to absorb this new wave of protest. The new opportunities allowed for the emergence of new young leaders and stimulated the process of mobilization and recruitment of young ordinary people. In this regard, the young activists who participated in the existing mobilizing structures played an important role in the growing movement calling for political and constitutional reforms even though they had not yet constructed their

independent networks. They engaged in continuous politics through the existing organizations and networks that had been established by the older and seventies generations.

Thousands of the young ordinary people joined movements such as Kefaya and the Al Ghad party. Maher and Qutub emphasized (Maher, interview, 21/1/2008 & Qutub, interview, 7/10/2010) that the formation of Al Ghad Students Union was during this period; just before the elections for parliament in November 2005 and featuring a huge number of young ordinary people who were not mobilized before. As national attention shifted towards issues of political and constitutional reform, the Kefaya movement became a vocal protest actor during 2004-2006 to call for comprehensive political and constitutional reforms. In this regard Youth for Change, which was considered the youth wing of Kefaya, became exceptionally active during the presidential elections (Maher, interview, 21/1/2008).

These protests, though small, attracted a great deal of national and international attention because they broke with many of the taboos that had characterized public life in Egypt for decades. The protestors staged popular demonstrations in public areas without official permission thereby challenging a long-standing ban on popular demonstrations outside university campuses. In addition to this, they raised slogans that directly attacked the president and the security establishment, also challenging a long-standing taboo against directly criticizing these 'sovereign' institutions. The protestors used new forms of protest such as candle-light vigils which helped attract attention. The role of youth was also visible during the demonstrations that accompanied the judges' protests in the spring of 2006. Judges who had exposed instances of election fraud during the 2005 parliamentary election were referred to a disciplinary committee by the High Council of the Judiciary. In response, the Judges Club of Egypt held a sit-in, and various parties and movements staged demonstrations in solidarity with the judges' sit-in. Youth from movements such as Kefaya and the Muslim Brotherhood were highly visible during these protests. The regime reacted strongly to such activism, and hundreds of activists from the Brotherhood and Kefaya were arrested and detained for several months (Shehata; 2008, p. 5). Following the 2005 elections and the end of the wave of political reform protests, the regime began to tighten its grip on power and resorted to methods of coercion. The political movements lost the momentum and the presence of political issues associated with the parliament, parties and reforms and the judiciary system judges retreated from the political discourse. Some activists expressed their disappointment which forced large groups in the different networks and affiliations to quit and withdraw as a result of the growing repression and the U.S. retreat from supporting the democratic cause (Qutub, interview, 7/10/2010).

The regime cracked down on this wave of political reform movement and launched a backlash against Kefaya and MB and jailed Ayman Nour (Radsch, 2011). This coincided with the decline in the United States policy of democratization in Egypt and the Middle East after the victory of Hamas in the Palestinian elections in 2006 and the achievement of the Brotherhood in the 2005 Egyptian elections. The U.S. policy witnessed a shift to focus on the formal and informal support to the civil society association rather than directly putting pressure on the regime. The U.S. administration's policy tended to focus on the spread of the liberal principles and encouraging the youth associations.

Social protest phase and the revival of youth activism 2007-2009

The high level of grievances became more visible and intense and the structural strains triggered a new wave of social protests which were encompassed by the revival of youth activism as a response to the social protest wave and failure of political mobility led by the 1970s generation**.** In this respect the economic and social crises which deepened in 2007-2008 triggered a yet another wave of political unrest and protestations.

After the repression of the political movements in 2006-2007, the Egyptian context was marked by an eruption in the economic and social protests as a result of the neoliberal policies and corruption. Egyptian workers played an important part in bringing down the regime of Hosni Mubarak. They not only had a substantial presence in the mass demonstrations in Egypt but also played a major role in delegitimizing the regime in the eyes of many Egyptian and popularizing a culture of protest long before the mass demonstrations that led to the ousting of Hosni Mubarak in February 2011 (Beinin, 2012 p. 3). Although they received far less attention than middle-class pro-democracy movements like Kefaya, workers were by far the largest component of the burgeoning culture of protest of the 2000s that undermined the legitimacy of the Mubarak regime (Beinin, 2012, p. 5).

As stated before, the mandate of “the government of businessmen” led by Nazif was to accelerate the neoliberal transformation of the economy and the sell-off of the public sector. The predominance of market oriented policies and the relationship between power and wealth, in addition to high levels of grievance, stimulated this wave of protestation, especially after the citizens began to realize that this new relationship between money and politics damaged the notion of public interest and spread patterns of consumer culture, and led to the excessive use of money in political life (Fawzy, 2010, p, 29).

The statistics showed that the highest estimate of the total number of labour protests from 1988 to 1993 is 162 - an average of 27 per year. Then from 1998 to 2003 the annual average

for collective actions rose to 118. But in 2004 there were 265 collective actions; over 70% occurred after the Nazif government took office in July. The movement was initially centred in the textile industry, which had been targeted for privatization, but by 2007 it encompassed virtually every industry, public services, transport, civil servants, and professionals (Beinin, 2012, p. 4, 5). In 2006, 2007, and March-April 2008 there was a spate of mass workers' strikes in Egypt's public and private sectors.

Integrating social and political activism: the April 6 strike

This wave did not focus on political reform but raised the demands of workers, employees, peasants and students. The lack of effective welfare policies and the failure of the subsidy system created growing anger among people. Protests increased because of the crises of bread, clean water and gas shortages. Some of what could be called non-political protestations managed to achieve important concessions from the regime for the interest of its members such as the tax collectors and El-Mahala labour protest movement in addition to the protest against the establishment of the Agrium petrochemical project in 2008. The regime showed a flexible and tolerant policy in dealing with such protests and sought deals through negotiation and compromise, fearing a public explosion which would be difficult to control or oppress without paying a high cost. It is worth noting that until 2011 only a small minority of workers advanced democratization as a strategic objective. Striking or protesting workers commonly sought to factional interests rather than openly contest the regime's power. The regime drew a red line at linking local grievances and national policy and temporarily succeeded in maintaining this position (Beinin, 2012, p. 6).

Indeed, the positive response of the government to these protest actions and the relative success of this strategy tempted many groups of young activism to call for a general strike on the 6th April 2008, which was the real beginning and foundation of April 6 Youth Movement. The April 2008 spate of mass workers' strikes in, particular among the textile workers of El-Mahalla al-Kubra, was described as the most effectively organized activism in the nation's history since World War II (Beinin & Hossam el-Hamalawy, 2007; Bayat, 2009, p. 9). The striking thing about this strike was the cooperation among workers and youth activists which led to its success. Among the most prominent elements of the political opportunity this time was the availability of new media and modern communication technologies such as blogs, Facebook and Twitter along with multiple news websites which allowed the activists to post their comments about news and events on websites like Masrawy, the Seventh Day and Islam-Online. The activists began to use these methods to preach large-scale strikes for the 6th of April. They formed the 6th of April group on Facebook shortly before the events.

Indeed, there was not any particular group or movement adopting this call for a strike; the matter was an initiative of the labour movement in the city of El-Mahalla Al-Kubra in Delta Egypt. This call for a strike became a key issue in the public sphere and grabbed the activists' attention to support it in spite of the absence of any political organization to coordinate or organize this strike. Compared with 25 January 2011, we should take into account that the labour movement was encouraged and supported by political and youth activists who perceived the protest as an opportunity to challenge the regime while the call for 25th January came as an initiative from youth activists on Facebook.

The prominence of youth activism and political protest 2010-2011:

The regime repression against the political groups and movements such as the Muslim brothers, Kefaya and the independent judges made it very difficult to identify an actual pathway to political reform as the regime seemed to be impervious to change. Mubarak had proven adaptable to both internal and external pressures, not brittle and vulnerable to political challenges. However, new developments emerged with the potential to affect Egypt's political trajectory dramatically; some of them connecting to the preparation for parliamentary and presidential elections in 2010-2011, with others relating to the growing influence of social media and youth activism.

There were plenty of prominent events that enabled activists to gain momentum in 2010, the most important of which were the return of Mohammed ElBaradei and the launching of Khalid Saeed's Facebook page in addition to the rigged parliamentary election. They created a new wave of contentious politics and increased the political awareness of younger generations which engaged in politics seeking for change. One prominent activist (Moataz Adel, Interview, 3/2/ 2012) confirmed that this was a new beginning of coordination and cooperation between the old and new networks. They joined hands and coordinated their activities in the real world, even though this new type of coordination and leadership began to emerge through Facebook particularly via the Khalid Saeed page.

ElBaradei Presidential Campaign that was formed after his return to Egypt in February 2010 got a lot of support from thousands of young ordinary people and political groups which cooperated under the umbrella of a new cross-ideological body called the National Association For Change, "which along with his tantalizing public statements, only amplified the ElBaradei phenomenon" (Cook, March 26, 2010). By late February, Egyptian bloggers and journalists were reporting that one thousand people were joining ElBaradei's Facebook page every ten minutes (Cook, March 26, 2010).

Media coverage contributed to ElBaradei's apparent popularity and to the anticipation over his next moves. In a sign of his evident prestige, street art celebrating ElBaradei began to appear in Cairo. To be sure, the number of "friends" on a Facebook page is a crude measurement of actual or potential power in Egypt's highly circumscribed political environment (Cook, March 26, 2010).

ElBaradei Presidential Campaign reached out to a new segment of young ordinary people who either joined the new networks or the existing ones, like April 6 youth movement, which supported the campaign even though it was keen to keep its independent organization and original identity. A similar trend took place with members of the new political parties like the Democratic Front Party that joined ElBaradei's campaign without leaving the party. Indeed these major events created a new wave of activism and did not diminish the old networks. However, the new wave and its new networks gained the momentum and media attention. Adel argued that "events created a new atmosphere that attracted the marginalized young people to the political arena, while the professional and older activists continued in their networks" (Moataz Adel, Interview, 3/2/ 2012).

After the fraud and rigging of the parliamentary elections in November 2010, it became clear that there was no hope for political reform through election strategies. The young activists increased the level of cooperation among themselves, blending internet activism with the more important strategy of drawing scared and complacent people into the streets. April 6 Movement set up branches and staged quick-hit acts of street protest such as spray-painting "The regime is over" on city walls. Copycat movements began and in the early weeks of 2011, the rebellion was born. April 6, along with other groups, were in the forefront of the uprising (Fleishman, 2011).

The youth activists and Facebook pages picked January 25, 2011, the "Police Day", as their new date for protest. Shawky, a prominent activist from April 6, stressed that "the Tunisian revolution stimulated their energy and created a militant sense and new hope for change among the younger generation" (Shawky, interview, 15/2/2012). Beside the public calls and activities, there were secret meetings for the preparation to avoid the security pressure. Shawky refers to a big shift in their methods of protest during their meetings as they decided to begin a sudden march in a new tactic instead of announcing the place of the demonstration on Facebook. They realized the importance of keeping the place secret till the last minute and on the 25th all groups gathered in a specific place then moved to the secret site of demonstration to take the police security by surprise. Maher confirmed that the activists

sought to “overcome the methods that the state security services always use to pre-empt demonstrations and protests” (Maher, interview, 20/1/2012)

5.3 The Formal Structures and Corporatist Arrangements

One can legitimately ask; where were the formal or official youth unions during the period of intensive protest? Why were they unable to capture and express the grievances of youth? One can legitimately argue that the inefficiency of the formal student organizations, legally established during the Nasser era, and their failure to meet the demands of young people triggered the longest wave of student mobilization from 2000-2010. It has become obvious that the corporatist structures were not able to include or integrate students into the political regime. In such a context, the youth activists began to establish their own organizations and networks outside the pre-existing political structures either of the ruling party (NPD) or opposition parties. The dilemma of student representation deepened because of the competition between the student unions officially recognized by the state and the student activism networks such as the Free Student Union and other student clubs that did not enjoy any legal recognition. There is no doubt that this dilemma cannot be understood and analyzed without examining the crisis of student unions and the poor representation of the students. They ended up unable to carry out their functions, became decorative structures, and ceased to be expressive and clear about the needs of students and their aspirations.

As stated before, the research sets out more specifically the structures of formal student and youth organizations under Nasser and how they evolved under Sadat. 1967 was a turning point when youth and students took advantage of the opportunity presented by the war and political mobility in the 1970s to be more active. This led to greater Leftist and Muslim Brothers influence in the universities which led in turn to the 1979 clampdown. Thereafter the formal students’ organizations were tightly controlled through a number of mechanisms:

a) Infiltration by the National Democratic Party and rigging of elections to assure their dominance.

b) Subordination to university authorities

c) Legal constraints on their establishments and what they may or may not be allowed to do

d) The establishment of university guards

The student institutional arrangements: Historical background

There was a complicated relationship between the student movement and official student unions in modern Egypt. This relationship used to have different shapes; the official student unions were supposed to reflect and contain the student movement, otherwise clashes and disputes would emerge around the issue of representation and legitimacy. When both sides failed to build a kind of cooperation and mutual recognition, the student movements were obliged to use informal channels and networks which were considered illegal by the regime and formal unions.

In democratic regimes, the student unions and clubs aimed to increase and develop the political participation and improve the socialization process. The educational systems in democratic frameworks expand the scope of a wide range of activities and accept the composing of all types of student organizations and clubs as long as they respect the code of conduct. Moreover, elections and performances are characterized by transparency, fair and free voting and the open exchange of ideas and criticism. This process gradually develops to become a model for the initial formation of positive participation among young people (Al-Khamisi, 1988, p. 668).

In the Egyptian context it is worth noting that the student movement has always been at the forefront of the pro-democracy movement within the universities and was always linked to the issue of democracy in the country as a whole (Abdullah, 1991, p. 13). In specific periods, such as the mid-seventies, there were vibrant and energetic Leftist, Nasserist, Islamist student movements which, through free elections, were represented in the official students unions and the Republic Student Union which comprised of five members elected from the representatives of student unions of all universities (Al-Khamisi, 1988, p. 668). In fact, the historical experience suggests that the emergence and development of the student movement became most prominent at the national level in two cases: First, when the cause of independence and the national feelings became the central issue in political life to be the subject of a strong national consensus like the period before independence in the 1940s and after the 1967 defeat, in the second case, when the political parties were absent or weak, then the student movements became the national political groups that reflected the hopes and goals not only for students but for the whole of society (Abdullah, 1991, 14). The Egyptian experience also showed that when the student movements, as a social movement, got involved in contentious politics, they used to take an opposition position toward the regime and interacted with, and were influenced by political forces outside the universities. Depending on the strength of the student movement and the different wings inside, the regime devised its

own strategy ranging from containment, manipulation, repression and exclusion (NCSCR, 1983, pp. 153-154). In other words, the effectiveness of student activism was associated with the social and political context; the more an atmosphere of freedom increased, the livelier were the student activities and initiatives. It is worth noting that low level of student activism may exist during period of repression such as the 1990s it but did not get momentum unless new opportunities emerge such as the Palestine uprising in 2000. Moreover, the Egyptian youth movement has always represented one of the main sources of the formation and the recruitment of the political elite, along with their interest in raising the political awareness among students by focusing on the call for participation and democracy, without ignoring their role in providing services which benefit all students. Not only did the role of unions and student movements contribute to the process of political socialization and participation but also they were essential institution for the formation and the recruitment of political elites and the making of political leaders. These prominent roles under the colonial rule prompted Walter Laqueur (1956) to state that, "history does not know that the community students play in a leading role, as happened in Egypt". Indeed, students have been among the most politically mobilized groups in Egyptian politics for much of the 20th century and into the 21st. This can be demonstrated by a brief examination of the political role of youth activism.

The legal frameworks and regulations (1979 bill) constraints and restrictions:

The legacy of Nasser's corporatist and hegemonic state continued to influence and govern the legal frameworks and student unions for a long time. The General Federation of Arab Republic of Students emerged in 1960 as an entity connecting to the Union of Socialist Youth Organizations and became the only formal student union in Egypt. However, in the wake of the massive student demonstrations in September 1968, the regime allowed in a more open regulation the formation of the "Political Committee" as one of the four core committees in the formal student unions[40]. In 1971 under continuing of student pressure, the regime abolished the system which allowed university administrations oversight of the activities of student unions, and established the "University Guards". The approval of the security services was a prerequisite for candidates in student elections (NCSCR, 1983, p. 158). The 1979 regulations came after the intensification of tension between Sadat and the student movements as the Leftist and Islamist activists won the student election and controlled the formal student unions. The leaders of student unions in 1977 - such as Abdel Moneim Abul Fotouh and

40 Four committees were: Cultural, Social, Scouts, Sports committees

Hamdeen Sabahi[41]- challenged the president in some public meetings and criticized his internal policies. Thus the regime issued a bill on June 19th 1979, Decree No. 265 which cancelled the previous bill No. 235 of 1976. This bill contained the regulations for the Law of the Organization of Universities entitled "student unions" and its main articles empowered the state role played by administration and security services over the student unions as follows:

- Banning of political organizations: It stated that "No creation of organizations or formations of organizations on the social, political, ideological bases in the universities".

- Abolishing the "Political Committee" of the student unions.

- Imposing restrictions on the conditions for nomination: Article 34 stated that "The person who stands for the nomination to the membership of the union's committees and boards must achieve certain conditions such as to enjoy good reputation and moral character, not have previously been given a custodial sentence for freedom, and not been dropped or suspended by student unions or committees". These restrictions gave legal justifications for the write-off and expulsion of any candidate from the competition in elections.

- Imposing penalties in article 39 on the member of the union who violates the rules governing student unions or prejudices to the union's reputation or harms the interests or loses terms of ethics and good reputation, including cessation of membership of the union for a maximum of two months".

It is worth noting that some of the words were stretched to justify punishment and then expulsion. The 1979 bill continued to be in force during the whole Mubarak reign, allowing the university administration and security services to intervene directly or indirectly in student elections by vetting candidates, creating the special security unit known as the "University Guard" and prohibiting political parties from operating inside university campuses (Eissa Mohamed, 2008, p. 37).

The governmental bodies responsible for youth and students:

The whole institutions in the field of youth and students witnessed dramatic changes and fluctuations over time. In 1999 the Supreme Council for Youth and Sports (El-Maglis El-Alla

41 Both have become after more than thirty years prominent candidates for the first presidential election after toppling Mubarak in 2012

Le-Shabab Wa Riada), which was established in 1979, was demolished when the Ministry of Youth was established. The latter was dissolved in 2005 when two national councils were established: one for youth and the other for sport. Due to the failures of, and instability in, the youth policy, in December 2005, the Ministry of Youth and Sport was abolished and the National Council for Youth was established (ESIS, Year Book 2006).

Furthermore, there was instability in laws and bills; Mosa'ad Ewies, a former official in the youth sector told the researcher that, "every minister changes the former bill and creates a new one; the same minister may change the bill many times" (Ewies, Interview, 2/10/2010). For example, there were more than ten modifications in the bill of youth centres in less than ten years. It was obvious that there were many authorities and actors responsible for devising and implementing youth policy, but the more important ones were the following: the National Council for Youth (Almaglis Alqaumy Leshabab) and the National Council for Sports (Almaglis Alqaumy Le-Riada) (ElSheikh, Interview, 8/4 2008).

On the other hand, some contradictions took place between these bodies particularly between NCY and the Ministry of Higher Education as youth in universities represents 25% of the 18-24 year-old age group. Both bodies have cross-sectional policies and provided similar services that include social and sport activities. The formal student organizations in universities consist of "Student Unions" and "Societies" (El Ossar) which could be seen as youth clubs. While the student union should be elected, the societies (El Ossar) need to be formed by the students themselves and registered in the official records after taking the administration's permission. Further political education for students used to be launched by the Leaders Preparation Institute (LPI) (Ma'ahad Edaad El-Qada) in Helwan which is affiliated to the Higher Education Ministry (Shura Council, 2000, pp. 98-100).

The National Democratic Party (NDP) and Students activities

The relative autonomy of official student unions rapidly deteriorated because of the restraints imposed on the election and nomination process which prevented young activists from contesting. Whereas in previous decades, student unions had played a central role in leading student activism, such a role was declining during the last wave of youth activism. The student unions "which had been dominated by pro-regime activists for most of the 1990s had become largely ineffective and de-linked from student activism" (Shehata; 2008, p. 7). The activists and experts were keen to confirm that the "student unions came under the control and censorship of professors and senior administrators who support the NDP or have hidden ties with security services. And their activities became under the observation and guardianship of the older generation" (El Mekawy, Interview, 20/10/2010 & Al Sawy, Interview, 10/1/2008).

On the other hand, the regime attempted to create its own loyal networks of young people through preparation courses and education in the Leadership Development Institute or the National Council of Youth. These students would compose later the leaderships of the official student unions which came under the regime's guardianship.

Lutfi and Al Gaaly argued that "NDP's students, backed by the administration and security service, dominated the student unions since 1995 after defeating the Muslim Brothers students wing in rigged elections" (Lutfi, Interview, 8/1/2008 & Al Gaaly, Interview, 8/1/2008). This could be seen as part of the deliberalization process which began in the mid-1990s as stated in Chapter three. It is worth noting that the students who dominated the unions belonged to the NDP directly or indirectly but what united them was the abandonment of political and social protest as a strategy to get youth rights. In an official course for young leaders of student unions at the Institute of Leadership Development, most of the attendants were members of the NDP with just one representing an opposition party (Fatima Ahmed, Interview, 5/10/2010)

It could be argued that there was a strategy adopted by the NDP based on the hidden politicization as a way to reject other political groups' existence in the universities. Nevertheless various indicators pointed to the overlap between the NDP and universities; a luxury building for the "Future Generation Foundation" headed by Gamal Mubarak, Assistant Secretary-General of the NDP and secretary of the Policy Committee was located in Cairo University(Ikhwanonline, 15/10/2006). Gamal Mubarak formed the FGF in November 1998 as an NGO focusing on executive leadership training and human resource development (Crisis Group, 2003, p. 11). In this regard, most of the deans of faculties and presidents of universities were members of the NDP, they took advantage of their informal networks to expand the base of loyal students to the party (Ikhwanonline, 15/10/2006). In addition to this, the leaders of student unions were attending the activities and courses organized by the NCY as many of the lecturers belonged to the NDP (Fatima Ahmed, Interview, 5/10/2010). It is striking that the NDP was inspired by the pioneering or Avant-garde Organization (Altanzeem Alta'aly) and Youth Organizations in the 1960s as a number of their prominent members such as Muffled Shehab and Ali Eddin Hilal were part of these organizations. However, there was a remarkable concern over repeating the experience of another student group called "Horus" created by the government in the 1990s to compete with opposition because it raised controversy around acts of violation of the moral code during the cross-gender flights (Ghannam, 12/12/2006).

The dysfunction of the government-sponsored student unions:

The statistics and polls since 2000 illustrated that there were aspirations and desires among large sectors of young people to participate and engage in political activities, but they were faced by the lack of mechanisms to accommodate these desires, in addition to the lack of trust in the formal institutions. On the other hand, the political culture among the older generation was keen to avoid politics and rejected the participation of youth in the political process. A survey showed that 61% of the students of Cairo University believed that the best way to help young people to take an active role in society is the opportunity for effective participation in student clubs and unions, followed by political and cultural groups with 16%, and political parties with 14%. They were also interested in public affairs and roles in the government and parliaments (Tohami, Youth and Politics, 2002, p. 96). This means that there was a high level of aspiration to participate but the lack of trust in participation channels led to apathy and alienation.

There were various indicators that the regime considered students as a threat and a source of problems, also showing the failure of official student unions as representatives of students and young people:

The actual forms of participation in the student activities and associations critically dropped as there were only 10% of students engaged in student union activities in spite of the previous poll that showed a high desire for participation. According to the Al-Ahram survey (2004) conducted on a national sample of youth (ages 15-24), 56% of the sample had never participated in student union elections, 67% had never participated in any student activities and 84% had never participated in a public protest or demonstration. Older study found that 80% of students did not participate in the 1990 and 1995 parliamentary elections (Tohami, 2002). Ordinary students mentioned many reasons for non-participation in the student unions' elections and activities such as the lack of time due to the term system and the load of study, but also that the unions did not reflect their demands and interests and they felt they were useless (Abu Yousef, 2001, pp. 84,85).

From the activists view, the student unions did not perform their basic functions with the exception of some leisure activities and trips. They did not play a real role in the field of providing services and protection of the rights of students, thus opening the door for alternative student activism to emerge. It is also worth noting the absence of the role of student unions in national and public issues like promoting democratic, developmental and economic reform. This absence extended to student issues as they no longer had a voice in the reform of the educational process or the Higher Education Act, or the 1979 bill which most

young activists were seeking to change. The student unions no longer provided political leaders compared with the role played by their counterparts in the 1970s, where the leaders of the student unions became the leaders of political movements in the following years. It is hard to recognize any young leader in the government or the parliament who have had the experience of leading student unions in the 1990s and 2000s (Tohami, 2002).

Perhaps the most striking thing in common among those students, who control most of the student unions, was their distancing themselves from political action and protest. The author's interviews with the activists showed that they had negative feelings toward the role of the student unions. One activist pointed out that, "students joined the student union because of their relationship with professors to take the advantage of the benefits and services associated with the union" (Al Sawy, Interview, 1/10/2010). "The unions became affiliated to the government and under the full control of the NDP and opportunists students" (Al Gaaly, Interview' 8/1/2008). "The unions were just applauding formal decisions and decorative bodies" (Hameed, Interview, 4/1/2008).

Authoritarian election and violence

The universities which were the main venue for youth activism in the 1970s and 1980s suffered from intense formal and informal restrictions. Since the mid-1990s, the regimes had imposed heavy restrictions on activism inside university campuses. There were various indicators that most of the student representatives in official student unions were not elected in a real competitive election, but that they were appointed by the government after the expulsion of rival candidates from election lists. Preventing free competition in elections began by disqualifying the students of the Muslim Brothers, then expanded later to include all other candidates and activists with the exception of the NDP. The Administrative Court approved the student's right to take an action against the university administration even if they have not reached the legal age to sue due to expulsion (Al Ahram 12/9/2002).

The tension became severe as a result of the escalation of polarization between the leaders of the formal student unions backed by universities administrations on one side and political activists and opposition on the other side. The tension and violence between the two sides reached a critical stage after the use of violence and thugs from within the Ain-Shams, Al Azhar and other universities between 2006-2010 in an attempt from NDP student unions to prevent the formation of free association and the political activism. The Muslim Brothers students at Al Azhar university received severe criticism in 2006 after introducing a "combat show" and dressing in black like Hamas fighters which the media called a military and militias show while MB's activists argued that, "it was a symbolic act of protest to express

their suffering from the repression they have faced for several years" (Lutfi and Al Gaaly, 2008).

In an investigation report about the tension in the university, conducted by Al Ahram (19/12/2006, p. 3), it concluded that students indicated that, "everything that happens is the result of the absence of the role of the university and the mistakes of the management and mistreatment of students". Al Azhar university chairman publicly condemned the students participating in these events and stated that the university was banning them from nomination and removing their names from the election list, as he added that, "the university administration did not allow these students to the hijack the student unions, and did not allow them to enter the elections, and to speak on behalf of Al-Azhar (Al-Ahram, 19/12/2006, p. 9). This declaration reflects the strategy used by the government and chairmen of universities and the security services to exclude the activists.

In this regard the last wave of young activism which included activists from groups such as Kefaya, Al Ghad and April 6 extended their networks inside the universities campuses but they faced similar constraints and repression. It is worth noting that this wave of youth activism (2000-2011) occurred largely outside university campuses and then attempted to penetrate the campuses. However as a result of the strict constraints imposed by the regime on political activism inside university campuses, youth activism within university campuses was limited and fluctuated over time. And even though students continued to stage some demonstrations inside university campuses, the most significant protest events staged by youth since 2000 occurred outside university campuses (Shehata; 2008, p. 7).

The deficit of the budget:

The budget of the student unions permitted for activities was modest compared with the number of students. It was only 8 million Egyptian pounds during the academic year 2005/2006, and increased to 32 million during 2006/2007 as a result of increasing tension and violence in the universities (Al-Ahram, 24/12/2006, p. 3). There is no doubt that the amount of 8 million pounds means that the amount allocated to activities decreased by a third compared to what it was three years before. For example, in the academic year 2002/2003 the Ministry of Higher Education had allocated 12 million Egyptian pounds for the activities of students in universities and institutes affiliated to it; the Ministry indicated that the money had been distributed to universities on the basis of the number of students enrolled in each university (Habib, Al-Ahram, 17/11/2002).

Table (12): The student unions budgets in the universities (2002/2003) (Habib, Al Ahram, 17/11/2002).

University	Budget (Thousand Egyptian pounds)
Cairo	1169
Alexandria	663
Ain Shams	975
Assiut	371
Tanta	623
Mansoura	600
Zagazig	911
Helwan	547
Minya	220
Menoufiya	395
Suez Canal	264
South Valley	260

Due to such a small budget, it was impossible to cover the whole number of students who desire to participate and benefit from the students unions. This led to a decrease in the

numbers of students who participated in student union activities to only 10% of the total number of students in the universities. It is worth noting that the rate of 10% of students involved in such activities did not reflect the student activism or express the numbers of students interested in public activities. The goals of this 10% of participants differed as some of them might be obliged to attend some lectures or activities to get free meals or T-shirts (Fatima Ahmed, Interview, 2008).

It is also worth noting that the budget of both the NCY and the NCS in the year 2007/2008 reached 442 and 392 million Egyptian pounds respectively. This means that the total budget for youth and sport is 814 million, about 35 Egyptian Pounds per young person per year (equivalent to 4 euro) (Tohami, 2009, p. 22).

5.4 Conclusion

This chapter has explained the development of the different waves of student and youth activism which could be dated back to 2000 until 2010 as both student movements in the universities and youth activism outside universities sparked one of the longest waves of mobilization in modern Egyptian history.

This chapter showed that the outbreak of the intifada in Sep/Oct. 2000 was a turning point in the Egyptian youth movement. The Invasion of Iraq in 2003 and the implication of the Intifada on youth mobilization turned youth activists against the regime, criticizing it for its failure and its ineffectiveness. Activism began to shift towards internal issues and various initiatives and platforms were launched to push this wave of protest. By 2004 the opportune context stimulated veteran activists who developed their mobilizing structures during the previous cycle of protestation and initiated the new pro-democracy protest movement. The high levels of grievances became visible and intense since 2007 and the structural strains triggered a new wave of social protest. The regime's positive response to social and labour protests and their relative success tempted youth activism to create links between social and political agendas through a call for a general strike on the sixth of April 2008, which was the real beginning and foundation of the April 6 youth movement. There were plenty of prominent events that enabled activists to gain momentum in 2010; the most important were the return of ElBaradei and the launching of the Khalid Saeed Facebook page in addition to the rigged parliamentary election.

On the other hand, this chapter also discussed the role of the formal and official youth structures during the period of intensive protest and analyzed the reasons behind their failure to capture and express the grievances of youth. It illustrated the inefficiency of the formal

student organizations, legally established during the Nasser era, and their failure to meet the demands of young people. It has become obvious that the corporatist structures were not able to include or integrate students into the political regime. They ended up unable to carry out their functions, became decorative structures, and ceased to be expressive and clear about the needs of students and their aspirations. The autonomy of the official student unions was very weak because of the nature of elections and the nomination process which prevented young activists from contesting according to the 1979 bill.

In such a context, the youth activists began to establish their own organizations and networks outside the pre-existing political structures either of the ruling party (NPD) or formal opposition parties. This opened the door for alternative student activism and networks to emerge and develop. Activists responded by establishing parallel institutions and new student movements replaced the student unions and traditional political parties which had come under the full control of the regime. The dilemma of student representation deepened because of the competition between the student unions officially recognized by the state and the student activism networks such as the Free Student Union and other student clubs that did not enjoy any legal recognition.

The following two chapters focus on two case studies of youth and student activism in Egypt; one from the student movements and the other from youth activism outside campuses.

Chapter Six:

Strategic Choices, Organization, Framing and Mobilizations: Case Study Of The Student Activism

6.1 Introduction

The formal structures and official corporatist arrangements which the regime tightly controlled were unable to capture or express mobilisation and new formats for activism outside of organised structures began to emerge. As stated in the previous chapters, the political opportunities structure 2000-2010 associated with different waves of youth activism in response to external and internal factors which motivated ordinary students to engage in large numbers with contentious politics, albeit beyond traditional student unions and political parties. This chapter addresses the student movements' strategies in dealing with these new political opportunities and the internal mechanisms of the youth activism as well as the framing process adopted to construct their collective identities focusing on their orientation, values and ideologies.

Chapter six highlights the development and profiles of student movements and networks in Egyptian universities in the first decade of the twenty-first century. As stated before, the thesis adopts a wide definition of youth activism to include various categories of youth and student activism particularly "student movements" and "youth chapters" of political parties and social forces. Apart from the National Democratic Party (NDP) students, all other students' movements became active in spite of the governmental procedures to formally prevent them and the exposure of many to the prosecutions and harassment. This chapter identifies the types of politically-oriented student movements as follows: at the top of the list come the movements associated with the Muslim Brothers student wing. Second, are movements associated with protest-oriented parties and networks that were active within the student context such as Al-Ghad, the Revolutionary Socialists, and the Labour Party (Al-Amal party). The third category constitutes those student activists associated with opposition parties which could be described as less active within the student environment, particularly the Tajamu and Wafd parties. The Nasserist student activism stands in between those two categories to be distributed between the Nasserist Party and Karamah Party. Before addressing these student networks and movements, this chapter explores the main strategies and characteristics of student activism in the Egyptian universities (2000-2010).

It is worth noting that this chapter is based on fieldwork research to collect data about youth activism in the Egyptian universities. The evidence has been collected from the activists themselves during the data collection period through semi-structured interviews, as described in chapter two.

6.2 The Strategies of Student Movements

Although it has resulted in the case of the political movement in Egypt in 2004-2006 and possibly since the October 2000, the youth activism regained their vitality and relative recovery. They developed and responded to the political opportunity structure by developing strategies that focused on protest-based activities, cooperation across ideological lines and connecting with outside campus movements.

Between election and protest

The new youth activism abandoned the strategy of participation in the formal façade corporatist arrangements of the student unions and focused on protest activities. They gave up their efforts to be represented through election in the formal student unions and have been more concerned with and involve in contentious politics through the prism of social and protest movements.

The interviews with, and active observation, large segments of activists demonstrated that a considerable percentage of political activists have never voted in any elections, parliamentary or otherwise, including the last presidential elections after the revolution. In fact the Nasserist and Socialist activists used to deliberately boycott all sorts of elections including the student union elections. However, the attitudes toward the student elections varied depending upon the circumstances of the relevant movement. In this respect the Muslim Brothers' student wing used to have a clear-cut strategy that they have to take part in any elections unless they have been formally excluded from nomination, in which case they declared a boycott of the elections. On the other hand, the Nasserists and Socialists always boycotted the elections. As for other formal parties such as Al-Wafd, Al-Ghad, Al-Amal (Labour), and the Independent groups, they usually took part as long as they had qualified members or supporting loyal candidates. One striking development was the participation of the Socialists in the voting process to form the informal Free Student Union in 2006/2007.

From the foregoing it could be argued that elections were not the only political concern for political activists. Yet, whether or not a specific organization would take part in the elections depended upon the circumstances surrounding the elections; such as fairness of the elections

and the availability of a suitable candidate to be supported. But for the majority of political activists nonetheless, organizing demonstrations and protests remain the most important activities. In this regard all the interviewees except one female student, who was an ex-member of the formal student union, took part in protests of varying intensity.

Cooperation across ideological divides (The Free Student Union)

The activists who formed these groups tried to cooperate with each other and developed common positions. Consequently they announced the formation of what is known as the "Free Student Union" (Etihad E-Talaba Elhor) in 2006/2007, which was elected on an informal basis as a parallel body to represent the students and as an alternative to the formal student union. The FSU engaged in student services and some students became official spokespeople on its behalf such as Al Gaaly and Kholoud Barakat.

In other words while the student unions were under the pressure of official restrictions, the activists exerted tireless efforts to establish themselves through parallel institutions such as the FSU and other informal groups. The dilemma of student representation emerged as there were student unions formally recognized by the state, but there was also the Free Student Union which did not have legal legitimacy.

The FSU represented a kind of youth-led initiative. One activist on the MB's young wing argued that "while the idea emerged in 1996, it was not implemented until 2005 due to the political openings climate in 2004-2005" (Lutfi, Interview, 8/1/2008). The initiative represented a symbolic response and reaction from the students prevented from being nominated to student elections. The formation of the Free Union came after conducting non-formal elections in 2005/2006 and 2006/2007 under the supervision of an independent Professors' Club and human rights organization. Although the educational administration sharply rejected these elections and considered them illegal, thousands of youths participated in the election in 7 universities in 2005/2006 and 14 universities in 2006/2007. According to a Leftist activist young woman, "the main goals of the FSU were to declare a protesting message against the authorities and to present good services to the students" (Kholoud Saber, Interview, 10/2/2008). There were two kinds of activities: firstly, student activities that serve students in cultural, sports and social fields and secondly, those supporting political reform inside universities and society.

When political movements come together for a common cause such as the FSU they become increasingly powerful to attract students for voting, and they did an effective job, as thousands of students were nominated in the FSU elections and tens of thousands took part in the voting

process. Problems start when the student movements suffer from self-degeneration and infighting breaks out, and the movements lose the sense of unity with regard to the student causes in favour of political interests and ideologies. The fact that the Muslim Brothers were the main players in the student movement was a point of weakness. The government took advantage of that point to portray the students as being controlled by the Muslim Brothers. Lutfi pointed out that, "at the announcement of the FSU they had to face harsh responses from the student union and the security forces"(Lutfi, Interview, 8/1/2008).

Under such circumstances cooperation between political forces becomes inevitable to overcome the state of weakness (Al Sawy, Interview, 10/1/2008). So when these student networks, with the exception of the Muslim Brothers, came together in a demonstration featuring the student international day in 2005 they succeeded in rallying 200 students according to an activist from Al Ghad. He also stated that Al Ghad youth, on the other hand, had succeeded in rallying more than hundreds students in the student international day demonstrations in 2006 (Qutub, interview, 7/10/2010).

Multiplicity and diversity

The diversity of experiments associated with student activism that dealt with youth affairs since 2000 could be an indication of the excessive vitality and activity that characterise the "Millennium Generation". Some of those experiments could be described as brand new, while others could be described as old and new at the same time. In other words the old movement could be rejuvenated with a new spirit in terms of either fashion or theme or probably the two together. However, the most famous student movements and organizations that emerged included the "Future Generation Foundation", which had been linked to the NDP. This movement more or less became active among government-sponsored student unions, something which has been discussed previously. Yet, in this current study the author will focus on student movements, which are most likely opposition-oriented such as Al Ghad movement, Kefaya movement, the Nasserist movement, the Socialist movement, the Labour Party and the Muslim Brothers. But, nonetheless, other movements exist which did not have direct links with political activities before the January 25th revolution such as the Amr Khalid and Salafi networks and the Coptic activists who performed their activities either under the auspices and care of the youth episcopate of the Coptic Church or independently.

It could be argued that while the Muslim Brother movement has been stable and sustainable in the last three decades, other student movements, particularly the leftist and the Nasserist movements suffered serious setbacks in the 1990s. However, the political opportunities linked to the Intifada in Palestine and the invasion of Iraq, and the political demonstrations by the

masses that followed have reactivated the leftist networks such as the Socialists and Nasserist students. New movements and political forces emerged including Al Ghad, Kefaya youth, Youth for Change and the FSU.

The assessment of student movement greatly varies in terms of popularity irrespective of the nature of activities to be performed by those movements. The MB student wing is the main player in the student movements. So, there was an almost general consensus among interviewees that the Muslim Brothers should come in first place followed by the other factions particularly the Revolutionary Socialists, Al Amal (Labour party), the Nasserist and Al Ghad. In this respect a strong rivalry existed between the MB and the NDP who controlled the student unions, then far behind them comes the Salafi student movement and probably the Coptic students (Al-Aryan, Interview, 12/1/2008). Abdel Hamied, a Socialist activist believed that the MB could be in command of around 10% of the whole students including the sympathizers (Hameed, Interview 4/1/2008). Nabil argued that, "despite the fact that those who take part in student activities could not exceed 3% of the total figures of students but nonetheless the MB could be around 60% of the total participants" (Nabil, Interview, 9/10/201). However, the new activism was so inconsistent that they could suddenly go up at one time and then suddenly plunge at other times. In this regard Al Ghad went up to second place in this balance of power during the academic year 2005/2006, but suddenly went down in the following academic years. With regard to the influence of youth activism according to different universities and faculties, it is worth noting the fact that Cairo University is at the top followed by Ain Shams and Al-Azhar universities respectively. Most political networks have representation in Cairo University with very few members which could be, at best, estimated in tens at some of the university faculties. Al Gaaly assessed the activism networks in the Cairo University faculties as follows: the Revolutionary Socialists were active at the faculties of Arts, Dar Al-Uloum and Engineering, while the Al-Amal party was active at Dar-Al Uloum and Engineering (Al Gaaly, Interview, 8/1/2008). On the other hand, the Nasserist and Al Ghad were active at the faculty of Commerce. Othman, a Nasserist activist noted that, "in the early nineties the leftist groups in general and the Nasserist movement in particular had been the dominant forces at the University of Ain Shams before their obvious retreat later on" (Othman, Interview, 7/1/2008). But as for the Al Tajamu and Al Wafd they could hardly be spotted in terms of activities among students apart from some individuals who neither directly showed their support to those parties nor do they take part in student activities. But even if there were students who belonged to those two parties, they remained inactive and unseen so that most student activists were absolutely unaware of their existence.

It is most likely that Kefaya, April 6, then the ElBaradei Campaign movements turned out to represent large segments of students and reflected their dreams better than the traditional political parties. The different waves of protest led to the emergence of new leaders and the establishment of new networks while the old political parties and forces attempted to take credit for the students' sudden activism as well as leading their own protests, but, for the most part, these have been small affairs and Egypt's small opposition parties remain cut off from the activism. Most Socialist students expressed scorn for Al Tajamu, Egypt's legal left-wing party. In this regard, the Lawyers' and Journalist's Syndicates re-emerged as the new incubator and as a centre of political activism (Schemm, 2002).

Recruitment and Mobilization:

It is obvious that the movements endeavoured to win the support of as many students as possible through protests and exhibitions. The recruitment and the building of movements start after the end of the demonstrations and exhibitions benefiting from the new contact with young people who participate for the first time. The process of winning supporters is usually the work of an active leadership who manage to attract them to increase the numbers. That also has something to do with the course of events, so that a riotous atmosphere usually provides a good opportunity for enthusiastic activists in order to attract supporters in an easier manner than when the atmosphere is quiet. MB activists said they benefit from the services and activities to recruit new members (Al-Aryan, Interview, 12/1/2008).

It is important to take into account the fact that student activism needs the support of the older graduates outside the campuses as some of them continue their university activities even after graduation. Moreover, some activists who are still undergraduates could resort to having bad academic performance in order to prolong their stay at university. This is for the simple reason that graduation of activists could result in a clear decline of partisan activities, and the subsequent loss of supporters, which means the new activists will start from scratch.

6.3 The Muslim Brothers Students Wing

For almost two decades the MB has been on the ascent. They have been active at the Egyptian universities under the label of the Islamic Current, or "Altyaar Al-Islamy". They managed to get support from such a large segment of the students that they enabled to win elections and take over the formal student unions from the beginning of the 1980s until the mid-1990s when the regime decided to tighten its control over the student unions. Subsequently, the government succeeded in forcing the MB to withdraw from the student elections by using every possible means to disrupt their activities. This was a great success for the government

and NDP as the MB finally lost their ground in the formal student unions, while their activities continued without the provision of those unions. Lutfi, who was a prominent activist from the MB student wing, said that, "the last time the MB managed to win a university union election was in 1994, while the loss of leadership of Dar Al-Ulum College union in the year 2000 marked the end of their reign" (Lutfi, Interview, 8/1/2008).

The MB activists were also active through student clubs (Ossar) at universities such as the Salahudin Club in the Faculty of Medicine, Cairo University, which has been their traditional stronghold since the 1970s.

Al-Aryan confirmed that, "the academic year 1999/2000 marked end of their reign to the formal student union after years of continuous control of the organization because of the expulsion" (Al-Aryan, Interview, 12/1/2008). However, the MB student wing revived after the Palestine Intifada and continued to be the most prominent group among activists in the universities but without legal cover. After practicing their activities for some time under the name of the Islamic movement "Altayar Al-Islamy", a decision was made to reinstate the name of "Muslim Brothers" from the academic year 2005/2006. That decision could be justified, according to Al Gaaly, by the fact that the "Islamic movement could feature a wide spectrum of organizations, while the MB would indicate a unique group of students" (Al Gaaly, Interview, 8/1/2008). On the other hand the "MB is considered popular among students in terms of legitimacy and credibility with regard to the historic role it has been playing within the Egyptian society". Indeed, this decision came during the rising of the political reform movement in Egypt which provided an opportune context and was an attempt from the MB to assure their existence and names to challenge the regime.

From the interviews involving the student leadership of the MB student wing, it became evident that the objectives of the movement featured three dimensions i.e. the religious dimension, the political dimension and the student dimension. But Al Gaaly confined the objectives "to promoting the Islamic faith as well as helping students" (Al Gaaly, Interview, 8/1/2008). Al-Aryan on the other hand focused on the religious and the national dimensions, by defining the objectives as "to produce a generation that favours the country and the religion based on proper understanding away from extremism and violence" (Al-Aryan, Interview, 12/1/2008). However, according to Islam Lutfi the objectives could be identified as follows:

- Promoting the 'moderate' doctrine featuring the Muslim Brothers among students.

- Taking advantage of the university as the only environment available for freedom of expression in the country.

- Reactivating positive images among students after years of repression (Lutfi, Interview, 8/1/2008).

They argued that the rejuvenation of student activities would be to the benefit of the country and the MB so that the latter would be viable afterwards in terms of sustainability and strength. In this respect, "the consolidation of the opposition was a main concern of the Muslim Brothers in this period" according to Lutfi.

Sustainability and consistency for many years has been the main feature that distinguishes the activities involving the Muslim Brothers compared with other young activists' networks. In terms of the services they provided they were highly competitive with a wider base of beneficiaries compared to other organizations. Generally speaking, the activities provided by the Muslim Brother Students included sports, arts, cultural, social, educational and charity activities. Al-Aryan argued that, "from the 1980s onwards there had been significant activities associated with the Islamic Movement including reception ceremonies for the new students at the beginning of the new academic year" (Al-Aryan, Interview, 12/1/2008). Also, they managed to initiate dialogues inside the lecture rooms, reciting the Qua'ran, and helping students with reviewing their lectures. Communication always creates an atmosphere of confidence and trust between the different parties. In such an atmosphere recruitment of new members for the organization begins. The role of the students extends beyond the above-mentioned activities to include other educational aspects such as providing lectures recorded on CDs on the different areas of scientific knowledge. Those services also include mock exams, exhibitions, and providing medical instruments. It is noteworthy as Al-Aryan confirmed, "MB extended their services to around 60% of the students who make use of the educational and scientific services" (Al-Aryan, Interview, 12/1/2008). For example, at the faculty of Law around 3,000 copies of the informal faculty guidebook (exam questions) used to be printed out to be distributed among 5,000-7,000 students, so that all the copies were taken i.e. this means that around 50% of the students would benefit from this activity.

The activities also included many musical concerts. Al Gaaly mentioned that, for example, a musical concert organized at the Medical Syndicate was attended by almost 2,000 students, and another at the faculty of Commerce within the university premises was attended by 3,000 students. In relation to the sporting activities, the MB organized a sporting session whereby 32 six-member teams took part. Interestingly, Lutfi stressed that, "some of the activities such as the musical concerts feature the Muslim Brother membership only and other students

attend as audience, while other activities remain open for everyone to take part" (Lutfi, Interview, 8/1/2008).

It is worth noting that the MB Students' activities reflected their collective desire to spread religious principle via new techniques. Al Gaaly confirmed that they always focused on campaigns such as "the real love" campaign in 2005/2006, which targeted the relationship between boys and girls, and the "resistance for survival" campaign in 2006/2007 aimed at reforming individuals, the university and the society(Al Gaaly, Interview, 8/1/2008).

Strategies and disruptive tactics:

As stated in previous chapters, external Arab and Islamic issues provided a political opportunity and were the main motivation for MB student demonstrations until 2003 with some exceptions. For example, MB students launched big demonstrations about Iraq in 1991, on El-Haram El-Ibrahiemy Massacre in 1994, the Gabal Abu Gunaim settlement in 1997, the threat to bomb Iraq in 1998, the Intifada protests in 2000/2002, on Kosovo war in 1999, and the Iraqi war in March 2003. after 2005 they turned to focus on internal issues as they led for the demonstrations calling for political reforms either independently or in coordination with other groups like the Socialists and April 6 youth movement. However they did not give up provoking over external causes such as their demonstrations for Gaza in 2009.

After 2005, MB students focused on the reform and political activities because they were under pressure from the regime. In this respect the most important campaign featuring the Muslim Brothers was "together for reform, a free university and a free country", on October 2th, 2005. That campaign was marked by huge protests at all Egyptian universities including Ein Shams, Azhar, Hilwan, Kafar Al-Sheikh, Manofia, Banha, Zagazeeg, Bani Swaif, Assiut and Ganoub Al-Wadi. In some of those demonstrations the protesters used new methods to express their grievances. For example, they just stood still with their hands cuffed and their mouths gagged to express the state of oppression suffered.

As stated before, the repression does not prevent the mobilization in specific periods and cases, but can also fuel it. This particular case shows that the literature which says that repression limits movement mobilisation is wrong in this particular instance. The student activism benefited from the regulations that prevented the police forces from invading the university campuses. Compromises and negotiations took place to emphasise the limits and red lines imposed by the police on demonstrations such as preventing demonstrations from crossing the campuses to streets. It is worth noting that the student protests used to erupt when the regime pressure on the MB organization and its leadership was at its fiercest as it

had been in the mid-1990s, Most significantly the protests that took place at Cairo University where tens of thousands of students were involved in demonstrations and gatherings featuring the freedom day on November 15th 1995, according to Lutfi. Those demonstrations led to massive arrests followed by military courts for the Muslim Brother leadership in 1995.

Since the 1990s the MB had shown their ability to rally students in big numbers to demonstrate against the regime, yet they had no intention to become involved in confrontations with the police. A case in point was the massive demonstration held at the University of Alexandria led by the MB in support of the Palestinian Intifada. On April 9th around 9,000 students took to the streets, but, unfortunately, that event ended dramatically as one student called Mohammed Al-Saka was killed and 260 students were seriously injured when the police used plastic bullets, and water hoses to disband the demonstrators. Afterwards the two sides exchanged accusations. On the one hand the police allegedly claimed that the demonstrators attacked them with stones causing damage to cars, but the students denied all the allegations, confirming that their demonstrations had been peaceful and that they were heading for a conference on petroleum probably held at Alexandria Library or otherwise at the American Cultural Centre. According to some police sources some of the communist elements could have initiated the violence following failure of the Muslim Brother activists to control the crowd, and knowing that there were limits for police tolerance (Schemm, 2002).

Those who were well-informed among the activists agreed with that viewpoint, as they would stress the fact that the MB would always try to avoid confrontations with the police as clearly instructed by their leadership. Moreover, it was most likely that advance arrangements were made with the police before any demonstrations would take place so that they could try and avoid such clashes. In fact, what happened in Alexandria was originally an organized protest involving the MB, and yet later on the Socialists and the Independent students took control of the crowd. The latter managed to do so in response to the mood of the crowd which included ordinary activists and young MB members and led them to the streets. Furthermore, it was not possible for the security forces to control 9,000 demonstrators through traditional means such as tear gas and security cordons. Eventually, they used live ammunition, as the police would not allow any disruption to the opening ceremony of Alexandria Library which was scheduled for April 23rd (Schemm, 2002).

However, some interviewees argued that the activities of the MB students considerably declined quantitatively and quantitatively. Their activities dwindled in specific years to reach its nadir falling short of its heyday during the decades of the eighties and the nineties. Tamam

(2006) argued that, “their activities failed to mimic the events featuring the student demonstrations in protest of the international alliance against Iraq following its invasion of Kuwait in 1991”. So, the Muslim Brother Student movement “was not up to the standard in response to major events which should have implied strong student reactions such as the American invasion of Iraq in 2003”. The situation remained the same until the reform protests broke out in the spring of 2005, which was known as the “Cairo Spring”. During those events a protest featuring Alexandria University students organized with banners condemning what they considered “naked video clips” and western culture. Their counterparts at Cairo University managed to organize a day of the love of Islam or what they called “Mohamed Day” in contrast to “Valentine Day”. So, after directly joining the protests for one reason or another, the Muslim Brothers had no option but to consider adopting the agenda for reform. Tamam (2006) argued that, “the main reason was that the Muslim Brother Student movement could be more or less concerned with the constitutional reforms, and yet those reforms had never been the main concern of the movement".

It could be maintained that the movement has had its successes and failures, though the activists of the Muslim Brother Students such as Al-Aryan think that “the movement had made great achievements, and won the hearts and minds of the students through focusing on their problems”. They were highly organized with a clear-cut doctrine and a satisfactory message to deliver. According to Lutfi, “the methods of work were continuously kept under review”, such as approving campaigns as a system of work, a professional approach that would take place through marketing and publicity that started in 2004. The traditional system of work involved schemes such as the prayer week, the reception week etc, but the new system would involve a general campaign featuring a specific issue. An information body would be organized for this purpose whereby values such as seeking love and excellence would be the main focus. The female role also increased according to Al Gaaly who said that, “Walaa Hashim from the Muslim Brother Student female membership became the deputy president of the FSU at Cairo University in 2005”. Moreover, “a group of female students managed to organize a symposium at the anti-imperialism conference in Cairo in relation to the alternative media” (Al Gaaly, Interview, 8/1/2008).

By contrast the interviewees admitted that “shortcomings and imperfections existed, which the movement tried to rectify”. Al Gaaly illustrated that, “those shortcomings include seclusion instead of openness”. But finally, positive developments were taking place and campaigns such as “together with reform” and “free university and free country” campaigns were paying off. Also, he stressed that there was a need to pay attention to the political media aspects as the media focused on their negative rather than the positive aspects. He added that,

“the activities should concentrate on symposiums, conferences, political newsletters, and political sessions”.

However, the security forces and the administration used to constitute major obstacles for the MB activism. The former tended to make frequent arrests among the active members and issued threats for others. In fact the MB activists were targets for the security forces even though the number of arrests may have varied from one time to another. Al-Aryan denied the allegations made by activists from other groups that the security forces turned a blind eye to the MB activities while preventing other activities. The administration on the other hand used to carry out investigations and dismiss students. For example, Al-Aryan referred to the numerous disciplinary boards he has attended accused of taking part in a concert(Al-Aryan, Interview, 12/1/2008).

Organizational capacities and internal mechanisms:

As part of the Muslim Brothers, the students’ wing get support from the organization but Lutfi confirmed that, “self-funding is the norm usually through contributions from members, and yet in some cases individuals provide funding for some activities upon request” (Lutfi, Interview, 8/1/2008). Al-Aryan also said that, “some activities generated income to cover the costs as in the case with exam print-outs, and the CDs featuring musical concerts” (Al-Aryan, Interview, 12/1/2008). But in the end, according to Al Gaaly their “budget was limited compared to that of official student union budgets for example, the amounts allocated from Helwan student union was fifty thousand Egyptian pounds despite the insignificant activities of the union” (Al Gaaly, Interview, 8/1/2008).

According to Lutfi, the Muslim Brother Student membership could be in the thousands, while Al-Aryan puts the number in the hundreds at Cairo University alone. Despite the threats made by the security forces and administration to the students, the MB activists confirmed that they had “succeeded to win the hearts and minds of the majority of students through personal conviction” (Al-Aryan, Interview, 12/1/2008). The membership existed in almost every university in Egypt, but the organization was more influential at Cairo, Azhar and Alexandria universities. Indeed, the MB exists in great numbers at regional universities, while they remain influential at Azhar University. In this regard, Ain Shams University was a special case given the tough administration and the harsh security measures. But despite all that the MB remain strong compared to other student movements.

In discussing the selection of leadership, Al Gaaly said that, “for some time this process used to be by direct appointment” as they represent a part of the central organization (MB) which

they must obey whose orders they should implement. However, “changes have been made to reflect a kind of democratic elections and autonomy, whereby the student membership at the different faculties or classes votes for the faculty or class representative” (Al Gaaly, Interview, 8/1/2008). It is worth mentioning that only the members of the student council have the right to vote, and every faculty has its own student council made up of 6-10 students. The selection process takes place in accordance with a number of criteria including activeness, administrative skills, relationships with colleagues and religious commitment. Lutfi pointed out that “the faculty council will be responsible for the selection of the faculty representative and his deputy”. Al-Aryan confirmed that “all MB students were eligible for voting, and they got the right to choose their representatives” (Al-Aryan, Interview, 12/1/2008). Yet, other non-elected technical committees exist whereby some individuals are designated to undertake specific jobs without being elected.

However, with regard to the decision-making process MB activists pointed out that “all matters were subject for open discussion and the dominant principle was team work and the division of labour”. Lutfi said that, “given the fact that decisions were taken on a democratic basis every member of the group has a moral obligation to stick to those decisions, which necessarily means commitment to the party”. According to Al Aryan a “good level of democracy existed within the movement and things were continuously improving, and in effect promising student leadership was produced through elections”.

With regard to the relationships between the students and Muslim Brothers leadership, the Al Gaaly confirmed the latter “granted them to act in accordance with their own decisions and perspective, and yet that should not prevent them from seeking the advice of the matured and skilful members, as long as they abide by the same policies and rules as other members do”. Al Gaaly suggested that “a major conflict is very unlikely as no direct intervention takes place”, but admitted that a minor conflict might take place in which case student opinion will dominate. Al-Aryan confirmed that the decision-making process worked within a general policy and accordingly decisions were to be made. In this respect Al Gaaly said that some campaigns including “Love” and “Resist being” were inspired by student ideas and did not need permission from top levels.

It became obvious that Muslim Brother students were about to become more independent from the leadership, had it not been for the Al-Azhar crisis. Following what activists considered as “a sporting event” organized by MB students while government and regime said it was “military show”, the MB leadership strongly criticized the show as being an invitation for a fight which would definitely disfavour student activities. So, the Al Azhar

crisis gave an excuse for the leadership to restrict that independence, as the regime took advantage of the student behaviour which came as a strong security blow to the MB leadership particularly the military trial for a number of its prominent leaders in 2007-2008. Some activists argued that students should not be accountable for what happened but rather the tense relationship between the MB and the regime should be blamed for all that had happened.

It should be noted that the MB mobilizing structure in the universities is more intricate and complex than other student networks. It includes different levels such as the student membership, the elected faculty leadership, intermediate level supervisors, the top leadership of the organization, the FSU union leadership, not to mention the bodies responsible for coordination with other forces. In this regard Lutfi argued that there was a problem connecting with the medium link in the movement between students and leadership. He confirmed that "the Muslim Brother leadership did not require anything from the students", yet, "the intermediate leadership featuring university supervisors remain the main problem", as it tended to communicate and interpret the ideas and regulations in a "conservative way". He added that "these intermediate supervisors are in command of wide powers without actually intervention from the top leadership" (Lutfi, Interview, 8/1/2008).

On the other hand, Tamam (2006) argued that "some from outside the student movement or even from outside the university became in control of the movement". In other words the movement was controlled by people who were not students. Consequently, every university or even every faculty had its own supervisors and educators who most likely had already finished their courses and graduated from university. Also, some sort of central committees for students had been established only to be controlled by the regional administrations, where a supervisor for the student sector would represent the highest authority in terms of group organization with a main duty of outlining and planning the strategies of the activities in relation to the university sector. Tamam (2006) confirmed that "the relationship between MB leadership and the students became more organized or could possibly be described as more bureaucratic as well".

It could be argued that there had been more room for autonomy through the internal elections for the selection movement leadership, besides the emergence of a new generation of activists who had more freedom to take action, but that should remain within the general strategy of the Muslim Brothers who avoided confrontations with the regime until 25 January 2011 when the Muslim Brothers youth wing pressured for the movement to become involved in the revolution to topple the Mubarak regime **(**El Barqy, Interview, 5/2/2012).

Concerning the transformation and mobility of generations of the Islamist movement at the universities in recent decades, it should be noted that a basic difference exists between the activities during the seventies as compared to the eighties and the nineties, as every period has its own unique characteristics. For example, during the period of the seventies, the activities were motivated by the students' feelings and affections in the complete absence of the traditional hierarchical leadership who would influence the university students. Thus that period has been characterized by the diversified Islamic thinking, and the freedom of movement away from partisan restrictions, in addition to invigorating the personal work experience of student activists. In the eighties, on the other hand, the Islamic activism was characterized by university activities taking shape on a specific partisan course, as the MB managed to win more than 80% of the student vote, while the Jihadist and Salafi organizations won 20% of the vote (Tamam, 2006). The period of the eighties was also unique for tight security measures which made the MB the only organization capable of confrontation, by taking full control of the Egyptian universities, except for sporadic clashes with Hours organizations which was the NDP student wing in early 1990s.

During the period of the nineties the Islamists became more focused on trade unions and syndicates than student unions, whereas most of the student leadership in the eighties and the seventies engaged with these activities. This, therefore, rendered work among students less significant. In this regard Al-Mulaiji (2003) argued that "the Islamist work among students was not as significant as before in terms of performance, availability, spirit and influencing university students".

The organizational framework in which the Islamist movements operated during the seventies was also different from that in the 2000-2010. The seventies decade represented what some called the second establishment of the MB (after the first one in the 1920s and the 1930s). The Islamist student movement had been known as Al-Jamaa Al-Islamia in the Egyptian universities during the seventies. The bulk of the group moved spontaneously with no advisors or leadership from outside the group. However, the idea of spontaneity and networking became a source of strength for the movement, even though on some occasions this might have led some groups to become involved in violence. Yet, following the graduation of the founders of the movement who gradually became distanced from the student environment, the movement started to lose its spontaneity and independence as a new generation took over the leadership of the student movement. The new MB students found themselves belonging to an Islamic organization operating within the universities rather than belonging to a student movement with an Islamic orientation.

The online presence of the Muslim Brothers younger generation:

The Muslim Brotherhood has an active online presence. Blogs and Facebook have enabled individuals in the MB to partake in opposition media activism (Exum, 2007, p. 1). This is evident in how younger MB members are trying to adopt this technology to generate the kind of solidarity, support and attention needed (Lynch, 2007). The pages, profiles and groups of MB members have gradually expanded on Facebook and Twitter. However, the virtual numbers do not match the actual number of members who are focusing on the real activities more than the virtual. This was one of the main things that helped them to win in the elections compared with the other new activism that focusing on the use of social media and was still seeking to build social and political bases in the real world. However, Facebook became a public avenue to display internal disputes and controversial issues among MB activists as it appears on the profiles and pages belonging to the younger and middle age activists like Haythem Abou-Khaliel[42]. It is obvious that, while new media technologies have provided some new-found benefits to opposition groups, they can bring potential challenges as well. The disputes emerged on online media in many occasions and in different movements.

6.4 The Protest Movements and Networks

The Students Union of Al Ghad:

The Students Union of Al Ghad was formed under the leadership of two activists, Mohamed Qutub and Ahmed Maher, just before the elections of Parliament in November 2005. More than a hundred students and youth gathered at the university, making it a strong movement within the university and within the Youth for Change Movement in 2005 and 2006. In fact the idea of the Union of Al Ghad students started some time before the presidential elections to support Ayman Nour in this election featuring a huge number of activists together with other sympathizers who were not organized. Maher confirmed that the actual establishment was just before the elections of the parliament, where it continued its strong activities in 2006 (Maher, interview, 20/1/2012). Following the election of the parliament, disappointment increased among the party activists leading them to quit. The newcomers then focused on student activities. Consequently, informal clubs (Ossar) were established within the university under the name “Al Ghad Youth Clubs” using the slogan of the orange flag. Those clubs were based at the universities of Azhar, Cairo, Ein Shams, Hilwan and Alexandria.

42 http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100000262669968

After this wave of activism there was a setback as many problems appeared during the academic year 2006/2007, during which the work featured individual random activities. The same could be said about other movements such as the Youth for Change which became exceptionally active during the presidential elections, and after the elections all students returned to their original parties. In this regard Maher, one of the leaders of Al Ghad Youth pointed out that the "Al Ghad students constituted a main component of the Al Ghad Youth, as almost half of the Al Ghad Youth were students, while another quarter of them were concerned with student causes, and only one- quarter have no concerns with student matters" (Maher, interview, 20/1/2012).

Al Ghad Student Union attempted to undertake numerous activities as well as providing services in a way almost similar to the Muslim Brothers students. They distributed curricula, and held training sessions for the preparation of future student leadership including those who were not members of the party. Maher confirmed that the union "had done a good job within the university during the academic year 2005-2006, as it came second to the MB, as could be clearly seen during the protests of the International Student Day in 2006" (Maher, interview, 20/1/2012). Qutub said that "on that day more than a hundred students came to the university carrying the orange flags". They shouted anti-regime slogans calling for the downfall of President Mubarak, as well as condemning the plan of "Mubarak's Ruling Family", whereby a big exhibition was associated with the demonstrations (Qutub, interview, 7/10/2010). Maher confirmed that the masses were impressed by the activities organized by Al Ghad and the MB who demonstrated for a short time before they left, "But nonetheless the protesters were estimated at five thousand after the Muslim Brothers and others joined the rallies" (Maher, interview, 20/1/2012).

According to Qutub, "it was in the interest of security to have activities performed by liberal students instead of limiting those activities to MBs" (Qutub, interview, 7/10/2010). In fact following the failure of the leftist groups those activities would be performed under a liberal cover, which constituted a good opportunity for Al Ghad to start. In this regard Qutub pointed out that "the general liberal doctrine tended to reject the idea of public protests" (Qutub, interview, 7/10/2010). Yet, Al Ghad encouraged its youth to join the protests, as well as the use of labelled banners to challenge the government. Al Ghad Student Union had also managed to form sub-committees at the universities of Hilwan, Alexandria, Cairo, Eien Shams, Faioum, Bani Suaif and Asyout.

Regarding the ideology and collective identity, it could be argued that two viewpoints have emerged, one in support of general student objectives, while the other viewpoint favoured

specific ideological objectives. In this respect Maher pointed out that Al Ghad Students Union in essence featured the following objectives: "establishment of a free and strong student union away from the domination of the security forces, which means the establishment of a new energetic political life as it had been before 1952 including the existence of a free multi-party system within the university" (Maher, interview, 20/1/2012). Given the fact that the above are general objectives, Qutub was keen to highlight the ideological objectives. Among those objectives was "introducing new moderate principles with positive thinking other than the Muslim Brothers, in addition to encouraging students to become involved in non-Islamic activities". That would necessarily mean "trying to persuade the Muslim Brothers to get out of their isolation to join the community at large" (Qutub, interview, 7/10/2010). It is worth noting that opinions differed when it came to the evaluation of the doctrine and ideology of the Al Ghad party. For example, Maher was not considered to be "a liberal in the real sense of the word, and so the party could be described as moderate belonging to the "third way" ideas in terms of social and political doctrine" (Maher, interview, 20/1/2012). However, the common thought was that "liberalism and secularism were synonymous and so both are anti-religious", and yet formally in its programmes admit that "Islamic Sharia should be considered a major source for any legislation" (Maher, interview, 20/1/2012).

Regarding the organizational leadership, it is worth noting that Qutub was chosen by Ayman Nour to lead the Al Ghad students. Maher and Basim Sayed were also chosen as deputies. The latter was a secular Christian and a member of "Andalusia Centre" (Qutub, interview, 7/10/2010). The Union included other activists such as Mustafa Mahmoud, Mohamed Maher and Ahmed Badawi besides a communication sub-committee led by Islam Hanafi. Ahmed Maher pointed out that the most prominent leadership was Mohamed Qutub, Ahmed Maher and Muram, who had been chosen by direct elections. Following the elections of the Free Union of Ghad Students Mohamed Qutub became the secretary of the union and Ahmed Maher assistant to the secretary (Qutub, interview, 7/10/2010).

As part from the youth activism in Egypt, Al Ghad used to experience internal conflicts, organizational problems occurred over the legal status of the youth and student union. Qutub would argue that he agreed with Ayman Nour and Wael Nuarah on the formation of a youth committee, but it was postponed until the end of the presidential elections. Yet, Qutub was appointed as secretary of the previous youth committee led by Hassabullah who was 40 years old and came back to the leadership after the departure of Qutub in the aftermath of a crisis(Qutub, interview, 7/10/2010). A problem occurred involving the party leadership which considered the Union an illegitimate entity. They were confronted by Hassabullah, who was then the secretary of Ghad Youth. His critics from the activists accused him of being a former

member of the ruling National Party. They argued that the party regulations stated that the youth secretary should be a member of the supreme board, and so his age should be in the range of 25-30 years old. Moreover, Hassabullah had already been appointed by the leadership as a youth secretary rather than being elected(Qutub, interview, 7/10/2010). That conflict led to failure of the movement according to Maher. Then some students joined the original youth secretariat as individuals, where elections were being held for sub-committees within the youth secretariat, and eventually Maher was elected as the secretary of the masses sub-committee. The most famous activists at the height of the activities of the Ghad students were Bilal Diab, Mustafa Mahmoud, Basim Samir and Muram (Maher, interview, 20/1/2012).

There were between 50 and 80 formal members on average in each of the various governorates of the republic, not to mention the party sympathizers. For example, in Cairo there were around 200 active members, but the total number of Al Ghad youth appeared to have been controversial. Maher, for instance, put the number at around 15 thousand members all over the country, while Mohamed Qutub would confirm that, as from February 2006, the youth committee of Al Ghad was in command of two thousand members in the entire country. He further confirmed that 60% of them were really active members, including 300 activists in Alexandria(Qutub, interview, 7/10/2010).

The financial resources which used to come from the businessmen constituted the main source of funding for the party. Some of these businessmen included Omar Seed Al-Ahal, engineer Basil Adil, Wail Nuara, and Majdi Al-Adassi. However deficits in funding appeared as the number of funders dwindled. On the other hand, 80 to 120 members focused on a self-funding scheme where members had to pay weekly contributions from 2 to 5 Egyptian pounds (Qutub, interview, 7/10/2010). In this respect Maher would admit that he gave almost 25% of his monthly salary, not to mention his time and the other expenses. He would further confirm that the only time they received major funding from the party was during the leadership training sessions, when the activities would increase proportionally with the increase of funding.

The Socialist Movement:

The Socialist Movement is the most fragmented among the student movements. It featured a number of groups and networks including the Independent Left, the Revolutionary Socialist students, the students of the Democratic Left (Sharif Musa, Samar Suleiman, Majallat Al-Busala) and the Social Democratic Party (Tanta University Group). Many questions have been raised about the nature and size of the socialist movement at the university. In this regard, according to Abdul Hamied, a prominent leftist activist, “the socialist movement is

unstable and always fluctuating up and down". For example, the movement was on the rise during the period 1996/97, and declined during the period 2002/2003 before it went up during the period 2004-2006. Abdul Hamied stressed that, "the decline has always been a function of internal organizations' disputes" (Hameed, Interview 4/1/2008). The most active movements within the socialist movement were the March 20th Movement, and the Revolutionary Socialists as they constituted a distinct and clear brand for all socialist students. The March 20th movement used to provide such a vessel for some time before transformation to the socialist movement took place. The main reason for that transformation was due to the March 20th, which was then active outside the university, becoming inactive, and that people no longer understood what was meant by March 20th, the one day when dominated the Tahrir protests in 2003 after the Iraqi war. So after transformation the left became more active under the new name of Socialist Students according to Abdul Hamied.

March 20th movement:

The movement was established outside the university by members of university staff, namely Aida Saif Aldawla, and Manar Hussein, with a number of students such as Bassam Murtada, Manar Kamil and Kholoud Sabir. It started its activities during the protest wave of 2003 following the Iraqi demonstrations and featured cooperation between a small group of university staff members and a group of students, the majority of which came from leftist families. The movement used to make some clinics as bases for its activities including particularly those of Saif Al-Naser and Adil Al-Mushid with the support of Farid Zahran, Majdi Abdul Hamid, Sabir Barakat, Ahmed Saif Al-Islam and Fatima Adli. In the university they started their activities with exhibitions featuring paintings at the beginning of the new curriculum year in 2003, but the preparations went back as early as the summer time (Kholoud Saber, Interview, 10/2/2008).

The activities took place at the university campuses and their starting point was the general student grievances and problems and what could be described as, more or less, a leftist agenda based on Marxist ideology (Kholoud Saber, Interview, 10/2/2008). Then, by and large, other students who were not politically oriented started to join. Then the movement began to take shape through those activities. Eventually, the movement took its place among other student movements, and was present in conferences and able to coordinate with other political forces(Kholoud Saber, Interview, 10/2/2008).

The number of students benefiting from the movement's activities varied depending on the activity. For example, Kholoud said, "it could be seen that during any exhibition there used

to be about 40 students in attendance and about ten students would leave their telephone numbers to become involved in the debates. In the meantime there were five to ten students involved in organizing the exhibition" (Kholoud Saber, Interview, 10/2/2008). According to Kholoud, in terms of popularity the Socialist movement came second to the Muslim Brothers followed by the Nasserists and Al Ghad besides a limited presence of Wafd. She also stressed that the activists at the Cairo University were no more than fifteen members. It was true that the extent of those activities was not that big, but still it produced the idea of a leftist movement which was considered a positive development, with the subsequent establishment of relationships with other movements within the university, so that the Socialist force was taken into account.

Yet, Kholoud Saber said, "the movement had to cope with some setbacks particularly with regard to student training and funding, not to mention its failure to link itself with a true leftist agenda within the university" (Kholoud Saber, Interview, 10/2/2008). Besides the financial problem there was the problem of the general atmosphere within the university, which would tend to cause barriers to the progress of the movement. The students were indifferent, and at times there were clashes with other movements, not to mention the power differences(Kholoud Saber, Interview, 10/2/2008).

The Revolutionary Socialists

It could be said that the March 20th movement provided a broad framework that brought together all leftist activists irrespective of their ideologies, and yet the Revolutionary Socialists remained the main power in the group (Al Gaaly, Interview, 8/1/2008). Their most important aim was to recruit members for the movement to achieve the political objectives featuring the creation of a revolutionary socialist movement. In this respect the movement had succeeded in communicating with a big number of students, so as to make them join its activities including protests. The socialist activist Abdul Hamid stated that, "the movement had been labelled by both the MB and the security forces as saboteurs following the violent events associated with some of the protests during the Intifada" (Hameed, Interview 4/1/2008). Actually, although there were tens of members besides the sympathizers, given its inadequate resources the movement would not focus on providing services for students and the same could be said about the Nasserist movement.

Focusing on the exhibitions, which was considered to be one of their main activities, drew the students' attention. In this regard one of the young activists from Al Ghad demonstrated that when he visited Cairo University in 2001 for the first time, he noticed that the students were

being involved in exhibitions, particularly the leftists and socialists (Maher, interview, 20/1/2012). Those exhibitions displayed photos and paintings in addition to the political debates. He took part in the debate "featuring the socialist students led by Khalid Abdul Hamied and the main issue of the debate was the importance of a political force to stand against the malpractices of the corrupt regime" (Hameed, Interview 4/1/2008). However, some interviewees understood that some of the Socialist students would work under the umbrella of external communist organizations, while the Socialist activists would insist that they had no links with any of the international movements. They would believe that it was necessary to take a more extreme position in terms of fighting and struggling. For this reason, their slogans during demonstrations in support of the Palestinian cause directly condemned the policies of the then President Mubarak. "They were of the opinion that political reform should be the first step that would lead to the liberation of Palestine, and that Cairo would be the start point of the road to Jerusalem", according to an activist from the RS. That attitude was contrary to that of the Muslim Brothers who were of the opinion that opposition should favour the formation of a united front against Israel by being less critical of the regime (Schemm, 2002).

RS activists cooperated with the MB through a cross ideological network called "Jam'etna (Our University) as well as through the FSU. Abdul Hameid confirmed that, "FSU provided a useful experiment by being involved in real activities, and by exposing the false nature of the official union and its malpractices" (Hameed, Interview 4/1/2008).

One of the activists appreciated the activities associated with the Socialist movement as he confirmed that "its agenda featured new ideas". Yet, Othman drew attention to the issue that the average age of the Marxist students was relatively high as he thought that "some of the activists have become professional politicians, which has prolonged their stay at the university through poor academic performance" (Othman, Interview, 7/1/2008). Another Islamist activist highlighted some of cultural dilemmas that faced the Socialist activism such as "the disagreements between the members regarding the role of religion in the public sphere, the relationship with other movements, whereby the tendency for accusing others of disloyalty is very common among members" (Lutfi, Interview, 8/1/2008).

Islamic Al-Amal League

The influence of the Al-Shaab newspaper on large numbers of students and the youth in general was undeniable during the 1990s. Moreover, the Headquarters of Al-Amal (Labour) Party became the focus of attention due to the demonstrations and protests. Eventually the party activities were suspended following the party crisis in 2000. Al-Sawi stated that

“because of the impact of the Palestine Intifada and particularly in 2002, the party resumed its activities at the universities of Cairo and Ain Shams, where the Islamic Student League emerged with an ever-increasing student support” (Al Sawy, Interview, 10/1/2008). Al-Sawi also illustrated the internal organizational capacity of the network by stating that there were seven students in charge of the activities in seven faculties at Cairo University, while the Cairo office, the centre of power of the Al-Amal Party, was made up of 14 activists led by a president and head deputy. The party also emerged at Azhar University. It is noteworthy that the party has been more popular in some faculties than in others. That was particularly so at Dar Al-Uluom and the Faculty of Law, although the party activities were extended to reach the Faculty of Engineering. A student called Mahmoud Al-Sakhawi from the Faculty of Engineering, a secretary of a party committee, succeeded in winning a seat in the elections featuring the Free Student Union. There was a focus on the FSU elections as it was hoped to create alternative student organizations. So, calling students for protests, in addition to the weekly congregations organized by the party at Azhar University, gathering the youth and the leadership marked the party activities.

Regarding the ideology and collective identity, Al-Sawi summarized the League as aiming to “help the party in its struggle for power in order to establish a civil state with an Islamic dimension i.e. a blend of the Islamic and civil dimensions” (Al Sawy, Interview, 10/1/2008). The activists endeavoured to communicate with all students within their reach, who would most likely be from an Islamic background, even though some of its membership was Christians such as Gamal Asaad, a member of the executive committee, and also George Ishag and Hani Labib. Al-Sawi considered that “the League is unique as compared to the Muslim Brothers and the Salafi groups in terms of thinking” (Al Sawy, Interview, 10/1/2008). In other words they thought that they were connecting “between a rational thinking, which is unique to the MB and the emotional thinking which characterizes the Salafi movement”, bearing in mind the limited support and poor financial resources of the Islamic League as compared to the Muslim Brothers movement(Al Sawy, Interview, 10/1/2008).

The leadership of the party mainly belongs to the middle-age generation as the organization could be “more or less described as an informal movement rather than a political party where most of membership and leaders belong to the young generation under 35 years old” (Al Sawy, Interview, 10/1/2008). In 2007 Osama Al-Hutaimi was secretary of the youth union, while Al-Sawi became assistant secretary assisted by Akram Irani, and Alla Hijari became president of the League and assisted Mohamed Mahmoud Al-Sakhawi. Later on, Al-Sawi became secretary of the youth union and participated in creating the Youth for Change and April 6 Movements in 2008. Al-Sawi also stated that the leadership was chosen by mutual

agreement, but with the increase of membership elections were approved as a means for choosing the League leadership. In his assessment of the Islamic Activist League, Al-Sawi believed that, "it could be equal to the Socialists who came second to the Muslim Brothers, followed by the Nasserists" (Al Sawy, Interview, 10/1/2008).

6.5 The Political Parties and Students

Apart from a few interim activities it could be generally concluded that the opposition parties seem to be isolated from the student movement. In this regard the fact of the matter is that democratic practice as a culture is missing from the majority of opposition parties, and that the public have little trust in the leadership of those parties who were possibly unknown to the public in the first place. The opposition parties tactically rely on using harsh language to address political matters in order to draw the attention of the masses so as to compensate for their missing chances to work among the masses in previous years. Unfortunately, by adopting such tactics those parties ended up as big losers among students (Abdul Majid, 2006, p. 10). Since political parties seemed to be indifferent about political nurturing of the youth, keeping those youth becomes a difficult task. The main problem is that the political parties make no effort to attract young activists. Given the revolutionary spirit and enthusiasm shown by the youth they always look forward for potential change and criticize the leadership. But after some time according to Salama, an activist from the Nasserist party, they realized that things had changed for the worse (Salama, Interview, 12/1/2008). Some political parties tend to prove their credibility among the youth by being involved in protest activities, but having said that, most parties remain distanced from young protesters, so that the majority of socialist students seem to be unhappy with the role played by the Tajamu Party, for example (Schemm, 2002). Abdulla (1994, p. 10) a leading figure of the leftist student movement in the 1970s noted the insignificance of leftist-oriented youth activism in universities before 2000, which, "reduced their chances among the masses as a potential alternative, so that the situation either remains the same if not changes for the worse".

Moreover, the student regulations as stated in the previous chapter restricted political activities at universities, so that the traditional political parties avoided direct and open political activities among university students. Some opposition parties have used those regulations as an excuse to justify their weakness and their absence from the student environment, while the new activism resorted to various tricks to communicate with the students.

Al Wafd students:

Al Wafd, as a traditional political party, avoided direct and open political activities among university students as a sign of respecting the official regulations. An activist from Al-Wafd denied "the existence of student clubs (Ossar) officially following Al-Wafd" (Nabil, Interview, 9/10/2010). However, it resorted to various tricks to communicate with the students, as far as the effective party needed to be in touch with young people and students. The Liberal activist Sameeh said that, "Al-Wafd used to have two student formal clubs (Ossar) at Tanta University which could be described as unique through the influence of Sayed Al-Badawi the party leader" (Sameeh, Interview, 5/10/2008). Moreover the Al-Masri student club used to informally represent the Al-Wafd party at the Faculty of Law of Cairo University for long time. It became exceptionally active during the reign of Numan Jumaa (ex-president of the party) who was then the head of the faculty in the late eighties until the mid-1990s. Lutfi confirmed that, "with the exception of a few of them, the majority of members were closely associated with the Al-Masri club through Numan Jumaa".

However, students who could be described as supporters of Al Wafd, would stay away from political activism in the university (Sameeh, Interview, 5/10/2008). In many cases that becomes common practice indicating a mechanism used by some political forces to avoid open involvement in political activities and protestation. In this respect, Pieter Nabil an activist from Al-Wafd activists argued that, "the party can be described as sensible and legal, and so has no desire to make any disputes with the 1979 regulations" (Nabil, Interview, 9/10/2010). They stressed that their strategy was "to win new elements of the young generation and most importantly it is the quality rather than quantity that counts, and that efforts should be made to win their hearts and minds" (Sameeh, Interview, 5/10/2008). So the main focus was that what should be taken seriously are the educational activities for the young generation. For example, Sameeh referred to Al-Wafd parliament as a case in point and an experiment that "raised political awareness among the youth including knowledge of the main political parties" (Sameeh, Interview, 5/10/2008).

The main problem with Wafd students is the fact that they lack a well-defined ideology, and those results in frequent disputes between the new liberals, and the supporters of traditional ideology who find nothing wrong in cooperation with other Islamic and socialist groups. In fact the Wafd party has often suffered from internal disputes and severe crises such as when one of them was linked with the youth demand to establish NGOs to seek financial support from abroad in 2006. Some of them even threatened to defect from the party in case that demand was rejected. The most significant of those organizations included Al-Nida Al-

Gadeed Organization, Development of Democracy Organization, Andalusia Association, Refugee Welfare Organization, Al-Hura Organization, Al-Nageeb Organization, and others that have been associated with rumours that they received foreign financial support proportional to their registered membership. Consequently, those in charge of those organizations had to pay part of the support they received to the youth from the regions in the form of bonuses in return for joining those organizations as members. Numan Jumaa opposed the idea that the youth from Wafd could join those organizations to the extent that he had threatened to suspend their membership of the party as he considered that behaviour to be a deviation from the national trend of the party. His attitude triggered opposition against him (Osman, Almesryoon, 13/11/2006). On the other hand, the Committee for the Support of Democratic Development (CSDD) led by Mahmoud Ali has been mentioned among those who have received financial assistance from the American Embassy. Eventually Jumaa suspended the membership of the trustees of that committee including Mahmoud Abatha who was a member of the council of trustees. But, later on according to Othman, "they were reinstated as members including Mahmoud Abatha who became the party leader". The most important of the activities undertaken by the CSDD was a training programme featuring elections which constituted a genuine part of the programme for the preparation of future leadership supervised by Mahmoud Ali.

The Nasserist Students Union:

In the early nineties of the last century the University of Ain Shams witnessed a strong Nasserist movement. The Nasserist activism was used to establish an exhibition featuring photography and paintings criticizing the regime and its policies. An activist from the Nasserists stressed that the membership of the leftist movements including the Nasserists and Socialists increased relatively by tens of core members from within the campus, and yet the Nasserists far exceeded the Socialists among the students. The Nasserist party had also got a branch at the Faculty of Law featuring a club (Ossra) known as the Nadeem Committee headed by Dr. Husam Issa one of the party's leadership. His influence was similar to that of Numan Jumaa at the Faculty of Law at Cairo University. The Nadeem Committee was established in the late eighties and continued as an official entity in the nineties. It should be noted that students used to join the committee and the Nasserist movement via Nadeem, but without joining the party. The Arab Nasserist Student Council headed by the famous political activist Alaa Shalabi, was officially operating through Nadeem.

The second branch in the Nasserist movement was "Nadi Al-Fikr Al-Nasseri" or the Nasserist Intellectual Club which was an expression of the movement of the Karamah party led by

Hamadein Sabahi. In addition there was a third group called the Nasserist Student Office. It is noticeable that the three networks were theoretically in harmony, but in reality they reflected organizational disagreement within the Nasserist movement.

Othman said that one of the most important activities that linked the youth to the Nasserist party during that time was the "Shaqshuga" camp in Faioum where the youth from the universities used to gather. Another activity was the Arab Youth camping activity which constituted one of the instruments of the National Arab Congress. However, Othman argued that "those activities were self-funded by students, while the contribution of the Nasserist party was limited to issuing statements, as those statements could only be reviewed by the party" (Othman, Interview, 7/1/2008).

It is worth noting that, despite the existence of these clubs and organizations that belonged to the Nasserist Party, the group did not take part in any student elections since the nineties to say the least. The main reason, according to Othman, "was a decision to boycott student elections as a party but there was no real chance to win the elections, while the MB used to go for elections but excluded from the list of nominees" (Othman, Interview, 7/1/2008).

Since 2000, while every youth was more or less affected by the Intifada and Iraq invasion, large numbers of ordinary young people took to the streets by joining the Nasserist Movement. Some were keen to join Karamah while others were keen to join the Nasserist Party. Salama argued "the agenda associated with the Karamah Party adopted broad national principles, whereby traditional Nasserist members would deem it as non-Nasserist" (Salama, Interview, 12/1/2008). Subsequently, one of the Nasserist party clubs became active in Cairo University after the Intifada under the label of the Nasserist Arab Student Council. Salama said that, "there were eight members in the student council, while there were between 30 and 35 members in the Cairo youth secretariat" (Salama, Interview, 12/1/2008). Regarding the official membership of the Cairo youth secretariat, there were 40 reliable active members in Cairo. But disagreement existed as to the level of commitment to the organization and Othman referred to those party sympathizers who were not officially considered as members.

By the end of the first decade of the 21st century, the Nasserist movement was in decline compared to the situation in the nineties which had witnessed its strong position in the University of Ain Shams as a result of preventing Israel from taking part in the industrial exhibition in 1996. The decline could be estimated at 80% according to Othman. The Nasserist student representatives in the interviews were of the opinion that they were second to the MB in terms of popular support in Cairo University, as the Karamah movement was

popular at Ain Shams University but non-existent at Cairo University. So the Socialists were second to the Nasserists at Cairo University.

Regarding the ideological differences between Nasserists and Socialists, one of the Nasserist activists believed that the "Nasserists were more open and straight forward and have nothing to hide compared to the Communists who would never admit their real ideology and instead they would rather say they were Socialists". Yet, they were very similar in rhetoric to the Nasserists such as their love for Gamal Abdul Nasser and his pan-Arabs ideology. Another activist stressed that "the Communists always resort to illegal ways to recruit students through lying emotional means".

6.6 Conclusion

This chapter demonstrated how the regime-control of campus-based student union activism, and the reluctance of traditional political party student wings to challenge this directly, led students to mobilise outside the structures of established youth activism. Since 2000, while every student was more or less affected by the Intifada and Iraq invasion, large numbers of ordinary young people took to the streets. Apart from a few interim activities it could be generally concluded that the opposition parties seem to be isolated from the student movement. Given the revolutionary spirit and enthusiasm shown by the youth they always look forward for potential change and criticize the leadership. Moreover, the student regulations as stated in the previous chapter restricted political activities at universities, so that the traditional political parties avoided direct and open political activities among university students. Some opposition parties have used those regulations as an excuse to justify their weakness and their absence from the student environment, while the new activism resorted to various strategies and tricks to communicate and mobilize. They developed strategies that focused on protest-based activities, cooperation across ideological lines and connecting with outside campus movements.

The structure of student activism featured high levels of multiplicity and diversity. Some of those networks and movements could be described as brand new such as Al Ghad, while others could be described as old and new at the same time such as the Muslim Brothers Student wing which rejuvenated with new spirit in terms of either fashion or theme or probably the two together. The assessment of the student movements greatly varies in terms of popularity irrespective of the nature of activities performed by those movements. The MB student wing is the main player in the student movements and comes in first place followed by the other factions particularly the Revolutionary Socialists, Al Amal (Labour party), the

Nasserist and Al Ghad. In this respect a strong rivalry existed between the MB and the NDP who controlled the formal student unions. Kefaya, April 6, then the ElBaradei Campaign movements turned out to represent large segments of students and reflected their dreams better than the traditional political parties. The traditional political parties in universities were fading while the MB youth wing continued to combine between protest strategy and providing services for the students, focusing on the real activities more than the virtual world, compared with other young activists who were focusing on the use of social media for mobilization.

This wave of student activism was less ideologically divided, creating new forms of cooperation like the Free Student Union. The diversity and variety of networks and collective identities among student activism did not prevent the cooperation and coordination against the regime when political opportunities emerged. The new wave of activism was ready to recognize the political opportunities and sought to maximize the gains by developing sufficient mobilizing structures and vehicles to achieve their goals in terms of change. The new activism abandoned the strategy of participation in the formal façade of corporatist arrangements of the student unions and focused on protest activities. They gave up their efforts to be represented through election in the formal structures and engaged with contentious politics through the prism of social and protest movements.

With regard the ideological dimension, it is worth noting that student activism suffered from intensive division across ideological lines since 1970s. However, they regained vitality and relative recovery by developing strategies that focused on protest-based activities, cooperation across ideological lines and connecting with outside campus movements. The activists who formed these networks cooperated with each other and developed a common understanding. They realized that since 1980, the student movements lost the sense of unity with regard to the student causes in favour of political interests and ideologies. The new activism launched across ideological platforms to cooperate and coordinate their action. When political movements come together for a common cause such as the FSU they become increasingly powerful.

In this regard the demands of youth activism were marked by an uncompromisingly militant stand which encouraged the longest wave of protest and activism for decades. This was the fruit both of years of disappointment and efforts to construct solidarity among new networks and revive old movements with a high tone of militant mode. The university campuses turned into one of the main incubators of professional and new activism. These movements and networks became one of the major challenges that faced the regime and steadily generated a

degree of pressure from below which, within a decade, had rendered the established regime vulnerable to change.

It is worth noting, however, that the evolution of student movements cannot be entirely separated from that of youth activism more generally because the constraints on the former have forced much student activity into broader youth activism and away from the campuses including new movements such as Youth for Change and April 6 Youth Movement which played important role in the preparation for the 25th Jan Revolution and afterward.

Chapter Seven:

Strategic Choices, Organization, Framing And Mobilizations of The New Activism: Case Study of April 6

7.1 Introduction

April 6 is one of the most prominent Egyptian movements with a clear "youth identity" in terms of composition, leadership and structure. The movement played an important role in the events which preceded the Egyptian revolution on January 25th 2011 and afterwards. Its roles put the movement under the focus and attention of the media and political observers. However the lack of academic research in this area has created a lot of misunderstanding and stereotypes about the movement both, in academia and the media of both internal and international levels.

Chapter six argues that the April 6 youth movement did not emerge from scratch but it came from the womb of the previous waves of continuous politics which had marked the political arena in the first decade of the twenty-first century, particularly Al Ghad Youth Union and "Youth for Change" (the youth wing of Kefaya). The political opportunities forced the regime to co-exist with the formation of clusters of youth activism which benefited from intercalation between foreign pressure and internal mechanisms. However the development of the movements depended on the building of collective identify as a protest movement which would adopt a radical framing process and political strategy to change the regime. In this regard the experiences and skills gained from the former waves of protestation since 2000 helped to develop the internal capacities and influence to challenge the regime. The last section of this chapter addresses the main propositions offered by the SMT to explain and evaluate the mobilizing structure and frames of the movements.

It could be argued that April 6 managed to construct its own collective identity as a youth protest movement engaged with contentious politics seeking to change the regime through the non-violence strategies. The flexible and loose structure enabled the movement to seize the available opportunities in terms of taking advantage of the growing interest in local and global issues of youth in Egypt and the Arab world, in addition to the use of modern communication of information technology which empowered activists of the Millennium generation and compensated for the existing weak mobilizing structures. Indeed, the movement paid a great cost before the revolution and contributed to the culture of protest among young people but

also it continued to suffer from splits, an inability to compete in the electoral arena, and strategic mistakes.

7.2 The Roots of the Movement and Pre-Established Organizational Aspects

The study distinguishes between two stages in the new social movement in terms of the different types of mobilization. The first stage consists of convergence around a joint aim and protest strategy without any kind of organizational structure while the second stage features the intended efforts to build organizational capacities and construct a collective identity for the movement. The first stage represents what Bayat (2009) called a "social non-movement" or what the political process model describes as movement without organization while the second stage represents the rational efforts and process to a gradually transform the movements into an organization. In the first stage the activists gathered around the political goal to challenge the regime benefiting from the political opportunities without the presence of a unified organization. All the efforts and different groups in the first stage were spontaneous, based on loose networks and Facebook or Twitter mobilization.

The first stage took place between March 2008 and June 2008. Social media and personal connection played important roles in this stage which represented the pre-established organization where discussions and debates began to develop a kind of joint understanding, agreements and acquaintance. The activists supported the call for the El-Mahalla strike which itself would help to them perceive the political opportunity and to move toward further action. It could be argued that the April 6 strike preceded the official formation of the April 6 youth movement and not the opposite. The activists understood the need to invest in the event and to come together to benefit from the consequences of collective action.

This stage was marked by a growing recognition among activists for the need to exploit the new opportunities after the success of the strike particularly public and media attention which was searching for speakers and leaders to produce their demands and express the collective action. As a result the question of organization became critical as the new generation of young activists were searching for leadership and organizational frameworks to set up an organized movement.

Social movement theorists confirm the reciprocal relationship between culture and organization as well as the need for formal or informal networks to help to create a new pattern of counter discourse. In this regard the remaining networks from a previous wave of

continuous politics in addition to the new social media impact helped to create a new awareness among the ordinary young people.

Before June 2008, from the perspective of social movements, we are talking about a low level of networks and organization which was just sufficient to raise awareness and disseminate counter-hegemonic discourse. April 6 did not form in April 2008 but it had grown out of other movements, like Kefaya and Al-Ghad. Through these loose frameworks the new awareness and framing process emerged but without transforming into an organized movement yet. The second stage would be marked by the attempts to construct a tight organized hierarchical movement.

The first stage: The impact of Youth for Change and the Millennium generation:

April 6 came out from the womb of the political and youth activism that have emerged in Egypt since 2000 and which benefited from the cooperation between seventies and nineties political generations, however April 6 itself represents the Millennium generation which sought to lead after the retreat of the other two generations. These young activists benefited from the experience and heritage of the older generation as well as from the political environment associated with the emergence of political and social protest movement in this period. For example, plenty of activists were associated with the Al Ghad party and Kefaya youth wing, Youth for Change such as Maher, ElSawy and others (see chap 5; also Shehata; 2008, p. 6).

Some of the April 6 documents and manifesto associated the roots of the movement "with the Palestinian Intifada and the convergence of youth political movements from the nineties generation" (Maher, Discussions before the Revolution, 2008). The "Discussions before the Revolution" document referred to the crystallization of a new approach which emphasized that, "supporting Palestine begins from liberating the interior, which developed through the emergence of chants against Mubarak during the invasion of Iraq, then the formation of Kefaya movement and its youth wing, Youth for Change Movement" of which Maher was one of its coordinators. The document also confirmed that the membership and the leadership of the Youth for Change movement came from new "generational units" from the nineties and Millennium generations who began their political experience in the demonstrations in 2000-2003 and which was then followed by the recruitment of hundreds of ordinary young members. The period of growth and virility was associated with the Kefaya and Al Ghad movements during 2004 to 2005. The interviewees confirmed that that "hundreds of members attended meetings and thousands were taking part in the demonstrations where at least the

attendance in the vigils was about 500 political activists" (Salama, Interview, 12/1/2008 & Al Sawy, Interview, 1/10/2010).

The "Youth for Change" movement gradually began to lose momentum after the presidential election in 2005 and the regime crackdown on the political mobility without sufficient support from the external context. In addition to internal cultural and political divisions in the movement, as Maher illustrated, every group and network in "Youth for Change" began to shrink and work for their own group not for the general interest of the movement. The "Discussions before the Revolution" document explains the decline of Youth for Change as being due to "the orders coming from the older generation who led the traditional parties in addition to bigotry and misunderstanding among the young activists themselves which made the movement an arena for conflicts partisans". In this regard the main concern for young people belonging to the political parties inside "Youth for Change" was "how to win the largest share of the cake of the movement". In other words the old parties' members in "Youth for Change" were attempting to recruit the new young activists to their parties and this created an isolation and conflict between the independent members and the partisans who attempted to mobilize the activists to vote for a particular decision which others were against. As a result, the disputes over the election emerged and every group or party was keen to elect the most possible number of members and supporters to the "Coordinating Committee" of the movement. With the continued involvement of older generations and conflicts the movement became paralyzed and collapsed. The cut-off point was the failure of the sit-in in supporting of the judges demands in 2006, which made activists convinced that "the route of the national movement and the struggle in the street was no longer useful, especially after the arrest of hundreds of political activists from Kefaya, Youth for Change, Al Ghad and the Muslim Brotherhood and the return the security repression" (Maher, Discussions before the Revolution, 2008).

These clashes resulted in the yielding of the large sector of the nineties generation who went on to their personal concerns and careers while some of them continued through civil society organizations, whether via human rights or media work, to be far from the direct involvement in the protest movement. This withdrawal paved the way for the emergence of the Millennium generation in creating the April 6 movement.

In this regard a number of political parties played roles as incubators for the young activists of April 6, Al Ghad and later, in the next stages, the "Democratic Front Party" became vehicle or network which young activists benefited. Adel for example emphasized that "plenty of activists of April 6 were members of DFP which opened its doors and headquarters to support

the new activism" (Adel, Interview, 3/2/2012). Indeed this produced a kind of overlapping and entanglements between the youth and social movements in Egypt. The traditional parties need the presence of young people in their organizations but without allowing them to reach positions of leadership and control while young activists need to use to political party resources and benefit from the membership as formal cover to protect them from police investigations. This could not happen without a kind of flexibility and pragmatism which distinguished the new political generations and which broke through the ideological and intellectual barriers drawn by older generations. Adel also distinguished between generations; he, for example was DFP party secretary in El-Mansoura attending meetings of youth and adults. He noted that, "the meetings focused on the intellectual and theoretical discussions while young generation meetings tended to have action-oriented minds" that focused on protest and street politics (Adel, Interview, 3/2/2012).

It could be argued that three elements governed the birth of the April 6 from the perspective of political generations. Firstly, the impact of the generational gap, although it arose from the networks and movements affiliated to the older generation, the Millennium generation found a chance to independently begin their own experience. Secondly, the regime's repression of the middle-age generation (the Seventies generation) convinced the younger generation that they could do better in challenging the regime. Thirdly, the young activists used to have a critical approach toward the practices and frames of the old generation and sought to mix between the new ideas coming from abroad to improve the performance of the new organizations such as non-violence methods and the use of social media.

The April 6 formation reflected the efforts to link between the social and labour wave of protest and youth movement in the April 6 strike of 2008. The call for a strike featured a parallel mobilization by both textile workers in El-Mahalla and young activists in urban centres especially Cairo (Shehata, 2008, p. 2).

The appearance of the wave of labour protests after 2007 was a great surprise to the activists and politicians. Maher (Discussions, 2008, pp. 2, 3) said that, "all politicians were watching from afar and wonder... as labour strikes and successive sit-ins took place every day" which raised questions about how and who were leading and organizing them. Even parties and leftist organizations reached the stage of weakness where they were not able to rally for a seminar or meeting. The social movements did not project any political goals or involvement in the power struggle but they just focused on their own demands of Mubarak as the head of the regime itself in order to implement the demands and raise their concerns about injustice. The young activists were convinced that they could help in developing the political awareness

of the labour movement; “the social protests demands were factional, simple and sometimes appealing to the president despite he who was the cause of their problems” (Ibid, pp. 2.3). However the political activists welcomed such social mobility and considered that the social mobility played a big role in breaking the fears among ordinary people from repression and revived the dream of change (Ibid, p. 3).

The April 6 Strike 2008:

The April 6 Strike 2008 highlight the resurgent role of the new activism in the public sphere after a short period of abeyance. In March 2008, there were ongoing riots over the bread prices, lack of clean water and workers’ wages with an increasing number of labour strikes happening every day. The most notable one was planned in the textile town of El-Mahalla el-Kubra[43], in a government-owned textile factory, the largest in Egypt with about twenty thousand workers (akhbarak.net). They announced that they were going on strike on the first Sunday in April to protest at high food prices and low wages (Rosenberg, 2011). They caught the attention of a group of tech-savvy young people who were astonished by the action and decided to create a Facebook page in support of the workers which unexpectedly started attracting thousands of members in a few days. The Facebook administrators were 27-year-old Esraa Abdel Fattah and 27-year-old Ahmed Maher at this time (PBS, 2011); both were the main co-founders of the Facebook page. The Facebook group called for a public strike on April 6 in solidarity with the workers in El-Mahalla. To their shock, the page quickly acquired some 70,000 followers. The administrators of the group invited about 300 people to join it; within a day it had 3,000 members and within a few weeks, 70,000 had joined the call for strikes across Egypt. They got further support from the growing network of bloggers (Fleishman, 2011).

Egypt hadn't seen such events before as it was the first time there had been a call for a public strike through social media without sufficient preparations and an organizing body. It was a little bit unclear in terms of what they meant by it and what action they would take. Some ideas came up like asking people to stay home while others were calling for people to protest wearing black. In fact there wasn't a really coordinated body to determine what the solidarity strike was supposed to look like. The Facebook members did support it, at least by clicking "Follow" or "Like" on Facebook; this is “negative action”. It is worth noting that page members did not necessarily believe that they should be involved in street protests, but they simply joined the group which later created the main basis for the April 6 movement. The

43An industrial city located in Delta about one hour's drive to the north of the capital city of Cairo.

Facebook organizers had never agreed on tactics, whether Egyptians should stay at home or fill the streets in protest. People knew they wanted to do something, but no one had a clear idea of what that something was (Rosenberg, 2011). Nonetheless, the call for the April 6 strike was picked up by bloggers and then by the mainstream media and thus received widespread attention. It seemed that everyone had heard about the proposed strike.

A couple days before April 6, the state-owned media came out very strongly against a strike. The Rose el-Youssef newspaper warned people not to demonstrate and not to go into the streets. There were severe warnings from the government about the potential risks if people did protest (Radsch, 2011). Security forces occupied the factory and forcefully prevented the strike in El-Mahalla but later on thousands of workers demonstrated and were joined by other citizens from different walks of life and affiliations, leading to a significant confrontation with the police force. Three people were shot dead and several were injured (EHDR, 2010, p. 128). The strike tapped into the labour unrest in the city where a small scale uprising continued for many days and left many people killed or injured by the police (Fleishman, 2011). Some estimates raised the number to four killed and 400 arrested (PBS, 2011). Protesters set fire to governmental buildings, particularly the NDP building and police station. The solidarity protests around Egypt, meanwhile, fizzled out, in most places blocked by police (Rosenberg, 2011).

The regime reacted harshly to both the workers' strike and Facebook group members who were attempting to demonstrate in parallel action. In Cairo, several young activists were arrested while attempting to demonstrate without great success and were detained for several weeks; among them was Esraa Abdel-Fattah who became a public figure in a few days because the Facebook page seemed to be at the root of the popular strike and the protests. The police initially assumed that she was the organizer and since they were searching for someone to bear the responsibility for the events, the picked on her. The Muslim Brothers did not officially endorse the strike, although many of the MB bloggers and students did informally. It could be argued that the government did not really understand what Facebook was all about at that point, so that is why they targeted the administrator. Al-Sheshtawy confirmed that, "the situation was really vague for the police as Esraa herself was a new face in the activism field compared with other activists particularly Maher who was well known in Al Ghad and Youth for Change but Esraa had not been involved before in protest movements" (Al Sheshtawy, Interview, 29/1/2012).

The activists were very proud of the success of the strike and the April 6 documents celebrated with some exaggeration in the evaluation of its success. The "Discussions before

the Revolution" document (2008) mentioned that, "The response was great for the calls as most of the students across the republic declined from going to schools and universities, also governmental bodies to a large extent were empty of their employees on this day because of the response to the strike". However, the indicators showed only relative success as many people did stay home for many reasons either supporting the strike or fearful from the risks after the police statements. In addition to this, many people whose numbers were not known stayed home as it was a particularly windy day (Shehata; 2008, p. 6). However the call for a May 4 2008 demonstration, on Mubarak's birthday, which the Muslim Brothers ended up endorsing, completely failed because it was not linked to any labour protestation (Al Sheshtawy, Interview, 29/1/2012). It was just a Facebook strike, whereas April 6, 2008, was a Facebook strike in solidarity with real strikers in the field.

7.3 The Second Stage: The Official Formation of April 6

There is a false impression among some observers that there was a movement or organization before April 6, 2008 called "April 6 Youth" movement. This reflects the lack of knowledge and empirical research which led to for misunderstandings and artificial interpretations about the political movement in Egypt. This quotation illustrates this problem in the analysis; "On March 23, 2008, a small group of young Egyptian activists calling themselves the April 6 Youth Movement launched a Facebook page" (PBS, Inside April 6). Another misunderstanding was to consider Esraa Abdel Fattah as a co-founder of the April 6 Youth Movement (Anarchitext, 2011). Actually she was just a co-founder of the Facebook group.

The empirical research confirmed that there was not any national organized structure call for the April 6 strike but the formation came after the success of the strike. SMT stresses the political opportunity and context of the emergence of a movement which was in this case connected with the call for strike. Indeed the strike created a new political opportunity enabling young activists to benefit from the existing formal[44] and informal networks in addition to the influence of the new social media in order to develop their own organization. It could be argued that in such specific context, the failure of the security forces to strike a balance between repression and cooptation created a new opportunity. This failure has become one of the reasons behind the emergence of the April 6 youth movement after the strike[45]. In this regard the security response against the April 6 strike helped it to succeed as it frightened large segments of ordinary people from going out and many preferred to stay at

44 Such as opposition parties and syndicates particularly Journalists and Lowers

45 Similar pattern took place in January 25th revolution.

home. An important lesson that can be drawn from the April 6 Youth is that, although the movement was repressed by the government, it caught the attention of the local and international media and drew attention to how social networking technology can be used, especially by youth activism, in organizing political opposition movements and exposing autocratic governments' 'unsatisfactory' performance (EHDR; 2010, p. 129). To some extent the regime was relatively shocked by what the state media thought was the activists' ability to get all of these people to buy into something just via social media (Radsch, 2011).

In addition to this, the police suppression and tactics such as arresting and crackdown had a similar impact on creating the movement as the arrested activists became public figures and new symbols which inspired young generations. Indeed, Esraa and Maher did not launch a movement before the April 6 strike; they just established a Facebook page. People create pages every day but not a movement. There was no concerted effort to create a movement before the strike, but afterwards, they began to form it when they saw the success in mobilizing thousands of people to stay home and 70,000 Facebook fans[46].

The historical event itself created the appropriate opportunity for young activists of the Millennium generation to seek to form their own political action. They began to think how to turn it into a political and social organization. The repression began to relax as the police recognized that there was no specific organization behind the bloody strike particularly after arresting and investigating both Esraa and Maher who had been tortured to give the police the Facebook group password. The public opinion was sympathetic to the young girl who just showed interest in other people's problems. Esraa was jailed for more than two weeks. After her televised release, she renounced her activism. Al-Sheshtawy confirmed that Esraa and Maher split over who should control and direct the Facebook page (Al Sheshtawy, Interview, 29/1/2012).

Maher took the initiative to launch a movement in a similar pattern to "Youth for Change" with various coordinators from different networks and youth groups. Asmaa Mahfouz (April 6, 2011) pointed out that the real date for the announcement of the forming of the movement was June 28, 2008, in the Journalists Syndicate conference in the presence of young people

46 This is a very compelling case of repression triggering movement formation (cf. also della Porta on the effect of police killings on the RAF in Germany and the Red Brigades in Italy; or the effect of the lynching of Emmett Till on the Civil Rights Movement in the US (Harris, Fredrick (2006), 'It takes a tragedy to arouse them', Social Movement Studies 5(1): 19-43). See also the general literature overview in Hafez and Wiktorowicz 2004.

from different ideological trends and independent members. The regime responded by trying to contain the movement turning harshly afterward. The police exerted pressure on the activists sending threats to their families and their employs and some of them began to lose their jobs because of the political activities (Ibid). The Alexandria Incident on July 23, 2008 witnessed the police crackdown on the activists within a month of its establishment. A group of April 6 activists went from Cairo to Alexandria to attend a seminar at the Al Ghad party to commemorate the 23 July Revolution on the beach (Fahmy Ibrahim, April 6, 2011). The security services attacked the tiny gathering while some of the activists constructed a giant kite out of bamboo poles and a sheet of plastic painted to look like the Egyptian flag. The police assault exploded into a frenzy of punches and shoves. Sixteen activists were arrested, most of them were in their twenties or younger. The other activists dispersed from the beach, feeling hot and frustrated; they didn't even get a chance to fly their kite (Bayat, 2009, p. 10).

The challenge and response:

Following the establishment of April 6 as Social movement organization (SMO), it began a new stage which was marked by severe challenges; some of which were internal relating to the possibilities and methods of building and developing the organizational capacity and resources. The movement also sought to construct a collective identity and joint solidarity within the movement through cultural and ideological tools and frameworks. However, other challenges emerged in the surrounding environment relating to the methods and techniques of protesting against the authoritarian regime in international and regional contexts.

The problem facing the April 6 strike after the establishment was the dilemma between social media mobilization based on Facebook and Twitter for protest and the balance of power in the real world between the regime and a nascent youth movement. The coordination committee decided to continue in the confrontation but attempted to join hands with other opposition groups, be they either secular or religious, like the ElBaradei Campaign for Presidency and the Muslim Brothers in arranging protests. For example, April 6 cooperated with the MB to organize the May 4 strike in 2009 and announced the group would coordinate online support for ElBaradei nomination (Wikileaks, 2009). The movement tried to work under the umbrella of the ElBaradei Campaign or at least to be one of the main groups that supported his activities (Mahfouz, April 6 and the foreign finance, 2011). But as Al-Nagar showed, "the campaign created its own organization" and he became the formal coordinator of the campaign (Mostafa Elngar, interview, 22/9/2010). This created competition with other groups and networks in the ElBaradei Campaign which had different ideas.

It is worth noting that the subsequent calls for strikes failed to achieve the same impact as April 6 2008. The movement called for another strike on April 6, 2009 but it did not succeed because it was not connected with labour strikes on the ground in addition to being targeted by the security forces which had learned from their mistakes in 2008. The main sites of the strike took place in universities, particularly in regional universities without sufficient media coverage. Adel, who was Secretary of the DFP in El-Mansoura at this time, mentioned that "around fifteen thousand students took part in the strike in El-Mansoura University in the east Delta area but the demonstration was under a security siege and many activists were arrested" (Moataz Adel, Interview, 3/2/ 2012). However, most observers saw the national 'Anger Day' as a big failure that led to the emergence of disputes among different factions which increased after the rumours that some members had got some American funds and training. Al-Sheshtawy pointed out that "the Nasserist and Islamists Al Amal youth groups dissented and attempted to compose a different group using the name of April 6 and declared that the membership of coordinator of the movement Ahmed Maher was frozen" (Al Sheshtawy, Interview, 29/1/2012). They composed a new group on Facebook but the total number of its membership was very low and eventually they gave up. On the other hand the main group on Facebook continued using the same name and attempted to increase its activities and membership. The failure of the 2009 strike and the internal divisions motivated its leadership to abandon the big dreams and to focus on small activities. In contrast to what had happened in 2008, the April 6 activities in the second half of 2009 were limited and restricted to only gatherings or conferences in a number of syndicates and public universities. For example, the activists distributed flyers in universities, asking the students to "engage in the political and social reform of their community"[47].

The movement responded to these challenges by cooperating with other political movements like the MB and sought to gain experience and learn new techniques by learning from other experiences worldwide. The movement was preparing itself to call for the April 6, 2009 strike, but the activists became aware of the limitations and constraints. Ahmed Salah, one of the controversial members of the movement, told the American ambassador in Cairo on December 6, 2008 that "this would be 'impossible' due to SSIS[48] interference". He "conceded that April 6 has no feasible plans for future activities". The police repression had driven the group's leadership underground, and many of its leaders were in hiding for weeks (Scobey, Wikileaks, 2008). However the activists' goal was to "replace the current regime with a parliamentary democracy prior to the 2011 presidential elections". The American embassy

47 http://ja-jp.facebook.com/topic.php?uid=38588398289&topic=15612&post=83109
48 State Security of Investigation Service (Mabaheth Aman Eldwala)

analysts' assessment was that the activism "offered no road map of concrete steps toward April 6's highly unrealistic goal". They also mentioned that, "most opposition parties and independent NGOs work toward achieving tangible, incremental reform within the current political context" (Ibid). It is worth noting that Salah, in this interview, either just representing himself or the movement, was reflecting the April 6 aims which were unrealistic from the American diplomats' perspective. Actually, these were the idealistic goals of April 6 because of the revolutionary mood among the young activists and their ability to dream and use the political imagination which attracted many ordinary young people, while traditional political parties and the Americans themselves considered them not to be viable.

The Serbian training:

April 6 effectively continued to use social media in organizing protests but the regime's harsh repression in the real world shrank its ability to extend and grow. Rosenberg (2011) argued that, "what worked so smoothly online proved much more difficult on the street". It was easy for the police to block the protests and prevent activists from interacting with ordinary people. In this respect the April 6 leadership began to realize the deadlock and the "limits of social networking as a tool of democratic revolution. Facebook could bring together tens of thousands of sympathizers online, but it couldn't organize them once they logged off. It was a useful communication tool to call people to; well, to what?" (Ibid). Rosenberg's argument assumed that Facebook was the main reason behind the success of the first April 6 strike, notwithstanding there were many factors that worked together to bring such success as has been discussed previously. However, the activists realized that they faced great challenges and dilemmas that needed a new more complicated approach. Adel confirmed "it was not a matter of calling for demonstrations or strikes on Facebook, but what was extremely important was how to implement on the ground through the cadres and activists who think and plan for it". Adel also distinguished between "the social media used by well-educated middle and upper classes activists to spread democratic values and the street activism from middle and lower classes who did not regularly log on to Facebook or Twitter" (Moataz Adel, Interview, 3/2/ 2012).

The activists continued to protest in the streets and organize conferences and gatherings but it was very difficult to turn them into a real challenge to the regime particularly after the failure of the May 4 strike and the internal split in 2009. Asmara Mahfouz (April 6, 2011) said that, "the failure shocked everyone and accusation about the responsibility appeared between the coordinators" and ideological factions particularly liberals and Nasserist and Al Amal (labour) activists. They began to search for new methods to organize effective protests in the

street to enable them to face the police repression. Al-Sheshtawy said that, “Mohammed Adel, a 20-year-old blogger and April 6 spokesman, travelled with others to Serbia in the summer of 2009 to attend a training course while other members like Basem Fathy went to the USA to attend another training course organized by Freedom House” (Al Sheshtawy, Interview, 29/1/2012). The activists studied the non-violent tactics of Serbian and Ukrainian youth activism and were taught by people who had organized the overthrow of Slobodan Milošević in the 1990s (PBS, 2011). Another report mentioned that Maher studied the Solidarity Union in Poland that brought had down communism there in the 1980s (Fleishman, 2011). In this regard the young activists began to see the young Serbs as heroes who had revolted against one of the worst dictatorships in the world. In Belgrade, April 6 activists “took a week-long course in the strategies of non-violent revolution” and “learned how to organize people” in addition to “how to train others” in Egypt (Rosenberg, 2011). The tactics were straight out of CANVAS's training curriculum. Adel Said, an activist from April 6, talked about his experience with the Serbs and said, “I got trained in how to conduct peaceful demonstrations, how to avoid violence, and how to face violence from the security forces… and also how to organize to get people on the streets”. The April 6 movement knew about Otpor and adopted the fist as its logo even before Mohamed Adel went to Belgrade. Though the activists did not visit Serbia again, they “kept emailing, occasionally pointing out mistakes in Arabic translations of CANVAS materials”. Adel had gone home with copies of “Bringing down a Dictator” subtitled in Arabic and continued to download books. He “conducted miniature versions of the CANVAS workshop in Egypt, stressing unity, non-violent discipline, the importance of clear goals, and keeping members engaged” (Rosenberg, 2011). Many of the analysts considered this journey not only a turning point that helped April 6 strategy to overcome the shortcomings and setbacks, but also played an important role in the January 25th revolution. Rosenberg (2011) pointed out that “their trainers in Serbia were happy with the young activist roles in 25th January as Srdja Popovic, one of CANVAS's leaders said, ‘We were quite amazed they did so much with so little’".

These training courses helped the movement but also created many internal disputes and provoked accusations that the activists were traitors. Though these courses added to the accumulation of experience, the exact benefits and achievements of these programmes were difficult to measure and weigh. It is also difficult to measure their contribution to the preparation for the revolution since summer 2009 as other networks and movements emerged either in the real or virtual world such as ElBaradei Campaign and the Khalid Saeed Facebook group in addition to new websites such as “Academia for change” which focus on learning Arab activists the non-violence strategies.

It is worth noting that some reductionist views produced by the media were spread about the movement and the role of social media, For example, a report from the geopolitical analysis group Stratfor mentioned that April 6 “became the most important organizers of the 18-day peaceful uprising” (Rosenberg, 2011). April 6 was “at the forefront of a surge that would energize millions, unite secularists and Islamists and force Mubarak to flee his palace” (Fleishman, 2011). This vision tended to look at April 6 as a hierarchical organization that had tens of thousands of organized members. It also considered April 6 was the most prominent movement in the 25th uprising while its role as a part of the new activism represented a small tip of the iceberg of activism which included tens of networks and factions. The difficulties which faced April 6 were more complicated and could not easily be resolved by training courses or the usage of social media. These challenges arose from the political culture and the internal mechanisms of the new types of social movements.

The preparation for the revolution:

There were plenty of prominent events that enabled activists to gain momentum in 2010, the most important being the return of Mohammed ElBaradei and the launching of the Khalid Saeed Facebook page in addition to the rigged parliamentary election. They provoked a new wave of protest by increasing the political awareness of hundreds of thousands of Millennium generation activists engaged with continuous politics for the first time seeking for change. In this regard, Adel confirmed that, “the old and new networks began to join hands to coordinate their activities in the real world. This new type of coordination and leadership began to emerge through Facebook, particularly Khalid Saeed’s page” (Moataz Adel, Interview, 3/2/ 2012).

The return of ElBaradei to Egypt on 20th February 2010, after launching his campaign for the presidency and the National Association for Change, revived the wave of political-oriented protest. Al-Nagar confirmed that “ElBaradei Campaign aimed to penetrate and reach the ordinary young people and not only the professional activists and create a new independent movement”(Mostafa Elngar, interview, 22/9/2010). ElBaradei’s arrival encouraged large segments of young people either to join the new movement or the existing networks such as April 6 which supported the campaign. However it was keen to keep its independent organizational structure and original identity.

April 6, in cooperation with other networks, spent the period before 25th January blending internet activism with the more important strategy of drawing scared and complacent people into the streets. April 6 set up branches and staged quick-hit acts of street protest, such as spray-painting "The regime is over" on city walls. Copycat movements began and in the early

weeks of 2011, the rebellion was born. April 6 with other groups were in the forefront of the uprising (Fleishman, 2011). It resorted to the tactics successfully employed a year ago; social media campaigns, demonstrations, graffiti art, online statements and flyers recounting the regime abuses (Fadel, 2012).

By the end of 2010 and January 2011, April 6 held the conference called the “small minority”, encouraged the boycotting of the 2010 election and participated in the formation of the “parallel parliament” after the fraud in the parliamentary elections in November 2010. Mohamed Shawky, who was in charge of the mass action in Elmaady district said that, “he and many young activists were arrested while attempting to uncover and expose the regime's atrocities that happened in the massacre of Saints Church in Alexandria during Christmas night 2011” (Shawky , interview, 15/2/2012). The movement, with other groups picked January 25th, 2011, the “Police Day” to be their date for protest. The Tunisian revolution had created a different feeling and new hope for younger activists and ordinary young people. “Beside the public calls and activities, there were secret meetings for the preparation to avoid the security pressure” (Shawky , interview, 15/2/2012). He pointed out that, “in one of these meetings they decided to begin a sudden march in new tactics instead of announcing the demonstration on Facebook and its place”. The activist realized “the importance of keeping the place of demonstration secret till the last minute and on the 25th all groups gathered in a specific place then moved to the secret site of the demonstration to take the police security by surprise” (Shawky , interview, 15/2/2012).

Fifteen days before the date, April 6 set up an “operation room” which Maher identified as having as its purpose “to discuss routine details including assessing the reach of our calls to protest with regards to internet websites, looking at the data and information that was being provided to citizens, and studying innovative mechanisms of protesting which aimed to overcome the methods that the state security services always use to pre-empt demonstrations and protests” (Asharq Al-Awsat, 2011). Two days before the planned protest, they organized themselves in cells of 30-50 activists; each cell was to regroup in a pre-selected spot in Cairo, but only one person in each cell would direct the cell to the main secret point. The Asmaa Mahfouz video called “Don't be afraid of the government” went viral and encouraged thousands of activists to join the protest movement. Shawky confirmed that, “the movement announced to demonstrate in El-Mohandseen, a well-off district on the 25th January but they decided later to come down in Nahiya, a popular poor district which enabled them to collect thousands of demonstrators”. The preparation stage featured plenty of meetings between April 6 and other youth activism that supported the calling for the demonstration and all activists responsible for the mass action or coordinators on April 6 in specific areas met with their

counterparts in other movements to arrange for the preparation of the demonstrations (Shawky, interview, 15/2/2012).

During the days of the revolution the demands rose to focus on the slogan that, “people want to topple the regime”. As the Tahrir Square protests gained momentum through late January/early February 2011, the April 6 group issued specific demands on February 6th 2011:

- Mubarak must immediately resign.
- The national assembly and senate must be dissolved.
- A "national salvation group" must be established.
- To form a transitional presidential council until the next presidential elections.
- A new constitution must be written to guarantee the principles of freedom and social justice.
- Those responsible for killing of hundreds of "martyrs" in Tahrir Square must be prosecuted.
- Detainees must be released immediately (PBS, Inside April6, 2011).

7.4 April 6 Role after the 25th January Revolution: The Main Phases

The study divides the trajectory of April 6 after 11 February 2011 until the presidential election into four phases. April 6 activists initially sought to maximize their power in cooperation with the new government and through reaching out to people who were not previously politicized. However the relationship reversed in July 2011 after the confrontation with the Supreme Council of Armed Forces that ruled the state after Mubarak. From July onwards, the SCAF successfully constructed a narrative to delegitimize April 6 and to make associating with them dangerous (Fadel, 2012). The situation became complicated because of the internal splits and lack of ability to compete in the election with the traditional parties.

First phase: the Romantic Phase:

The prominent features which distinguished this phase were the romantic revolutionary feelings, high expectations and desire for cooperation with the new government. However a tragic split began to emerge. The great success of the revolution to overthrow Mubarak and the worldwide appreciation of the young people’s role was a motivation and huge boost to the

revolutionary spirit among the youth activists who began enjoyed the moments of victory and glory. The youth activism was very proud of their role in provoking the protests that forced Mubarak from power.

The popularity of April 6 soared to a peak after helping to orchestrate the protests and poll results released in April by the Pew Research Centre found that 38% of Egyptians regarded the movement as a favourable agent of change, ahead of the Muslim Brothers and trailing only behind Mohammed Hussein Tantawi, the head of the SCAF, and Amr Moussa, the former foreign minister who became popular figure (Fadel, 2012).

In the aftermath of the January uprising, April 6 strategy was to maximize their power benefiting from their role in the revolution (Fadel, 2012). One of the most strategic options was the cooperation with Essam Sharaf's government and attempts to calm the streets, in addition to playing the role of monitoring the government and ministers to judge on their actions. Both the government and the SCAF positively responded to the requests of activists. On February 14th, Maher referred to the new role of the April 6 movement in calming the protest, "Those who are demonstrating have their own issues. We made the decision not to demonstrate while we wait for a response to our demands. We can always go back to the street" (PBS, 2011). Others rejected this approach, such as the Socialist activist Hossam el-Hamalawy who thought that the fight as far from over, "Activists can take some rest from the protest and go back to their well-paying jobs for six months, waiting for the military to give us salvation. But the worker can't go back to his factory and still get paid 250 pounds. The mission is not accomplished" (Ibid).

This phase was marked by many aspects of both cooperating and monitoring the government such as formal meetings and discussions. For example, a delegation from April 6 led by Maher met with the minister of interior, Mansour Al'Esawy, on 11th June 2011[49]. The minster invited them to attend the National Security conference. They also met with Deputy Prime Minister Ali Selmi and a Japanese delegation to discuss pro-democracy movements (Fleishman, 2011). In this stage, April 6 also organized a conference in collaboration with the

49https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=121342731284733&set=a.119279621491044.29804.119276198158053&type=1&permPage=1

Cairo Centre for the Culture of Democracy[50] entitled "Youth: From Revolution to Rise of Egypt" in July in the Pyramisa Hotel at Dokki (April 6 Youth Conference, 2011)[51].

The April 6 leadership attempted to devise new approaches that connected politics to the needs of the people. For example, the movement's branch in the Menya governorate helped in solving the gas cylinder crisis (Ahram Weekly, 22/6/2011). However this approach could not become the main priority of the movement because its main strategic option was exerting pressure for reform through demonstrations. The movement's main strategy was to focus on street activism as long as the complicated problems existed.

In fact the April 6 strategy to connect politics to the people' needs did not last long because of its involvement in daily confrontations with the SCAF and police in the following stages. It is worth noting that the language used by April 6 members and other activists focused on giving orders to the officials for example, "the governor must decree a law that gives the cylinders to licensed distributors only" (Ibid). This language reflected the idealism and romantic feeling of the revolution heroes who felt entitled to give orders which the SCAF and government must implement.

The Second phase: exerting pressure through demonstrations

This stage was marked by demonstrations and Friday gatherings to exert pressure on the SCAF to achieve the revolution goals in addition to critical assessment of the SCAF decisions. By now, it had become clear that the military junta was in control while the government of Sharaf, appointed from Tahrir, was extremely weak due to a lack of real power and authority. April 6 confirmed "the need to pressure constantly, and stated that instability was a main characteristic of any revolution and that it is slowly improving" (BBC, 22/6/2011). It should be noted that April 6 was discriminating between the position of the SCAF and that of the government, trying to maintain the ties with the government (which, was considered a revolutionary one, and appointed by Tahrir's influence to replace the government of Shafik appointed by Mubarak). Until June the demonstrations were peaceful and communications with the government existed. The communication and meetings were held to propose a reshuffle of ministers of the government. April 6 met with the Prime Minister Sharaf to give him a recommended list of new ministers to take the posts of those resigning in a wave of changes (Ahram Weekly, 13/7/2011). The group rejected the

50 http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Cairo_Center_for_the_Culture_of_Democracy

51 This event was criticized by other groups because of tension over Tahrir at this time and well off a which might refer to external financial support

appointment of pro-SCAF Faiza Abo-Elnagah for the Ministry of Foreign Affairs as she was thought to be working against Egyptian activists in the U.S. (April 6 statement, 22/6/2011).

Several ambiguous confrontations took place in the street between the SCAF military police and some activists after Friday gatherings aimed at prosecuting Mubarak, particularly on 8th March where some dissident officers were arrested and detained. Polarized feelings were evident in demonstrations, where supporters of the April 6 group chanted slogans against military rule while onlookers watched warily (Fadel, 2012). Consequently, the doubts deepened when the SCAF held an official meeting with hundreds of youth factions which April 6 considered as an attempt to break up youth coalitions and support groups loyal to it.

The Third phase: The Confrontation

The sense among youth activists was growing that they were gradually losing the momentum and the revolution. Maher wrote on his Facebook account in early July 2011 that, “the revolution is stolen”. The activists thought the SCAF intended to replace the revolutionary groups that had a role in the preparation for January 25 with other new groups linked to the SCAF. Maher confirmed that, “there were revolutionary youth associations and youth activism led by security and intelligence informants and their mission was to distort the groups that played key roles in the revolution”. He sharply criticized the SCAF whom he said “considered our revolution a foreign plot to destabilize and overthrow the regime”. The activists tried to recapture the public’s support but became involved in a bitter dispute with the military council, which retained strong public backing at this time (Fleishman, 2011). On the other hand, in July 2011, the military issued a statement accusing April 6 of “driving a wedge between the army and the people”. A member of the SCAF accused the group of getting illicit training in Serbia, and several members were arrested (Fadel, 2012). The generals accused April 6 of "igniting strife" between the army and the people (Fleishman, 2011).

The movement responded by suing the SCAF and organizing a march to the ministry of defence in order to condemn and reject the accusations made in the SCAF’s statement no. 69. The demonstrators were attacked by alleged thugs while the military police and army stood by watching. The attacks brought to the activists’ minds similar scenes of violence from the security forces and thugs from the 25th January revolution. April 6 issued a statement against the SCAF and army stating that it was not “our Egyptian army” that sacrificed its blood, but the SCAF’s army (Ahram Weekly, 24/7/ 2011). The movement defended itself against the SCAF’s allegations that it was funded by the U.S. and has secret links with Israel. The

movement's demands were that "the military council either present all evidences and documents against the youth movement in its possession to the general prosecutor or officially apologize". The April 6 statement issued on 23 July about clashes at Abbasiya Square claimed that the "SCAF's mask has fallen down to reveal the face of Mubarak once again" (Ibid).

This confrontation provoked angry feelings in the streets because of the backdrop of economic and political instability after months of clashes between security forces and demonstrators that had disrupted daily life. Although April 6 once had near-heroic status, the SCAF and state-owned media succeeded in portraying the group as agents of a foreign-backed insurrection (Fadel, 2012). The SCAF got remarkable support from some Islamists especially among the Salafi trend in this confrontation. In this regard, April 6 became very close to the liberal camp while the Islamic-secular polarization was increasing. Maher pointed out that, "Islamists were pressing for power and election while April 6 must protect the country from religious extremists" (Fleishman, 2011).

Most of the Salafi leaders were clearly against April 6 and youth activism. Mohamed Yousry, the Secretary-General of the Commission Legitimacy of the Rights and Reform stated that "what April 6 were doing has been applied and implemented in non-Islamic countries" and accused it of having connection "with, Freemasonry and crusade to dismantle the Egyptian state". Yasser Borhamy, Vice President of the Salafi movement, also criticized the activists accusing them that "want to drive a wedge between the people and the army" and that, "the witnesses in Alexandria proved that the protesters are the ones who started throwing stones at the citizens and the military police" (Ahram, 25/7/2011). In later stages, some of the Islamists apologized for these accusations they made without any evidence.

The confrontations and mutual accusations continued for months. Political activists continued to accuse the SCAF of "botching their transitional rule, working against democracy and conducting deadly crackdowns on unarmed protesters" (Fadel, 2012). In November, April 6 was also accused of being involved in the bloody confrontation of Muhammad Mahmoud street and the burning of the scientific historical building (Engy Hamdy, 29/2/2012). The movement denied all these accusations and confirmed they were still strong and that six thousand new members had joined the movement in the three months since the July confrontation, as these events prompted the citizens to sympathize with them rather than stay away from them (Maher, youm7, 25/9/2011).. However, later, Maher admitted that the movement suffered from the attack that "destroyed our reputations. This is more dangerous

than detention or arrest" as "they have the most powerful weapon of all: the media" (Fadel, 2012).

The Fourth phase: The controversy over the election strategy:

April 6 decided to boycott the election despite the participation of other liberal and secular parties in addition to an April 6 faction known as the Democratic Front. There were no published polls to gauge the youth activists' popularity after these confrontations, but the multi-phase parliamentary elections suggested that the youth movement's support had faded badly with only 2% of seats projected to go to the 'Revolution Continues' coalition which included the Democratic Front and which Maher's faction decided to boycott. Altogether, liberal parties were projected to take only 20% of parliamentary seats, compared with 62% projected to go to Islamist candidates, including members of the Muslim Brotherhood and the ultra-conservative Salafi (Fadel, 2012). The results made Maher's supporters claim that his strategy was better than those who had participated and failed to get the majority. The movement refused to participate or to support any candidates of electoral blocs (including liberal blocs). The activities of the movement during the election process were determined by two tasks; first, exposing the former NDP candidates known as "Foloul" to citizens, and secondly monitoring any election violations (Maher, 25/9/2011). In the presidential election, April 6 decided to observe and monitor without supporting any candidate in the first round but in the second run-off they supported the MB candidate Mohamed Morsi, against Ahmed Shafiq who was considered to have been very close to Mubarak's regime and near to the SCAF.

7.5 The Internal Organizational Capacities and Collective Identity

The process of developing the mobilizing structure and cultural frames featured intense debate about the continuity and change in the movement. One of the main characteristics of April 6 and other youth activism was their fluidity and liquidity. These kinds of new social movements in the Egyptian context were always experiencing long stages of reshaping the organization and constructing their collective identity which is still in progress and not stable or strict. However, this led to various splits and instability in the structure. Indeed, April 6 developed a more stable structure and collective identity and strategic choices compared to other youth networks such as Youth for Change, but still needed to be articulate this in more complex and specific terms and concepts.

In this regard the internal organizational structure of April 6 featured multiple phases and changes in response to the external conditions and political challenges on the one hand, and

internal splits on the other hand. Its leadership confirmed that, “the movement is open for any proposal for changing and developing its internal regulations such as the suggestion for holding the election” (Maher, Interview, 20/1/2012). As Maher pointed out in the interview, “the restructuring and holding the election are still ongoing processes” (Ibid).

It is important to explore and evaluate the main elements featured in the mobilizing structures as have been introduced by the SMT theorist which include; leadership, membership and recruitment, internal cohesion and internal democracy, financial resources, and ability to connect between formal and informal networks.

The Political Bureau of the Movement:

The main structure of the movement consists of the general coordinator, and administrative bureau which includes the founders, coordinators, provincial and official committees. As stated before, the leadership of April 6 in the virtual world during the April 6 strike in 2008 consisted of both Esraa Abdel Fattah and Ahmed Maher as the co-founders of the Facebook group. Esraa did not have a formal position in the movement after formally launching it in June 2008; she became one of the civil society activists who ran the Egyptian Democratic Institute. On the other hand Maher was considered the main leader of April 6 and founder of the movement.

However, according to the principle of “Trial and Error”, the structure was not constant but changed over time on a number of occasions. Maher pointed out that, “the structure in the beginning and during the stage of formation since 2008 was simple and similar to Kefaya and its “Youth for Change” wing (Maher, Interview, 20/1/2012). The movement divided its goals and activities according to different tasks; assigning coordinators for a particular file or task. When there was a consensus or agreement about something, they allocated members to carry out the necessary tasks and jobs and to be responsible for it. However, at the beginning of 2009 they resorted to committees and the most prominent among which were the following three; Media, Mass, Educational Committees (Maher, Interview, 20/1/2012). Some of the coordinators in charge of these committees split after a clash in May 2009 and new coordinators had been appointed. Maher pointed out that in 2010 a fourth committee was created called ‘Organizational and Internal Communications’. In 2011, due to the complexity of the political situation and the flow of membership in the thousands per month, a fifth committee called the ‘Membership and Provincial Affairs Committee’ was created (Maher, Interview, 20/1/2012).

Thus the structure consisted of five official committees according to Maher and these were: Media Committee, Mass and Public Action Committee, Educational and Cultural Committee, Organizational and Internal Communications Committee and Membership and Provincial Affairs Committee. These general committees began to have within them sub-committees such as the media committee which formed a research committee to support the theoretical side, educational process and decision support. Maher pointed out also that "various suggestions emerged about the separation between planning and implementation and conduct of elections" (Maher, Interview, 20/1/2012).

It is worth noting that April 6 refused to announce the names of members who were in charge of the organizational structure, but in the light of the internal disputes after the revolution, one of its Facebook pages published some information about the names and members of the Political Bureau on 12th June 2011 with notification about what the Facebook and the Internet websites said to represent the group officially, but later on, the page deleted the portion of the statement that mentioned the coordinators[52]. The members of the bureau, according to what had been published, were: Ahmed Maher. Mohamed Mahmoud, Ingy Hamdi, Mohamed Adel, Ahmed Nadeem, Ahmed Abdul Aziz, Amal Sharaf, Mustafa Beheiri, Mahmoud Afifi, Nada To'eima, Amr Ali, Mohammad Sami, Islam Saeed, Mohammed Mustafa, Walid Rashid.

According to Shawky, "the movement has known a constant central structure from 2009-2012 after the separation of the leaders of the group called 'Will not Pass' in 2009". He claimed that, "the core leadership that exchanged positions and responsibilities in the Central Bureau includes: Ahmed Maher, Amal Sharaf, Ingy Hamdi, Amr Ezz, Mohamed Adel" (Shawky, interview, 15/2/2012). He added that, "the coordinators in charge of Mass and Public Action committee were Amr Ali and Amr Ezz before the revolution until the split in mid-2011 then Amr Ali again". Moreover, "the coordinators in charge of Media Committee were Asmaa Mahfouz then Ingi Hamdi, assisted by Tariq Al-Kholi before separation, then Mohamed Adel who was in charge of the internet website, then Mahmoud Afifi" (Shawky, interview, 15/2/2012).

52 The researcher saved this page on his computer as soon as it appeared, then could find it again on Facebook. But still considered to be relevant and draws the general picture of April 6 structure at this time.

http://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=121199887965684&set=a.119279621491044.29804.119276198158053&type=1&ref=nf
June 12, 2011

The membership and Election:

April 6 leaders stated that the number of members was twenty thousand in mid-2011 and they distinguished between two types of membership: organized and affiliated members. The members who worked as engineers or doctors, etc., were paying a monthly subscription value of about 20 Egyptian pounds (Maher, Interview in El-Mehour channel, 2011). Maher's figures about the twenty thousand who were regular members of the movement could be true, in general, but the actual number of members who were attending as activists could be less. Shawky suggested that, "the actual number of membership was ranging between 2,000-3,000" (Shawky, interview, 15/2/2012). This is because the twenty thousand were the registered members though many of them were not active while others were just taking part in a one-time event. In this regard, Shawky confirmed that, "the majority of the new members faced the problem of lack of experience and limited preparation" (Shawky, interview, 15/2/2012). Another remarkable problem relating to the numbers is the high level of members who dropped out and new comers.

It is worth noting that the number of activists who used to attend the April 6 gatherings and protests before the revolution, according to Shawky, "went down in 2009 and 2010 to just 50 activists and 300 in the best cases" (Shawky, interview, 15/2/2012). If that is true then we could assume that only 0.5% of the recorded members of the Facebook page (around seventy thousand at this time) joined the activities and could be considered as active membership during the repressive regime in the period of decline while the 3,000-5,000 represented the active membership during the political opening after the revolution.

The dissident group that split after the revolution accused Maher of "dictatorship and rejecting to hold the election" but Maher confirmed that, "the issue of elections has been manipulated by those who sought to dismantle the movement" (Maher, interview, 20/1/2012). Maher argued that, "The delay was intended to avoid police penetration and to complete the regulations and the theoretical part, but now we can organize it"(Ibid). The internal election began to take place in 2012 to replace the appointed members by elected ones. Early in 2012 April 6 decided to hold elections on the governorate and provinces. This election raised the membership issue again as one could assume the number of members who had the right to vote and elect was less than the registered membership (twenty thousand). The movement did not announce the exact figures for the number of voters at the provincial level. It could be assumed that the presence of voters was not that large compared with the total number of the membership.

It was expected that the elected coordinators in the provinces would elect the General Coordinator and members of the Political Bureau. Actually this strategy of election, when completed, reflects that April 6 was still keen to keep its internal organization far from the public and security intervention. It also raised the issue of different levels and layers of membership and activism. There was a good lesson the movement learnt from the mistake that the split faction, 'Democratic Front', faced and showed its weakness. In mid-September 2011, the Democratic Front led by Amr Ezz and Tariq Al-Kholi held an open election to choose the coordinators for the Political Bureau. However, the number of members who had the right to vote in this election was limited to those who had joined the movement at a certain time and they were only 200-300 members (Shawky, interview, 15/2/2012). The organizers said that, "this is the real bulk of members of April 6 who represent the movement and preferred to be active in this faction while rejecting Maher's April 6 branch".

It should be noted that these low figures reflect the problem of new social movements in Egypt such as Kefaya or April 6 when activists attempted to transform the movement and stream of ideas and activism into a hierarchical organization. When they attempted to create an organizational structure which was composed of members and leaders, the movement began to experience the loss of momentum and vitality as the conflicts over leadership and resources erupted. During the non-organization phase, thousands or tens of thousands of professional and new activists as well as young ordinary people attended the public activities. They believed that these activities aimed to serve and support public goals and national interests. Soon, these high numbers dramatically shrunk and became limited only to the few members who were keen to attend the organizational activities and elections. This could be explained by different reasons whether it is the lack of interest among large numbers of members or the will of the dominant administrative group according to the "Iron Law of Oligarchy" developed by Robert Michels[53]. This is in addition to the fear of the police and security penetration which the leadership attempted to block.

In the absence of official records of membership, it became unclear who were the real and original members and who claimed to be members for various goals. Indeed, the new youth activism are not formal movements or organizations that have official records for membership and this is one of the main differences between civil society organizations, political parties and the new social movements.

53 Michels, Robert. 1915. Political Parties: A Sociological Study of the Oligarchical Tendencies of Modern Democracy. Translated into English by Eden Paul and Cedar Paul. New York: The Free Press. From the 1911 German source.

Some activists pointed out that there is a membership form that new members sign when they join the movement. The provincial coordinator collects these forms to be sent to Cairo to the Political Central Bureau. However as there are no any identity cards, only the leadership can decide whether that person is a member of April 6 or not and can isolate the dissident. This enabled the leadership to claim that the members accused of an undesirable behaviour were not members of the movement (Wesam Abdel Razek, 2012). This tactic took place on many occasions and for different purposes such as Basem Fatehi who took training in Freedom House in the U.S. in 2009, Ahmed Salah who claimed to represent April 6 and met the American diplomats and Alia Al-Mahdy who published her naked photos on Facebook. April 6 stated that all of them neither represent the movement nor were real members. This tactic was also used against the split in 2009 'You Will Not Pass' and 'The Democratic Front' in 2011. The leadership said it is important to protect the movement and prevent people from claiming to be members just to distort its image or to protect the members from the security interventions.

The organizational characteristics:

In response to the internal and external challenges in 2009 the movement transformed to a "closed organization", and imposed more difficult conditions on the membership because of what Maher described as a "huge security breach" in 2009(Maher, interview, 20/1/2012). Maher confirmed that the internal structure of the movement must be secret and unpublished because of security conditions (Maher, interview, 20/1/2012). The movement emphasized that the security services sought to know the internal structure of the movement in order to dismantle it especially after the clash with the military junta. Apart from the announcements and events published in the media and on Facebook, April 6 attempted to strike a balance between the publicity and security. For example, the time and date of invitation for a specific event might be published but the organizational arrangements would be kept secret (Free Youth, April 6 Youth).

There are different and contradictory interpretations about the ambiguity associated with the structure of the movement and its leadership. From Maher's point of view the secrecy was necessary in light of the ongoing security attempts to penetrate the movement and in order to prevent anyone from claiming to represent the movement to abuse it. On the other hand, his opponents saw this as a kind of dictatorship and personification of the movement. The truth might be in the middle, as Maher and his close circle represent the main founders and keen to keep its continuity and success. They fear for the consequences of dissident actions and the security breach which forced them to get rid of suspicious members or rivalries to keep it

alive. Indeed, surveillance and secrecy disrupt free communication and open debate within a movement, leading either to fragmentation of aims and expectations - a recipe for discord and sedition - or to outright authoritarian tendencies and a cult of leadership (Bayat, 2009, p. 11).

The absence of a clear published structure and membership is linking the movement to Maher and his inner circle. It would be easy to deny the relationship with any suspicious events or acts carried out by members or by state agencies to impute some of negative actions to the movement such as the attack on a number of activists who were against its leadership, especially Ahmed Doma and Khalid al-Sayed, on April 20th 2012.

It is worth noting that Ahmed Salah was one of the controversial figures in the movement. Salah[54] was the activist whom Wikileaks cable suggested had discussed a plan with U.S. officials in 2008 to overthrow Hosni Mubarak. He claimed that the unwritten plan was agreed upon by all opposition groups. He said, "When I discussed the plan, I was with the April 6 Youth Movement…the plan was [masterminded] for the movement". "But April 6 never implemented this plan and it never took place" (Fahmy, 2011). These positions triggered a severe campaign against April 6 in the Egyptian media. Maher denied that Salah was ever an activist with the movement, saying that, "He took advantage of its proximity to the movement during the translation work for foreign journalists and foreign researchers and claimed to be of the group" (Maher, interview, 20/1/2012). Maher also emphasized that Salah, "misused our trust and claimed that he represented us when in fact he did not". He focused on the fact that, "the age limit for members in the April 6 Youth Movement is 35, and Salah was 45". On the other hand, and after the fallout, Salah accused April 6 of tarnishing his reputation and denies Maher's accusations (Fahmy, 2011).

April 6 is considered to be a decentralized movement which can be seen on different levels: "On the geographical and provincial level, each branch has different activities depending on the circumstances and connections". However there is a general framework and a uniform plan which help to centrally coordinate the activities. "The Political Bureau does not impose decisions, but its task is evaluating, following-up, framing suggestions and assisting efforts, material and human resources (April 6 Youth document, the construction project). The decentralization appears in the freedom of action of the provincial branches and the networking with other groups and other parties.

In this regard Shawky confirmed that, "every governorate has its own structures and leaders that decide its independent activities" (Shawky, interview, 15/2/2012). The Alexandria branch

54 https://www.facebook.com/asea1009

is the most independent one among the other branches in governorates as it decides its activities without clear orders from Cairo (Wesam Abdel Razek, 2012). On the other hand, ex-members argued that there is a degree of centralization in the movement where the branches receive instructions from the capital, and follow the “plan to decide everything”.

Funding and networking

The availability of financial resources is a critical element in the success of any social movement. In this regard, April 6 stressed in its written documents and formal declaration that, "the group does not receive any external or internal funding but is only self-funded" (April 6, the construction project, p. 4). On the other hand, due to its novelty and the young age of most of its members, it suffered from the lack of financial resources. The members are either students or young professionals who are paying monthly subscriptions. Indeed, they can contribute a small amount and this is not sufficient to fund the activities. The movement's leaders insisted that their funding depends mostly on such contributions, which range between 10-20 pounds per month (2-4 dollars).

However, there is a multiplicity of references to various kinds of support from political figures or human rights networks which support the arrested activists. Asmaa Mahfouz (2011) pointed out that, “There is a pattern of big donations when the movement launches a campaign or important activity such as April 6, 2009 and 2010 most came from senior politicians”. The political activist Mamdouh Hamza provided the headquarters for the movement in one of his estates beside the headquarters for many other youth activism. In contrast, opponents, dissidents and officials insisted that the movement be financed from the outside.

In the crisis of confrontation with the SCAF in 2011, the government began to investigate the external funding for some organizations and human rights movements. But Maher denied that they “accepted international contributions” (Fleishman, 2011). Inge Hamdi (Facts You Do Not Know, 2012) confirmed that April 6 refused even donations and support from Egyptian businessmen in order to preserve the independence of its decisions. She added that, “The government did not refer any of its members on trial for access to foreign funding”. One of the striking issues was the accusation that Maher participated in establishing a human rights training centre in 2010 which was called the ‘Future Centre’ (Dar Al-Moustaqbal) to get external funding[55]. Maher denied this accusation and confirmed that, “it was just a law firm

55 Photo of the Firm contract as a Non-profitable Firm https://www.facebook.com/photo.php?fbid=275362312534892&set=a.275361305868326.62414.260656207338836&type=1&theater

set up by the lawyers to defend the detainees but closed after a month and the office did not have a bank account or receive any funding". He added that the firm was closed after a month when he knew they hired Ahmed Salah (Maher, interview, 20/1/2012).

In spite of the lack of any evidence on the financing of April 6 from the outside, several issues still need further discussion such as the relationship with the Freedom House and their training abroad, and indirect funding.

From the perspective of social movements, these movements are connected with many formal and informal networks and organizations. Among the most prominent of these networks linked to April 6 are the Democratic Institute, Al Ghad, and the Democratic Front Party. April 6 has associated with close ties with the activists working in these organizations such as Esraa Abdel Fattah, Ahmed Badawi and Basem Fathi who cooperated previously to establish the movements. It could be argued that there are intersections in joint activities, especially in training and educational activities particularly for the new members helping in developing their intellectual and cultural capacities and visions.

It could be argued that April 6 took the advantage of the resources and staff of formal and informal networks and organizational resources available for the movement. It benefitted from the headquarters of syndicates especially the Press where its first establishing meeting was held in the hall, free of charge at the Freedoms Committee of the Journalists Syndicate. In addition to this, the movement uses the appropriate available elements of the environment and locations to hold its meetings in public places such as International Park, Freedom Park and El Azhar Park or the headquarters of the political parties and human rights organizations (Mahfouz, 2011).

Inge Hamdi (2012) indicated that even months after the revolution, April 6 did not have a headquarters, they just benefitted from the headquarters of the Al Ghad and Democratic Front in addition and the Muslim Brotherhood when there was a positive cooperation with the Muslim Brothers parliamentarians. The usage of these resources and headquarters of political parties and revolutionary movements in the governorates reflected the complexity and the large overlap between the categories of membership and activists at the local level. It is worth noting that the overlap at the central level and the state of liquidity certainly extended to the local levels. On the local and regional levels, an activist could be a member of more than one movement and political party at the same time as they attend educational or regulatory activities, and perhaps vote in their elections. For example, Shawky was a member of the Brothers and 6 April at the same time. Other cases included the joint activities and demonstrations that were arranged by different groups at the same time.

Constructing a collective identity:

The movement's collective identity is associated with the April 6 strike in 2008. The movement took this event as a day to celebrate its historical birth, and the title of which is associated with its identity. Many new groups in Egypt attempted to choose their name from the date of prominent events like 20 March and April 6. This makes the movement neutral in relating to ideologies and political disputes with the exception of the opposition to the regime. The movement stressed this identity in its activities, for example, they launched a campaign called I am Aprilism (Ana Abrily) to defend the movement on the Internet[56].

April 6 sought to construct a collective identity and solidarity among the members through presenting itself as a protest movement and not as a political party or civil society organization. It confirmed that it is an independent youth movement which is not part of any other political party or group (A document called who are we?). April 6 official documents emphasized that, "membership is open and the main elements constituting the group are young people of both sexes either independent or affiliating to any ideology without consideration of the intellectual affiliations of the various members as long as they are seeking to one goal" (The intellectual construction project document). It is a youth movement not only with the standard of membership and leadership, but also the target group which is "the youth and young people who interested in the change" (who are we, formal document). No specific age has been set in these documents which also said that it seeks to form a "youth block or youth organization". But Maher mentioned that, "The age limit for members in the April 6 Youth Movement is 35" (Fahmy, 2011).

April 6 sought to strike a balance between the priorities at internal and external levels. For example, it focused on facing the Mubarak regime without neglecting the existence of inner feelings toward the regional symbolic issues such as the siege on Gaza and January 2009 Israeli attack. They emphasized the change of priorities that took place since 2005 arguing that that the support of Palestine can only be effective after changes at home.

7.6 Conclusion

April 6 emerged in a context where a wide range of grievances and discontent took place. But according to SMT, this psychological discontent was not enough to form a movement without constructing a collective identity and solidarity among the members and developing a framing process and cultural meanings. Resentment and grievances were there for a long time but the

56 http://www.facebook.com/ana.abrily

movement arose from the interaction between political opportunities, cultural and educational frames in addition to mobilizing structures that linked these grievances to the corruption of the regime and the need for change.

The thesis distinguished between two stages in the formation of April 6 in terms of the different types of mobilization. The first stage consists of convergence around a joint aim and protest strategy without a clear organizational structure while the second stage features the intended efforts to build organizational capacities and construct a collective identity for the movement.

A number of elements governed the birth and structure of April 6. Firstly, the impact of the generational gap and the retreat of the middle-age generation. Secondly, the efforts to link between the social and labour wave of protest and youth activism in the April 6 strike of 2008. Thirdly: The failure of the security forces to strike a balance between repression and cooptation created a new opportunity. The success of the strike created a new political opportunity enabling young activists to benefit from the existing formal[57] and informal networks in addition to the influence of new social media in order to develop their own organization.

One of the main characteristics of April 6 and other youth activism was their fluidity and liquidity. These kinds of new social movements were always experiencing long stages of reshaping the organization and constructing their collective identity which is still in progress and not stable or strict. However, this led to various splits and instability in structure.

April 6 has a clear "youth identity" in terms of composition, leadership and structure. The movement constructed its collective identify as a protest movement which adopted a radical framing process and political strategy to change the regime. Indeed, April 6 developed a more stable structure and collective identity and strategic choices compared to other youth networks such as Youth for Change, but still needed to be articulate this in more complex and specific terms and concepts.

April 6 can be regarded as a pattern of the new social movements in terms of the absence of hierarchy and central organization with a lack of ideology which could be seen as result of universal and global trends and hybrid culture. However, these features represent a great challenge to the movement due to the absence of intellectual and organizational unity because of the internal multiplicity of ideologies. It is worth noting that there are other factors that do

57 Such as opposition parties and syndicates particularly Journalists and Lowers

not fit neatly into a NSMT framework. April 6 is not just about identity issues, but also about bread-and-butter issues, it is not just about personal lifestyles, etc.

The dilemma for the movement in terms of organizational and networking aspects can be summarized as follows; that it positively benefitted from the loose organizational framework as it helped to integrate different and many efforts of networks at a given moment, as happened on April 6, 2008 or in the 25th January revolution. This helped to the movement evade repression. However, this framework quickly leads to negative effects when conflicts and splits emerge between groups and members, or when a famous individual member or group commit or carry out any mistakes which can be easily attributed to the movement as a whole. The internal institutional structures and organizational capacities were not effective and led to splits and divisions. The collective identity was not constructed in a way that guaranteed sustainability and solidarity among members and activists who flocked to the new movements.

It could be argued that April 6 managed to construct its own collective identity as a youth protest movement engaged with contentious politics seeking to change the regime through the non-violence strategies. The flexible and loose structure enabled the movement to seize the available opportunities in terms of taking advantage of the growing interest in local and global issues of youth in Egypt and the Arab world, in addition to the use of modern communication of information technology which empowered activists of the Millennium generation and compensated for the existing weak mobilizing structures.

Chapter Eight :

Using Social Movement Theory to Assess Egyptian Youth activism: Opportunity, Mobilization, Strategies and Cultural Frames

8.1 Introduction

The dramatic increase in the political opportunities since 2000 provided an appropriate context for plenty of movements and networks to develop their mobilizing structures, strategies and framing process. However opportunities are not static; they can exist for brief periods of time, and then close again, or alternatively the political changes caused by mobilization can themselves lead to demobilization. In a similar way the youth activism and networks also featured long or short cycles of prominence and decline, coalitions and disintegration which should be considered when explaining the trajectory of social and political movements in Egypt during the period in question.

It is not only change in political opportunities that triggered activism, but most important also the responses of the agents of change themselves and their strategic actions and perceptions that shape the different cycles of political activism when they struggle to develop their mobilizing structures and framing processes. In other words the changes in political opportunities and constraints created important incentives which triggered new phases of contention for people with collective claims, but their actions in turn create new opportunities.

chapter eight is seeking to construct a synthesis to assess field work data through the prism SMT. The discussion focuses on how the youth activism identified political opportunities, and the role of external and transnational factors such as Palestine/Iraq, US democracy drive etc., which came to light and is not explained by SMT.

This chapter also explains the methods and the dynamics of interaction between political opportunity, mobilizing structures and framing processes in the Egyptian context that triggered the longest wave of youth activism since the 1970s. It also seeks to identify the main features and characteristics of youth activism in addition to their strategic choices in dealing with the challenges created by internal and external factors prior to the 25 January revolution.

8.2 The Political Opportunity

The first decade of the twenty-first century was marked by significant social and historical changes in Egypt which led to a change in the political opportunities; the shrinking role of the

state, the erosion of regime legitimacy, the collapse of the social pact and globalization and its effect on social media. This was further exposed through the regional political developments in the Middle East that started in 2000 and which created the political opportunity structure which triggered different waves of social and political protestation and new kinds of youth mobilization.

The regime's adaptive capacity (Heydemann 2007, p. 26) to accommodate external and internal pressure and to respond to the grievances and the counter-hegemonic forces dramatically deteriorated. The corporatist arrangements and statist order created during the Nasser era could not survive because of economic restructuring, integration into the global economy and vigorous implementation of neoliberal policies since 2004, which weakened key institutions of state control, particularly the public sector and the subsidy system and created economic crises.

The failure of the corporatist structures and the collapse of the social pact associated with the socio-economic crisis raised the level grievances and the sense of relative deprivation to unprecedented levels. The ineffective state apparatus did not succeed in delivering sufficient and appropriate services to the citizens and lost the capability to achieve its functions. Thus, the society and social forces began to create and develop their own agencies and institutions to fill the gap through establishing various kinds of organizations which could be called "parallel structures", either for lobbying and political purposes such as the Free Student Unions and other independent trade unions or for delivering health and educational services such as private tutoring or for the informal economy. The student movements were under pressure and official restrictions, but they exerted tireless efforts to establish themselves through the parallel institutions such as Free Student Unions and other informal groups. In later stages these parallel structures established alliances among other social forces that had high levels of grievances, through coordination and networking. In such a context the younger generations did not see any reason why political participation should be further postponed and social protest became one of their main responses to such exclusion.

In response to the external and internal pressure, Mubarak opened the political sphere a little bit in 2004-2005, such that 88 members of the Muslim Brothers had been elected in the parliament. Ayman Nour, the head of the Al Ghad party, was running for the presidency election against Mubarak in 2005 in the first presidential election in Egyptian history. It is worth noting that the hope for political reform in 2005 was reinforced by the emergence of Kefaya, Al Ghad and the achievement of the opposition in the election (102 seats).

Following the 2005 elections and the decline of this wave of political mobilization, the regime began to tighten its grip on power and resorted to the methods of coercion and repression. The protest movements lost momentum, which coincided with the decline in the United States policy of democracy promotion in Egypt and the Middle East after the victory of Hamas in the Palestinian election in 2006 and the achievement of the MBs in the 2005 Egyptian elections.

The splits inside the regime began to increase around the issue of the political succession and the deterioration in the social and economic conditions in addition to the political coercion and atrocities against ordinary people, all paved the way for triggering another wave of protests and new types of youth initiatives.

It could be argued that the political opportunities expanded in the last years of Mubarak's reign which was marked by fraction and interest conflicts among the ruling elite, and which lost its coherence and harmony. These divisions and clashes among the ruling elite could be linked to the transformation of power and political succession. The military, bureaucracy and "Policies Committee" led by Gamal Mubarak and his loyal network of political and businessmen leaders were divided over the issues of economic policies, privatization and corruption, as well as the failure to resolve internal factionalism and impose party discipline. These remarkable divisions within the regime between the old guard and the new guard, the military and bureaucracy apparatus and the NDP's Policy Committee had been recognized by the political activists who were seeking for change**.** According to the political process model, which has been discussed in previous chapters, the political activists perceived these divisions and splits among the ruling elite as a potential political opportunity to maximize their role in the contentious politics.

These gaps and splits within the institutions exposed the vulnerability of the regime while the political activists attempted to employ them for their interests. In this respect there was an assumption among some activists that the change would come from inside the state itself, particularly after the failure of the Islamic militants' violence strategy to topple the regime in the 1990s. On the other hand, the regime used to manoeuvre between political forces as shown by Lust Aukar (2007, p. 39) who focused on "The distinction that lies in the extent to which opposition groups are given equal opportunity to participate in the political sphere or structure of contestation". A pragmatic wing in the regime recognized the benefits of turning a blind eye on some aspects of the new political activism in a manoeuvre to strike a balance between accommodation and repression strategies and to create a balance of power inside the regime and in the opposition camp in order to marginalize the Muslim Brothers after 2005. It

could be argued that the regime was forced to accept the existence of the social and political movements and attempted to develop a strategy similar to the Sadat's strategy that boosted a cultural and political context conducive to the hegemony of Islamist groups (Tohami, 2009, p. 149).

As the Islamists had became the stark enemy of Mubarak's regime, it was forced to accept the existence of new opposition movements as long as they came under the control and the scrutiny of the security services to strike a new balance in the opposition. This strategy could also ease the external pressure and improve the regime's negative image in international society.

It is worth noting that the regime accommodated the political and ideological polarization by introducing itself as a centre among extreme groups. As the tone of the conservative Salafi discourse spread in the public sphere, with support from some wings in the regime, the liberal networks within the regime supported liberal discourse in the media and civil society. The regime realized that such networks and discourse could help in challenging the strong religious discourse and serve the regime for certain positions in certain situations. For example, the state-owned media encouraged the protest in specific times and for different reasons such as the first wave of protest against Israel during Intifada in 2000 and the confrontation between the SCAF and the American non-profit organization that erupted in 2011-2012.

The liberal wing and pragmatic strategists of the regime were concerned about the political expansion and dominance of religious discourse and encouraged the liberal discourse to strike a new balance in the society and political sphere. In this regard, the regime issued a formal licence for the Al Ghad party led by Ayman Nour and the Democratic Front Party led by Osama Ghazali Harb in 2004 and 2007 although they represented a new formal liberal opposition and rejected the Nasserist party Al Karamah and the new Islamist party Al Wasat . However, in later stages Al Ghad and DFP became prominent incubators for the young movements before January 25th revolution.

The regime accepted the formation of clusters of Salafi, liberal and left-wing groups as long as they kept within the framework of controlled speech and did not had real access to the stage of organization and protest[58]. The emergence of Kefaya and April 6 came in such a political environment and as a result of interact between foreign pressure and internal mechanisms. However the interaction between the regime and the movements led to a hostile

58 For more details see table (2) The democratic façade and controlling the opposition parties 1981-2010.

relationship as these movements began to construct their collective identify as protest movements, adopting a radical framing process and political strategy for change which totally different from the traditional political parties. In this regard the experiences and skills gained from the former waves of protestation since 2000 helped to develop the internal capacities and influence the challenge to the regime. Kefaya, for example, introduced the possibility of, and the right to demonstrate in Cairo's city centre which was considered a red line from the security services' perspective. This civil right, established by such initiatives, continued in the street despite the regime's attempts to suppress and threaten those who made it by using the "stick-and-carrot" policy.

Structural theory could help in explaining the emergence of April 6 and other labour movements at this stage because of the high level of grievances and relative deprivation**.** The socio-economic crises which deepened in 2007-2008 triggered a new wave of social unrest. This wave did not focus on political reform compared to 2004/2005 wave but raised the demands of workers, employees, peasants and students. The various forms of social, economic and political exclusion rendered youth, particularly urban educated youth, a marginalized social group, but one that had a high level of expectations due to its urban exposure and education (Shehata, 2008, p. 3). The crisis of social mobility motivated the different layers of social categories to cooperate to remove the grievances. The young people, particularly from the middle-class, found in the means of communication technology, such as Facebook and Twitter, fertile ground to show their rejection and protest not only at the deterioration of their own positions, but on the overall economic and social deterioration on the national level. Indicators about the nature of the forces that took part in the social protests suggest that they largely included categories from the middle-class including different categories such as entrepreneurs, employees, professional, student activists and politicians (Siam, 2010, p. 59).

Some of what could be called non-political protests managed to achieve important concessions from the regime for the tax collectors and El-Mahala labour protest movement in addition to the protest against the establishment of the Agrium petrochemical project in 2008 (Shehata, 2010). The regime showed a flexible and tolerant policy in dealing with such protests and struck deals through negotiation and compromise fearing a wide public explosion which would be difficult to control or oppress without paying a high cost. This positive response of the regime to these protest actions and its relative success encouraged many of the young activists to call for a public strike on the 6th of April 2008, which was the real beginning and foundation of April 6 youth activism.

Among the most influential elements of the political opportunity in this context was the availability of new media and modern communication technologies such as blogs, Facebook and Twitter along with multiple news websites which allowed the young ordinary people to engage with continuous politics and express their views in the public sphere. The activists began to use the social media to create a framing process that delegitimizing the regime and to mobilize young people to demonstrate and protest.

8.3 The External and Transnational Factors

In the Middle East context, the case studies show that the intensive interaction between internal and external politics has a great impact on shaping the political opportunities. The external and transitional factors played more major roles in creating new opportunities than the social movements theory proposed.

The outbreak of the Intifada in 2000 was a turning point in the Egyptian youth movement. It was the spark that announced the beginning of a new round of youth activism after long period of calm and apathy. This mobilization represented a qualitatively and quantitatively different stage from other waves of protest since the 1970s. The student sector, in various stages of education, interacted with events which were manifested in daily demonstrations and marches in universities and the streets of cities and villages over several weeks in October 2000 and March 2002 (Schemm, 2002). This wave of mobilization was associated with the return of large numbers of left-wing activists to the political arena (Abdalla, 2003, p. 5).

The regime strategy was always concerned about any kind of popular gathering and strongly repressed any kind of the youth mobilization in the 1990s. However, the regime's strategic calculations during these events were more complicated as it sought to use the internal protests for external purposes and to enhance its regional role to renew its internal legitimacy. The regime turned a blind eye to the ongoing mobilization until it reached a level that the regime could not tolerate any more, after which it began to repress them in 2002 and 2003. However, this change in the political opportunity structure agitated Egyptians against the regime and provided a suitable environment for youth activism to emerge and develop. The engagement of hundreds of thousands of ordinary young people of universities and schools in such protestations created a new awareness and new mobilizing structures that young activists joined and where they learned the rules of the new political game. It also enhanced the militant mood among young people. This engagement of the youth in politics was against the traditional strategy of the regime to exclude the majority of young people from politics.

Despite the significant decline in the events and demonstrations relating to the Palestine Uprising, opposition to the invasion of Iraq mobilized had the vitality and spirit once again of the youth movement. The spontaneous demonstrations that started against the war confirmed the entry of new players on the scene: young ordinary people who did not belong to any political organization but were thirsting for an effective political voice. Tens of thousands of young people occupied Tahrir Square on 20th March 2003 for the first time since the student movement had done so in 1971-1972. The security forces nonetheless succeeded in ending the demonstration on the same day after 12 hours of occupation. It was an inspiring event that the 25th January activists repeated in a more organized way, controlling the square for two weeks until the toppling of Mubarak in 11 February 2011.

The Palestine Intifada and Iraqi war did not only pave the way for street protests and mobilization but also for challenging the regime's legitimacy. It could be argued that the legitimacy of the Egyptian regime used to be tested through the regional and Arab policy as well as protecting the national security. In this regard the regime policies promoted the counter-hegemonic movements and their efforts to delegitimize the regime where a significant aspect of legitimacy was contingent on a nationalist foreign policy. The counter-hegemonic movements were involved in stark cultural and ideological campaigns to delegitimize the regime and its policies and the security apparatus which had grown increasingly demoralized. The regime came under growing pressure and criticism of young activists because of what was seen as "a weak or compliance role in the region during the second Intifada and during the American invasion of Iraq" (El-Mahdi, 2009, p. 1022).

The impacts of the Palestinian Intifada and Iraqi war mobilizations resulted in turning against the regime criticizing its failure and the absence of effectiveness. Activism began to shift towards internal issues and launched various initiatives and platforms to push this wave of protest. By 2004 the opportune context stimulated veteran activists who had developed their mobilizing structures during the previous cycle of protestation and initiated the new pro-democracy protest movement. The American support for democracy policies decreased the regime's repressive capacity to oppress the political mobility in 2004-2006 and paved the way for the emergence of new movements and networks such as Kefaya, Al Ghad and Youth for Change which attracted large groups of ordinary young people. The American pressure for democratization and the relaxation of the regime repression before the 2005 presidential and parliamentary elections encompassed the growth of political movement. The demonstrations calling for the political reform continued 2005-2006 and emphasized the new shift in both issues and mobilizing structure. The new agenda of the young people's movement witnessed a

shift from this phase of focusing on external and regional issues to the stage to focus on domestic and internal issues.

The decline of this cycle of protest coincided with the retreat of the US democracy promotion in Egypt and the Middle East after the victory of Hamas in the Palestinian election in 2006 and the achievement of the MBs in the 2005 Egyptian elections. The regime launched a backlash against Kefaya and the MBs and Al Ghad's leader Ayman Nour. As stated previously, the US policy witnessed a shift to focus on the formal and informal support to the civil society association rather than directly putting pressure on the regime. The U.S. administration's policy tended to focus on the spread of liberal principles and encouraging young civil associations and NGOs. It is worth noting that young activists joined the ElBaradei Presidential Campaign in 2010 realizing the available opportunities which were linked to the international reputation of the Nobel Prize-winning prominent figure diminishing the repression capacities of the regime. Moreover, the transnational factors empowered a number of youth networks and groups by providing them with training, ideas and experience and funding. It is noteworthy that the Tunisian revolution spread to Egypt and then to other Arab countries and triggered the new wave of the Arab Spring.

The external and transnational factors created political opportunities and shaped the mobilization process. When internal opportunities were closed, youth activism sought to benefit from international alliances and institutions to create opportunities and generate new resources. Some NGOs and youth networks used to get financial support through NGOs or training activities from external actors. On the other hand, Islamist youth networks used received financial support from Gulf States and benefited directly or indirectly from available training provided by NGOs such as the project of "Academic for Change".

It could be argued that external actors played a role in sowing the seeds for a democratic struggle and through pressures on the ruling elite. Moreover, the transnational factors created an environment that changed the political opportunity structure agitating many Egyptians against the regime. In this regard, the external factors were not related to just to US policy but also to regional conflicts such as the Arab-Israeli conflict and the Iraqi wars in addition to transitional ideologies and movements like pan-Arab and Islamist.

8.4 Mobilization Dynamics and Networks

The initial engagement of ordinary young people with contentious politics, unlike professional activists, came as a result of the available opportunity leading to a huge impact and rupture in the conventional politics practised by political parties and advocacy NGOs.

Contentious politics entered a new phase when ordinary people, borrowing Tarrow's concept (2011, p. 8), particularly youth and teenagers, became involved in the contestation with elites and authorities. They either joined old forces or created their own networks through a long or short process of recruitment and membership that allowed the newcomers themselves to become professional activists. As soon as the ordinary young activists engaged with contentious politics, segments from among them gradually turned into activists or professional activists and leaders. In this regard, the transforming of ordinary young activism from non-collective action to be part of networks and broad social movements was a complex process. Indeed, what used to be called movements in the Egyptian context were types and coalitions of networks that coordinated their action based on growing mutual trust and cooperation across ideological lines. These alliances of networks had a remarkable impact when gathered behind a goal and managed to build a consensus about a particular strategy for a short time. However these coalitions and movement often disintegrated to begin a new course of re-organizing and seeking alliances again such as Youth for Change and April 6.

The protest and social movements are inclined to work through the networks and not through hierarchical organization as a result of regime repression and internal disputes. This tendency, among large segments of new activism in the protest movements, became more effective in exerting pressure on the regime than other formal and older organizations and parties. This broad sense of networks and movements among young activists facilitated the mobilization and released the pressure of the regime that was focusing on central organizations like the Muslim Brothers and traditional political parties. When the political opportunity occurred, these limited networks converged to form new coalitions to increase their influence.

This process produced a distinguishing between two types of youth activism and two stages of the development of social movement; social non-movement and new social movement that have been tested on the April 6 youth movement. Bayat (2009, p. 5) in his contribution on social movements in the Middle East tended to focus on the first stage and neglected the second stage. He argued that the vehicles through which ordinary people in the Middle East change their societies are not simply audible mass protests or revolutions; rather people resort more widely to what he called "non-movements" which means "the collective endeavours of millions of non-collective actors, carried out in the main squares, back streets, court houses, or communities" (Bayat, 2009, p. 13). These collective actions of non-collective actors used to be practised by large numbers of ordinary people. These activities triggered much social change even though they fragmented and were rarely guided by an ideology or recognizable leaderships and organizations. In this respect these "social non-movements enjoy significant,

consequential elements of social movements; yet they constitute distinct entities" (Bayat, 2009, p. 13).

It could be argued that Bayat's model only represents a specific phase of mobilization and movement -for example the pre-established phase of April 6- which soon would enter another phase of networking and loose structures. What he called the non-collective actors developed into further complicated networks and movements through the cycle of protestation and mobilizations. Bayat's concept applied when new political opportunities occurred and the public mood of protest and change emerged.

Indeed the youth activism and social protest that emerged in Egypt could not be perceived as fully-fledged movements or organizations yet but, on the other hand, they were more complicated and growing differently than social non-movement as Bayat assumed. Some of these networks were less than a movement but others gradually developed their organizational capacities to be similar to the new social movements. Some of these networks and movements tended to focus on politics such as April 6 and Youth for Change, while others avoided practicing politics, such as the new preacher Amr Khalid network.

However at a certain time, at the moment of revolution most of these networks, converged and formed an alliance against the regime. They effectively worked together to topple the regime launching a framing process to delegitimize and demoralize its actions and building counter-hegemony blocks and alliances. They followed a peaceful mobilization, non-violent resistance and possibly negative or silent protest against the repression of the Mubarak regime.

The Common characteristics and Features of Youth activism

Youth activism as in Egypt a kind of social movement has demonstrated some distinguished characteristics that set it apart from earlier waves of youth activism in Egypt.

Flexibility and horizontally organized mini-networks

The type of a particular social movement has a profound effect on the success of the movement. According to (Tarrow, 2011), a formal hierarchical organization such as the Muslim Brothers can more easily sustain interaction with allies, authorities, and supporters, but lose much of their capacity for disruption (i.e. contention), an output better suited to autonomous, horizontally organized mini-groups such as April 6 and Youth for Change.

The youth networks and movements are characterized by a high degree of elasticity and fluidity, a lack of centrality and the free movement of activists among groups and networks due to the absence of clear-cut ideology or charismatic leadership. Whereas the regime used to have a high capacity to weaken and abort nascent organizations, new forms of political mobilization were networked and digitally active. Activists were involved in many organizations and networks as well as political parties; sometimes they preferred to participate under a wider umbrella such as Kefaya, and another time they established Youth for Change and April 6. They worked together launching a joint initiative such as Free Student Union and another time they worked separately and returned back to their original parties. Many of the activists were very active in many groups at the same time, and nowadays almost anyone can be an activist; establishing or joining a Facebook group, posting to a blog, or setting up a Twitter account.

However, this flexibility decreased the sustainability of these networks and created a short life span. The sequences of events, resultant from the political opportunity, helped the formation of new youth activism with high levels of membership and thousands of supporters but they would began to shrink and crumbled as soon as the PO fade away in favour of another new movement. Most of the activists freely gave up their original membership and joined other organizations or political parties without restrictions as they worked across groups and youth activism. For example, in 2005 most of the activists preferred to join the Al Ghad party and Kefaya and its wing “Youth for Change” during the political mobility in 2005-2006. Then other networks emerged between 2008 and 2010 which most activists joined such as April 6 and the ElBaradei Campaign. After the revolution new revolutionary coalitions emerged and attracted large segments of both old and new activists. In some cases, young people chose to give up the banner of political parties to which they belonged, and quickly joined the new movements, but they might subsequently return back again to their original parties. This showed a lack of commitment to political parties, protest networks and youth activism with a few exceptions such as April 6.

It is worth noting that the central dimension was required in organizing and coordinating between networks and movements. The role of social networking technologies and a few satellite channels such as Al Jazeera relatively compensated for the communication gap and lack of centrality particularly in addition to coordination roles played by youth activist movements and traditional forces such as the Muslim Brothers. In other words, the youth activism was not hierarchical, but rather horizontally network-based which used social networking technology as a mobilizing tool. For example, Facebook used to invite people to events or organize demonstrations such as the April 6 2008 strike and the 25 January

revolution. Tarrow suggested “a delicate balance between formal organization and autonomy, one that can only be bridged by strong, informal, non-hierarchical connective structures". As such, the most successful movements will have this "informal connective tissue operating within and between formal movement organizations" (Tarrow, 2011, p. 137).

From working through traditional parties to working independently:

The relationship between youth activism and the traditional political parties and forces could be described as unstable and changeable. Shehata (2008, p. 1) has argued “the current wave of youth mobilization has occurred largely outside existing parties and movements, and has tended to be less ideological and more inclusive compared to earlier waves”. In fact the relationship was more complicated and featured irregularities and fluctuations between affiliation and autonomy. The traditional political parties and forces played different roles in the emergence of the new waves of youth activism. While some forces such as the MBs benefited from these waves, other opposition parties became less attractive (as stated in chapter six which showed that the presence of the traditional political parties among students was too weak). As theorists argue that the new movement depends on the existing formal or informal networks to emerge and develop, it is important to confirm that many of the activists began as members of the traditional parties and middle-age generations movements. In later stages, they moved outside to establish their own independent groups although some groups were still using their venues and facilities and gained experience from the older generation while rejecting their political positions on many occasions. The relationship became more complicated and the new activists began to represent a serious challenge to the traditional leadership of the political organizations. For example, some activists from the MB student wing were active in the movement for a long time until they managed to construct a new collective identity and coordinate with other youth activism to declare their separation from the MB after 25th January 2011.

It is worth noting that the young people played an important role in the movements established to support Palestine and Iraq, and in others calling for political and constitutional reforms but they did not build their independent movements just yet. They began to mobilize and practice politics through the existing organizations and networks that were established by older generations. During that period hundreds of young activists joined new movements such as the Egyptian Political Committee for Supporting the Palestinian Intifada (EPCSPI) which were mostly led by seventies or middle-age generation activists, many of whom had split from older parties and movements during the 1990s then they established their own parties and groups. However, resisting establishing their own organizations for a while, youth

activists engaged in the creation of newer parties and movements such as Kefaya and the Al Ghad party then they separated to establish their own networks such as Youth for Change and April 6.

From universities and official arrangements to informal networks that developed outside campuses:

The political process model illustrates that the mobilizing vehicles include the micro-level groups, organizations, and informal networks that comprise the collective building blocks of social movements (McAdam et al, 1996, p. 3). The current youth activism emerged in the universities which were the main venue for recruiting and mobilization then developed outside the campuses. For most of the twentieth century, university campuses were the primary site of youth activism. The collected data and interviews illustrated that most of the activists began to engage in continuous politics in the universities through demonstrations and protests, and then they moved out to establish and develop their own networks. The universities which were the main venue for youth activism suffered from heavy restrictions on the political activities so that the young activists abandoned the official corporatist arrangements and preferred to form their own networks and initiatives to practice polities without permission from the administration (such as the Free Student Unions). They gave up the strategy of being represented in the formal student unions or clubs and replaced it with a strategy depending on informal or parallel unions and networks that practice politics without formal approval in order to mobilize students to protest and provide them with services and help when needed. Consequently their efforts and the bulk of the work among students took place through the prism of social protest and new social movements without the need for official representation in the student unions. Youth activism took place outside the partisan and corporatist institutional frameworks as a result of depriving young ordinary people from electoral power to change things. Consequently, they were likely to “resort to their own networks to bring collective pressure to bear on the authorities to undertake change” (Bayat, 2009, p. 11).

Moreover, the professional syndicates played an important role in the mobilization of the youth activism that benefited from the available resources and support. The declaration of the Free Student Union and April 6 took place in the Journalists Syndicate. With the onset of the crisis in Palestine and the invasion of Iraq, the syndicates’ particular lawyers and journalists began holding rallies and seminars on current events. “As the universities are riddled with informers and encircled by vigilant security, the syndicate grounds have become a kind of "liberated territory" for student activists”. The activists from different universities used to

meet and discuss the current events and they began to know each other as well as activists from older generations (Schemm, 2002). “The real politics start after the demonstrations end” said one activist referring to the recruitment process and the construction of the organizational capacities (Maher, interview, 20/1/2012).

The cycles of contention

The legacy of the protest began in 2000 and reached its peak in 2011. The demonstrations in October 2000, April 2002 and March 2003 sparked the first cycle of youth activism as the mood of young people became more militant. The second wave took place in 2004-2006 and focused on internal reform. Then a wave of labour and social protestation continued from 2006-2008. The last phase consisted of social protest and political activism until the 25 January revolution. These four waves of youth activism reflected the accumulation of protesting experiences over a decade. They comprised together the longest cycle of political activism since the 1970s. Every cycle or wave of protest matches what Tarrow (1988, pp. 38-39 & 2011, p. 12) described as the magnitude of conflict, its social and geographical diffusion, the forms of action employed, and the number and types of SMOs involved vary in concert over time. When these increase above the mean for the preceding period, we are in the presence of a cycle of protest. It is worth noting that new networks and movements took momentum in every cycle of protest. When a common purpose and opportune political context existed, the old and new networks of activism unified and cooperated across ideological divides to work under one broad umbrella. Then they began to gradually decline and lose the momentum to pave way for the emergence of new across-ideological movements. These umbrella movements connected with each period and cycle of protest such as the EPCSPI (2000-2003), Kefaya and Al Ghad (2004-2005), April 6 (2008), the ElBaradei Campaign for Presidency (2010) and the Revolutionary Youth Coalition (2011).

The EPCSPI emerged in response to the Palestinian Uprising and declined in accordance with the decline of the uprising which meant that its task and mission did not exist. A short time later Kefaya emerged as the new umbrella for movements seeking to stop the election of Mubarak or his son in the 2005 election. The youth activism began to emerge inside Kefaya as an independent network under its umbrella. After the decline of Kefaya, April 6 emerged and developed until the return of ElBaradei.

It is difficult for scattered networks of youth activism to have an impact on politics without coordinating and acting together in specific events such as March 2003, April 6 strike and 25 January and through specific organizations such as Kefaya and Youth for Change. They created a consensus among activists on the unified aim as a result of specific opportunities

and the existence of common feelings which motivate coordination, activities and protestation. The consensus, which included these different networks, continued for a specific period among the networks while they got support from the majority of activists. Then they began to break down and return to their original networks because of the lack of a coherent collective identity and sustainability and the intervention of the state or organized movements to penetrate these movements which led to internal disputes in the movements such as Youth for Change. On the other hand, the high expectations began to turn into disappointments and activists began to return their personal lives and careers.

The end of any specific cycle of contentious politics depends on the unified goal which either achieved or failed. Then the movements began to lose their claims which provided the temporary basis for solidarity among protest movements. For example, the Kefaya role began to decline and lose momentum after 2006 as a result of its failure to achieve its main goal in preventing Mubarak from winning the presidential election in 2005.

At every stage of this period, the activists were able to realize the existing political opportunities as information spread about the vulnerability and challenges facing the regime. The activists used to test the limitations of the regime repression in order to launch a new wave of protest. When one movement succeeded in exploiting such an opportunity, other joined it; old networks would recover and new networks formed. When the resulting "cycles of contention" spread to an extreme, revolution may occur. Tarrow (2011) argued that, "The difference between movement cycles and revolutions is that, in the latter, multiple centres of sovereignty are created, turning the conflict between challengers and members of the polity into a struggle for power". These waves of mobilizations since 2000 helped in developing new and old centres which were necessary to launch the January 2011 revolution.

8.5 The Strategies and Tactics of Social Movements: Integrating Social And Political Waves of Activism

The “objective” political opportunities do not automatically trigger episodes of contentious politics or social movements, regardless of perceptions, frames and strategic choices of the leaderships. The movement entrepreneurs decide the best time to take actions and the kind of such strategic actions. The interaction and outcomes of these decisions generate other reactions and could end up creating a new opportunity or deepening the constraints for the original insurgents and for latecomers (Tarrow, 2011, p. 12). The outcomes of such waves of contention depend not on the justice of the cause or the persuasive power of any single

movement, but on their breadth and on the reactions of elites and other groups (Tarrow, 2011, p. 12).

The collective response and their strategies could recall in four types of activism; passive, survivalist struggles, collective protest and social movements (Bayat, 2000, p. 4). Focusing on the last two responses, the collective protest could be described as spontaneous, ad hoc, and consequently uncommon; they often involve violence and a risk of repression (Bayat, 2000, p. 6). However, when these social protests "gain national support by embracing diverse issues and actors" - such as students and the middle-class making economic as well as political claims - they often follow significant changes including political reform (Bayat, 2000, p. 6).

In this regard, the cycle of social protest erupted in 2007-2008 aimed at achieving factional, social and economic demands. The protest was gradual and quiet in general alongside avoiding highlighting the political or partisan identities. This kind of social protest tended to coordinate with the political forces, when necessary, to take advantage of them and put pressure on the regime, without allowing the political forces the opportunity to exploit the protest to directly achieve political goals (Fawzy, 2010, p. 32). This wave of social protest was not interested in power struggles, democratization or external issues such as the previous waves but they focused on service interests and avoided politics as long as this strategy serviced their aims. A survey (Siam, 2010, p. 59) about the social protest in Egypt in 2009 concluded that, except for protest activities initiated by political activists, the remaining part of the protestation activities, about 80%, was far from the struggle over top politics. Siam (2010, p. 59) argued that this wave of protests was against the state policies and institutions and the failure of corporatist institutions and the civil society associated with it. This wave developed its tactics and forms of protests which reflected the progress made by social activism. They were no longer limited to strikes, sit-ins and demonstrations, but new mechanisms of negotiation and diversity in practice and styles of protest emerged as well as the use of media which reflected the evolution of consciousness (Siam, 2010, p. 71). It is worth noting that this wave of social protest combined with the new wave of youth activism began with the formation of April 6 and was ended by the Facebook groups and ElBaradei campaign. Both the youth and labour activism linked to each other but while the first focused on political change, the latter focused on social reform.

Bringing together social protest and youth activism:

The political activists sought to build a strategy of integrating social and local protests such as labour strikes into the contentious politics. However, they were cautious of the risk of triggering police repression. In this regard, the ordinary young people who began to

participate in this wave of social protest forced the regime not to use the severe repression against them by following some rules. Firstly, they insisted that they were coming from outside the context of traditional political parties. Secondly, they avoided any link with Muslim Brothers or Islamic militants. Thirdly, they attempted to distance themselves from the power struggle. This strategy showed awareness of the constraints and enhanced the political opportunity through the relaxation of repression and the tolerant approach toward them. This separation was necessary to distract the regime's attention until the emergence of a new political opportunity.

The movements which have society-oriented strategies such as the youth networks connected with Amr Khaled, Salafi and beneficiary associations associated with the Muslim Brothers also avoided involvement in traditional politics and power struggles as they were focusing on their strategy to reform society and religious activities. It is worth noting that plenty of state corporatist bodies engaged in the peaceful protest such as a number of local councils, which were subject to the control of the ruling party (Siam, 2010, p. 71). The NDP itself participated in the protests, Agrium and façade opposition parties were forced to play a role and engage in protest activities (Tohami, 2010, p. 160).

Some contradictions faced the strategy of bringing together society-oriented networks, social protest and political collective actions and transformed them into political action when the political opportunity arose. These strategic choices of these non-political networks created a tension in the relationship with the strategies of professional activists. The professional activists and political and ideological networks faced the regime repression campaigns in the former wave of protest and they thought they qualified to lead the new wave. Some of them accused the newcomers of a lack of political awareness and experience, while new ordinary young people who had just begun to participate were skeptical about the professional activists and their strategies and had concerns about their political interests. For example, Mostafa Al-Nagar, who was the coordinator of ElBaradei campaign in 2010 expressed "a negative evaluation of April 6 strategy and tactics that focused on direct political protest while the well-regarded Agrium social protest focused on local levels and including ordinary people" or what could be called "politics from bottom" (Mostafa Elngar, interview, 22/9/2010). Another activist, El Gebba showed his concern over some professional activists who considered activism as their career that earned them money (El Gebba, interview, 29/9/2010).

There were negative impressions among professional activists and politicians that these social protests were only about limited demands such as salary increases, and would not lead to a big change. However others argued that these networks and movements were gradually

transforming their limited social demands into comprehensive political demands for change when they realized that the regime was the only party to be blamed for their grievances. The most important change these networks and social protests achieved was in providing a suitable environment and incubator for young ordinary people to engage in continuous politics without too much fear. Over time and with the accumulation of experiences and networks they were able make the January 25th revolution happen.

In this regard, social and protest movements like Agrium (Tohami, 2010), April 6 strike and the tax collectors (Shehata, 2010), represented a tiny revolution in a limited but specific way. It could be argued that the 25th January Revolution replicated the main strategies and tactics of these movements but in a larger context. The accumulation of experiences developed and learnt from protest and social movements on the local and provincial levels had proven to be effective and succeeded in challenging the incumbent regime and its policies. Indeed, the accumulation of these new waves of participations led to a gradual shift and transition in large segments of these networks' strategies and views to become revolutionary in their strategies and thoughts and to engage directly in contentious politics. These social protests accumulated over the years and new activism, using social media, linked these components with each other. The increasing capacities of youth activism which have a kind of sustainability helped to take advantage of the available opportunities.

The strategic actions and repertoire of contention:

The literature of social movements focuses on three forms of strategic action used by social movements: Violence, Disruption, or Convention. These contentious acts could be considered the strategic actions in pursuit of rational goals. Tarrow (2011, p 89) argued that, "contention can be considered as "public performance" to air disputes with the government and the status quo".

In the Egyptian context, the conventional actions, which included regularized and accepted strikes and demonstrations for instance, were not formally allowed to take place in such competitive authoritarian regime. However, the political opportunity forced the regime to deal with the new activism initiatives to use these conventional forms as part of the protest strategy. Thus strikes and demonstrations could be included under the disruptive strategic action. In general, most of the tactics and forms of action utilized by the Egyptian youth activism could be classified under non-violence and disruption strategies.

In the absence of free activities and conventional actions before 2000, the political class was forced either to temporarily exit the political scene, or to go underground (Bayat, 2009, p. 10)

and use violence such as the Militant Islamists who resorted to subversive rebellion in the 1990s because open and legal political work was limited (Bayat, 2009, p. 11). However, their failure convinced the new young activists to abandon the violence as strategy for change. They recognized that while violence can be impressive and clearly shows discontent, it has shortcomings of scaring off possible sympathizers to a cause.

In this regard disruption, as a form of contentious action, is merely the threat of violence, but it need not actually threaten public order. This can be done through non-violent direct action, such as sit-ins, marches, rallies, constructing barricades, blocking traffic, etc. In general, "disruption loses its power as the movement progresses as formal organization moves away from it, police and elite counteract it, and individuals within the movement lose interest in collective action" (Tarrow, 2011, p. 95**).** The activists exert pressure on the regime to undertake sustained social and political reforms. Such a non-violent strategy required powerful social forces such social movements or genuine political parties to challenge political authorities (Bayat, 2009, p. 2). The disruption was the main strategy among the radical new activism who "adapted non-violence ideas to favour a type of indigenous political reform marked by a blend of democratic ideals and, possibly, religious sensibilities" (Bayat, 2009, p. 13).

Nonviolent movements are considered the dictators' worst nightmare. Thus the social movements in the Egyptian context presented themselves as non-violent peaceful movements that did not resort to vandalism. They took advantage of global experiences and avoided the risk of a clash with the security forces as happened with other Islamist groups previously. The anti-terrorist ideology became effective among the young generations of activists as a result of the militant Islamist's failure in the 1990s, who themselves began pursuing nonviolence strategies thereafter. It should be taken into account that the violence that occurred in specific events was in response to police violence (Siam, 2010, p. 71) such as that happened in the El-Mahalla city on April 6 and during the 25th revolution.

The youth activism' activists were aware of the limits of change through 'authoritarian elections' as the regime designed the election process in ways that ensured its own durability. In this regard, the rise of the pro-democracy movement cannot be viewed in the light of the nuanced idea of elections in authoritarian contexts as a catalyst for the rise of contestation (Brownlee, 2007). Most of the youth activism, as protest movements, distinguished itself from political parties and Muslim Brothers by rejecting the election as a strategy for change and instead they chose the disruptive tactics and nonviolence strategy to be their main strategic actions for change. It is worth noting that other militant Islamists were also rejecting the

election but on a different basis because of their interpretation of Islamic principles which consider democracy is against Islam. After toppling Mubarak, some activists refused to abandon their protest strategy, such as April 6, while others formed their own political party to contest the election. April 6 sought to define itself as a lobby group and not a political party. There was a continued discussion about this strategy and if it can work or not after the change in the political sphere in Egypt in 2011-2012.

8.6 Framing Processes and Strategies of Cultural Change

The cultural factor deals with the moral visions, cognitive understandings, and emotions that exist prior to a movement but which are also transformed by the formal leaderships through a framing process and strategic efforts in order to create shared understandings that legitimize and motivate collective action.

The "objective" political opportunities do not automatically trigger episodes of contentious politics or social movements, regardless of perceptions, frames and strategic choices of the leaderships. The leaderships decide the best time to take actions and the kind of such strategic actions. The interaction and outcomes of these decisions generate other reactions and could end up by creating a new opportunity or deepening the constraints.

The leaders of the youth activism were aware of the political conditions and had their own interpretations and knowledge about the environmental political opportunities and constraints. As soon as they defined a situation as an opportunity, they began to mobilize and act. For example, there were perceptions that the Palestinian Uprising could trigger a new wave of collective action in the streets. The activists understood that the regime repression would diminish and people's support for the cause provided an appropriate opportunity to demonstrate and form their mobilizing structure. A similar realization and perceptions could be seen on other occasions such as the political mobility in 2005, social protestation in 2007-2008 and the January 25th revolution. The leading activists and entrepreneurs did not only recognize the available opportunities when they emerged but they also sought to create new opportunities. In this respect the young activists benefited from the new social media which provided them with a new genre for mobilization and frames. They also were aware of the difficulties facing the arrangement for the political succession and its impacts on the regime coherence.

The leaderships and theorists of the movements sought to construct frames which spread through the new social media. The new media used to transmit these symbols and frames, in a move towards constructing a consensus among young ordinary people and those taking part in

the action and who were meant to be mobilized. The ideas and ideologies spread in the public sphere, in addition to grievances, enabling the youth activists to present new claims and to behave in ways that fundamentally challenged the regime.

The youth activism, in cooperation with other social movements, managed to replace the dominant belief system that legitimizes the status quo with an alternative mobilizing belief system that supported collective action for change. The culture of protest could be seen in the music and arts such as Rap and Cairo's murals and graffiti which represented memorial spaces and sardonic resistance. Jokes about Mubarak and his family were indicators of social and political change.

The Agrium protest movement against the petrochemical project in Damietta governorate in 2008 illustrated an appropriate example of the framing process that was launched by activists to demoralize the regime policy. The leadership and activists used cultural and historical heritage to generate symbols to inspire the ordinary people and integrated particular ideas and meaning in their counter- hegemonic discourse (Tohami, 2010). The movement consciously utilized these symbols and cultural meaning to recruit members and get support from society.

It is important to take into account that both radical and reform Islamists continued "to serve as a crucial mobilizing ideology and social movement frame" (Bayat, 2009, p. 7). They launched a counter-hegemonic discourse in order to delegitimize the regime considering it far from Islamic principles and Sharia. Apart from exclusive or inclusive characteristics of Islamist movements, some interpretation of the Islamic principles was used as conservative readings of Islam to serve the regime while a different growing trend developed a revolutionary reading to challenge the regime. For example, Fares, a liberal activist and a former member of MB used to write on his Facebook page an Islamic metaphor in modern ways to mobilize young ordinary people.

Social solidarity and collective identity:

The young activists attempted to be those types of leaders and entrepreneurs who create a social movement by trapping into and expanding deep-rooted feelings of solidarity or identity. They launched activities and presented ideas to purposefully "construct" collective identities through constant negotiation. In the trajectory of social and youth activism, the solidarity and collective identity needs to be addressed by the leadership and entrepreneurs. The solidarity means that isolated incidents of contention, for instance, participation in a demonstration to support Palestine or Iraq or social protest to improve the public services or increase salaries did not create social movements, because the participants in these forms of contention

typically have no more than temporary solidarity and cannot sustain their challenges against opponents (Tarrow, 2011, p. 11). However such actions and protestation and spontaneous assemblies were more an indication that a movement was in the process of formation than movements themselves.

There were common purposes pursued by Kefaya, April 6 in 2008 and the Revolutionary Youth Coalition during the January 25th revolution. Each of them called for change and toppling the regime but to transform such networks and social protests into social movements, it was necessary to create a collective identity and identifiable challenges that helped the movement to be a sustaining collective action. But unless they can maintain their challenges, movements will evaporate into a kind of individualistic resentment. In this regard, the remaining networks from a previous wave of continuous politics, in addition to the new social media impact, helped to create solidarity and raise the awareness among the ordinary young people. Before June 2008, from the perspective of social movements, there was a low level of networks and organization, just sufficient to keep the counter-hegemonic movements alive until new opportunities emerged. The second stage would be marked by the attempts to construct a collective identity of April 6 as a protest and youth movement which would adopt certain ways for change. With a few exceptions, particularly April 6, the collective identity of most of the youth activism was not constructed in a way that guaranteed sustainability and solidarity among members who easily flocked to the new movements. The movements benefited from the loose organizational framework as it help to integrate different networks at a given moment, however, this type of organization led to negative effects when conflicts and splits erupted between groups and members, or when a famous individual member or group committed any mistakes which could easily be attributed to the movements.

Cooperation and division:

Social movements emerge out of what is culturally given, finding their position in the political landscape by utilizing pre-existent rhetoric and symbols. Constructing a new identify for the movements needs a framing processes and ways of defining of the historical and cultural heritage. This process had a remarkable impact on the relationship between different movements particularly that between the youth activism and Islamism which was complicated and characterized by irregularities as it transformed from cooperation to competition and the opposite. Bayat (2009, p. 9) argued that that the increasing roles of youth and women movements marginalized the role of Islamists. However the fieldwork showed various aspects of cooperation across ideological divides between Muslim Brothers, political parties and youth activism between 2000-2011.

The youth activists followed the examples of Kefaya and the EPCSPI which could be described as “non-ideological” in nature. Many of the youth that joined movements like Kefaya, and Youth for Change or who blogged on the internet, did not clearly subscribe to a well-defined ideological orientation. Most seemed to share a general commitment to the values of human rights, pluralism, democracy, and social justice and some displayed watered-down leftist, and Islamist orientations (Shehata; 2008, p. 6).

Isherwood (2008) and Etling et al, (2009) concluded that young bloggers connected with Kefaya were typically secular, and many bloggers have Socialist, and some, even Marxist, sympathies. However Kefaya itself was a loose-knit political movement that was composed of different ideological trends that cooperated across divide lines such as Liberals, Labour Islamic and the Communist as well as the fact that some of them were Independents (Tohami, 2009, p. 190). The movements that have gained momentum since 2000 tended to be inclusive and internally diverse.

It could be argued that the presence of Islamic opposition was hampering activism at certain times and strengthening it at other times. They cooperated on many occasions such as the Free Student Unions and organized joint protests such as the “Anger Day” on 4 May 2008 and 6 April 2009, in addition to the National Association for Change. On the other hand, they competed and contested with each other on other occasions such as the youth activism rejection of the MB strategy to participate in the parliamentary election in 2010.

It is notable that Sometimes, the MB cooperated and worked with other networks under these broad umbrellas and by exchanging ideas but a number of MB members split to join the new networks such as Mostafa Al-Nagar who became the coordinator of the ElBaradei Campaign and Mohamed Adel who joined April 6 and became the spokesman of the movement.

The political opportunities did not resolve the problems of "ideology" and "identity" in Egyptian youth culture. For example, the cultural polarization prevailed between religious trends on one side and the Westernized trend on the other hand. Another trend was the debate about the Coptic issues among activists from both Muslim and Coptic youth groups. Lastly, there was a debate among Islamist groups themselves.

The split between the religious and the secular elements appeared to intensify the divisions. The pioneer study about the Arabic blogosphere (Etling et al, 2009, p. 9) which focused on the political activists discriminated between Islamists, secularists, and avowed atheists. Among the Islamists, it showed different groups such as Salafi Sunnis, Twelve Shi’as, and

moderate modernizers. Among secularists, it showed Western-leaning democrats, anti-Western Socialists and Communists, and a healthy dose of Feminists.

These give us insight about the cultural diversity in the society especially the growth of religious groups in both the Coptic, who were thought to be between 6-12% of total population, and Muslims. Using religious symbols from Islam and Christianity as a way of mobilizing and recruiting, this sometimes led to clashes between movements themselves and with the state. When there was a spread of Islamist groups and their symbols, the Coptic activists began to express their grievances and mobilize. A scholar argued that, "Over the past few years, the Copts have realized that the government has actually violated its long-standing agreement with them. It no longer protects them, supports their causes or speaks to their interests. Hence, they have now taken the grave risk". It is easy and common to see the enraged Christian youth on the streets. They express dissent which may be uncomfortable for many Muslims (Iskandar, 2011). Most Coptic internet websites speak about what they described as the isolation and marginalization of Coptic youth and discrimination (EHDR, 2010, p. 118). Many Coptic activists express their growing concern about the victories of the MB and Salafi in the election.

Internal diversity and interaction:

The internal diversity in the movements and generational mobility provoked debates and discussion about the strategic choices and polices. While some wings in the movements tended to be more conservative, others have more open-minded views and good relations with other groups. This created intense debate and pressure for reform policies, strategies and frames. The airing of this internal debate in cyberspace foretold coming challenges to the movements. In this regard the social media helped to empower the voices of younger generations who tended to criticize many aspects and practices in some movements, such as the Muslim brotherhood and its leaders.

Blogs and Facebook have enabled individuals in the MBs to partake in opposition media activism (Exum, 2007, p. 1). This is evident in "how younger MB members attempt to adopt this technology to generate the kinds of solidarity, support and attention" they wish to see (Lynch, 2007). The pages, profiles and groups of MB members gradually expanded on Facebook which became a public avenue to display internal disputes and controversial issues among MB activists as it appeared on the profiles and pages belonging to the younger and middle-age activists like Haythem Abou-Khaliel[59]. The movement leaders thought they were

59 http://www.facebook.com/profile.php?id=100000262669968

able to contain the different wings while activists argued that this "may further threaten the authority of more conservative leaders". Different approaches emerged among MB leaders about how to tackle the issues; while some of them were concerned that the diversity may lead to fractions and splits, others did not agree saying, "youth should be encouraged to use this technology and not be criticized for doing so" (Ajemian, 2008). The splits took place around many issues relating to policies, organization and culture. For example, the ex-Muslim Brother activist Abdel-Monem Mahmoud levelled a series of critiques of the conservative aspects of the published draft of the MB's programme as a political party in 2007 before splitting (Ajemian, 2008). At the same time, Facebook and Twitter became a public avenue to display internal disputes and controversial issues among the MB's younger generation. Facebook pages also illustrated the escalation of the dispute among the young activists of the Muslim Brotherhood themselves. They debated about the decision to participate in the 2010 election and how it has been taken, as some former members raised charges on the incidence of counterfeiting in the decision of the Shura Council, whose members agreed to participate by 98%. The debate had shifted between the activists, from participating in the election decision itself, to a broader discussion about the process of decision-making in the Brotherhood and the role of youth. These disputes escalated and led to significant splits in 2011 when hundreds of activists formed the Egyptian Current (Eltayyar) party whose leaders were prominent figures in the MB student wing in the universities.

8.7 Conclusion: Challenges after the Revolution

There were high expectations from the youth activism and revolutionary groups after toppling Mubarak in 11st February 2011.

The youth activism expressed the sweeping feelings and ambitions to participate among young people who were keen to practice in the political and public arena during that romantic period where youth activists were considered to be the heroes of the revolution.

The institutional opening after the revolution was supposedly intended to reduce the level of domestic protest as social movement organizations shifted their resources towards lobbying (Maney, 2001, p. 29). This entailed a transition of youth activism roles and strategies to political parties' policies or NGOs and civil society organizations. However, there was a concern that this shift could mean that youth activism would lose large segments of its membership as networks were turned into NGOs or political parties, characterized by the centrality and bureaucratic rules of the Egyptian experience since the 1970s. Most youth activists refused to abandon their protest strategy (such as April 6 and the Revolutionary Youth Coalition) while others accepted to form their own political party to contest in the election such the dissident group of MBs youth wing (Al Tayyar) without great achievements.

There was, for example, a controversial initiative among April 6 activists to identify the movement as a lobby group and not a political party but this was one of the reasons behind the split in April 6 in 2011. The discussions continued about this strategy and whether it could succeed in making April 6 or other networks of youth activism function as lobbies or not.
However, the main reason for the failure of this shift was that the large segments of youth activists believed that the revolution had been stolen and that the old regime still existed and that their role consequently is to keep the spirit of revolution through protest activates and nonviolent strategy. They sought to achieve the idealistic goals of revolution which required tremendous efforts and resources. The dilemma of the Egyptian revolution is that "nothing guarantees that a just social order will result from a revolutionary change" (Bayat, 2009, p. 2). After 25th January, youth activists sought to demolish the SCAF rule which they considered a continuation of the old regime. On the other hand, the election strategy which was part of the façade corporatist arrangements during Mubarak era began to work in favour of MB and Salafi parties. Moreover, MB benefited from the confrontation between youth activists and the SCAF that have weakened both of them and helped MB to win the presidential election and overthrow SCAF in July 2012.

There was a state of revolutionary idealism among the youth activism after the revolution. However, they were not fully prepared yet to deal with the requirements of the moment and committed numerous of strategic mistakes that led to the decline of their influence in addition to division and disintegration. One of their mistakes was focusing on the protest activities and social media instead of connecting with ordinary people to solve their problems and build electoral bases. It is noteworthy that the internal structures and organizational capacities as kind of new social movements were not qualified for effective participation in elections and led to more splits and divisions. The collective identity also has not been constructed in a way that guarantees the sustainability and solidarity among members who easily flocked to new movements.

The dilemma of the youth activists in terms of organizational and networking aspect can be summarized as follows: that they positively benefited from the loose organizational framework which integrated different elements and networks at a given moment such as April 6, 2008 strike or 25 January 2011 Revolution. However, this kind of horizontal organization has negative impacts when conflicts and splits erupted between groups and members, or when some individual members or network commit mistakes which easily attributed to the movement.

The level of social and political trust deteriorated between activists and SCAF, between the political movements, and within the movements and parties themselves. The ideological polarization between Islamists and seculars weakened the cross ideological cooperation and youth activism got lost in the middle of such polarization.

Conclusion

Social Movements Theory has been conceptually developed and empirically applied in various chapters of the thesis. It has been applied to two specific case studies from among student activist formats; the student unions and the April 6 youth movement.

It was suggested in the previous chapter that SMT and empirical analysis addressed the main questions about the prominence of youth activism in Egypt. The thesis began by asking what conditions shaped the mobilization of youth activism in Egypt since 2000 and what SMT could tell us about these movements. The empirical study has set out the cycles of contentious politics which have been led by new activism and youth activism in Egypt by using the conceptual tools of SMT; political opportunity, mobilizing structures and framing processes as well as external and transnational factors. Political opportunities expanded significantly after 2000, as shown by discussion of the rising levels of grievance, the internal contradictions of competitive authoritarian, division among ruling elites and the impact of transnational and external factors. Youth activists responded with strategies, mobilization, organisations and framing process which characterise the youth activism.

The thesis has answered the second question by suggesting that Egyptian youth activism could be considered as New Social Movements and not only an old style of Social Movements or Social Movements Organizations. The new activism could be identified as; firstly, adopting a kind of mobilizing structure that is horizontal and networked, secondly, being less ideologically partisan enabled them to form across ideological networks and movements, and, thirdly, value-oriented movements that focus on freedom, dignity and social justice. The youth activism was not hierarchical, but rather network-based which used social networking technology as a mobilizing tool. They are not vertically organized such as the MB that could be considered to be of the old style social movements. However, large segments of the youth activism are not typical NSM by Western criteria and terms because they are not post-material nor post-industrial movements and still focus on power struggles, political issues and radical change of an authoritarian regime. Moreover, variables have started to occur that emphasize the importance of both the generational effect and social media roles. They need to be integrated in the analysis to offer a new synthesis about the youth activism and to fill the gaps in the literature and theory. Youth activism as part of contentious politics would not have prevailed without the new social media which played a major role in the mobilization and framing processes. The most important thing about these movements was that they were part of a wider generation of young people. The generational peculiarity

and gaps should be taken into account when exploring the common features and collective identity of these youth activism.

The Generational Effect

The analysis of youth activism showed that the youth activism were part of the same political generation that could be called the “Digital Native” or “Millennium” generation. Mannheim (1974, pp. 7-8) identified a political generation as the same age group members who were involved in the two key elements; that all grow in the same historical and cultural context, and feel together in the same social and historical determination. In the Egyptian context, the Millennium generation is composed of the young people who grew up and experienced the historical developments in the period 2000-2011 when their age was between 18-35 years. They represent a political generation by Mannheim concepts which emphasized that the biological generation has no sense of great political importance without having collective identity. The generation that becomes a political and social phenomenon worthy of study is the generation that consists of individuals in the same age groups who have lived through the same historical experience and share the same hopes and disappointments, and have experienced freedom and opposition to the older generation (Mannheim, p. 8; Willis, 1977; Pilcher, 1993). Feuer (1969, p. 25) argued that the generational collective identity is formed due to the founder events that consolidate the similar generational awareness and way of life. It is worth noting that Bayat’s thesis about youth activism and non-collective actors (Bayat, 2009, p. 5) is similar to Mannheim’s theory about the political generation. Bayat’s contribution tended to focus on culture, norms, uniforms and way of life. The claims of youthfulness remain at the core of youth movement. But the intensity of youth activism depends, first, on the degree of social control imposed on them by the moral and political authorities and, second, on the degree of social cohesion among the young (Bayat, 2009, p. 18).

The political generation features different groups of young people who may be conservative on the one hand or liberal on the other, for example. But both belong to the same generation, because both of them constitute different intellectual and social responses to the same exciting historical factors. Each of these two groups represents a specific "generation unit" within the same generation (Mannheim, Karl, p. 9-10). In the Egyptian context the generation features different groups such as Nationalists, Islamists, Marxists, Liberals and Independents.

Generational gaps: cooperation and rapture:

Much of the new energy in the Egyptian society and politics came from the younger generation which became the main social agent for change. The generations that controlled and led Egyptian politics for decades, both in government and opposition during Mubarak's reign, became very old and isolated from the social and cultural transformations in the society. There was a chance for a new generation to replace the old elite by being attached to Gamal Mubarak in the Policies Committee but its neoliberal agenda was a major stimulus for the 25th January revolution. On the other hand, the official opposition parties came under the full control of the regime security services. The activists from the Seventies generation, which emerged in the universities in 1970 (see chap. 3), launched various political initiatives particularly political parties since the nineties such as Al-Wast, Al Ghad and Al Karamah after an internal generational and organizational split in the MB, Al-Wafd and Al Tajamu respectively, as well as wide umbrella movements that consisted of independent and cross ideological activists such as the EPCSPI, and Kefaya (Tohami, Generational Mobility, 2009).

The "Millennium" or "Digital Native" generation engaged in contentious politics joining these movements and networks in large numbers because of the historical events and political opportunities that occurred in Egypt and the region since 2000. They interacted with the large number of left-wing activists from the Seventies generation who returned to the political arena after nearly a decade of political apathy (Abdalla, 2003). However, a relative decline took place after the end of the wave of political mobility in 2005. The Millennium generation began to form their own organizations benefiting from the experience and tactics learned from the seventies generation.

Numbers of leading figures sought to establish their own initiatives and networks after developing critical positions toward the older generations, accusing them of apathy and inefficacy and compliance with the regime. They launched movements such as Youth for Change, April 6 and the Current (El-Tayyar) party which could be considered a rupture with the older generation. Other movements featured better relationships between internal generations such as the MB and the ElBaradei campaign. However the April 6 movement is the most independent group among the younger generation initiatives. These young activists called for the 25 January revolution and were the basic backbone of the demonstrations, although the subsequent stages witnessed the participation of other generations.

The new activism was characterized by a set of features that ranged from consuming products of globalization and adopting a kind of hybrid culture and values balancing between particularity and universality, in addition to the lack of centrality and hierarchy that shaped

their new networks and mobilizing structures. The young activists were driven by unlimited aspirations and ambitions so that they went to the extreme demands during the revolution while the older generations were hesitating and sought a compromise with the regime. They followed radical strategies and became less conciliatory in their approach to the regime, favouring comprehensive political change (Tohami, 2011).

The cultural and collective identity of the Millennium generation is a hybrid culture; a combination of global and local components, modern and traditional values. Large segments of the young activists moved beyond the divided ideologies to adopt and construct an open political value system which could be described as the "postmodernism generation". Perhaps the model of the young man, Wael Ghoneim, the founder of the page "Kolna Khalid Saeed", who works at Google, is an indication of this case. He graduated from Cairo University, and received his MBA from the American University in Cairo. Although he is not a partisan, he engaged in the protestation against the regime through social networking technologies.

The Role of Social Media

The arrival of the internet-based technologies has made the work of professional activists much more effective and has attracted the attention of society and observers, if only because their internal and external communications became much cheaper and harder to be monitored. The new social networking technologies have provided the youth with new channels for participation and empowerment. This became true in a part of the world where the older generations, in either government or opposition, controlled the traditional political and cultural arena and dominated the public sphere. However, the younger generations gradually launched creative initiatives using online media in recent years until the 25 January revolution. The younger generations have engaged in public affairs by peaceful means to bring about a change and to influence the decision-making processes and policies.

In this regard, the new social media played a facilitating role in the long wave of continuous politics in Egypt since 2003, although it is not a causal role. It basically helped in the mobilization and framing process aiming to delegitimize the regime and demoralize its policies. The ideas and ideologies spread in the public sphere, and, in addition to grievances, enabled the young activists to present new claims and to behave in ways that fundamentally challenged the authorities. Indeed the social media impact could not lead to real change without physical offline action in society. In this respect the most notable actions, such as the April 6 Strike in El Mahala 2008 and January 25 revolution, were triggered by the marriage between online and offline activism, particularly when activists moved smartly between

online and offline activities to create real challenges to the regime and to escape from police repression.

The social media empowered ordinary young people and impacted on the policy agenda as well. The activists launched social media campaigns to support or halt policies and actions both in internal and external issues and which resulted in increasing the role of the public space and public opinion in foreign policy. The Egyptian youth activists succeeded in attracting international attention and the building of a positive image which shaped the international community's policies toward the Egyptian revolution.

However, the impact of social media on youth activism became a controversial issue that led to debates about how networks both online and offline, contributed to the ousting of former president Mubarak. The role of youth activists and their strategy that for a long time was considered irrelevant or far from a strong influence on the political structure, proved to be effective in stirring the crowd and making a change through non-central virtual and practical frameworks and networks with a determination to pay the cost of change.

The activists have made extensive use of information technology as a mobilizing instrument. Through their websites, blogs and social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter, youth has been able to coordinate various protest activities, even in the absence of organized political structures. The April 6th Strike and January 25 both uprising were wholly a product of the marriage of virtual and real activism. Taking into account that the regime had a high capacity to weaken and abort the forming of central hierarchical organizations, the new activism began using the social media to organize the demonstrations and launch digital campaigns calling for reform or change. The social media served as mobilizing vehicles and channels that connected and coordinated the activities of youth networks and groups which were not hierarchical, but rather network-based.

Expanding counter-hegemonic discourse

The value of internet-based communications and new media is not only because they can easily communicate and mobilize widely with one another, but also because it allows and facilitates the creation of a counter-public sphere of discourse that has the potential to penetrate the society (Ajeman, 2008). They facilitated the creation of a counter-hegemonic narrative that challenged the regime. The human rights issues and the abuse of power were always a remarkable issue in the process of demoralizing the regime policies. This represented a major challenge to the regime which was considered a classic hierarchy, attempting to maintain control of a large public sphere.

In this regard youth activism's influence was growing in its online presence. They were far more prominent and active than the National Democratic Party (NDP). Howard argued that, "If the election were held online, Egypt's ruling elites would be tossed out of power. The tide of opinion among Egyptians online has become a flood of support for opposition movements" (O'Donnell, 2010).

Constructing alternative awareness and incubator of democratic:

The new social media presented the possibility of a much richer public sphere than existed before. The internet has become the primary incubator of democratic political conversation. The social movements have moved online, using the information infrastructure of digital media as the place for difficult political conversations. The main opponent to the regime was a complex, fractured umbrella group. They composed of tech-savvy activists and wired civic groups which may not be enough to hold it together much longer (Howard, 2010). The slogan 'People Want the Fall of the Regime', which insurgents raised, was not only a rebel sign against the control of the older generation which had been in power for decades, but also it could be understood as a guide for this generation to build a new world - freedom, justice, dignity- fit perceptions for this generation formed in the light of the era of globalization.

It is important to consider the remarkable competition between activists and regimes, where each part pushed to come up with new tools: the authorities - with new tools to censor, and the activists - with new tools to unblock the censored materials. The regime realized the risks of leaving the arena of public sphere and developed new tactics to halt the strategy of new activism and then the social media turned out to be a battlefield. This also included the more the established organized groups which have sought to take part in the internet arena after recognizing the benefits and risks of ignoring such an arena but without having much influence.

In sum, the Egyptian Youth activism could be seen as the cohering of a generation. They transformed the youth activism from activism in the old-style social movements to activism via a specifically Egyptian form of New Social Movements which were ultimately horizontal networks using social media as a tool for mobilization and challenging the regime hegemony. They adopted a nonviolent strategy to bring change but subsequently were unable to translate this revolution into post-revolutionary structural power.

In answer to our third question then, what does the study of contemporary youth activism in Egypt tell us about the wider realm of Egyptian state-society relations, we can say that the revolution has only just begun. The January 25th Revolution saw a change of leadership but

the necessary change in the deeper socio-political fabric of the country needed for a transition to more democratic politics is still to come.

Appendix

Appendix (1): List of Interviewees

	Name	Position-status	Affiliation	Date	Format of interview
1-	Dr. Norhan ElSheikh	Professor and Expert	Director of Youth Studies Unit in FEPS and consultant at NCY	8/4/ 2008	Face-to-face
2-	Dr. Gamal Sultan	Professor and Expert	Al Ahram Centre for Political and Strategic Studies- former Member of the NDP Policies Committee	10/4/2008	Face-to-face
3-	Dr. Nabieh Elalqamy	Professor and Expert	Chairman of Youth and Education Committee in the Shura Council (NDP)	15/4/2008	Face-to-face
4-	Dr. Mosaad Ewies	Professor and Expert	Secretary of Syndicate of Sports Professionals- Former chair Youth Agency in the Ministry of Youth	2/10/2010	Face-to-face
5-	Hani El Mekawy	Activist and Journalist	Specialist in student and education affairs	20/10/2010	Face-to-face
6	Ehaab Abdou	Founder	Nahdet El-Mahroussa	20/4/2008	Face-to-face
7	Haitham Kamel	Head of Board	Sustainable Development Association (SDA)	25/4/2008	Face-to-face

8	Tamer Elfouly	Member	Egyptian Federation of Youth NGOs	23/4/2008	Face-to-face
9	Ahmed Al Gaaly	Former chairman	Muslim Brothers student wing and FSU	8/1/2008	Face-to-face
10	Kholoud Saber	Activist	Socialist student movement and FSU	10/2/2008	Face-to-face
11	Ibrahim Essam Al-Aryan	Activist	MB Youth Wing	12/1/2008	Face-to-face
12	Ahmed Maher	Coordinator	April 6	21/1/2008 and 20/1/2012	Face-to-face Facebook
13	Daia Al Sawy	Activist	Al Amal (Labour) Party	10/1/2008	Face-to-face
14	Moataz Adel	Activist	Secretary of the Democratic Front party in Al Mansoura	3/2/ 2012	Facebook
15	Sameh El Barqy	Activist	Al-Tayyar party	25/2/2012	Skype
16	Ahmed Sameeh	Activist	Liberal, Andalusia Centre for Tolerance	5/10/2008	Face-to-face
17	Moataz Othman	Activist	Nasserist and human	7/1/2008	Face-to-face

			rights activist		
18	Fatima Mohamed Said	Independent	Chair of a Student Union	5/10/2010	Face-to-face
19	Mahmoud Al Sheshtawy	Journalist and activist	Kefaya and ex April 6 member	29/1/2012	Facebook
20	Khalid Abdel Hameed	Activist	Revolutionary Socialist	4/1/2008	Face-to-face
21	Islam Lutfi	Activist	Al-Tayyar party - Ex MB Youth Wing	8/1/2008	Face-to-face
22	Mohamed Qutub	Activist	Al Ghad	7/10/2010	Face-to-face
23	Peter Nabil Mikhaieel	Activist	Al Wafd	9/10/2010	Face-to-face
24	Mostafa Elngar	Activist	Former coordinator ElBaradei Campaign for Presidency – Al Adl (Justice) party	22/9/2010	Face-to-face
25	Mohamed El Geba	Activist	Ex Muslim Brothers	29/9/2010	Face-to-face
26	Isam Salama	Activist	Arab Nasserist Party	12/1/2008	Face-to-face
27	Mona Saad	Activist	ElBaradei Campaign for Presidency	5/2/ 2012	Facebook
28	Mohamed Shawky	Activist	Coordinator of April 6 Mass action in Elmaady	15/2/2012	Skype

29	Mohamed Samir	Activist	Independent	12/2/2012	Facebook
30	Shaaban Ayob	Activist	Salafi	11/2/2012	Facebook
31	Anonymous	Activist	Facebook activists	27/1/2012	Facebook
32	Anonymous	Activist	Facebook activist	16/2/2012	Facebook
33	Ishak Ibrahim	Activist and researcher	Egyptian Initiative for Personal Rights	25/2/2012	Skype
34	Noha Khaled	Activist	Mesrna Group - Aboul Fotouh Campaign	19/2/2012	Facebook
35	Abdullah ElNourani	Activist	Islamist - civil society	3/2/2012	Facebook
36	Shykh hosny (Mohamed Hosni)	Activist	Islamist	11/2/2012	Facebook
37	Belal Abdallah	Researcher and activist	Independent	17/2/2012	Facebook

Appendix (2) List of Abbreviations

CSO	Civil Society Organizations
NSMs	New Social Movements
SMT	Social Movement Theory
PPM	Political Process Model
SMOs	Social Movement Organizations
EP	Egyptian Pounds
NGOs	Non-governmental Organizations
NYP	National Youth Policy
NDP	National Democratic Party
NCY	National Council for Youth (Almjls Alqwmy llshbab)
NCS	National Council of Sport (Almjls Alqwmy llryadh)
NCYS	National Council of Youth and Sport
SCYS	Supreme Council for Youth and Sports
MY	Ministry of Youth
LPI	Leaders Preparation Institute
ILO	International Labour Organisation
UNDP	United Nation Development Programme
USAID	United State Aid Programme

CDAs	Community Development Associations
CAPMAS	The Central Agency for Public Mobilisation and Statistics
ESISYB	Egypt State Information Service Year Book
FEY	Federation of Egyptian Youth NGOs
YO	Youth Organizations
YENAP	Youth Employment National Action Plan
FEPS	Faculty of Economic and Political Science
FSU	Free Student Union
NCSCR	National Centre for Sociological and Criminological Research
NCMC	National Council for Motherhood and Childhood
EPCSPI	Egyptian Popular Committee for Supporting the Palestinian Intifada

Appendix (3) List of Youth activism and Youth Wings of Political Parties

Abdel Moneim Aboul Fotouh Presidential Campaign

Al-Karamah (Dignity) Party

Al-Wafd party

Al-Amal Islamic (Labour) Party Islamist

Al Ghad Youth Union

Al-Tayyar Al-Masry (The Egyptian Current Party)

Amr Khalid Association

April 6 Youth Movement

Arab Nasserist Party

Democratic Front party

Egyptian Federation of Youth NGOs

ElBaradei Presidential Campaign

Justice Party *(*Hizb ElAdl)

Formal student unions (federations): (Etihad E-Talaba):

Free Student Union ((Etihad E-Talaba Elhor)

Future Generation Foundation (FGF): NDP and Gamal Mubarak youth wing

Jam'etna (Our University)

Youth for Change (Kefaya youth wing)

March the 20th movement

Meserna Group

Muslim Brothers Student Wing (al-ʾiḫwān al-muslimūn)

Nasserist Party (alhzb alnasry)

National Democratic Party (NDP) (alhzb alwtna aldymwqraty)

Ossar: The student clubs or societies in universities

Revolutionary Socialists

Salafi movement

Socialist movement

Tajamu party

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