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Latent heat: Changing forms of activism under repressive authoritarian regimes: A case study of Egypt, 2000-2008

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Latent Heat: Changing Forms of Activism under Repressive

Authoritarian Regimes: A Case Study of Egypt, 2000-2008

A Thesis Submitted to

the Department of Political Science

in partial fulfillment of the requirements for

the degree of Master of Arts/Science

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under the supervision of Dr. James H. Sunday

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Abstract

This study explores the factors that have affected the changing forms of political activism under repressive authoritarian regimes, with focus on the case of Egypt in the period between 2000 and 2008. As such, the study will primarily focus on social movements as a valid tool of activism at three different instances/phases throughout the time framework of the study. These instances are: 1. Post-Palestinian Intifada (2000-2002), 2. Post-Iraq war (2003-2005), and 3. Post-2005 parliamentary elections (2006-2008/9).

The study analyzes the reasons of igniting social movements as a tool for activism in these instances and development of the movements along that time line. The study then highlights the difference between the aims, characteristics and mobilization power of the social movements in the three historical periods. The paper argues that two main reasons are behind the rise and development of social movements as a disruptive form of activism: first, the strong and steady periods of activism followed by limited liberalization opportunities; and, second, the stagnation between the old generation of the 1970s and their failure to incubate the young activists' generation.

Dedication

To my parents who have always believed in me, but not in what I do. Who taught me the art of debating, allowed me to find my strength, and opened my mind to the magic between books' shelves.

To those who struggle to line their ideas in words and fall in the pitfalls of linguistics and finding empirical evidence.

To those who stood up for humanity, called for justice, equality, and liberty. To all Egyptians whom have lost their freedom, beloved ones, family, and lives in their quest for a better future for our Egypt.

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I would like to recognize the efforts of my masters' companions Asmaa Samy and Rana Gaber in editing my thesis, solid support and all our steamy debates over endless pots of coffee. I would like to extend my deep gratitude and love to my supportive system Audrey Coguiec, Marwa Makhlouf, Engi Amin, Noha Seyam, Ahmed Hoza, Barndolo Espina, Anne-Sophie Rink, Hood Ahmed and all my other very beautiful friends. Many thanks to NEP, my work family whom I have learned a lot from and have always been a source of support to finish my degree. A very deep appreciation goes to my bachelor degree professors and honorable teachers from statistics department at Faculty of Economics and Political Science who taught me how to understand statistics before calculating it, proving that "*differentiation creates integration*".

Chapter One: Introduction and Literature Review

1.1 Introduction

Authoritarian regimes in the Arab world have been stable for a long time, it is noticeable that their policies dealing with political opposition have been constantly subject to change. A closer and detailed investigation of the most consolidated authoritarian regimes is essential for understanding their stability, as well as political uprisings against authoritarian rule and subsequent political reform, if any.[1] Reforms taking place in authoritarian regimes do not necessarily lead to radical change or the onset of democratization; however these changes might show or indicate political actors' adaptation abilities that create new political bargains and new forms of activism.[2] Hence analyzing the adaptation of activism could give a better understanding for the changing forms of activism under authoritarian regimes.

In Arab countries, especially Tunisia and Egypt, the political de-liberalization strategies that the authoritarian regimes used against the opposition kept them weak and inefficient, so that they would not be able to practice their role as an oppositional power. Hope then was shifted to the advocacy NGOs and their ability to become the focal point for a secular opposition in the region, and a part of an active civil society.[3] The formation of civil society itself is an on-going process that is subjected to the changes of social forces, economic status, and state strategies. Nevertheless, civil society is also affected by the complex relationship between political actors, since it affects state strategy towards civil society. In other words, civil society is subject to the changing policy of

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[1] Holger Albrecht, "*Raging against the machine political opposition under authoritarianism in Egypt"*. (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2013): XIX.

[2] Dietrich Jung, "*Democratization and development new political strategies for the Middle East*". (New York, N.Y.: Palgrave Macmillan, 2006): 37

[3] Vickie Langohr, "*Too much civil society, too little politics: Egypt and liberalizing Arab regimes*". (Comparative Politics. 36 (2): 181-204, 2004) Pp 194,195

the state that depends on the state needs, hence it can encourage civil society and nourish it or limit its expansion and power accordingly.[4] The interference of the regime and it's ruling party elites affected the political oppositions ability to mobilize and hence prevented any form of effective activism against the government. Co-opting any potential activism in the legal, formal institutional framework has been a main strategy for authoritarian resilience. The state could control, direct and eliminate undesired groups. Also the state monitored the development of the other non-coopted actors and prevented them from developing into a potential threat or challenge for the regime.[5]

In Egypt, however, in the decade leading up to the 2011 uprising, new movements emerged. The formation of these new political movements fostered new frontiers of activism and cooperation between different youth groups, and took opposition against the state to the street. These movements did not only create a new wave of opposition, but also initiated a "swarm effect" of activism that contributed to the 2011 uprising in Egypt later on. This wave of activism formed a collaborative phenomenon where different political factions participated (leftists, Nasserists, liberals, the Muslim Brotherhood youth, welfare and rights' groups).[6] A lot of factors could explain the uprising of activism after a long period of oppression, such as the window of liberalization that followed the Palestinian Intifada in 2000 and the Iraq invasion in 2003. These two incidents created an opportunity for mobilization for activists to establish social movements with specific characteristics. The characteristics of the

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[4] Maha M. Abdelrahman, *"Civil society exposed: the politics of NGOs in Egypt.*" (London: Tauris Academic, 2004) Pp 3-5

[5] Joshua A. Stacher, "*Parties over the demise of Egypt's opposition parties*". (British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies. 31 (2): 215-233, 2004). Pp 219

[6] Reem Abou-El-Fadl, "The Road to Jerusalem through Tahrir Square: Anti-Zionism and Palestine in the 2011 Egyptian Revolution". (Journal of Palestine Studies, Vol. 41, No. 2 (Winter 2012), pp. 6-26). Pp 9-10

movements changed and evolved during the time between 2000 and 2008, which also reflected on the activism that the movements incubated.[7]

These movements had various aims at the beginning: from challenging regime strategies and plans of hereditary succession in the presidency as in the Kefaya (Enough) movement in 2005, to supporting the workers strikes and their demands as was the case with the 6th of April movement in 2008.[8] However coordination between activists was "not entirely new, nor was it entirely accidental" as Lust and Khatib explain in their study of activism under the liberal authoritarian regimes of the Middle East and North Africa. In fact, activists had been building bridges over different political groups and organizational structures to escape the direct coercion of the state and the limitation that was imposed on activism and citizenship in the formal traditional forms of activism within authoritarian regimes.[9] Given regime strategies of liberalization and de-liberalization in Egypt, it is interesting to investigate **"*What explains the changing forms of political activism under repressive authoritarian regimes?*"**

1.2 Literature Review: Beyond Repression and Coercion Alone

To explore how my research question was addressed by different scholars, I will review the most important concepts included in my research, and then highlight the relationship between repression and coercion. Then I will divide my literature review into two main subtopics; firstly, scholars who review activism role in a very limited

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[7] Maha M. Abdelrahman, *"Civil society exposed: the politics of NGOs in Egypt.*" (London: Tauris Academic, 2004) Pp 3-5

[8] Lina Khatib, and Ellen Lust, "*Taking to the streets: the transformation of Arab activism*" (Baltimore, Maryland : The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014) Pp 8-11

[9] Ibid, Pp 10-11

approach in the Middle East and challenged its efficiency. Secondly, scholars who review the possible existence of a challenging activism in the Middle East under repressive authoritarian regimes.

1.2.1 Operational Definitions

Before reviewing the literature of activism in the Middle East and specifically in Egypt, I would like to conceptualize the most important concepts in my study, namely Social Movement, state repression, authoritarianism and activism.

- Social Movement: Social movements have been viewed as a historically specific form of collective action which can be defined as *"[c]ollective challenges to existing arrangements of power and distribution by people with common purposes and solidarity, in sustained interaction with elites, opponents, and authorities"*[10]

- State Repression: "*state repression involves the actual or threatened use of physical sanctions against an individual or organization, within the territorial jurisdiction of the state, for the purpose of imposing a cost on the target as well as deterring specific activities and/or beliefs perceived to be challenging to government personnel, practices or institutions*"[11]

- Authoritarianism: One of the most reflective definitions of authoritarianism is what Jebnoun describes as a *negative* definition. For him, authoritarianism is "..*neither democracy nor totalitarianism, and does not constitute a specific political model. Authoritarian regimes rely on restricting political participation*

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[10] David S. Meyer, and Sidney Tarrow, "The social Movement Society: Contentious Politics for a New Century". (Lanham : Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, c1998), P4, *As cited by* Steven Buechler, *"Social movements in advanced capitalism: the political economy and cultural construction of social activism*." (New York: Oxford University Press, 2000): P10.

[11] Robert Justin Goldstein, *"Political repression in modern America from 1870 to 1976*". (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2001). PP xxvii

and denying society or its representative institutions (..) the ability to protest against crucial decisions adopted by a small restricted group."[12] From the definition we understand that authoritarianism does not follow one book, it can take different forms and adapt to the different political fluctuations.

- Activism: the simplest and most straightforward definition is the one offered by Bayat. For him, activism is "*any kind of human activity- individual or collective, institutional or informal- that aims to engender change in people's lives (..) activism includes different types of activities, ranging from survival strategies and resistance to more sustained forms of collective action and social movement.*" [13]

1.2.2 Relationship between Repression and Activism

It is important to note that social movements in Egypt are not a phenomenon that developed overnight. Activism had existed for decades but it did not have effective capabilities for social mobilization from the start, especially under the repressive authoritarian measures of Mubarak's state.[14] It has been a controversial topic if activism or any form of political opposition could exist under a repressive authoritarian regime like those found in the Middle Eastern and North African countries. It is important to look at the literature addressing social movement theory as a tool of activism and its applicability under that kind of regime.

Activism entails considerable threat for the stability of authoritarian regimes, which is why state authorities employ repressive measures and coercive actions to

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[12] Noureddine Jebnoun, *Modern Middle East authoritarianism: Roots, ramifications, and crisis.* (London; New York: Routledge, Taylor & Francis Group, 2014).

[13] Asef Bayat, "*Activism And Social Development In The Middle East*". (International Journal of Middle East Studies. 34 (1): 1-28. 2002) Pp3

[14] Killian Clarke, "*Unexpected Brokers of Mobilization: Contingency and Networks in the 2011 Egyptian Uprising*". (Comparative Politics, Vol. 46, No. 4 (July 2014), pp. 379-397). Pp 380-381

eliminate any threat. This is what Davenport calls the "Law of Coercive Responsiveness". Discussing repression as a strategy, he argued that, the impact of repression is not uniform especially in authoritarian regimes. Thus, repression does not necessarily lead to a decrease in mobilization, and the change of mobilization because of repression depends on the reaction of non-state actors that might differ from one case to another.[15] In fact, it is hard to separate opportunities for mobilization from threat of repression as they co-occur and affect the interaction between the state and non-state actors. Tilly and Tarrow explains that "*most people engaging in contentious politics combine response to threat with seizing opportunities*".[16] This does not identify a certain rule for responding to repression, but suggests another scenario for increasing mobilization rather than decreasing it if the right opportunity exists.

The coercive actions set by the regime, de-liberalization and the shutting down of channels for mobilization contributed to opening other opportunities that represented a new wave of activism. This new wave focused on informal forms of participation and found expression in the disruptive political and social movements in Egypt. It is only logical in that sense that Egypt, starting in 2000, saw the emergence of several activist groups which proliferated despite the restricted political environment and paved the way for a new wave of political opposition that were marked by:

1. The transformation of opposition against the regimes from regime governed channels to the street level.

2. Political activism functioning outside the organized sphere of formal political institutions.

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[15] Christian Davenport, "*State Repression and Political Order*". (Annual Review of Political Science. 10: 1-23; 2007). Pp 8,9

[16] Charles Tilly and Sidney Tarrow. *"Contentious Politics"*. (Boulder/London: Paradigm Publishers; 2007). P 58

3. A fluid process of coalition- and network-building between different social movements that could differ ideologically.[17]

1.2.3 Scholarly Debate: Activism Under Authoritarian Regimes

We now return to the main controversy about activism and social movements under authoritarian regimes, where repression, coercion and cooptation of political opposition under the control of the state have been practiced for decades. In the light of this argument, there are two schools of thought: Those who doubt the existence of such contentious phenomena as social movements due to the characteristics of the Middle Eastern countries, and others who argue that the Arab world is in fact rich with political contestation and mobilization, yet with certain limitations. Some scholars doubted the formation of social movements as a mean of activism due to the fragmentation of the political opposition, the dependence of the Egyptian syndicates on the state, and the repressive measures imposed on any kind of activism within civil society or political opposition parties. These factors, according to the scholars, limited opportunities for activism and the formation of any serious social movement in the Middle East that could be capable of social mobilization and challenging the regime.[18] On the other hand, scholars such as Vairel, Lust and Khatib argue that the Middle East had its own share of activism and saw the rise of social movements that later on contributed to the 2011 uprising.[19]

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[17]Maha Abdelrahman, *"The Transnational and the Local: Egyptian Activists and Transnational Protest Networks"*. (British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies. 38 (3): 407-424; 2011). Pp 409,410

[18] Amy Austin Holmes, *"There Are Weeks When Decades Happen: Structure and Strategy in the Egyptian Revolution"*. (Mobilization 17(4):391-410 · December 2012). Pp393

[19] Lina Khatib, and Ellen Lust, "*Taking to the streets: the transformation of Arab activism*" (Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014) Pp 8-11, Pp2.3; Frédéric Vairel, "*Protesting in authoritarian situations: Egypt and Morocco in comparative perspective".* In Joel Beinin and Frédéric Vairel. "*Social movements, mobilization, and contestation in the Middle East and North Africa",* (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2011) p 27.

a) Middle Eastern Authoritarian regimes and the limited inefficient role of activism

"*Since the early 1990s, Egypt has experienced a substantial degree of political deliberalisation which defies the notion of a blocked transition*"[20]. ~ Kienle

With the coercive measures laws enforced starting the 1990s, Scholars as Stacher claimed that the civil society and political opposition have been further weakened. Thus, civil and political participation was not a tolerated option for the Egyptian authoritarian regime.[21] From this angle scholars discussed the absence of activism in Egypt from different lenses of cultural, structural, institutional and political behavior of non- state actors.

Scholars such as Bayat, Hinnebusch and Bellin view activism in a limited and narrow perspective due to different conditions.[22] Bayat argues that the main reasons for the limited nature of activism in Egypt are partially cultural, attitudinal and structural. According to Bayat, the efficiency of activism is highly correlated with the ability for mobilization. Activists can improve their chances of affecting the regime if they can mobilize large numbers, especially if mobilization transcends class boundaries. In an authoritarian regime civil society institutions serves as a helping arm for the state to create a new wave of rentierism. Instead of functioning as a portal of activism and a potential window for political opposition, civil society institutions were aiding the regime to fulfill their "beneficiaries'" needs from the Egyptian unprivileged

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[20] Eberhard Kienle, "*More than a Response to Islamism: The Political Deliberalization of Egypt in the 1990s*". (Middle East Journal, Vol. 52, No. 2; Spring, 1998), P.219

[21] Joshua A. Stacher, "*Parties over the demise of Egypt's opposition parties*". (British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies. 31 (2): 215-233, 2004). Pp 216

[22] Ibid, Pp 1-2; Raymond A. Hinnebusch, "*Party Activists in Syria and Egypt: Political Participation in Authoritarian Modernizing States*" (International Political Science Review. 4 (1): 84-93; 1983.) Pp84,85; Eva Bellin,. "*The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Exceptionalism in Comparative Perspective*". (Comparative Politics. 36 (2): 139-157 2004) Pp150.

citizens. Thus, collective action turned to be collective "consumption" and became the main characteristics of the urban movement. This, in turn, sabotaged any hopes for social changes and secured the status quo in favor of the authoritarian regime.[23]

According to Eva Bellin, the low level of popular mobilization for political reform is not exclusive to the region and its authoritarian nature. The most important factors she highlighted were the absence of democratic experience for non-state actors, hence there were no institutional foundations for mass mobilization. Adding to that, the existence of a nondemocratic threat had its effect on demobilizing democratic activism and did not unify the other factions of the political ideologies and the middle class. [24] Following an institutional analysis and westernized point of view, Pereira conditioned successful reforms on democracy and institutionalization of political participation and contestation. He added, *"All groups must channel their demands through the democratic institutions and abjure other tactics"*[25]. Meaning that opposing the authorities through disruptive or informal means of political participation is not an efficient tool for citizens who seek policy changes nor social reform. Under this umbrella, the institutional structure of the Middle East countries and its non-democratic nature would have no valid room for activism in the form of disruptive social movements that could affect the regime's policy reform.

As one of the main conclusions of studying activism from a behavioral lens in the Middle East and specifically Egypt, Hinnebusch claims that autonomous and a publicly purposive political activism is not impossible for authoritarian regimes, yet it exists

[23] Ibid, PP 3-7

[24] Eva Bellin, *"The Robustness of Authoritarianism in the Middle East: Exceptionalism in Comparative Perspective*". (Comparative Politics. 36 (2): 139-157; 2004) Pp 150, 151

[25] Luiz Carlos Bresser Pereira, Jose' Maria Maravall, and Adam Przeworski, "Economic Reforms in New Democracies: A Social Democratic Approach". (Cambridge University Press; 1993), P4

within certain limits.[26] However, the limit comes from within the non-state actors themselves. The self-limiting behavior of activists is a response to repression, Hinnebusch argues. Opposition activists, he continues, tend to be *careerists*, and non-state actors are dependent on the regime. Nevertheless, the continuous harassment from the regime against advocacy NGOs and political parties raised concerns for the safety of activists and paralyzed them.[27] Cunningham in his article "State versus Social Movement" confirms that movements are *incredibly fragile*.[28] He explains that the behavior of movements is highly affected by the repression measurements and actions that the authorities could impose on them. According to his studies, movements' output could alter drastically in response to any small change in interest distribution, connection level between the movement actors and the targeted population, or the resources within reach for movement key figures. He then marks the importance of repression cost on the limitation of movements' activism, "*increased costs stemming from the expectations of repression can limit a protest group's ability to provide incentives for participation or, more directly, actually create barriers to participation*".[29]In that sense, social movements as a tool for activism in a repressive political environment would be an irrational tool for activism or political participation.

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[26] Hinnebusch Raymond, *"Party Activists in Syria and Egypt: Political Participation in Authoritarian Modernizing States"*. (International Political Science Review. 4 (1): 84-93; 1983) Pp 90
[27] Ibid, Pp 90,91
[28] David Cunningham, "State versus Social Movement; FBI Counterintelligence Against The New Left" from Jack A. Goldstone, "States, Parties, and Social Movements". (Cambridge University Press; 2003), Pp 45- 46.
[29] Ibid, 45-46

b) Middle Eastern Authoritarian regimes can foster a new wave of activism

"*Political participation is simply the efforts of ordinary people in any type of political system to influence the actions of their rulers, and sometimes to change their rulers*".[30] ~Nelson

Adhering to Nelson perception of political participation- that is a component for activism tools- Alhamad confirms that due to the constrains that smothers the political participation in the firm grip of authoritarian governments, the traditional understanding of political participation is not sufficient to capture its influence in the Egyptian context. It is necessary to understand political participation and hence activism beyond the formal institutions and focus on the informal (disruptive) channels, where there is more room to contest with the authorities.[31] Moreover, Goldstone in his book *States, Parties and Social Movements* confirms that to understand social movements, analyst must study the phenomena within its political contexts and environment. In addition, he contests with scholars that limit the activism role of social movements to protesting activities only, and confirms that the success of social movements depends on the combination of protesting activities and conventional tactics for influencing state actors. Hence, Social movements are not a phenomenon that solely depend on the democratic status of the regime, but they emerge in response to citizenship rights and the development of political structure in a given country.[32]

Benin and Vairel in their book have addressed the problem of the limitation of Social Movement Theory (SMT) when applied to Middle Eastern and North African

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[30] Joan Nelson, "Political Participation" in "Understanding Political Development" Myron Weiner and Samuel P. Huntington (Boston: Little, Brown & Co., 1987), P. 104

[31] Laila Alhammad, *"Formal and Informal Venues of Engagement"*, from Ellen Lust- Okar and Saloua Zerhouni, "*Political Participation in the Middle East*". (Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc; 2008), Pp35-36.

[32] Jack A. Goldstone, "States, Parties, and Social Movements". (Cambridge University Press; 2003), Pp2-7

countries. These limitations, as explained previously, are subject to different opinions in regards of the political climate in authoritarian countries, such as Egypt. However, as expressed by scholars, there is a vital role for working class activism, Islamists, demobilized leftists and civil society and human rights advocacy activists in feeding contentious politics and contentious collective action within Egypt. Although they find that the Middle East is an interesting field for new social movements that goes beyond the classical models of social movements, they find that certain categories such as "nation", "class", and "Islam" have no objective trans-historical essence in explaining movements. Furthermore they confirm that not all of the countries had witnessed a certain "opening opportunity" for the birth of its activist movements. In other words, movements that are born under repressive circumstances could be created due to a "collective threat"; this kind of threat could serve as a political opportunity in itself. This very important difference between opening opportunity and collective threat, could explain the rationality of using social movements as a tool of activism in repressive authoritarian regimes.[33]

As Albrecht stresses in his article *The Nature of Political Participation*, people tendency to depoliticize from the formal channels of political participation does not correlate with their lack of interest in politics. Political participation in its informal disruptive mechanism then is more of culturally embedded rather than political.[34]

In fact, Lust and Khatib highlight the nature of activism within authoritarian regimes and the nature of relations between activists and the state when they describe it as "continuously evolving" with new innovative strategies that addresses their

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[33] Joel, Beinin and Frédéric Vairel. "*Social movements, mobilization, and contestation in the Middle East and North Africa*". (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2011) Pp1-9
[34] Holger Albrecht, "*The Nature of Political Participation*", from Ellen Lust- Okar and Saloua Zerhouni, "*Political Participation in the Middle East*", (Lynne Rienner Publishers, Inc; 2008), P 25

changing demands. In other words, the state-activist relationship is dynamic and not static, and it can be subjected to change or adaptation, although it may seem stagnant on the surface. In addition, Lust and Khatib confirm that coordination between activists is not entirely a new phenomenon, nor is it accidental.[35] Activism strategies have been subjected to a long history of evolution, which over the decades produced a new set of tactics and organizational structures that were using both online and offline methods. New forms of disruptive activism in the form of social movements did not only make it harder for the regime to impose control, yet also, the new social movements were able to connect the fragmented activism that was scattered between the divided political parties and civil society associations, and topped it by the power of mobilization.[36] Adhering to the last argument, Meyer and Tarrow also confirm that movements' nature change and develop its activism mechanism over time. In their classical description of their evolutions, movements change over time cycles to become well structured. Movements' structure then depends on their ability to develop its formalization, professionalism, and ability to largely mobilize members and supporters.[37] In the case of Egypt, this evolution started to form in fall 2000 in the shades of the Palestinian second intifada, as activists from different factions started to form the "unified popular committee" or *Al Lagna Al Sha'bia Al Mowahada* to support the Palestinian case against the Israeli occupation. These committees started a new pattern of activism in Egypt that had not been there before. This is not only because it was aiming to unify the different factions of political ideologies for the sake of one cause, but also because it created a new, more flexible and open form of activism that focused on direct action.

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[35] Lina Khatib, and Ellen Lust, "Taking to the streets: the transformation of Arab activism" (Baltimore, Maryland : The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014) Pp 3-9
[36] Ibid Pp 3-9
[37] David S Meyer and Sidney Tarrow, *"The Social Movement Society: Contentious Politics for a New Century"*. (Rowman & Littlefield Publishers, Inc; 1998). P19

This new wave of activism served as the first signs for ditching the old formal and institutional means of activism and paved the way for more disruptive strategies.[38]

Drifting away from the formal state controlled forms of activism in Egypt was only logical for various reasons. Using law, the state authority had designed a legal framework to curb contentious activism through the 1971 constitution in light of the emergency law. This explains why the regime favored formally organized forms of activism; as such forms of activism could be more easily controlled and coopted. However, the presence of law that restricts the activity of civil society and political opposition activism did not define the borders and the limits for the authoritarian state tolerance and acceptance, where the rule of law had never been exercised effectively. In fact, as Albrecht puts it, *"becoming 'legal' or 'illegal' is not a matter of law"* for the exercise of the rule of law was not guaranteed. This could explain the direct coercion and harassment against activists within or outside of formal organizational coverage. These practices of coercion increased and decreased according to the liberalization and de-liberalization necessities of the regime, to force political activism to adapt in return to serve regime stability.[39] Despite all of these fluctuations, Egypt remained on a solid status of being "Not Free" according to the Freedom House index. Indeed, the measure shows a strong decline for political rights and civil liberties in Egypt between 2000 and 2008 with a ranking of between 5 and 6 on a scale from 1 to 7; where countries ranking between 5.5 and 7 are marked as "Not Free" countries.[40]

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[38] Dīnā Shaḥātah, al-Sayyid Yāsīn, and Ālā Rūbī, "*Awdat al-siyāsah: al-ḥarakāt al-iḥtijājīyah al-jadīdah fī Miṣr*". (Al-Qāhirah: Markaz al-Dirāsāt al-Siyāsīyah wa-al-Istirātījīyah, al-Ahrām; 2010) p11
[39] Holger Albrecht, "Raging against the machine political opposition under authoritarianism in Egypt". (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press, 2013): Pp 5-6
[40] Freedom House Index.

Repression and coercive measures were supposed to limit activism in Egypt, however this was not the case. After the new wave of activism in 2000, and particularly after the Iraq invasion in 2003, activists broke their silence and started to focus on internal developments and political reform. The time between 2003 and 2005 witnessed the birth of several political movements that were focusing more on the internal development of the country, with demands for political and constitutional reform. Although activism in Egypt witnessed a drawback after the parliamentary elections in 2005, Seyam's field research on peaceful demonstrations recorded 1,331 demonstrations that extended all over the Egyptian governorates between 2005 and 2009. This oppositional behavior shows that activism was no longer centered on Cairo, but extended to other Egyptian governorates as well. Furthermore, political mobilization was more socially diverse by that time, with labor groups participating in 18.5% of the protests in Seyam's sample, employees in 12.4% and students in 5.9 of the protests. What is also significant about these activism events is that they were not all focusing on political reform and economic development as it was in the time between 2003 and 2005. Noticeably, 15.6% of the protests were addressing human rights and citizens' protection.[41] Thus, there was a significant development in awareness and activism as well as the continuous nourishment of movements despite all the government's efforts to contain disruptive contentious mobilization. Accordingly there is a suggested certain level of change of political behavior that affected the people within Egypt.

With the above-mentioned literature, there exist a gap in explaining the development of activism in Egypt. Surely it continues to evolve due to the interaction

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[41] Dīnā Shaḥātah, al-Sayyid Yāsīn, and Ālā Rūbī, "Awdat al-siyāsah: al-ḥarakāt al-iḥtijājīyah al-jadīdah fī Miṣr". (Al-Qāhirah: Markaz al-Dirāsāt al-Siyāsīyah wa-al-Istirātījīyah, al-Ahrām; 2010) Pp12-17

between the state and the non-state actors, however the change of "collective action" purpose in different instances along the proposed timeline, suggests that there exists a change of political behavior in perceiving social movements as a mean of activism. This study tries to explain the different instances in social movement history between 2000 and 2008 that changed the characteristics of social movements as a mean of activism in Egypt relying on comparing the change of collective action and the change of political opportunity or the collective threat.

1.3 Theoretical Framework

Sidney Tarrow in his book "Power in Movement" argues that contentious collective action is the base and the fundamental component for all movements to develop. Collective action usually is based on a goal or a cause strong enough to engender mobilization. The opening that collective action creates for regular citizens who do not have access to specific institutions, makes these actions contentious and can contribute to the formation of a new movement.[42] Thus, collective action is an essential condition for mobilization and for the creation of movements. On the other hand, mobilization may seem irrational in a context in which the costs of collective action are potentially high, but Tarrow explains that movements emerge if political opportunity structures are favorable that could lead the way for the formation of new allies that could challenge the regime and the elites.[43]

Although Tarrow in his study applies this theory on the Western culture, especially France and the United States in the 1900s and European movements in the 1980s, some similarities can be detected between the birth of movements in these contexts and the

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[42] Sidney Tarrow, *"Power in movement: social movements, collective action and politics".* Cambridge u.a: Cambridge University Press. 1994); Pp 2-3
[43] Ibid, Pp 18

ones that were created in Egypt after 2000. The similarity comes from when social movements form as they often emerge in response to short-term changes in the political opportunity structure surrounding the actors.[44]

Activism in Egypt had not witnessed a welcoming climate, especially due to the persistence of coercive laws restricting civil society and political opposition parties, in addition to the Emergency Law and the continuous harassment and persecution of political activists and human rights advocates. However external pressure imposed on Mubarak's regime had a huge impact in creating new channels for domestic social forces. These new channels later on helped in forming movements and an infrastructure for activism.[45]

A political opportunity forced itself on Egyptian street politics in the year 2000 with the second Palestinian Intifada. The events had their impact not only on collective political action but also on establishing new forms of collaboration between different NGOs, political factions, and activists. Following the formation of the "Popular Committee to Support the Intifada" (PCSI), other movements were established between 2001 and 2003. The new movements did not solely focus on the Palestinian Intifada or freedom but they had diverse demands. For instance, the Anti-Globalization Egyptian Group (AGEG) has mainly focused on economic challenges.[46] Moreover, following the 2003 war, the rallies organized under the umbrella of Kefaya brought together different ideological factions that had not met to organize or cooperate before. These movements and The new wave of activism represented by these movements were marked by two

[44] Ibid, Pp 84

[45] Maha Abdelrahman, "'*With the Islamists?—Sometimes. With the State?—Never!' Cooperation between the Left and Islamists in Egypt".* (British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies. 36 (1): 37-54; 2009) Pp 40

[46] Rabab Mahdi, "*A Decade of Ruptures*", from Lina Khatib, and Ellen Lust, "Taking to the streets: the transformation of Arab activism" (Baltimore, Maryland : The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014)

important and newly established conditions for activism in Egypt. First, the jointly organized protests and conferences (e.g. Cairo Conference against Imperialism and Zionism) by nationalist Nasserites, Muslim Brotherhood (MB), some civil society organizations have excluded formal political parties and different leftist coalitions along with wide range of activist groups (e.g. AGEG) that allowed them to bond and create their collective action from the first place. The new bond has introduced a new concept of cooperation where different political factions have succeeded to organize themselves and bypass their ideological differences. Thereby, this paved the way to unify the purpose of movements established afterwards, namely Kefaya, Shabab Men Agl Al Taghyeer, etc. Also, these events have opened opportunities for mobilization that have attracted new generations of activists later on.[47]

Second, the new movements were able to mobilize in larger numbers compared to previous experiences since Mubarak authoritarian regime was not able to put them under control by using its traditional means of control and coercion. Whilst collective and organized resistance started to emerge in Egypt, new characteristics of industrial activism as represented in the worker protests have come to the forefront due to its challenging nature to the state leadership. Tripp explains the measures which the regime took including, installing of specific representatives from the ruling NDP in the Egyptian Trade Union Federation (ETUF)'s National Council where they occupied twenty-two out of the twenty-three seats. Regardless, the wave of strikes and industrial action that took over Egypt from late 2006 onwards continued to grow and mobilize more participants with its sit-ins, strikes and demonstrations. An estimated number of workers who were involved in strike actions jumped from roughly 140,000 in 2005 to

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[47] Maha Abdelrahman, "'With the Islamists?—Sometimes. With the State?—Never!' Cooperation between the Left and Islamists in Egypt". (British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies. 36 (1): 37-54; 2009) Pp 41

more than half a million in 2008, while the number of protests recorded in the same period tripled from about 200 in 2005 to about 600 in 2008.[48]

The new wave of mobilization and cooperation between different political factions and the political opportunity evolved after the 2003 protests have resulted in the creation of 14 movements and initiatives that tried to challenge regime repression and to oppose the 2005 parliamentary and presidential elections that are most likely to be fraud. Among these movements were Kefaya (Enough) which, although it was dominated by a Nasserist ideology, it had representatives of Leftist groups and the MB. Other movements that tried to challenge the regime included El Shar'i lina (the street is ours) and Shayfeen.com (we can see you), the March 9th Group for Academic Freedoms, the Egyptian Anti-Globalization Group (AGEG), and the Leftist March 20th movement, along with others.[49]

For the purpose of explaining the formation of new activism channels under the authoritarian regime in Egypt with relevance to social movements as means of activism, this paper will examine the validity of two hypotheses:

1. **Periods of strong repression followed by limited liberalization opportunities/period create space for establishing movements and changing forms of activism.**

This research hypothesis argues that if the Egyptian state is strongly coercive which would result in a weak civil society and pressuring syndicates, any later liberal opening or collective threat will produce an opportunity for social movements to form. To be specific, it will produce a prime opportunity for both social movements and workers to

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[48] Charles Tripp, *"The power and the people: paths of resistance in the Middle East*". (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press; 2013). Pp 157
[49] Ibid, Pp 38

adapt each in its way to create new forms of activism at any instance of liberalization adopted by the regime or collective threat.

2. **Stagnation of old generations within different social movements led to the formation of more radical social movements by younger and new generation of activists.**

The new demands of the new generation of activists and their desire to enforce more cooperation between different political factions despite their ideological differences were met by stagnation and resistance from older generations who were on top of the previous social movements. Hence, they forced the new generation of activists to create their own movements that have raised more radical demands compared to earlier historical eras.

1.4 Research Design

1.4.1 Case Selection: Egypt 2000-2008

The birth of social movements that challenge regime strategies and state coercion in an authoritarian state is threatening in an anti-opposition political climate, where opposing the government is not welcomed or even tolerated. Movements in Egypt had to go through a long process of formation, as they did not develop overnight. Although unified collective action -under repressive authoritarian regimes- between the movements' founders took decades, this study aims to shed the light on the interaction between the factors that paved the way for the movements to develop and the change of political opportunities that presented themselves along the study timeline. It is important to note that the study will not focus on the historical origins of activism and movements. With regards to the topic under study, Egypt can be perceived as a unique case compared to other Middle Eastern authoritarian countries because of several reasons. On one hand, the formal institutions of political participation had been

weakened for decades in Egypt, unlike Tunisia for instance where non-state actors were active, such as the Tunisian Labor Union (UGTT) that had a major political role. Thus, changing forms of activism from formal to disruptive form was essential to revive political activism in Egypt, and this change was not necessary in Tunisia. On the other hand, Egypt did not suffer ethnic diversity issues, which maximized the chances of cooperation between different political affiliation to mobilize over the same collective threat, unlike other countries such as Syria and Yemen.

This case study will focus on Egypt in the period between 2000 after the Palestinian Second Intifada protests to 2009 when movements had sharpened their mobilization capabilities and had developed new forms of activism creating a movement infrastructure.

During the chosen timeline, the study will focus on certain instances in the political timeline that have produced a reaction of activism, a change in political behavior and social movement mobilization. These instances will be divided into three groups:

1) Timeframe: 2000- 2002; The Palestinian Intifada in 2000, and the formation of new networks between different political ideologies and factions.

2) Timeframe: 2003- 2004; The Iraq Invasion in 2003 along with regime's coercive strategies in 2002. This contributed to an increase in demands for internal reform.

3) Timeframe: 2005- 2008; The aftermath of the parliamentary and presidential elections in 2005, the neo-liberal policies of the Nazif government and the birth of a new wave of young activism that was different from the former 70s generation activists and politicians.

The three instances suggested were chosen to assess the change in social movements as a tool for activism after these three notable events. The three events

are not treated as solely domestic or foreign events, but rather milestones for the change of movements as an activism tool and the change of political behavior.

1.4.2 Variable Operationalization

The dependent variable of this study is the formation of social movements as a tool for activism.[50] In order to infer the causal factors behind this phenomenon, I have chosen the factors that are most significant and that are more likely to influence the dependent variable. Thus the independent variables are:

a) <u>Effect of regime strategies on the formation of social movements</u>

Adaption capabilities of civil society and non-state actors to liberal opening or collective threats imposed by authoritarian regime strategies. In other words the liberal openings or collective threats will cause a transfer of activism from formal institutions to disruptive forms of activism.[51]

b) <u>Stagnation of old generation and the internal splits between the old and new generation of activists:</u>

The tension within movements between old and new generations of activists affected the development of new movements with more radical characteristics. As I am focusing on the evolution of social movements, it is crucial to look at one of the main factors behind its continuous development. This factor refers to the widening gap between the old and new generation, which forced new activists to establish their own movements with more radical tendency, rather than the older 1970s activists' movements.

The next Chapter would be mainly exploring the strategies of Egyptian activists to move from formal to disruptive forms of contention under the impact of state

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[50] Through the studying of the formation of social movements in Egypt after 2000, I am studying the change of activism that was previously divided on different political institutional actor. Hence, the new wave of activism was based on informal institutional bases, rather than the previously formal ones that had been subjected to direct and indirect coercion of the regime.

[51] The ability of social movements to change its structure as a response to regime strategies can be regarded as a 'political opportunity' in itself as the theory of social movement explains.

repression in the timeframe between 2000 and 2004. Followed by another chapter comparing the changes in the political behavior of young activists and older generations within different social movements and the formation of more radical social movements between 2005 and 2008.

Chapter Two: Latent Heat of Disruptive Activism

After the declaration of the Egyptian republic in 1953 there were many promises for a democratic life. However, these promises were not fulfilled as the Egyptian state—starting with Nasser's era—strove to contain forms of activism that could have challenged the newly established regime. Many obstacles prevented the flourishing of an independent civil society. On the contrary, the professional syndicates for example were used for stabilizing the regime rather than correcting its path and ensuring the collective rights of the represented community. This exploitation of civil society was in favor of state corporatism in the contemporary state of Egypt. Throughout the years, activists tried to find channels to express their demands through civil society institutions, syndicates, or political parties, however when these channels were confronted with repression and coercion a need for new channels were evident. In this chapter I will give an overview of the relationship between the state and activist institutions in Egypt, as well as the forms and mechanisms of repression that affected this relationship. Highlighting regime strategies and how did it force activism to adapt and change its methods accordingly in the time frame between 2000 and 2004/5.

In this chapter I argue that the strategies of Egyptian activists moved from formal to disruptive forms of contention under the impact of state repression. Throughout the chapter I will analyze the repression periods followed by limited opening of liberalization that created spaces for establishing movements, and changing forms of activism in Egypt. The first section will shed light on the historical foundation of state-opposition interaction in the contemporary state in Egypt. I then turn in the second section to analyze the state repression in Egypt and the use of direct and indirect coercion measures. The following section will analyze the adaptation of activism post

Palestinian Intifada 2000-2002 and the significance of the movements developed during this phase. Lastly, I will discuss the evolution of activism post Iraqi invasion 2003-2005 and the emergence of new regime-challenging movements.

2.1. Overview on the State-Activism Relationship in Egypt

Nasser military regime initiated the national unity program, which in return resulted in "suppression of popular participation" in both political and developmental process, where everything was run by the government. The military was the main representative of the popular will, and accordingly political activities were all run by a top-down approach.[52] Starting the 1950s, the relationship between the state and any potential or actual political opposition in Egypt has been subject to either bargains or coercive measures. Nasser's regime initiated a bargaining system with labor and the middle class. The main idea of the bargain was that all political parties and civil society organizations were either banned or at least put under the direct control of the regime, yet the Nasserist regime provided social services in return in the form of food subsidies, employment opportunities in state institutions, energy, housing, and transportation. In addition, the state provided free education and health care.[53]

Nasser had established the pillars of the newly fashioned authoritarian regime in Egypt. The new system was founded on nationalist-populist foundations which gave it more elasticity and fluidity and helped it to adapt to changes. The interaction between the formal and informal modes for conflict resolution, bargaining, and coalition management, gave the authoritarian regime a huge advantage of adjustment based on specific situations, which Heydemann would call "bounded adaptiveness". The

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[52] Peter Johnson, "*Egypt Under Sadat*". (MERIP Reports, No. 11, pp. 3-9: August 1972). P. 4
[53] Dina Shehata, *"The Fall of the Pharaoh: how Hosni Mubarak's Reign Came to an End"*. (Foreign Affairs, Vol. 90, No. 3 (MAY/JUNE 2011) Pp26-32: 2011), P.27

existence of formal institutions played a great role in controlling mass politics and potential activists. Formal institutions such as parliament, trade unions, non-governmental organizations, political parties and syndicates were tools that the regime used to maintain its control over the political arena and also served as bargaining tools between the rulers and other political actors, as clarified later on in this chapter. The space given to some political factions would increase or decrease based on the situation and the needs of the regime at that time, which would in return affect the bargain between the political actors, and hence the form of activism.[54]

The contemporary authoritarian state in Egypt relied on state-centered corporatism to ensure the durability of its regime. According to Nazih Ayubi, state corporatism is "*an 'integrated' variety of corporatism wherein the corporations are not viewed as the bearers of private interests, nor as mediators between the individual and the state, but are in effect 'state agents"*. In that sense, the state used the professional syndicates, labor unions and agricultural cooperatives as corporatized sectors to serve the goals of the state both economically and politically.[55] The state encouraged the creation of syndicates and labor unions, as these organizations served as the best instruments to control the middle classes and workers. These classes were marked as a threat for the regime given the possibility of cooperation against the regime which would have exposed the absence of effective political participation. This explains why the state encouraged the increasing quantity—but not the quality—of such organizations and facilitated the increase in its membership.

[54] Steven Heydemann, *"Social Pacts and Authoritarianism"*. In Oliver Schlumberger, "*Debating Arab authoritarianism: dynamics and durability in nondemocratic regimes"*, (Stanford, California, Stanford University Press, 2007), Pp26-27

[55] Nazih Ayubi, "*Withered socialism or whether socialism?: the radical Arab states as populist-corporatist regimes*". (Third World Quarterly. 13 (1): 89-105; 1992). Pp 97-98

The biggest expansion in voluntary membership happened between the 1950s and the 1960s under the direct supervision and control of the military. That period of time witnessed a very tight environment for any activism, given that political parties were not legally allowed to exist beyond the ruling party.[56] The origins of state corporatism were planted in Nasser's era, and can be tracked since the 1950s as Nasser had created a new bargain with the union leaders. According to this bargain, the unions will not perform any act of activism (right to strike or form an independent initiative) and in return of keeping the union leaders positions and securing jobs for employees in the state sector. Later, in the 1960s the Arab Social Union party formed committees in the largest workplaces to supervise the workers and their managers.[57]

By the mid-1970s, to foster his legitimacy, President Anwar El Sadat unlike Nasser opened the door for political liberalization. This liberalization move was empowered by his desires to gain both national and international consent for his state and government. Consequently, opposition parties and movements were allowed to gain some representation within the country's elected assemblies as long as their representation would not threaten the two-thirds majority of the ruling NDP. The ruling party was set to be always in control of the real levers of power, whilst opposition power was allowed to have a considered quota in the parliament and in the civil society. [58]

A significant feature of dictatorships is their ability to mobilize cooperation and to prevent rebellion through policy concessions and the distribution of rents.[59] Noting

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[56] Dina Shehata, "*The Fall of the Pharaoh: how Hosni Mubarak's Reign Came to an End*". (Foreign Affairs, Vol. 90, No. 3 (MAY/JUNE 2011) Pp26-32: 2011). P.29

[57] Philip Marfleet, "*State and Society*". In Rabab El-Mahdi and Philip Marfleet. *"Egypt: the moment of change"*. (London: Zed Books; 2009) Pp 28-29

[58]Dina Shehata, "The Fall of the Pharaoh: how Hosni Mubarak's Reign Came to an End". (Foreign Affairs. 90 (3): 26-32; 2011). P.29

[59] Jennifer Gandhi, And Adam Przeworski, "*Cooperation, Cooptation, and Rebellion Under Dictatorships*". (Economics & Politics. 18 (1): 1-26. 2006). P2

that rents may not always be in the form of oil production benefits, it could also be in the form of sharing partial political power within governmental institutions. The use of such tool is tied to the strength and effectiveness of opposition. Gandhi and Przeworski observe that when the opposition is weak there is less risk of rebellion, thus the dictator would chose to maximize his utility and would not share rents with the opposition. However, when there is a possibility for rebellion with a presence of a strong opposition, the dictator would compromise and share enough rents so as not to let the opposition rebel against his power.[60]

Mubarak's regime started after the assassination of former president Sadat, and the angry opposition and the economic crisis that hit Egypt in the 1990s forced Mubarak to adapt the control measures of the state over political life in Egypt. The unstable levels of external debt forced Mubarak to sign an agreement with the World Bank for economic reform in Egypt, which forced new challenges on the authoritarian Egyptian regime. In the next twenty years after the economic decline in early 1990s, Egypt witnessed a reduction of social spending and opened the way for trade liberalization. The effect of the economic reform extended to readjusting the economic structure. Social spending was reduced, trade liberalized, and guaranteed governmental employment was suspended. The adjustments also affected commodity prices and interest rates, which impacted the lives of ordinary Egyptians, even though they had not yet gotten over the aftermath of 1973 war.[61]

The number of associations under the supervision of the Ministry of Social Affairs increased considerably in the mid-1970s, yet it stagnated in the mid-1980s.

[60] Ibid, P2

[61]Dina Shehata, *"The Fall of the Pharaoh: how Hosni Mubarak's Reign Came to an End"*. (Foreign Affairs, Vol. 90, No. 3 (MAY/JUNE 2011) Pp26-32: 2011), P.27

Notably, the number of association jumped by 40% from 7,593 to 10,731 during 1976.[62] The new policies of the state aimed at more economic liberalization encouraged different social groups to establish their organization. As for political parties, the same period witnessed changes in the extent of political freedom. With the demise of the single party regime concept, 13 legally authorized political parties emerged on the political scene. The main significant and politically important parties were —of course— the ruling National Democratic Party, the liberal New Wafd Party, the centrist (currently Islamist Socialist Labor Party), the leftist Progressive Unionist Patriotic Rally, and the newly authorized Arab Democratic Nasirite Party. Yet there were two other political powers that remained important, yet were not legalized; the Muslim Brotherhood and the communists. Those political powers were not given the right to establish their own political parties, and remained legally marginalized and therefore worked with other legalized political parties to channel their own political views. The communists cooperated with the Progressive Unionist Patriotic Rally, and Muslim Brotherhood found alliance partners in the New-Wafd and later with the Socialist Labor Party.[63] The severe constraints and oppressive measures that were forced on political life have severely restricted any form of civic or political participation for young generations and civil society in Egypt.[64]

Numbers reflected the miserable situation of civic life, based on the Ministry of Social Solidarity numbers, in 1991 there were 12,832 associations where more than

[62] Center for Political and Strategic Studies, Al-Taqrir al-istratiji al-Arabi, 1989 (Arab strategic report, 1989) (Cairo: Dar al-Ahram; 1990). pp. 458-462; Ministry of Social Affairs, Al-Mu'ashirat al-ihsa'iyya, p. 254. As cited by Muṣṭafā Kamāl al- Sayyid, *"A civil society in Egypt?"*, (The Middle East Journal. 47 (2): 228-242:1993). P232-234

[63] Muṣṭafā Kamāl al-Sayyid, *"A civil society in Egypt?"*, (The Middle East Journal. 47 (2): 228-242;1993). P232-234

[64] Dina Shehata, *"The Fall of the Pharaoh: how Hosni Mubarak's Reign Came to an End"*. (Foreign Affairs, Vol. 90, No. 3 (MAY/JUNE 2011) Pp26-32: 2011), P.28

75% of these associations included under the umbrella of the ministry were concerned with providing social services, such as child care, social assistance, family care, etc. Most of these associations were centralized in Cairo, with a total of 3,266 organizations, which is almost 25% of the total registered organizations. Importantly, Cairo's demographical weight in the country does not correlate with the number of associations registered and working in Cairo, and it rather reflects its political centrality.[65]

The growth of non-governmental institutions was supposed to correlate with growth of activism and a richer political life. Assuming the decline of state role and an increase in activism freedom.[66] However, the Freedom House Index showed a huge decline for political rights and civil liberties in Egypt between 1981 and 2004, with de-liberalization and repression intensifying as reflected in an increase in the Freedom House scores from a of 4 to 6 by the year 1992/1993. Given this increase the ranking of the country shifted from "partially free" to "not free" status.[67] This shows the adaptiveness of the authoritarian regime and its institutional configuration that allowed it to close off any chance for political reform or activism.

Formal institutions should have opened a doorway for the rise of activism in Egypt throughout the years. However, they were designed to shut down and limit any chances for activism, especially among youth. This can be explained through certain characteristics of these institutions that allowed them to dodge any signs of change. They were based on Nasser's national-populist formula which made these institutions highly adaptive and in return crucial for authoritarian resilience. This could explain how

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[65] Muṣṭafā Kamāl al-Sayyid,"A civil society in Egypt?", (The Middle East Journal. 47 (2): 228-242;1993). P231

[66] Kim D. Reimann, "A View from the Top: International Politics, Norms and the Worldwide Growth of NGOs". (International Studies Quarterly Vol. 50, No. 1 pp. 45-67: March 2006). Pp 45-46

[67] Freedom House Index, web: https://freedomhouse.org/

the authoritarian regime survived using curbed activism and state controlled institutions. In fact, the continuity of these formal institutions under the full control of the state is vital for its survival, which offers a significant reason of why the state maintained its closed control over the channels of activism in Egypt, through repression and coercion.[68]

2.2 Repression in the Egyptian State

In authoritarian regimes the measures taken for maintaining control are case sensitive. This means an authoritarian leader would have to carefully weigh the opportunity cost of taking any coercive actions as well as the probabilities of success for such actions. Repressive measures are usually applied when the costs are less than the benefits; any other alternatives or opportunity for bargaining could be neglected and are not favorable if repression would not cost the state its power, control or legitimacy or else.[69] Repression as of its nature, may usually take a violent form directed from the state on the sources of threat, such as political opposition. In fact, violence in some cases is tackled as a legitimate tool of state power and organization that could be found in the state's everyday administration.

In terms of comparing cost and benefit of using repression and coercive measures, the Middle East is commonly known to have a history of relatively low cost for repression. It sounds only logical that if people were able to mobilize, the power of mobilization would increase the cost of repression, yet authoritarian regimes do not give up easily. [70]When the state in Syria and in Algeria found themselves challenged

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[68] Steven Heydemann, *"Social Pacts and Authoritarianism"*. In Oliver Schlumberger, *"Debating Arab authoritarianism: dynamics and durability in nondemocratic regimes"*, (Stanford, California, Stanford University Press, 2007), PP26-

[69] Christian Davenport, "*State Repression and Political Order*", (Annual Review of Political Science. 10: 1-23; 2007). Pp4

[70] Eva Bellin, "The Robustness Of Authoritarianism In The Middle East: Exceptionalism In Comparative Perspective". (Comparative Politics. Vol. 36, No. 2 Pp. 139-157: 2004). Pp150

by the Islamists' impressive mobilization power in the 1980s and the 1990s, respectively, the state lessened the costs of this repression. The states used the special threat posed by the Islamist to manipulate the situation in its favor so as not to lose domestic legitimacy or international support. The threat then became the mobilization itself and not the states' repression; hence the Islamists were framed as a threat to order and security in front of domestic and international constituencies.[71] The Islamists were not the only ones who have suffered from repression under Middle Eastern regimes, also the democrats. Coercion is directed against those who pose challenges to the state and demand reforms that advocate good governance, demanding their right for a single, coherent, transparent and an accountable set of rules. The major two actors who have been calling for those political reforms were none other but Islamists and democrats that usually take the heat in any extensive repressive actions.[72]

It is puzzling why people do not fight back coercive rule if it includes too much repression and violence. Yet, in order for people to mobilize and roll their sleeves to resist a state of repression a combination of circumstances must exist that would encourage them to fight back, and rationalizing their behavior that could violate their own safety. One major factor to determine the rise of activism and mobilization is the existence of social networks, the vulnerability of targets, and an emotional reflex, such as anger or self-defense, could be a reason to resist; these mentioned factors could be found in most of the Middle Eastern authoritarian countries.[73] In that sense, we cannot exclude Egypt where it has been impossible to peacefully mobilize people or provoke

71 Ibid, 150
72 Steven Heydemann, *"Social Pacts and Authoritarianism"*. In Oliver Schlumberger, "*Debating Arab Authoritarianism: Dynamics and Durability in Nondemocratic Regimes*", (Stanford, California, Stanford University Press, 2007),. Pp 28
[73] Charles Tripp, "*The power and the people: paths of resistance in the Middle East*". (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press; 2013) Pp68- 69

a demonstration due to media control and the banning of any form of activism. The print media were severely controlled by the regime since Nasser era, and the government banned rallies and lobbying. For fear of assault, arrest, or worse, no one dared to organize demonstrations or marches for a very long time, as it was considered as an irrational behavior.[74]

In Egypt, the limit of state repression against its citizens was not bounded by the constitution or legal restrictions, but rather by the perceptions of the officials and the political culture present in the country at a specific point in time. The 1971 Constitution guaranteed a long list of civil and political rights, prohibiting torture, and defining the guidelines for the state to exercise its power on different levels. However, the constitution only framed the broad guidelines, leaving a lot of matters to be decided by laws and regulations that the state could easily manipulate to violate citizens' basic rights. Mubarak government used constitutional amendments in its favor for a long time to force more oppression and coercion on the citizens. With the endless renewal of the emergency law in place since 1981, the government was able to take any measures "required by the circumstances," when necessary. These measures included the suspension of the constitutional rights of citizens, and forcing coercive rules on civil society organizations and political opposition.[75] Under the umbrella of this law and the amendments that followed it, the president has the authority of referring civilians to military courts to be prosecuted by military officers (judges).[76] These civilians' felonies are affiliated to state security and their verdicts must be ratified by the president.

74 Rabab El Mahdi, "*Egypt: A Decade of Ruptures*". In Lina Khatib and Ellen Lust. 2014. "Taking to the Streets: The Transformation of Arab Activism". (John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland; 2014). Pp 53
75 Muṣṭafā Kamāl al-Sayyid,*"A civil society in Egypt?"*, (The Middle East Journal. 47 (2): 228-242;1993). Pp 235
76 Sadiq Reza, "*Endless Emergency: The Case of Egypt*". (University of California Press, New Criminal Law Review: An International and Interdisciplinary Journal, Vol. 10, No. 4 (Fall 2007), pp. 532-553: 2007). Pp 540-541

Around 1,033 civilians were reported to be tried in military courts in the time between 1992 and 2000. This which resulted in 92 death sentences and 644 prison terms as recorded. [77]

Notably Egypt's Mubarak had been one of the most successful authoritarian rulers to maintain his power and preserve his control for more than two decades through a high degree of violence and repression against any group who would organize opposition activities. The main tool for repression was the sophisticated security sector in the form of military as a safety net in the background, the state security police (Amn El Dawla), the state intelligence apparatus (Mukhabarat), and the private security personnel grouped in powerful elite members with wide jurisdictions. The menu of coercive control had various forms, starting with close surveillance of political activities outside of what the regime would allow, to direct personal threats, physical abuse, and torture in custody as well. The state bureaucracy was the backbone for the organization of repression, which was mainly in the form of the Ministry of Interior and the Ministry of Social Affairs. The state used its institutions well to orchestrate the stage for the cohesive organization and control over activism and opposition, where the Ministry of Information Technology and Communication cooperated with other state-controlled institutions in violating citizens' rights of freedom and also in holding back the truth from them, as media was censored and used to intimidate people.[78]

Since 1981, Egypt had entered into a new era of coercion through the emergency law. The associated security and military courts constrained any possible loophole for liberty, even through the judicial system. However, it is important to note that the Egyptian state did not use repression and coercion whenever possible; it was used

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[77] Ibid. Pp 540-541

[78] Holger. Albrecht, *"Raging against the machine political opposition under authoritarianism in Egypt"*. (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press: 2013). Pp 13-14

whenever any other forms of containment failed. The strong coordination between the state institutions and tools was formed to contain any possible opposition or challenges against the state, which did not happen much due to how strong the system was and vicious in its reaction.[79] It is important then to discuss the different forms of repression that have been used in Egypt, between indirect and direct means of coercion.

2.2.1 Indirect Coercion

"(Law) was the basis of state governance and ..no authority should interfer in court cases and justice.. since the first day (in power) I have abided by the rule of justice" ~ Mubarak on the sovereignty of Law[80]

Unclear set of codes and rules are the best gateway for confusing any associational life to limit it and control it. The Egyptian constitution had been a legitimate tool to limit any form of activism or participation, despite its major role in protecting and organizing it. In its quest to manipulate activism, the state in Egypt indirectly limited activism and opposition through two main pieces of legislation, namely Law 32 of 1964 on citizens' societies, Law 40 of 1977 on political parties, and Law 84 of 2002 for NGOs and civil society. The manipulation was not only on how the laws were written, but also in applying these laws.

First law 32 of 1964: this law regulates the registration of any society organization with the Ministry of Social Affairs and prohibits any political engagement for the organization in order to register it.[81] Again, the constitution in Egypt was not drafted with clarity around the concepts it regulated, an example would be the term "political activity" was loosely defined and did not provide clear characteristics. Thus

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79 Ibid, Pp 13-14

80 Mubarak's speech on the 25th of April 1986, Al-Ahram, 26 April 1986 as cited by Hesham Al-Awadi, "The Muslim Brothers in Pursuit of Legitmacy: Power and Political Islam in Egypt under Mubarak". (Tauris Academic Studies, I,B, Tauris and Co. Ltd: 2004). P53

81 Muṣṭafā Kamāl al-Sayyid,"A civil society in Egypt?", (The Middle East Journal. 47 (2): 228-242;1993) Pp 236-237

it was upon the interpreter to identify if the organization's proposed activity is political or not, or in other words "sensitive" or not. Consequently, the ministry has denied registration to certain associations, like the Arab Organization for Human Rights and its Egyptian chapter. This law was also used to intimidate other institutions if they were engaged in activities deemed unsuitable or if their leaders were not approved by national security, as they were threatened to suspend their activities.[82]

Law No. 84 of 2002: this law was a new obstacle for the NGOs and civil society in Egypt. Before the issuance of this law, NGOs that had been perceived sensitive were operating in a legal hide-and-seek. Whereas, the NGOs were denied their legal recognition, they were still operating under the umbrella of processing their papers. Many political NGOs were registering themselves as either nonprofit companies or law firms to escape the legalization noose posed by the unjust laws. To force more repression and control on formation or registration of new association, the government issued Law No. 84 of 2002. Accordingly, by June 4th of 2003 all NGOs had to register.[83]

Law 40 of 1977: this law was founded to regulate the establishment of any political party in Egypt, yet it was also limited and conditioned based on vague and loose statements. For example in article number four discussing the conditions in which a party can be suspended or denied its legitimacy, one of the conditions states that "*the party, in its principles, programs, the exercise of its activity, or the election of its leaderships or members, shall not be founded on a religious, class, sectarian, categorical, or geographical basis, or on the exploitation of religious feelings, or*

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[82] Ibid, Pp 236-237

[83] Holger. Albrecht, *"Raging against the machine political opposition under authoritarianism in Egypt"*. (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press: 2013).Pp68

discrimination because of race, origin, or creed."[84] Thus, the law was easily manipulated and used to limit certain unfavorable political factions. Islamists have been denied from legal representation, and other political opposition powers based on the interpretation of this law specifically. Also it was used to freeze the Socialist Labor Party (Hizb al-Amal al-Ishtiraki, SLP) that has associated with the Muslim Brotherhood in an electoral alliance since 1987. The party has been in a twirling mixed up ideology between leftists and Islamists till the 1990s where Magdi Husayn became the party leader and became one of the most outspoken critics of government members and policies. This rise of activism and alliance with the unfavorable political faction was not tolerated for long by the regime, where they froze the party's newspaper "Al-Sha'ab" and then later on the party itself. The Egyptian authoritarian regime was clever in "fine tuning" its soft-repression tactics; using legalities as needed and as per to the situation. The repression in that case is indirect as it did not target directly the members of the political party or its leader who had maintained his office in the heart of Cairo. The state targeted the party's activism indirectly through condemning the party as illegal to stop the raising of the party's activism and challenge that was posing on the regime.[85]

2.2.2 Direct Coercion:

Unlike his predecessors, Mubarak invested his confidence and trust in his security, military commanders, and the heads of ultra-influential intelligence services. As a fully military man, he left a very narrow space for competition, if there was any room at all.[86] Coercion and repression are means of controlling, and can also be used to maintain precautionary measures to send clear and strong messages to whoever would

84 http://www.parliament.am/library/Political%20parties/egiptos.pdf Last Acc. 06/06/2016
85 Holger. Albrecht, *"Raging against the machine political opposition under authoritarianism in Egypt".* (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press: 2013). Pp 48-49
86 Tarek Osman, "Egypt on the Brink: from Nasser to Mubarak". (Yale University Press Publication; 2010). Pp 170-171

try to go against the state. Any potential challenge coming from civic organizations, public disorder or university students would usually meet the same fate of torture and coercion. The Egyptian Organization for Human Rights reported that in the period between 2003 and 2007, 167 deaths had occurred in Egyptian prisons due to severe mistreatment.[87] Direct hostility towards civil society has been a repeated reality that activists had to face. Arrests based on framed or unclear allegations have been used a lot to arrest dangerous figures, especially at certain events. Before the 1995 elections, the government arrested 81 members of the Muslim Brotherhood (Egypt's largest non-governmental civil association at that time) and other Islamists, the main charges were "planning to incite armed rebellion" and were put to trial in 1992, yet it was self-explanatory that the arrests were meant to hinder Islamists from participating in the upcoming elections. Mubarak tried to legitimize the arrest by confirming, in a 1995 interview prior to the elections, that the Muslim Brotherhood was a threat for Egypt. He confirmed that they were linked to violent terrorist organization and that they had killed Sadat once he gave them the room for dialogue.[88] According to a testimony by Negad Al-Borai, secretary-general of the Egyptian Organization for Human Rights (EOHR), had the Muslim Brotherhood youth been allowed to participate in the elections, they would have become a major threat for the regime due to the amount of seats they could have won in the parliament. Eventually, in 1992 54 of the defendants had their trial and were sentenced up to five years in Jail.[89]

[87] Tarek Osman, "Egypt on the Brink: from Nasser to Mubarak". (Yale University Press Publication; 2010). P 191

[88] Charles Robert Davidson, "Reform and Repression in Mubarak's Egypt". (The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs: Fall 2000), P8

89 David Gollust, "*Egypt: Muslim Trial," Transcript of Voice of America Broadcast"*. September 18, 1995, available in Global NewsBank, as cited by Charles Robert Davidson, "Reform and Repression in Mubarak's Egypt". (The Fletcher Forum of World Affairs: Fall 2000), Pp8-9

On another note, Saad Eddin Ibrahim, a renowned social scientist, tried to cross the line of tolerated opposition and consequently was sentenced to seven years in prison by a state security court in July 2002. Although he was protected by Suzan Mubarak for a long time in his work in promoting human rights, this protection was lifted when he started to criticize Mubarak's sons. In addition, his supervision of the 2000 elections had triggered other concerns among high authorities, those two conditions together combined resulted in the harsh sentence. However, due to international pressure Ibrahim was then released based on the final court statement in March 18, 2003.[90]

The effect of repression on activism cannot be the same as it differs from one scenario to another. While the state expects that repression would have certain consequences, this is not always the case. Repressive behavior could have different negative, positive, or even a sometimes an inverted U-shape effect on collective action. On the other hand, sometimes repression would not have any effect at all on the rise or decrease of activism in certain counties.[91] Mobilization is one of the most important factors that affect the outcome of repression, and on the other hand affected by state coercion and will. As in the case of Egypt, the repression on civil society forced many popular political forces to be reluctant in regards of political mobilization. This reluctance lowered repression cost, yet it did not increase its benefits either. There is no straightforward correlation that explains the relationship between the state's coercive capacity and demobilization. In some cases, state coercion encourages mobilization and civil society activism. In other scenarios, repression could succeed in demobilizing

90 Holger. Albrecht, "Raging against the machine political opposition under authoritarianism in Egypt". (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press: 2013). Pp63
91 Christian Davenport, "State Repression and Political Order", (Annual Review of Political Science. 10: 1-23; 2007). Pp8

certain political factions, yet nurtures others that could develop the ability to challenge the state through mobilization.[92]

2.3 First Instance: Intifada in Palestine… Intifada in Egypt

"*What is threatening to authoritarian regimes is not the breakdown of legitimacy but the organization of counter hegemony.. only when collective alternatives are available does political choice become available to isolated individuals*"

~ Geoffrey Pridham [93]

The authoritarian regime did not accept the existence of minimal and weak opposition because they were trying to promote democracy, but rather to limit their outreach to larger sectors of society and keep them under the coercive measures of the state's formal institution (parties, associations, syndicates). The formal landscape of politics did not represent all the different factions of the Egyptian society as it was urban-based and targeted at the middle and upper classes. Consequently, the organizations performing under the formal politics umbrella failed to be the major channel for political participation for Egyptian society. New forms of activism that were no longer loyal to the regime were necessary, yet it was unknown when they would emerge. It was not until the 2000s that human rights groups and social movements started to challenge the regime and took to the streets for protests.[94] The regime did not

92 Eva Bellin, "The Robustness Of Authoritarianism In The Middle East: Exceptionalism In Comparative Perspective". (Comparative Politics. Vol. 36, No. 2 Pp. 139-157: 2004). Pp 146
93 Geoffrey Pridham, *"Transitions to Democracy: Comparative Perspectives From Southern Europe, Latin America and Eastern Europe".* (Aldershot: Dartmouth: 1995). Pp 54-55
94 Holger. Albrecht, "Raging against the machine political opposition under authoritarianism in Egypt". (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press: 2013). . Pp 60-61

use direct coercion at first, and tried to show some tolerance for these new forms of activism.[95]

The creation of social movements did not come from a democratic institutional foundation that favors mobilization or empowers democracy as it is the case in the classical social movement theory. The absence of empowering democracy and mobilization explains why it took so long to establish social movements and even longer for them to adapt their shape to the Egyptian context and to flourish. The low levels of popular mobilization for democratic reform lowered the cost of repression and coercion and increased the security establishments that prevented the formation of any initiative for political reform. One of the most important factors that reinforced the existence of authoritarian regimes in the Middle East and its robustness, is the unified credible threat posed by Israel on the occupied lands of Palestine and its neighboring Arab countries.[96] However the same reason for the robustness of authoritarian regime was one of the main reasons for the establishment of social movements in Egypt. To formulate a collective action that can resist and challenge a local repressive power as the state, there must be a political public body formed of diversified citizens to act upon their demanded rights.[97]

The repression strategies and the coercive measures that had smothered the ordinary channels for activism forced activism to deviate from the ordinary channels. Activism began to shift from the formal channels such as opposition parties, civil society organizations and syndicates, to more disruptive –often- transnationally linked form, which in that context is social movements. Notably, the social movements started

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95 Ibid, Pp 60-61
96 Eva Bellin, "The Robustness of Authoritarianism In The Middle East: Exceptionalism In Comparative Perspective". (Comparative Politics. Vol. 36, No. 2 Pp. 139-157: 2004). Pp150-151
97 Charles Tripp, "The power and the people: paths of resistance in the Middle East". (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press; 2013). PP132

to play a critical role in mobilization, especially after the Palestinian intifada in 2000.[98] The following sections would elaborate more how these movements were created as a reaction to regime strategies at certain instances that presented themselves as political opportunities for movements to form and become a valid tool for activism. In addition, the upcoming sections will discuss the dynamics and features of these movements and how they developed between the different historical instances and the public spaces they contested.

2.3.1 Activism in Egypt post Palestinian Intifada 2000-2002

Social movements in Egypt passed through different stages throughout the years, especially in Mubarak's era. Repression alongside with specific events such as the Palestinian Intifada formed an opportunity for new social movements to be created. This stage marked the beginning of a new era for activism in the Arab world, and Egypt specifically, as Nicola Pratt emphasized that "*The second Intifada triggered perhaps the largest most radical spontaneous demonstrations in the Arab world since the first gulf war*"[99]. Notably repression doesn't have a definite relationship with activism, however repression can ignite mobilization instead of submission to empower activism. Repression then can have a positive impact on the formation of social movements (as a tool of activism) if certain conditions apply, such as the existence of rich social network that can offer resources to initiate and sustain mobilization.[100]

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98 Lina Khatib and Ellen Lust, " *Reconsidering Activism in the Arab World: Arab Uprising and Beyond*".
In Lina Khatib and Ellen Lust. 2014. "Taking to the Streets: The Transformation of Arab Activism".
(John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland; 2014). Pp5
99 Nicola Christine Pratt, "*Democracy and authoritarianism in the Arab world*". (Boulder: Lynne Rienner Publishers: 2007). Pp170
100 Reinoud Leenders, "*Social Movement Theory and the Onset of the Popular Uprising in Syria*".
(Arab Studies Quarterly, Vol. 35, No. 3, Special Issue: Perspectives on the Arab Uprisings, pp. 273-289; 2013). P274

The Palestinian Intifada revived the latent repertoire for activism and political opposition in Egypt. Different political actors started to turn their heads towards the streets and to take over public spaces, establishing new forums of collaboration between different political factions and ideologies. This new mood for collaboration was transnational and powered by twenty collective NGOs and independent activists to establish the popular committee PCSI to support Palestine.[101]

Activism is a transnational phenomenon, where the rise of activism in a country could affect the other in a contagious fashion. Abd El Rahman emphasizes that transnational movements are built on nationally based groups and movements, a truth known but usually neglected and forgotten. Nevertheless, the emergence and the growth of some of the national protesting movements could be influenced by transnational movements, such as the case for AGEG movement in Egypt.[102] In other words, movements and demonstrations are like a series of dominos, once one fall, others follow. The demonstration that broke on the 10th of September 2001 and that were organized by the committee was followed by a series of demonstration that were in the heart of Cairo and almost in all of the Egyptian universities and mosques. The spark triggered other forms of activism and participation on the grass root level, through campaigns for fund raising, finance medical and relief convoys and conferences in favor of the Palestinian case.[103] The intifada was capable of reviving the hope for Arabs that people-power resistance could beat the unjust and the foreign occupier that took over their lands and rights. The intifada was able of mobilizing huge masses of youth in

101 Rabab El Mahdi, "*Egypt: A Decade of Ruptures*". In Lina Khatib and Ellen Lust, "Taking to the Streets: The Transformation of Arab Activism". (John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland; 2014). Pp 54
102 Maha Abdelrahman, "*The Transnational and the Local: Egyptian Activists and Transnational Protest Networks*". (British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies. 38 (3): 407-424: 2011). Pp 409
103 Maha Abdelrahman, "'*With the Islamists?—Sometimes. With the State?—Never!' Cooperation between the Left and Islamists in Egypt*". (British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies. 36 (1): 37-54: 2009). Pp 42

Palestine and it was able also to spark mobilization among Arab youth and new generations to make their own intifada against the status quo of their own country.[104]

The new generation of youth could not ignore the gap between their aspirations for their countries and what their leaders had to offer, hence the arising feeling of anger was not to be contained. Unlike the older generations who had been living in the pre-independence era, the youth were not grateful or loyal to the state, neither were they longing for dreams of nationalism and development.[105] Thus, the contagious phenomenon expanded within the new wave of activism, and new movements were formed in the time between 2001 and 2003. The most commonly known movements were the Anti-Globalization Egyptian Group (AGEG), the 20 March Movement for Change, and the Defense Committee for Labor Rights. The significance of these groups lies in the platform they created for engagement of activists away from the bureaucratic parties' platforms and affiliations. Also, they provided spaces for interaction and cooperation between activists from different political backgrounds, which had it is own implications on the long run rather than on the short run. Furthermore, these movements fostered transnational and cross-ideological connections between activists working on the same cases and causes, whether on local or international levels.[106] In addition to that, as movements were flourishing, the interaction that took place between small-scale protests groups helped in forming a more pluralist political culture of opposition.[107] New initiatives, networks, and forums about different yet related issues were formed in the aftermath. The Anti-Globalization Egyptian Group (AGEG) was one of the

104 Larbi Sadiki, "*Popular Uprisings and Arab democratization*". (International Journal of Middle East Studies. 321: 71-95: 2000). Pp 83
105 Ibid, Pp 83
106 Rabab El Mahdi, "*Egypt: A Decade of Ruptures*". In Lina Khatib and Ellen Lust, "Taking to the Streets: The Transformation of Arab Activism". (John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland; 2014). Pp55
107 Maha Abdelrahman, "The Transnational and the Local: Egyptian Activists and Transnational Protest Networks". (British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies. 38 (3): 407-424: 2011). PP 408

movements formed at that time with a clear mindset of openness to anyone who accepts its principles and ready to participate in the movement's activities.[108] AGEG succeeded in creating a forum for different political and social backgrounds to meet, including factory workers, left-wing intellectuals, small- and medium-size enterprise businessmen, in addition to underground socialist activists and other independent youth. However, this movement did not include any Islamists. [109]

Movements in that period had very distinctive features and characteristics that characterized the first stage of movement formation, and contributed to the formation of other social movements later on.

1. Whilst it contributed greatly to the formation of the new activism pillars in Egypt, it was young, immature and spontaneous.

2. The movements that launched their activity in that period drew on horizontal and non-central organization, which explains why it was very successful in attracting both the independent and politically affiliated youth. As most of the youth activism happened out of university campuses, youth were participating in the streets with other public protestors.

3. Another important point is the success of these movements to mobilize the politically independent youth for 20-21 March 2003 demonstrations against the American war on Iraq, which was counted as the biggest demonstration in Egypt since January 1977. In that sense the success of the campaigns, demonstrations and movements can be

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[108] Maha Abdelrahman, "'With the Islamists?—Sometimes. With the State?—Never!' Cooperation between the Left and Islamists in Egypt". (British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies. 36 (1): 37-54: 2009). Pp 43
[109] Ibid, Pp 43

measured in the taboos they were able to break within the political contestation between the state and the activism in Egypt.[110]

4. The movements relied on the direct action aside from the formal organizational boundaries, such as political parties, civil society organizations and others.[111]

2.3.2 The significance of the Movements Post Palestinian Intifada:

The new form of activism in its disruptive form aside from the formal institutional channels created a new and heavy challenge for the authoritarian regime in Egypt, these challenges could be summarized in -but are not limited to- the following reasons:

1. <u>The contestation of public space:</u> the public space is where the state shows its power and communicates on daily basis with the people. Taking over the streets with demonstrations is hard as the streets themselves, bazars, and parks of town serve as an extension of state power. Also, the quest of protesting in the street is harder due to the heavy surveillance almost in every corner from police and security forces in uniform or civilian outfits, informants, and others. Tahrir square and downtown area that is filled with governments' administration buildings (e.g. the High court of justice) became the assembly point for confrontation with the state, and a focal point to mobilize the masses and attract the silent factions of the society. During demonstrations, the state would try to block the demonstrations and repress them, yet instead of demobilizing the masses, this reaction ignited other waves of resistance that were usually more organized than the previous one. Eventually, the unauthorized resistance of the public became the

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110 Dina Shehata, *"Al- Haraka Al Shababeya Wa Thawret 25 Yanayer"*. (Korasat Istrategeya Issue no 218: 2011) Pp 12

111 Dina Shehata, *"Awdet Al- Seyasa: Al Harakat Al Ehtegageya Al Gadeda Fe Misr"*. (Markaz Al Derasat Al Seyaseya wa Al Estrategeya, Cairo; 2010). Pp 11

forbidden fruit of confrontation with the state, on both physical civilians' presence and demanding the recognition of their rights.[112]

On the other hand, taking over public spaces in protest defies the government's claims of representing the masses and the whole society. As the number of protesters increases, the state is more challenged as it reduces its credibility and legitimacy in front of the activists and the silent masses.[113]

2. <u>New channels for activism:</u> The disruptive notion of the movements provided a new channel – especially for students- to practice activism and express their own point of view in post-intifada politics. These new channels of expressions took different forms other than participating in ballots, elections, or civil society organizations. Students were able to express their disenchantment against the regime through demonstrations, boycott campaigns against Israel and their supporting allies, and on-campus student related activities.[114]

3. <u>Ideological differences and historical grievances:</u> the 2000 Intifada committee was able to overcome the political and ideological differences for its membership, and as well the historical rivalry between the different political factions. Although this was applied on a limited number of members, yet it showed the ability of the movement to channel the popular sympathy into mass campaigns, which in other words were able to mobilize.[115]

4. <u>Return of pluralist politics:</u> after decades of non-pluralist politics in Egypt, the street uprising (*Intifadat al-shari'*) can be counted as an indirect election, where the masses

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[112] Charles Tripp, "The power and the people: paths of resistance in the Middle East". (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press; 2013). PP73-75
113 Ibid, PP73-75
[114] Rabab El- Mahdi, "*Egypt: A Decade of Ruptures*" from Lina Khatib, and Ellen Lust, "*Taking to the streets: the transformation of Arab activism*" (Baltimore, Maryland: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2014). Pp54
115 Ibid, Pp54

were finally confronting the incumbent regimes. As Sadiki emphasizes, the expression of ingratitude towards a regime that built its legitimacy on past achievements and had done little to satisfy people's needs and struggles, can be tackled as indirect elections that weaken the legitimacy of the authoritarian regime. Egyptian states post the 1952 coup d'état based their legitimacy on their past achievements, disregarding the current struggles their country was facing.[116] Mubarak had followed the same strategy for his state, yet the rebellions that expressed their anger and ingratitude towards the regime. The raise of activism motivated the awakening of latent energy of protesting and opposition that had been silent for a very long time.[117] These demonstrations represented a return to political activism and street politics at a level not known to Egypt for over two decades

5. <u>Collaboration of out-casted political ideologies</u>: only after a week from the beginning of the Palestinian Intifada, the leftist had announced joining the PCSI to support the Palestinian case in Egypt. Also with post Iraq war, the leftist had again contributed to the formation of the 20th of March for change movement "*Haraket 20 Mares Men Agl Al Taghyeer*" that was the fuel for the 20th and the 21st demonstration against the American invasion of Iraq. This not only opened the door for participation in activism and inclusion in political life without operating under any illegal label, but also they were successful in mobilizing the people into the street, where the 20th of March demonstrations included between thirty and forty thousand participants, numbers that even exceeded the expectations of the movement itself.[118] Social movements have a nature that is like chemical chain reactions, it is sustainable and it never ends, in that

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[116] Larbi Sadiki, "*Popular Uprisings and Arab Democratization".* (International Journal of Middle East Studies. 321: 71-95: 2000). Pp 83-84
117 Ibid, Pp 83-84
118 Dina Shehata, "*Awdet Al- Seyasa: Al Harakat Al Ehtegageya Al Gadeda Fe Misr*". (Markaz Al Derasat Al Seyaseya wa Al Estrategeya, Cairo: 2010). Pp 79-81

light the social movements have sustained a series of interaction between the diverse opposing groups and the state. The diverse opposing groups are the collective actors who have been marginalized and repressed in the political order. Thus, the movements were able to attract different political ideologies and gather groups of different representations. Whilst the Egyptian Popular Committee for Solidarity with the Palestinian Intifada (EPCSPI) was initially formed by leftist activists, it was able to incubate later on the Islamists activists who joined as representatives of unions and professional syndicates dominated by the Muslim Brotherhood. This can be marked as the first re-emergence of the Muslim Brotherhood in street politics and activism and participation in joint activities with other political factions. Nasserists also joined the EPCSPI yet as individuals and not representatives of their political party.

2.4 Second Instance: Movements Post Iraq Invasion 2003

In December 2003, under the three slogans: 'No to Capitalist Globalization and US Hegemony', 'No to the Occupation of Iraq, and Zionism in Palestine', and 'No to Authoritarianism in the Arab Region' the second Cairo conference was held by different political groups of Nasserites, Islamists, civil society organizations, syndicates and non-politically affiliated groups that represented the activism pool in Egypt. The conference was capable of putting all the activism and opposition forces in one room, which led to establish new collaborations and also tensions.[119] Consequently, some of these groups realized that a new upgrade and a different face of activism needed to be introduced which encouraged the lunching of new movements with more definite characteristics as affected by the Egyptian state strategies post Iraq invasion.

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119 Maha Abdelrahman, "'With the Islamists?—Sometimes. With the State?—Never!' Cooperation between the Left and Islamists in Egypt". (British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies. 36 (1): 37-54: 2009). Pp 40-44

Movements are fluid by nature and are continuously evolving in terms of strategies and tactics, which makes it hard to conceptualize them. Thus, it is important to analyze movements as a process in motion and not as a static phenomenon where it is more prominent to use the term network in analyzing the contentious nature of movements and its changing concerns, focus and directions.[120] Network alliances can be created to achieve a certain long-term project between marginalized political groups from different ideological backgrounds and class, and between different forms of associations (NGOs, political parties, syndicates) but usually last for a short period of time to serve a certain unified aim.[121]

The period after the Iraqi invasion of 2003 witnessed several new coalitions among diverse political factions. The coalition of March the 20th Movement for Change was formed between the Hisham Mubarak Law Center, banned organizations like the Muslim Brotherhood and the Communist Party, and other independent activists. They raised the bar for movements' demands by addressing President Mubarak to refrain from a fifth term and rejecting the passing down of the presidency to his son Gamal Mubarak. The coalition between Islamist and leftists is not extremely new for the political life in Egypt, with a previous alliance between the political powers in the 1980s for electoral alliances. However, the March 20th alliance was significant considering the ideological diversity between the organizations succeeded in mobilizing around a concrete set of demands. The collective action was a sign for a contentious frustration and rejection for unjust status quo in the political spectrum. However, the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP) did not address the frustration as expected, but it neglected the opposition demands and clarified that the government was not interested

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[120] Ibid. Pp39-40
[121] Ibid, Pp39-40

in changing the political status quo of Egypt. This reflex from the government increased the frustration within the oppositional powers, and encouraged them to band together against the prominent power.[122]

Adding to that, there was an increasing pressure from western governments for democratization in the Middle East after the Iraq invasion in 2003. This resulted in the birth of several new movements that were different in concept and direction from the previous ones. Movements post 2004 were different from the movements that were created after Palestinian Intifada in 2000 as they had a clear vision, specified demands from the government, and were ready to challenge the government directly and on the basis of internal politics.[123] The most significant movements in this phase were Kefaya (Enough), Al Hamla Al Sahbeya Lel Taghyeer (currently Horreya – Freedom), Al Gabha Al Wataneya (National Front), and Shabab Men Agl Al Taghyeer, (Youth for Change).[124]

2.4.1 The Significant Movements Developed (2003-2005)
a) *First: Kefaya Movement:*
Since the early 2000s, political factions started to form collaborations together and cooperate. At the beginning the movements were occupied with the Palestinian intifada demands and later after with the US invasion of Iraq, they came to the realization that national reform is important to fight foreign aggression. Political freedom was addressed as a prominent tool for resisting the Israeli occupation and the American invasion of both Palestine and Iraq. It then became a necessity to form a

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122 Samer Shehata, *" Opposition Politics in Egypt: A Fleeting Moment of Opportunity?*" ". (The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Volume 2, Issue 9: October 2004). Pp4-5
123 Manar Shorbagy,. "*Understanding Kefaya: The New Politics in Egypt*". (Arab Studies Quarterly, Vol. 29, No. 1, pp. 39-60: Winter 2007), Pp 49
124Dina Shehata," *Al- Haraka Al Shababeya Wa Thawret 25 Yanayer"*. (Korasat Istrategeya Issue no 218: 2011). Pp 12

movement that could incubate the new consensus and revive the possibilities of a free political life in Egypt.[125]

Gathered over Iftar in Ramadan at the house of Al Wassat leader, Abul Ela Mady in 2003, with more than 35 invited political leaders who were Muslims, Christians, leftist, Marxists, Nasserites and Liberals as well, the main question that was hunting the gathering was "where is Egypt going?". The focal subject of all the gathered political figures was the necessity of change in Egypt.[126] At the end of this gathering, the group named six political figures (George Ishaq, Ahmed Bahaa elDin Shaaban, M. Said Edris, Sayyid Abdel Sattar, Abul Ela Madi, and Amin Eskandar) that could possibly represent all the political factions to draft a statement for their new movement. The statement was soon opened for the public and gathered more than 300 signatures. In September 2004 Kefaya (the Egyptian Movement for Change) was announced officially. The founding statement hammered home the close connection between the Iraq invasion and the need for a domestic change, where they confirmed that there were close ties between foreign threats and political despotism.[127]

The NDP's rejection of political reforms and constitutional amendments for free elections in 2005, of an end to a 23-year-long period of emergency law, and of reforms that would enable real party pluralism in Egypt had been followed by modest amendments for party election and syndicates laws.[128] Between December 2004 and September 2005, a series of public gatherings were organized in Cairo by Kefaya. It

125 Manar Shorbagy,. "*Understanding Kefaya: The New Politics In Egypt*". (Arab Studies Quarterly, Vol. 29, No. 1, pp. 39-60: Winter 2007), Pp 45-46
126 Mohamed Saied Idrees testimonial documented at;
http://www.aljazeera.net/programs/infocus/2012/2/21/%D8%AD%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D9%83%D9%81%D8%A7%D9%8A%D8%A9 Last Acc: 01/07/2016
127 Manar Shorbagy,. "*Understanding Kefaya: The New Politics In Egypt*". (Arab Studies Quarterly, Vol. 29, No. 1, pp. 39-60: Winter 2007), Pp 45-46
128 Dina Shehata,"*Egypt's Ruling Party Conference: The More It Seems to Change, the More It Stays Almost the Same*". (The Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Volume 2, Issue 9: October 2004) Pp2

was clear that the government had already set plans to tune down the opposition, weakening and keeping it oppressed in September 2004 conference. Despite the expected result of the NDP conference of limiting activism, Kefaya raised the bar for its demands from the state as a reaction to the continuous oppressive state strategies.[129]

The emergence of Kefaya attracted different political groups to demonstrate under its banner after they have been outlawed by the regime. For example, Magdi Husayn and his fellow members of SLP joined Kefaya's demonstrations to use its visibility and interaction with the masses. That was a clever strategy to dodge colliding with the regime, yet did not benefit the party legalization; however it ensured the continuity of the political activism of the SLP members.[130]

Although the founders of Kefaya belonged to different political parties, they were represented in Kefaya as individuals. Thus, they agreed not to request permission for demonstration from the government or to organize any rallies, they were set to give a totally different model for movements and opposition than the one that had existed before.[131] Starting with Kefaya setting a clear list of demands since its start that were targeting electoral life in Egypt and constitutional reform. The movement focused on introducing term limits on the presidency, while making sure that power would not be passed down to his son and holding free and fair election for selecting Egypt's next president. The emergency law was of great importance since it had been exploited with a negative impact on political freedoms. The movement also called for the separation

129 Frederic Vairel, "*Protesting in Authoritrian Situations: Egypt and Morocco*". In Joel Beinin and Frédéric Vairel. "*Social movements, mobilization, and contestation in the Middle East and North Africa*". (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press: 2011). Pp38
130 Holger Albrecht, "Raging against the machine political opposition under authoritarianism in Egypt". (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press: 2013). Pp 49
131 Amin Eskandar testimonial documented at;
http://www.aljazeera.net/programs/infocus/2012/2/21/%D8%AD%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D9%83%D9%81%D8%A7%D9%8A%D8%A9 Last Acc: 01/07/2016

of power between the governmental institutions, and empowering civil liberties.[132] Kefaya could be counted then as a mature form for movement activism in Egypt.

According to George Ishaq, the importance of the movement can be summed up in their success to break the fear in Egyptians of opposing and of criticizing the president himself.[133] This reflects the meaning of activism evolution in Egypt, especially after long years of oppressed silence. However, violent repression was the state reaction against the movement's activities in 22 out of 29 governorates in Egypt, and their daring activities against the government and the ruling family. A fierce campaign of arrests against Kefaya members earned the sympathy of other oppositional groups and the media, and instead of silencing the opposition one more time, the state played the old tool of "carrot and stick". Journalists and anchors had opened the door for investigation and discussed on daily bases figures who were beyond the red line before. They started to question the ruling family and especially Gamal Mubarak who was the expected next president.[134] Thus, as Opp and Roehl argued *"The question should no longer be whether repression has a deterring or radicalizing effect, but which effect is to be expected under what conditions"*[135]

b) Second: Shabab Men Agl Al Taghyeer

Shabab Men Agl Al Taghyeer was formed under the umbrella of the Kefaya movement, yet unlike Kefaya, it did not include 70s activists club and it consisted

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132 Manar Shorbagy,. "*Understanding Kefaya: The New Politics In Egypt*". (Arab Studies Quarterly, Vol. 29, No. 1, pp. 39-60: Winter 2007). Pp 49

133 George Ishaq testimonial documented at;

http://www.aljazeera.net/programs/infocus/2012/2/21/%D8%AD%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D9%83%D9%81%D8%A7%D9%8A%D8%A9 Last Acc: 01/07/2016

134 http://www.aljazeera.net/news/arabic/2011/2/7/%D8%AD%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-%D9%83%D9%81%D8%A7%D9%8A%D8%A9-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%A9 Last Acc 07/07/2016

135 Karl-Dieter Opp and Wolfgang Roehl, "*Repression, Micrombilization and Political Protest*". (Social Forces: 1990), Pp 523

mainly of youth. The movement was created in the aftermath of the December 2004 demonstrations, and included youth from various political parties such as Labor, Al Ghad, Nasserist, Al Karama, Al Wasat, and El Ashtrakeyoon Al Thawreyoon, in addition to other independent youth. The movement was successful in mobilizing activists not only in Cairo, but also extended to other governorates and increased from 30 members to 200 in three months only.[136]

Although the movement was supposed to be independent from Kefaya, the 70s activists objected completely on its independence and it was then set to be the young extension of the Kefaya movement. The movement's demands were set and clear from the beginning, as they declared they were demanding political democracy in society and the universities, fighting façade, as well as equality and equal opportunities for everyone. They even included other clear goals such as the rejection of the emergency law, Mubarak governance, fair and just elections, with a new constitution, independence of universities, and other rights that were all aiming to fulfill their main goals. Although they followed the same organizational structure as the previous movements, they adapted their language to be closer to the people, unlike Kefaya who was accused because of their elitism. This which made their demonstrating and opposing activities successful, especially in the time between February 2005 and September 2005 when Mubarak declared that he was running for presidency again.[137]

2.4.2 The Significance of the Post-2003 Matured Movements

1. The increasing mobilization power despite the aggressive and repressive measures the government was applying formed a new type of public activism that was reflected in

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[136] Dina Shehata, " *Al- Haraka Al Shababeya Wa Thawret 25 Yanayer*". (Korasat Istrategeya Issue no 218: 2011). Pp 15-16
[137] Ibid, Pp 15-16

an unforgiving and hostile mass public.[138] Even when the resistance started to threaten the activists' safety and the government was showing more coercive actions, the opposition did not stop and the masses showed a new capacity for violence that made mobilization a political public reality not a mere phenomenon.[139]

2. Kefaya demonstrated the superiority of non-institutionalized activism. Insuring that non-institutionalized activism is more successful than the institutional based one; The difference in outcomes between Kefaya and Egyptian Campaign of Change (ECC) confirmed the successful model of Kefaya. The ECC's 1970s intellectuals decided to form a cross-ideological group at the same time Kefaya was founded. However, unlike Kefaya, the ECC adopted an approach of institutional cooperation rather than individual one between different parties and groupings, including Al Ghad and Tagamu' parties and the Muslim Brothers. The model collapsed quickly, as it disintegrated and then reinvented itself into a broad leftist coalition, without any form of coalition between any other political faction or ideology.[140]

3. The movements in this phase-especially Kefaya and Shabab Men Agl Al Taghyeer-were able to mobilize more youth than the previous movements. In light of such mobilization, it was clear that youth mobilization was no longer exclusive for the Muslim Brotherhood and youth mobilization could extend to different political ideologies, or ideology-free youth.

4. The new generation of activists that joined political activism started blogging about the political life in Egypt, thus they facilitated the movement of information and interaction between the youth. The most famous bloggers at the beginning were Wael Abbas,

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[138] Charles Tripp, "The power and the people: paths of resistance in the Middle East". (New York, NY: Cambridge University Press; 2013)Pp 132-133

139 Ibid, Pp 132-133

140 Manar Shorbagy,. "*Understanding Kefaya: The New Politics In Egypt*". (Arab Studies Quarterly, Vol. 29, No. 1, pp. 39-60: Winter 2007). P48

Manal and Alaa Seif who contributed significantly in different protests supported by Kefaya.[141]

In conclusion, activism in Egypt since the 1950s till early 2000s was limited and controlled through repression and coercion by the state strategies. The bargains set by the state and exchanged with the different non-state actors were not sufficient to curb the emerging power of collective action at the first instance of liberalization. The political opportunity presented itself at first with the Palestinian Intifada that have opened a liberal opening for different political factions to communicate and enforce a collective action. The social movements were then used as a tool for activism that was marked by pan-Arabism characteristics. Other instances that followed certain events (such as Iraq war) contributed in social movements' development and its characteristics, as it shifted from pan-Arabism focusing on the Palestinian case to nationalist movements. The nationalist movements focused on the Egyptian political reform, yet it also had more developed features than the previously established social movements. The most significant features for post 2003 social movements are; 1) increasing mobilization power, 2) marked the superiority of non-institutional activism over the formal channels, and 3) the ability to mobilize youth.

It was yet questionable if the 1970s generation of intellectuals, activists and political leaders could incubate the new generation of activists. The most threatening success for social movements as a tool for activism was to break the unity that was formed between the different political factions, yet it was also questionable if these coalitions could stand still for long. Given the bargains that the government would try to cut between the political factions separately and their ability to stay unified, and the

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141 Dina Shehata, " *Al- Haraka Al Shababeya Wa Thawret 25 Yanayer*". (Korasat Istrategeya Issue no 218: 2011). P13

reaction of maturing social movements to the state repressive strategies, it was hard to infer on the future of activism in Egypt. On the other hand, the movements –although matured- did not address any of the economic challenges that Egypt have been suffering from, where the focus of movements shifted from the Arabism to nationalism through political liberty and freedom. The next chapter would further discuss the pre-mentioned arguments and the accumulating anger and dissatisfaction of the working class and the basic Egyptian low income citizens who were obviously neglected, yet they were real challenges to burst soon yet on time.

Chapter Three: New Wave of Radical Movements

In this chapter, I argue that there has been major change in the political behavior of young activists, where stagnation of old generations within different social movements and their persistence in holding the leadership positions led to the formation of more radical social movements by new activists/generations. First, I would like to shed light on the overall context; political, economic and social circumstances around which change in the suggested political behavior took place, during the time between 2006 and 2008. Second, I will discuss the failure of the political leaders of different political identities in incubating the young activists within their movements, while focusing on the *Muslim brotherhood* and *Kefaya* as examples. Third, I will turn to the other igniting factors for the contestation between the old and young generation of activists, namely; the rise of workers protests and how their economic demands took a political twist within its context. To emphasize the validity of the proposed hypothesis, finally, the last section will discuss the emergence and the rise of new youth movements, considering *6th of April* movement as an example for the phenomenon.

3.1. Change in Political Behavior

Given that a country's population is not static, the form of its activism will not be either. Changes happen to different generations that can affect their way of interaction with the state and methods of activism within their society and political realm. William Klecka defines a generation as *"... those persons who have been socialized in a similar fashion because of their exposure to the same prevailing events"*. Consequently, generational differences can be a result of –yet are not limited to- 1) the exposure to different historical events and incidents and 2) changes to the process of

socialization and its content. Although the exact weight of these factors is hard to be measured, their effect cannot be neglected and their influence cannot be contested.[142]

Quantitative and qualitative changes in a generation has a valid effect on activism mobilization. In 2007, according to the Egyptian Central Authority for Public Mobilization and Statistics (CAPMAS), Egyptians between the age 15 and 29 years old constituted 28 percent of the Egyptian population, 83 percent of the same group suffered from unemployment which affected their desperate economic status.[143] With large parts of the population suffering from unemployment and low standards of living, a ticking bomb was set to explode. These youths were not only facing hardships of life, but also political marginalization, and societal deterioration despite their significant degree of education. The older generation's lack of vision and creativity did not prevent the birth of a new age of activism that depended on information fluidity and accessibility through the internet from different parts of the world.[144] The leaders of Egypt's dominant political parties were mainly the business elites of the country and friends of the presidential palace. The political leaders and economic power elites had their firm control over the country's regulations system and even employment opportunities. There was a very narrow room left for youth participation in political life or even to find a decent job opportunity without being hit hard by state repression, or the repressive socio-cultural superstructure.[145] Frustration grew among the youth with

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[142] William R. Klecka, *"Applying Political Generations to the Study of Political Behavior: A Cohort Analysis".*(Public Opinion Quarterly. 35 (3): 358-731971). Pp 358

[143] Dina Shehata and Mahmoud Ibrahim, *"Youth Movements and Political Activism in Egypt"*. (Cairo: Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies: 2010) as cited by Nabil Bassem Hafez, *"New Social Movements and the Egyptian Spring: A Comparative Analysis between the April 6 Movement and the Revolutionary Socialists".* (University of Calgary. 98- 113: 2013). Pp 101

[144] Nabil Bassem Hafez, *"New Social Movements and the Egyptian Spring: A Comparative Analysis between the April 6 Movement and the Revolutionary Socialists".* (University of Calgary. 98- 113: 2013). Pp 101

[145] Nadine Sika, *"The Political Economy of Arab Uprisings"*. (The European Institute of the Mediterranean; March 2012). Pp 18-19

a very little hope left for change or for a better life, as the only way left to attain a decent job was to have some "connection" with authorities that was known as "*wasta*" in the Egyptian society.[146]

As per a survey conducted in 2004 on youth between ages 15 and 24 by Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, the civic participation of this age range was excessively low. The youth had very little faith in civic participation with 56 percent of them never having participated in student union elections and 84 percent of them never having participated in a public protest or a demonstration.[147] Political participation was no better than civic participation, with 92.9 percent of youth not enrolled in any party and only 12.5 percent recognizing the right number of political parties in Egypt at that time. The lack of interest in political life was more evident as only 26.5 percent were able to name five out of the 25 active political parties in Egypt. According to the study, youth were not interested in political participation as they knew that political parties would never address their needs.[148]

Collective action presupposes that individuals must recognize their belonging to the relevant collective itself, meaning that individuals should recognize group identification for participation in collective action. The identification is born with and nurtured by communication that takes place between individuals, thus they could realize the shared anger, grievance or common identity to initiate collective action against the state.[149] In the aftermath of conferences, student unions, campaigns and initiatives of the post-Intifada in 2000 organized by movements such as Kefaya and

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[146] Ibid, Pp 18-19

[147] Dina Shehata, "*Youth Activism in Egypt*". (Arab Reform Brief; 2008)., p.3, www.arab-reform.net/en/file/390/download?token=bGY_5Pp8 Last Acc. 31st of July, 2016

[148] Nadine Sika, "*Youth Political Engagement in Egypt: From Abstention to Uprising*". (British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, 39(2), 181–199: 2012). Pp 194

[149] Merlyna Lim, "Clicks, Cabs, and Coffee Houses: Social Media and Oppositional Movements in Egypt, 2004-2011". (Journal of Communication. 62 (2): 231-248: 2012). Pp 234

political parties like the Ghad and the MB; friendships and personal contacts were formed between the youth of different, social, political and economic backgrounds. Consequently, the chances to form a joint initiative or a movement that mobilizes the youth's energy for a united vision concerning their own needs and aspirations started to increase. In addition, a growing tolerance for diversity and variations between youth enabled a new social transformation for a more radical form of activism.[150]

The downturn of activism that hit the shores of movements by the year 2006 ignited another layer of frustration among youth. The aftermath of the 2005 elections, the withdrawal of the Muslim Brotherhood presence in the protesting and the marches against the state in fear of its direct repression, and also the diminishing street protests had downsized the political and social activism among the youth. As *Shabab Men Agl Al Taghyeer* had collapsed due to the compiled internal splits between its members and the suspension of most of its activities[151], the youth either re-joined their old political parties or were directed to blogging. Activism in Egypt was suddenly divided, yet another type of activism and movements appeared in the political and social arena. Starting in 2006, movements were calling for grassroots demands that were intertwined with the workers' protests and other class demands. Subsequently, the movements for the first time were calling for economic, social, political and grassroots demands that could be counted as an evolution of the demands of the previously dominant 70s generation of activists. [152]

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[150] Sanaa El- Banna, "*Divided, They Win? A Case Study of the New Political Generation in Egypt since 25th January 2011*". (The American University in Cairo: 2012). Thesis supervised by Heba Raouf Pp 128

[151] Dina Shehata, "*Al- Haraka Al Shababeya Wa Thawret 25 Yanayer*". (Korasat Istrategeya Issue no 218: 2011). Pp 17

[152] Dina Shehata, "*Awdet Al- Seyasa: Al Harakat Al Ehtegageya Al Gadeda Fe Misr*". (Markaz Al Derasat Al Seyaseya wa Al Estrategeya, Cairo: 2010). Pp 258

The independence of youth from activists of the older generation methods provided them with a fresh identity and a new definition of the struggle against state coercion and repressive control. After the larger and pre-existing movements lost their momentum and ability to mobilize youth with the parliamentary and presidential elections of 2005, youth activists were determined to take the struggle for to a more radical level. Youth activists implemented the bottom-up approach used by grassroots initiatives and tried to establish a link to the struggle against the neo-liberal strategies promoted by Ahmad Nazif's technocrat cabinet since 2004. This contributed to the evolution of the 2006 labor movements and the 2007 protests in light of skyrocketing process of price increase and deteriorating life conditions for Egyptians.[153]The implications of this linkage and change in political behavior will be discussed in later section in this chapter.

Workers and young activists had found common ground as they both considered opposition political parties as untrustworthy and obsolete organizations; hence, they could not fulfill their demands or understand their needs. Protest leaders then dissociated collective action from the sphere of political parties, denying allegations of any linkages. Protesters were concerned that party leaders would impose their own agenda on the workers and activists' demands. Also, the Egyptian government was more likely to respond to social and economic protests with salary concessions or promises of increasing state subsidies, while on the other hand political protests were usually met with attempts to silence them.[154] Consequently, activism among youth was no longer

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[153] Nabil Bassem Hafez, "New Social Movements and the Egyptian Spring: A Comparative Analysis between the April 6 Movement and the Revolutionary Socialists". (University of Calgary. 98- 113: 2013). Pp 109
[154] Marina Ottaway and Amr Hamzawy. "*Protest movements and political change in the Arab world*". (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: 2011). Pp8 http://carnegieendowment.org/files/OttawayHamzawy_Outlook_Jan11_ProtestMovements.pdf. Last Acc 4th of August, 2016

focusing on political demands only, but also on social and economic demands. The demands also reflected some marginalized factions, for example when student activists protested raising university fees. Asyut, Cairo and Helwan students launched campaigns resisting university coercive action under titles such as "Resistance" and "My Right". In a sense, this shows that youth protesting was no longer focusing only on the transnational demands (the protesting after Palestinian Intifada 2000). Youth activism had its own share of evolution where protests were not exclusive for campuses only, as students dragged their demands to court, and managed to secure a number of court rulings in their favor.[155]

There were concrete reasons behind this rise of youth activism in Egypt and its acceleration especially in the time frame between 2006 and 2008. Through the next sections, the analysis will focus on three major reasons that helped in forming the new generation of activism with its renovated ideology and radical demands, these reasons include but are not limited to 1) Segregation between the 70s intellectuals and the new generation of activists, 2) Muslim Brotherhood pragmatic approach in formulating their policies and the emergence of new political Islamic thought, and 3) Implications of neo-liberal policies and labor protests.

3.2. Old Generation vs. New Generation
3.2.1 1970's Generation Activists- Kefaya

On February 2005, Kefaya tried to link between online and offline activism using its young activists and paved the way for the young blogging activists to create Shabab Men Agl Al Taghyeer platform (Youth for Change). The initiative itself came from the Young bloggers, and soon Shabab Men Agl Al Taghyeer was considered the

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[155] Dina Shehata, "*Youth Mobilization in Egypt: New Trends and Opportunities*". (Al Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies: 2010). P.6

youth wing for Kefaya that organized various sit-ins and demonstrations and fast enough they started to look for new mechanisms to contest with the state.[156] Although *Shabab Men Agl Al Taghyeer* had been born and nourished under the *Kefaya* movement umbrella, there was evident segregation between these two movements and disputes over the tactics used in confronting the regime and the state. One of the major disagreements was over the use of the "street tactics", according to Khaled Abdel-Hamid-one of the architects of street tactics- the best way to keep mobilizing youth and connecting with the ordinary people was going to the streets. Abdel-Hamid stated clearly that their mission as young activists focused on linking young people's daily problems to the state and the government, and forcing it to their agenda.[157] This was not only to put pressure on the government, but also to raise awareness regarding people's rights and responsibilities. Reform would not come from the government directly: if people did not ask for reform and stayed silent about their demands, their problems would not be solved and their life standards would deteriorate further.

The young activists' vision did not align with that of the old generation of Kefaya movement, as they criticized the 70s generation for not being able to establish links to regular Egyptians. Kefaya leaders wanted to transfer activism to the virtual field, with a significant increase of bloggers between 2005 and 2007. Yet Kefaya still was haunted by its limitation to certain circles of sympathizers and elites.[158] The limited nature of Kefaya's mobilization tactics contributed to its inability to survive the

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[156] Mona Elkouedi, "The Egyptian Revolution against Mubarak's Regime in 2011: The making of new public spaces in Tahrir Square". (Social Science Forum Report: 2012). P13 http://assforum.org/web/pdf/report%2020090712/Mona-ELKOUEDI.pdf
Last Acc. 6th of April, 2017

[157] N. Azimi, "*Egypt's Youth Have Had Enough".* (Open Democracy: August 2005). Retrieved from http://www.opendemocracy.net/democracy-protest/enough_2794.jsp as cited by Merlyna Lim, "Clicks, Cabs, and Coffee Houses: Social Media and Oppositional Movements in Egypt, 2004-2011". (Journal of Communication. 62 (2): 231-248: 2012). Pp 238

[158] Merlyna Lim, "Clicks, Cabs, and Coffee Houses: Social Media and Oppositional Movements in Egypt, 2004-2011". (Journal of Communication. 62 (2): 231-248: 2012).Pp 238

government's intimidation and attacks, with 200 Kefaya activists being arrested during the judicial reform protests in 2006. Consequently, Kefaya started to lose more ground starting 2006, and they appeared less frequently in the Egyptian streets and shifted their activism to closed rooms and satellite channels. As a result of losing its mobilization power in the street and being limited to controlled appearance in the media and limited cyber activism, by the year 2007, Kefaya was hitting a rock bottom.[159]

Kefaya suffered from other structural problems that contributed to its loss of momentum and political strength. As Kefaya maintained an organized form of opposition against state policies, they lacked transparency concerning their organizational rules. As a result, the emerging internal competition weakened the – assumed- collective power of the movement and its ability to mobilize. The movement structure had opened a window for authoritarian presence of some of the leaders and had sabotaged the work of some of the committees; also the structure did not protect the less-resourceful members and enabled their marginalization.[160]Kefaya who was losing its momentum after the victorious win of Mubarak in the 2005 presidential elections, showed that Kefaya leaders don't have enough knowledge to achieve their main motto for no further presidential terms. The organizational traditional mechanism that the older generations of Kefaya movement were using did not contain the frustration among Kefaya youth that was resulted from the 2005 elections.[161] Consequently, dissentions took place in Shabab Men Agl Al Taghyeer, the youth wing of Kefaya that weakened the mobilization for Kefaya movement.[162]

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[159] Ibid, Pp 238

[160] Sanaa El- Banna, "*Divided, They Win? A Case Study of the New Political Generation in Egypt since 25th January 2011*". (The American University in Cairo: 2012). Thesis supervised by Heba Raouf. Pp 128

[161] Samir Al-Sayed, "*The Future of Youth Protests*". (Al- Ahram Weekly). http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/News/17030.aspx Last Acc 6th of April, 2017

[162] Samir Al-Sayed, "*The Future of Youth Protests*". (Al- Ahram Weekly). http://weekly.ahram.org.eg/News/17030.aspx Last Acc 6th of April, 2017

In terms of social bases, Kefaya's membership was exclusively drawn from the middle class. The movement faced obstacles reaching out to other social factions of society. With its inability of communicating with peasants, workers and others, the movement failed to address the demands and concerns of these classes. This affected its ties and connections with the public mobilization power coming from these classes who had been affected by the neo-liberal policies of the government. The leaders of Kefaya stressed the importance of connecting to other protest movements and class demands, however very little was done. Aside from the constant affirmation from Kefaya in their public statement and personal interviews, their support was rather symbolic than practical, by issuing statements of support and organizing rallies.[163]

The young activists identified Kefaya's ignorance of the economic and social demands raised by the Egyptian public as the main reason behind the regression of Kefaya's role in activism. The 70s generation of Kefaya focused only on their political demands that were not aligned with the youth demands. According to young leftist activists of Kefaya[164], the 70s generation was less likely to venture a direct collision with the state, and their demands' ceiling was always lower than what the young activists from Kefaya and Shabab Men Agl Al Taghyeer recommended or demanded.[165] In fact, there was an ongoing conflict between the 70s generation and the young generation of activists over the tactics used against the Mubarak regime and the demands ceiling. The 70s generation failed to incubate the enthusiasm and the vision

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[163] Maha M. Abdelrahman, "*A Hierarchy of Struggles?: The 'Economic' and The 'Political' in Egypt's Revolution*". (Review of African Political Economy. 39 (134): 614-628: 2012). Pp 618

[164] Researcher Habiba Mohsen interviews with Nermeen Nizar, Amr Saeed, and Mostafa Yehia on the 13th of August 2016. In Habiba Mohsen, "*Hawal Al-Mosharka Al Seyaseya Al- Ghayer Taqledeya Lel Shabab Men Al Tayar Al-Masry*". In "Al- Anmat Al-Ghayer Taqleydeya lel Mosharka Al Seyaseya Lel Shabab Fe Masr". (Monatada Al Badael Al-Arabi Lel Derasat. Cairo:2012).

[165] Habiba Mohsen, "*Hawal Al-Mosharka Al Seyaseya Al- Ghayer Taqledeya Lel Shabab Men Al Tayar Al-Masry*". In "Al- Anmat Al-Ghayer Taqleydeya lel Mosharka Al Seyaseya Lel Shabab Fe Masr". (Monatada Al Badael Al-Arabi Lel Derasat. Cairo:2012). Pp 76-77

of the new generation who had been subjected to a huge change in the activist's life in Egypt. Furthermore, they failed to recognize the importance of these demands and recommendations and condemned them as being reckless. They also claimed that these impetuous demands would put the movement in tighter and harsher confrontations with the security institutions. In return, the youth felt that they had been marginalized and used for a cause that did not reflect their progressive and ambitions for political, economic, or social reform in Egypt.[166] These defects showed how segregated the oppositional intelligentsia was at that time and how did that affect their credibility. The leftist leadership in Kefaya was treating the national and social agendas and demands as two mutually exclusive battles and favored the opposition to western colonialism over labor demands and social justice.[167]

Youth activists rejected the idea of joining political parties and movements characterized by rigidity and the marginalization of their own mobilization power, youth activists then created new movements of their own. The new movements followed a more pragmatic modern approach in tackling activism and political discourse, focusing on collective identity and action rather than dividing oppositional power and identities. Hence, the new wave of youth movements tended to be less ideological as they focused mainly on the goals of these movements.[168] Most of the followers of these new movements did not subscribe to a specific ideological orientation. Instead, they focused on human rights, pluralism, democracy and social justice agendas.[169] That will be further discussed in a later section, yet it is important to

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[166] Ibid, Pp 76-77
[167] Joel Beinin and Hossam El-Hamalawy, "*Strikes in Egypt Spread from Center of Gravity*". (Middle East Report, May 9, 2007)
 http://www.merip.org/mero/mero050907.html. Last acc 1st of August 2016
[168] Dina Shehata, "Youth Activism in Egypt". (Arab Reform Brief; 2008)., p.6, www.**arab-reform**.net/en/file/390/download?token=bGY_5Pp8 Last Acc. 31st of July, 2016
[169] Ibid, P.6

analyze the split emerging within Muslim Brotherhood between the Islamist movement's old generation and youth, as they were also another prominent power for youth mobilization between 2000 and 2005.

The socioeconomic pressure conducted by the state forced another type of underestimated activism, which is the non-movement, to enforce its existence in the disruptive political arena. According to Asef Bayat, non-movement *".. refers to non-collective direct actions of individuals and families to acquire basic necessities (land, shelter, urban collective consumption, informal jobs, business opportunities) in a quiet, unassuming fashion"*.[170] Under the surface of the political life in Egypt, there was another "non-movement" kind of activity that had not been correlated with either the institutionalized politics or the politics of movements. These groups had been resisting the oppression and coercion of the state in a quiet yet a smart way, as they laid a new infrastructure for youth activism through online and offline activities.[171]Non-movement phenomenon is directly linked to the more informal and spontaneous form of political and social expression and practices. The mobilization under this type of activism directly aimed to the streets rather than using headquarters to launch their campaigns. Hence, they are in more direct contestation with the state over control of public space, and focused mainly on domestic demands and grassroots level needs. [172]The non-movements have become very popular among youth and attracted more audience with more support. Movements such as Kefaya (also Al Gabha Al Wataniyya Lil Taghir) have laid the pillars for the non-movements formation with their adoption for non-

[170] Assef Bayat,"*Social movements, activism and social development in the Middle East*". (Geneva: UN Research Institute for Social Development: 2000). Pp 24
[171] Lina Khatib and Ellen Lust, "Reconsidering Activism in the Arab World: Arab Uprising and Beyond". In Lina Khatib and Ellen Lust, "Taking to the Streets: The Transformation of Arab Activism". (John Hopkins University Press, Baltimore, Maryland; 2014). Pp5
[172] Assef Bayat, "Life as Politics: How Ordinary People Change the Middle East". (Amsterdam University Press, ISIM Series on Contemporary Muslim Societies; 2010). Pp 6-7

formal activism and direction towards online mobilization platforms. Although Kefaya was loosely structured with less ideological persistence, it could not accommodate the same characteristics of non-movements and its power to mobilize directly to the streets.[173]

Thus, there was another phenomenon rising carefully and slowly, which is cyber-activism. Activists started to turn their heads towards blogging bit by bit, which weakened the state's monopoly over the exchange of information and transformed the average citizen from information consumer to producer. The shift from a state controlled flow of information to more flexible and liberated flow had weakened the state propaganda. Hence, newly established youth movements took the advantage of the transformation and tried to turn the class demands into a nationwide movement. Establishing a forum for discussing and planning strikes and protests and widening their activism network, youth activists started to mobilize more youth. The young activists soon started to be famous and known among several networks and activists' groups which to some extent gained them protection from regime repression.[174]One of the most remarkable bloggers at that time was Alaa Abdel Fattah, who was very famous in the blogging society in Egypt and also for National Security in Egypt.[175] Abd El Fattah was under the spotlight during the judicial independence protests in 2005, when 80% of Egyptian judges joined forces calling for increased judicial independence. The state security arrested 700 activists amongst was Alaa Abd El Fattah. "Free Alaa" campaign organized by Alaa friends at that time did not pull him out of detention, yet it kept him

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[173] Randa Aboubakr, "*New directions of internet activism in Egypt*". (Communications Vol. 38(issue 3): Pp251–265: 2013). Pp256-257

[174] Nabil Bassem Hafez, "*New Social Movements and the Egyptian Spring: A Comparative Analysis between the April 6 Movement and the Revolutionary Socialists*". (University of Calgary. 98- 113: 2013). Pp 109

[175] Ethan Zuckerman, "Alaa on Egyptian Blogs and Activism". (My Heart's in Accra blog: September 2006), http://www.ethanzuckerman.com/blog/2006/09/16/alaa-on-egyptian-blogs-and-activism/ Last Acc 9th of August 2016

safe from torture and put his profile and case under the global spotlight and raised more attention to cyber-activism in Egypt.[176]

Cyber-activism witnessed an exponential increase. In 2005, the blogging era started in Egypt with 400 bloggers focusing on individual rights and national unity. By the year 2006, the number had increased nearly threefold almost reaching 1500 bloggers (almost half of them are blogging in Arabic).[177] Naturally, the blogging phenomena did not mature to cyber-activism directly in 2005, which posed the necessity of developing new dynamics given the nature of the structure and constraints on citizen activism. There were national and international factors that boosted the nurturing of cyber-activism: on the domestic level, the government policy against freedom of expression and media as well as the repression of political movements calling for reform and change pressured the youth towards using other outlets of activism. In addition, western media and international human rights organizations emphasized the important role of blogging in advocacy and recognized cyber activists as a privileged group worthy of coverage, which in return ensured them a level of protection from government's harassment.[178] Blogging in return created new opportunities for expansion of mobilization and created a repertoire of contention, consisting of a range of strategies, methods, tools, and tactics that cyber activists used to make claims on the state and the government. The internet was used to extend the arm of social action. It was not only

[176] Ibid

[177] Ethan Zuckerman, "Alaa on Egyptian Blogs and Activism". (My Heart's in Accra blog: September 2006), http://www.ethanzuckerman.com/blog/2006/09/16/alaa-on-egyptian-blogs-and-activism/ Last Acc 9th of August 2016; Courtney Radsch, "Core to Commonplace: The evolution of Egypt's blogosphere". (The Middle East Center St. Antony's College, Oxford University: 2008). Pp 4-5 http://www.arabmediasociety.com/UserFiles/AMS6%20Courtney%20Radsch.pdf Last Acc 10th of August 2016

[178] Courtney Radsch, "*Core to Commonplace: The evolution of Egypt's blogosphere".* (The Middle East Center St. Antony's College, Oxford University: 2008). Pp 4-5 http://www.arabmediasociety.com/UserFiles/AMS6%20Courtney%20Radsch.pdf Last Acc 10th of August 2016

used to mobilize the people, but also to document encounters with the state occurring during protests, violations, and aggressive repression. Most importantly, cyber-activism created a new form of public engagement. Previously, mobilization of youth and young generations had to be done within face-to-face encounters that were rather costly for activists in terms of danger and repression. With the new online tools, youth activists established new channels subverting state control and were able to empower the public aside from the old generation activists grip and control.[179]

In conclusion, the new methods of activism and the usage of cyber-activism for mobilization, facilitated the splitting process of young activists from the 70s generation. The failure of the 70s generation to incubate the demands of the young activists, cost them a huge source of mobilization.

3.2.2 A Widening Generational Gap within the Muslim Brotherhood
The Muslim Brotherhood (MB) was well known for their organizational structure and capacity—features that made them stand out among all the other political forces in Egypt. They were well-known for their efficient well-structured organization and network, despite all the harsh regulations and close monitoring from the state. The idea of organization (*tanzim*) remained a focal point in the thinking and strategic planning of the MB. This emphasis also made them different from other Islamists forces.[180] The detailed organizational structure of the MB network meant that the organization had the capacity to reach out to the different governorates in Egypt. In addition, it facilitated coordination between the brothers in different organizations where they mobilized the youth, not only through charity organizations but also professional syndicates, schools,

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[179] Merlyna Lim, "Clicks, Cabs, and Coffee Houses: Social Media and Oppositional Movements in Egypt, 2004-2011". (Journal of Communication. 62 (2): 231-248: 2012).Pp 237
[180] Holger Albrecht, "Raging against the machine political opposition under authoritarianism in Egypt". (Syracuse, New York: Syracuse University Press: 2013). Pp 101-102

universities and student unions. The MB recognized the importance of mobilizing youth and started building up their basis in the public universities starting the 1970s. As of the 1980s and onward, the MB was successful in controlling the student unions in major universities, namely Cairo, Alexandria and of course Al-Azhar universities.[181]

Sheikh Muhammed al-Ghazly, Sheikh Sayyid Sabek, Sheikh Bahy al-Khouly, and Abou al-A'la al-Maududi were the main preachers that formed the consciousness of the 1970s brothers. The 70s brothers drifted away from the effect of the Salafist Al-Gam'aya al-Shar'ia, and Ansar Al-Sunna as they started interacting with Al-Kardawy and Al-Ghazaly in student union summer camps. The 1970s generation was relatively more open than the previous generation that had been inspired by the teachings of El-Banna. Their interaction and cooperation with other political forces in syndicates made the 70s generation more open to moderate opinions which they tried to channel within the movement. The debate regarding the need for reform in terms of educational curriculums, confrontation with adherent ideologies, and most importantly, the controversy regarding nominating women in parliamentary elections ignited conflict between the brothers. The MB leadership showed intolerance for the new ideas proposed by some of the leaders, such as Abd El-Moneim Abou El-Fotouh, as they viewed such ideologies as enemies of the MB and Islam. The level of intolerance increased in the 1980s when Salafism penetrated the MB.[182]

The dissension between the brothers was highly evident in 2007 in regards to the group's party program draft. The debate included sensitive topics such as women's and Christians' right to run for presidency, Egyptian-Israeli relations, and the

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[181] Ibid, Pp 101-102

[182] Doha Samir Abdel Gawad, "*Muslim Brothers in Egypt: Politics of Generational Gaps*". (The American University in Cairo: 2012). Thesis Supervised by Dr. Heba Raouf. Pp 36-44

establishment of a religious committee to judge the compatibility of laws with sharia. All of these points were disputed among MB leaders, [183] the growing fusion between them was then followed by sanctions and membership suspension in some cases.[184]

Considering such political and social progress, it was hard not to notice some major deficiencies in Islamist movements. While young activists were accumulating strive for political and social reform, the Islamists did not offer major political, social, or economic reform vision or programs. They usually leant on vague and broad claims, while emphasizing the importance of taking their word for granted without offering any further elaboration. The Islamist movements had another obstacle in citizenship, as they minimized the role of women, criticized civil society, sympathized with labor protests without taking any further steps.[185] Although youth were accorded only a secondary role in the MB organization, they were at the forefront of activism since the 1970s, especially within the university campuses and student unions in the 1980s-1990s. The repression and direct coercion of the state against the MB pressured MB leaders to avoid any direct confrontation with the state. During the time between 2000 and 2003, MB activism was limited, and they never stepped up to take the leading role in any of the Intifada protests or Iraq invasion marches.[186] Moreover, when youth activism generally shifted towards grass root demands and domestic issues, the Brotherhood was reluctant to mobilize its own youth towards the political reform, or later on, to support workers protest. [187]

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[183] Ibid, Pp 36-44

[184] Co-Authors, "*Al-Anmat Al-Ghayer Taqleydeya Lel Mosharka Al Seyaseya Lel Shabab Fe Masr*". (Arab Forum for Alternatives. Cairo,Egypt: 2012). Pp 27-29

[185] Fawzy Gerges, "*The Evolution of Islamists Movements*". In Clement M.Henry and Ji-Hyang Jang, "The Arab Spring: will it Lead to Democratic Transitions?" (New York: Palgrave Macmillan: 2013). Pp 140

[186] Dina Shehata, "Youth Activism in Egypt". (Arab Reform Brief; 2008)., p.7, www.**arab-reform**.net/en/file/390/download?token=bGY_5Pp8 Last Acc. 31st of July, 2016

[187] Ibid, p7

The gap in communication between the youth activists was soon filled by the excessive usage of new media tools and channels. New media became a tool for self-expression, organization, and mobilization, hence youth found a new wider and broader ground to communicate and exchange their points of view away from their rigid organization. The increase in the number of mobile phones and internet users facilitated the expansion of the number of blogs, email groups, Facebook and twitter users who were mostly from the youth. Consequently, new media outlets formed a virtual world that was less controlled by state regulations and direct coercion. Before 2010, the estimated number of internet users in Egypt reached 17 million, 2.5 million of them were Facebook users and almost 200,000 blogs were created with 20% of these blogs focusing on matters related to politics.[188] This, in turn, facilitated the transfer of information to the MB youth, especially to those who were geographically marginalized.

On the other hand, the MB perceived all media channels as enemies of the movement. With their approach of justifying everything without ever admitting mistakes, the MB kept a negative stereotype against the media for shaming them and raising fear of their power. This explains why MB leaders encouraged their youth to isolate and detach themselves from news published about their leaders.[189] The only source of information that was encouraged was the Ikhwan online website (a Muslim Brotherhood website) that lacked professionalism; it was biased and reflected a specific, tailored image of the Ikhwan. The Ikhwan website focused on transmitting two main messages; firstly, MB rules reflect the Islamic Shariah, meaning that it should

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[188] Dina Shehata," *Youth Mobilization in Egypt: New Trends and Opportunities".* (Al Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies: 2010) P.6

[189] Shaimaa Ibrahim, "A study of official media outlets of Muslim Brotherhood group and Freedom and Justice Party in Egypt". (The American University in Cairo; Spring 2013). MA Thesis supervised by Dr. Naila Hamdy. Pp 20-21

control state and society affairs. Second, the MB works on uniting the Islamic Ummah and grouping the Islamic countries (mainly in Arab countries) to liberate them from the imperialism.[190]Thus, it put strong obstacles for devoted Muslim youth to question the brotherhood.

In addition, the rigid educational syllabus of the MB for their youth, did not help to enrich the political or the religious knowledge and awareness of the young members. Consequently, there was a dispute between MB youth generation, a team that refused to detect the corruption and rigidity of the MB as an organization, and another team that became very critical of their own leaders and their organizational methods.[191] Critical MB youth – the majority of whom were under 30- did not see any problems with dealing with dissimilar ideologies and new ideas and were actively blogging to channel their own ideas freely. The new technology eradicated the dichotomy of religious socialization of the 1980s and 1990s, which in return had increased the sense of confidence in the possibility of political opposition in Egypt. Yet again, the blogging experience within the brotherhood reflected the dispute between its youth, between open moderate reformist, and rigid conservatives.[192]The early steps of cautious openness of MB youth towards communicating with other political factions came from the 27-year-old then Abd Al Monem Mahmoud, who was a young MB journalist and webmaster. Mahmoud had created his blog under the title of "I am Ikhwan" in October 2006 in both Arabic and English languages. Mahmoud had created his blog after the success of one of the earliest MB blogging experience "Ensaa" that was directed to reject innocents' military trials. Ensaa had succeeded to attract 60,000 visitors in its

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190 Ibid, Pp 20-21

191 Doha Samir Abdel Gawad, "*Muslim Brothers in Egypt: Politics of Generational Gaps*". (The American University in Cairo: 2012). Thesis Supervised by Dr. Heba Raouf. Pp 80

192 http://www.wrmea.org/2009-november/young-egyptian-bloggers-seek-a-more-democratic-muslim-brotherhood.html Last Acc 10th of August 2016

first month, yet Mahmoud "I am Ikhwan" topped up this success with more than 200,000 hits in its first months. This blogging activity developed ties between MB youth and other secular and leftist blogging youth. The evident similarities between all of the cyber activists' demands opened new channels to communicate their ideas and ideologies.[193]

The MB mistakenly thought that they could control the activism of the MB youth and keep them obedient to the leadership. However, the activities that the young brothers started after the Palestinian Intifada and their interaction with activist youth from other political factions in charity organizations, syndicates or even through protesting in the streets made them critical towards MB policies. The MB had been focusing mainly on their structure and organizational matters, neglecting street level activism and limiting it as much as possible. According to the MB leadership, interacting with other political ideologies in a collective action was risky and the consequences could not be controlled. According to the MB youth, the gradual reform that the MB was calling for was no longer sufficient at a certain point, as they –as youth- were thriving for grassroots level reform. On another level, the interaction of young activists through Facebook, blogs, and other virtual channels had led to a new critical vision of MB youth towards their leadership and policies.[194] This included not only youth from Cairo, but also from other governorates. There was interaction between the old generation and the young generation, but it was ineffective as decision-making power was held exclusively by the *Ershad* office, and sometimes the Shura council. Thus, like members of the Kefaya movement, the youth were marginalized and only

[193] March Lynch. "*Brotherhood of the blog*," (The Guardian: March 2007). https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2007/mar/05/brotherhoodoftheblog Last Acc 7th of April, 2017
[194] Co-others. 2012. Al-Anmat Al-Ghayer Taqleydeya Lel Mosharka Al Seyaseya Lel Shabab Fe Masr. Arab Forum for Alternatives. Cairo,Egypt.Pp 26-32

used to serve the agenda and policies determined by an older generation. In return that was not satisfying for youth, and it was only natural for them to defect from their organization and political affiliation with the 70's leftist and Islamic leadership.[195] With the aid of an easier follow of information and unrestricted communication channels, again the youth were able to mobilize themselves away from their former rigid leaders.

3.3 Working Class Heroes – Youth Activists Join Forces with Labor Movements

In December 2006, the workers of Mahala organized a strike because they had not received their promised bonuses. This strike ignited a further a series of labor protests and grassroots' demands all over Egypt. The frequency of protests increased from 222 protests in 2006 to more than 600 between 2007 and 2008, and then it accelerated to become more than 700 protests in 2009. This increase in protest activism attracted the youth who declared their solidarity with these protests and supported the labor movement.[196]

Capitalism was in its finest suit by the year 2004 when Egypt witnessed in shock and wonder the formation of the first businessmen cabinet.[197] The new prime minister, Ahmad Nazif, himself holding a business degree from Canada, was accompanied by a group of neo-liberal intellectuals. Moreover, the cabinet included six monopoly capitalists who were put in charge of ministries that matched their own business portfolio. For example, the ministry of Tourism was led by tourism monopolist Mohamed Zuhair Garana, and the owner of the biggest multinational corporations

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[195] Ibid,.Pp 26-32

[196]Dina Sehata, "Awdet Al- Seyasa: Al Harakat Al Ehtegageya Al Gadeda Fe Misr". (Al ahram center for political and strategic studies: 2010), as Cited by the editor Dina Shehata, "*Al- Haraka Al Shababeya Wa Thawret 25 Yanayer*". (Korasat Istrategeya Issue no 218: 2011). Pp 13

[197] Hazzem Kandil, "*Why did the Egyptian Middle Class March to Tahrir Square*?". (Mediterranean Politics. 17 (2): 197-215: 2012). Pp 209

Rachid Mohamed Rachid in Egypt handled the ministry of industry and trade. Moreover, those who have were not awarded with a ministry were put in charge of parliamentary committees. Thus, iron and steel tycoon Ahmed Ezz became secretary for organizational affairs in the ruling party and leader of the budget and planning committee in parliament. The increasing power of crony capitalist elites over the cabinet and parliament made it almost impossible for the middle class to maneuver.[198]

The Nazif cabinet took serious steps to re-establish privatization in Egypt, while confirming that economic reforms went hand in hand with social development programs. These promises of the cabinet failed even to trick the international community that used to support Mubarak regime, as the Financial Times pointed out that the economic policy resulted in increasing economic inequality and widened the gap between the nation.[199] The neo-liberal program aimed at re-defining the role of the state in the economy and to reduce the excessive resources invested in public subsidies; it basically concentrated the public fund and wealth into a smaller number of specific elites. The state re-allocated public funds resources that used to be directed to agriculture, industry, training and employment to subsidize the neo-liberal program elites instead.[200] As Timothy Mitchel elaborates on the neo-liberal program in Egypt, "*Its major impact was to concentrate public funds into different hands, and many fewer. The state turned resources away from agriculture and industry and the underlying problems of training and employment. It now subsidized financiers instead of factories, cement kilns instead of bakeries, speculators instead of schoo*ls". Eventually, the subsidies fund landed in the hands of the small number of elites to make them more

[198] Ibid, Pp 209

[199] Rabab El Mahdi and Philip Marfleet,"*Egypt Moment of Change*". (The American University in Cairo Press: 2009). Pp 4-5

[200] Timothy Mitchell, "*No factories, no problems: the logic of neo-liberalism in Egypt*". (Review of African Political Economy. 26 (82): 455-468: 1999). Pp 461-462

powerful and influential entrepreneurs, while the rest of the public were left with their struggle with inflation and increasing prices of commodities.[201] Consequently, the state-citizens relationship that had long been sustained on bargaining terms in the form of subsidies had to be re-modelled. The relationship between social classes, means of production and dynamics of governance was restructured to fit into the new cabinet's neo-liberal policies.

The international financial institutions and the Washington consensus offered ideological cover for the change in governance, consolidating 1) decreasing state expenses, 2) limiting the role of the state in the economy, 3) employment markets with more flexibility, 4) free trade, 5) liberalization of monetary policies, 6) decreasing taxation and 7) the protection of property rights. In other words, Egypt helped these elites in accumulating their wealth and limited the state role in promoting socio-economic equality.[202] Thus, neo-liberal policies exacerbated an old problem that has been presented in Egypt for a long time, which is inequality. Hence, the citizens' hostility towards capitalist system increased, as the elites and the friends of the presidential palace were increasing their wealth at the expense of society.[203] The leading class of elites was not excited about cooperating with other classes, they were behaving according to their capitalist nature as competitors. The elites failed to co-opt other classes of bureaucrats, middling landowners, and small investors, accordingly the abandoned classes began to merge with the proletariat class of workers, even if not on

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[201] Ibid, Pp 461-462

[202] Nabil Bassem Hafez, "New Social Movements and the Egyptian Spring: A Comparative Analysis between the April 6 Movement and the Revolutionary Socialists". (University of Calgary. 98- 113: 2013). Pp 99

[203] Nadine Sika, *"The Political Economy of Arab Uprisings"*. (The European Institute of the Mediterranean: March 2012). Pp 19
file:///C:/Users/asus%20Tp/Downloads/10.%20PapersEuromesco10_Sika.pdf Last Acc. 27th July, 2016

economical bases, they sympathized with them. This merge between classes decreased the support to the elites and the regime.[204]

Signs of struggles for workers in the aftermath of Nazif's privatization policies had increased, the International Company for Manufacturing Boilers and Steel Fabrication (IBSF) workers' struggle is only one of hundreds in the wave of working-class collective action. Nazif had put the privatization of public sector industrial and financial enterprises on the fast track. In the first half of 2004, workers managed to stage 74 collective actions. Following the installation of Nazif's government, the number increased to be 191 actions. Unsurprisingly, 25 percent of the collective actions staged by the workers were in the private sector, which was the largest number ever reported. Demonstrations and protests continued in 2006, as al-Masry al-Youm reported a total of 222 strikes, which was followed by another raise of 580 collective actions in 2007.[205] The Workers and Trade Union Watch website reported that in the first week of January 2008 alone, 27 collective actions had happened. Workers had been mobilizing and dragging each other, al-Masry al-Youm estimated that the number of workers in the collective actions ranged between 300,000 to 500,000. What is more significant about these collective actions was the diversity of the workers themselves, where the strikes represented workers from different industrial segments.[206] For example, the 2007 strikes' focal point was the textile and clothing industry workers, but it stretched to include also building materials workers, and transport workers. It even included completely marginalized workers such as the Cairo subway workers, food

[204] H. Kandil, "*Why did the Egyptian Middle Class March to Tahrir Square?*". (Mediterranean Politics. 17 (2): 197-215: 2012). Pp 211

[205] An investigative report by al-Misri al-Yawm, as cited by Joel Beinin, *"Underbelly of Egypt New Neoliberal Agenda".* (Middle East Report: 2008), http://www.merip.org/mero/mero040508.html Last Acc. 1st of August. 2016

[206] Joel Beinin, *"Underbelly of Egypt New Neoliberal Agenda".* (Middle East Report: 2008). http://www.merip.org/mero/mero040508.html Last Acc. 1st of August. 2016

processing workers, bakers, sanitation workers, oil workers in Suez and other workers from different industrial segments. Hence, the private sector industrial workers became a highly valued and prominent player in the workers strikes and collective actions.[207]

By the year 2007, the strikes became more contagious and attracted the public sector workers and employees. 55,000 real estate tax collectors had started their strikes demanding wage evenness with other collectors, they kept on striking for weeks in the heart of Cairo. Remarkably, the 2006-2007 Mahala workers strikes had taken a political twist with workers demanding the impeachment of the local trade union committee. Workers went further with their political challenge of the regime and questioned the legitimacy of the government itself. The socio-economic protests kept on accelerating, as 2008 had witnessed more than 400 collective actions that included enormous amount of workers from different industrial segments. On April the 6th, a massive general strike led by young activists and cooperating with workers had taken the streets affirming the politicized nature of the workers protests.[208]

Hence, new movements emerged to support the raising power of working class rebels and to stand with the labor demands. These movements believed that the bottom-up approach could successfully connect the base of the society and would consequently force a radical and wider change over the state and regime.[209] A movement such as Tadamon (solidarity) followed this model and was followed by 6th of April, as these movements showcased how social, political and grassroots socio-economic demands could merge and link together. The transformation in demands was influenced further

[207] Ibid

[208] Marina Ottaway and Amr Hamzawy, "*Protest movements and political change in the Arab world*". (Washington, DC: Carnegie Endowment for International Peace: 2011). Pp3http://carnegieendowment.org/files/OttawayHamzawy_Outlook_Jan11_ProtestMovements.pdf. Last Acc 4th of August, 2016

[209] Nabil Bassem Hafez, " *New Social Movements and the Egyptian Spring: A Comparative Analysis between the April 6 Movement and the Revolutionary Socialists*" . (University of Calgary. 98- 113: 2013). Pp 108-109

by the Eshtrakeyoon al-Thawreyoon (Revolutionary Socialists). Stepping up to the political scene, the new generation was successful in offering creativity and ideational transformation that was bold enough to challenge the oppressive state. The youth movements were different from the old generation movements, as they opened up the membership to all youth with different political identities. The main objective for these movements was to "change" and was formed by 60 percent of youth; accordingly, they officially distinguished themselves from the old generation activists and their patriarchal attitude that failed them.[210]

Furthermore, the regime reaction to the rising anger of workers was not suitable. The regime relied once more on the bargaining approach, by granting the workers their economic demands. However this approach did not benefit the regime as expected, on contrary it ignited the workers strikes even more and encouraged them to continue protesting. The government showed no signs of changing or adjusting its neo-liberal policies, so it failed to fulfill the other side of workers' demands. The workers movement on their own could not force change on the regime, as they were unable to organize a nation-wide political movement on their own. Hence, a small number of workers realized that regime change is the key to solving their problems and achieve their demands.[211] As the government provided the impetus for the rise of the workers' movement by not providing another solution for state corporatism, it encouraged the spreading of El-Mahala workers' chanting all over. It was expected at that time that the government would intervene in the protests with more repressive machinery; however, they did not until 6th of April 2008. The regime was not less threatened by the workers

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[210] Ibid, Pp 108-109

[211] Joel Beinin,"*Workers' Protest in Egypt: Neo-liberalism and Class Struggle in 21st Century*". (Social Movement Studies. 8 (4): 449-454: 2009). Pp454

strikes, but once it turned political, the regime showed its intolerance directly.[212] Privatization policies affected directly the workers, and hence it fueled their collective action. Once again the workers found themselves struggling against the regime, its institutions, and the whole state, and not only the privatization policies that was preventing them from living a decent normal life. In that sense, it was only reasonable for their demands and chanting to turn political and join the youth activists' opposition against the state.[213]

There had been different movements that collaborated with the workers movements and realized the importance of the economic demands in their quest for change and their challenge against the state. Examples of these movements would be Tadamon, 6th of April and Revolutionary Socialists, however, the next section would explore 6th of April as an elaborative example for how the youth activism had developed between 2005 and 2008.

3.4 The Birth of the 6th Devil

The capitalist politicians were determined to adjust Egypt's economy in favor of their neo-liberal plans. The country was sinking deeply into poverty, unemployment, pollution, ignorance twined with illiteracy, and public services in fatal conditions, yet they did not form policies that concentrate on subsidies like the former governments.[214] Instead, they managed to transfer the questioning of social equality and eradicating

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[212] Rabab El-Mahdi, *"Labour Protests in Egypt: Causes and Meanings*". (Review of African Political Economy. 38 (129): 387-402: 2011). Pp 395-396

[213] Maha M. Abdelrahman, "*A Hierarchy of Struggles?: The 'Economic' and The 'Political' in Egypt's Revolution*". (Review of African Political Economy. 39 (134): 614-628: 2012). Pp 621

[214] H. Al-Gahmy & A. Abd al-Qawy, "*Tahqiqat niyabat amn al-dawla fei qadaya fasad al-wuzara [State Security Prosecutor Investigates the Corruption of Ministers]*". (Al-Shorouk Newspaper: 12 March 2011). p. 7; A. Ghoneim, "*Azmat al-dawla al-misriya al-mu'asera [The Crisis of the Contemporary Egyptian State]*". (Cairo: Dar al-'Alam al-Thaleth: 2005). As cited by H. Kandil, "*Why did the Egyptian Middle Class March to Tahrir Square?*". (Mediterranean Politics. 17 (2): 197-215,: 2012). Pp 210

poverty into questioning efficient management and control. The bargaining system had changed. Previously, the state would use the needs of people to form a bargain on the merit of subsidies. The government would then offer subsidies for certain social needs in exchange of legitimacy. However, the new government was not shy to save money surplus that could help fulfilling a social need in favor of their capitalist club. The new tax regime had already imposed 60 percent in the form of indirect taxes and tariffs, putting the taxes load on the shoulder of the general population, with a blind eye on their economic level. On the other hand, the businessmen had witnessed a luxurious tax reduction by cutting it into half, where the taxes decreased from 40 percent to 20 percent.[215] According to the World Bank, 47 percent of the Egyptians were earning less than 2$ per day. These deteriorating conditions of the socio-economic life of an Egyptian were sufficient to fuel anger not only between the workers but also through youth, middle class, and peasants.[216]

The labor protests were rising in Egypt; however, they faced a major deficiency by being localized. The protests lacked sectoral or national coordination between the strikes, protests or any collective action. The collective actions erupted and formed spontaneously and exclusively, with only a few committees that represented these strikes to negotiate with the management.[217] The workers activism crossed path with the other extra-parliamentary opposition forces and coincided with their political agenda. Kefaya's campaign for democracy, Shabab Men Agl al-Taghyeer, and other groups introduced the labor demands into the political realm; however, they did very little effort to organize the workers activism. With movements losing their momentum

[215] Ibid, Pp 210

[216] H. Kandil, "*Why did the Egyptian Middle Class March to Tahrir Square?". (*Mediterranean Politics. 17 (2): 197-215,: 2012). Pp 210

[217] Maha M. Abdelrahman, "*A Hierarchy of Struggles?: The 'Economic' and The 'Political' in Egypt's Revolution*". (Review of African Political Economy. 39 (134): 614-628: 2012). Pp 619

and power starting 2006, the workers activism was usually met by sympathy without any further actions done.[218]

By the year 2007, the labor protests framed a new path for the workers' protests in Egypt and opened a doorway for the young activists to engage with a more radical demanding voice. On the 28th of September 2007, on voice of America Radio Sayyid Habib declared that "*We are challenging the regime*". The workers and activists figured at this point that the battle against the regime was cohesive, whereas the socio-economic struggle of the workers became political with national implications.[219]

The workers activism was further strengthened and became an important pillar in activism life due to the following reasons:

1. The state failure to sustain socio-economic provisions, for both workers specifically and for the Egyptian citizens generally. The state failed to provide employment opportunities, sustaining wages, or even provide the public sector with its needed public services from free education, decent health care,etc.

2. The abstention of the state of using coercion against the workers strikes or protests, which encouraged them to continue protesting and mobilizing. Despite the state efforts to form a bargain that could match its neo-liberal policies, the workers remained angry and could not trust the regime or its strategies.[220]

3. Nationalism characterizing the state was over; with the Egyptian state anti-nationalism position from America's Iraq invasion and the Palestinian case, it was obvious that the nationalism era was over.

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[218] Joel Beinin, "*Workers' Protest in Egypt: Neo-liberalism and Class Struggle in 21st Century".* (Social Movement Studies. 8 (4): 449-454: 2009). Pp451

[219] Joel Benin, "*A workers' Social Movement on The Margin of the Global Neoliberal Order, Egypt 2004-2009*". In Joel Beinin and Frédéric Vairel. "*Social movements, mobilization, and contestation in the Middle East and North Africa*". (Stanford, California: Stanford University Press: 2011). Pp 195

[220] Rabab El-Mahdi, "*Labour protests in Egypt: causes and meanings*". (Review of African Political Economy. 38 (129): 387-402. 2011). Pp394

4. The growing role of new media in circulating information, documentation and flexibility of connection between the different activists.

All of these major changes in the political and economic life had fostered the strength and weight of the labor protests and workers activism in Egypt.[221]

In parallel to these circumstances, a young generation of activists and other leftist groups had grown disenchanted with the prioritizing of political demands over economic ones. Increasing dissatisfaction had resulted from the failure of the movements to reach out to workers protests and youth calling for social and economic rights. Accordingly, small groups of young activists formed new movements with fresh agendas to link between economic and political demands of the people. The most leading of these new movements are Tadamon (Solidarity), April 6, Youth for Justice and Freedom, and Hashd (Mobilization). The objective of these movements was to abandon the separation between democratic change demands and economic and social struggle demands movements.[222]

In the aftermath of the 6th of April strikes in 2008, a group of youth activists formed a group on Facebook and declared their solidarity with the Mahala workers strikes. They would later on become known as the 6th of April movement, as their emergence was connected to the workers strike. The Facebook group succeeded in attracting the attention of the public, with reaching 70,000 members.[223] The strike idea was appealing to the youth activists and spread quickly through Facebook, as Israa Abd El Fattah started to market for the 28th of March 2008 strike under the slogan of "*No for surrender ... Egypt will regain its youth again*". After the great attention the group

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[221] Ibid, Pp394

[222] Maha M. Abdelrahman, "*A Hierarchy of Struggles?: The 'Economic' and The 'Political' in Egypt's Revolution*". (Review of African Political Economy. 39 (134): 614-628: 2012). Pp 622

[223] Dina Shehata, *"Al- Haraka Al Shababeya Wa Thawret 25 Yanayer"*. (Korasat Istrategeya Issue no 218: 2011). Pp 20

had witnessed and the advertising campaigns for 6th of April strikes, the group officially announced in June 2008 the formation of 6th of April movement and announced its vision in the journalists' syndicate.[224]

The declaration note clearly highlighted the goals and the target of the movement, where reform and change came on the top list. Also, the declaration emphasized the importance of the youth activism for the success of the movement as they are the real engine for the reform and they are the owners of the change. In addition, the movement hammered on the openness of the movements for all the different factions of the society. The call of membership has been opened for all the Egyptians, whether they are individuals, groups, parties or others, with complete disregard for their political affiliation or identity.[225]

Ahmed Maher, one of the main 6th of April activists, explained that the interference of Kefaya movement in Shabab Men Agl al-Taghyer is one of the main reasons for its failure. This explains why 6th of April preserved their independence from other movements and political organizations. The movement had a very flexible organizational structure, however, they were highly organized. For example, in the case of arresting one of the movement's members, the emergency committee would work on four different aspects, 1) legal support through providing the detained member with a lawyer, 2) provide the detained member with all what they need for daily needs such as medical supplies, books, or food,[226] 3) start media propaganda to spread information about the case of the detained member, and finally 4) protesting pressure, where the

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[224] Ibid, Pp 20

[225] 6th of April formation declaration found on their blog. https://shabab6april.wordpress.com/ABOUT/ Last Acc 11th of August 2016.

[226] Dina Shehata, *"Al- Haraka Al Shababeya Wa Thawret 25 Yanayer"*. (Korasat Istrategeya Issue no 218: 2011). Pp 22

other members of the movement would organize marches to protest against detaining their fellow member.[227]

6th of April used the new media as a valid tool for mobilization and to organize their demonstrations. With their initial start from a virtual podium formed on Facebook, 6th of April succeeded in collaborating with the workers protest in Mahalla and later on the movement was able to organize a number of protest activities on the streets.[228] Starting April 2008 Egypt had more than 160,000 blogs with 20% of them of political nature. These blogs succeeded in attracting attention from the people and the government. The bloggers used a very easy and attractive language to criticize the officials and their practices. Besides their various tools of channeling their ideas, from photos, videos, and multi-media, they also managed to transform some of the blogs into archives to document the violation of human rights by state security forces.[229]

Importantly, 6th of April movement and the other movements that are similar to it were of great importance for the renovation of activism in Egypt post-2006. The importance of these movements drives from;

1) The movements' adaptation abilities, this which was a new characteristic for the movements in Egypt.

2) They were able to criticize the regime openly and freely with no restrictions.

3) They marked the awakening for radical reform, with all the radical demands.[230]

4) There was no ideological inclinations in these movements, if one did not have an ideology they would still be welcomed. The post-2006 movements' focus was on the

[227] Ibid, Pp 22

[228] Dina Shehata, "*Youth Mobilization in Egypt: New Trends and Opportunities".* (Al Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies: 2010). P.6

[229] Dina Shehata, "*Youth Activism in Egypt*". (Arab Reform Brief; 2008), p.5, www.**reform**.net/en/file/390/download?token=bGY_5Pp8 Last Acc. 31st of July, 2016

[230] Nadine Sika, *"Youth Political Engagement in Egypt: From Abstention to Uprising"*. (British Journal of Middle Eastern Studies, 39(2), 181–199: 2012). Pp 189

goal, not the identity

5) Human rights values, democracy, social equality and justice were the main driving values of these movements.

6) The movements were secular in its nature; however, it succeeded in incubating and co-opting Islamist youth.

Consequently, 6ᵗʰ of April was able to mobilize youth from various political social and economic factions of the society. These movements showcased maturity of political opposition in youth-driven movements and disruptive activism.[231]

In conclusion, as discussed above, the new features of the youth movements (and non-movement tendencies in some cases) shows that the activism in Egypt had changed in the period between 2005/6 and 2008. The failure of the older generation activists to incubate the youth generation was evident and had its own consequences on the older movements' mobilization power. The stagnation of the older generation activists, despite their political ideology, did not help the former movements to hold their momentum and eventually lost their power as the youth activists split from the old generation activists' grasp. Social movements then were used as a more radical tool for activism with the new youth generation activists' demands and their desire to enforce a dialogue between different ideologies. Cyber activism had contributed significantly in opening new channels for online activism and to openly talk about the youth demands, which entails that there has been a major change in political behavior towards activism between the younger generations. Movements during this period were more resilient to older generations' activism, and the demands shifted its focus from challenging the state policies and the presidential rule to grassroots' and economic demands.

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[231] Ibid, Pp 189

Chapter Four: Conclusion

Activism under authoritarianism is a very interesting and rich phenomenon where state and non-state actors adapts to each other strategies in a contentious non-static manner. This study focused on the adaptational mechanism of activism, to escape the state grip over political participation channels in the Egyptian context. The study then tries to draw the nexus between repression and stimulating mobilization over a collective threat, and hence the rise of newly formed movements that can contest with the state. The repressive nature of the Egyptian state did not prevent the evolution of activism and the emergence of social movements, thus this paper examines the changing forms of political activism under authoritarian regimes, specifically in Egypt in the time frame between 2000 and 2008/9 and focuses on social movements as a tool of activism.

Given the state repressive nature and regime strategies that limited any form of political opposition, the context of forming social movements according to the western definition was impossible. Some scholars debated that in an authoritarian state like Egypt social movements could not be formed due to a lack of opening opportunity, the weakness of political opposition power, and absence of effective non-state actors. Other scholars debated that Egypt had roots for activism, yet within specific boundaries and limitations. Although opening opportunity is a valid and important reason for social movements to rise and develop, the list of factors scholars claimed to be the only opening opportunity factors were mostly limited to western political context. The contentious political disputes between the state and the opposing entities and activists served as empirical evidence for activism. The case of Egypt proved that collective threat triggered by the excessive usage of state repression could serve as a political

opportunity for the social movements as well. It is important to note here that the relationship between repression and activism is dynamic, they both affect and are affected by each other. Hence, scholarly literature emphasized on the importance of studying activism and political participation beyond formal institutions and explore the disruptive forms of activism, such as social movements.

This research argued that political activism changes its forms under repressive authoritarian regimes. The main focus was to explore the literature gap of explaining the activism development and evolution in Egypt based on the development of collective action purpose, and the limited liberalization instances. To study how activism changes from formal into disruptive form of activism, this paper analyzed two hypotheses;

1. Periods of strong repression followed by limited liberalization opportunities/ period create space for establishing social movements as a tool for activism

2. Stagnation of old generations within different social movements, and the failure of generation in incubating younger generation activists led to the formation of more radical social movements by younger and new generation of activists.

The chapters were organized to infer on these two hypotheses, while reflecting on the characteristic changes of the social movements within the suggested timeline for the study. Below I will discuss the study findings for each hypothesis that have been thoroughly discussed in the previous chapters.

2   First: Social Movements between 2000-2002

Pre-Palestinian Intifada, state had mastered the art of repression and coercion against any form of opposition or activism, closing the channels of political inclusion

and mobilization against youth. The Egyptian contemporary state succeeded for a long time in curbing down the political opposition and political participation through bargains made with the non-state actors. Hence the legitimate and formal channels of political opposition were completely under the supervision and control of the state. The political opposition institutions were not performing as oppositional entities; syndicates were co-opted since Nasser, political opposition parties were weakened and some of them not even legalized. Also, civil society was only used by the government as a serving mobilization arm in favor of the regime when needed. The political opposition power was fragmented and weak with very low chances of taking any steps against the government. However with the sparks of the Palestinian Intifada, some oppositional figures and activists were able to cooperate together and start a wave of protesting and activism in 2000. The collision of the collective threat and a window opening for liberalization was fruitful in producing the first collective action of the 2000 activists. The disruptive form of activism was then successful to take the streets as a channel for political mobilization and expression, after it was completely dominant and under the supervision of the state. The inability of the formal opposition bodies to contain this newly activated activism forced the mobilized youth and activists to turn their heads towards the disruptive form of social movements. Repression and coercion role was remarkable at this stage as it was one of the main engine to shift activism focus from institutional to disruptive form, and helped forming a collective threat fueling the activism power. The creation of new social movements also remarks an important milestone in activism life, were activists started to create their own political channels rather than the governmentally owned ones (sometimes even run by the government). Social movements such as the Anti-Globalization Egyptian Group (AGEG), the 20 March Movement for Change, and the Defense Committee for Labor Rights were

created during the yet immature activism period, yet they served as the pillars for a new generation of activists who can work together neglecting their political and ideological differences. Also, these movements became the base for more developed movements that were capable of reviving the pluralist perspective of political contestation, as they were openly challenging the regime and it is strategies, which in return questioned the legitimacy of the regime but did not affect it.

3 Second: Social Movements between 2003-2005

The government tried to curb down the activism and the fast-growing social movements despite the encouragements of the western politics to boost democratic changes in Egypt. Ignoring the activists' demands in 2003-2004 by the ruling party, grew activists' frustration even further and the repression again had its positive impact on social movements' development. Considering the government coercive policies, new movements were established that were not addressing the transnational needs only as the post-intifada movements, but they were directly challenging the regime with specified demands and a clearer vision. The most significant movements established from interesting coalitions in that phase were Kefaya, Al Gabha Al Wataneya, and Shabab Men Agl Al Taghyeer. These movements- especially Kefaya- were able to break the fear of directly opposing the head of the state. On structural level, the movements were able to prove that the informal form of opposition and activism is more prominent and successful. As most of the founders of these movements were political parties' leaders, civil society workers and political groups' figures, they found it more convenient to form a movement that can incubate different ideological backgrounds and more liquefied structure to escape the government indirect coercion through the practice of Ministry of Social Solidarity laws.

4 Third: Social Movements between 2005- 2008/9

The rise of movements and the direct collision with the state in the streets, helped in forming a new generation of activists with different political behavior. The exposure of youth activists to political fluctuations with the pressuring socio-economic problems ignited their needs for more radical demands. The failure of the 1970s activists and the Muslim brotherhood leaders of incubating youth within their mobilization power, encouraged them to defect and form their own youth movements. The youth movements had marked another milestone of activism evolution and movements' development and maturity in Egypt, as they tried to fill in the gap presented in activism demands for socio-economic reform. The significance of activism at this point was how it reached out to grass root level which was previously inactive and their effective usage of offline mobilization tools. The youth activists were successful in cooperating with workers' activism and gain enough trust to politicize their demands. In that sense, youth also were able to create new tools for contestation with the state through less controlled channels, which is the new media that lowered the political participation. The rise of cyber activism had contributed in mobilizing youth and exchanging their ideological and political opinions, which in return enhanced their political awareness and encouraged them to defect from their dissatisfying political affiliations that were marked by rigidity and marginalization of youth in the decision-making process. Youth who established movements such as Tadamon, 6th of April and Revolutionary Socialists realized that in order to push for real reform, their demands should challenge the state more directly and should integrate the economic demands. Significantly, youth activists shifted their focus from political affiliations to contentious collective action cause-driven activism.

In conclusion, social movements are fluid in its nature and do not follow a static form, as they adapt and evolve according to the political readiness, repressive measurements and reform needs at a certain point of time. Contentious collective action is the main pillar for movements to develop, this which could explain the change of political behavior of activists and their approach of contesting the state. There exist different factors and variables that contribute to the formation and evolution of movements that differ according to the region, type of regime, political behavior and others. It is hard to cover all the factors through this study, which in return could add a certain level of limitation for conceptualizing its conclusion. Another limitation is the contentious nature of movements' evolution that increases the fluidity of the phenomenon understudy; however, the previously mentioned factors cannot be neglected or underestimated.

This paper provides future studies with necessary background on the political context and characteristics of the developed political activism in Egypt. Future studies may employ other approaches that include Islamist activism, parliamentary competitions and state-political opposition bargains. This study also opens avenues for studying changes of political behavior, especially among young activists who clearly had contributed to movements' reform where it showcases the bases for coalitions between the desperate political opposition powers, roots for youth mobilization, and the evolution of activism demands in Egypt. This study also challenges the scholarly debate that activism in the ME, and especially in Egypt, is an irrational phenomenon. Thus it opens avenues for debating the rationality of contesting the state and regime openly, taking into consideration risk and repression cost. Studying the pattern of activism reform in Egypt could explain the spring upraising in 2011 and also its failure from a political behavior approach.

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