

Mappings of Power: The State, NGOs, and International Organizations in the Informal Economy of Cairo

JULIA ELYACHAR

Near Eastern Studies, New York University

WHAT'S IN A NAME

Ahmed Sa'id was Secretary of his neighborhood NGO and a member of a joint government-NGO committee. He was also a successful owner/operator, or master (*'usta*), of a workshop (*warsha*). He owned a body shop that checked the balance of cars with computerized equipment. He had paid 120,000 LE (about US\$ 35,000) for that equipment—produced in Italy to his specifications—with money he had saved as a migrant worker in Germany, Turkey, and Italy. Sa'id's equipment gleamed in the center of his workshop. To the left stood his desk, which attested to the business function of a workshop master, and his special status as Secretary of the NGO. Under the glass of his desk lay a display of the business cards of some of his most valued customers—mainly army officers.

The neighborhood he lived in, al-Hirafiyeen, was a state-sponsored project. It had been built in 1989 by a state ministry—the Governorate of Cairo—to house workshops evicted from other parts of northern Cairo. All this followed on the heels of Decision #242, which was issued in 1989, the official explanation said, to rid neighborhoods of northern Cairo of polluting workshops. Sa'id was one of about 600 craftsmen in a broad range of crafts who had been told to

Acknowledgements: The fieldwork on which this paper is based was funded by the MacArthur Foundation and Social Science Research Council Program in International Peace and Security in a Changing World, 1994–1996; The Fulbright Commission, Institute of International Exchange, 1993–1994; and a Sheldon Dissertation Fellowship, Harvard University, 1993. I am grateful to these organizations for their generous support. I carried out the fieldwork in partnership with Esam Fawzi, and would like to acknowledge his crucial contribution to my research. I presented an earlier draft of this paper at the panel “Forming the Future: Official and Unofficial Practices,” American Anthropological Association Annual Meeting, San Francisco, November 2000. My thanks to Sally Falk Moore, the panel organizer, for inviting me and for her helpful comments. I am also grateful to Tomaž Mastnak for his important suggestions and comments on earlier drafts of this paper, and to the editors and anonymous readers of *CSSH* for their immensely helpful input. All remaining errors are my responsibility.

0010-4175/03/0000-0000 \$9.50 © 2003 Society for Comparative Study of Society and History

shut down their workshops, and given a subsidized apartment and workshop in the new location. Decision #242 was only sporadically enforced, and the new neighborhood stood half empty in the early 1990s.

When the World Bank started up the Social Fund for Development in Egypt in 1991, to “offset the temporary disequilibrium of structural adjustment programs,” it utilized that space to make al-Hirafiyeen home to about 350 micro-enterprises as well. Soon after the Social Fund and the “Youth Micro-Entrepreneurs” they funded came to al-Hirafiyeen, a great deal of money followed in their wake: from international organizations, international NGOs, and bilateral development agencies—most of it targeted for Youth Microenterprise.

After the craftsmen had been moved into the new neighborhood, they had organized themselves into an association, or *rabta*. This word had no relation to the global discourse of NGOs and civil society with which we are all now so familiar. Rather it drew on an indigenous tradition of craftsmen’s associations and organizations for self-help among recent migrants to Cairo from the countryside, a legacy that includes historically diverse forms of interaction and regulation by the Egyptian state.¹ The craftsmen had formed their *rabta*, according to its leaders, in order to negotiate with the Governorate of Cairo regarding their many complaints and concerns about the new, unfinished neighborhood into which they had been moved. As a civic association, the *rabta* was regulated by the state via the Ministry of Social Affairs.

The name the craftsmen chose for their association, and the symbolic frame of reference for interactions with representatives of power it invoked, was effective in the first years of the association’s existence. But when the neighborhood became home as well to microenterprises funded by the Social Fund, the craftsmen had to operate in a new configuration of power. Reference to a long tradition of craftsmen’s associations for interactions with the state as the hegemonic form of power no longer made sense. The dominant mode of discourse to refer to civic associations had changed to one in which notions of development organized around NGOs were paramount. This is not to imply that either the craftsmen’s *rabta*, or the forms of associational life to which it was linked, was devoid of power. Rather, I am pointing to the distinct trajectories and configurations of power with which the *rabta* versus the NGO were associated.

To simplify, the *rabta* is an indigenous cultural organization that has historically had links to the Egyptian state. The NGO, on the other hand, has its origins in a distinctly international stage. NGOs in Egypt are no less “Egyptian”

¹ Civic associations have been under state regulation in Egypt since 1964, when the regime of Abdul-Nasser enacted Law 32. The legacy of self-help associations among internal migrants to Cairo is very much alive. There were 823 such migrant associations in Egypt in 1990, 80 percent of them in Greater Cairo. See Tanada (1996), cited in Bayat (2002). Bayat’s article provides a good comparative overview of associational life in Egypt. See also the research of Amani Qandil, including Qandil (1998), and see also Bianchi (1989). The historical legacy of the “craft guilds” in Egypt since at least the Ottoman Empire has been the subject of much debate among historians. For an important recent reassessment of the debate, see Chalcraft (2001).

than the craftsmen's *rabta*, but that obvious point makes it no less useful to delineate the distinct genealogies of power to which different associational forms are linked. NGOs grow out of a distinctly international context and development agenda in which funding has been linked to programs to "develop civil society," since the 1980s in particular.² The craftsmen's association, and the neighborhood to which it was linked, had developed in a dual relation with the state that had forced them to move to this new location.³ After the graduate microentrepreneurs had become co-residents of the craftsmen's neighborhood, global configurations of power in which the international organizations and NGOs were prominent had become localized as well.

Leaders of the craftsmen's association thus changed their name in 1993 to emphasize "development" (*tanmiyya*) as their aim, and began to use the word "NGO" to refer to their organization.⁴ This apparently simple name change was effected in recognition of the changing global and national environment in which the neighborhood was located. A simple name change, in other words, reflected crucial shifts in national and global configurations of power. It also indicated the craftsmen's ability to maneuver and exercise power in the locality where they lived and worked.⁵

THE FENCE, THE MAP, AND THE NGO

Sa'id entered the NGO after its name had changed, and development had become the main referent for public pronouncements about the association's work. When he spoke about his work for the association, it was in terms of his service to "the public interest" (*al-maslaha al-'ama*), of which he was extremely proud. There were issues in town that made him angry, things that were not right. Like the fence near his workshop, which should not have been there. To accommodate that fence, the builders had short-changed Sa'id and his neighbors of valuable working space. The land behind the fence was illegally occupied and, he often repeated, the state should do something about it. Although

² I develop this argument further in Elyachar (2001).

³ See Ghannam (1997; 1998) for analysis of another case where the Egyptian state forced residents of one neighborhood to move to another.

⁴ The name change was from the Craftsmen's Association (*rabta al-hirafiyeen*) to the Association for the Development of el-Hirafiyeen City (*al-gam'iyya li-tanmiyya madina al-hirafiyeen*). In Arabic, the term for association changed from *rabta* to *gam'iyya*; the latter is usually used in Egypt as the translation of NGO.

⁵ In this sentence it would be accurate to speak of "strategic power" in the terms of de Certeau (1988). But the concept of "strategy" has multiple meanings in anthropology since Bourdieu used "strategy" to develop his theory of practice in opposition to static notions of "the rule" (1977). De Certeau contrasts strategic to tactical power in regards to the individual or group's relation to external forms of power. A strategy can serve as a basis for generating relations with an "exteriority composed of targets or threats" (1988: 36), whereas a tactic "cannot count on a 'proper' (spatial or institutional) locus" (*ibid.* xix). See Ghannam (1998) for excellent mobilization of de Certeau's concepts for analysis of a housing project in Cairo. De Certeau's concepts of strategy and strategic power are, in turn, quite different than those of anthropologist Eric Wolf (1999; 2001), which I draw upon below.

the land behind the fence was, on paper, owned by the Governorate, someone else had long been using it. Such squatting is both illegal and an everyday practice in Cairo, and many other cities of the world. When practices that violate laws are accepted as the norm, and have a legitimacy that is not the state's, they are often called "informal practices." In this case, the squatter on state land was another part of the state—the Army, or rather a poultry farm owned and run by the Army.⁶

Sa'id went on a hunt to find the official map of the neighborhood and where things had gone wrong. He thought that having the official state map of the neighborhood, with the boundaries clearly drawn in to show what land belonged to whom, would help him prove that the poultry farm was illegally squatting on state land. And once that point was proven with the map, he thought, he would be able to force the poultry farm to move the fence and get off those meters of land that were rightfully his. He never found that map. Neither did we.

Esam Fawzi and I started our search for the official accounting of property relations in el-Hirafiyeen in the offices of the Governorate of Cairo, which had built the neighborhood in the first place. But the relevant information had recently "died" with the death of an official responsible for the neighborhood's overall planning, to use the language, half in jest, of an official of the Governorate. Officials and staff were happy to learn that we were conducting research in a neighborhood they had built, and which had become so important to the progress of the Social Fund—itsself an institution of great importance in Egypt. Given the paucity of information on hand, officials were pleased for the chance to contribute to the research and hoped to gather information for their own use as well.

Planners in Egyptian Ministries produce maps for reports and state planning projects, often in cooperation with visiting French experts. But the Governorate is a Ministry without professional planners, although it has the power to build on state land allocated to the Governorate. When I visited the Ministry of Planning, professional planners, Egyptian and French, were engaged in different stages of planning projects. All such plans, of course, entailed the drawing and redrawing of maps laying out the contours of envisaged, and completed, planning projects. Such was not the case with the Governorate, although it is also a builder of state projects on state land. That is not to say that there are no planners in the Governorate, let alone in Egypt. Such would be absurd. The point is

⁶ On the military as an important owner of land and businesses in Egypt, see Henry and Springborg (2001:150–52), and Bianchi (1989:5). According to Henry and Springborg, "the military controls vast tracts of valuable land, much of it along Egypt's coastline or the Suez Canal, in prime tourist development sites. The conversion of such land . . . into other uses provides a major source of revenue directly to the military. It also enables it to enter into joint ventures with public sector and private developers, thereby forging linkages with strategic elites" (2001:150–51). They add that a significant part of military manpower is absorbed in productive activities such as "the rising of crops and livestock" (ibid.:151). In other words, the case that I discuss here of the poultry farm is not an anomaly.

that, according to one of the engineers who planned some of the “New Communities” built by the state in the 1980s and 1990s, these were not trained planners working inside this particular state agency. Rather, they were engineers who took on planning projects as a way to save the Governorate the expense of hiring outside consultants.

Not only were there no professional planners on the project; there was no official map. After many inquiries and investigations through various routes during my fieldwork led to no results, I finally concluded that there was no official map of the neighborhood. That is not to say that there were no maps at all. Clerks in the Governorate still had a preliminary sketch of the bare outlines of the neighborhood. Other drawings were with the firm that had sub-contracted the building project. I was also given, by the end of my study, a map of the area that had been drawn and used by the Army. They were kind enough to provide that map for my research despite the fact that it had not been drawn for civilian use. There were not maps of el-Hirafiyeen in the offices of state agencies responsible for planning in Cairo, since el-Hirafiyeen was “the Governorate’s,” and not theirs. This includes the office that makes maps available to the public and researchers. Nor was Ahmed Sa’id able to find the map. He could find no official representation of how property was supposed to be allocated, and where the lines were supposed to lie between el-Hirafiyeen and the poultry farm. The obvious conclusion—as he often repeated—was that the map was being withheld from him. His enemies in the NGO and local government officials were conspiring to keep the map out of his hands. Without the map, he said, he could not prove his case against the poultry farm and force them to move off of the land that was rightfully his. Such a situation could not have arisen by accident. For how could the state have no official map of its own land and property rights?

ACCOUNTING FOR THE MAP

To think about that question, it is useful to first consider the gap that often exists between official accountings or maps, and actual relations of power and property that exist on the ground. As is the case throughout Cairo and many other cities of the world, what is in on the ground is often quite different than what is on the map. Land in Cairo is rarely empty, but its users may not be seen by the official eye of the state. There are many reasons why a state might choose not to see what is obviously there. Informal housing often exhibits a situation of “ambiguous persistence,” to use Smart’s term for illegal activity that has a “significant degree of social legitimacy” and is “usually tolerated, or only occasionally and situationally repressed” (2000:104). Smart’s formulation of the problem has its limitations, but it is useful in its emphasis, first, on the political and fluid nature of state decisions whether or not to “see” or “repress” social situations where informality or illegality prevail. It creates analytical space for thinking about contexts in which some things are “seen” and others are

“overlooked” at one and the same time.⁷ A very different explanation of the discrepancy between, on the one hand, official accounts of property and official maps of land use, and on the other, realities on the ground, is provided by Hernando de Soto, in his book *The Mystery of Capital*. De Soto argues for the revival of Marxist categories in a fashion endorsed by Margaret Thatcher. His argument is important, if for no other reason than his influential role as a “public intellectual” whose research has a direct impact on development policy. According to de Soto, official property rights are but a “bell jar” of privilege floating in a veritable sea of disenfranchised entrepreneurs (2000). Leaving aside for a moment the many problems with de Soto’s book, the extent to which informality prevails in Egypt seems to support his stance.

In many ways, the arguments of Smart and de Soto could not be more different. But they share one important feature: an assumption that the state is in one place, and informality is in another. And yet, I will maintain, the state cannot always be so neatly located outside informality. The small story I opened with above, about a fence that moved, a state that squatted on its own land, and a map that could not be found, lays out in a nutshell some of the dilemmas surrounding the issue of informality in Egypt, and elsewhere as well. The issue of informality is of great importance in and of itself—the phenomenon is faced by states throughout the world. For my purposes, however, I am more interested in informality as a diagnostic issue that sheds light on some of the problems faced by researchers who want to investigate changing forms of power in the world today and, in particular, the nature of the relationship among “the state,” “international organizations,” and “NGOs.” I will pursue that interest by laying out the contours of the story I opened with above in more detail, including its broader context. But first, I would like to provide an overview of how the issue of informality developed in Egypt—as an empirical phenomenon, a research issue, and an organizing concept for development intervention.

STATES OF INFORMALITY

The problem of informality in Cairo was literally in front of everyone’s eyes by the 1980s. It emerged as a question of housing or, in other terms, changing forms of the production of space. According to a leading authority on informal housing in Cairo, 84 percent of the building in the city in 1975–1990 was carried out without authorization from the responsible government agencies, did not conform to building regulations, and was not included in official government statistics and publications of the period on urbanization (El Kadi 1994: 31). When new maps of the city were drawn up in 1990, entire “informal neighborhoods,” built through such methods, took up about 40 percent of the land mass of Greater Cairo (ibid.).

⁷ During the 1990s in Egypt, for example, some divergences between the use of property and official accounts provoked a strong response of the security apparatus of the state, and others were systematically overlooked. See below.

We cannot attribute the complex phenomenon of informal housing in Cairo to one factor like circular migration across state boundaries, although the link between the two is clearly more than casual.⁸ However, assessing the degree of causal relation between the two is not my concern here. Rather, I am interested in a complex process (one without unilateral causality) through which new social spaces emerged in Egypt where sovereignty of the state did not hold sway. I am also concerned with why some of those spaces were perceived as a security threat and others were not (or, in Smart's terms, why some were situationally repressed and others were not). Finally, and most centrally, I want to elucidate the diverse levels of power that operate in those social spaces, and especially the interactions among the forms of power we call the state, international organizations, and NGOs.

Much of the housing built informally during the 1970s and 1980s was funded by millions of individual Egyptians who worked in the Arab Gulf states during the 1970s and 1980s, and moved their savings to Egypt via financial networks that remained outside the official banking system, and that, by and large, bypassed state financial institutions. Those transfers can be characterized (depending on one's definition of the term) as part of the informal economy. Once inside of the sovereign territory of Egypt, moreover, little of this money was deposited into the banking system of Egypt. With the banking system weak and distrusted, and interest rates low, informal alternatives were very attractive. One significant part of migrants' savings was invested in "Islamic Investment Companies" (IICs), which pooled small and large sums (both from inside Egypt and migrants still in the Gulf) to invest in the money markets of London and New York.⁹

The IICs built on informal networks created by Egyptian migrant workers in the Gulf to move their money into Egypt and back to their families. With an investment structure resembling mutual funds, and yet organized as a specifically Islamic form of investment in which profit, rather than interest, was paid to depositors, the companies gained the trust of many Egyptian workers in the Gulf. The debates surrounding them echoed other concerns of the time among bank regulators worldwide regarding new possibilities for unregulated financial transfers enhanced by the new computer technology of the 1970s. These involved what was then called the Euromarkets, and they have been more recently debated in terms of offshore banking.¹⁰ The "crowning flower of the hid-

⁸ For discussions of the link between informal housing and migration, and in relation to other factors see, for example, Oldham, El Hadidi, and Tamaa (1987), Arandal and El Batran (1997), Tekçe, Oldham, and Shorter (1994), Hoodfar (1997), Nada (1991), and Rageh (1985). For some good summaries of the literature on Egyptian migration to the Gulf, see Amin and Awmy (1985), Choucri (1983), and Fergany (1988; 1991).

⁹ For a good overview of the issue of Islamic Investment Companies, see Roussillon (1988b), Rycx (1987), and Sadowski (1991:219–53).

¹⁰ For an anthropologist who analyzes both off-shore banking in the Caribbean and Islamic banking, see Maurer (2000; 2002). On the implications of unregulated banking and the new computer technology, with good references on the relationship to the Latin America debt crisis of 1982, see Castells (1996:119–25). In the wake of September 11th, in turn, the U.S. government targeted

den economy” (Sadowski 1991:232), the IICs brought migrant savings networks in the 1980s together with key money center banks and investment houses in the United States. They also practiced the kind of currency speculation that was then still being called “the black market.”¹¹ By the end of the 1980s, the three largest of the IICs claimed more than \$1.3 billion dollars in deposits belonging to more than 254,000 investors (ibid.:231). The state maintained an ambivalent relationship to these leaders of the “hidden economy.” Even as efforts to suppress this source of competition to the official banking system were underway, in 1988 the IICs served as a source of liquidity for the state when it was faced with a severe food crisis (ibid.:238). But later that year Law 146 was passed, which created a new set of regulations that forced most of the companies into bankruptcy or reorganization. Many Egyptians, many of them former migrants, lost all their savings.

Migrants who turned their cash into real estate assets had better luck. Some of the remittances that had been transferred across borders without recourse to the official banking system were invested in real estate through various forms of informal property relations. This money also stayed outside the national economy when migrants or their relatives bought land and helped create new or transformed neighborhoods, whose contours were shaped without regard to state law. Some gained unprecedented windfalls in the 1980s from an astronomical rise in real estate prices that continued through the 1990s. Again, the investment of remittances in housing assets was not the sole cause of this real estate boom, but it was clearly an important factor. Others were massive military investment in new neighborhoods of Cairo, and state subsidization of speculative investment in real estate (Mitchell 2002:274–75). In this period, real estate replaced agriculture as the country’s third-largest non-oil investment sector, after manufacturing and tourism.¹² By the early 1990s, through the complex set of factors that go into creating any asset bubble, a real estate investment bubble was full-blown in Cairo.¹³ Between December 1993 and April 1994 alone, the price of land for building in most neighborhoods of Cairo rose by 50 percent (*el-Ahali*, 21 Apr. 1994: 3).

such informal banking networks as “financiers of terror.” The links between offshore banking and informal migrant financial networks became front-page news in November 2001, when the U.S. Government shut down financial organizations accused of funding the al-Qaeda network. See *The Financial Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, and *The New York Times* of 8 November 2001, for reporting about informal financial networks, or *hawala* funds.

¹¹ In the late 1990s, on the other hand, similar practices in a different period of globalization and the triumph of financial deregulation were called arbitrage, and were made famous by financier and civil society advocate George Soros.

¹² Mitchell (2002:275) citing *Economist Intelligence Unit (EIU), Country Report: Egypt, 3rd quarter 1998*, p. 10. Furthermore, as Mitchell goes on to say, “Indeed it may have become the largest non-oil sector, since most tourism investment went into building hotels and vacation homes, another form of real estate.”

¹³ For study of the historical precedents in another period of “globalization,” see Owen (1969) on the real estate boom in Cairo at the turn of the twentieth century.

Much of this phenomenal rise in real estate prices occurred through various systems that were technically illegal, but normalized social facts. In the case of “informal neighborhoods,” individuals invested their large or small sums of money saved over a lifetime into land owned by the state, or invested in land zoned for agriculture that was gradually being incorporated into Greater Cairo. Surrounding villages were absorbed into the capital city. Previously uninhabited land owned, on paper, by the state became, de facto, the private property of others in fully developed land markets with the state receiving no compensation in the process.¹⁴ The city grew at an unprecedented pace, though little of the growth went on according to the rule of law. Since there were no criminal statutes against squatting on state land in Egypt, there were few legal instruments to put a stop to such forms of building once they were facts on the ground, beyond ineffective fines and threats of razing buildings.

Such informal “squatting” had, of course, transformed the face of most large third world cities in this period. In the thinking of many development theorists of the time, squatting, and the ability of the poor to produce solutions to their own housing crises, was a positive thing. There was hope that the poor might provide some of the answers that development had failed to supply. De Soto’s *The Other Path* was the strongest and most influential statement of the view that informal neighborhoods of squatters were not the problem—the state was (de Soto 1989).

But not everyone agreed. As much as it was tolerated on the whole, informal housing also became the object of direct attacks by the security apparatus of the Egyptian state, especially when neighborhoods became associated in official discourse with “Islamic fundamentalism.” When some informal neighborhoods associated with Islamist organizations were literally attacked by security forces, the notion that “informality” was in itself linked with “terrorism” became common in official discourse. Informal neighborhoods in Cairo were often portrayed in official state discourse as a cancer on the social and political body. When the Egyptian government laid siege to the informal neighborhood of Imbaba, the semantic association in Egyptian Arabic of informal neighborhoods (*‘ashwaiyyat*: which means random, disordered) to notions of a site of disorder was extended to an association to terrorism.¹⁵ Here, I would like to point out the extent to which state discourse echoes the assumption made by both Smart and de Soto: the state is in one place, informality in another.

And yet, I would maintain, “the state” and “informality” cannot be so neatly separated. Given that informality was defined in terms of an opposition to the

¹⁴ De Soto (2000) argues that these informal property rights are “dead capital.”

¹⁵ See Denis (1994) and Ghannam (1998; 1997) for useful discussions of the security concerns of the state about informal neighborhoods and Islamic fundamentalism. Denis provides an excellent survey of the press debates of the time. See Denis (1995) for a more complex typology of the sociology of housing in Cairo than that provided by the duality “informal/formal” housing. That duality is also critiqued by Tekçe, Oldham, and Shorter (1994:10).

state, such a conclusion raises a number of questions.¹⁶ Cross-border circular migrations, pervasive unregulated financial networks across borders, and growing percentages of territory in the capital city that seemed to be outside of state regulation, were all too central in this period to be relegated to a sphere of negative phenomena—the “not formal.” “Informal housing” was linked by the state to specific “problem neighborhoods” such as Imbaba, I have said, but informality as a mode of technically illegal activities with a high degree of social legitimacy was extremely widespread by the 1990s. Nor was informality characteristic of the poor alone, as is often assumed in discussions of the Middle East.¹⁷ Informal property relations had become a crucial generator of wealth and power in society at large. Indeed, the state itself was not isolated from these dynamics.

The issue of widespread squatting on state land by the wealthy and state officials in Egypt, for example, such as was evident in el-Hirafiyeen over the course of my fieldwork, became the subject of debate in official public space via the Islamist press in the 1990s, exposed as part of a wider campaign to publicize alleged instances of government corruption and malfeasance. The government, in turn, acknowledged that there was little it could do to stop such squatting, even by official agencies of the state, in the absence of criminal (as opposed to civil) laws against it. In some cases, military orders were issued to enforce the rights of the state in the land it legally owned, against its own agencies.¹⁸ Informality, it seems, had become part of the state itself.¹⁹ That is, making sense of the “informal”—be it informal housing or informal economy—makes no sense without a parallel story of the state. And, I would add, without a parallel story of international organizations as well.

WHAT GOES INTO THE MAP

Informal housing in Egypt, I have said, became regarded by the state as a security threat associated with Islamic fundamentalism and terrorism. But attached to the term economy, the term “informal” had a quite different fate. When informal housing was replaced by informal economy on the agenda of international organizations, informality assumed positive attributes that could be supported by international organizations (IOs) and the state alike. Informal economy became an agenda that the state, ironically, could adopt as its own.

¹⁶ In fact, by 1992, the originator of the term, anthropologist Keith Hart, was writing of the dualism of “state” versus “informal economy” as a dubious idea at best (Hart 1992:225).

¹⁷ Asef Bayat (2002:3) makes a similar point. For examples of the notion that informality refers specifically to “the poor” and “survival strategies,” see Wikan (1996), Singerman (1995), and Hoodfar (1997).

¹⁸ I discuss and document such cases in more detail in Elyachar (forthcoming).

¹⁹ A statement like “informality had become part of the state” can be read as a rhetorical device to illustrate the problems of the duality “state/informal.” But for the historical processes that are captured by such a statement, see Castells (1998) on the informalization of the state; J.-F. Bayart, S. Ellis, B. Hibou (1997) on the criminalization of the state; and Hibou (1999) on the privatization of the state.

When housing was replaced by economy, informality gained new prominence and official sanction.

When structural adjustment programs (SAPs) enforced by the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund became official state policy in Egypt (on paper if not always enforced) in the 1980s and 1990s, the issue of informal economy acquired new policy implications. IOs supervising the state's retreat from the economy realized that the practices through which the poor in Egypt had always managed to survive were a good thing, and could become the basis of a "safety net" for those who might fall through the holes made by SAPs. In other words, they undertook to develop the informal economy. But before IOs could do this, they had to gain a better knowledge of just what that economy was.

To intervene in any given social reality, an institutional power first has to map it. That is true of IOs as well as of states. In the case of informal neighborhoods identified with "terrorism" and "Islamic fundamentalism," as I have said, the security dimension was paramount. But in the case of the informal economy, security of the state did not emerge as a key motivation for deciding to see, and to map. Rather, security of the global order under conditions of widespread unemployment and structural adjustment was on the agenda of international agencies around the world. Here it is significant that informality was cast as an economic issue in a context when definitions of just what the economy is were under widespread debate within and outside the profession of economics.²⁰ Recast as economy, informality became an issue solvable by economic means. Specifically, in the case of the development of the informal economy under the sponsorship of IOs, a statistical mapping of the massive informal economy was needed. But informal activity, by definition, is not included in state statistics, so mapping it was no easy matter. It entailed rewriting some of the basic categories around which statistics are gathered on both national and international scales.²¹ Such a project was sponsored by IOs in different parts of the world. Once the contours of the informal economy were mapped out, it then became possible for IOs and others to begin funding this thing that they had helped to define.

I have made a shift here, of course, from literal maps to the more metaphorical notion of mapping. Not all maps are images of roads in space, or engineers' plans. The statistical summaries we call "national income accounts," for example, give a numerical mapping of "national economy." We can read off of those tables of value added an image of a country at work, of laboring bodies within the bounds of a distinct national economy. Once we speak of "national economy," moreover, the state is an implicit unit of analysis as well. National income accounts, like gross national product, are mappings made by the state

²⁰ On this issue see Fine (1999), Callon (1998), Elyachar (2002), and Mitchell (2002).

²¹ On categories and counting in the colonial context, see Cohn (1986; 1996). The studies inspired by Foucault on such issues are numerous, but Cohn's analysis of state building as a cultural project actually precedes Foucault (Dirks 1996).

of the officially recognized national economy. If such mappings are accounts of the present, then they are also plans for the future (Scott 1998). As such, they are also instruments in the deployment of power. This is true of other kinds of accounts and mappings as well. Accounts, David Stark reminds us, is a term that “simultaneously connotes bookkeeping and narration” (1998:133). Any accounting, he says, draws on and reproduces social orders (*ibid.*). This point could not be clearer in the United States in the wake of the accounting scandals of 2002: what goes into accounts is highly contestable. And so, too, what goes into the map.

In the words of an engineer in Cairo who built el-Hirafiyeen: “there is no state decision without the map.” The engineer was speaking, here, about Decision #242, to move workshops from neighborhoods of northern Cairo to el-Hirafiyeen. His pragmatic statement captured something broader, however, including the fact that sometimes decisions about what goes into the map, and what stays out, are not so simple. Maps and accounts of the state reflect the official story of the state, the ways in which resources will be deployed in plans for the future. Decisions about what goes into this story entail contests for power among different groups. And in a context where official rules of the game often do not prevail, conflicts over mapping take on special significance.

Mapping is also about power exercised via property in land. The question of what goes into the map—the official accounting—involves contests for power among different groups attempting to assert control over land. As such it is useful to think of property in these contexts as a “bundle of rights” or a “bundle of powers” over which contestation is never-ending and rampant.²² In the context encountered by Ahmed Sa’id, I suggest, contestation over the bundle of rights in this one parcel of state-owned property resulted in a negative outcome—the official map was not drawn.

Maps were not drawn in other arenas as well. I have outlined above some of the spheres of economic exchanges in Egypt that were not captured by the official state accounts of the economy in the 1970s and 1980s, and the extent to which this “informal sector” was growing. Moreover, in a parallel development, questions were being raised about the adequacy of dominant definitions of economy within the economics profession as well. The need for new maps of economy was becoming clear. Redrawing such maps involved extensive projects of counting, and a rethinking of what to count and how. Most of those projects were sponsored not by the state, which had counted, taxed, and managed the “national economy.” Rather, new contests over what went into the map, and efforts to include that which had remained outside, originated this time, by and large, in IOs.

The redrawing of maps of the economy is part of the shifting relations be-

²² For anthropological contributions to a rethinking of property, see Verdery (1998, 1997), Hann (1998), Ghani (1996), and M. Strathern (1998).

tween states on the one hand and IOs on the other. Projects sponsored by IOs to generate research and statistics independent of state institutions and state statistics are, simultaneously, a deployment of power in that changing relationship. We should remember that since Bretton Woods IOs have been given the authority to oversee not only relations between states but the conditions of life of their citizens as well (Escobar 1995:39). This aspect of IOs' work was reinforced when mandated concern for human rights was added to earlier humanitarian concerns of poverty alleviation.²³ With this switch, the person being counted became, rather than a citizen of a nation-state, an individual in a universal humanity.

By the 1970s, when it had become clear that significant portions of the people living and working in third world cities did not appear in government statistics and were ignored by the appropriate authorities (Tripp 1997:22), this aspect of IOs' agenda became extremely significant. If large portions of the people living and working in third world cities did not appear in government statistics, then IOs would have to generate an alternative set of statistics. To exercise their mandated responsibility for the individuals in member states, IOs had to know more about their life conditions, but, again, they were now counted as individuals, not as national citizens.

The statistical agencies of nation-states were deemed insufficient for such a task. First of all, they lacked statistics about the informal economy. But this was not the only dilemma. Statistical systems for tracking the economy in the third world were often transferred wholesale from industrialized societies, and assumptions embedded in the numbers were often incompatible with local economic conditions. Furthermore, a breakdown of the social science tradition and state educational institutions in the 1970s and 1980s in Egypt and elsewhere around the world under the pressure of SAPs, reduced the state's capacity to track its own economy (Fergany 1991:27).

Planning and statistical agencies in the "third world," it should be remembered, were often set up in the capitals of the imperial powers. Development lenders continued the imperial tradition, and linked their aid to the implementation of alternative systems of information gathering (Mosley 1987:21; Robertson 1984:16; Gardner and Lewis 1996:8; Cooper and Stoler 1989; Cooper and Packard 1998). From the time of its first loans of the 1940s, in fact, the World Bank had borrower states sign a statement of commitment to provide the Bank with any information it requested, stipulating as well the right of Bank officials to freedom of movement in all the territory under the sovereignty of the state (Escobar 1995:231). Gathering detailed information about borrowing countries was an integral part of the work of World Bank "missions" sent to third world countries (ibid.:231–32).

²³ On the change in the Bank to poverty alleviation see Finnemore (1997) and Escobar (1995).

INFORMAL ECONOMY: A BRIEF HISTORY OF A CONCEPT

The problem of informal economy is linked to the issue we usually now call globalization.²⁴ In terms relevant for this article, I refer to the fact that by the end of the twentieth century the assumption of the nation-state as the unit of analysis for study of economy and society—one inherited from nineteenth-century social theory—was no longer tenable. Academic debate about this problem in sociology began with study of the “new social movements” in the early 1980s (Touraine 1980; 1985; Cohen 1985). Anthropologists started from another perspective, usually inside the boundaries of the nation-state but among marginalized populations who later would become identified with informality. These populations lived inside the boundaries of sovereign states, but they were somehow “outside” its bounds as well.

Two theoretical approaches dominated early debate about informal economy in Egypt and elsewhere.²⁵ The first was linked to modernization theory and the issue of rural-urban migration. The informal economy was here seen as a resting place on the way to integration into the modern economy of the city, and residence in a shantytown was seen as a sufficient marker of informal economy. This approach was linked to the debate about “squatting” that I referred to above. It was also linked with anthropological and sociological accounts of the culture of poverty and dual “traditional” versus “modern” markets (Boeke 1953; Geertz 1963a; 1963b). Another early strand in the informal-economy debate had roots in the Marxist tradition. Actors in the informal economy were here seen as a lumpen proletariat outside the direct social relations of capital, engaged in petty commodity production articulating capitalist and precapitalist social relations.

Among economists, the issue of informal economy was approached from still another standpoint. Corporations in the United States and Europe learned during the 1970s that subcontracting work out to small workshops was often cheaper than having workers on staff full-time, even when wages and benefits, where they existed at all, were as low as in Egypt (where average full-time salary was about \$85 a month in the 1990s). While the term “informal economy” was not important in these debates, this form of downsizing or informalization as a response to working class struggles of the 1960s and economic stagnation in the

²⁴ I only bring in the term globalization here to highlight the degree to which the debate about informal economy in Egypt tends to be isolated from debates about globalization, and vice-versa, despite the apparent link between the two by any definition of these contested concepts. I must otherwise bracket here the vast and endless debates about what is globalization and whether it exists. I review and discuss the significance of debates about globalization and anti-globalization in Elyachar (2002). For a recent analysis of transformation of the Middle East in terms of “globalization” as a positive process of distinctly economic transformation, see Henry and Springborg (2001).

²⁵ Research on the informal economy is voluminous and sometimes contentious. For a sample of different perspectives on informality that also include good summaries of the debate, see Assaad et al. (1997), Peattie (1988), Tripp (1997), Meagher (1995), and Lubell (1991). I do not include here some of the more commonly cited works, since they are well-summarized in these.

1970s laid important groundwork for the rise of the informal economy paradigm. Neo-Marxian research emphasized the political implications of this informalization: subcontracting to firms employing unprotected workers in the third world was a strategy amounting to job flight, declining wages, and the end of stable labor contracts for pools of unionized workers in the North (Beneria 1989; Castells and Portes 1989; Portes and Sassen-Koob 1987; Meagher 1995; Wilson 1993).²⁶ By the 1980s, and even more in the 1990s, it became possible to argue that the flexible structure of small businesses in the informal economy was more developed than the economy of the first world, which was meanwhile coming to resemble the third world in employment conditions and production structures of key sectors of the economy. Economists began to argue that small business had great potential in a globalizing economy for economic growth in a traditional sense.²⁷

These debates were not restricted to the academy. IOs mandated the power to oversee the conditions of life of individuals neglected by their state also needed to gain a better picture of the informal economy. For such a task, fieldwork at the margins of national economies and nation-states would not be sufficient. In the late 1980s, therefore, the International Labor Organization (ILO) assumed a coordinating role in research on the informal economy, and began to assist the statistical agencies of its member states in gathering standardized information on the “informal sector.” In 1993, a “Resolution concerning statistics of employment in the informal sector” was adopted by the fifteenth International Conference of Labor Statisticians (Husmanns 1996:18). The new ILO definitions subsumed the “informal enterprise” within the already established category of “household enterprise,” and recommended use of household-based (rather than enterprise-based) surveys to obtain knowledge of the extent of informal sector activity (ibid.:20).

Given the thrust of ILO work to make the “hidden economy” visible so as to produce new data about the state of the global labor market in its broadest definition, the concept of informal economy now acquired a more technical meaning. In the new definitions of informality linked to economy, not to culture, the concerns of statisticians became paramount, and the informal became that which was hard for the statistician to see. As a first pass, this meant activity not included in national income accounts and Gross National Product estimations.

²⁶ As Meagher points out, the analysis of informality and flexible accumulation was developed in regards to Latin America, Asia, Europe, and the United States (Meagher 1995:265). Meagher also points out that structural adjustment reforms “now enforce a process of systematic deconcentration of capital in the public sector, thereby creating conditions more favorable to informalization” (ibid.:264).

²⁷ For example, the growing size of sections in large bookstores like Barnes and Noble during the 1990s on small business, or special issues of *Business Week* on small and microenterprises. For discussion of the potential of the informal sector as an “engine of growth,” see Handoussa and Potter (1991) and Handoussa (1992). For a critique of the idea that the large corporation is outdated in the global age, see Harrison (1994). A good summary of the debates about the importance of small business in the “information age” can be found in Castells (1996:155–56).

Practically, it turned out that most economic activity missing in national accounts was carried out in small production units: workshops employing less than ten people, and shops using simple tools of labor or with a low capital base.

While the new approach to the informal was technical and linked to statisticians' concerns, there was an implicit link of informality with the state on two accounts. The first was because the informal was that economic activity not reflected in state-generated statistics such as national income accounts or gross national product and, since it was not recorded, de facto omitted from accounts of the national economy (in the sense of economic activity carried out or registered within the sovereign territory of the state). Second was the issue of the scope of state legal systems. "Informal economy," or the "informal sector," was economic space where state law regarding economic activity, be it labor regulations or tax law, did not apply. This new definition of informality facilitated a purely technical interpretation of the term. Once informal activity was identified ex post facto by statisticians as linked to small-scale economic activity, a statistical correlation became a definition. With this change initiated by the ILO, informal economy was transformed from a negative concept—establishments of labor not recorded in state statistics—to a term usable by statisticians. Even this was not a uniform criteria. What was small in the United States could be considered large in Egypt, as my informants repeatedly told me.

In Egypt, the first attempts to carry out macro-studies of informality had little choice but to rely on national surveys using previous data-bases and other definitions. Micro-surveys had confirmed that, in a number of cases, informality was statistically correlated with small size. And thus it was a logical and quite acceptable approximation, given the available data, to take size of enterprise data, which was available, as a stand-in for informality (Fergany 1991; Handoussa 1991; Lubell 1991). The next step, however, was a move to discussing informality not as an issue related to registration or legal status, but only to size and technical criteria: to small and micro enterprise.

Research into informal economy had began with an anthropological edge focused on the marginalized from modern society—either in the third world or on the outskirts of first world developed cities. Fieldwork, long the disciplinary trademark of anthropology, had become popular as a way to study social movements and informal economy alike. But fieldwork projects were not sufficient to understand a broad issue like informal economy on a global scale. The concept would have to be statistically relevant as well. Under the auspices of international agencies under the U.N. umbrella, informal economy was transformed into a term usable by statisticians. The concept changed from a negative concept—establishments of labor *not* recorded in state statistics—to those establishments employing less than ten (for micro) or fifteen (for small) enterprises (these are the numbers commonly used for Egypt). While the first had a shadow existence, the latter could be tracked only by either massive census-like efforts, or by generalizing from micro-scale anthropological studies characterized by depth, not breadth.

Articles in or about Egypt gathered together those existing studies in frustrated attempts to draw general conclusions (Kharoufi 1991; Rizq 1991; el Mahdy 1995). While some argued for further and “more sensitive field research” that would help reveal the contours of the informal economy and the role of culture in the “Egyptian miracle” of survival in the face of extreme poverty (Kharoufi 1991:17), others inside and outside of Egypt were clearly trying to lay the groundwork for a more effective large-scale statistical survey strategy (Fergani 1991; Charmes 1990; Hussmanns 1996). It was then discovered by the World Bank that the informal economy—small workshops employing small numbers of people, and not always complying with the law—constituted the bulk of the productive private sector economy in Egypt. How did this discovery come to be made?

COMPETING MAPS, CONVERGING PRACTICES

Once IOs had mapped out the rough contours of “the informal economy,” it became possible to begin funding that something they had helped invent.²⁸ But here IOs and other development agencies ran into a problem: many governments were unlikely to welcome the prospect of IOs running rampant to promote informality—which by definition negates the role of the state. To enact projects to develop informal economy in real time and space, states had to sign on as well. The new technical definition of informal economy linked to size—not legality—helped solve this dilemma. If informal economy is defined as enterprises with only a very small number of employees, then they can be called “microenterprises.” That term does not have the same whiff of extra-legality as does informal economy. Microenterprise also has quite different ideological connotations: it stresses individuals and their entrepreneurial qualities over the community and its genius for survival.²⁹

This was no mere discursive switch job, and not an abstract exercise. When the World Bank and other large IOs decided that microenterprise could become a “safety net” for the collateral damage of SAPs, they had to work out that strategy with real states, in real programs, in real time. Without the involvement of

²⁸ It might be more accurate to write, here, “to invent as a problem of development intervention based on the production of knowledge about legitimate practices on the ground that did not proceed according to the rule of law.” But considering the central role of the ILO in the history of the concept, my statement is not really a glib exaggeration, as one reader suggested. According to Keith Hart, the inventor of the term, the ILO applied the concept to a report on Kenya in 1972 even before his original paper coining the term had been published (Hart 2001:150). See Hart (1992; 2001:148–51) for his own reassessment of the debate about informal economy and his role in that debate. As I hope is clear from the thrust of my argument, I do not maintain that the processes captured by the analytical concept “the informal economy” do not exist. Rather, I am interested in an interactive process whereby social realities are studied by anthropologists such as Keith Hart, under the auspices of specific forms of institutional power such as IOs, and that those concepts then play a crucial role in the mobilization of organizational and tactical power (in the sense defined by Eric Wolf [1999]) in specific ethnographic settings. My thanks to Bill Maurer for alerting me to the publication of Hart’s 2001 book.

²⁹ I discuss further the differences between the informal economy and the microenterprise approaches in Elyachar (2002a).

state institutions, it would be difficult to carry out the broad statistical surveys so sought after by the World Bank and other IOs. For there is still no mechanism in place for IOs to directly survey populations that enjoy the nominal label of “citizen” in relation to the state. Rather, such alternative surveys and statistical mappings have been carried out with the funding and direction of IOs, from within the institutions of the state. In Egypt, establishment of the Social Fund helped make such efforts possible.

SAPs in the 1980s did not yield the expected results that macroeconomic theorists had predicted, and short-term disequilibrium between the forces of supply and demand began to look like long-term equilibrium. Reformist voices within the Bank (which acquired great weight inside the Bank with the appointment of James Wolfensohn as its President), enforcing these programs of financial discipline, began to voice doubt in the economic doctrine they preached.³⁰ It had been expected that suffering due to massive layoffs by the state and public enterprises, and the withdrawal of state subsidies on food would be temporary, but as it began to look as if they would be permanent, new development programs were devised to relieve the sufferings of those groups negatively affected by structural adjustment. In a number of countries where SAPs were being enforced, the World Bank established Social Funds as the “social safety net” of choice. These experiments were carried out in the Caribbean, Latin America, and Africa (Graham 1994).

In Egypt, the Social Fund was set up in 1991 as a World Bank project with \$572 million of funding from fifteen donor countries, the European Union, the United Nations Development Program, and the Arab Fund. It was established as a new agency, inside and outside of the state, created especially for this purpose (The World Bank 1991a). What does it mean for an agency to be both inside and outside of the state? For all intents and purposes, the Social Fund was an institution established in Egypt by the World Bank, organized as an autonomous agency and funded by sources outside the state budget. In the words of its 1994 Annual Report, the Social Fund was a “semi-autonomous apex agency, under the chairmanship of the Prime Minister” (Government of Egypt 1995). Its semi-incorporation into the state, however, gave crucial levers of power to the regime, such as the appointment of the Prime Minister as the Chairman of its Board of Directors, the right to choose the Managing Director, and a say in the direction of funding distribution, as long as the funding guidelines of the donor agencies were respected. Target groups of the Social Fund (women, graduates, those laid off from public enterprises, those with low income), which were not determined by the Egyptian state, also included migrant workers forced back to Egypt during the Desert Storm Gulf War.

The Egyptian Social Fund began funding microenterprise soon after its

³⁰ For a critique of the impact of fundamentalist macroeconomic theorists in the International Monetary Fund on third world countries, and a representative sample of one of the main viewpoints inside the World Bank, see Stiglitz (2000).

founding. With the appointment of Prime Minister Ghanzouri following the 1995 parliamentary elections, three objectives were stated as the goals of the new government: increasing investment and production, increasing chances for productive labor, and increasing income for the average Egyptian. Microenterprise seemed tailor-made to meet these goals, and statements about its importance became commonplace. One headline went so far as to state that “expansion of microenterprises was the goal of economic reform.”³¹ In other words, the Egyptian state had adopted as its own an agenda that had begun as a way to bypass and overcome the corrupt essence of the third-world state. Informal economy had come full circle. It was being reabsorbed, via microenterprise, into its supposed inverse—the state. The same was true of informal information gathering networks.

Assaad, Zhou, and Razzaz have argued that the main function of informal networks is to “facilitate the flow of information when formal channels of information dissemination are weak or ineffective” (1997:3). IOs like the World Bank are well aware of the importance of such informal networks for generating the information the state cannot be trusted to provide. Efforts were thus underway in the 1990s by the World Bank and other IOs to establish alternative information-gathering systems on an ongoing basis from within the Egyptian national institute for statistics and planning, or CAPMAS, its English acronym.³²

CAPMAS has long given its name to researchers who bring it funding (author’s interviews with staff and researchers), but this institutionalization of a state information-gathering capacity within the buildings of the state itself is something else. Information gathering was seen as a central part of the Social Fund’s mission from the start. As an agency that was both inside and outside of the state, it had a new capacity to undertake such research without being condemned by local public opinion as an outsider’s imperialist venture. At the same time, the Social Fund became a framework through which the World Bank and other agencies could gather information on a national basis without having to rely on the discredited state statistics.

In that context, the Social Fund project entailed the development of new databases within CAPMAS itself. Data deemed necessary for the Social Fund’s needs were to be collected and analyzed through surveys and studies. As a government agency, CAPMAS was to act as a “steering committee” for such surveys to ensure broad government participation (World Bank 1991:23). In line with the approach to informal economy advocated by the ILO (see above), these were to be household surveys. Such an approach was no departure for Egypt, where household-expenditure surveys have long been conducted, but this time

³¹ “Continuation of Administrative and Legal Reform.” *el-Ahram*, 17 May 1995: 1 (in Arabic).

³² The name of the agency reflects its origins in the Nasser era, when gathering statistics was seen as part of a nation and state-building project. As an anonymous reviewer pointed out, statistics have always been seen as a security issue in Egypt, long before (I would add) the relation between power and counting became a popular Foucauldian topic for academic research.

those surveys were the basis for generating information about “the economy,” not about “household expenditure” or consumption per se. With informal economy relocated by the World Bank at the center of its notions of “the economy,” such surveys were a logical way to proceed, since they are generally known to render better data about informal economic activities than do surveys of economic enterprises traditionally defined.

In the meantime, the rewriting of informal economy as microenterprise facilitated the use of existing data to rewrite the contours of the economy in Egypt. Economic activity that used to lie outside accountings of the economy that mattered now merged into the broader statistical mapping of “the Egyptian economy.” Workshops that had often been seen (with the caveats above) as backwards and a block to development were now the essence of the market economy that the World Bank and other development institutions should help to “grow.” A new map of Egypt had emerged.

This is well illustrated in a World Bank report issued in 1994, written for a public-private sector conference about the future of the Egyptian economy.³³ In this report, the micro and small-enterprise sector in Egypt, defined as privately owned shops employing fewer than ten workers, was found to constitute 99 percent of private sector units (World Bank 1994:3), to produce 80 percent of private value added (ibid.:8), and to employ 76 percent of non-agricultural labor (ibid.:25). Microenterprise was pinpointed as the key to increased employment, and central to economic growth as a whole (ibid.:26). Over-regulation by the state—of health, safety, environment, and labor—was said to be an important constraint on the growth of microenterprises and small enterprises into larger firms (ibid.:13).

The approach advanced in this World Bank report echoed the perspective advanced by Hernando de Soto in his book *The Other Path*, which identified unwieldy and irrational state regulation as the main cause of informality. In this view, the so-called informal economy *was* the private sector, it *was* the economy, and it was merely up to the state, with prodding from the IOs, to wake up and recognize this. Rendered formal and licit, informality became microenterprise and the star of the private sector in the global age.³⁴ De Soto and the net-

³³ Such conferences are advocated by the World Bank to solve the dilemma of “ownership”: the problems that occur when developing nations forced by conditionality agreements to sign on to development programs do not feel that those programs are really “theirs.” The conferences are seen as a way of mobilizing “civil society” in a dialogue with the state and the IOs over development policies. Theoretically, such conferences should help lead to a consensus among civil society, the state, and IOs about development policies, and increase the possibility that development policies will actually be carried out. For the conference in Egypt that my informants were preparing for, the representations of “civil society” were, in the main, businessmen’s associations. For discussion of the concept of “ownership,” see the World Bank (2001:191–94).

³⁴ One of the main authors of the 1994 report was, in fact, a development consultant who is cited by de Soto as an important resource for his research in Egypt (de Soto 2000). I mention this not to point to any “conspiracy,” but because informal networks of knowledge creation about informal economy are a central topic of my paper. At the same time, it is important to realize that views on

work of researchers he drew on around the world provided extensive documentation of the tangle of regulations and laws on the books, in Peru and Egypt in particular, regarding the establishment of economic enterprises. The solution de Soto offered was a retreat of the state to render informality (noncompliance) formal by eliminating state regulation of labor and the workplace. In de Soto's later book, *The Mystery of Capital* (2000), microenterprise emerged as the vanguard of a new democratic world order, and microentrepreneurs a new global army that had nothing to lose but the chains of the state.

THE FENCE AND THE MAP REVISITED

When I first visited el-Hirafiyeen in 1993, a mood of both despair and heightened expectations pervaded. Many of the craftsmen who had been moved from their old neighborhoods had closed down their workshops. Some had opened new kinds of businesses, in a new line of work. A master carpenter opened an unlicensed coffeehouse—an essential part of workshop life that had been overlooked by the neighborhood's planners. Some sold their workshops and apartments to new kinds of users, although those owners were by law forbidden to sell. Buyers included government clerks glad to find the cheap prices and fresh air, a factory worker with a job nearby, and a sister whose unemployed husband, downsized under the terms of SAPs, could never afford to buy a flat for his family. None of these were users for whom the neighborhood had been built. These sales were technically illegal, had complete social legitimacy, and were de facto accepted by the state as well since state employees could resolve any technical legalities via the payment of fees or bribes.³⁵ In other words it could be said, if one were attached to the term, that the craftsmen and users of this neighborhood changed the nature of their businesses and residences “informally.”

Many craftsmen were full of resentment toward their neighbors, the “youth microentrepreneurs,” whom they saw as spoiled “students” (as opposed to those who really know) carrying around briefcases to play the role of businessmen. They minded that the banners over town and elsewhere celebrated the spoiled students, and not themselves—those who really worked. Only a few of the craftsmen attempted to benefit from the new microenterprise and NGO funding, while most looked on with grim amusement, at best.

these and many other matters are the subject of debate within the Bank itself. For example, the *World Bank Development Report 2000/2001*, written under the leadership of Ravi Kanbur, clearly states that “microfinance”—loans to support the establishment of microenterprises—is “no panacea for poverty” (World Bank 2001:75), and repeats throughout that the state has an important role to play in development. In turn, it is important to realize that Kanbur resigned from the Bank due to controversies inside the organization about the views he advanced. This debate can be characterized (if simplified) as one between the “Washington consensus” and the “post-Washington consensus.” On that debate, see Fine (1999; 2001) and Elyachar (2002).

³⁵ See Ghannam (1997; 1998) for a parallel discussion of the ways in which the users of government-constructed housing for the residents moved from central Cairo to Zawiya el-Hamra reordered their built environment.

The air of resentment was fed by a steady stream of funders who came to el-Hirafiyeen (and other Cairo neighborhoods) on fieldtrips, and found it marvelously authentic and down to earth. The megastars of IOs came when they were in Cairo for their international meetings. For example, President of the World Bank James Wolfensohn visited this project of the Social Fund that his organization had started, and the President of the European Union had been there as well.

Hopes were high among the craftsmen inside the NGO. Sa'id later recounted that when took up his post as Secretary to the NGO, he was sure that he would be able to turn matters around: he would abolish the illegal workshops outside of the bounds of el-Hirafiyeen that had no licenses to operate and competed unfairly; would get the fence of the Army poultry farm moved so that he and his neighbors could get their rightful allotment of working space; would force state officials who had squatted on state land near the access road to move out.

As I have said, Sa'id was sure that a "correct" map of el-Hirafiyeen existed. This map would show that all of these informal acts of the state were wrong. He believed that map had gone missing, deliberately, in a conspiracy against his efforts to put things right. Some readers of my work have asserted that the map was rather being kept from me, for different reasons, by loyal Egyptian nationalist clerks and officials who did not want me, a foreigner, to see what was none of my business. Personally, I think neither Sa'id nor I were important enough to inspire such bureaucratic conspiracies, and I find far more plausible that, in a context where the forces acting on the production of space in Cairo are so complex, an authoritative official map simply had never been drawn up. This explanation seemed still more plausible to me after Sa'id and I attended a local government meeting in late 1994.

THE OVERSIGHT COMMITTEE AND INFORMAL STATES

One day Sa'id invited Esam Fawzi and I to attend a meeting of the Committee for the Oversight of the Affairs of Madina al-Hirafiyeen. He brought us in as witnesses—one a foreigner at that—in an effort to embarrass his opponents in the NGO and the state into heeding what he interpreted as the law.³⁶ He thought that in front of us, the outsiders, the Committee would be forced to admit the legality and justice of his claims to the public good, and to support his petitions to force the army-owned poultry farm to move off his land, and to compel workshops that had informally opened up their doors outside the boundaries allotted to the workshop neighborhood of el-Hirafiyeen to close down.

The meeting that day, 19 November 1994, was held in a large hall of the local government of the sister neighborhood to el-Hirafiyeen, el-Salam City. The meet-

³⁶ I emphasize my foreignness in this context because of its centrality in Sa'id's decision to bring me to the meeting. At first he thought it a bad idea, and only wanted Esam to attend, posing as a craftsman. But then he decided that more pressure would be exerted by our presence as a foreign researcher with a local assistant.

ing was open to the public, and various constituents with grievances—almost all having to do with different problems of “informality”—were in attendance. The first item on the agenda was the need to expand the access streets into el-Hirafiyeen, which included the street on which Sa’id had his workshop. Despite the picture of confrontation drawn by Sa’id, all were in agreement that this expansion of the street, and thus of the workshop’s de facto working space as well, was necessary. The only question was what to do about the informally constructed buildings in the way. Up for debate was whether or not houses that had been built without permission on state land should be demolished to expand the access roads.

Meanwhile, the issue that had so incensed Sa’id and led him to conclude that there was a conspiracy against him had been settled. It was announced in the meeting that a deal had been made with the army poultry farm to buy out some of the land that they had made theirs by occupation. In other words, this state-owned land that had been the subject of controversy between two different state agencies was settled by a third state agency mediating details of financial compensation. Since the issue had been settled it did not come up for debate (whether the settlement was enforced is another issue, one I cannot answer here). Rather, the discussion that occupied us for some half an hour concerned houses that had been built by individuals along another of the access roads on another part of state-owned land. It was said (although not openly) that some of the builders were state bureaucrats.

The President of the Locality of el-Salam explained his predicament: He had in front of him two conflicting orders from state ministries. The first told him to enforce the law and demolish buildings that had been built without permission on state owned land. But he had also been told to enforce Law #25, under which any building that had been finished, and provided with services before 1992, should be formalized and accorded legal status. He presented a sophisticated overview of the problem of informal housing in Cairo. This included a comparative analysis of how things proceeded in other neighborhoods, ranging from elite Nasser City to Manshiet Nasser. The latter had been completely informal and was gradually being formalized, a process mediated by NGOs established with IO and development agencies’ support (see Assaad 1996).

As he spoke, the President of the Council expounded his theory of informality. Informal housing, he explained, was housing for which the state provided no services—water, electricity, roads, or lighting. People who build in such conditions enjoyed cheaper prices in exchange for doing without these services. Those who lived in informal settlements had to provide for themselves, until they were established enough that the state had to recognize them, such as had happened in Manshiet Nasser. Those living in informal housing had the right to build, he explained, but not to demand anything from the state. Therefore, he went on, it was unclear whether they, the state, in turn had the right to take back the state land on which these people had built. In the end a compromise was found: an engineer would be sent to survey the houses on that stretch of state

land, to estimate the value of the land, and to see if the residents were willing to pay compensation to the state for the occupied land. If they were so willing, then they would be accorded full property rights. The compromise turned state law into a generator of revenue, with mediation that might impress the most advanced jurisprudence in the United States, eager to reduce the costs of litigation (Mnookin, Peppet, and Tulumello 2000).

Also on the agenda that day was the problem of lighting for the public streets of el-Hirafiyeen. Who was responsible for this? Workshop owners had long complained that the lighting was inadequate. Many of their customers came at nightfall, after work, driving in their cars for minor repairs. The craftsmen expressed their fear that female customers in particular would not bring their business to unlit streets. They claimed, as citizens, that the state should light public streets. But the state representatives refused to accept the responsibility to allocate social services to the craftsmen as citizens. State responsibility, they said, was restricted to the main public square of the neighborhood, where, it so happened, the buildings of the state stood. Around its periphery were the public sector bank, the post office, a public sector bus station, and the official mosque. Space where the state was symbolically and effectually sovereign (although no one put matters in these terms) was the only section of the neighborhood for which the state would provide lighting. Further inside the neighborhood, in the spaces shared by the craftsmen and microentrepreneurs for their work and home life, it was up to the users to provide their own lighting.

SEARCHING FOR THE STATE

In his book *Seeing Like a State*, James Scott presents a picture of an all-powerful state that uses maps to deploy its power in projects to reshape society. Maps, as he puts it, have the “apparent power . . . to transform as well as merely to summarize the facts that they portray.” And, he goes on to add, this “transformative power resides not in the map, of course, but rather in the power possessed by those who deploy the perspective of that particular map” (Scott 1998: 87). Scott shows how the high-modernist state has used maps to impose its visions of the future on society.

But what happens when the state is not *the* dominant institution drawing maps within its own sovereign territory? What if the state refuses to shed light on the back streets of its own sovereign territory? What if the state reveals itself to be a far less coherent force than that portrayed by Scott? What if, as in the case of Sa’id and many others who I could cite, maps are less an instrument of a sovereign state, but rather another ground on which competing visions of reality, and contests for power are played out? And what if they are played out inside the state itself?

The conflicting users on the ground in this corner of Cairo were all part of the state: the Governorate that legally owned the land, the Army poultry farm that squatted on the land, and the government officials who built their homes

on the land as squatters. The opposite seems to be true regarding the project to map the informal economy. It was not the Egyptian state that set new definitions of economy. It was not the state that initiated surveys to decipher just what was that new economy within which the informal economy was now subsumed. Instead, it was IOs that set the new definitions and supplied the funding and expertise to carry out the statistical surveys.

The modern state imposes power, according to Foucault, through the gaze that sees (1980:146–65). If seeing, counting, and mapping the activities of citizens have moved, at least in part, to the level of IOs, then there are implications for state sovereignty. That is only part of the story. Efforts to map out and develop the informal economy were, as I have said, eventually incorporated into the Egyptian state. If the gaze that sees has its nerves in institutional settings other than the state, and yet functions as part of the state, then the implications are many. Lurking inside the formidable offices of the state can be a complex range of forces competing for power, or forging new ways to work together, and perhaps to create a new (even if informal) institutional entity altogether. The lines between “the state,” “international organizations,” and the civil society that is assumed to lie outside the state are far fuzzier than we often realize. That much has become clear to me through my fieldwork on the evolution of the informal economy in Egypt.

Like the informal economy, IOs and NGOs are defined in opposition to the state. The two can seem to be in stark opposition, but practices have evolved across their boundaries, as the state can absorb informality, and IOs can enter the state. The all-powerful state portrayed by Scott and others, that can confidently count, map, and measure the activities of its citizens to better control them, was in Egypt in question by 2000. Unitary state sovereignty—and thus sovereignty itself—had come into question.

GOVERNMENTALITY AND THE ETHNOGRAPHY OF POWER

How to approach this problem as an ethnographer conducting research at the point where the state, IOs, and informality intersect? Three possible approaches come to mind. One is deconstructive in nature and argues that “the state” is a problematic category in the first place. Such an approach has been useful in making clear that “the state” might never have been unitary in the fashion portrayed by much social theory.³⁷ The second approach focuses more on historical changes, under the idea that something has “really” changed out there.³⁸

³⁷ For two important examples of this approach by scholars who combine fieldwork with theoretical inquiry, see Mitchell (1991) and the ensuing debate in the *American Political Science Review*; Herzfeld (1992); and Gupta (1995). Gibson-Graham’s identification of the strengths and limits of the deconstructive and other approaches to the question of “global versus local” was helpful to me in this formulation (Gibson-Graham, forthcoming).

³⁸ For historical background on the concept of the modern state and implications for current debates about sovereignty and globalization, see Hont (forthcoming).

Such inquiries might explore the changing nature of state sovereignty or explore the nature of globalization as a whole.³⁹

A third approach to the study of evolving forms of power that cross state boundaries is that inspired by Foucault's concept of governmentality. In his essay of that name, Foucault writes with great prescience of the context that many anthropologists and other social scientists are trying to grapple with only now. Writing at the close of the era marked by 1968, Foucault notes that there is a tendency in the literature of "overvaluing the problem of the state" (1991:103). By the turn of the eighteenth century, he writes, it was no longer sovereignty over territory, but rather population of a certain volume and density, that was the object of government: "Population now represents more the end of government than the power of the sovereign; the population is the subject of needs, of aspirations, but it is also the object in the hands of the government, aware, vis-à-vis the government, of what it wants, but ignorant of what is being done to it" (ibid., 100).

Governmentality, in turn, is defined by Foucault as "the ensemble formed by the institutions, procedures, analyses and reflections, the calculations and tactics that allow the exercise of this very specific albeit complex form of power, which has as its target population, as its principal form of knowledge political economy, and as its essential technical means apparatuses of security" (ibid.:102). In the history put forward by Foucault, the modern state appears as but one moment in a longer historical process of the evolution of forms of governmentality, and ceases to figure as the sole, or even most important, container of power. An approach drawing on Foucault's formulations of governmentality is an appealing solution to the dilemma of the missing map and the intersecting agencies that I have addressed in this paper. Those targeted by IOs or states as part of the informal economy or as microentrepreneurs are not of interest as citizens of a sovereign state. Population—not citizenry—is the object of programs of intervention that were initiated by IOs to "alleviate poverty" or to help the poor help themselves. The object of these acts of governing is clearly not to increase the sovereignty of the state. (And without the state, it makes little sense to talk about citizenry.)

At the end of the 1960s, Foucault's opinion that the problem of the state was being over-valued must have seemed strange. But not by 2001. In political protest actions at the turn of the millennium such as the anti-globalization movement, it is often not the state, but rather the World Trade Organization and the World Bank—international, or global organizations—that may be "over-valued" (Elyachar 2001b; 2002). The state often disappears from view as the object of political protest. Likewise, when world leaders of states and business gathered in Okinawa in July 2000 to discuss the most pressing problems of the global era, they, too, called for new forms of "global governance—new, cooperative, though as yet largely unspecified way of running world affairs in re-

³⁹ On the changing nature of state sovereignty see, for example, Hibou (1999) and Smith, Solinger, and Topik (1999).

sponse to the massive changes wrought by globalization and rapid technological change.”⁴⁰ The state *per se* was not an object of concern; practices of governance—governmentality—were. The concept of governmentality is easily amenable to a discussion of new forms of “running world affairs.”

But the use of Foucault’s concept of governmentality to examine the complex relations of states, IOs, NGOs, and informality is also problematic. As a concept, governmentality defines away the state as an object of analysis. This, despite the fact that Foucault was theorizing the nature of power within the territory of the state when he developed his concept. In the notion of governmentality, the move to transnationality—like the move to micro-power—is already subsumed into the theoretical perspective, rather than problematized as an issue for analysis. For once the object of disciplinary measures is a “population,” rather than a citizenry; the move to a global scale is already implicit. Populations are universal; they refer not to political identity, but rather to human identity as a category outside of political divisions (Malkki 1994; Mastnak 1996). If this is so, then the adoption of the concept of “transnational governmentality,” as recently proposed by Ferguson and Gupta, may not solve the dilemma (2002).

The concept of governmentality is appealing in a world where the World Bank has at least as much power to govern as do many states in the world (whether with “good governance” or not is another question), but I would argue that it can obscure some of the key issues that we need to focus on. Perhaps we need to start approaching “governmentality” itself as a practice rather than as a concept. From being a concept developed by Foucault at a historical moment when it still seemed strange to say that the state was overvalued, “governmentality” (or “governance”) has now become the daily practice of “world leaders,” such as those who met in Okinawa. As a theoretical notion, it is not crucial if a governmentality is located in the state, or in the World Bank, or in an NGO. But I would suggest that it matters very much where practices of governmentality are located. We need to take note of transformations in the locations, and meanings, of practices in specific institutional settings. This point was made by Coronil in his analysis of the state in Venezuela (1997). There, he critiques the Foucauldian approach of seeing the state “as the structural effect of dispersed disciplinary formations” (Coronil 1997:63 n. 22). From such a perspective, he suggests, power is not located in specific structures or institutions; rather, it is diffused throughout society, and thus dissolves as a specific form of power. Coronil argues, in turn, for the importance of locating “power in historically constituted structural relations.”⁴¹

Thus, despite the importance of the analyses of the state inspired by Foucault, perhaps we should not shift our level of analysis too quickly away from the state

⁴⁰ Reginald Dale, *The International Herald Tribune*, 25 July 2000, “A New Debate on ‘Global Governance.’”

⁴¹ That comment is made in the context of the debate surrounding Mbembe 1992, in which Coronil took part. The citation here is from Coronil (1997:73, fn. 8).

as imagined (Gupta 1995), or as an effect of dispersed disciplinary practices (Mitchell 1991). Likewise, it may be a mistake to extol the virtues of “economic citizenry” in the global age,⁴² or membership in “global civil society,” as a viable substitute for political citizenry. I suggest that we first spend more time observing the transformations underway in historically constituted forms of institutionalized power. In such a project, ethnography becomes crucial, for unlike other modes of research, ethnographic research can look at seemingly fixed institutional entities, such as the state, to reveal the processes of change that are underway within them and across them (Ashraf Ghani, personal communication, 2000). At its best, ethnography is located between structure and process, and can help illuminate complex processes of change underway in particular historical conjunctures. Ethnography is key to any project that aims to analyze the changes taking place in historically constituted forms of power.

In the face of such a complex configuration of power, ethnography can in itself be a theoretical undertaking (Moore 1987; Ghani 1992; Wolf 2001). At such a moment, it might be more productive for us to set aside some of the usual arguments about “the state.” For example, throughout much of this paper I have written of “the state” in a manner that some will surely find unsatisfactory. There is no doubt that the state is changing, and that our categories have benefited from deconstruction. But rather than trying to definitively resolve ongoing debates about “the state,” I suggest a slightly different direction: more research on the forms of power that are emerging at the interstices of the state, IOs, and NGOs. The hybrid forms we find there require much more analysis, as do the processes that defy many of our assumptions about the state, and about related binary oppositions such as “global/local,” “state/global,” and “state/NGO.”⁴³ In such inquiries, problems such as informality can be of crucial importance, as what Sally Falk Moore has called “diagnostic events” (Moore 1987), but I would call them diagnostic points of analysis. Ethnography must itself, then, be strategic, and tactical, in its nature, choosing those nodal points of research where the state appears “fuzzy” and where categories are blurred. In a context where all institutionalized forms of power—be they the state, IOs, or NGOs—are attempting to cope with unplanned dynamics outside their control, and to devise programs to fit those dynamics into a planned future, we need to rethink both our categories and our ethnographic methods.

A problem like “the informal economy” begins as an unplanned dynamic outside the control of any state. The IOs that launched projects for the informal

⁴² On the notion of economic citizenry, see Sassen 1996. For a critique, see Spivak 1999:400, fn. 116.

⁴³ Bianchi (1989) argued in the 1980s for the importance of understanding “hybrid forms” and the uselessness of the usual binary oppositions for understanding the Egyptian state and its relations to civil society. Stark’s use of hybridity to analyze what he calls “recombinant property” in Eastern Europe is also relevant here, particularly in the context of his argument about the uselessness of the search for divisions between “private” and “public” sectors in post-socialism (1998). See also Callon’s 1998 discussion of hybrid forms.

economy tried to fit those dynamics into a planned future. The informal economy took shape as a research program, a funding agenda, and a new social field on the ground, and efforts to map it were a crucial part of these undertakings. However, this time it was IOs and not the state that initiated the mapping, even when they did so within institutions of the state. Fieldwork to explore these realities must decipher why fences move and why maps disappear, or why they are not drawn up at all. It must decipher the relations of power that shape what is on the ground, and what gets onto the maps, both graphic and statistical. The mappings of power we need to chart as ethnographers, and as theorists, are complex indeed.

REFERENCES

- Amin, Galal and 'Awny E. Amin. 1985. *International Migration of Egyptian Labour: A Review of the State of the Art: Manuscript Report*. Ottawa: International Development Research Center.
- Arandal, Christian and Manal El Batran. 1997. "The Informal Housing Development Process in Egypt." Centre National de la Recherche Scientifique (CNRS), Working Paper No. 82, Bordeaux, France.
- Assaad, Ragui. 1996. "Formalizing the Informal? The Transformation of Cairo's Refuse Collection System." *Journal of Planning Education and Research* 16:115–26.
- Assaad, Ragui, Yu Zhou, and Omar Razzazz. 1997. "Why is Informality a Useful Analytical Category for Understanding Social Networks and Institutions?" MacArthur Consortium Working Paper Series, Institute for International Studies, University of Minnesota.
- Bayart, J. F., S. Ellis, and B. Hibou, eds. 1997. *La criminalisation de l'État en Afrique*. Bruxelles: Complexe.
- Bayat, Asef. 2002. "Activism and Social Development in the Middle East." *International Journal of Middle East Studies* 34:1–28.
- Beneria, L. 1989. "Subcontracting and Employment Dynamics in Mexico City." In Alejandro Portes, Manuel Castells, and Lauren Benton, eds., *The Informal Economy: Studies in Advanced and Less Developed Countries*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Bianchi, Robert. 1989. *Unruly Corporatism: Associational Life in Twentieth-Century Egypt*. New York: New York University Press.
- Blaug, Mark. 1985. *Economic Theory in Retrospect*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Boeke, J. H. 1953. *Economics and Economic Policy of Dual Societies as Exemplified by Indonesia*. New York: International Secretariat of Pacific Relations.
- Bourdieu, Pierre. 1977. *Outline of a Theory of Practice*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Burchell, Graham, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller, eds. 1991. *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Callon, Michel. 1998a. "The Embeddedness of Economic Markets in Economics." In M. Callon, ed., *The Laws of the Market*. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers.
- , ed. 1998b. *The Laws of the Market*. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers.
- Castells, Manuel. 1996. *The Rise of the Network Society*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- . 1998. *End of Millennium*. Oxford: Blackwell.
- Castells, Manuel and A. Portes. 1989. "World Underneath: The Origins, Dynamics, and Effects of the Informal Economy." In A. Portes, M. Castells, and L. Benton, eds., *The*

- Informal Economy: Studies in Advanced and Less Developed Countries*. Baltimore: The Johns Hopkins University Press.
- Chalcraft, John. 2001. "Crafts and Guilds in Egypt, 1986–1914." Ph.D. dissertation, New York University.
- Charmes, Jacques. 1990. "Une revue critique des concepts, définitions et recherches sur le secteur informel." In *OCDE, Nouvelles approches du secteur informel*. N.p.
- Choucri, Nazli. 1983. *Migration in the Middle East: Transformations, Policies, and Processes*. With the collaboration of Peter Brecke. Vols. I and II. Technology Adaptation Program, Massachusetts Institution of Technology.
- Clark, Gracia, ed. 1988. *Traders versus the State*. Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press.
- Clifford, James and George E. Marcus, eds. 1986. *Writing Culture: The Poetics and Politics of Ethnography*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Cohen, Jean L. 1985. "Strategy or Identity: New Theoretical Paradigms and Contemporary Social Movements." *Social Research* 52, 4:663–716.
- Cohn, Bernard S. 1986. *An Anthropologist among the Historians and Other Essays*. Delhi: Oxford University Press.
- . 1996. *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Cooper, Frederick, and Ann Stoler. 1989. "Tensions of Empire: Colonial Control and Visions of Rule." *American Ethnologist* 16:609–21.
- Cooper, Frederick, and Randall Packard. 1998. *International Development and the Social Sciences: Essays on the History and Politics of Knowledge*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Coronil, Fernando. 1997. *The Magical State: Nature, Money, and Modernity in Venezuela*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Crapanzano, Vincent. 1980. *Tuhami: Portrait of a Moroccan*. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.
- de Certeau, Michel. 1988. *The Practice of Everyday Life*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- de Soto, Hernando. 2000. *The Mystery of Capital: Why Capitalism Triumphs in the West and Fails Everywhere Else*. New York: Bantam Press.
- . 1989. *The Other Path: Invisible Revolution in the Third World*. New York: Harper and Row.
- Denis, Eric. 1995. "Le Caire: Aspects Sociaux de l'Étalement Urbain: Entre spécialisation et mixité." *Égypte/Monde Arabe* 23 (3e trimestre):77–130.
- . 1994. "La Mise En Scène des 'Ashwaiyyat. Premier acte: Imbaba, Décembre 1992." *Egypt/Monde Arabe* 20 (4e Trimstred):117–32.
- Dirks, Nicholas B. 1996. "Foreword." In B. Cohn, *Colonialism and Its Forms of Knowledge: The British in India*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- el-Kadi, Galila. 1994. "Le Caire: la ville spontanée sous contrôle." *Monde arabe: Villes, pouvoirs et sociétés. Monde arabe Maghreb Machrek*. Numéro spécial. 1er trimestre.
- Elyachar, Julia. 2002a. "Empowerment Money: The World Bank, NGOs, and the Value of Culture in Egypt." *Public Culture* 14, 3 (autumn):493–513
- . 2002b. "Below the Tip of the Iceberg: Markets and Alternative Economic Identities in Cairo." Paper presented at the conference "Empire of Economics," Kevorkian Center for Near Eastern Studies, New York University, 22–24 May 2002.
- . 2001a. "NGOs and the Religion of Civil Society in the 'Informal Economy' of Cairo." *Critique Internationale*, Octobre 2001, no. 13:139–52 (in French).
- . 2001b. "The Illicit Relations of Seattle and Wall Street: Anti-Globalization Movements and Anti-Development in the World Bank." *Casopis za kritiko znanosti*, Ljubljana, Slovenia.

- Escobar, Arturo. 1995. *Encountering Development: The Making and Unmaking of the Third World*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Fabian, Johannes. 2001. *Anthropology with an Attitude: Critical Essays*. Stanford: Stanford University Press.
- Fergani, Nader. 1991. "A Characterisation of the Employment Problem in Egypt." In H. Handoussa and G. Potter, eds., *Employment and Structural Adjustment: Egypt in the 1990s*. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press.
- . 1988. *In Pursuit of Livelihood: A Study of Egyptian Labour Migration*. Beirut: Center for Arab Unity Studies (in Arabic).
- Ferguson, James. 1999. *Expectations of Modernity: Myths and Meanings of Urban Life on the Zambian Copperbelt*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: The University of California Press.
- Ferguson, James and Akhil Gupta. 2002. Spatializing States: Toward an Ethnography of Neoliberal Governmentality. *American Ethnologist* 24, 4:981–1002.
- Fine, Ben. 1999. "The Developmental State is Dead—Long Live Social Capital?" *Development and Change* 30, 1:1–19.
- . 2001. *Social Capital versus Social Theory: Political Economy and Social Science at the Turn of the Millennium*. London: Routledge.
- Foucault, Michel. 1980. *Power/Knowledge: Selected Interviews and Other Writings 1972–1977*. Colin Gordon, ed. New York: Pantheon.
- . 1991. "Governmentality." In Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller, eds., *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Gardner, Katy, and David Lewis. 1996. *Anthropology, Development, and the Post-Modern Challenge*. London: Pluto Press.
- Geertz, Clifford. 1963. *Agricultural Involution: The Processes of Change in Indonesia*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- . 1983b. *Peddlers and Princes: Social Change and Economic Modernization in Two Indonesian Towns*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Ghani, Ashraf. 1996. "Production and Reproduction of Property as a Bundle of Powers: Afghanistan 1774–1901." Paper presented at the Agrarian Studies Program, Yale University.
- . 1992. "Theory and Mode of Presentation: From Malinowski to Marx." Lecture presented at the Massachusetts Institute of Technology, 18 Nov. 1992.
- Ghannam, Farha. 1997. "Remaking the Modern: Space, Relocation, and the Politics of Identity in a Global Cairo." Ph.D. dissertation, University of Texas at Austin.
- . 1998. "The Visual Remaking of Urban Space: Relocation and the Use of Public Housing in "Modern" Cairo." *Visual Anthropology* 10:265–80.
- Gibson-Graham, J. K. forthcoming (2002). *Geographies of Power: Placing Scale*. A. Herod and M. Wright, eds., Oxford: Blackwell Publishers.
- Gordon, Colin. 1991. "Government Rationality: An Introduction." In Graham Burchell, Colin Gordon, and Peter Miller, eds., *The Foucault Effect: Studies in Governmentality*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Government of Egypt. 1995. *Annual Report 1994*. Cairo: Social Fund for Development.
- Graham, Carol. 1994. *Safety Nets, Politics, and the Poor: Transitions to Market Economies*. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution.
- Gupta, Akhil. 1995. "Blurred Boundaries: The Discourse of Corruption, the Culture of Politics, and the Imagined State." *American Ethnologist* 22, 2:375–402.
- Handoussa, Heba. 1992. "Egypt's Informal Sector: Engine of Growth?" Paper presented to the Middle East Studies Association Conference, Portland, Oregon, 28–31 Oct.
- . 1991. "Crisis and Challenge: Prospects for the 1990s." In H. Handoussa and G.

- Potter, eds., *Employment and Structural Adjustment: Egypt in the 1990s*. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press.
- Handoussa, Heba, and Gillian Potter, eds. 1991. *Employment and Structural Adjustment: Egypt in the 1990s*. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press.
- Hann, Chris. 1998. "Introduction: The Embeddedness of Property." In C. M. Hann, ed., *Property Relations: Renewing the Anthropological Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Harrison, Bennett. 1994. *Lean and Mean: The Changing Landscape of Corporate Power in the Age of Flexibility*. New York: Basic Books.
- Hart, Keith. 2001. *Money in an Unequal World: Keith Hart and His Memory Bank*. New York: Texere.
- . 1992. "Market and State after the Cold War: The Informal Economy Reconsidered." In Roy Dille, ed., *Contesting Markets: Analyses of Ideology, Discourse and Practice*. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press.
- . 1973. "Informal Income Opportunities and Urban Employment in Ghana." *Journal of Modern African Studies* 11:61–89.
- Henry, Clement M. and Robert Springborg. 2001. *Globalization and the Politics of Development in the Middle East*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Herzfeld, Michael. 1992. *The Social Production of Indifference: Exploring the Symbolic Roots of Western Bureaucracy*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Heyman, Josiah McC. and Alan Smart. 1999. "States and Illegal Practices: An Overview." In J. McC. Heyman, ed., *States and Illegal Practices*. New York: Berg.
- Hibou, Béatrice, ed. 1999. *La privatisation des États*. Paris: Karthala.
- Hont, Istvan. 1993. "The Rhapsody of Public Debt: David Hume and Voluntary State Bankruptcy." In Nicholas Phillipson and Quentin Skinner, eds., *Political Discourse in Early Modern Britain*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- . Forthcoming. *Jealousy of Trade*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Hoodfar, Homa. 1997. *Between Marriage and the Market: Intimate Politics and Survival in Cairo*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Husmanns, Ralf. 1996. "ILO's Recommendations on Methodologies Concerning Informal Sector Data Collection." In B. Herman and W. Stoffers, eds., *Unveiling the Informal Sector: More than Counting Heads*. Brookfield: Avebury.
- Jay, Martin. 1984. *Marxism and Totality: The Adventures of a Concept from Lukács to Habermas*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Kharoufi, Mostafa. 1991. "The Informal Dimension of Urban Activity in Egypt: Some Recent Work." *Cairo Papers of Social Science* 14 (Winter):8–20.
- Koptiuch, Kristin. 1999. *A Poetics of Political Economy in Egypt*. Minneapolis: The University of Minnesota Press.
- Lubell, Harold. 1991. *The Informal Sector in the 1980s and 1990s*. Paris: Development Centre, OECD.
- El-Mahdy, Alia. 1995. "The Informal Sector in Egypt: A Brief Literature Review." Paper presented at the workshop on "The Dynamics of the Informal and Small-Scale Enterprise Sector," Aswan, Egypt, 1–3 Dec. 1995. Sponsored by the Economic Research Forum for the Arab Countries, Iran, and Turkey, with support from the Friedrich Ebert Stiftung.
- Malkki, Liisa. 1994. "Citizens of Humanity: Internationalism and the Imagined Community of Nations." *Diaspora* 3, 1:41–68.
- Mastnak, Tomaž. 1996. "Fascists, Liberals, and Anti-Nationalism." In R. Caplan and J. Feffer, eds., *Europe's New Nationalism: States and Minorities in Conflict*. New York and London: Oxford University Press.
- Maurer, Bill. Forthcoming. "Uncanny Exchanges: The Possibilities and Failures of

- 'Making Change' with Alternative Monetary Forms." *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*.
- . 2001. "Islands in the Net: Rewiring Technological and Financial Circuits in the 'Offshore' Caribbean." *Comparative Studies in Society and History* 43, 3:467–501.
- . 2000. "A Fish Story: Rethinking Globalization on Virgin Gorda, British Virgin Islands." *American Ethnologist* 27, 3:670–701.
- Mbembe, Achille. 1992. "The Banality of Power and the Aesthetics of Vulgarly in the Postcolony." Trans. J. Roitman. *Public Culture* 4, 2:1–30.
- Meagher, Kate. 1995. "Crisis, Informalization and the Urban Informal Sector in Sub-Saharan Africa." *Development and Change* 26:259–84.
- Meyer, Günter. 1988. "Manufacturing in Old Quarters of Central Cairo." *Éléments sur les Centres-Villes dans le Monde Arabe*. URBAMA, 19.
- Mitchell, Timothy. 1991. "The Limits of the State: Beyond Statist Approaches and Their Critics." *American Political Science Review* 85 (March):77–96.
- . 2002. *Rule of Experts: Egypt, Techno-Politics, Modernity*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Mnookin, Robert H., Scott Peppet, and Andrew S. Tulumello. 2000. *Beyond Winning: Negotiating to Create Value in Deals and Disputes*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press.
- Moore, Sally Falk. 1987. "Explaining the Present: Theoretical Dilemmas in Processual Ethnography." *American Ethnologist* 14, 4:727–36.
- Mosley, P. 1987. *Overseas Aid: Its Defense and Reform*. Brighton: Wheatsheaf.
- Oldham, Linda, Haguier El Hadidi and Hussein Tamaa. 1987. "Informal Communities in Cairo: The Basis of a Typology." *Cairo Papers in Social Science* 10 (Winter).
- Owen, Roger. 1969. "The Cairo Building Industry and the Building Boom of 1897–1907." Colloque International sur l'Histoire du Caire, DDR, Ministry of Culture of ARE: 337–50.
- Peattie, Lisa. 1987. "An Idea in Good Currency and How It Grew: The Informal Sector." *World Development* 15, 7:851–60.
- Portes, A. and S. Sassen-Koob. 1984. "Making it Underground: Comparative Material on the Urban Informal Sector in Western Market Economies." *American Journal of Sociology* 93:30–61.
- Qandil, Amani. 1998. "The Nonprofit Sector in Egypt." In H. K. Anheier and L. M. Salamon, eds., *The Nonprofit Sector in the Developing World*. Manchester: Manchester University Press, 145–46.
- Rageh, Abou-Zeid. 1985. "The Changing Pattern of Housing in Cairo." In *The Expanding Metropolis: Coping with Urban Growth of Cairo*. Proceedings of Seminar Nine in the series "Architectural Transformations in the Islamic World," held in Cairo, Egypt, 11–15 Nov. 1984. The Aga Khan Awards.
- Rizq, Su'ad Kamel. 1991. "The Structure and Operation of the Informal Sector in Egypt." In H. Handoussa and G. Potter, eds., *Employment and Structural Adjustment: Egypt in the 1990s*. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press.
- Robertson, A. F. 1984. *The People and the State: An Anthropology of Planned Development*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Roussillon, Alain. 1988. "Sociétés Islamiques de placement de fonds et 'ouverture économique.'" *Dossiers du CEDEJ* 3. Cairo: CEDEJ.
- Rycx, Jean-François. 1987. "Islam et dérégulation financière." *Dossiers du CEDEJ* 3. Cairo: CEDEJ.
- Sadawski, Yahya. 1991. *Political Vegetables? Businessman and Bureaucrat in the Development of Egyptian Agriculture*. Washington, D.C.: The Brookings Institution.

- Sassan, Saskia. 1996. "On Economic Citizenship." In *Losing Control? Sovereignty in an Age of Globalization*. New York: Columbia University Press.
- Scott, James. 1998. *Seeing Like a State: How Certain Schemes to Improve the Human Condition Have Failed*. New Haven, Conn.: Yale University Press.
- Singerman, Diane. 1995. *Avenues of Participation: Family, Politics, and Networks in Urban Quarters of Cairo*. Princeton, N.J.: Princeton University Press.
- Smart, Alan. 1999. "Predatory Rule and Illegal Economic Practices." In Josiah McC. Heyman, ed., *States and Illegal Practices*. New York: Berg.
- Smith, David, Dorothy J. Solinger, and Steven C. Topik, eds. 1999. *States and Sovereignty in the Global Economy*. New York: Routledge.
- Stark, David. 1998. "Recombinant Property in East European Capitalism." In M. Callon, ed., *The Laws of the Market*. Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishers.
- Strathern, Marilyn. 1998. "Divisions of Interest and Languages of Ownership." In C. M. Hann, ed., *Property Relations: Renewing the Anthropological Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Stiglitz, Joseph. 2000. "The Insider: What I Learned at the World Economic Crisis." *The New Republic* (posted on web site www.tnr.com, 6 Apr. 2000).
- Tanada, Hirofumi. 1996. "Survey of Migrant Associations in Cairo Metropolitan Society (Egypt), 1955–1990: Quantitative and Qualitative Data." *Social Science Review* 42, 1: n.a.
- Tekçe, Belgin, Linda Oldham, and Frederic C. Shorter. 1994. *A Place to Live: Families and Child Health in a Cairo Neighborhood*. Cairo: American University in Cairo Press.
- Touraine, Alain. 1980. *L'Après socialisme*. Paris: Grasset.
- . 1985. "An Introduction to the Study of Social Movements." *Social Research* 52, 4:749–87.
- Tripp, Aili Mari. 1997. *Changing the Rules: The Politics of Liberalization and the Urban Informal Economy in Tanzania*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- Verdery, Katherine. 1997. "Political Identities and Property Restitution in Transylvania, Romania." National Science Foundation grant proposal published in *PoLAR: Political and Legal Anthropology Review* 2, 1:120–41.
- . 1998. "Property and Power in Transylvania's Decollectivization." In C. M. Hann, ed., *Property Relations: Renewing the Anthropological Tradition*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Wikan, Unni. 1996. *Tomorrow, God Willing: Self-Made Destinies in Cairo*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Wilson, Fiona. 1993. "Workshops as Domestic Domains: Reflections on Small-Scale Industry in Mexico." *World Development* 21, 1:67–80.
- Wolf, Eric R. 2001a. "On Fieldwork and Theory." In E. Wolf, *Pathways of Power: Building an Anthropology of the Modern World*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- . 2001b. "Facing Power—Old Insights, New Questions." In E. Wolf, *Pathways of Power: Building an Anthropology of the Modern World*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- . 1999. *Envisioning Power: Ideologies of Dominance and Crisis*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press.
- World Bank. 1991a. "Staff Appraisal Report: Arab Republic of Egypt, Social Fund Project." *Population and Human Resources, Country Department III: Europe, Middle East, and North Africa*. Report No. 9561-EGT. 29 May 1991.
- . 1991b. *Egypt: Alleviating Poverty during Structural Adjustment*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank.

- . 1994. “Private Sector Development in Egypt: The Status and the Challenges.” Prepared for the Conference “Private Sector Development in Egypt: Investing in the Future,” Cairo, 9–10 Oct. 1994.
- . 2001. *World Development Report 2000/2001: Attacking Poverty*. Washington, D.C.: World Bank.

Reproduced with permission of the copyright owner. Further reproduction prohibited without permission.