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The American University in Cairo

School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Egypt's Marginalized Revolution: Social Movements in a Changing Political Environment 2011-2015

A Thesis Submitted to

The Department of Sociology, Anthropology, Psychology and Egyptology

In partial fulfillment of the requirements for the degree of Master of Arts

By Ziad A. Akl

Under the Supervision of Dr. Amy Austin Holmes
September 2016

The American University in Cairo
School of Humanities and Social Sciences

Egypt's marginalized revolution: social movements in a changing political
opportunity structure 2011-2015

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Egyptology

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Chapter 1

Theorizing Social movements and Political Opportunity

Introduction

Social movements and non-institutional collective entities were a key component in the struggle against authoritarianism during the last decade of Mubarak's rule. Mainly the Muslim Brotherhood and political parties occupied Egypt's political landscape during Mubarak's 30-year reign. The labor movement was also present during Mubarak's reign, although highly constrained by the state's security apparatus, it was able to survive the repression and remain an actor albeit with limited influence on Egyptian politics. However, the extent of the challenge posed by these dominant forces to the Egyptian state and the regime that represented it was minimal and even insignificant. Apart from seasonal contentions during parliamentary elections, opposition to the Mubarak regime led by political parties and the Muslim Brotherhood resorted to a strategy of passive coexistence.

Starting from the early 2000s, new modes of socio-political organization started to appear within Egypt's political landscape. A number of social movements like "Kefaya", "Youth for Change", "The National Campaign for Supporting Al-Baradei", "April 6" and "We are all Khaled Saeed" began to have a felt presence within the Egyptian public sphere. At the same time, several strikes and demonstrations by different sectors in Egyptian society were taking place. Among the most influential of those were the strikes by textile workers in the city of Mahalla, the strikes by the Syndicate of Journalists and the Syndicate of Lawyers and the strikes by

tax employees.¹ Such episodes of social mobilization had a cumulative effect on the dissemination of information and raising levels of political consciousness in Egypt.

The social movements that emerged during that decade demonstrated characteristics that were uncommon to the prevailing modes of social and political organization in Egypt at the time. For example, these movements were mostly cross-ideological in nature, structurally they had horizontal instead of vertical leadership bodies and they mobilized on the basis of cause rather than ideological position. The main defining feature of those different movements was their deep-rooted anti-authoritarian sentiments and their commitment to a framework of democratization. Finally, the different movements that emerged during that period resorted to a number of different tactics that were quite original to the Egyptian landscape of social movements. New movement tactics included silent stands by “we are all Khalid Saeed” and door-knocking campaigns by “the national campaign for supporting Al-Baradei”. The new modes of organization and tactics of protest managed to put social movements high on the political actors hierarchy by the end of 2010. This anti-authoritarianism and pro-democracy struggle peaked for a number of reasons during the early days of 2011 in what is commonly known as the “January 25th” revolution.²

In the preparation stage for the demonstration planned for January 25th 2011, a number of those movements as entities and their actors as individuals were an integral part of the planning. After the events in Tunisia, activists from youth movements met and reached an agreement to call for popular protests on police day January 25th.

¹ See Abaza, Mona “Egypt: scattered thoughts on a counter-revolutionary moment” Open Democracy/ ISA RC-47; Open Movements, March 2015 <https://opendemocracy.net/mona-abaza/egypt-scattered-thoughts-on-counterrevolutionary-moment>

² See Shehata, Dina “Youth movements and the 25 January revolution” Arab Spring in Egypt: revolution & beyond. Ed. Bahgat Korany & Rabab El-Mahdi. American University in Cairo Press. Cairo. 2012. pp.109-118

Those activists belonged to five youth movements: April 6, the popular campaign for the support of Al-Baradei, the Freedom and Justice movement and a number of youth activists from the Muslim Brotherhood and the Democratic Front party. Movements used their Facebook pages and activists resorted to their twitter accounts to announce and publicize the demonstration. A few days later, on 6 February 2011, when the Revolution Youth's coalition announced itself as an entity, its executive office included representatives from different movements like April 6th, youth for justice and freedom, national campaign for supporting Al-Baradei and the free youth organization. In the decade that preceded the January revolution and during the 18 days uprising until Mubarak stepped down, social movements were indeed re-defining the landscape of political actors in Egypt.

The collective political pressure applied by these movements and other political forces during the 18 days from January 25th to February 11th in Tahrir Square resulted in the removal of Hosni Mubarak from office and the termination of his 30 year Presidency. After Mubarak was deposed, expectations of a democratic trajectory in Egypt were very high. Moreover, the expanded access to the public sphere after the January revolution pointed to a potential for growth in both role and impact of social movements, specifically ones that were active during the 18-day sit-in in Tahrir Square. However, more than five years later, the actual results on the ground hardly meet any of those expectations. It is this very paradox that I intend to address and examine in my research. Social movements that were successfully building up resources and support and accumulating impact over a decade of political repression and firm state-grip over mobilization and assembly are not capable of having the same impact at a phase where the political system became relatively more opened (in the period from 2011 to 2015 a series of political procedures, an unprecedented rate of

political participation and a significantly high rate of social mobilization) and the basis of the deeply consolidated regime were intensely shaken. Social movements that were in the peak of their socio-political presence are faced today with a growing number of challenges excluding them gradually from the public sphere, marginalizing their overall political influence and systematically restraining their capacity to act, mobilize or merely survive. The people and the entities that were once viewed as the nucleus of Egypt's new social and political forces are now being labeled as traitors, criminals and terrorists. As Mona Abaza so eloquently phrased it: "the euphoric, Bakhtinian, carnivalesque and dramaturgical moment of January 2011, which caught the attention of numerous observers and which lasted for almost four years, seems to have withered away".³ Explaining and examining this paradox and revealing the different developments that led to its existence are the primary purposes of this research.

The movements that demonstrated potential and impact are actually being fragmented, re-formulated and re-aligned. The series of interactions between social movements, the state and/or other political actors have caused internal movement divisions and negatively affected movement coherence. Any social movement, regardless of its internal structure, the amount of resources its capable of mobilizing or even the growing rates of its membership has to respond to a set of political and social conditions that constitute a structure of political opportunity within which the movement works in pursuing its causes. However, coping to the different changes in this structure of political opportunity can affect social movements in a variety of ways. It is the aim of this research to examine the changes in the structure of political

³ Abaza, Mona "Egypt: scattered thoughts on a counter-revolutionary moment" Open Democracy/ ISA RC-47; Open Movements, March 2015
<https://opendemocracy.net/mona-abaza/egypt-scattered-thoughts-on-counterrevolutionary-moment>

opportunity in Egypt from 2011 to 2015, and assess the effect these changes had on the social movements under study. I argue that the changing structure of political opportunity, the impact of that changed structure on social movements and the tactics and strategies employed by the movements to cope with that change led to a set-back in the extent of their influence, their mobilizing capacities and their internal unity and coherence.

For purposes of clarity and specification, three movements will be exclusively and thoroughly addressed within the context of this research: the Revolutionary Socialists, April 6 and Ultras White Knights. It is important to mention that April 6 was divided into two fronts in April 2011, the Ahmed Maher front and the Democratic Front. Although this fragmentation will be handled in detail while discussing the structure of political opportunity under the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces' rule, the main focus of the research will be on the Ahmed Maher front. Similarly, it is difficult to completely separate between Ultras White Knights and Ultras Ahlawy due to the extreme resemblance between the two movements and the mutual trajectory they were taken on through out the course of the past five years. Therefore, discussing Ultras White Knights will entail some discussion of Ultras movements in general and Ultras Ahlawy in specific due to the course of events and the similarity in context. However, the primary focus will be on Ultras White Knights. Finally, the Revolutionary Socialists experienced internal division a few years before the revolution when an offshoot came out of the movement calling itself "The Socialists Revival Stream". However, this division will not bear tangible significance to the course of this study.

The difference in the nature and the structure of those three movements will be determining to the outcome of their examination. Although those three

movements operated within the same structure of political opportunity, the impact of that structure on them was not the same. It is important to be aware of the essential differences that exist between those movements. 6 April is a political movement, one that engulfs all ideologies and revolves around a number of demands that constitute core goals of the movement. The movement does not have a firm structure, and the diverse backgrounds of its members allow the movement to be flexible in its political interactions and positions. The Revolutionary Socialists are a strictly ideological movement. The overarching ideological directions of the movement dictate its political discourse and interactions. In addition, the movement has a firm internal structure that allows it to maintain its collective identity despite the recurring changes in the political environment in which the movement operates. Finally, Ultras White Knights is a non-political and non-ideological movement. Its internal structure is extremely lucid and the idea of the movement taking part in political coalitions or alliances is very much debatable within movement ranks. The movement clashes with political dimensions like political parties, political coalitions and episodes of social mobilization regularly due to the politicization of its members, its tactical strategies that revolve around the use of public space and its history of violent confrontations with the Egyptian police and regular exposure to state violence. However, the movement's goals and *raison d'être* remain non-political. Therefore, among the main points argued in this research is how the factors that constitute the structure of political opportunity cannot be used in a generalized or one-size-fits-all sense, they must be situated and contextualized to fit the nature of social movements examined and the structural nature of the state in which they operate.

Within the course of this research, three structures of political opportunity will be addressed. The first will start from February 11th 2011 when Mubarak stepped

down and designated the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) to be in control of the country, and end on June 30th 2012 when Mohamed Morsy was officially announced as President. These 16 months will be commonly referred to as the SCAF period. The second structure of political opportunity will start on July 1st 2012 which is marked as the first day in Mohamed Morsy's presidency, and end on July 3rd 2013 when former Defense Minister Abdelfattah Al-Sisi announced the ouster of Mohamed Morsy and the beginning of a transitional phase with a road map. These 12 months will be commonly referred to as Mohamed Morsy's presidency or the Morsy period. Finally, the third structure of political opportunity will start from July 4th 2013 when the transitional road map was in effect and interim President Adly Mansour officially took office, and will extend till the end of the timeline of this study in December 2015. These 29 months or two and a half years will be referred to as the post June 30th period or phase. Although this period witnessed a change in Presidential office after the election of Abdelfattah Al-Sisi as President in the summer of 2014, I argue that the structure of political opportunity did not change with the change in presidential office.

Research purpose and significance

The purpose of this research is to understand the reasons behind the recurrent fragmentation and division within social movements in Egypt, the overall setback in their political impact and the strategies and tactics they used to cope with and adapt to the changes in the political environment over the course of the past five years. In order for this purpose to be achieved, I will look at the different political opportunities that existed in the three main phases that Egypt passed through since January 2011. Assessing the response of the movements to the changes in political opportunity and

the level of resources each movement can gain access to will eventually explain their significance within the new political landscape, their impact on their environment and the effects of the changes within this environment on the movements themselves.

The significance of the research is that it traces the changes, threats and challenges faced by social movements over a period of 5 years from February 2011 to December 2015 measuring the state of change within movements, the extent of change in the environment in which they operate and relating that change to the wider political context in Egypt. Furthermore, this research does not relate the state of fragmentation within social movements, the various coping tactics and strategies they resorted to, the set of political alliances and interactions they took a part in to one factor, but rather to a number of different factors depending on the context within which each movement operates. The main reasons this research proposes are a change in the political opportunity structure (according to the variables used in this research to explain the concept), an internal debate over tactics and political positions, the influence of movement ideology on the organizational structure and the political positions adopted by movements and the capacity of movements to maintain cohesion and collective identity in the context of a changing political environment.

The comparison this research will focus on will depend on a number of variables, examining their effects on the different movements researched. The main point of onset in the comparison is the manner in which movements respond to the change in the environment in which they operate, i.e. the political opportunity structure. Under this broad umbrella, variables related to movement goals, tactics of protest, alliances and interactions with the state and other political forces and internal dynamics that relate to decision making mechanisms and movement cohesiveness will be considered.

- 1- Movement goals: despite the fact that most movements have a clearly specified set of goals before their initial onset, the political environment in which they operate and the changes within that environment could alter these goals or merely re-contextualize them. Movement goals go a long way to explaining movement tactics, strategies and behavior. The change in movement goals from one phase to another highlights the impact of the structure of political opportunity on different social movements.
- 2- The tactics of protest: this variable refers to the different methods employed by movements in demonstrations and protests in response to challenges faced or in making claims. The difference in those tactics (sit-ins, strikes, demonstrations, marches) reflects the level of resource mobilization of movements as well as their response to changes in the political opportunity structure.
- 3- Political alliances and interactions: the political alliances a movement chooses to be a part of is very reflective of its response to the political opportunity structure. For example, during the second round of the Presidential election, April 6 chose to support the Muslim Brotherhood's candidate Mohamed Morsy as a response to the change in political opportunity, one that resurrected the old regime/Muslim Brotherhood dichotomy and the increased influence of institutional politics, which was a result of the different electoral procedures and the post-revolutionary political process during the SCAF phase. This variable will also refer to movement interaction with different branches of the state whether the executive and legislative branches or the security apparatus. Although the security apparatus is a part of the executive, the pattern of interaction varies a lot between the Ministry of Interior, the presidency or the

SCAF for example. This is due to the structural nature of Egypt's matrix of security institutions that is distributed among various entities and the change in political leadership that took place more than once in the period from 2011 to 2015.

- 4- Internal dynamics: the amount of internal disputes and the ability to reconcile them is very telling of a movement's ability to cope with a changing political opportunity. A movement's capacity to accommodate new members, survive fragmentations and maintain a unified position in different political circumstances determines to a great extent the level of cohesion inside each movement, which is in turn reflected on the movement's ability to survive changing political opportunities and maintain political influence. This variable will also deal with the decision-making mechanisms inside movements, their level of organization within mobilization, the extent of authority that movement leadership has and the extent to which individual members identify with the movement as an entity or choose to operate in their personal capacity as individuals.

Research questions

- Why couldn't the social movements considered in this study utilize the potential for growth reflected in the openness of the structure of political opportunity that existed after Hosni Mubarak's ouster from office?
- How did the changes in the structure of political opportunity impact the capacities and abilities of the movements?
- How did the structure of political opportunity lead to internal disputes or internal cohesion in movements under investigation?

- How did state strategies (legislations, repression, cooptation) affect the movements?

Conceptual framework

My research focuses on both the internal dynamics and structure of social movements, as well as the environment and the conditions these movements are facing and the effect they have on the movements. Therefore, my research will employ the concepts of the political process theory, putting special emphasis on the concept of political opportunity structure.

Political process theory and political opportunity structure both extensively conceptualize the political environments social movements face. There is a definitional dilemma with both concepts, especially with political opportunity structure. However, the definitional dilemma is not the only point of contention among political process and political opportunity theorists, another dilemma exists in identifying the variables that each concept should examine. While some theorists (Eisinger's work on race riots in American cities and McAdam's work on the civil rights movement)⁴ focus on structural variables like the state structure and the political system (factors that are to an extent stable over time and are outside the control of movement actors), others have recognized non-structural variables (Keniston's work on student groups in the United States and Parkin's work on the British Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament)⁵. Such factors include strategy, agency

⁴ See Eisinger, Peter K. "The conditions of protest behavior in American cities" *American Political Science Review*, Vol.81, pp.11-28

and see McAdam, Doug "Political process and the development of black insurgency 1930-1970" University of Chicago Press, Chicago, Illinois, 1982

⁵ See Keniston, Kenneth "Young Radicals" Harcourt Brace, New York, 1968 and see Parkin, Frank "Middle-Class Radicalism: The Social Bases of the British

and culture, and they are more related to the choices of movement actors and their perception of what constitutes political opportunity. "The analytic focus on the mutual influence of context and strategy appropriately directs attention to the large theoretical tensions in political sociology, stated broadly, between structure and agency".⁶

Due to these theoretical contentions, two definitions of political opportunity have been developed, a broad definition and a narrow one. Within the course of this research, the narrow definition of political opportunity will be used. The broad definition of political opportunity argues that factors composing political opportunity could be specified as all the factors that can be classified as factors affecting the chances of people to act together, a series of processes that might not even be thought of as political.⁷ The problem with this definition is that it is extremely overarching and can pretty much engulf anything under the sun.

The narrow definition, the one developed by Doug McAdam in 1996 is the one that will be used to define political opportunity within this research. McAdam's definition, which will be elaborately explained in this literature review, restricts political opportunities to a short list of "narrowly political factors".

The literature on social movement strategies and impact as both relate to political opportunity is extensive. As Goodwin and Jasper put it "one of the exciting developments in recent research on social movements has been extensive conceptualization of the political environments that movements face, which has

Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament" Manchester University Press, Manchester, 1968

⁶ Meyer, David S. "Protest and political opportunities" *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol.30, 2004, pp.125

⁷ See Meyer, David S. and Debra C. Minkoff "Conceptualizing political opportunity" *Social Forces*, Vol.82, No.4, June 2004, pp.1460-1461

largely taken the form of political opportunity or political process approaches".⁸ The fact that the use of political opportunity structure as a concept has been widely applied to different social movements in different political contexts has dangerous implications though. Gamson & Meyer, in recognition of this danger write: "The concept of political opportunity is in trouble, in danger of becoming a sponge that soaks up virtually every aspect of the social movement environment, political institutions and culture, crises of various sorts, political alliances and policy shifts. It threatens to become an all-encompassing fudge factor for all the conditions and circumstances that form the context for collective action. Used to explain so much, it may ultimately explain nothing at all".⁹ This critique points essentially to the ease with which political opportunity structures could be misused. Extensive broadening or strict narrowing down of the concept overshadows crucial analytical dimensions in examining the impact of political opportunities on social movements. In Egypt's case for example, some explanations easily resort to the introduction of the "protest law" in the post June 30th phase to account for the setback in social movement influence and activity.¹⁰ While this explanation and its approach of origin are partly true, it is extremely narrow and does not account for a multitude of other variables that could be overlooked through out the analytical process. Similarly, arguing that social movements faced a set back in their influence because Egypt is not ready for democracy is too broad and overly generalized analysis that transforms political

⁸ Goodwin, Jeff and James M Jasper and Jaswinder Khattra "Caught in a winding snarling vine: the structural bias of political process theory", *Sociological Forum*, Vol.14, No.1, March 1999, pp.27-54

⁹ Gamson, William A. and David S. Meyer "Framing political opportunity" *Comparative perspectives on social movements*, Ed. Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy and Mayer Zald, Cambridge University Press, 1996

¹⁰ See Ahmed, Passant "Social movements: moving forward or an inevitable setback" *Arab Forum for Alternatives*, working paper, October 2015

opportunity from a structural concept to an imprecise and loose trend with hardly any analytical value. However, the expansive use of political opportunity structures and political process theory has enriched the variables used in analyzing different cases depending on the political context and the type of analysis. While there appears to be an agreement on the conceptual meaning of political opportunity structures, the factors that constitute such structures are always a point of contention. "The challenge for researchers is to identify which aspects of the external world affect the development of which social movements, and how. Given the broad range of empirical concerns and settings, conceptual statements are necessarily broad".¹¹ Therefore, using the concept without properly situating it could be misleading.

On defining the concept of political opportunity itself, Sydney Tarrow argues that the main explanation behind social movement mobilization is the existence of political opportunities. In "Power in Movement" Tarrow writes "the main argument of this study is that people join in social movements in response to political opportunities and then, through collective action, create new ones. As a result, the "when" of social movement mobilization-when political opportunities are opening up-goes a long way towards explaining its "why".¹² In this sense, Tarrow uses "political opportunity" to break away with resource mobilization theories as well as theories of collective action in explaining social movement mobilization. His argument basically revolves around the idea that having sufficient resources internally or the mere existence of grievances does not explain movement mobilization without the necessary dimension of the opening up of political opportunities. In other words, he does not completely dispose with the two approaches, he rather relates them to an

¹¹ Meyer, David S. "Protest and political opportunities" *Annual Review of Sociology*, Vol.30, 2004, pp.134

¹² Tarrow, Sydney G. "Power in movement: social movements and contentious politics" Cambridge University Press, 1994, pp.17-18

overarching context of political opportunity, so “even groups with mild grievances and few internal resources may appear in movement, while those with deep grievances and dense resources-but lacking opportunities-may not”.¹³ Reconciling movement resources with the prevailing structure of political opportunity is the most appropriate approach to analyze the significance and role of social movements in Egypt in the period from 2011 to 2015. However, I would add to Tarrow’s statement that the “when” of social movement mobilization does not only go a long way towards explaining the “why”, it also goes a long way towards explaining the “how” of social movement mobilization. In other words, political opportunity is more of a framework engulfing resource mobilization, causal factors, tactical strategies and the overall ability to instigate change and policy shifts.

However, Tarrow’s approach remains very broad and boils down in essence to what exactly is the definition of “political opportunity”. According to his own association-based definition of movement: “collective challenges by people with common purposes and solidarity in sustained interaction with elites, opponents and authorities”¹⁴, political opportunity could be understood as the factors that facilitate the association of people and influence the pattern of their interaction with opponents and authorities. In his own words, he defines political opportunity as those “dimensions of the political environment that provide incentives for people to undertake collective action by affecting their expectations for success or failure”.¹⁵

Tarrow’s definition in that sense would be best used as a general concept that unfolds

¹³ Goodwin, Jeff and James M Jasper and Jaswinder Khattri “Caught in a winding snarling vine: the structural bias of political process theory”, *Sociological Forum*, Vol.14, No.1, March 1999, pp.30

¹⁴ Tarrow, Sydney G. “Power in movement: social movements and contentious politics” Cambridge University Press, 1994, pp.3

¹⁵ Ibid, pp.85

depending on the manner in which factors and patterns of interaction are to be analyzed.

I intend to use Tarrow's approach in explaining the link between political opportunity and social movement mobilization, not only to explain why movements influence their environments and are influenced by them in a specific manner, but also to address the question of "when" they are capable of doing so and "how". Tarrow's general approach could be best used to explain the positions taken and tactics employed by the movements examined in this research depending on the political opportunities that were created over the course of the four years from 2011 to 2015. Another important aspect in his approach is his argument that people join social movements as a response to political opportunities and through collective action, they make new ones, this line of thought will be used in my research to explain how social movements and other political actors have managed to create new political opportunities in the SCAF period, the Mohamed Morsy period and the post June 30th phase.

While Tarrow's work on political opportunity is often criticized for being too broad and unspecific, Doug McAdam further narrowed down the concept of political opportunity in a structural manner to a list of factors that are specifically "political". In an attempt to escape the broad trap of political opportunity, McAdam proposed what he called a "highly consensual list of dimensions of political opportunity"¹⁶, which included the following factors:

- 1- The relative openness or closure of the institutionalized political system

¹⁶ McAdam, Doug "Conceptual origins, current problems, future directions", *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*, Ed. Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy and Mayer Zald, Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp.27

- 2- The stability or instability of that broad set of elite alignments that typically undergird a polity
- 3- The presence or absence of elite allies
- 4- The state's capacity and propensity for repression¹⁷

McAdam's narrowing down of the variables or factors that constitute political opportunity has been often critiqued as very structural. The "Structural bias" in defining what constitutes political opportunity has been propagated by Goodwin and Jasper in their overall critique of the political opportunity thesis.¹⁸ In his narrowing down of the factors constituting political opportunity, McAdam's focus is on long-term and relatively stable factors while ignoring cultural and/or agency-related factors. However, he intends for his classification to come out that way, "the kinds of structural changes and power shifts that are most defensibly conceived of as political opportunities should not be confused with the collective processes by which these changes are interpreted and framed".¹⁹ In other words, McAdam seems to be after an "objective" political opportunity, one that could be measured through variables that are relatively stable. Factors that are more subjective are not to be confused with political opportunity, they are to be recognized but not seen as determining or formative. Once again, this "narrow" definition of political opportunity is extremely telling when applied to the change in political opportunity in Egypt in the post June 30th phase with comparison to the two phases that preceded it. Factors like the

¹⁷ Ibid

¹⁸ See Goodwin, Jeff and James M Jasper and Jaswinder Khattra "Caught in a winding snarling vine: the structural bias of political process theory", *Sociological Forum*, Vol.14, No.1, March 1999

¹⁹ McAdam, Doug "Conceptual origins, current problems, future directions", *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*, Ed. Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy and Mayer Zald, Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp.25-26

absence of elite allies, the state's capacity for repression and the stability of elite alignments describe to a great extent the vast change in the structure of political opportunity in the post June 30th phase.

Several arguments have been made to counter the structural bias in McAdam's classification of the factors constituting political opportunity, one of them was Gamson and Meyer's chapter in the same book edited by McAdam, McCarthy and Zald that "recognizes how completely culture penetrates institutions and political processes".²⁰ However, I do not intend to delve into the issues of structural vs. cultural or non-structural factors within my research. I will use some structural factors within my variables, specifically McAdam's relative openness or closure of the political system and the state's capacity for repression. But in addition to those I will use non-structural variables as well like tactics of protest, political alliances and movement cohesiveness. These three variables are very much dependent on perceptions of movement actors of the political opportunities and threats they face, and through these perceptions, responses to political opportunities are tailored and eventually new opportunities are created.

Perhaps the approach that reconciles Tarrow's broad definition and McAdam's narrow one is the work by Herbert Kitschelt in 1986 on Anti-nuclear movements in 4 democracies. Kitschelt's work was not intended to bridge any gaps between theoretical perspectives; however, he managed to come up with a set of variables in analyzing the different political opportunities structures he worked on. The combination of those variables had structural and non-structural elements. Moreover, he makes several classifications within his approach to understanding political opportunity and how it affects movement mobilization and strategies.

²⁰ Goodwin & Jasper, 1999, p.33

Kitschelt argues that political opportunity structures "are comprised of specific configurations of resources, institutional arrangements and historical precedents for social mobilization, which facilitate the development of protest movements in some instances and constrain them in others".²¹ This definition sort of weaves different approaches to social movements together, mainly political opportunity and resource mobilization. This is exactly his conceptualization of political opportunity structures filtering between movement mobilization, the choice of tactics and the impact on their environment.

There are two important additions that Kitschelt makes, the first has to do with the specific ways political opportunity structures can facilitate or restrain the capacities of movements to engage in protest (an addition that is highly relevant to the cases examined in this research), and the second has to do with the distinction he makes between input and output phases of the policy cycle. Kitschelt outlines three different ways by which political opportunity structures can influence the capacity of movement to engage in protest. First, movement mobilization depends on the amount of resources that a movement can extract from its settings, the availability of those resources and the movement's access to them depend on the political opportunity structure, "if movements can appeal to widely shared norms, collect adequate information about the nature of the grievance against which they protest and raise the money to disseminate their ideas and information, the chances of a broad mobilization increase".²² Second, movement access to public sphere and political decision-making mechanisms depends on institutional rules regulating the interaction between the state and social movements and interest groups in general, "these rules allow for, register,

²¹ Kitschelt, Herbert P. "Political opportunity structures and political protest: anti-nuclear movements in four democracies" *British Journal of Political Science*, Vol.16, No.1, January 1986, pp.58

²² *Ibid*, 61

respond to and even shape the demands of social movements that are not yet accepted political actors".²³ Third, movement mobilization faces opportunities that change with time and with the appearance or disappearance of other movements whether supportive or counter-movements. These three factors go a long way towards explaining the differences between structures of political opportunity in the three periods examined in this study.

As a critique to the distinction between open and closed political opportunity structures, Kitschelt argues that the distinction is one-sided since it "considers only the input processes of political decision cycles".²⁴ His argument in this regard is clear and makes a lot of sense. While distinguishing between open and closed structures explains the process of making demands in relation to movement mobilization and the system's assimilation of those demands, it ignores another important dimension which is the system's actual capacity to implement such demands and in return also affect movement mobilization. This idea is what Kitschelt builds on to differentiate between input and output phases of the policy cycle. However, the system's actual capacity to implement demands should not be confused with the system's willingness to implement them. In other words, the output structure is rather twofold. On one hand, the output structure entails the system's capacity to materialize demands into policy. On the other hand, the output structure also entails the system's willingness to consider the demands or its ability to repress them and offer alternative policy solutions in response to the demands or in suppression of them. Therefore, Kitschelt's input and output structures are best understood when weaved with the state's capacity or propensity for repression.

²³ Ibid, 61-62

²⁴ Ibid, 62

I believe the input and output structures to be very relevant to the case in Egypt if weaved with Kitschelt's other ideas on open vs. closed and strong vs. weak political systems.²⁵ I intend to use the input/output structure to explain mobilization in some of the cases examined in my research, specifically Ultras movements and the turn of events after the Portsaid Stadium and the Aerial Defense Stadium massacres. In February 2012, 74 fans, mostly members from Ultras Ahlawy movement, were killed after a clash with security forces and the opposite team fans during a game in the Egyptian Football League between the Cairo-based Al-Ahly and the Portsaid-based Al-Masry.²⁶ The two major Ultras movements in Egypt, Ultras Ahlawy and Ultras White Knights, joined forces in demonstrating for cancelling the league and bringing the ones responsible for the deaths to trial. Although the major actor behind those demonstrations and demands was Ultras Ahlawy, Ultras White Knights were quite supportive. As a result of the massive pressure and the relentless protesting over these demands, the Egyptian League was cancelled and 21 death sentences were issued by an Egyptian Court in the Portsaid Stadium massacre case in January 2013.²⁷ However, the death sentences were issued against fans belonging to Al-Masry team and the Egyptian police was not held responsible for the events. In February 2015, similar events took place in Cairo's Aerial Defense Stadium when 22 members of Ultras White Knights were killed while trying to enter the stadium to attend a match between Zamalek and Enppi²⁸. Despite the wave of reactions this massacre created and the demands of Ultras White Knights to cancel the league and suspend all football activities until the ones responsible are brought to trial and the deaths of Ultras

²⁵ Ibid, 66-67

²⁶ See

<http://www.telegraph.co.uk/news/worldnews/africaandindianocean/egypt/9055387/Egypt-football-riot-Dozens-killed-in-Egyptian-football-stadium-riot.html>

²⁷ See <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-21209808>

²⁸ This incident is explained in thorough detail in chapter 3

members are legally avenged, the league was suspended for a brief period of time and then it was resumed. Until today, no verdict was issued in this case and surprisingly, some Ultras White Knights members are held in custody over charges of their responsibility in orchestrating the massacre that led to the deaths of their fellows.²⁹

The contrast between the input/output structures in each one of those cases demonstrates the connection between the policy input/output cycle and the prevailing structure of political opportunity. The system's ability to capacitate or repress demands is closely related to the nature of the structure of political opportunity with its various dimensions. In general, the Egyptian political system's ability to assimilate demands (input structure) and transform them into policies (output structure) could be very explanatory of the difference in movement response to political opportunity.

However, one of the major problems with the concept of political opportunity is the fact that it was developed, tested and mostly applied in democratic contexts. Since political opportunity is in origin an attempt to conceptualize the political environments in which social movements operate, the nature of those environments and of the ruling regimes in them entails a set of pre-conditions that shape political opportunity. In democratic states, it is common to have constitutional articles protecting civil rights and liberties, free and uncensored media, constrained state violence and an overall tolerance of dissent and opposition. In non-democratic or authoritarian states, such pre-conditions do not exist, and if they do, they are not administered or exhibited in the same manner. Non-democratic states sometimes have constitutional articles that protect civil rights and basic freedoms, but the implementation of such articles is absent or minimal. In fact, the opposite of those conditions exists and appears to be dominant in non-democratic contexts. Therefore, it

²⁹ See <http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2015/02/09/air-defence-stadium-massacre-sparks-powerful-reactions/>

seems appropriate to ask if the very same variables can accurately account for political opportunity in contrasting political environments? Osa and Corduneanu-Huci worked on examining the occurrence and non-occurrence of social movement mobilization in twenty-four non-democratic cases.³⁰ Although their work did not include any Arab countries, their definition of authoritarian contexts and the factors they use to explain openings for political opportunity are very relevant to Egypt's case. While acknowledging the differences that exist between authoritarian regimes, they argue that they all share an important characteristic, an absence of a mechanism for regular and legitimate transfer of power sanctioned by those subject to the state.³¹ Moreover, they identify three features of authoritarianism that act as barriers to collective action: confining political activity to a single party, state control over mass media and lack of essential guarantees to citizenship rights. The factors affecting political opportunity outlined in Osa and Corduneanu-Huci's research are elite divisions, changes in state repression, media access and influential allies.³² Although those variables seem to be similar to the ones used in political opportunity structures in democracies, the contribution of Osa and Corduneanu-Huci is in the exclusion of the openness or closure of the institutional political system as a structure of political opportunity variable in non-democracies. The value of their work on political opportunity in non-democracies contributed to testing the political opportunity structure in a context different than the one in which it was developed. The results of the study show that "in all the instances of social mobilization some combination of

³⁰ See Osa, Maryjane and Cristina Corduneanu-Huci "Running Uphill: political opportunity in non-democracies" *Comparative Sociology*, Volume 2, issue 4, 2003.

³¹ *Ibid*, pp.610

³² *Ibid*, pp.606

the variables were found, and in all the cases of non-occurrence of social mobilization the variables were missing".³³

The political opportunity thesis could be applied to non-democracies; however, the nature of the regimes must be taken into consideration within the course of research. The widely used variables in different literature on social movements are plausible in non-democracies, but their significance must be situated according to the overall political context. In Egypt's case, access to the institutional political system does not bear the same significance that it bears in proper democracies. The post June 30th phase witnessed a Presidential election, a constitutional referendum and a parliamentary election. However, the cumulative effect of those institutional procedures on the democratic orientation of the Egyptian regime was minimal. Despite the "technical" openness of the institutional political system in post June 30th Egypt (the period from July 2013 to December 2015 witnessed a constitutional referendum, a presidential election and parliamentary elections), the structure of political opportunity itself remains closed. Therefore, in the course of examining dimensions of political opportunity, the presence of the political opportunity variable must be accompanied by the significance of the variable in the overall political context. In other words, holding an election, whether presidential or parliamentary, is not necessarily reflective of representative democracy or accessible political opportunities. Finally, throughout the analytical procedure, some variables might be absent in a specific period of time; therefore, a combination of present variables will be of more analytical value. In the following table, I attempt to show the political opportunity variable examined and its assessment in each of the three time periods researched.

³³ Ibid, pp.622

Table 1

Political Opportunity Variables in different time periods

Political Opportunity Variable	SCAF Period	Morsy Period	Post June 30th Period
Openness or closure of the institutionalized political system	Opened	Opened	Closed
Stability of elite alignments	Unstable	Stable	Stable
Presence or absence of influential elite allies	Present (Pro-revolution and collective action allies)	Present (Anti-Muslim Brotherhood and pro-collective action allies)	Absent
State's capacity and propensity for repression	High	Low	High

The previous table is a very brief introduction to the nature of the political opportunity structure prevailing over Egypt's political landscape over the course of the past five years. Although this table is quite concise, detailed explanation of political opportunity in each of the three time periods will be included at the beginning of each chapter. Briefly, access to the institutionalized political system was opened during the period of SCAF and Mohamed Morsy's period. The time period from February 2011 to July 2013 witnessed two constitutional referendums, a Presidential election, a Parliamentary election and a SHURA Council election. The participation rate in those political procedures was among the highest ever recorded in Egyptian political participation history. Constraints on political party formation were removed and the period witnessed the rise of numerous political parties and coalitions that ran for parliamentary elections. In addition, ten candidates ran in the Presidential election held in 2012. In the post June 30th period, access to the institutionalized political system was closed. Although the period witnessed a Parliamentary election in November and December 2015 and a Presidential election in the summer of 2014, these procedures were characterized by an obvious lack of political participation, a procedural marginalization of political forces, an apparent lack of diversity in the candidates running for Parliament or for the Presidency and heavy constraints on collective action and social movements activity. So while institutional procedures were taking place, the essential underpinnings of an effective institutionalized political system were absent.

Elite alignments during the SCAF period were unstable. The fall of Mubarak and the escalating rates of social mobilization at the time caused a rupture in the stability of elite alignments in Egypt. This rupture was fairly over during Mohamed Morsy's rule and in the post June 30th phase. During Mohamed Morsy's rule, an anti-

Muslim Brotherhood elite alignment was taking place. This alignment continued in the post June 30th phase but on a military-oriented nationalism platform. Social movements during the SCAF and the Mohamed Morsy periods had influential elite allies. Whether pro-revolution or anti-Muslim Brotherhood elites, influential allies played a role in opening up the structure of political opportunity during those time periods and facilitating social mobilization through providing social movements with different types of resources. However, in the post June 30th phase, influential elites allied against social mobilization and collective action.

The state's capacity for repression was high during the SCAF and the post June 30th period, and it was much lower during Mohamed Morsy's rule. Social mobilization was faced with state violence in numerous instances during the SCAF period. In the post June 30th phase, state violence was also regularly practiced, and additional measures like the protest law and the NGOs law were taken to curtail social mobilization and collective action. However, state violence was much lower during Mohamed Morsy's rule.

Despite the detailed examination of the political opportunity structure and its most influential and formative variables, the purpose of this research is not to test the political opportunity thesis or the political process theory, but rather to use it as an overarching framework that could explain the trajectory social movements in Egypt were taken on over the course of the past five years. Therefore, application of the political opportunity theoretical framework will not be strictly rigid; instead, it will be flexibly situated to Egypt's political landscape and structural realities.

In close relation to this research is the concept of resource mobilization. Since I will be assessing the response of movements to the changing political opportunity in relation to movement structure and mobilization capacity, resource mobilization

concepts will be a useful approach. Charles Tilly identifies collective action as joint action in pursuit of common ends, he argues that “the extent of a group’s collective action is a function of (1) the extent of its shared interests (advantages and disadvantages likely to result from interactions with other groups), (2) the intensity of its organization (the extent of common identity and unifying structure among its members) and (3) its mobilization (the amount of resources under its collective control).³⁴ Tilly’s concepts outlined above are related to two of the variables I am working on dealing with movement cohesiveness and internal dynamics and movement tactical strategies, which explain movement capacities to respond to threats through mobilization. Hence, weaving resource mobilization and political opportunity structures is a powerful combination explaining the trajectory of social movements in Egypt from 2011 to 2015.

Literature Review

The literature on pre-revolutionary Egypt mainly dealt with two issues, the nature of Mubarak’s dictatorship and the causes of its persistence, and the anti-regime movements and political coalitions that were being shaped during the last decade. King argued that the endurance of the Mubarak regime was related to strategies of repression and the use of the state’s coercive apparatus, institution engineering and winner-take-all electoral systems. He also argues that neo-liberal economic policies and privatization programs have created a new elite and separated this patronage from the rest of society.³⁵ In an argument similar in essence to King’s, Amin argued that Egypt under Mubarak was ruled according to an equation of interests that took into account the interests of the ruling elite in Egypt and the foreign powers interested in

³⁴ Tilly, Charles “From mobilization to revolution” Random House, New York, 1978, pp.84

³⁵ King, Stephen J. “Sustaining authoritarianism in the Middle East and North Africa” *Political Science Quarterly*, Vol.122, No.3, 2007

Egypt's status-quo.³⁶ The literature that dealt with the persistence of authoritarianism in Egypt further built on the uncontested executive authority idea argued by Posusney³⁷ and Goldstone's vulnerabilities of the neo-patrimonial states.³⁸

Another brand of literature on Egypt dealt with the scene of contentious politics and social movements during the last decade of Mubarak's rule. Rabab El-Mahdi has argued that the social movements operating during Mubarak's last decade in office should be understood as "one loop in a chain of continuous currents of protest", she argues that the movement has maintained "different but complementary activities" and she concluded that the movement is far from over.³⁹ In the introduction of their work, El-Mahdi & Marfleet point to the fragmentation of the opposition movement in Egypt⁴⁰, which is a point that I will further build on within the course of this research.

Post-revolutionary literature addresses grievances within Egyptian state and society that led to the outbreak of demonstrations, military defection (the military's choice to support the ruler or pressure him to leave) and the influence of the Tunisian revolution. This line of thinking and analysis is quite dominant in literature written on the heels of Mubarak's ouster, specifically in 2011 and early 2012. Jack Goldstone argues that military leaders defected due to the failure of Mubarak to maintain an elite balance between them and the new business elite related to Mubarak's son and

³⁶ Amin, Galal "Egypt in the era of Hosni Mubarak" The American University in Cairo Press, Cairo, 2011

³⁷ Posusney, Marsha Pripstein "Multiparty elections in the Arab World: election rules and opposition responses" Authoritarianism in the Middle East: regimes and resistance, Ed. Marsha Pripstein Posusney & Michele Penner Angrist, Lynne Rienner Publishers, Colorado, 2005

³⁸ Goldstone, Jack A. "Revolutions: theoretical, comparative and historical studies" Wadsworth/Cengage learning, California, 2008

³⁹ El-Mahdi, Rabab "The democracy movement: cycles of protest" Egypt: moment of change, Ed. Rabab El-Mahdi and Philip Marfleet, The American University in Cairo Press, Cairo, 2009

⁴⁰ Ibid

apparent heir, Gamal.⁴¹ Eva Bellin makes the argument that the behavior of the Egyptian military was highly professional due to its ability to survive without the presence of Mubarak in the presidency, an analytical mixture of military professionalism, autonomy and institutionalization.⁴² Amy Holmes in late 2012 dealt exclusively with the idea of elite defection in the course of the Egyptian revolution, refuting the arguments that claim the presence of an elite conflict within the Mubarak regime or the defection of the military elite in support of the revolution.⁴³ Holmes argues that the Egyptian case relied mainly on a revolutionary coalition of lower and middle classes, which did not include military or economic elite. Dina Shehata sees the events in January to be a result of youth movements that were able to break several constraints on political action, and that those movements came to realize their full potential in the aftermath of the Tunisian revolution.⁴⁴ However, the majority of this literature does not address resource mobilization during the revolution and does not hint to the social solidarity that was present in the square and that acted as a point of attraction to further participants. Moreover, the short timeframe between the date of publishing and Mubarak's ouster overshadowed the literature with a state of revolutionary enthusiasm, which led to an over estimation of the extent and intensity of potential change resulting from the January 25th revolution. Generally, the majority of post-revolutionary literature published in 2011 and 2012 addressed causes of regime collapse from a "statist" perspective rather than a collective action one.

⁴¹ Goldstone, Jack A. "Understanding the revolutions of 2011" *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.90, No.3, May/June 2011

⁴² Bellin, Eva "Lessons from the Jasmine and Nile revolution: possibilities of political transformation in the Middle East" *Middle East Brief*, Crown Center for Middle East Studies, No.50, May 2011

⁴³ See Holmes, Amy Austin "There are weeks when decades happen: structure and strategy in the Egyptian revolution" *Mobilization*, Vol.17, No.4, December 2012

⁴⁴ Shehata, Dina "The fall of the Pharaoh" *Foreign Affairs*, Vol.90, No.3, May/June 2011

It would be fair to say that the body of academic literature written on Egypt post January 2011 dealt primarily with the fall of Mubarak, the rise of the Muslim Brotherhood, the role of social media and modern technology in social networking and the significance of social actors like workers and the urban poor within the course of the revolutionary processes and the post-revolutionary political process. Academic disciplines like comparative politics and international relations produced literature that dealt with the role of militaries in the Arab revolutions, the significance of political institutions in the transitional phase and the comparative context of the Arab Spring. The academic contributions concerning social movements in the Arab World after the Arab Spring was relatively minimal in comparison to other fields of study. Nonetheless, some valuable output was produced.

In a working paper titled "Social movements: moving forward or an inevitable setback", Passant Ahmed argues that the setback in the role of social movements within the Egyptian political landscape is attributed to the closure of the public sphere through a number of legislations in the post June 30th era and the utter dependence of social movements on mass mobilization as a tactical tool without attempting to develop more tools.⁴⁵ Ahmed concludes that the persistence of various grievances in Egyptian Society necessitates the presence of social movements, but their active existence is dependent on the amount of room the state will allow them to act in. Contrastingly, and in another working paper, Georges Fahmi argues that the success of social movements after the fall of Mubarak is attributed to their solid connection with the street and their ability to create a parallel discourse to that of the state and of institutional political forces, a discourse so adamant on upholding revolutionary

⁴⁵ Ahmed, Passant "Social movements: moving forward or an inevitable setback" Arab Forum for Alternatives, working paper, October 2015

principles and the refusal of the idea of reconciling with the old regime.⁴⁶ The opposing views in both papers demonstrate how social movements were viewed from very different angles depending on the time at which the work was written, or in other words, on the set of conditions under which social movements were working.

Although both arguments bear a degree of accuracy, specifically in the context of the time at which they were written, they show that a comparative framework engulfing the time period from 2011 to 2015 is necessary in order to properly assess the role of social movements in Egypt and the manner in which they were influenced as a result of the changes in the political environment.

A more recent contribution was Abdalla's paper published in early 2016 on Egyptian Youth Movements during Egypt's political transformation since 2011. Abdalla addresses "Youth Movements" rather than "Social Movements"; her focus is on political entities that include large youth segments, mainly three political parties and a coalition of social movements and political parties. Despite the overarching institutional framework that she uses in her analysis, which focuses mainly on the ability of youth movements to transform into institutional political actors and instigate change in policy as a result, Abdalla pays special attention to how youth political actors adapted to the changes in the political environment. She concludes that social movements failed to evolve into political actors due to a lack of internal organization, that the mobilizing capacities of youth movements were affected as a result of social mobilization losing its appeal to the Egyptian public, which in turn entailed a change in strategy.⁴⁷

⁴⁶ Fahmi, Georges "Youth movements and democratic transformation in Egypt" Arab Forum for Alternatives, working paper, April 2013

⁴⁷ See Abdalla, Nadine "Youth movements in the Egyptian transformation: strategies and repertoires of political participation" *Mediterranean Politics*, Vol.21, No.1, pp.44-63, January 2016

In an attempt to exclusively address Ultras movements (a field of study with extremely few academic contributions so far), both Connor Jerzak and Robbert Woltering have produced insightful literature. Despite the fact that both articles dedicate vast space for explaining the phenomenon of Ultras movements and trace their historical origins in Egypt, conclusions about their role in the revolution and their political presence have been made. Jerzak argues that Ultras movements "became politicized as they sought autonomy in public space, but faced resistance from Egyptian security forces".⁴⁸ The article traces the politicization of the Ultras to the regular police harassment, and relates police harassment to the Ultras' continuous attempts to freely use public space. Jerzak concludes that the Ultras not only defy authoritarianism, but dominant narratives about Egyptian society as well. The views expressed in the article are quite accurate, but they remain somewhat generalized due to the lack of sufficient insight into internal dynamics of the movement and the overarching focus on their role during the 18 days sit-in in Tahrir Square in January 2011. Woltering's observations about the Ultras movements are not very different, and he also concludes that the Ultras have developed into a revolutionary social movement through extensive politicization as a result of their public presence and the effect of the Port Said massacre on a large sector of Ultras members.⁴⁹

A more thorough look into the Ultras movements' internal dynamics and the construction of individual members is to be found in the work done by Dalia Ibraheem on Ultras Ahlawy movement. Ibraheem's work is more concerned with the inner workings of the movement, its process of socialization and its ritual practices, without much detail on the political contextualization of the movement or its coping

⁴⁸ Jerzak, Connor T. "Ultras in Egypt: state, revolution and the power of public space" *Interface*, Vol.5, No.2, November 2013

⁴⁹ Woltering, Robbert "Unusual suspects: Ultras as political actors in the Egyptian revolution" *Arabic Studies Quarterly*, Vol.35, No.3, May 2012

strategies within a changing political environment.⁵⁰ However, Ibraheem's work highlights how Ultras movements re-produce their relation to the city through the use of public space or "space making practices".

Research Methodology

Participant observation: Through out the past five years, I attended meetings and participated in movement-related collective action whenever the opportunity allowed. Such events included protests by Ultras movements after the Port Said Stadium massacre in 2012 and the Aerial Defense Stadium massacre in 2015, the protests that broke out in November and December 2012 after Mohamed Morsy issued the constitutional declaration and the anti-protest law demonstration in 2013. The idea behind using participant observation in this research aims to explore with a firsthand experience the dynamics of interaction between movement members, members and leadership and the perception of movement actors towards what constitutes political opportunity. However, some serious challenges were posed when it comes to participant observation, specifically after June 30th, mainly related to the amount of access I was able to secure for myself.

Structured Interviews: I used structured interviews at a later stage of my fieldwork. The way I planned to conduct this research depended mainly on participant observation and semi-structured interviews. However, upon concluding those two methods, I saw that some specific information was still missing, and that's when I resorted to structured interviews that are clearly tailored to find out the remaining information.

⁵⁰ See Ibraheem, Dalia Abdelhameed "Ultras Ahlawy and the spectacle: subject, resistance and organized football fandom in Egypt"
<http://dar.aucegypt.edu/handle/10526/4394>

Semi-Structured interviews: those interviews were the main tool of research used in this study. Since my research covers a long period of time (almost 5 years) and focuses mainly on the opportunities and challenges movements faced and the resulting divisions they went through, I believe that interviewees must have the ability to speak of their experience in a non-restricted manner. Therefore, using semi-structured interviews was the most suitable tool for that purpose.

I interviewed 15 members from the three movements examined in this research, four from 6 April, four from the Revolutionary Socialists, five from Ultras White Knights and two from Ultras Ahlawy. The participants were chosen on basis of their level of activity within their movements. By “level of activity” I am specifically referring to their regular involvement with movement activities, their inclusion in decision-making mechanisms or their adherence to movement leadership decisions. Since the criteria were based on the “level of activity”, factors like age, gender, religion and social class were not of strong relevance to the choosing process.

Chapter 2

Social Movements and the Influence of Political Opportunity Under the rule of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces

February 2011- July 2012

The Structure of Political Opportunity Under SCAF

The Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF) took control of Egypt on February 11th 2011 after Hosni Mubarak stepped down. Nation-wide celebrations were held on the account of the occasion including institutional and non-institutional political forces, participants in the Tahrir Square sit-in and even non-politicized masses. On the heels of Mubarak's ouster, the national state of euphoria was accompanied by a wave of high expectations and a phase of re-grouping between political forces that realized the political environment was suddenly very different than Egypt's post 1952 legacy in that matter. Since the coup of 1952 led by Gamal Abdel-Nasser, Egypt lived under firm state grip over political life and a single party system until the 1970s. In the 1970s, Egyptian president Anwar El-Sadat introduced a state controlled multi-party system, which developed into a neo-patrimonial regime under the rule of Mubarak⁵¹. Tracking down the different political positions and interactions that took place in the few weeks that followed Mubarak's ouster requires vast space and a context that would go beyond the scope of this research. However, a short description of the structure of political opportunity in which social movements and political forces worked during SCAF's rule, and the subsequent overall change in the political environment is necessary before delving into the specifics of each movement separately.

⁵¹ See Bellin, Eva "The robustness of authoritarianism in the Middle East: exceptionalism in comparative perspective" *Comparative Politics*, Vol.36, No.2, Jan 2004

In the few weeks that followed the ouster of Mubarak, collective action and mass mobilization were at their peak. Despite the state's recurring attempts to disperse the numerous people who refused to evacuate Tahrir Square after February 11th and the controversy that erupted among some political forces on whether to evacuate the square or remain in it, weekly re-groupings through marches to the square after Friday prayer helped maintain a high rate of mobilization in the street. Coercive institutions, whether the police or the army, were still very reluctant to use force to disperse demonstrations and sit-ins. SCAF in its fifth communiqué on February 14th 2011 urged the people to go back to their jobs and quit demonstrating in order for the council to be able to facilitate an atmosphere of democracy that would materialize the demands of the people expressed during the revolution. The communiqué stated that demonstrations and protests represent a threat to national security and negatively affect the economy. However, no coercive measures or blunt prohibitions were expressed within it.⁵²

Statements made by movements and revolutionary coalitions at that time focused on the ongoing struggle for democracy. A few demands were principal in almost all announcements made by revolutionary political forces at that stage, and several of those statements and communiqués were co-signed by more than one entity under the banner of the revolution's youth coalition or under a common umbrella of mutual goals. The Revolution's Youth Coalition was formed during the second week of the 18 days sit-in in Tahrir Square. The coalition included representatives from April 6, the Popular Campaign for the Support of ElBaradei, the Youth for Freedom

⁵² For a full text of the communiqué see http://www.sis.gov.eg/Ar/Templates/Articles/tmpArticles.aspx?ArtID=44125#.Vnp0W_FwbV0

and Justice movement, the Muslim Brotherhood and the Democratic Front Party.⁵³

Mutual demands included pardoning political prisoners, suspension of the emergency law, assuring civil participation in the post-revolutionary democratic procedure and appointing a new prime minister and a new government instead of the one led by Mubarak's last appointed Prime Minister Ahmad Shafik.

At the same time, the Mubarak-regime allied elites were being cracked down upon. Several ministers who held office during Mubarak's rule were under investigation, some of them were arrested and others fled the country. The same applied for some businessmen who were associated with the regime as well as some key figures in Mubarak's National Democratic Party. The party itself was dissolved and its assets were confiscated by the state after a court ruling on April 16th 2011.⁵⁴ Escalating pressure from the different political forces and from the street led to the arrest of Mubarak himself and his two sons.

In connection to those developments, media platforms were opened to those who participated in the Tahrir sit-in or to members of revolutionary coalitions, whether social movements or institutional entities. Moreover, some elites offered help to new post-revolutionary political forces through financial assistance to form political entities or through different tools of enabling like media exposure and individual presence and participation in various activities and campaigns. Examples of such elite support include Mamdouh Hamza offering a house he owned to be the headquarters of April 6 movement⁵⁵, Naguib Sawiris financing the Free Egyptians

⁵³ See Shehata, Dina "Youth movements and the 25 January revolution" Arab Spring in Egypt: Revolution and Beyond, Ed. Bahgat Korany and Rabab El-Mahdi, The American University in Cairo Press, Cairo, 2012, pp.119-120

⁵⁴ See <http://www.masress.com/shabab/4665>

⁵⁵ Personal interview with M.S, member of April 6 movement, 8/8/16

Party and a number of celebrities participating in demonstrations like actors Khaled Abouelnaga and Sherihan.

This brief history or description of the political environment in which social movements operated under SCAF rule does not intend to argue that political conditions during that phase were perfect or properly conducive to creating a democracy. After all, events rapidly raced each other during that time and with the passage of time, a power balance between the state and dominant political forces represented in the Islamic stream materialized, leading to more consolidation of the post-revolutionary institutional political forces and the SCAF. Meanwhile, a state of fragmentation and re-formulation within non-institutional political actors was taking place. Moreover, violence was used more than once in dispersing demonstrations and protests, SCAF issued a communiqué banning demonstrations and massacres took place in different venues like Maspero and Port Said Stadium. However, these points in specific will be discussed more thoroughly later on.

However, in comparison to the structure of political opportunity that prevailed during the last decade of Mubarak's rule, the SCAF period was characterized by a relatively opened structure of political opportunity. The structural factors making up the structure of political opportunity like openness of the institutionalized political system, elite alignment, the presence of influential elite allies and the state's capacity or propensity for repression were all present with varying degrees during the SCAF period. More importantly, the peaking rates of social mobilization, starting with the 18 days sit-in in Tahrir Square and continuing with considerable accretion through out

the SCAF period, were crucial in opening up the public sphere and the structure of political opportunity.⁵⁶

Access to the institutional political system was significantly changed after January 25th. There are two main factors that contributed to increasing access to the institutional political system, changing the political parties law and amending the electoral law. During Mubarak's reign, political parties had to be approved by the political parties committee in the SHURA Council, which was headed by Safwat Al-Sherif, head of the SHURA Council and Secretary General of the National Democratic Party. Official approval of political parties had no clear criteria, and opposition parties received state funding and were closely monitored by security institutions.⁵⁷ After the revolution, SCAF changed the legal framework governing the establishment of political parties and loosened the restrictions on them. The result was approving 60 new political parties in the time period from March to December 2011.⁵⁸ At the same time, more transparent measures were taken as a result of the constitutional declaration of March 2011. Articles 39 and 40 of the declaration restored full and direct judicial supervision of elections. This measure was abolished after the constitutional amendments introduced by Mubarak in 2007.⁵⁹ As a result, access to the institutional political system was much more opened compared to the era of Mubarak. Moreover, the different institutional procedures held during the SCAF period (a constitutional referendum, Parliamentary elections, SHURA Council

⁵⁶ See Holmes, Amy Austin "There are weeks when decades happen: structure and strategy in the Egyptian revolution" *Mobilization*, Vol.17, No.4, December 2012

⁵⁷ See Taha, Ahmed "Political party life in Egypt after the revolution" *Jadaliyya*, 29/11/2012 <http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/8647>

⁵⁸ Ibid

⁵⁹ See Akl, Ziad A. "Judicial supervision and credibility of elections" in Rabie, Amr Hashem (ed.) "Towards free and fair elections" Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, Cairo, 2012

elections and a Presidential election) recorded the highest rates of political participation known in modern Egyptian history.

Elite alignment during the SCAF period, or the set of elite interactions that characterized Egypt in that phase, was in favor of the revolution. It is important to note that no tangible elite defections took place prior to the fall of Mubarak, however, elite alignment during the SCAF period cannot be detached from the rising rates of social mobilization and the gradual exclusion of the Mubarak business and political elite from influence. Elite alignment was indeed influenced by the ouster of Mubarak from office, but perhaps a more influential factor was the SCAF's decision to remove Ahmed Shafik, the last Prime Minister appointed by Mubarak, as a result of the massive pressure from the street and acute opposition to his presence in different media platforms. On March 3rd 2011, Shafik resigned after Egyptian novelist Alaa Al-Aswany launched an attack on him in a private channel. Al-Aswany's attack was not an isolated incident. Revolutionary forces at that time were mobilizing for the removal of Shafik from office, and a planned sit-in in Tahrir Square for that purpose was violently dispersed by the army on February 25th.⁶⁰ The removal of Shafik from office and the arrest of some key figures in Mubarak's regime did not only signal a marginalization and exclusion of Mubarak's political and business elite, it also indicated the state's willingness to respond to the demands made by revolutionary forces. Although official records state that Shafik resigned, there was no tangible support offered to him by the SCAF in order to keep him in office.

During the SCAF phase, social movements had influential allies among elites, specifically when put in comparison with Mubarak's last decade or the post June 30th

⁶⁰ See Irshad, Ghazala "Egypt's political transition" *The Cairo Review of Global Affairs*, The American University in Cairo, Summer 2012
<http://www.thecaireview.com/timelines/timelines-egypts-political-transition/>

phase. Revolutionary forces during that time enjoyed very high media exposure, specifically from private channels and newspapers owned by businessmen. The channel ONTV, owned by the Egyptian businessman Naguib Sawiris, and the newspaper Al-Masry Al-Youm, owned by the Egyptian Businessman Salah Diab, extensively covered social mobilization during the SCAF period. Political activists and social movement members were regular guests in talk shows and newspaper interviews. Moreover, several celebrities, whether actors, writers or journalists, regularly participated in demonstrations and marches during the SCAF period; while businessmen like Naguib Sawiris and Mamdouh Hamza provided resources to some social movements and post-revolutionary political parties. The interests of those elites in allying with social movements and political activists are a totally different point that would require a different context to be addressed. However, the mere existence of influential elite allies helped in opening up the structure of political opportunity during the SCAF period.

The state's capacity for repression during the SCAF phase was much lower in comparison to the last decade of Mubarak in office and the post June 30th phase. This is not to say that the phase did not witness repression and state violence. After all, some of the most violent incidents over the course of the past five years in Egypt, like the Maspeero and Port Said Stadium massacres, took place under SCAF rule. However, violent dispersal of demonstrations and protests was not practiced with every single case, it was rather a selective process depending on the participants, their demands and their numbers. Protests, demonstrations and marches that witnessed massive participation or the presence of elites were not attacked or violently dispersed. At the same time, other repressive measures like putting civilians on military trials were taken by the SCAF. Therefore, the state did not abandon its

repressive apparatus or give up its tools of violent coercion; it merely restricted its use of those tools and allowed its repressive apparatus to work with a more selective approach rather than a generalized one. The result of this was no more than a reduction in the state's capacity for repression.

The point to be made is how this set of political conditions served different aspects of social movement strategies and tactics. On the level of goals and strategies, all social movements examined in this research were focused on more or less a shared set of goals that included opposing military rule represented in the SCAF, stopping military trials for civilians, pressuring for reform of state institutions (Ministry of Interior in specific) and eliminating and prosecuting the remnants of the Mubarak regime political elite including SCAF members. These strategic goals were developed in response to the military's use of coercive force, the reluctance in reforming state institutions and the ongoing repressive procedures represented in both the use of violence and military trials. On a tactical level, social movements mainly resorted to mass mobilization, the use of public space and forming coalitions. Some movements, like the Revolutionary Socialists for example, were more concerned with campaigns to raise awareness and spread movement ideology⁶¹ through geographical diffusion. Once again, those tactical goals were facilitated to some extent by the relatively high rate of mobilization and the swelling in movement membership.

Although this phase could be characterized by a relative openness in the structure of political opportunity, which enabled social movements to work on their targets more efficiently and operate within a less repressive context, it also posed some challenges to social movements. Internally, social movements had to deal with numerous rapid changes. The swelling in membership levels was indeed a challenge

⁶¹ A personal interview with H.H, member of Revolutionary Socialists media bureau, 1/8/2016

that movements had to accommodate. The openness of the structure of political opportunity allowed the movements to have a larger role in public participation, whether through mobilization or through direct involvement in the post-revolutionary political process via electoral coalitions like "Al Thawra Mostamera" or the Revolution Continues coalition. Expansion in membership and increased access to public participation caused the decision making process inside the movements to be more problematic and negatively influenced the overall movement cohesion. Given the influx of new members, it became difficult for movements to monitor the backgrounds of new faces, which in turn allowed for movement infiltration by state security institutions⁶². The structure of leadership inside some movements witnessed a state of revision, leading to internal fragmentation in some cases like April 6 or an ongoing conflict in balancing the extent of actions carried out by movement members in their individual capacity versus actions and statements carried out under the banner of the movement as a collective entity; Ultras movements in specific were an example of that later description.⁶³

Therefore, the changes within the structure of political opportunity that took place during the phase in which the SCAF ruled Egypt from February 2011 to June 2012 had a dual effect on social movements. On one hand, social movements enjoyed more access to the public sphere and were able to be a part of more political interactions on institutional and non-institutional levels. On the other hand, these movements faced a number of internal challenges related to their increased public exposure, their growing popularity, their inner political conflicts and their interactions

⁶² A personal interview with H.T, member of Revolutionary Socialists, Cairo, 31/7/2016

⁶³ See Akl, Ziad A. "Misunderstanding Egypt's Ultras" Egypt Source, The Atlantic Council, 1/9/2015
<http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/egyptsource/misunderstanding-egypt-s-ultras>

with other political forces or with the state. Adopting a balanced overlook between internal and external challenges faced by social movements during that period of time is imperative in understanding the course of events these movements went through and their coping and adaptive strategies in response to those events.

The Revolutionary Socialists

The Revolutionary Socialists were among the main movements that mobilized for the call to demonstrate on January 25th 2011. They had played an integral role and were a fundamental component in the struggle for democracy and change through out the last decade of Hosni Mubarak's rule. Due to its binding ideological commitment, the movement has always been present in labor strikes and protests, specifically during the phase where Mubarak's neo-liberal privatization program was being implemented. Despite an internal division that took place in 2007 leading to an offshoot calling itself the Socialist Revival Stream, the movement remained cohesive to a great extent and continued its anti-Mubarak struggle on a firmly ideological platform.

The Revolutionary Socialists were among the first social movements to utilize the Internet and modern information technology as part of their tactical agenda. The movement was also very aware of the role of the media in aiding their goals, and they had regular communication with private Egyptian media and foreign media working in Egypt in order to secure coverage and exposure of different collective action related events during Mubarak's last decade in office.⁶⁴ Under the umbrella of the Kefaya movement, the Revolutionary Socialists played an active role in mobilizing against succession, privatization, repression and the emergency law. Professional

⁶⁴ A personal interview with H.H, member of Revolutionary Socialists media bureau, 1/8/2016

elites in the Kefaya movement, journalists in particular, were utilized by the Revolutionary Socialists to publicize causes and guarantee high media exposure of various proceedings.

The goals of the Revolutionary Socialists during that phase were very clear in their very first official communiqué that followed the ouster of Mubarak⁶⁵. The communiqué stressed on celebrating the fall of the dictator while keeping a close eye on the popular legitimacy and sovereignty that was begotten on Tahrir Square and on the streets of Egypt. Unlike the majority of social movements and political actors, the Revolutionary Socialists put great emphasis on the role of labor strikes in bringing down Mubarak. The movement also stressed on the importance of ongoing strikes and demonstrations among labor in private and public sector factories as well as among the professional middle class. At that time, the dominant rationale in revolutionary analysis of the ouster of Mubarak resorted to the central role played by youth who were occupying Tahrir Square and other revolutionary venues in the country. The concentration on the social elements of the revolution represented in the working class and the middle class demonstrated the strong and overarching ideological commitment of the Revolutionary Socialists; a factor that will be of great importance in the relative internal cohesion of the movement from 2011 to 2015.

The important point to consider while discussing the goals of the Revolutionary Socialists at that time is their recurrent emphasis on differentiating between the ouster of Hosni Mubarak and the idea of revolution. Concomitant to that vision is their clear position towards the army leadership as one of the faces of the Mubarak regime and one of the threats posed to the revolution. On February 21st 2011, the movement issued an official statement condemning the violence used by the

⁶⁵ For the full text of the communiqué see <http://revsoc.me/statements/statementlthwr-lmsry-mstmr/>

army against a demonstration in the city of Suez⁶⁶, the statement clearly distinguished between the army generals who were an integral part of the Mubarak regime as well as leading figures in the SCAF and the soldiers who were seen by the movement as a component of the revolutionary block. Therefore, the goals of the movement at that specific point revolved around deconstructing the Mubarak regime with its different dimensions, empowering social sectors like the labor and the middle class, opposing the military rule and the violence it used against demonstrations, strikes and protests and discrediting the political procedure that followed the revolution starting with the referendum on the constitutional amendments held on March 20th 2011.

Tactically, the movement translated those goals into action using various tools and methods. Among the tactics that the revolutionary socialists used before 2011 and during the 18 day sit-in that represented the core of the January 25th revolutionary processes was dissemination of information. The movement's media bureau was very active during the SCAF period in conveying to the public what takes place in different revolutionary proceedings and episodes of collective action. Another important tactic was what movement members called "visualizing".⁶⁷ The Revolutionary Socialists had an opened platform through their website for visual content of events related to the revolution, whether strikes, demonstrations, marches, protests or even confrontations with the army or the police. These two tactics were part of an overall strategy aiming to counter mainstream media with its professional inaccuracies, blunt lies and dominant political bias. An overlook on the movement's official statements and a close observation of their presence in the street during the SCAF phase

⁶⁶ See <http://revsoc.me/statements/statementfy-mwjh-jnrlt-mbrk-lshb-wljnwd-yd-whd/>

⁶⁷ A personal interview with H.H, member of Revolutionary Socialists media bureau, 1/8/2016

demonstrate that public presence via collective action and occupying public space were integral dimensions in the movement's tactical strategy. Although occupation of public space was not a unique tactic for the Revolutionary Socialists since it was a common trait in the majority of social movements at that time, the ideological composition of the Revolutionary Socialists made occupation of public space both a goal and a tactical strategy.

Internally, the movement did face some challenges during the course of the SCAF's rule over Egypt from February 2011 to June 2012. The most tangible of those threats was the capacity to accommodate new members and absorb the expansion in movement membership after the ouster of Mubarak and the media exposure of the movement as a result of some confrontations with the military. Concrete membership figures are unfortunately not available, but according to some movement members, the movement had 16 fully operative offices all over Egypt in early 2012 compared to 2 offices before 2011.⁶⁸ The expansion in membership and the geographical diffusion of the movement was not only the result of media exposure, but also a tactical strategy that aimed to spread awareness in different parts of Egypt. As one of the movement members said: "Part of the consciousness that has developed is that we can't stay in Tahrir Square and hold sit-ins and wait for the army to come in and massacre us. This allows the army to isolate us, politically and ideologically. Tahrir is very important as a symbol of the revolution, and we will always go back there for big events, but we have to take the revolution into every single working-class neighborhood in this country".⁶⁹ While some might consider the swelling in movement membership as a sign of daunting success and favorable expansion, the

⁶⁸ Ibid

⁶⁹ Interview with Revolutionary Socialists member Mostafa Ali, published in International Socialist Review, Issue #82, January 2012
<http://isreview.org/issue/82/year-one-egyptian-revolution>

Revolutionary Socialists lacked the capacities to absorb and assimilate those large numbers. It is important in this regard to understand that the Revolutionary Socialists have an internal prepping process that new members go through. This process includes explanation of the movement's ideology, subjecting new members to various sources of socialist literature and history as well as holding regular workshops and seminars for new members. The movement could not muster sufficient capacities to meet this growth in membership and the consecutive responsibilities it required. The Revolutionary Socialists did not have enough members to participate in the prepping process, and engaged members could not find the time to accommodate new members due to the frequency of political activity and the peaking rates of social mobilization during that time. Movement members reported that the expansion in membership slowed down the decision making process and affected the members' ability to play an active public role. The majority of those memberships eventually became inactive or simply disappeared.⁷⁰

The Revolutionary Socialists did not take part in any political or electoral coalitions during the SCAF period. There were several co-signed statements that the movement issued with other movements, and there was obvious support from the revolutionary socialists to movements like "Kazeboon" and "No to Military Trials", but this support did not flourish into any official coalitions. The ideological nature of the revolutionary socialists was a determining factor in their refusal to join in any official coalitions with other movements or political forces. Moreover, there was a very clear opposing position that the movement took from the post-revolutionary political process. That is why the movement did not declare its support to any candidate or coalition during the Parliamentary elections, the SHURA Council

⁷⁰ A personal interview with H.T, member of the Revolutionary Socialists political bureau, 31/7/2016

elections, or the two rounds of the Presidential election. The movement saw the political process as a reconciliatory approach undermining the revolution and the role of social forces in it, and consolidating both the SCAF's control over Egypt's political landscape and the Muslim Brotherhood's ascent to power.

Revolutionary Socialists members report of attempts made by the state to interact with the movement through meetings with military intelligence officials⁷¹ during the 18 days sit-in and in later stages as well. State representatives in those meetings asked to be familiarized with movement demands and goals. Movement members also report of attempts to discover possible avenues of cooperation between the state and the movement during those meetings.⁷² However, these meetings were not conducive of any alliances with the state or any diversion from the movement's regular course of action. The minimal level of interaction with the state and with other movements and political forces, as well as the movement's rejection of cooptation attempts by the state, are among the main reasons the Revolutionary Socialists maintained a state of relative internal cohesion during the SCAF period.

April 6

Since its establishment in 2008, April 6 has been a major component in Egypt's struggle for democracy and its fight against extending Mubarak's rule or political succession. Although the movement was formed after a labor strike in the city of Mahalla in 2008, it was recognized as a cross ideological and youth oriented political movement rather than a working class based one. At the time of its onset in 2008, April 6 was seen among other similar movements as a change in the pattern of political collective action in Egypt. A number of factors differentiated April 6 and

⁷¹ A personal interview with H.H, member of Revolutionary Socialists media bureau, 1/8/2016

⁷² Ibid

other similar movements from the regular pattern of opposition movements witnessed in Egypt since the 1970s. These factors included the non-institutional nature of the movement and its independence from entities associated with collective action like political parties or trade unions, the majority of movement members belonged to an age group that was below 30 years, the regular use of the Internet and other tools of modern technology in mobilization, the lack of an overarching ideological component or identity and the ability to attract a large number of non-politicized and/or organized youth within its ranks.⁷³ Several of these characteristics will be of influence in the movement's adaptation to the changing structure of political opportunity in the period from 2011-2015.

April 6 was among the main entities that mobilized for demonstrations on 25 January 2011 in Tahrir Square. Different movement members used their blogs and other social media platforms to help publicize the call for taking to the streets on Police day. A movement member, Asmaa Mahfouz, uploaded a video on You Tube urging people to take to the streets on January 25th. Her call included references to the corrupt state security institutions and the President, the failing government and the rigged Parliament. Mahfouz stressed on how individual participation would matter and how those who believe that women should not participate in protests should join the demonstrations of January 25 to assure the safety of those women as human beings and as Egyptian citizens.⁷⁴ What Asmaa Mahfouz did in that video summarizes the rhetoric of April 6 as a political actor and its significance as a social movement. Among the main dimensions that April 6 introduced to Egypt's political landscape was the tactical and organizational renovations that aimed to break longstanding

⁷³ See Shehata, Dina "Awdat Al Siyasa" Center for Political & Strategic Studies, Al-Ahram Foundation, Cairo, Egypt, 2010, pp.247-248

⁷⁴ See the video on <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZOj48pnzY1c>

patterns of political dissent. Political protest was not just repressively curtailed under the Mubarak regime, but also culturally stigmatized. April 6 indeed played a role in countering a gender-bias associated with social mobilization in Egypt when the movement through its female members attempted to break the stigma surrounding female political activism.

The movement was also active in various episodes of collective action that preceded the revolution, specifically within the context of participating in events organized by "We are all Khaled Saeed" movement. During the 18 days sit-in in Tahrir Square, the movement was among the most vocal actors and the most formative components of social and political forces present in the square. April 6 was also among the movements that participated in the formation of the Revolution's Youth Coalition, which was dismantled after the Presidential elections in July 2012. The coalition included in addition to April 6 other movements like the National Campaign for Supporting Al-Baradei, the Muslim Brotherhood Youth, the Democratic Front Party Youth and Youth for Freedom and Justice.⁷⁵ This brief history shows two important facts about April 6 that will be of significance in the period from 2011 to 2015. First, April 6 enjoys a tangible ideological flexibility that allows it to absorb a large multitude of members and cooperate with a number of political actors. Second, the movement has adopted a tactical pattern that used coalition building as one of the movement's tools to achieve its goals and targets.

⁷⁵ See "Dismantling the Revolution's youth coalition in Egypt" Sky News Arabia, 7/7/2012
<http://www.skynewsarabia.com/web/article/32292/%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1-%D8%AD%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%8A%D9%94%D8%AA%D9%84%D8%A7%D9%81-%D8%B4%D8%A8%D8%A7%D8%A8-%D8%A7%D9%84%D8%AB%D9%88%D8%B1%D8%A9>

On the level of movement goals, April 6 clearly stated that their ultimate goal if the full realization of the revolution's demands summarized in the slogan "bread, freedom and social justice". The movement distinguishes between its goals before and after January 25th 2011. The goals that were focused on Mubarak's removal and standing up to succession in order for a true democracy to take place were re-contextualized in the aftermath of Mubarak's ouster to focus on ensuring the completion of a transitional phase that would end with a democratically elected civil leadership.⁷⁶ Although these goals may seem too broad and overly generalized without sufficient detailing of specifics, they are very reasonable if put in the context of a non-ideological and change oriented movement. There is great emphasis in movement statements and communiqués on achieving democracy and avoiding relapsing into authoritarian rule in whichever form it may take. The sponge-like nature of those goals made the movement an active component in a number of initiatives that stood against the resurrection of the Mubarak regime or the violence and the brutality used by the army against protesters.

Tactically, April 6 could be classified among the most innovative movements during the SCAF period. The relative openness of political opportunity and the ease of access to the public sphere during the SCAF period compared to later periods allowed the movement to employ public space and its use among their main tactical strategies. The movement used its official social media accounts and the accounts of its different members to mobilize for different events that involved collective action and public participation. The allocation of public space was materialized in mobilizing for marches, demonstrations and human chains (*salasel al thawra*).⁷⁷ During the Parliamentary elections of 2011, the movement introduced a new tactic

⁷⁶ See <https://shabab6april.wordpress.com/about/>

⁷⁷ A personal interview with M.M, member of April 6 movement, 30/7/2016

called “white circle/black circle”. The idea behind the tactic was to raise public awareness about the candidates running for parliament. The names in the white circle were candidates whom the movement believed to be pro-revolution and change-oriented, while the black circle included the names representing anti-revolution trends or Mubarak regime associations.⁷⁸ The tactical strategy of the movement during that phase could be summarized in three main aspects. First, the usage of public space via organizing events of collective action, second, raising political awareness through the high media exposure and the initiatives taken by the movement, and third, utilizing the movement’s potential to collaborate with other social and political forces to publicize causes and maximize influence and effect.

April 6 has witnessed a number of serious internal challenges during the SCAF period. For reasons that will be specified later on, April 6 is among the movements that faced some of the most internal disputes and contentions. Like other social movements, April 6 became very popular in the few months that followed the ouster of Mubarak. Movement membership swelled significantly and the movement had offices in 20 different cities across Egypt.⁷⁹ The lack of a solid ideological framework for the movement allowed the co-existence of members from diverse political backgrounds. By mid 2011, April 6 had members with liberal, leftist, Islamist and non-politicized backgrounds. The clash over ideological orientations and their respective influence on movement strategies and interactions became a source of recurring internal dispute.

In April 2011, the movement witnessed an internal clash between its members over movement leadership, the result of that clash was the movement’s fragmentation into two fronts, the Democratic Front led by Tarek El Khouly, and the original

⁷⁸ A personal interview with M.S, member of April 6 movement, 8/8/2016

⁷⁹ Ibid

movement, which came to be known afterwards as the Ahmed Maher front. It is important here to mention that internal divisions and disputes were not a new phenomenon to the movement in 2011. A similar situation took place inside the movement back in 2009 when some members decided to travel to the United States to participate in a course organized by the Freedom House Foundation. At that time, Mohamed Abdelaziz, a member of April 6, announced that the movement's central committee convened and decided to freeze the membership of Ahmed Maher and other members who participated in the course. On the other hand, Ahmed Maher responded that this decision was not taken by more than 12 people and does not represent the movement. He also added that the decision aims to divide the movement and was taken by an Islamic faction within the movement's ranks.⁸⁰ The movement survived that dispute and Ahmed Maher remained in his position as movement general coordinator. However, what needs to be considered here is the negative influence of the diverse ideological backgrounds on the movement's internal cohesion and the popularity and charisma of Ahmed Maher as an individual despite the movement's horizontal structure of leadership, bearing in mind that those who opposed Ahmed Maher's actions and tried to remove him from the movement could not muster sufficient support and eventually defected from the movement like Tarek el-Khouly and Mohamed Abdel-Aziz. These two points will bear more and more significance with the passage of time from 2011 to 2015.

The fragmentation in 2011 was not very different from the 2009 precedent, it was merely more publicized due to higher media exposure and more vocal due to the

⁸⁰ See "A division within the Egyptian 6 April" Al Jazeera.net, 18/7/2009 <http://www.aljazeera.net/news/arabic/2009/7/18/%D8%A7%D9%86%D9%82%D8%B3%D8%A7%D9%85-%D8%A8%D8%AD%D8%B1%D9%83%D8%A9-6-%D8%A3%D8%A8%D8%B1%D9%8A%D9%84-%D8%A7%D9%84%D9%85%D8%B5%D8%B1%D9%8A%D8%A9>

changing structure of political opportunity after the January revolution, which allowed for the creation of a new entity under the same name. The division took place after an internal election for membership of the movement's executive office was held. Disputes over the movement's membership in the Revolution's Youth Coalition were a main reason behind the division and the respective election. While Ahmed Maher announced the withdrawal of the movement from the Revolution's Youth Coalition on the account that the members representing the movement in that coalition received support from Islamic factions, the Democratic Front denied those allegations and claimed that the reason for the division is Ahmed Maher's intention to turn the movement into a civil society organization in order for it to be able to receive financial funds. Ahmed Maher's front announced the dismissal of the movement's members in the executive office of the Revolution's Youth Coalition, Amr Ezz and Tarek El Khouly, but the dismissed members and Khaled El-Sayed, member of the coalition's executive office ignored the decision and assured the ongoing presence and participation of Ezz and El-Khouly in the executive office of the coalition.⁸¹ The results of the internal election came to announce the winning of both Ahmed Maher and Tarek El-Khouly as members of the movement's executive office, but by then, the contention was too steep to be avoided. Both fronts refuted each other's claims about the causes of the division, and the result was the establishment of a new entity under the same name and logo. The conflict over institutionalization, foreign funding and support from Islamist factions were the main determinants that led to the movement's fragmentation in April 2011.⁸² Although both factions did not produce any objective evidence that would support their accusations, which makes the validity

⁸¹ See El-Sayed, Samir "Contention between fronts peaks inside 6 April", Al-Ahram newspaper, 19/4/2011 <http://www.masress.com/ahram/74926>

⁸² An interview with Tarek El-Khouly published in Akhbar AlYoun newspaper on 14/10/2011 <http://www.masress.com/akhbarelyom/6333>

of each faction's arguments very questionable and increases the possibility of those accusations being mere delegitimizing claims; Ahmed Maher's Front remained committed to its confrontational approach in all post-revolutionary phases while figures like Tarek El-Kholy and Mohamed Abdel-Aziz became members of the 2015 Parliament and were assimilated into the institutional political system as a result.

April 6 went through a series of interactions with the state as well as other political actors during the SCAF phase. Like other social movements at that time, April 6 was approached by the state represented in the Military Intelligence during the 18 day sit-in.⁸³ Although no official meetings took place between April 6 (or any other social movement for that matter) and the Military Intelligence during the Tahrir sit-in, all political activists and participants report the presence of Military Intelligence representatives in the square. At the same time, the official meeting that was held between the SCAF and the political actors in September 2011 was problematic. SCAF did not invite any social movements to that meeting and it only directed the invitation to institutional political forces represented in a number of political parties. April 6 spokesperson (Ahmed Maher front) Mohamed Adel criticized this move and stated that the SCAF ignored a vital sector of Egypt's political landscape, a sector that is more influential in the street, has more acute demands than the political parties called for the meeting and represents the largest segment of Egypt's population, the youth.⁸⁴ But the contention between the SCAF and April 6 dates back to an earlier stage than the September meeting, precisely, to July 22nd 2011 when SCAF issued communiqué number 69 where the army explicitly labeled April 6

⁸³ A personal interview with M.M, member of 6 April movement, 30/7/2016

⁸⁴ See Elsayed, Samir "SCAF refuses to invite youth movements to its meeting with political parties" Al-Ahram newspaper, 18/9/2011
<http://gate.ahram.org.eg/News/117054.aspx>

to be working on dividing between the army and the people.⁸⁵ The SCAF communiqué refuted claims made by the movement about the army's use of violence to disperse demonstrations and protests in the cities of Mahalla and Suez. Other than the growing hostility between the state and April 6 after that communiqué, the movement received more media exposure and more membership requests in solidarity with its position from violations committed by the military and false justifications used by the army leadership about what took place in Mahalla and Suez.⁸⁶ The pattern of interaction between the state and April 6 was a very contrasting one. On one hand, the state hunted down the movement through stigmatizing and defaming it, attempts that will later on be escalated to banning the movement and arresting its members and leading figures, and on the other hand, this growing state hostility contributed only to an increased movement popularity and swelling in rates of membership, particularly during the SCAF phase.

The Presidential election in 2012, which marked the end of the SCAF phase, witnessed another series of interactions between April 6 and a number of political actors. The movement did not openly support a Presidential candidate in the first round of the election. However, internal debates within the movement concluded that both Abdelmonem Aboufotouh and Hamdeen Sabahi were favorable candidates. In other words, the movement was neutral towards both candidates who were together with Khaled Ali seen by most revolutionary forces as pro-revolution candidates. Although Khaled Ali's chances were not as promising as the other two candidates who enjoyed considerable wide support and were more resourceful, the three candidates represent the most dominant ideological backgrounds within April 6, a

⁸⁵ For the full text of the communiqué see <http://www.soonaa.com/vb/showthread.php?t=8554>

⁸⁶ A personal interview with M.S, member of April 6 movement, 8/8/2016

Nasserist/nationalist background represented in Sabbahi, a liberalized-Islamist background represented in Aboulfotouh and a leftist background represented in Ali. The second round of the election was very different when the run-off was between Mohamed Morsi, a Muslim Brotherhood candidate and Ahmed Shafik, Mubarak's last appointed Prime Minister. At this point, the movement was approached by the Muslim Brotherhood in order to secure the movement's votes and utilize its growing popularity for the benefit of the Muslim Brotherhood's candidate Morsi.⁸⁷ An internal vote was taken over supporting Morsi or remaining neutral to both candidates. However, what Shafik represented and the fact that he was an integral face of the Mubarak regime was a sufficient factor in swinging the vote towards the official support of Morsi. Moreover, members with Islamist backgrounds and political orientations inside the movement were also a causal factor in the vote being in favor of Morsi's support. The movement held an official meeting to announce its support for Mohamed Morsi in the second round to avoid a setback represented in Shafik's presidency. Although some perceive the movement's position in the second round of the election as an alliance formed with the Muslim Brotherhood, the pattern of internal dynamics of how this decision was reached and later interactions with the Muslim Brotherhood during Morsi's presidency demonstrate that the decision to support Morsi in the second round was more of a crisis management approach rather than an actual political alliance with the Muslim Brotherhood.

An overview of the impact of the prevailing structure of political opportunity during the SCAF phase on April 6 demonstrates that the main effect was induced through the movement's internal dynamics. The relative openness of political opportunity and the ease of access to public sphere and public space led to the

⁸⁷ Ibid

emergence of various conflicting views inside the movement. Moreover, the diverse ideological orientations caused several negative effects to the movement's internal cohesion. Finally, the interaction with other political forces was a cause for further divisions and fragmentation inside the movement. April 6 clearly lacked a structure of leadership able to absorb the diversity that resulted from the opening in political opportunity and the overarching ideological framework that would enable it to remain one cohesive entity.

Ultras White Knights

The Ultras White Knights, or the Zamalek football club Ultras, emerged as influential actors in the January revolution during the 18 days sit-in in Tahrir Square. The movement itself existed since 2007, and the very fundamentals and building blocks of the movement were present and active since 2004 under the name "Zamalek Fans Association".⁸⁸ Ultras movements in general, specifically Ultras Ahlawy and Ultras White Knights, have a long history of effective mobilization capacities, successfully organized collective action and recurrent confrontations with the Egyptian Police. As I have argued elsewhere, "Despite their active presence in the streets dating back several years, 2011 marked a new introduction of the Ultras to the Egyptian public. Suddenly, they occupied a bigger slice of public space, their performance becoming more vocal, and their presence more significant. Mistakenly, several scholars and commentators mark that year as the beginning of the Ultras' politicization. Close examination of the different Ultras movements demonstrates that their vocal presence in the public sphere, however, does not necessarily entail a political orientation".⁸⁹ Therefore, two main points must be taken into consideration

⁸⁸ A personal interview with H.A, member of Ultras White Knights, 3/8/2016

⁸⁹ Akl, Ziad A. "Misunderstanding Egypt's Ultras" Egypt Source, The Atlantic Council, 1/9/2015

while discussing Ultras movements. First, there is a difference between the actions taken by Ultras members in their individual capacities and between actions endorsed by the movements in the collective sense. Second, Ultras movements do have an overarching body of principles and values that could be interpreted and analyzed in a political context, specifically because this body of principles directly motivates movement actions and initiatives in the public realm. However, these principles and values must not be confused with or interpreted as a political agenda, an ideological orientation or a strategic overview; they are movement principles that could be weaved diversely in various contexts to promote movement beliefs and ideas.

As mentioned earlier, the emergence of the ULTRAS in Egypt dates back to 2007 when the first group was officially announced. There is no concrete evidence which group emerged before the other Ultras Ahlawy or Ultras White Knights, and there is also no non-biased consensus among those I interviewed on which movement came to life before the other. However, both movements were officially started in the period between February and March 2007. In Egypt's case, the phenomenon itself could be analyzed from two dimensions, the development of football fans traditions in Egypt and the developments of Egyptian youth culture over the last decade.⁹⁰

Cheering for football in Egypt was done in a primitive and amateur manner in the 1980's and 90's. There were no real attempts by fans to organize themselves as an independent entity during those decades. The organized supporters at that time were clusters supported by the administrative board of the club or one of the players in the

<http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/egyptsource/misunderstanding-egypt-s-ultras>

⁹⁰ El-Sherif, Ashraf "The Ultras' politics of fun confront tyranny" Jadaliyya, 5/2/2012
<http://www.jadaliyya.com/pages/index/4243/the-ultras-politics-of-fun-confront-tyranny->

team. Such clusters of fans were common during the 80's and 90's. However, they were always easily manipulated and steered through the different benefits they received from the supporting source. The other type of football fans was a type that simply went to the stadium on Fridays to watch a game for recreational purposes without further attachment. However, "the most important feature of the period was that rooting for football teams was detached from any broader emotional, social or organizational attitudes"⁹¹. The development of self-motivated clusters of fans and making the connection between cheering for football and a wider social and political context are the main two different features in cheering for football through out the past decade.

But these two features were also a product of the globalization of football in the late 1990's. With the spread of satellite receivers and the Internet, football became a globalized commodity with a powerful industry behind it. As a global commodity, the rooting, cheering and fan organization techniques were transported from one country to another. It is important to note that I am not attributing the phenomenon to the globalization of football, for the phenomenon itself exists since the mid twentieth century. What I am arguing is that the adoption of the idea in the Arab World and North Africa in particular is due to the commoditization of football and the influence of globalizing the football industry.

There is no real record of when exactly did the phenomenon start. However, the earliest group of ultra fans dates back to the early 1960's where a group calling themselves "The Boys" was established to support the Milan based team, Inter, in Italy.⁹² The idea of the Ultra-fan does not undermine or degrade other fans, it rather

⁹¹ Ibid, page 2

⁹² Beshir, Mohamed Gamal "Kitab al-Ultras", Dawwen Publishing House, Cairo, Egypt, 2011, page.32

points to the fact that Ultra-fans are not like other fans. Being an Ultra-fan means that you are someone who is willing to spend time and money in support of your team. The way Ultra-fans cheer is not traditional, they cheer for 90 minutes without stopping, they write songs and chants and they design stadium performances that require lots of creativity, organization and practice. Soon Ultras were spread across Latin America, Western Europe and the Balkans.

In the Arab World, the Ultras as we know them today appeared initially in Tunisia in 1998 through a group called (African Winners) which was supporting the Tunisian team "The African".⁹³ The group had a rough start and was not fully developed until 2002 when group membership swelled and other Ultras groups began to appear for different teams in Tunisia like "Al-Tarajii" and "Al-Nijm Al-Sahili". The development of the groups was facilitated by the presence of Tunisian teams in the final rounds of African Championships. By the year 2010, Tunisian Ultras groups were dissolved by the state in a decision that banned the assembly of those groups, wearing Ultras group jerseys to games, displaying posters of revolutionary icons like Che Guevara and banning the use of fire works in cheering. What is interesting is that after the Tunisian revolution, the Ultras movements have been suffering several internal divisions and conflicts. In a game in the African Championship in 2011, the "Tarajii" Ultras fought a vicious fight with each other in the stadium during one of the games. Like the case in Egypt, the revolution in Tunisia had an effect on the Ultras movements.⁹⁴

Ultras White Knights as a movement started as an outcome of a number of unions that gathered "Zamalek" fans in independent forums before the movement came to life. The first official announcement for the movement's formation was on

⁹³ Ibid, pp.44

⁹⁴ Ibid, pp.46-49

March 19th 2007 in a game in the African Champions league. The movement's identity and its *raison d'être* stems from supporting the "Zamalek" football team. This mandate was later expanded to include all the teams playing any sport in the name of "Zamlaek". Until today, this main term of identity has not changed, and the movement remains opened to all ideological, social and religious or non-religious backgrounds as long as the essential base of supporting the club and dedicating oneself to it is present.

Organizationally, the movement is very impressive. The solid organizational capacities the movement possesses are best manifested in their ability to mobilize and the high level of communication and coordination that exists among the members. The movement is spread out into smaller nuclei based on geographical division on the basis of neighborhoods. Alexandria for example is divided into 6 neighborhoods while Cairo is divided into more. Due to the widespread base of the movement, efforts of mobilization are facilitated in an easier fashion than other movements and political parties. Moreover, the personal link that develops between members is a very important aspect within the organization of the movement. On January 28th for example (The Friday of Rage), movement members were not affected by cutting the mobile phone service or the Internet. The personal relationships they have with each other allowed them to know where each member in the nucleus lives (since it is the same neighborhood, the process was easier).

It is important to understand that the impressive organizational capacity of Ultras White Knights was not created with the movement, it rather dates back to the pre-movement phase where the existence of forums and underground fan clubs created a network of personal relations accessible to each member.

Concerning leadership, the movement appears to be a combination of horizontal and vertical leadership patterns. Evidence of vertical leadership is obvious due to the presence of “group leaders” who decide the policies of groups, coordinate its activities and decide on its official positions. However, the leadership structure seems a bit vague since this vertical leadership has no clear selection criteria, mainly the member’s dedication to the group and his/her input, but also because there is no clearly defined realm of authority for the “group leaders”; although there seems to be consensus on the fact that they “determine group policies”, these policies are very accessible to lower levels of members during the process of formulation. Therefore, the leadership structure of the movement is quasi-vertical where central decision is taken from above by movement leaders, but at the same time, decision-making channels are opened on a horizontal level.

Group membership is another important dimension in understanding the movement. As previously mentioned, members do not have to subscribe to any ideologies or platforms. However, there are governing and overarching principles that seem to dominate the overall direction of the movement and that members are required to believe in. Such principles include freedom, equality, dignity to all, fraternity, solidarity and tolerance. The movement has members who are Salafists, Muslim Brothers, Leftists, Liberals and ones who are non-politicized.⁹⁵ The membership soared after the revolution, but the numbers were witnessing a yearly increase since the movement was launched in 2007. However, members are very aware to differentiate between group members and group supporters or those who

⁹⁵ See Akl, Ziad A. “Misunderstanding Egypt’s Ultras” Egypt Source, The Atlantic Council, 1/9/2015
<http://www.atlanticcouncil.org/blogs/egyptsource/misunderstanding-egypt-s-ultras>

sympathize with the cause. The determinant criterion here is the commitment and dedication to "Zamalek". Group members are the ones who show up to practice, attend meetings, participate in organized celebrations and dedicate time and effort to the movement. Those who fail to comply with those terms and cannot adhere to the decisions taken by group leaders are excluded from the movement; likewise, those who simply like the movement's Facebook page and support Zamalek without involvement in movement activities are called supporters and not members.

Therefore, it is very difficult to anticipate the exact numbers of membership increase since the Egyptian League has been suspended for some time after the massacre in Port Said stadium in February 2012, and when the league came back, audience were not allowed into stadiums. When the audience attendance ban was lifted in early 2015, it lasted only for 1 week, and the only Zamalek match that took place witnessed another tragic incident where 22 fans lost their lives as a result of inhuman security measures that caused the fans to suffocate to death in an iron cage designed as a passage to the stadium. However, the movement's official Facebook page had 261,000 likes in 2012 and 930,000 likes by the end of 2015. Other Facebook pages that are affiliated with the movement amount to 200,000 likes combined.

Concerning collective action on a political platform, the movement is very careful not to combine its original football related mandate and vision to other realms of social and political life. Therefore, official calls for movement members to take to the streets in the name of the movement happened only three times, on February 11th 2011 the day Mubarak stepped down (the call was initiated before Mubarak stepped down), on May 2012 when the assistants of the former minister of interior Al-Adly were released by the court and in November 2012 when one of the members was shot and killed in the clashes in Mohamed Mahmoud street. Movement members assert

that presence in Tahrir Square during the 18 days sit-in was not a movement collective decision, but rather a decision taken by a number of members in their individual capacities.⁹⁶

However, the group allows a huge amount of room for its members to participate in the protests and demonstrations they relate to. This organizational lucidity between the individual member and the movement causes serious confusion in trying to understand the movement's role during the transitional phase. If 500 members decided as a group to take to the streets, they demonstrate in the same group manner but do not necessarily represent the movement's position.

Tactically, the movement utilized the relative openness of political opportunity and the brief collapse of the state security apparatus and the consecutive state vulnerability to mass mobilization in the few months that followed the revolution. These developments must be put in perspective with the growing political awareness of movement members after the revolution. A founding member of the Ultras White Knights in Alexandria said that his interest in politics came to life with the revolution, "before that my relation to politics was nothing more than reading headlines and believing that something is profoundly wrong with the country".⁹⁷ There were two opposing points of view inside the movement concerning tactics, one saw the necessity of more political participation through demonstrations and protests, and another saw the necessity of confining the movement's role to supporting the team (Zamalek) and demonstrating against its corrupt administration. Eventually the movement decided to remain confined to football and Zamalek related activities. However, the politicization effect was obvious in the chants of the members in the

⁹⁶ A personal interview with H.A, member of Ultras White Knights, 3/8/2016

⁹⁷ Ibid

stadium, which targeted the police and the corruption in the country. But it is important to note that the overall political changes opened the door for a new area of contention within the movement concerning the fields in which it should be active. Despite this contention, the movement remained focused on utilizing public space through collective action and mobilizing via social media and personal networking between members. In addition, the group used art as a tool of mobilization for demonstrations and protests. Ultras groups, whether Ultras Ahlawy or Ultras White Knights, have consistently composed songs and cheers expressing the group's views and values. These songs were extremely popular among youth and were released in a studio album in 2012.

Like other social movements, episodes of interaction took place between Ultras White Knights and other political forces during the SCAF period. With the Parliamentary elections in November 2011, several political forces seeking the movement's support approached the UWK. An active member in the movement in Cairo explains: "UWK was approached by the Muslim Brotherhood, the Egyptian Bloc coalition, the WAFD party and the revolution continues coalitions before the parliamentary elections"⁹⁸. Different political forces were seeking the movement's mobilizing capacities, its influence on youth and its celebration techniques as means of electoral campaigning. Movement leadership was very much against those initiatives and did not officially support any of the candidates or coalitions.⁹⁹

One week before the elections were scheduled to start, the confrontations and clashes in Mohamed Mahmoud Street took place, precisely on November 19th 2011. Since the clashes were around the ministry of interior and were quite violent, many movement members saw the necessity of participation, motivated primarily by the

⁹⁸ A personal interview with M.I, member of Ultras White Knights, 1/8/2016

⁹⁹ Ibid

police's systematic violence against movement members in several instances and the belief in how crucial police reform is. However, the movement did not issue an official statement asking its members to participate in the demonstrations. However, those who were present on Mohamed Mahmoud clashes in November 2011 do recall the evident and influential presence of the UWK. Refraining from issuing an official statement to participate was a continuation of the two opposing fronts created within the movement after the revolution. The way to escape this conflict was a reconciliatory approach that preserves the movement's identity as a fan-based Zamalek-oriented group and at the same time, allows room for the members to participate in their individual capacity. Mohamed Mahmoud clashes increased the number of the politically oriented Ultras, which was evident in the manner in which they were organized during the clashes. The high degree of organization demonstrates that more members are involved.

After the elections and when the Egyptian Parliament was in session, the Port Said massacre took place. Although the Ultras Ahlawy was the movement affected most by the events, Ultras White Knights was also affected. The movement declared its support to the Ultras Ahlawy and both movements participated in demonstrations as well as the clashes on Mohamed Mahmoud Street in February 2012. The Ultras White Knights were officially a part of the demonstration condemning the Port Said massacre and the Ultras Ahlawy march from the Egyptian Football Federation to the Parliament in March 2012¹⁰⁰. However, there were no official statements made for members to participate in the clashes later on.

A number of Parliament members like Ziad Al-Eleimy and some political figures like Hamdeen Sabbahi and Abdel-Monem Aboul-Fotouh (both presidential

¹⁰⁰ See <http://www.masress.com/elbalad/121656>

candidates in the 2012 presidential election) adopted the case of the Ultras and allied with them. This phase had a profound effect on both Ultras movements. An Ultras White Knights member in Cairo says that "it was the first time we were approached by political figures who actually sympathized with our cause instead of wanting to use us".¹⁰¹ At that time, several members started to be affiliated with some political parties and movements. This indeed increased the rate of politicization on the individual level within the movement.

An important aftermath of the events in Port Said was the cancellation of the Egyptian National Football League. The cancellation of the league had a multidimensional effect on the ultras. The main reason of the movement's existence was vanished without any mentioning of when will it come back. This created a divide between a lobby that demanded pressuring the authorities to start a new season without Al-Ahly football team, and another lobby that saw that the movement must coincide with Ultras Ahlawy in their position against the resumption of the league. Ultras Ahlawy did not want the league to be resumed before avenging the deaths of 74 Ahly fans in the Port Said Stadium massacre and holding the ones responsible accountable. This position was opposed by the football industry in Egypt that saw significant financial losses in the suspension of football activities. On that platform, football media started to address the growing political influence of the Ultras and accuse them of having an unpatriotic agenda. Meanwhile, some Ultras White Knights members saw that the resumption of the league without Al-Ahly would secure a winning season for Zamalek and restore the League title to zamalek after Ahly had monopolized it since 2004. This debate is not one over tactics; it has more to do with the movement ideology translated into basic human principles. This conflict though

¹⁰¹ A personal interview with Y.A, a member of Ultras White Knights, 2/8/2016

demonstrated the growing influence of the politicized members who saw in the movement a possible political actor and wanted it to assume that role.

The impact of the changing structure of political opportunity during the SCAF phase on Ultras White Knights could mainly be seen in the politicization of some movement members, which could be somehow traced to their growing interaction with political forces and actors. Despite the growing diverse trends and orientations inside the movement, its non-political *raison d'être* helped maintain movement internal cohesion in the face of political controversies. However, the series of events from January 2011 to June 2012, specifically the massacre in Port Said Stadium, has expanded the realm of the "political" within Ultras White Knights and Ultras Ahlawy. Apart from the politicization of individual members, the core goals and fundamental principles of Ultras movements started to be molded into a political framework. The relative openness in the structure of political opportunity after January 25th politicized various dimensions within Ultras movements that were previously thought of as non-political. Ultras movements' artistic forms of expression like songs and graffiti started to acquire a political platform, and collective cheers and chants became increasingly politicized. Finally, drawing the dividing line between individual action and entity-based collective action remains to be a problematic point within the movement, whether during the SCAF period or in later phases.

Chapter 3

Social Movements and Political Opportunity Under the Rule of Mohamed Morsy

July 2012-July 2013

The Structure of Political Opportunity Under the Rule Mohamed Morsy

Mohamed Morsy was announced President of Egypt by the High Electoral Commission on June 24th 2011. Morsy won in the second round of the election against Ahmad Shafik with a total of 13,230,131 votes.¹⁰² The victory achieved by Morsy and the Muslim Brotherhood in this election had more political significance than mere transition of power from the SCAF to an elected President. The one year in office that Mohamed Morsy spent marked a structure of political opportunity different from the one that preceded it and the one that followed it.

The institutional political process designed by the army after the fall of Mubarak was indeed nurtured by the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamist political forces. Being the most cohesive block and the only remaining political faction with previous experience in interacting with the state (specifically within an institutional political process context), the Muslim Brotherhood emerged as the most viable post-Mubarak option. At the same time, the pattern of revolution itself did not allow for any profound structural changes that would have changed the long standing power relations in Egypt's political landscape. Despite the success in ousting Mubarak, the

¹⁰² See

http://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast/2012/06/120624_egypt_election_results.shtml

25 January revolution was not able to develop into a social revolution or a political revolution with control over tools of political transition. For a multitude of reasons, the revolution stood still at being a demand-based movement applying pressure on state institutions to realize political change.

The Muslim Brotherhood's political tactics and choices were influential in shaping the structure of political opportunity after the revolution. "In the spring of 2011, the revolution was still fresh, and the institutions of the old state, including the military, police, bureaucracy and judiciary, were still on the defensive. At that time, a united revolutionary front could arguably have secured better constitutional provisions regarding civil-military relations, checks and balances, political freedoms, and democracy".¹⁰³ However, the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamist forces were keen to secure a central place for themselves in a post-revolutionary political landscape. Massive mobilization was organized by Islamist forces to pass the constitutional amendments proposed by the army in the March 2011 constitutional referendum. Islamist forces were seeking a fast electoral process that would guarantee them majority in representative political institutions, and they certainly were the faction most financially, organizationally and geographically prepared for running in those elections. The constitutional amendments introduced by the SCAF in March 2011 served that target. Similar episodes of mobilization were repeated in different procedures of the political process that followed the referendum, starting from the Parliamentary elections, the Shura Council elections, and ending with the Presidential elections in the summer of 2012.

Therefore, by the time the Presidential elections were held, several facts of the post-revolutionary political map in Egypt had been changed. First, the solid

¹⁰³ El-Sherif, Ashraf "The Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood's failures" Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, July 2014, pp.5

revolutionary front that existed during the 18 days had been repeatedly fragmented by internal disputes and political alliances. Second, a mutual interest based alliance was created between the Muslim Brotherhood and the army, an alliance that engulfed various Islamist political actors but reserved the central role for the Muslim brotherhood. Third, new institutional political entities were introduced to the scene, mainly political parties with various political orientations and ideological backgrounds. Despite the presence of some secular political parties, whether liberal or leftist, in this institutional influx, the most influential entities were Islamist political parties, mainly the Freedom and Justice party and El-Noor party. Fourth, the secular revolutionary block has witnessed some division and fragmentation, either internally like 6 April or over political procedure related disputes like the Parliamentary and the Presidential elections. Fifth, the violence and hostility towards collective action had reached very high levels by that time after dramatic events like Maspeero, Mohamed Mahmoud and Port Said stadium. The escalation of violence created an intensified hostile ground between social movements in specific and the state coercive institutions represented in the police and the army. Finally, the second round of the Presidential elections has resurrected the revolution/old regime dichotomy due to the run off between Mubarak loyalist Ahmed Shafik and Muslim Brotherhood member Mohamed Morsy. Therefore, the structure of political opportunity that existed under Morsy's rule was heavily polarized and marked with several political disappointments and uncertainties to secular revolutionary forces.

Moreover, the institutionalized political system was opened and accessible within that structure of political opportunity. On one hand, there was an obvious mobility in the establishment of institutional political forces and on the other, Morsy's phase, with its balance of political powers, was materialized through a series of

institutional political procedures. Although Islamist forces that abused their electoral victories through a vulgar display of power and a systematized process of political exclusion dominated the institutional political scene, this phase did not witness legislations bluntly banning entry into the institutionalized political system or repressive measures limiting the ability of political forces to participate in the institutional political framework.

Elite alignments and alliances during that phase were unclear and lacked certainty. The outright domination of Islamist forces over the political scene was equally problematic to all elite sectors inside Egyptian society. The revolutionary elite could not forgive the Muslim Brotherhood's power hungry politics in light of the Brotherhood's previous affirmations that they will not run for Presidential elections. Despite the fact that some factions of the revolutionary elite like April 6 chose to support Mohamed Morsy in the second round of the Presidential elections, this support did not signify a political alliance with the Muslim Brotherhood as much as it signified a momentary interaction motivated by fear of an electoral win by a Mubarak regime loyalist like Ahmed Shafik. At the same time, the Muslim Brotherhood failed to utilize that revolution/Mubarak dichotomy once more during Morsy's rule. In addition, Islamist hostility and antagonism aimed at the revolutionary elite to neutralize their collective presence and tone down their acute criticism, like the clashes between the protesters and members of the Muslim Brotherhood at the Presidential Palace in December 2012 and summoning regime critics like Bassem Youssef to investigation before the General Prosecutor in March 2013 on the account

of charges of insulting the President¹⁰⁴, ensured that such an interaction would not take place.

The old state elite had similar problems with the Muslim Brotherhood and other Islamist forces. Although the old state, represented in the military, the police, the judiciary and the bureaucracy, chose to cooperate with the Muslim Brotherhood in the face of an intense revolutionary mood in the aftermath of Mubarak's ouster, this support was not materialized into actual policy-oriented support during Morsy's Presidency. As soon as Mohamed Morsy took office, vast changes in state employees took place in all sectors like the bureaucracy, the judiciary, the military and state owned media institutions. The choices of new state employees, with the exception of the military and the police, were made on the basis of loyalty to the Muslim Brotherhood and mutual understanding. Such changes were introduced in state media institutions and different branches of the bureaucracy, and caused a wave of resentment inside state institutions that saw these changes as an elaborate plan of elite reconfiguration and replacement. Despite Morsy's changes in bureaucracy leadership figures, the actual impact of those changes remained minimal due to the fact that they were mainly changes from above that targeted high ranking officials in leadership positions without introducing changes in regulations or in the underlying bureaucratic infrastructure of personnel. This incomplete institutional change failed to achieve the Muslim Brotherhood's goal of securing the loyalty of the bureaucracy, specifically since "the group lacked experience in bureaucratic administration and the well-

¹⁰⁴ See <http://www.almasryalyoum.com/news/details/299588> and <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=91DUPoojKlo>

entrenched existing bureaucracy defied the Brotherhood's attempts to exert control over it".¹⁰⁵

The more significant point concerning elite alignment and alliances during this phase was the polarity between secular and Islamic elites. "Liberal, nationalist and leftist elites might not have had the same electoral clout as the Brotherhood and the Salafists, but that did not mean that they would easily accept the unexpected and unsettling electoral outcome of a Brotherhood takeover of Egypt's Parliament, Presidency and constitution-drafting process".¹⁰⁶ The Muslim Brotherhood's electoral victories did not mean or secure social and political legitimacy within various elite sectors. Moreover, the sudden influx of Islamic sentiments in the media and the emergence of several Islamist media platforms like newspapers and satellite channels marked a serious religious penetration of the public sphere. This penetration was alarming because it led to the appearance of religion in areas of public life where it previously did not exist, and signaled an attempt to dominate cultural interactions and social values with religious doctrine. Needless to say, the Copts of Egypt were a vital segment of that secular elite. Amidst fears of undermining civil liberties, economic interests, religious freedoms and cultural lifestyles, the secular elite was allied against the Muslim Brotherhood, specifically in the months that followed Mohamed Morsy's constitutional declaration in November 2012.

The state's capacity for repression is another controversial point to consider while assessing the structure of political opportunity that existed during the phase of Mohamed Morsy's presidency. State coercive institutions demonstrated more than once during the period of the SCAF rule their willingness to use violence and their

¹⁰⁵ El-Sherif, Ashraf "The Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood's failures" Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, July 2014, pp.8

¹⁰⁶ Ibid, pp.9

propensity to resort to repressive measures in dealing with opposition. However, the Muslim Brotherhood could not establish full control over these coercive institutions during Morsy's year in office¹⁰⁷. Cooperation between the Muslim Brotherhood and the old state did not develop into a working relationship or a strategic partnership with state institutions of coercion and legitimate violence. The relationship remained controversial and uncertain. The best example to demonstrate the uncertainty of this relationship was the behavior of those state institutions in a contentious event like the protests that erupted after the constitutional declaration in November 2012 at the Presidential Palace "Al-Ithadeya". Despite the massive presence of protesters in the parameter of the Presidential Palace, the police and the army did not use violence to disperse those protests. In fact, the Muslim Brotherhood had to call upon its own members to confront the protesters and crack down upon the sit-in that was held near the palace without any significant intervention from both the police and the army.¹⁰⁸ Similarly, coercive institutions did not attempt to hinder any anti-Morsy collective action through out the period of his presidency. Therefore, the state's propensity for repression was at a very low level during that phase compared to the SCAF period or the post June 30th era, which was a pivotal point in shaping the structure of political opportunity during Mohamed Morsy's phase.

Hence, the structure of political opportunity under Mohamed Morsy was different in some aspects than the structure of political opportunity that existed during the SCAF phase. According to McAdam's narrow definition of what constitutes political opportunity, the main sources of difference between the two structures could be summarized in the set of elite alignments and alliances, and in the state's capacity and propensity to use repression. It is fair to say that the structure of political

¹⁰⁷ Ibid, pp.3-9

¹⁰⁸ See <http://www.alwasatnews.com/news/718222.html>

opportunity during Morsy's phase was opened. In fact, the social support manufactured through anti Muslim Brotherhood elite alliances and the state's lack of willingness to use violent and repressive measures make the structure of political opportunity during Morsy's phase the most opened one amongst the three structures examined in this research. This openness had an impact on the different dimensions of social movement activity during that phase; mainly tactics, political interactions and presence within public space.

The Revolutionary Socialists

The movement was not among the social or revolutionary movements that supported a candidate in the Presidential elections. The Revolutionary Socialists and other movements labeled names like Hamdeen Sabbahi, Abdelmonem Aboul-Fotouh and Khaled Ali as pro-revolutionary. However, the Revolutionary Socialists had a solid position against the use of the institutional political procedure as a tool to determine the outcome of the revolution. According to the movement's rationale, the institutional political procedure represented a set back for the revolution and was designed and manipulated by Mubarak regime loyalists. In addition, the movement had developed significant hostility towards the SCAF in the period from February 2011 to June 2012. The violent confrontations that took place in events like Maspeero, the Cabinet events and Mohamed Mahmoud Street were sufficient motivation for the Revolutionary Socialists' refusal to support or even acknowledge any SCAF administered political activity. Therefore, the movement evolved out of the SCAF phase with tangible hostility to the SCAF and deep conflicts with the political forces that chose to cooperate with it in muting revolutionary processes.

The goals of the Revolutionary Socialists during Morsy's phase revolved around the same themes that were dominant in defining the movement's goals in the

aftermath of Mubarak's fall and during the SCAF period. The Marxist ideological commitment that the movement was keen to uphold was equally reflected during both structures of political opportunity. However, the course of events that took place during the SCAF rule, mainly state violence aimed at collective action like violent dispersal of demonstrations and putting civilians on military trials, introduced some new goals during Morsy's phase; goals that focused primarily on holding SCAF members accountable for the harm done. Similarly, the openness of the structure of political opportunity under SCAF and the recurring post-revolutionary political friction allowed the movement to specify its goals further during Morsy's phase. Constant demand of labor rights and the necessity of continuing the revolutionary process through popular collective action remained to be the main themes around which movement goals revolved. The labor rights theme was narrowed down to exclusively include minimum wages (some movement communiqués stated a minimum wage of LE 1200 and others stated a minimum wage of LE 1500)¹⁰⁹ and the full time hiring of temporary labor force working in state institutions, the public sector and private sector facilities. Another important goal that did not appear in the communiqués that followed the ouster of Mubarak was purging state institutions from corrupt individuals and Mubarak loyalists. Finally, the SCAF phase made the movement introduce a new goal and stress upon it in all communiqués, that goal was holding SCAF members accountable for the violence and the crimes committed against the protesters in the period from February 2011 to June 2012. Concomitant to that goal was the regular insistence on releasing all those who were illegally detained,

¹⁰⁹ See <http://revsoc.me/statements/18855/> and <http://revsoc.me/statements/tsmt-lml-thsr-qsr-lrys/>

or who were imprisoned by military trials, or arrested for political reasons.¹¹⁰ In total, movement goals were not changed; they were rather narrowed down and re-contextualized as a result of the changing structure of political opportunity during the SCAF phase.

Tactically, the Revolutionary Socialists developed some new tactics that were not present during the SCAF phase. During the last few months of the SCAF period and the early months of Morsy's phase, the Revolutionary Socialists worked in partnership with the "Kazeboon" movement (a movement started in December 2011 to refute the false allegations of the SCAF concerning its role in pre-meditated and deliberate state violence against protests and demonstrations¹¹¹) to realize their goals of disclosing the SCAF's lies about the violence used against the protesters and eventually, holding the SCAF accountable for the crimes it had committed during its rule.¹¹² The movement worked on disseminating the "Kazeboon" visual and written content through its widely accessed website and the social media accounts of its members.

In the context of the movement's attempts to spread awareness about social justice issues, the Revolutionary Socialists launched a campaign on July 22nd 2012 under the name "we want to live". The campaign targeted regular people on the street and aimed to gather signatures on proposed demands and possible solutions concerning issues of wages, prices, housing, health and education. The tactic was seen by movement members as an ongoing refusal to participate in the institutional political procedure and an affirmation of the movement's beliefs in the crucial role of

¹¹⁰ See Revolutionary Socialists communiqué issued on 8/7/2012
<http://revsoc.me/statements/tsmt-lml-thsr-qsr-lrys/>

¹¹¹ See Ibrahim, Mohamed "Askar Kazeboon" Masr Al Arabia, 17/12/2014
<http://www.masralarabia.com>

¹¹² A personal interview with H.H, a member of the Revolutionary Socialists, Cairo, 1/8/2016

public mass mobilization over issues of social and economic justice.¹¹³ The campaign was active in different parts of Egypt where the movement was able to use its geographical expansion and the swelling in its membership to organize campaign related events in different cities across Egypt. At the same time, the Revolutionary Socialists continued to mobilize for demonstrations, protests and marches on regular basis. When necessary, the movement organized these protests with other revolutionary forces, but for the most part, the Revolutionary Socialists singularly mobilized for collective action events raising demands related to social justice and accountability. Finally, an important dimension in the Revolutionary Socialists' tactical strategy during the Morsy phase was the focus on supporting and empowering the student movement and the labor movement. The "Revolutionary Socialists Student Union" was actively present in all contentious political friction in Egyptian private and public universities during Morsy's phase. The movement was present in student strikes in Nile University, German University in Cairo, Helwan University, Cairo University and the University of Alexandria.¹¹⁴ Similarly, the movement was actively engaged in supporting and mobilizing for various labor strikes all over Egypt. The overall tactical strategy of the Revolutionary Socialists during Morsy's phase was inspired by the movement's ideological orientation and their belief in a radical and non-institutional approach to realize the revolution's goals.

Internally, the Revolutionary Socialists did not face acute internal disputes or grave challenges related to the movement's internal dynamics during Morsy's phase. As mentioned earlier, the movement's ideological framework has led to a relative state of cohesion within movement membership and a uniform mechanism of

¹¹³ See Revolutionary Socialists communiqué issued on 21/7/2012
<http://revsoc.me/statements/17625/>

¹¹⁴ A personal interview with H.T, a member of the political bureau of the Revolutionary Socialists, Cairo, 31/7/2016

decision-making. However, this does not mean that the movement did not witness internal contentions. The expansion in membership and the geographical diffusion were a source of internal disputes during Morsy's phase. This is the same impact that these two factors had on the movement's internal dynamics during the SCAF's rule. On January 7th 2013, Al-Watan newspaper published a story about the resignation of 20 members of the Revolutionary Socialists in the city of Beheira due to the movement's pro-Morsy directions and its alliance with the Muslim Brotherhood.¹¹⁵ The 20 resigned members belonged to a coalition called "The Coalition of the Egyptian Revolution's Generation" while also being members of the Revolutionary Socialists. The spokesperson on behalf of the resigned members, Mohamed Al-Sanhoori, stated in the story that the movement is no longer revolutionary and it chose to abandon the revolution's path for political compensations with the Muslim Brotherhood. In response to the published statements, the Revolutionary Socialists issued an official statement denying the false allegations published in the newspaper. The movement denied any knowledge of resigned members in Beheira, and it asserted that there are no members in the movement who belong to the "Coalition of the Egyptian Revolution's Generation".¹¹⁶ Movement members say that Al-Sanhoori and 4 other members were dismissed from the movement in August 2012 due to organizational violations. According to H.H, member of Revolutionary Socialists, the five members were posting false information under the group's name, recruiting members without organizational authorization and cooperating with security institutions to infiltrate the movement.¹¹⁷

¹¹⁵ See <http://www.elwatannews.com/news/details/109708>

¹¹⁶ See the Revolutionary Socialists official statement issued on 8/1/2013
<http://revsoc.me/statements/21551/>

¹¹⁷ A personal interview with H.H, a member of the Revolutionary Socialists, Cairo, 1/8/2016

This incident is an example of how a changing structure of political opportunity can influence the internal dynamics of a social movement. The openness of political opportunity allowed the movement membership to expand and enabled the movement to gain more media exposure and popularity. However, given the lack of sufficient tools to assimilate and accommodate the membership expansion, it becomes difficult to draw clear boundaries between actions committed in individual capacities and others committed under the banner of the group's collective sense. Moreover, the state's propensity for repression during Morsy's phase was not as acute as it was in the SCAF's phase. However, this reduced propensity for repression was not accompanied with any legislation securing more liberties and freedoms, or a bundle of structural reforms that could signal fundamental changes in state security institutions' manner of operation. Therefore, while violent confrontations between the state and social movements witnessed a temporary decline, the state's attempts to infiltrate or coopt those movements did not.

Mohamed Morsy's phase witnessed more interactions between the Revolutionary Socialists and the state as well as other political forces than the SCAF period did. Instances where political interaction took place between the Revolutionary Socialists and other political forces or the state during the SCAF phase did not exceed partial support or invitations to hearing sessions. During Morsy's phase, the pattern of interaction itself did not change, but the rapid changes in the political environment made these interactions more frequent. The movement remained resistant to taking part in any tangible political coalitions during Morsy's phase, but its overall involvement with other political forces increased.

There was a series of interactions between the movement and the state during Morsy's phase. On July 9th 2012, the movement received an invitation to participate in a hearing session with Muslim Brotherhood leading figure Mohamed Al-Beltagi on the movement's vision about the new constitution. The Revolutionary Socialists declined the invitation and stated that the constitution should be written from below via the Egyptian People and not from above via a political elite that represents a defunct electoral procedure.¹¹⁸ The movement believed that such hearings should be held with representatives from the working class and the unprivileged sectors of Egyptian society rather than with politicized elites. The Revolutionary Socialists' decline of the invitation stirs up the notion of "objective" and "perceived" political opportunities¹¹⁹. While this invitation could be situated as a definite opportunity missed, it was regarded by the movement as a step in a direction that alienates the Revolutionary Socialists from their core goals. Therefore, judging political opportunity is not a mere process of identifying its presence, it goes further to ensure the context in which this opportunity is perceived by the movement. While it could be argued that participation in this hearing session was an opportunity that would have brought the Revolutionary Socialists closer to institutional politics and policy-making circles, the movement perceived it as treachery to its founding principles and its ideology and alignment. In addition, perceiving political opportunity is closely related to the nature of the movement itself. Ideological movements tend to be more rigid in how they perceive political opportunity, while more flexible or instrumental movements, ones focused on practical politics more than intellectual discourse tend to

¹¹⁸ See the Revolutionary Socialists communiqué issued on 9/7/2012
<http://revsoc.me/statements/21539/>

¹¹⁹ See Suh, Doowon "How do political opportunities matter for social movements: political opportunity, misframing, pseudo-success and pseudo-failure" *The Sociological Quarterly*, Vol.42, No.3, 2001, pp.437-460

perceive political opportunity in a more pragmatic fashion. This point is proven recurrently in comparing movement interactions with the state and political forces in the cases of the Revolutionary Socialists and April 6, and it shall be handled in more detail in latter sections of this research.

A few days after this invitation incident, when Mohamed Morsy took a decision to resurrect the Parliament after a court ruling had dissolved it; the movement issued a communiqué declaring its partial support for the decision. However, this support did not signify alignment with Mohamed Morsy as much as it represented the movement's belief in the corruption of state institutions that took the decision to dissolve the Parliament in the first place. The movement saw in the resurrection of Parliament an attempt to de-legitimize the SCAF period and the political decisions made under the SCAF's rule. The communiqué clearly stated that the resurrection of Parliament must be accompanied by other decisions like releasing political detainees, forming a government from various political streams and purging state institutions from corruption and Mubarak regime loyalists.¹²⁰ In September 2012, when there was massive political friction over the new Student Union statute in public universities, Revolutionary Socialists students were called to a meeting with Mohamed Morsy to discuss their vision and demands. Once more, the movement declined this invitation and stated that their demands could be easily identified through their work on the ground and their statements issued on the movement's website.

Overall, the Revolutionary Socialists' set of interactions with the state during Mohamed Morsy's period demonstrates the movement's position regarding institutionalized politics and their take on the idea of political concessions. The

¹²⁰ See the Revolutionary Socialists communiqué issued on 11/7/2012 <http://revsoc.me/statements/21516/>

openness of political opportunity during that phase allowed the Revolutionary Socialists to play a more active role in Egypt's political landscape. In turn, this role made the state more willing to approach the movement. It is important to notice that these interactions took place before November 2012, or in other words, before Mohamed Morsy's catastrophic constitutional declaration. During that phase, the Presidency and the Muslim Brotherhood were still looking for political legitimacy among revolutionary forces and were willing to take steps to appear as a democratic and politically inclusive stream. However, the Revolutionary Socialists' firm ideological framework was reflected in the movement's pattern of political interactions, making the overall influence or result of these interactions very minimal.

Mohamed Morsy's phase saw some political interactions between the Revolutionary Socialists and other political forces and social movements. These interactions ranged from declaring support to some causes and calling for collective mobilization of different revolutionary forces. Ever since the massacre in Port Said Stadium took place, the Revolutionary Socialists frequently declared their support to Ultras Ahlawy in their struggle to hold the ones responsible for the massacre accountable. On September 9th 2012, a match between Al-Ahly and Enppi was supposed to be held over the "Super Cup", a one-match tournament gathering between the winner of the Egyptian League and the winner of the Egyptian Cup. The match was the first official match to be held after the suspension of all domestic football related activities in the aftermath of the Port Said massacre. The Revolutionary Socialists issued an official communiqué declaring their support of Ultras Ahlawy's call to cancel the match, and some Revolutionary Socialists members

joined the protests organized by Ultras Ahlawy at Borg-Al-Arab stadium in Alexandria where the match was held.¹²¹

The movement called for mass mobilization on December 3rd 2012 against Morsy's constitutional declaration and the forthcoming constitutional referendum. The Revolutionary Socialists called upon all revolutionary forces to join a sit-in in Tahrir Square to express their rejection of Morsy's political procedure and his recent decision. However, by that time, revolutionary forces were divided over the most appropriate pattern of interaction and political alliance. Several forces had joined the National Salvation Front formed after Morsy's constitutional declaration. The Revolutionary Socialists did not join the Front on the account of the presence of some old regime loyalists in this front, mainly Amr Moussa, former minister of foreign affairs under Mubarak and one of the candidates in the 2012 Presidential elections. On January 25th 2013, the movement called on all revolutionary forces in the National Salvation Front to revise their position and join with the Revolutionary Socialists in an independent front representing the revolution and rejecting any elements that could be related to the Mubarak regime. The movement's call however did not find sufficient support from revolutionary forces. Finally, on May 19th 2013, the Revolutionary Socialists announced their support to the "Tamarod" campaign aiming to gather signatures to oust Mohamed Morsy and hold an early Presidential election. Despite the post June 30th claims that the Revolutionary Socialists helped in paving the way for a military dictatorship in Egypt, movement members are very keen to differentiate between their support to the mobilization on June 30th to depose

¹²¹ A personal interview with K.A, a member of the Revolutionary Socialists, Cairo, 5/8/2016

Mohamed Morsy and the military orchestrated political road map announced on July 3rd 2013.¹²²

The overall set of interactions between the Revolutionary Socialists and other political forces during Mohamed Morsy's phase demonstrates that the movement was trying to utilize the openness of the political opportunity through forming coalitions with other revolutionary forces or declaring support to some causes. However, the movement could not abandon its formative principles and join in the broad anti Muslim Brotherhood elite alliance due to the presence of old state elites and Mubarak regime loyalists. Although the movement declared its support for the idea of Tamarod and joined in the efforts of signing petitions to end Mohamed Morsy's rule, this support did not signify willingness to engage in coalition building as much as it signaled practical effort to realize a common goal without any further commitment to the political forces that share it. But in general, the opened structure of political opportunity made the movement more willing to join in political coalitions and expand its range of political interactions with forces perceived to be in accordance with the Revolutionary Socialists' goals and overall strategy. The movement's solid ideological framework laid down a set of pre-conditions for such coalitions, but the dominant elite alliances at that time did not allow these pre-conditions to materialize at the time.

April 6

April 6 entered the Morsy phase with several changes that took place over the course of the SCAF period. The conditions under which the movement worked were

¹²² A personal interview with H.H, a member of the Revolutionary Socialists, Cairo, 1/8/2016

very different internally and externally. Internally, the movement had witnessed fragmentation in April 2011 into two fronts. The second round of the Presidential election in 2012 and the movement's decision to announce its support for Mohamed Morsy was another point of internal contention. Although the decision was taken after an internal vote that resulted in a majority for supporting Mohamed Morsy, many members were not happy with the movement's position, which in turn became a source for ongoing internal disputes that extended through out the whole year that Mohamed Morsy spent in office.¹²³ Externally, the movement lost the uniqueness that it enjoyed in the years before 2011 after an influx of similar movements and initiatives that emerged during the SCAF phase.¹²⁴ In other words, April 6 was no longer the unmatched social movement demonstrating ideological flexibility, capable of orchestrating mass mobilization and resting on a large segment of youth membership. Moreover, the openness of political opportunity and the rising rates of political participation in the institutional political procedure introduced more political actors and entities to the Egyptian political landscape. This is not to say that the movement lost its place in the street as a result of new political actors and entities, but it is important not to ignore the influence of competition on a movement that is both cross ideological and politically inclusive. The decision taken by April 6 to support Mohamed Morsy in the second round of the election did not only result in internal disputes, it also created tensions with sectors of Egypt's secular elite, which saw an Islamist tendency and political opportunism in the movement's decision. Hence, April 6 during Morsy's phase was faced with various challenges that influenced the movement's internal cohesion, its pattern of interaction with other political forces and

¹²³ A personal interview with M.S., member of 6 April movement, Cairo, 8/8/2016

¹²⁴ See Farag, Ziad "6 April from establishment to prohibition" Al-Arabiya Institute for Studies, 7/5/2014 <http://studies.alarabiya.net>

its position as a political actor within Egypt's post revolutionary map of social and political forces.

On the level of movement goals, the goals of April 6 during Morsy's phase did not change much from the goals clearly stated by the movement since the day it emerged. The ongoing pursuit of democracy and the full realization of the revolution's goals remained central themes in April 6 goals. However, I believe that an important distinction should be made between the movement's goals during the first five months of Mohamed Morsy's presidency, and its goals during the second half of Morsy's year in office. The core point of separation was on November 22nd 2012 when Mohamed Morsy issued the constitutional declaration making presidential decisions immune to any form of appeals or petition from the judiciary or any other state branch. During the first half of Mohamed Morsy's presidency, April 6, in defense of its decision to support Morsy and its belief that he represented a civil leadership, was more concerned with monitoring the democratic performance of the President. However, during the second half of Morsy's presidency, the movement believed that he no longer represented any democratic platform, which in turn changed the movement's goals and its position from the President from conditioned support to demanding early presidential elections.¹²⁵ This change in movement goals was very much reflected on the movement's tactical strategies during Mohamed Morsy's phase.

Once again, on a tactical level, a difference is obvious during the first half and the second half of Morsy's presidency. During the first half of Morsy's presidency, the movement's main tactical focus was on its internal dynamics. Evolving from a phase of fragmentation, internal disputes over political decisions and a substantial

¹²⁵ A personal interview with M.M., member of 6 April movement, Cairo, 30/7/2016

expansion in membership accompanied with a tangible geographical diffusion, the tactics of April 6 at that phase were focused on internal organization, capacity building within the movement and raising the political awareness of newcomers.¹²⁶ One of the tools used to materialize those tactics was holding internal elections in the different geographical branches of the movement all across Egypt. Following the movement's fragmentation in April 2011, holding these internal elections was important to refute claims of undemocratic leadership and to reconfigure movement leadership in light of the members that defected and in an attempt to accommodate the increasing number of movement members. During the second half of Morsy's presidency, the movement was more concerned with mass mobilization and collective action as tactics to serve the movement's goals of holding an early presidential election. In this context, political coalitions, the media and the movement's expanded geographical base were all used as tools to aid in materializing those tactics.

Internally, the challenges April 6 had to face did not stop at the movement's fragmentation into two fronts back in April 2011. The decision to support Mohamed Morsy was seen by some members as a political concession that the movement did not need to make. A serious internal dispute started to materialize over that decision, a dispute that was amplified via Ahmed Maher's selection as a member of the constitutional drafting committee and also via the different ideological backgrounds that had a multitude of perceptions regarding the movement's most appropriate political conduct. The results of these disputes materialized in October 2012 when another fragmentation took place inside the movement and a third front of April 6

¹²⁶ A personal interview with M.S., member of 6 April movement, Cairo, 8/8/2016

emerged calling itself "The Revolutionary Front".¹²⁷ Members who defected from the movement and formed that front stated that April 6 is not supposed to declare its support to any political candidate or a specific political entity, and that the movement has lost a lot of its revolutionary spirit and its original role.¹²⁸ The founder of the Revolutionary Front, Mohamed Awwad, stated that Ahmed Maher violated the movement's internal regulations by openly supporting a candidate in the Presidential election, which transformed April 6 from a political pressure movement to an institutional political actor obliged to make concessions as a result of the political alliances it takes part in.¹²⁹ However, the Revolutionary Front was not successful in establishing itself as a separate entity and could not effectively engage in social mobilization or public presence.¹³⁰ But the divisions within April 6 and the pattern of fragmentation resulting in new fronts, whether the Democratic Front or the Revolutionary Front, demonstrate the role of political interactions and the absence of an overarching ideological framework in influencing the movement's cohesion. Understanding the fragmentation of April 6 must be based on both angles: the lack of ideological homogeneity and the instrumental nature of the movement's political interaction. The Revolutionary Socialists were involved in a number of political interactions in the period from January 2011 to July 2013, but the movement's firm ideological commitment ensured minimal internal division. On the other hand, Ultras White Knights are not an ideological movement, but the presence of a dominant and rigid term of identity like supporting the Zamalek Club and the movement's inherent non-political nature have managed to maintain movement internal cohesion.

¹²⁷ See Farag, Ziad "6 April from establishment to prohibition" Al-Arabiya Institute for Studies, 7/5/2014 pp.6 <http://studies.alarabiya.net>

¹²⁸ A personal interview with M.A., member of 6 April (The Revolutionary Front), Cairo, 1/8/2016

¹²⁹ See <http://www.elwatannews.com/news/details/455069>

¹³⁰ See <http://www.sasapost.com/6-april-movement/>

Moreover, the fragmentation of April 6 is closely related to the openness of the structure of political opportunity in the SCAF and the Mohamed Morsy phases, specifically since political interactions occur less frequently at times where the structure of political opportunity is closed, which is the case in the post July 3rd phase that shall be discussed in detail later on.

Another acute phase of internal disputes and contentions occurred during the few days that followed Mohamed Morsy's constitutional declaration in November 2012. The movement's change in position towards the President after that declaration was unacceptable to some members who had Islamist political backgrounds and ideological orientations.¹³¹ Although no further fragmentations took place in the Ahmed Maher Front over those disputes, the presence of Islamist backgrounds within the ranks of the movement became a point of constant dispute. Within the same context, the movement's decision to support "Tamarod" and mobilize for gathering signatures to hold early presidential elections and oust Mohamed Morsy from office was a source of internal conflicts as well. These two incidents, or the aftermath of the November constitutional declaration created an organizational chaos inside the movement, and it became very difficult to monitor what was being said by members in their individual capacity and what was being publicized under the movement's banner as a collective entity.¹³²

Mohamed Morsy's phase witnessed a number of interactions between April 6 and the state as well as some political actors. However, there were no solid alliances that the movement became a part of during that time. Nonetheless, there was an informal pattern of interaction between the movement and other political actors, and

¹³¹ A personal interview with M.S., member of 6 April movement, Cairo, 8/8/2016

¹³² Ibid

another informal pattern of interaction between the movement and the state. During the first half of Morsy's presidency, the Muslim Brotherhood, still grateful for the supportive position April 6 adopted in the second round of the Presidential election, reached out to the movement more than once. April 6 general coordinator, Ahmed Maher, was selected among the constitutional drafting committee (Maher resigned in November after the constitutional declaration was issued), the movement was invited to attend the hearing sessions organized by the Muslim Brotherhood to discuss the new constitution and was approached by the presidency to discuss the turbulence in Egyptian Universities in September 2012. In May 2013, Ahmed Maher was arrested in Cairo Airport upon his return from abroad after participating in a workshop on Egyptian opposition forces.¹³³ In the movement's attempts to release Maher, a number of movement members spoke directly to Saad El-Katatni, member of Guidance Bureau in the Muslim Brotherhood, Secretary General of the Freedom and Justice Party and former head of the dissolved Egyptian Parliament. El-Katatni interfered and Maher was released 24 hours later.¹³⁴

Ahmed Maher's brief arrest in Cairo Airport is actually very telling of the pattern of power politics and the resulting format of interactions. Maher was arrested on the account that he was involved in inciting protests at the Minister of Interior's residence aiming to harm the Minister. The state institution that demanded Ahmed Maher's arrest was the National Security Agency. However, the political interventions of the Muslim Brotherhood's leading figure resolved the dispute and prompted the release of Maher. The instance is very descriptive of the pattern of

¹³³ See http://www.bbc.com/arabic/middleeast/2013/05/130510_egypt_ahmed_maher_arrest

¹³⁴ A personal interview with M.S., member of 6 April movement, Cairo, 8/8/2016

interaction between the state security branches and the executive power represented in the Presidency, the Muslim Brotherhood and the Freedom and Justice Party; a contentious dynamic in which all social movements in Egypt were caught during Morsy's phase. For many years, Egypt has known a dynamic that governed interactions between state security institutions and the Presidency, one characterized by a high degree of coordination and a mutual strategic vision. However, this pattern of mutual understanding and synchronization was not present during the Muslim Brotherhood's rule. The best proof of this lack of coordination was the numerous reports prepared and publicized by Egypt's National Security Agency in the context of Mohamed Morsy's espionage trial after his ouster.¹³⁵ It is indeed very difficult to determine how objective or non-biased those reports are since the trial itself is a political trial in essence, but the trial and the reports included in the case file demonstrate that the Muslim Brotherhood and the security apparatus had a very contentious pattern of interaction. The fact that the Muslim Brotherhood intervened to release Ahmed Maher shows that arrest decisions were not taken with any coordination between both state branches. This absence of coordination was reflected in later instances like the minimal involvement of the security apparatus in the prevention of the clashes between protesters and Muslim Brotherhood supporters at the Ithadeya Presidential palace in December 2012 and the reluctance of the security apparatus to crack down on the anti-Morsy collective action within the framework of the Tamarod campaign. Therefore, the Ahmed Maher arrest incident was just another symptom of the Muslim Brotherhood's incomplete control over state institutions in general and the security apparatus in specific. Although Saad Al-Katatny's

¹³⁵ See <http://www.youm7.com/story/2014/9/9>

intervention managed to release Maher, the incident disclosed an uncoordinated pattern of interaction nonetheless.

On the level of interaction with other political forces, April 6 did not join in significant alliances during that phase. Neither the electoral support for Morsy nor the sharp opposing position taken towards him after the constitutional declaration resulted in any tangible political coalitions. April 6 resisted the Muslim Brotherhood's attempts to coopt the movement. Similarly, the movement refrained from joining the National Salvation Front formed from a number of political parties and public figures after the constitutional declaration in November on the account that the Front had several symbols of the Mubarak regime within its ranks like Amr Moussa (former minister of foreign affairs under Mubarak), Sameh Ashour (former head of the lawyers' syndicate under Mubarak) and Elsayed El-Badawi (head of Al-Wafd party at the time). The only clear and official interaction that April 6 was a part of was its cooperation with "Tamarod" to gather signatures for an early presidential election. Despite the acute internal disputes that joining forces with "Tamarod" caused inside April 6, the movement was able to gather 1 million signed petitions through its different branches all over Egypt and submitted them to "Tamarod".¹³⁶

Overall, April 6 during Morsy's phase was a lot more caught up in its own internal dynamics and disputes than it was in facing external challenges. The openness of the structure of political opportunity during Morsy's phase and the reduced propensity for repression by the state allowed the movement to be more concerned with its internal issues. Moreover, the inherent lack of ideology within the movement and the political conditions that allowed it to work more openly and expand in membership turned the movement into a sponge, absorbing a multitude of

¹³⁶ See <http://gate.ahram.org.eg/News/361923.aspx>

members without proper grooming for those newcomers or detailed vision of how to situate the membership expansion within the movement strategy. Finally, the movement's political compromises during the second round of the Presidential elections became a burden on the movement's internal cohesion and made the movement more aware of the negative consequences of its flexible strategy in forming political coalitions; which could be observed in the movement's refusal to join the National Salvation Front despite the common goal of ousting Mohamed Morsy from office and the mutual support of the Tamarod campaign.

Ultras White Knights

Ultras White Knights as a movement is both non-political and non-ideological. Therefore, examining the movement and the impact of the structure of political opportunity on it requires taking into consideration two main factors. First, the set of conditions that surround the main activity around which the movement evolves: football; and second, the core entity that the movement identifies with and finds its collective identity in supporting it, in the case of Ultras White Knights this entity is Zamalek Sporting Club. Hence, examining the impact of the structure of political opportunity on the movement must be accompanied by two important facts. The first fact is the suspension of football activities in Egypt after the Port Said Stadium Massacre in February 2012, and the decision to resume those activities without the presence of fans or any audience in stadiums in October 2012. The second fact is the number of failures and internal disputes that existed inside the Zamalek club during Morsy's phase for non-political reasons. These two facts determined to a great extent the course of Ultras White Knights as a collective entity during Morsy's phase.

The suspension of football activities and the cancellation of the Egyptian football league after the Port Said Stadium massacre in February 2012 had crucial effects on Ultras movements. It is important here to differentiate between the effects of the Port Said massacre on Ultras Ahlawy and Ultras White Knights. Ultras Ahlawy, being the victims of the massacre with 74 movement members killed in the stadium, took a personal vendetta in the pursuit of the ones responsible for orchestrating the massacre and holding them accountable. Ultras White Knights, although supportive of the Ultras Ahlawy cause, had some internal disputes concerning the resumption of the football league. While some Ultras White Knights members believed that all football activities must be stopped until the ones responsible for the massacre are held accountable, other members saw that the league should be resumed without Al-Ahly club. For some members, the absence of Al-Ahly from the league represented an opportunity for Zamalek to achieve the league title, a victory that zamalek did not achieve since the 2003-2004 season. Ultras White Knights' collective decision was to support Ultras Ahlawy in their cause and their demand to suspend all football related activities. However, Ultras White Knights were not involved in the political trajectory and the confrontations with state security institutions that Ultras Ahlawy was subjected to in the course of their pursuit of holding the ones responsible for the massacre accountable. However, the overall effect of the Port Said massacre had an equal impact on both movements.

The Egyptian Football league season 2011-2012 was canceled in February 2012 after the Port Said massacre. A new season started in October 2012, the 2012-2013 season, but that season was held without the presence of any audience and was eventually cancelled in July 2013 due to the events post June 30th. The suspension of football activities and the decision to ban fans from attending matches in the stadium

deprived Ultras movements of their main public space of expression. "Ultras have thus struggled to retain purpose without opportunities to organize stadium events during games. After all, these groups could not attend matches and the postponement of soccer lasted over a year. As a result, according to one Ultras leader: everything has changed, yet nothing has really changed, for us, the biggest challenge has been trying to stay united without our common ground of football. Without the bond of soccer, Ultras groups have struggled to retain group interconnectivity".¹³⁷ Strong personal ties between Ultras members have helped to counter the effect of losing the main space of expression and maintain movement cohesion despite the loss of the movement's core public platform. However, the suspension of football activities did not only affect the group's interconnectivity, it also contributed to further politicization of the movement.

Ultras White Knights' lucid internal structure allows for considerable room between individual actions and collective ones, and the politicization of some members remain until today a matter of personal and individual choice rather than a group strategy or direction. However, the suspension of football forced the Ultras groups to take to the streets for public expression. The return of the league and holding the ones responsible for orchestrating the Port Said massacre accountable became movement demands that were naturally put in a political context. The decision to resume the league and allow fans into stadiums is a decision taken by more than one state institution in Egypt. The decision belongs primarily to the Egyptian Football Association, a nominally independent entity but it is actually dominated by the Egyptian Ministry of Youth and the Egyptian Ministry of Sports.

¹³⁷ Jerzak, Connor T. "Ultras in Egypt: state, revolution and the power of public space" *Interface*, Vol.5, No.2, November 2013, pp.253

Moreover, an integral part of the decision is the Ministry of Interior, the state institution directly responsible for stadium security. It is important to mention in this regard that stadiums in Egypt are owned by the state. Very few clubs own their own stadiums, but the majority is owned and controlled by either the Egyptian Armed Forces or the Egyptian Ministry of Youth. The two major teams in Egypt, Ahly and Zamalek, do not own stadiums and both play their matches on state owned stadiums until today. This specific point was a reason for further politicization of Ultras movements and ground for the movements' interactions with the state on a platform of demanding the resumption of the league and the return of fans to the stadiums. These points constitute important dimensions in understanding the football infrastructure in Egypt, which is in turn crucial to understanding the overarching political context in which Egyptian Ultras movements in general operate.

On the level of both goals and tactics, Ultras White Knights did not undergo any major changes during Mohamed Morsy's phase. The movement remained to be concerned with supporting Zamalek and standing up for the principles that underlie that support. Principles and values like liberty, equality, dignity, solidarity and belonging constitute the main building blocks of the movement's goals. The non-political nature of the movement was a determining factor in keeping those goals intact through changing structures of political opportunity. In other words, the football-oriented *raison d'être* makes the movement less instrumental in comparison to more politically oriented movements like April 6. Tactically, the movement had to resort to different means to face the absence of public space that accompanied the suspension of football activities. While official matches were suspended, team practice was still taking place in the small stadium located inside the Zamalek Sporting Club. Although this stadium does not meet professional standards laid down

by the FIFA or by the Egyptian Football Association, hence no official matches are ever held on it, movement members used this stadium during team practice and friendly matches as a platform for their collective presence. In addition, the group used artistic means of expression like graffiti and music to disclose their ideas and messages in all different structures of political opportunity.

Internally, the movement had to struggle with the politicization of a significant number of its members and the consequent effects of that politicization on the movement's official positions. The internal disputes that were present during the SCAF phase over the movement's political and public role became even more acute during Morsy's phase as a result of the expansion in membership and the growing influence of politicization on movement members. Some leading figures in Ultras White Knights were supporters of the Islamist movement "Hazemoun", a Salafist movement that emerged in support of Salafist leader and presidential hopeful Hazem Salah Abouismail. Two of those leading figures, "Sayed Moshagheb" and "Masaken", were present in Hazemoun's demonstrations and were also a part of the orchestrated attack on the sit-in near the Presidential Palace in November 2012. Other Ultras White Knights members joined with those two group leaders in those events. The movement still holds that those were individual actions that were not sanctioned by the movement in a collective sense. However, the collective identity of the movement, its slogans and its flags were used in those events, which gave the impression that the movement is supporting the Muslim Brotherhood and their Salafist partners.¹³⁸ This incident was repeated more than once with different political forces and through out various episodes of collective action during Morsy's phase. Both the lack of an

¹³⁸ A personal interview with H.A., a member of Ultras White Knights, Cairo, 3/8/2016

overarching ideological framework and the lucid structure of leadership were main causes of the movement's internal disputes during Mohamed Morsy's rule.

The movement in its collective sense as an entity was not a member in any political coalitions, but the ongoing politicization of members led to the emergence of clusters of Ultras White Knights members in different political streams like the Muslim Brotherhood, Hazemoun, Al-Dostoor party and Al-Tayyar Al-Shaabi.¹³⁹ During the demonstrations and protests in November 2012 after the constitutional declaration and the anniversary of the Mohamed Mahmoud clashes, several movement members responded to the calls by other movements like April 6 and the Revolutionary Socialists to participate in those events. As mentioned earlier, the movement in its collective sense did not sanction this presence. However, the collective identity of the movement, the cheering techniques and the previous experience in dealing with the Police were all factors that highlighted the presence of Ultras White Knights members in those collective action episodes. It is important to notice how members from Ultras White Knights were present in the November 2012 clashes on both sides, with Mohamed Morsy and against him. However, this contrast in political orientation and allegiance did not have tangible implications on movement cohesion or the strength of networking between movement members. The non-political nature of the movement and the strength of personal relationships between its members are the main reasons behind movement collective cohesion albeit individual political differences.

Overall, the structure of political opportunity under Mohamed Morsy's rule did not pose grave external challenges to Ultras White Knights. The main challenges that the movement had to deal with during this phase were internal ones. The

¹³⁹ A personal interview with M.I., a member of Ultras White Knights, Cairo, 1/8/2016

suspension of the league was reflected internally on the movement through further politicization and limited access to public space. It may appear that political opportunity was less opened to Ultras White Knights in comparison to other movements like April 6 or the Revolutionary Socialists as a result of the suspension of football activities and the loss of the movement's main venue of expression. However, Ultras White Knights managed to compensate for those lost dimensions through graffiti and music. Although the movement was able to tactically adapt to these circumstances, the absence of football directly affected the movement's *raison d'être*. It is true that the movement did not disappear from the public sphere, but its social mobilization momentum as a collective entity was indeed reduced. In addition, the lack of ideology and the lucid internal structure blurred the lines separating between members in their individual capacities, free to choose their own political orientations, and the movement's collective sense materialized in its official decisions. The state's reduced propensity for repression contributed to a more opened structure of political opportunity, which was in turn reflected on the movement's ability to mobilize and intercommunicate. Despite the conflicting political orientations inside movement ranks, the existing personal ties and the cumulative identity related to identifying with the team maintained the movement's internal cohesion and its capacity to mobilize.

Chapter 4

The structure of political opportunity and its impact on social movements in Egypt after July 3rd 2013

July 2013-December 2015

The Structure of Political Opportunity in the Post-July 3rd Phase

This chapter is concerned with the phase that started on June 30th 2013 with a wave of mass protests demanding the ouster of Mohamed Morsy from Presidential office. The structure of political opportunity and its impact on social movements during that phase was significantly different from the two phases that preceded it. Although there is a degree of similarity between the episodes of collective action in January/February 2011 and June/July 2013, there is also a multitude of difference that explains the sharp variation between the resulting structures of political opportunity in the two phases. The formative factors in a political opportunity structure were very different in January 2011 and June 2013. These factors have shaped a trajectory post June 30th that was very different from the one shaped by those factors post January 25th. Therefore, social movements were working in a very different political environment than the one that existed in the previous two years. Rapid and significant changes in the structure of political opportunity post June 30th have resulted in an overall change in movement tactics, interactions and internal dynamics. Moreover, the role of the state and the context in which it was situated after June 30th was both extremely influential on the resulting structure of political opportunity and remarkably crucial in shaping the response of social movements to the new structure. Similarly, a process of elite reconfiguration took place post June 30th, this process did not only include the resurrection of the pre-2011 political elite, but also the

marginalization of Islamist and secular elites that emerged during the January revolution and in the phase that followed it. The post June 30th structure of political opportunity was not only marked by a vulgar resurrection of the state's repressive apparatus, but also by a set of political and legislative procedures that cracked down on pluralism while stigmatizing and incriminating the different elements that compose Egypt's revolutionary lobby. Needless to say, social movements were caught up within that dynamic. Hence, it is practically impossible to examine the impact of the changing structure of political opportunity on social movements without first giving considerable attention to the factors that undergird this structure.

Although Egypt's post June 30th political environment bears diverse significance, two main characteristics could label it; an overarching conservative and anti-revolutionary trend, and a state dominated public sphere. According to Michele Dunne: "the 2013 removal of then president Mohamed Morsi from power brought a notable revival of a specific brand of nationalism—militaristic, populist, anti-foreign—that evoked the Nasserism of the 1950s and 1960s, in contrast to the more inclusive strains of nationalism articulated during the 2011 uprising against Mubarak."¹⁴⁰ This resurrected brand of nationalism was constantly spread through state-owned as well as private media. The manner in which Mohamed Morsi was removed from office on July 3rd 2013 brought the army back to the core of Egypt's political landscape after a brief sidelining process through the political institutions and the accompanying elite that dominated the political scene during Mohamed Morsi's year in office. The re-introduction of the army into the heart of the scene was done on a heroic/populist platform and materialized through a hardcore patriotic discourse. The post June 30th political landscape became heavily polarized, first the polarity was

¹⁴⁰ Dunne, Michele "Egypt's nationalists dominate in a politics-free zone" Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, April 2015, pp.3

between a pro and anti Muslim Brotherhood lobby, but a few months later, the polarity was between a pro army lobby and a revolutionary one. Two points were central to that regard, commoditizing security to become a product of political allegiance rather than a public service, and Abdelfattah Al-Sisi's ascent to Presidency. As Shahin puts it: "Sisi has gradually set himself up as a strongman, consolidating his power through a massive crackdown on the Muslim Brotherhood and its leadership as well as on non-Islamist political opponents. He became president in June 2014. Under his rule, ultra-nationalism has embedded itself in Egypt's identity. His actions have contributed to sharp polarization among the citizenry, inciting xenophobic tendencies and encouraging Egyptians to accept that those who dissent can be physically eliminated."¹⁴¹

Unlike January 2011, the post June 30th political trajectory was clearly laid out and highly institutional. The July 3rd road map had sufficient detail of the different political procedures that shall constitute the post Mohamed Morsi transition. Although this road map was altered more than once with regards to its order and its timeline, and until December 2015 there are steps in that map that are not yet realized, the very existence of it signaled a detailed path that the state was willing to go to any lengths to defend it. All forms of opposition or dissent were radically confronted in a clear message against the idea of diversity or pluralism. The state's efforts to confront opposition to the road map were both repressive and procedural. Violent dispersal of protests, demonstrations and sit-ins took place. The main target of those efforts was the Muslim Brotherhood, and the culmination of such efforts materialized in the

¹⁴¹ Shahin, Emad El-Din "Egypt's revolution turned on its head" *Current History*, Vol.114, issue 776, December 2015, pp.344

violent dispersal of the Rabaa sit-in¹⁴², which was very close to an army-orchestrated massacre. At the same time, a wave of suppression to opposition media was taking place. The army closed down Islamist channels like Al-Nas and Al-Hafez a few days after the ouster of Morsi. A short while later, Al-Jazeera Mubasher Masr was also closed down and its crew arrested. In September 2013, a court ruling ordered Al-Jazeera Mubasher Masr and three other Islamist channels to stop broadcasting. Needless to say, Muslim Brotherhood affiliated newspapers were closed down, journalists were subjected to recurrent harassment by security forces and T.V shows with opposition related content like Bassem Youssef's Al-Bernameg and Reem Maged's Baladna Bel Masri were also stopped.¹⁴³

In addition to the resurrected army-based nationalism, the crack down on opposition media and the return of the repressive security apparatus, marginalization of revolutionary youth became a crucial aspect of the post June 30th state policy. This specific dimension was very influential on social movements. The pattern of political activism in which Egyptian youth were engaged from 2011 to 2013, and even in the years that preceded 2011 was a non-institutional pattern focusing mainly on collective action, mass demonstration and collective use of public space. The enactment of the protest law in November 2013 and the constant and recurrent arrests of youth political activists constitute vital dimensions of the post June 30th state policy to marginalize youth from political activism. Moreover, the amendments made on the universities law ensured the suppression of political activism and collective mobilization in universities, an important platform for youth political expression. Concomitant to the use of legislation as a tool to curb youth political activism, a number of court rulings

¹⁴² For a full account of the Rabaa sit-in and its dispersal please see

<http://rabaastory.net/timeline.html>

¹⁴³ See Abdulla, Rasha "Egypt's media in the midst of revolution" Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington, July 2014, pp.21-22

outlawed youth movements, mainly the Ultras and April 6, criminalizing those movements as entities and banning their activities. What is worth mentioning in this regard is how those cases were not litigated by the state through public prosecution; but independent lawyers filed them in their individual capacity. While some explain the actions of those lawyers on a patriotic platform, the more popular explanation is the pursuit of fame. In the Ultras case, it was filed by Mortada Mansour, a lawyer and at the same time the President of the Zamalek Sporting Club. Mansour filed the case after two members from Ultras White Knights threw a bag full of urine on him after the massacre in the Aerial Defense Stadium where 22 Ultras White Knights members choked to death. The movement until now believes that Mansour is among the ones responsible for orchestrating the massacre, though without sufficient evidence to incriminate him in court.¹⁴⁴ Those cases represent how some elite sectors allied against social movements and revolutionary political activism in the post June 30th phase.

If we were to employ the dimensions that make up a structure of political opportunity according to McAdam's list, we would realize that the post June 30th political opportunity was not only closed, but also considerably hostile. McAdam's list of highly consensual dimensions of political opportunity included the relative openness or closure of the institutionalized political system, the stability or instability of the broad set of elite alignments that typically undergird a polity, the presence or absence of elite allies and the state's capacity and propensity for repression.¹⁴⁵

Examining those factors in the post June 30th phase is very telling of the nature of the

¹⁴⁴ A personal interview with H.A., member of Ultras White Knights, Cairo, 1/8/2016

¹⁴⁵ McAdam, Doug "Conceptual origins, current problems, future directions", *Comparative Perspectives on Social Movements*, Ed. Doug McAdam, John D. McCarthy and Mayer Zald, Cambridge University Press, 1996, pp.27

political opportunity structure that prevailed since July 3rd 2013 in Egypt.

The institutionalized political system was relatively closed after the ouster of Mohamed Morsy. On one hand, the Egyptian Parliament was dissolved by a court ruling in June 2012¹⁴⁶ and since then, Egypt has lived in a parliamentary vacuum until the new post June 30th Parliament convened for the first time on January 10th 2016. On the other hand, the various political procedures that took place from July 2013 to December 2015, which included a constitutional referendum, a presidential election and parliamentary elections, all suffered low participation rates in comparison to similar political procedures held in 2011 and 2012. The constitutional drafting committee was selected by the interim President Adly Mansour and the Presidential election held in the summer of 2014 had only two candidates running for office. In addition, the recent parliamentary elections law limited the role of political parties and allowed them to run for only 20% of the Parliament seats. Therefore, access to the institutional political system became restricted by legislations and the resulting political procedures were characterized above all by an obvious lack of participation.

The stability of elite alignments and the presence or absence of elite allies are among the factors that changed significantly in the post June 30th phase. While the period from 2011 to 2013 was marked by a relative exclusion of the Mubarak elite and the dominance of an Islamic one, the post June 2013 phase could be characterized by the exact opposite. The phase began with a systematic exclusion of Islamist political and economic elites from the Egyptian political landscape, which was shortly followed by cracking down on the revolutionary youth and symbols of the January 25th revolution. A notable resurgence of the Mubarak regime elite started to take place and peaked near the end of 2015 with the majority of Parliament candidates belonging

¹⁴⁶ See <http://gate.ahram.org.eg/News/220045.aspx>

to that category. During the first phase of the election in October 2015, 84 former National Democratic Party (NDP) members won seats in the Parliament from a total of 286 seats in that phase. In addition, a number of family members of former NDP members also won parliamentary seats within that round.¹⁴⁷ Elite reconfigurations took place a few weeks after Morsi's ouster when state officials appointed by the deposed President were all changed. The elite reconfiguration process included appointing new faces in the bureaucracy, state-owned media institutions, public universities and the judiciary. Moreover, anti-revolutionary sentiments became more vocal, and accusations of conspiring against the state and receiving foreign funds to promote chaos in Egypt became very popular.¹⁴⁸ Near the end of 2015, the parliamentary elections introduced new segments into Egypt's political elite like retired military men, former state officials during Mubarak's reign and leading figures in the pro-state media lobby.

In addition to this process of elite reconfiguration, some elite sectors are heavily allied with the post June 30th regime. This category includes Egyptian Copts, who felt threatened by the Islamist domination of the public sphere and saw a strategic savior in Abdelfattah Al-Sisi's regime. The Egyptian Coptic Church has been a solid ally of the regime since the ouster of Morsy despite the fact that the post June 30th regime did not offer any tangible gains to Egypt's Coptic community. Meanwhile, Islamic institutions like the Azhar and the Ministry of Endowments have played a supportive role to put the regime's actions in a religiously acceptable context. The Ministry of Endowments took a decision in 2014 to distribute a unified Friday prayer address on mosques every week. Ever since that time, political

¹⁴⁷ See <http://www.alarabiya.net/ar/arab-and-world/egypt/2015/10/29/>

¹⁴⁸ See Shahin, Emad El-Din "Egypt's revolution turned on its head" *Current History*, Vol.114, issue 776, December 2015, pp.345

connotations and blunt regime support have been a recurrent content in weekly addresses. Topics distributed by the Ministry included titles like “the grace of security”, “the importance of following leaders” and “the virtue of political stability”. In early December 2015, the Friday prayer address exclusively referred to calls for demonstrating on January 25th, the fifth anniversary of the revolution, labeling those calls as religiously unacceptable because they contradict with “national interest” and encourage disobedience to the ruler who is the shadow of God.¹⁴⁹

The elite alignments in Egypt post June 30th are stable to a great extent. Contentious elites, ones that could either oppose or merely be non-supportive of the regime were marginalized or outlawed and imprisoned. Meanwhile, supportive elites were rewarded and empowered. The post June 30th regime coopted some sensitive elite sectors like Egyptian Copts and the Mubarak business elite. Meanwhile, the regime avoided taking any provocative measures to antagonize other sensitive sectors like the bureaucracy and the labor sector. Despite some subsidy cuts in electricity, gas and oil, no bureaucracy downsizing or privatization plans were put to action. The post June 30th regime has managed to coopt, repress or marginalize social and political elites, which in turn contributed to the regime’s interest in the closure of political opportunity after the ouster of Mohamed Morsy in July 2013.

Finally, the state’s capacity and propensity for repression is a dimension that changed massively in the post June 30th phase. This is not to say that the state during the SCAF phase or Mohamed Morsy’s presidency lost its capacity for repression. Violent confrontations, military trials and political arrests were taking place in all three phases, although they were much less during Mohamed Morsy’s presidency due to the nature of the relationship between the executive authority and the state’s

¹⁴⁹ See Akl, Ziad A. “The state’s religious politics” Daily News Egypt, 14/12/2015 <http://www.dailynewsegypt.com/2015/12/14/the-states-religious-politics/>

repressive apparatus discussed in the previous chapter. However, what is different in the post June 30th phase is how systematic this repression became, and how the state started to resort to the use of diverse tools to practice this repression. Although coercive force and the use of violence remained to be a crucial tool used by the state's repressive apparatus, new tools and tactics like legislation, politicized judiciary, disappearances and random arrests were also introduced. The resurrection of the state's repressive apparatus and the expansion in its tactics and its sphere of influence were among the most detrimental and formative dimensions of the political opportunity structure that prevailed in Egypt in the post June 30th phase.

One of the most important dimensions of this repressive structure is the Egyptian protest law passed in November 2013 by the interim President Adly Mansour. The law was passed in a contentious political environment after the violent dispersal of the Rabaa sit-in in August 2013. At that time, street protests were frequently organized by the Muslim Brotherhood as well as other revolutionary forces, while the Brotherhood demanded the return of Mohamed Morsy to the Presidential office, revolutionary forces were organizing protests to pressure for further democratization and object to the non-democratic discourse that the state was adopting. However, revolutionary collective action in general was overshadowed by the Muslim Brotherhood's frequent demonstration and their sit-ins organized in Rabaa and Nahda Squares in Cairo and Giza. The sharp contrast between the Egyptian military's behavior towards demonstrations in 2011 and 2013 is very telling of the change in the structure of political opportunity in general and in the state's propensity for repression in specific. While factors like military professionalism, autonomy, internal cohesion and ethnic or sectarian diversity can account for the role of the armed forces during any uprising, other factors like elite alignments and

alliances and the armed forces' relationship with society are more telling in explaining the contrast in the military behavior towards protests in Egypt in 2011 and 2013.¹⁵⁰ Therefore, the significance of the protest law cannot be alienated from the military's general behavior towards collective action in the post June 30th phase and its overall domination of state branches as well as the public sphere during that time. Hence, the protest law is not a mere isolated legislation, it is rather an aspect of a comprehensive strategy designed to counter and repress collective action.

The law itself is not only repressive in nature, but also illogical. The different articles of the law ask those who seek a permit for demonstration to submit information like the slogans that shall be raised or chanted, the names of the people attending and their numbers and the start time and ending time of the protest. The law also allows security forces to reject any request for a protest permit on extremely evasive grounds like "evidence of threats to peace". Moreover, the law grants security forces the right to use armed force in cases that are not clearly specified like "threatening national interest" and "threatening property".¹⁵¹ Like much other legislation issued post June 30th, the protest law was a politically motivated preemptive legislation that lacked sufficient detail and rational specification. In its comment on the law, Amnesty International stated: "security forces will make use of the authority given to them under the new law to disperse peaceful protests for not complying with the law's requirements, including on broad grounds such as disrupting traffic and holding demonstrations in places of worship. Moreover, under the new law, any violent act committed by a small minority of protesters, or even just

¹⁵⁰ See Holmes, Amy Austin "Why Egypt's military orchestrated a massacre" The Washington Post, 22/8/2014

<https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/monkey-cage/wp/2014/08/22/why-egypts-military-orchestrated-a-massacre/>

¹⁵¹ For the full text of the law see <http://english.ahram.org.eg/News/87375.aspx>

one, can be used as a legal justification for dispersing the entire demonstration".¹⁵² Undoubtedly, the law was extremely influential in shaping the political opportunity structure and the overall political environment in which social movements worked in the post June 30th phase.

Despite the repressive impact of the protest law, it was not the only legislation issued in the post June 30th phase with repressive intent. In the absence of Parliament, the legislative authority resides in the hands of the executive, in this case, interim President Adly Mansour and later President Abdelfattah Al-Sisi. In the period from July 2013 to December 2015, over 300 laws were passed. Although the majority of those laws were regulatory and technical in nature, some of them are directly related to the state of expression and the right of assembly.¹⁵³ An example of this is the law of "terrorist entities" which was passed in early 2015. This law gives the state the power and authority to label any entity a "terrorist organization" and to take all measures necessary to handle them. But the law offers extremely elusive and unclear definitions of "terrorist entities" and of the conditions that should be present in order for an entity to be labeled "terrorist". Other examples include the presidential decree to expand punishment for evidence of local or foreign funding to NGOs, which was passed in September 2014. There is also the amendment to the Azhar law passed in October 2014 enabling the Al-Azhar administration to dismiss any student who insults the institution without defining what exactly the act of insulting entails.¹⁵⁴

¹⁵² See "Egypt: new protest law gives security forces free rein" Amnesty International, 25/11/2013
<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/news/2013/11/egypt-new-protest-law-gives-security-forces-free-rein/>

¹⁵³ See Akl, Ziad "A political evaluation of President Sisi's one year in office" Al-Ahram Center for Political & Strategic Studies, 4/7/2015
<http://acpss.ahram.org.eg/News.aspx?Serial=233>

¹⁵⁴ See Akl, Ziad "Repression and legislation in Egypt" Ahram Online, 26/5/2015

These laws did not only curtail civil liberties and closed the public sphere for social movements; they also cracked down on the activities of civil society organizations and independent initiatives with social or political content. The legal framework elaborately manufactured by the post June 30th regime inflated the state's propensity and capacity for repression during that phase. It is reasonably argued that the scope and severity of the state's repressive measures in the post June 30th phase have surpassed the SCAF phase and the Mubarak years as well.¹⁵⁵ Moreover, the legislative framework of the post June 30th phase negatively affected the input/output structure of the policy cycle in two aspects. First, it reduced the ability of social movements and political actors to make claims and demands through closing the institutional political system and putting constraints on social mobilization, and second, it demonstrated the state's complete lack of political willingness to respond to demands, regardless of the state's actual capacity to accommodate demands.

In light of those developments and within the framework of such circumstances, social movements were operating in a tangibly different structure of political opportunity. The closure of political opportunity in the post June 30th phase had diverse effects on social movements internally and externally. The goals, tactics, internal dynamics and political interactions were heavily affected in the Revolutionary Socialists, April 6 and Ultras White Knights. Close examination of each movement will reveal the intensity and extent of the impact of a closed structure of political opportunity on social movement activity.

<http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContentP/4/130673/Opinion/Repression-and-legislation-in-Egypt.aspx>

¹⁵⁵ See Mandour, Maged "Egypt under President Sisi is more autocratic and repressive than at any other point in the country's history" Sada Journal, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, 11/8/2015
<http://carnegieendowment.org/sada/?fa=60985>

The Revolutionary Socialists

Although the movement supported “Tamarod” in their efforts to depose Mohamed Morsy and end the Muslim Brotherhood’s domination over Egyptian politics and public sphere, the Revolutionary Socialists were equally against the resurrection of a military dictatorship that would revive the Nasserist discourse of the 1950s and the 1960s and employ the repressive tactics adopted and practiced by Mubarak through the state’s repressive apparatus that the movement believed was still very intact. On July 9th 2013, less than a week after Morsy’s ouster on July 3rd, the movement issued a communiqué condemning the violent dispersal of a Muslim Brotherhood sit-in in front of the Republican Guard headquarters where Mohamed Morsy was supposed to be held at the time.¹⁵⁶ The communiqué clearly addressed state violence used against Egyptian citizens whose lives were a lot less important than security facilities. The movement clearly warned of the military stronghold over the country and the significance of the use of violence in resurrecting a military dictatorship.¹⁵⁷ The same communiqué condemned the Muslim Brotherhood attacks on protests, marches and demonstrations organized by revolutionary forces. Hence, the movement’s position from the ongoing political changes post June 30th was quite obvious: a denial of any legitimacy for the Muslim Brotherhood and the deposed President Mohamed Morsy, and a rejection of all the attempts and the rising sentiments of a military-led nationalism that would result in a repressive dictatorship. This position was reaffirmed further in the movement’s communiqué addressing Abdelfattah Al-Sisi’s call for Egyptians to take to the streets to authorize him to fight terrorism in Egypt. The communiqué issued on July 25th 2013 clearly stated the

¹⁵⁶ See <http://www.theguardian.com/world/interactive/2013/jul/18/cairo-republican-guard-shooting-full-story>

¹⁵⁷ For a full text of the communiqué see <http://revsoc.me/statements/lhry-byd-lns-msh-blskr-wlhrs/>

movement's rejection of the call and that the movement will not participate in any demonstrations aiming to authorize Al-Sisi to fight terrorism. The movement saw these demonstrations as a step towards further consolidation of the military dictatorship.¹⁵⁸ It is fair to say that the post June 30th phase was a hostile one for the Revolutionary Socialists. On one hand, the movement was bluntly against regime directions, and on the other hand, the movement was not safe from Muslim Brotherhood harassment.¹⁵⁹

As mentioned in previous chapters, the firm ideological framework of the movement did not induce much change to the movement's goals from one phase to the other over the course of the past five years. However, in light of the hostile political environment the movement found itself in, maintaining the movement's political activism while considering the safety of movement members became a crucial goal in the post June 30th period.¹⁶⁰ Other goals remained the same, revolving around the main themes of the movement's Marxist ideology. However, demanding accountability became more central after the series of violent confrontations between the regime and protesters. Nonetheless, labor rights, fighting and disclosing corruption, achieving social justice and enticing and empowering revolutionary collective action remained core movement goals for the Revolutionary Socialists post June 30th.

Tactically, the changing environment introduced some alterations to the movement's strategy. The most obvious of those alterations was the movement's return to an atmosphere of secrecy and underground work instead of the state of

¹⁵⁸ For a full text of the communiqué see <http://revsoc.me/statements/sqt-lkhwn-ltmyq-lthwr-l-ltdym-lnzm-ln-nfwwd/>

¹⁵⁹ See <http://onaeg.com/?p=2037067>

¹⁶⁰ A personal interview with H.T., member of the political bureau of the Revolutionary Socialists, Cairo, 31/7/2016

public exposure that movement activities enjoyed from 2011 to 2013.¹⁶¹ Resorting to more covert tactics of operation did not put an end to the movement's political activism. Members of the Revolutionary Socialists are still active until today, specifically among the labor movement in industrial cities like Al-Mahalla and in public universities among student unions. However, the movement's media exposure was significantly reduced and its macro-political presence became a lot less vocal. These tactics were chiefly motivated by the movement's concern over the safety of its members in light of the mass arrests and forced disappearances that political activists are being subjected to since July 2013. Until December 2015, only two leading figures from the Revolutionary Socialists (Mahinoor Al-Masry and Youssef Shaaban) were imprisoned compared to the majority of the political bureau of April 6 for example.¹⁶² Maintaining movement activism and vitality while employing covert tactics is traced back to the movement's ideological framework. The closure of political opportunity restricted the movement's access to the public political landscape and put considerable obstacles to the process of making claims and applying pressure to realize them. However, the movement's commitment to ideological principles allowed it to work on a more subtle scale, pursuing its goals through empowering its members and building their capacities, raising awareness among strategic elite sectors (mainly the labor force) and spreading its ideology among the student movement. Therefore, despite the closed political opportunity and the movement's covert tactics, ideology allowed the movement to remain resilient and maintain purpose.

The closed political opportunity in the post June 30th phase made the

¹⁶¹ Ibid

¹⁶² A personal interview with K.A., member of the Revolutionary Socialists, Cairo, 5/8/2016

movement more focused on its internal dynamics. The swelling in membership rates that the movement experienced during 2011 and 2012 was significantly reduced after July 2013. Reduction in public exposure and the setback in membership numbers allowed the movement to pay more attention to its internal grooming process of new members and further detail it. The Revolutionary Socialists have had a tradition of grooming new members through an "initial membership" phase, where new members are allowed to attend movement activities and meetings but do not have a vote in movement internal elections or decision making processes. This phase usually lasts for one year. However, due to the influx of new members in 2011 and 2012, the movement decided to reduce the "initial membership" time to only three months. Movement members believe that this step, taken mainly to accommodate the vast expansion in membership, negatively affected the movement's internal cohesion and did not allow for adequate preparation of new members.¹⁶³ In the post June 30th phase, the movement took a decision to extend that period to one year again. This decision did not only allow the movement to enhance the preparation of its new members, but also to filter the numerous membership requests it received in 2011 and 2012 and evaluate them in detail. In addition, the blunt authoritarian direction of the post June 30th regime solidified the movement's consensus on its political position, which in turn limited the room left for internal disputes over movement tactics and strategy. Therefore, examining the Revolutionary Socialists in the post June 30th phase demonstrates the crucial role of ideology and the effect of a closed structure of political opportunity in maintaining solid internal movement cohesion.

The political environment and the change in movement tactics were both not

¹⁶³ A personal interview with H.T., member of the political bureau of the Revolutionary Socialists, Cairo, 31/7/2016

conducive of tangible political interactions or alliances during the post June 30th phase. Since the ouster of Mohamed Morsy, the movement was not approached by the state with its different branches. With the exception of the Revolutionary Socialists members who were imprisoned after June 30th, no interactions took place between the movement and the state. However, interactions and alliances with other political forces and social movements did take place during that phase. The Muslim Brotherhood approached the Revolutionary Socialists more than once in an attempt to form an anti-regime alliance. Despite the massive ideological and strategic differences between the two movements, and the hostility nurtured between them over the course of the past five years, the Muslim Brotherhood sought a political alliance with the Revolutionary Socialists. Initially, the Revolutionary Socialists were not against establishing a front with the Muslim Brotherhood, provided the Brotherhood would give up demands of Mohamed Morsy's return to Presidency and any allegations of Muslim Brotherhood legitimate rights of rulership.¹⁶⁴ The Muslim Brotherhood did not accept those conditions, and the attempts to form an alliance did not see the light. However, there were some attempts by the youth wing of the Muslim Brotherhood to approach the Revolutionary Socialists and form a unified anti-regime front. While the Revolutionary Socialists agreed to that alliance after promises of revising goals and strategies on the Muslim Brotherhood's part; the Brotherhood leadership in London declared that this youth wing does not represent the movement and that no political alliances will be formed with the Revolutionary Socialists.¹⁶⁵ The only political alliance that the Revolutionary Socialists are a part of is the "Revolution Path Front" formed in September 2013¹⁶⁶, an alliance that includes the Revolutionary Socialists,

¹⁶⁴ Ibid

¹⁶⁵ Ibid

¹⁶⁶ See <http://www.aljazeera.net/news/reportsandinterviews/2013/9/26/>

April 6 (The Democratic Front) and the Strong Egypt Party. There were attempts to include Al-Dostoor party in this alliance, mainly through the party's youth wing. However, internal disputes and fragmentations inside Al-Dostoor party did not allow it to take part in that alliance.¹⁶⁷ Similarly, the challenges faced by the Ahmed Maher Front of April 6 (the court ruling banning all movement activities and the imprisonment of numerous movement leading figures) did not allow the movement to take part in the alliance.

The pattern of political interaction adopted by the Revolutionary Socialists was a rigid one. The movement's ideological nature makes it less flexible and less instrumental in its interactions with other political forces. However, the overarching authoritarian directions of the post June 30th regime, the recurrent attacks on the January 25th revolution, its symbols and its principles, and the resurrection of the Mubarak regime political elites were all factors that helped in creating a common ground between different revolutionary forces.¹⁶⁸ The presence of the Muslim Brotherhood on that common ground is still problematic due to the core conflict over the legitimacy of Mohamed Morsy as President and the Muslim Brotherhood's internal disputes. In general, the closure of political opportunity after June 30th affected the potential political alliances between revolutionary forces. Although a common ground was created, its mere presence could not overshadow the complex set of challenges posed to coalition building and effective political activity. Despite the existence of an opposition lobby of social movements, the closure of political opportunity created a number of obstacles that hindered this lobby from materializing

¹⁶⁷ A personal interview with K.A., member of the Revolutionary Socialists, Cairo, 5/8/2016

¹⁶⁸ See Abdel-Hayy, Ahmed Tohami "Changes in revolutionary and youth forces after the military coup in Egypt" Al-Jazeera Center for Studies, April 2014

into a tool of effective pressure on the regime. In other words, the closed political opportunity determined to a great extent the “when” and the “how” of social movement mobilization during that phase.

April 6

Due to various reasons, April 6 faced a higher degree of hostility from the regime in the post June 30th phase compared to the Revolutionary Socialists or Ultras White Knights. On one hand, the popularity and mobilizing capacity of April 6 made it a crucial target for the state’s repressive apparatus. On the other hand, the set of internal disputes that April 6 experienced in the SCAF period and during Morsy’s Presidency made the movement more vulnerable to state repression and antagonism. April 6 in the post June 30th phase faced internal fragmentation, mass arrests and a court ruling in April 2014 banning all movement activity and incriminating it as an entity.¹⁶⁹ While the movement managed to survive amidst this hostile environment, its tactics were changed much and its popularity and mobilizing capacities were reduced. Between legal prohibition and stigmatization, April 6 faced serious challenges to survive in the closed structure of political opportunity that dominated the post June 30th phase.

Movement goals did not change much in the post June 30th phase. April 6 maintained the same framework of goals engulfing pro-democracy ideas and collective action means of instigating change. Like the Revolutionary Socialists, April 6 endorsed neither the Muslim Brotherhood nor the post June 30th regime. Therefore, on the level of goals, the movement was almost brought back to where it was before 2011, seeking democracy under a repressive and authoritarian regime in the absence of sufficient common ground with major forces of opposition or institutional political

¹⁶⁹ See <http://elbadil.com/2014/04/28/>

forces.

Tactically, April 6 has developed some coping techniques in the post June 30th phase, and specifically after the wide implementation of the protest law. While the movement maintained its high level of mobilization during the few months that followed Morsy's ouster from office, which included calling for demonstrations and protests over the violent dispersal of the Rabaa sit-in and the introduction of the protest law, the movement resorted to different tactics after numerous movement members were arrested and put on trial for charges related to violating the protest law.¹⁷⁰ The most recent of those new tactics was the movement's call for a general strike on June 11th 2015.¹⁷¹ April 6 called on the Egyptian people to stay at home on June 11th 2015 and refrain from dealing with any state institutions to demonstrate that the people are the source of all authority. The movement clearly stated that this call for strike does not constitute any violation to the protest law since it does not involve taking to the streets. Although the call did not resonate and the strike did not have any tangible impact, it demonstrated nonetheless that the movement is still capable of developing coping strategies and is still working to create new political opportunities despite the repressive political environment and the closed structure of political opportunity.

The absence of an ideological framework and the movement's broad goals remained to be ongoing factors in internal disputes. The most remarkable of those disputes took place in July 2013 when Abdelfattah Al-Sisi urged the Egyptian citizens to take to the streets to demonstrate their will to give him an authorization to fight

¹⁷⁰ See Shehata, Dina "Banning 6 April: reasons and consequences" Al-Ahram Center for Political and Strategic Studies, Cairo, 18/5/2014
<http://acpss.ahram.org.eg/Review.aspx?Serial=170>

¹⁷¹ See <http://www.aljazeera.net/news/arabic/2015/5/27/>

terrorism.¹⁷² The movement did not endorse those calls and officially stated that it will not participate in those demonstrations. However, the internal debate over that decision was divisive to the movement's internal cohesion. A pro-army lobby supported the direction of participating in the demonstrations, but the majority of movement members, specifically leading figures in the movement political bureau, refused to participate in those demonstrations believing that it would be a sign of the movement's endorsement of the regime's violent actions and its authoritarian tendencies. Despite the movement's decision not to participate, some members did take part in the demonstrations held on July 26th 2013 and the movement later took a decision to expel all members who participated in those demonstrations.¹⁷³

The pattern of interaction between April 6 and the state or other political forces in the post June 30th phase was minimal, specifically when taking into consideration the movement's flexibility in forming political alliances. There were no attempts by the state to approach the movement in the post June 30th phase, and similarly, April 6 believed the post June 30th regime to embody both the principles and the faces that the movement rebelled against in 2011 and stands against until today. Moreover, the arrests of movement leading figures like Ahmed Maher and Mohamed Adel deepened the conflict with the state. However, the movement was quite active in the efforts to establish a revolutionary alliance to stand in the face of the Muslim Brotherhood and the post June 30th regime. The movement launched an initiative in November 2015 to hold dialogue between the different elements of the Egyptian political landscape.¹⁷⁴ This initiative called for a dialogue between all

¹⁷² See <http://www.sis.gov.eg/En/Templates/Articles/tmpArticleNews.aspx?ArtID=69083#.VporofH8XBw>

¹⁷³ A personal interview with M.S., member of 6 April, Cairo, 8/8/2016

¹⁷⁴ See <http://arabi21.com/story/876310/>

political forces including the regime and the Muslim Brotherhood. While the initiative included important points like restructuring the civil/military relations, appointing a technocratic government to deal with economic and financial challenges and developing a code of ethics for the media; the focus on the hostility between the regime and the Muslim Brotherhood overshadowed all the points in the initiative leading to its utter failure.

Overall, April 6 was negatively affected by the impact of the closed structure of political opportunity that prevailed in Egypt in the post June 30th phase. The arrest of movement leading figures, specifically movement General Coordinator Ahmed Maher, has created deep disturbances in the movement's overall strategy and shifted the movement's focus from macro-political issues and its commitment to the pursuit of democracy to applying political pressure to release imprisoned movement members.¹⁷⁵ The court decision to ban the movement and its activities limited the movement's ability to mobilize resources and reduced its media exposure. Moreover, the ongoing struggle between the post June 30th regime and the Muslim Brotherhood, taking into consideration the rigidity of both parties, has negatively affected the pattern of interaction between the different revolutionary forces limiting the influence of any non-institutional political alliances in the post June 30th phase.

¹⁷⁵ A personal interview with M.S., member of 6 April, Cairo, 8/8/2016

Ultras White Knights

Ultras White Knights faced severe challenges in the post June 30th phase. The movement and its activities were also banned by a court ruling in May 2015¹⁷⁶, 22 of its members died in what's known as the massacre of the Aerial Defense Stadium in February of the same year and its main platform of expression remains absent due to the ongoing ban of audience from attending football matches in stadiums. The non-political nature of the movement and its core commitment to a non-political entity, the Zamalek Sporting Club, constitute important dimensions in the impact of the changing structure of political opportunity on the movement. Non-political factors like the change in the Zamalek Club leadership and the performance of the football team had a tangible effect on the movement. At the same time, political factors like the clashes with the security forces in the Aerial Defense Stadium, the court ruling to ban the movement, the arrest of some movement members and leading figures and of course the protest law, which was tailored in an overly-broad and elusive manner that could easily incriminate any collective presence for the movement, also had considerable effects on the movement and its strategies and tactics. Combining both types of factors, and weaving them with the non-ideological and non-political nature of the movement is necessary to understand the impact of the post June 30th phase on Ultras White Knights.

Despite the politicization of numerous Ultras members since 2011, the resumption of football activities in late 2013 shifted the movement's focus as a collective entity to its core goal: supporting Zamalek. Examining the role of the Ultras, whether Ultras Ahlawy or Ultras White Knights, over the course of the past

¹⁷⁶ See Akl, Ziad "reassessing dealing with the Ultras" Al-Ahram Center for Political & Strategic Studies, Cairo, 27/9/2015
<http://acpss.ahram.org.eg/Review.aspx?Serial=10245>

five years demonstrates that those movements' political role is a reactive rather than a causal one. They apply political pressure through collective action and clash with political dimensions as an entity in response to stimuli. However, Ultras movements in their collective capacities do not have overarching political directions or detailed political agenda. Therefore, movement goals and tactics are politicized by external factors like waves of mass mobilization, state repression or violence and solidarity with movement members who are facing challenges on a political platform. Hence, the impact of a changing structure of political opportunity on Ultras movements is determined through the extent and intensity of external political stimuli on one hand, and the conditions surrounding the entities to which Ultras members relate and with which they identify (the football teams they cheer for and the clubs they represent) on the other.

With the closure of political opportunity and the restricted access to the public sphere, the political presence of Ultras White Knights became less vocal. As mentioned earlier, the resumption of the football league and the change in the Zamalek Club leadership made the movement more focused on the team and the ongoing football activities. The new Zamalek Club President, Mortada Mansour, who was elected in March 2014¹⁷⁷, had a very contentious relationship with the movement. It is important here to understand that club presidents in Egypt are not elected by club or team fans or supporters, but by club members, individuals who pay yearly subscriptions to be members in the club and enjoy a range of privileges and benefits in return like social and sporting activities. Club memberships in Egypt cost somewhere between LE 250,000 to LE 500,000 (depending on how fancy the club is)

¹⁷⁷ See <http://english.ahram.org.eg/NewsContent/6/51/97779/Sports/Egyptian-Football/Outspoken-lawyer-Mansour-becomes-Zamalek-chairman.aspx>

with a yearly membership renewal fee of LE 750 in average. Team supporters and Ultras members are rarely club members. Therefore, the movement's position towards Mortada Mansour was not influential in the Zamalek Club elections. Mansour banned the movement from attending team practice on the account of anti-military chants and offensive language used in cheering. Several attempts to reconcile between Mansour and the movement were made, but none of them proved successful.¹⁷⁸ As the tensions between the movement and the new club president became more acute, internal debate within Ultras White Knights started to take place over the political content of the cheers and the slogans. Some movement members believed that the politically hostile content should be toned down in order for the movement to be able to attend team practice. However, those views could not find sufficient support within movement ranks due to the frequent hostility shown by Mansour to the movement.¹⁷⁹

When the Egyptian Football Association decided to allow audience into stadiums again in February 2015, Ultras White Knights prepared themselves for attending a match between Zamalek and Enppi. The match was important since those two teams were fighting on the top of the league table, and at the same time, it was the first time Ultras movements were allowed into football stadiums since the Port Said Stadium massacre in February 2012. The entrance procedures were very difficult and the audience had to go through excruciating security measures that included standing in line in an iron cage to wait inspection. Due to the large numbers of audience and the slow performance of police forces securing the stadium gates, several fights started to occur between members of Ultras White Knights and the police. The police used tear gas to disperse the fans and the result was a stampede that

¹⁷⁸ A personal interview with H.A., member of Ultras White Knights, Cairo, 3/8/2016

¹⁷⁹ Ibid

resulted in the death of 22 Ultras White Knights members.¹⁸⁰ 19 members died on the spot and 3 others died the next day as a result of injuries. This incident suspended the Egyptian League, brought back to memory the Port Said Stadium massacre and put Ultras White Knights in a new confrontation with the state represented in the police and with the club president whom they believed to be an accomplice in a conspiracy to target movement members due to the recurrent conflicts they had with him.¹⁸¹

The Aerial Defense Stadium events created internal disputes inside the movement. Movement members debated over the best course of action to respond to what happened in the stadium. While some members saw that a confrontational response is the most appropriate course of action, others believed that movement needed to start a dialogue process with security institutions and the club board of directors to ensure the safety of movement members. However, the result of this dispute was the refusal of a reconciliatory approach and pursuing pressure to cancel the Egyptian National League and hold the ones responsible for the massacre accountable. Once again, the contradiction between the movement's collective decisions and the members' actions in their individual capacity materialized in this situation when two members decided to avenge the death of their fellows by throwing a bag of urine on Mortada Mansour.¹⁸² The attack, which Mansour claims consisted of a chemical substance and not urine, motivated Mansour to file a case against the movement accusing it of being a terrorist entity. The result was a court ruling in May 2015 banning all Ultras movements and their activities, but the ruling did not declare

¹⁸⁰ See <http://english.ahram.org.eg/News/122539.aspx>

¹⁸¹ A personal interview with H.S, member of Ultras White Knights, Cairo, 28/7/2016

¹⁸² A personal interview with H.A., member of Ultras White Knights, Cairo, 3/8/2016

the movement a "terrorist entity".¹⁸³ Movement internal disputes continued when the Egyptian Football Association took a decision to resume the league, which Zamalek won for the first time since 2004. Ultras White Knights members were divided over whether to celebrate the club's victory or refrain from all celebrations due to the un-avenged deaths of their fellows. The movement's official position was against any formal celebrations, however, some movement members decided to celebrate in their individual capacity.

Overall, Ultras White Knights, and Ultras movements in general, were significantly marginalized in the post June 30th phase. However, the tools of this marginalization were not entirely political due to the nature of the movement itself. Although there were political stimuli via state violence and repressive legislation, which influenced the movement's decisions, the football related challenges were more effective on the movement's trajectory in the post June 30th phase. Despite the politicization of numerous movement members over the course of the past four years, the movement is clearly heading towards de-politicizing its image and its direction in order to be able to maintain its core Zamalek-related purpose. The closed structure of political opportunity and the movement's non-political challenges have caused Ultras White Knights to withdraw from the public sphere, reduce their political presence and internally debate over their public participation in the first place.

¹⁸³ See Akl, Ziad "reassessing dealing with the Ultras" Al-Ahram Center for Political & Strategic Studies, Cairo, 27/9/2015
<http://acpss.ahram.org.eg/Review.aspx?Serial=10245>

Conclusion

The data collected and analyzed along the course of this research suggests a number of conclusions regarding both the political opportunity thesis and the nature of Egypt's post-January political transition and the role of social movements in it. Despite the fact that different social movements were operating within the same political opportunity structure over the three phases, the effect of that structure was not the same on all movements. Although the formative factors in a political opportunity structure are stable and measurable, their impact on social movements is not. Over the past five years in Egypt, the response of social movements to the changes in the political opportunity structure was governed by factors other than the ones making up the structure of political opportunity itself. The response of the Revolutionary Socialists, April 6 and Ultras White Knights to the changes in the political opportunity structure were not just influenced by the openness or closure in the structure, but also by movement ideology, the flexibility in the movement's interactions with other social and political forces, the movement's level of internal cohesion and the manner in which a movement perceives a political opportunity in the first place. Moreover, the impact of the openness or closure of the political opportunity structure on social movements is closely related to challenges that are specific to each movement, whether internal or external. While the three movements researched operated within the same political environment, each of them had unique challenges not confronted by the other movements, which in turn governed their responses to the changes in political opportunity. For example, the influx of membership did not allow the Revolutionary Socialists to ideologically groom new members, April 6 faced consecutive fragmentations and a court ruling banning its

presence and Ultras White Knights suffered from acute hostility from its own club president and were affected by the decision to ban audience attendance in football matches. Each movement faced those specific challenges in an isolated manner depending on the nature of the movement, its tactics of operation and its overall set of interactions with the state or with other political forces or elites.

The political opportunity thesis itself was developed mainly in democratic contexts. Although some studies have worked on its application in non-democratic political environments and have proved it to be valid, the significance of the different variables making up a political opportunity structure is different in democratic and non-democratic contexts. The case of Egypt in the past five years proves that some of the political opportunity structure variables are dependent on the overall political environment on one hand and the state structure and the autonomy of the different state branches on the other. For example, access to the institutional political system is one of the factors that make up a structure of political opportunity and determines the extent of its openness or closure according to Doug McAdam's definition. However, in a non-democratic context like Egypt's, access to the institutional political system does not necessarily result in a more opened structure of political opportunity. During the Parliamentary elections of 2011 and 2015, the institutional political system was theoretically accessible in Egypt. But the accessible institutional system could not undo longstanding facts about Egypt's balance of political powers in 2011 or confront a matrix of non-representative and repressive legislations in 2015. The result of that was a very low rate of participation in the elections of 2015, a lack of diversity in the running candidates and parties and an overall absence of a clear political agenda for any political force that participated in the election. Moreover, the significance of how accessible the institutional political system is to social movements depends on the

willingness and the capacity of the movement to institutionally participate in a political process. The three movements examined in this research did not demonstrate any willingness to participate in an institutional political process or to transform into institutional political entities like political parties. In fact, all three movements declined opportunities to become a part of an institutional political procedure, whether it was a decline to join the constitutional drafting committee like the Revolutionary Socialists did, a resignation from the committee like April 6 did or a refusal to accept a Presidential initiative of dialogue like the Ultras did. In addition, all three movements did not run for elections held in 2011, 2012 and 2015. Therefore, the significance of the openness or closure of the institutional political system to social movements depends primarily on the movement's willingness to participate in an institutional political process and the extent of representation the institutional process entails.

The state's capacity or propensity for repression is another factor that depends largely on the state structure and the political contextualization of the threat posed by social movements to the state. In Egypt, the manner of state repression was not uniform with all social movements; it depended on the timing and the movements themselves. The tactics and means of repression themselves varied from one time period to another and from one movement to another, ranging from direct state violence, draconian legislation or mass arrests. The influence of the state structure on the capacity for repression was evident during the Muslim Brotherhood rule from 2012 to 2013. The matrix of security institutions structurally embedded within the Egyptian state demonstrated its capability to operate independently from the executive authority represented in the Presidency. Incidents like Ahmed Maher's arrest, the largely neutral behavior of security forces during the Presidential Palace

(Ithadeya) clashes in December 2012, the army's statement on the first of July 2013 that gave Mohamed Morsy 48 hours to solve the political crisis and the peaceful behavior of the police and the army during the mass mobilization that took place from June 30th to July 3rd 2013 all demonstrate that the state's repressive apparatus, due to its structural nature, was working according to an independent agenda of interests separate from that of the executive during the Mohamed Morsy phase. This point becomes even clearer when the state's repressive conduct is compared in different phases. The repressive apparatus' peaceful conduct towards the mass mobilization in June 2013 was neither exhibited in previous incidents like the Maspeero or the Cabinet clashes in 2011, nor was it reflected on the state's course of action towards the Rabaa' and Nahda sit-ins in 2013. Similarly, the repressive measures taken by the state towards social movements and collective action were also not uniform. The only measure that equally affected all social movements was the protest law that was issued in November 2013. Other measures of repression were independently used with different social movements depending on the extent of influence of the movements and their direct clashes or nurtured hostilities with the state. Ultras White Knights were subjected to a massacre in February 2015 where the police forces present did not take any action to try and prevent it, a behavior very similar to that of both the army and the police during the Port Said Stadium massacre in February 2012. Both massacres took place after noticeable political activity by Ultras Ahlawy and Ultras White Knights. In a similar manner, April 6 was incriminated by a court ruling in April 2014 after a phase of acute opposition to the post June 30th regime. The presence of elites within the ranks of movements goes a long way to explain the intensity of state repression and the manner in which this repression is executed. The evident contrast in the manner of repression applied to Ultras movements (where the

majority of movement members belongs to a young age group and is composed mainly of lower-middle class youths) versus the one applied to a movement like the Revolutionary Socialists (where several members belong to sectors of professional elites like journalists, writers, doctors and academics) could be traced to the existence of elites within the ranks of the movements. This is not to say that the presence of elites within movements secures them against state repression, but it certainly reduces the intensity of that repression and diversifies its means. Therefore, In Egypt's case, the state's capacity or propensity for repression depended on the nature of the movements, their membership ranks and the overall political context in which the state repressive apparatus is operating.

Elite alignments and the presence or absence of elite allies were influential factors in how social movements responded to the changes in the political opportunity in Egypt over the course of the past five years. Elite alignments, or the set of elite interactions that constitute the core or the foundation of socio-political interests, shifted over the three phases Egypt passed through from 2011 to 2015. As mentioned in previous chapters, elites were aligned with the revolution during the SCAF period, with elite allies aiding social movements and sharing anti-Mubarak and pro-democracy sentiments. Social movements received similar aid from elites who were lined up against the Muslim Brotherhood and the growing influence of political Islam during Mohamed Morsy's phase. However, this set of alignments as well as those allies shifted position in the post June 30th phase. All collective action related activity was cracked down upon either through legislation or direct measures of repression like arrests or state violence. Pro-revolution elite alignment and elite allies acted as means of empowerment for social movements during the phases of SCAF and Mohamed Morsy, providing movements with various resources, media exposure and

a more positive public perception in some instances. It would be fair to say that social movements were used more than once as a tool of leverage in elite conflicts in Egypt over the course of the past five years. However, the three social movements examined in this research did not offer sufficient concessions for any of the political elite factions that approached them. The failure to utilize social movements as a tool of securing political interests in the SCAF period and during Mohamed Morsy's rule goes a long way towards explaining the shift in elite alignments in the post June 30th phase. Moreover, the state's attempts to reconfigure professional, bureaucratic, business and political elites in the post June 30th phase were successful in inducing a pro-state shift in elite alignment in Egypt.

Political interactions and coalition building were not significantly useful for social movements in Egypt in the past five years. Although some coalitions were made between various social movements, none of those coalitions resulted in major policy changes or a stable collaborative entity among the member movements. The only possible exception would be the Revolution's Youth Coalition, which managed to maintain cohesion for a considerable amount of time (January 2011-July 2012) despite the recurring internal conflicts and act as a representative entity for the revolution until it was dismantled. Another dimension of collaboration was present in the support of various social movements to broad initiatives or other social movements like "Kazeboon", "No to Military Trials" and "Tamarod". The openness in the structure of political opportunity that Egypt witnessed after the January revolution did not lead to successful coalitions between social movements due to the differences in movement agendas and the contrasting interpretations of perceived opportunities. Moreover, the short timeframe between the ouster of Mubarak and the institutional political procedure that took place after January 2011 did not allow social

movements to form electoral coalitions. Post-revolutionary electoral coalitions were mainly composed of political parties, some of whom were new parties that engulfed some social movement members like the Egyptian Social Democratic Party, the Popular Socialist Coalition Party and the Strong Egypt Party. However, it would be fair to conclude that April 6, the Revolutionary Socialists and Ultras White Knights did not aspire to participate in an institutional political process, not only due to the short timeframe, but also due to the shared belief that an institutional political process would merely resurrect Mubarak's balance of power between political forces in Egypt, launch an unequal battle with Islamist forces and further consolidate the rule of the SCAF. Nonetheless, it is important to notice that coalitions between social movements became more possible with the closure in the structure of political opportunity in the post June 30th phase. The various constraints put on collective action and the increasing state repression created mutual grounds between social movements that did not exist in the previous two phases.

Internal challenges were another formative factor in the trajectory taken by social movements over the past five years in Egypt. Social movements were confronted by three internal challenges: the lack of capacities to accommodate the influx in membership rates, organizational conflicts that resulted in movement fragmentation and the lack of consensus over movement strategies and policies due to the change in political opportunity and the consequent change in movement roles and spheres of influence. Although those challenges were faced by April 6, the Revolutionary Socialists and Ultras White Knights, they were manifested in each movement differently depending on the nature of the movement and its internal structure. The Revolutionary Socialists could not undergo the proper prepping process for their new members, which caused problems related to movement cohesion and

movement infiltration by the state's security apparatus. Ultras White Knights on the other hand enjoyed considerable expansion in movement membership but could not utilize this expansion due to the suspension of the national football league and the ban on crowd attendance after the resumption of the league. Similarly, organizational conflicts and lack of consensus over strategies led to the fragmentation of April 6 into more than one front. However, those conflicts were present in Ultras White Knights as well, but the movement did not fragment into fronts, it suffered a problem of differentiating between the movement's collective behavior as an entity and the behavior of its members as individuals. Therefore, although internal challenges may be common, their effect on social movements depends to a great extent on how the movements themselves are structured.

The cases of the three movements examined in this research demonstrate the importance of ideology in maintaining movement cohesion in a changing political environment. April 6 is a cross-ideological movement, Ultras White Knights is a non-ideological one and the Revolutionary Socialists are a strictly ideological movement. The ideological component of the Revolutionary Socialists has managed to maintain the movement's internal cohesion despite the changes in the structure of political opportunity over the past five years. Ideology does not merely maintain movement cohesion, but also governs the pattern of interaction between movements and political forces and directs overall movement strategy. The Revolutionary Socialists have experienced much fewer internal conflicts in comparison to another political movement like April 6. The political interactions and internal debates of social movements are easier to assimilate if an ideological framework is present. Ideological movements do not eventually become as popular or attract the same amount of new members as non-ideological movements do, and they are generally more rigid in their

political alliances and coalitions. However, ideology maintains movement internal cohesion and political agenda consistency, specifically in a changing political environment.

Despite all the internal debates over tactics and strategies, the internal challenges of accommodating new members or the external factors shaping the structure of political opportunity like state's capacity for repression or elite alignment, the path that social movements in Egypt were taken on over the course of the past five years cannot be alienated from the point of onset that marked those five years a remarkable period in Egyptian history, or in other words, the January revolution.

Although Egypt witnessed a consistent increase in social movement activity during the first decade of the 21st century, the January revolution marked a rupture in state-society relations and opened up avenues of political activism that were present prior to the revolution. While this rupture could be explained as a change in the structure of political opportunity, the extent of that change and its impact on the various political actors is closely related to the pattern of that rupture and its direct significance to Egypt's balance of political powers. The January revolution was indeed a historic event that will shape various dimensions in Egypt's future, but one must question the extent of political and social change this event was capable of instigating. January 25th was more of a political revolution rather than a social one. The millions that occupied Tahrir Square in Cairo, and other squares in different cities like Alexandria and Suez for 18 days applied pressure on the state until the core demand of the sit-in was realized with Mubarak's ouster. However, factors that would have allowed for the creation of a permissive context capable of materializing significant political and social change (like military defections, acute elite conflicts, class-based mobilization or armed struggle) did not take place. Therefore, what January 25th created was not a

radically different political environment, but rather a new political context that had room for moderate and tolerable competition to longstanding state structures and balances of political power. In this sense, the resulting change in the structure of political opportunity was not vigorous enough to allow for the realization of the January revolution's demands. Moreover, social movements were caught up in macro-activism, mobilizing on the basis of broad national demands in the absence of an institutional framework capable of assimilating those demands. Hence, it would be fair to conclude that social movements over-estimated the extent of change brought about by Mubarak's ouster.

The period from early 2011 to late 2015 witnessed an increase in social movement activity in Egypt, but at the same time, it also witnessed a systematic process of marginalization of those movements, specifically in the post June 30th phase. Marginalizing social movements in Egypt was a product of rapid changes in the structure of political opportunity and a bundle of internal challenges that faced the various social movements working in Egypt's political landscape. Future social movement activity in Egypt will require a balance between the external political environment and the internal movement dynamics. A shift in social movement focus from macro to micro activism will also aid in sustaining movement influence and capacity to induce change. Moreover, manufacturing elite alliances and intra-movement coalitions are a necessity to survive a closed structure of political opportunity and an ever-growing state propensity for repression. Finally, January 25th was not capable of introducing instant political change capable of confronting Egypt's structural realities and its dominant elite alignment, but nonetheless, it created changes in political perceptions and awareness that could be built on to foster future political change.

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