Department of Political and Social Sciences

Exploring Individual Motivation for Social Change:
Mobilization of the Muslim Brotherhood's youth in pre-revolutionary Egypt

Emin Poljarevic

Thesis submitted for assessment with a view to obtaining the degree of
Doctor of Political and Social Sciences of the European University Institute

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Abstract

Islamist activism is on the rise across the Middle East and North Africa. In the light of the post-revolutionary elections in Egypt and Tunisia, Islamist parties are sweeping the polls supported by the overwhelming majority of voters. This dissertation investigates the dynamic of this support for the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood. The explanation of individual activists' motivation behind this form of middle-class activism has been investigated by exploring individual beliefs, emotions and identities. Activists' motivational explanations and representation do not develop in a vacuum, outside of a specific context. Explaining the configuration of collective action therefore requires an analysis of a pattern of social characteristics using a spectrum of social movement theories. The long-term contentious relationship between the various Egyptian authoritarian regimes and the Muslim Brotherhood produced an Islamist resistance culture with a particular set of incitements for would be activists. Middle-class activists have primarily been motivated by the Brotherhood's ability to educate its followers through a multi-stage membership process. During this process youth activists have acquired a strengthened sense of individual purpose. They also possess organizational skills and have successfully ascended the social ladder, leading to a feeling of moral superiority and a degree of personal autonomy even within an authoritarian socio-political context. The social movement organization serves as a facilitator of structured dissent and its success depends ultimately on its ability to recognize the basic needs of a frustrated population. Sympathizers of a particular social movement organization in turn seek realistic forms of dissent which correspond to their system of values and practices.

Preface

In the last stages of authoring this dissertation, December 2010-February 2011, an unexpected series of revolutionary events swept through the Middle East and North African states catching both the affected authoritarian regimes and observers by surprise. A rapid diffusion of explosive collective expressions of grievances rippled through the masses of urban centers in Tunisia, Egypt and Libya, introducing a new era in the historical trajectory of these countries and the region as a whole. By all gathered accounts, the Islamist social movement organizations and political parties in these and some neighboring states have been the primary political winners in the power vacuum left by the crumbling repressive regimes. As the post-revolutionary parliamentary and presidential elections unfold, and the normalization of political plurality develops, in each of the states, it can be expected that the formerly marginalized Islamists will dominate the reconstruction of socio-political institutions. But what do these Islamist organizations stand for? Who are the Islamist activists? And what has been the primary force behind their popular support?

Previous studies of Islamism and its activists often focused on the operational and discursive relationship between religion and politics propagated by these groups. Some even looked at the structural reasons behind the Islamists' sustained mobilization and organizational development. Still others simply described Islamism as a social tide or a form of the region's collective cultural expression of its inability to reform itself. Many of these studies have displaced some of the central questions regarding the sustained mobilization of Islamism across the region and beyond. This study represents an alternative point of departure and approach to understanding the successes of what is now one of the most thriving Islamist social movement organizations – namely the Egyptian Muslim Brotherhood.

This study combines disciplinary contributions from a variety of scholars, but primarily those within the sociology of social movements, social psychology, and repression studies. I believe that such an interdisciplinary platform offers a solid ground from which one can explore the effects of state repression on the development of Islamist dissent. My primary focus is directed toward explaining individual motivations behind this form of social movement activism. More specifically, the study attends to, what I believe, is an underdeveloped understanding of authoritarian states' impact on religiously inspired social movement organization. As such, the study presents an inclusive analysis of macro-, meso-, and micro-dynamics of contention.

During my review of the social movement literature, I have noticed that most studies did not problematize institutionalized repression of activism and social movement mobilization, thus presenting us with a substantial empirical gap. It is, therefore, important to explore the impact of systemic state repression on low-level activism and its responses. It is for that reason that I investigate the individual activists' motivation to mobilize against an authoritarian regime. For the investigation to be convincing and systematic I have chosen to map out the dynamic of state repression and its impact on the Islamist meso-level mobilization. This mapping has been integrated into the analytical structure where repression effects have been traced by locking on to the Muslim Brotherhood's operational and strategic framework.

The following chapters are ordered as to ease the reader into the topic by initially presenting the theoretical and methodological approach and the empirical material in the first two chapters, respectively. After that, I briefly introduce the organization of the Muslim Brotherhood by describing the mainsprings of its initial formation. At the same time, I introduce Mubarak regime's repression mechanisms by explaining its main characteristics. Several subsequent chapters discuss the dynamics of interaction between the macro- and meso level actors, including the analysis of the focal spaces of contention. The main part of the study consists of an examination of micro-level activism, showing how its essence lies in it being continuously affected and shaped by the contentious relations on the macro- and meso levels. My arguments here rest on closely analyzing the individual activists' motivational narratives. This disposition of the study has allowed me both to address an alternative approach to the study of Islamism, *and* to attempt an integration of structure and agency; the result, I hope, is a convincing and original multidimensional understanding of social mobilization under repression.

The study as a whole is divided into three thematic parts, each with its specific purpose. The first part (chapters 1 and 2), situates the subject into a larger body of social movement scholarship; it outlines the purpose, main research questions, and the methodology of the case study. Chapter one outlines the limits of this study together with an approach to the defined subject. It explains the usage of the main concepts: repression, Islamism and motivations, and how the study addresses several gaps in the study of social movements. Chapter two describes the study's methodological design and explains why I have chosen Egypt, the Muslim Brotherhood, and its young activists as a primary "object" of study.

The second part (chapters 3, 4 and 5) contains the empirical chapters that reflect upon the underlining effects of state repression on the MB's Islamist activism. The disposition of in this part is based on logic of structural impact on the development of social activism. I believe that this inductive layout allows for a more critical overview of the socio-political conditions that individual activists face in the formation and structuration of their dissent. For that reason, the *who, how* and *where* of contention is appropriately dealt with. In other words, each chapter represents a dimension of the structural layout which directly influences micro-level activism.

Chapter three delineates the complexity of the authoritarian state regime and the opposing focal social movement organization (SMO), the Muslim Brotherhood. The *who* in the contentious interaction is presented under the assumption that the dominant actor (authoritarian regime) ultimately provokes the SMO to adapt and respond to authoritarian policies. As a consequence of the externally imposed limitation on its activism, the Muslim Brotherhood has developed an internal structure designed to deal with the regime's oppressive policies. This chapter represents a mild critique of assumptions made by resource mobilization theorists (RMT), showing that the complexities of social mobilization in an authoritarian context highlight additional elements than those included in the RMT.

Chapter four explains the *how* of repression/dissention, that is, the strategies and tactics of the contentious relationship. The chapter's main argument is that the violent state policies are met with nonviolent Islamist mobilization. The dynamic of authoritarian policies has, however, been inconsistent, and under constant pressure to conform to the constitutional order. This dynamic has prompted the Muslim Brotherhood to develop a set of nonviolent strategies resulting in a reformist type of activism channeled through social and institutional structures. The primary goal has therefore been to legitimate their

socio-political claims by both gathering mass-support, and creating a sense of trust among the professional middle class.

Chapter five deals with *where* the contentious relationship takes place. The chapter makes use of the theoretical construct of political opportunity structures (POS) developed by the social movement scholars. The presentation of the Muslim Brotherhood's primary space for mobilization (syndicates, courts) and a more abstract mobilization field where legitimacy and credibility are valued, public religious sentiments, is structured so as to construct a background upon which the micro-level activism can be explored in-depth.
The third part (chapters 6, 7, 8, 9 and 10) situates the micro-level dynamics of Islamist activism into the larger context of the repression/mobilization framework outlined in the previous part. Here the impact of repression on the individual activists' mobilization choices is analyzed through the abstract conception of agency as it, seemingly paradoxically, operates under non-agentive constraints. The form of repression is discussed in broad terms in order to highlight its psychological impact on individuals' deliberation of activism.

Chapter six analyzes the complexity of Islamist activist agency by the way of focusing on the compound relationship between the SMO and individual activists. The evolution of the organizational and ideological structure of the Muslim Brotherhood has also played a major role in sustaining the mobilization of the group. On the other hand, the organization's pragmatic mobilization strategies, its membership size, and growing generational differences have branched out into substantial differences of opinion within the organization. This, I try to show, has been both a major strength and weakness of the Muslim Brotherhood.

Chapters seven, eight and nine collectively explore the activists' motivational structure. Here, the activists' narratives are approached with the aid of three analytic dimensions: beliefs (chapter 7), emotions (chapter 8) and identities (chapter 9). These chapters go beyond traditional approaches to activists' mobilization choices as they explore the roots of interpersonal solidarity. What they show is that the Muslim Brotherhood version of Islamism has had significant impact on attracting large numbers of activists. Moreover, the MB has been effective in tapping into the symbolism of moral ideals through which they have been able to evoke (positive) emotional responses by many middle-class Egyptians. Above all, the interviewed activists considered the Muslim Brotherhood's activism as a moral obligation, enabling them to change an ill-managed society and state.

Chapter ten concludes the study by way of summarizing and specifying the most important results of my findings to the discipline of social movement studies. It offers a critical approach to state repression, highlighting the specific features of Islamist thought in social mobilization. In light of the constructed socio-political context, the chapter explicitly states my understanding of social activists' motivational drive to mobilize, directly answering the initial research questions stated in the first chapter. The chapter then briefly returns to a comment on de-westernization of social movement studies made in the introduction, arguing for the importance of broadening the scope of epistemologically critical investigations of SM mobilization dynamics beyond the traditional regions. It also explains how this study contributes towards that purpose.

Uppsala, February 28, 2012

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PART I

1   Moving Beyond Democratic Contexts in Social Movement Research[1]

These distinctions between old and new social movements provide a convenient way of categorizing various contemporary political conflicts and social movements. For one thing, classes and related class interests, which provided the prime source of collective identity and motivation for collective action in the past (at least in Europe), seem less a factor today, at least for explaining social movements. Contemporary social movements seem motivated by concerns other than those directly associated with income and economic security.

Eyerman 1992, 45

Introduction

This study is an attempt to broaden the sociological understanding of social movements by focusing on individual activists' motivation for mobilization in an authoritarian and non-Western context. This case study is an extension of previous attempts to reduce both the empirical and conceptual gaps by providing an analysis of micro-sociological dynamics in a Muslim majority society ruled by a repressive regime. In other words, the ambition is to better our understanding of the dynamics of collective nonviolent Islamist

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[1] Understanding collective action in general and social movements in particular can be used for "good" or "bad" motives. A student of collective action can research the kind of movement that is compliant with his/her normative values, and vice versa. I want to argue that an awareness of this fact is extremely important in a "scientific" evaluation and informs the research result. A researcher's relation withhis object of study includes taking political positions. Charles Tilly addresses this particular issue briefly in his famous work *From Mobilization to Revolution* wherein he candidly declares that there is no avoiding one's "political stance". It is, therefore, important to acknowledge this fact be aware of the bias one possesses when entering the field. He adequately proposes that "[w]e must find the balance point between imprecision and obscurantism". I intend to follow that advice. Since we are concerned with collective action of state subjects then it also follows that this research assumes an activist-centered approach to the issues at stake.

dissent, by analyzing individual motivations behind activism. To achieve this purpose, the study's interdisciplinary profile integrates theoretical concepts from several different fields of social studies, namely, social movement scholarship, theories of social psychology and studies of repression. This is done in order to make use of the most relevant parts of these traditions in order to construct a theoretical model that will help answer the research questions and analyze a large amount of empirical data that has been gathered (see Yin 2003).

The first chapter in particular highlights the importance of social context and culture in studying social agents. Herein the basic logic of state repression is outlined together with the concepts of motivation and Islamism - two key terms used in this study.[2] The chapter also attempts to situate the descriptions of personal transformation from a passive observer of socio-political realities to an active, religiously inspired, agent seeking to project his newly acquired zeal upon others in the hope of transforming these same socio-political realities to a new format.

1.1 Beyond "Western" Contexts

The dynamic of socio-political contention in authoritarian states which employ repression, has been a topic of a number of important studies (Johnston 1989; Khawaja 1993; Kurzman 1996; Davenport 2000; Thalhammer 2001; Ondetti, 2002; Osa and Corduneanu-Huci 2003; Boudreau 2004; Francisco 2004; Davenport *et al* 2005; Davenport 2007a). However, surprisingly few scholars have attempted to explain the specific micro-dynamics of Islamist social movement mobilization under state repression (one notable exception is the edited volume of Wictorowicz 2004a; see also Gunning 2008).

There seems to be a lack of regional expertise among social movement scholars regarding Islamist activism in general and especially its micro-social specificities. Moreover, they usually study movements and events with which they sympathize (Tilly 1978,

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[2] In Durkheim's *The Rules of the Sociological Method*, one can find a developed and plausible argument supporting a sociologist's effort to formulate research concepts. Here, one can find formulations of the main concepts used in explaining individual motivations behind social change in late Mubarak-era Egypt.

introduction).[3] Consequently, an overwhelming majority of movement studies deal with leftist, environmental, anti-globalization and other types of movements that are prominent in Western-democratic contexts. Thirdly, many scholarly investigations of Islamist activism see it as being anti-systemic, particularly evident in the work of area-studies specialists and political scientists, who ignore the explanatory frameworks developed by social movement scholars (see Huntington 1997; Lewis 1997; Pipes 2003; Kepel 1993; 2006).

For that reason it is necessary to provide a brief overview of a typical political regime in the MENA region, before the "Arab spring" of 2011. This can be generalized to other states where an authoritarian system is in place ruled by a single or a very small group of leaders in control of political power, often for decades at a time (see Linz 2000). Several of the long-reigning regimes in North Africa have recently been deposed, including the Mubarak regime in Egypt, a primary concern for this study. However, events are still unfolding and it is as yet unsure whether real freedom and political plurality will be enshrined in the polity. For this reason, the revolutionary and post-revolutionary events of 2011-2012 are left largely unattended in this study.

What is, on the other hand, explored in-depth are the policies, strategies and tactics of political control the Mubarak regime employed. This is done by identifying the main repressive mechanisms including the state's institutional framework and its security infrastructure. The former regime's repression infrastructure and strategies represent a macro, structural dimension of the analysis. Its control strategies are contrasted with the meso-level dissidents, the Muslim Brotherhood, which throughout its development learned how to counter repression and organizationally survive for eight decades, and in the process accumulate a substantial amount of organizational experience.

In contrast, many social movement experiences in most of the liberal-democratic states in the post-WWII period were based on a different set of "rules" of contention (for American civil rights activism, see Davenport 2005 and McAdam 1988, for European experiences of left-wing activism, see della Porta 1992). In an authoritarian setting, as a rule, any type of

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[3] It would appear that there are few scholars sympathetic to Islamist activism. This assumption does not necessarily affect the quality of academic and scholarly standards one needs to adhere while conducting sociological research, as long the researcher is aware and open with his/her sympathies (see Tilly 1978, introduction).

social activism that challenged the political status quo has automatically been treated as a (security) threat (see Kurzman 1996; Boudreau 2004). Such threats, viewed from the regime's perspective, needed to be contained and/or eliminated. As such, Islamist SMOs in the Egyptian post-independence period have been treated, both in the terms of numbers and organizational capacities, as the most threatening socio-political force in the country (Wickham 2002; Wiktorowicz 2004; Zuhur 2007). This has meant that, the Islamist SMOs in general, and the Muslim Brotherhood in particular, have been subjected to a wide range of state repression tactics.

It is in this contentious nexus between the repressive state regime and the dissenting social movement organization that one can find a variety of individual activists who are constantly making micro-decisions about their socio-political dissenting activities. Individual actors in this study are represented by their narratives, which represent a socio-psychological dimension of mobilization in an authoritarian state (for a similar proposition see Walsh and Warland 1983, 778). It is here that one can observe the effects of macro-/meso-level contention on a very individual level.

For instance, if one was to attentively observe the revolutionary events that unfolded in Egypt and other Arab states, one may have noted that people on the streets often refer to "breaking the barrier of fear" as an explanation for the popular uprising where their desire for freedom and justice won over their fears of repression. The analysis conducted in this study therefore goes beyond resource mobilization theories and focuses on grounded micro-level explanations based on the assumption that individual activists are those actors who are motivated enough to choose to mobilize against a more powerful adversary (the repressive regime). This is done in the hope of fulfilling their desire to change their personal (psychological and/or material) situation (Stekelenburg and Klandermans 2007, 182).

Motivational schemas or motivational cognitive structures about driving forces of human behavior do not develop in a vacuum that is outside of a social context. Here social context means that which surrounds a social actor and that which helps us to understand his/her actions (Scharfstein 1989, 1). This constructed framework of social and physical references surrounding a social actor is what we can call contextualization, a process of

making connections between a social actor and the contiguous social surroundings (see Dilley 1999).

For example, in order to explain a social activist's motivation to mobilize against a particular regime, one needs to interpret the specificities of that regime and its control mechanisms. Moreover, one would also need to explain the organizational form chosen by an activist to channel his/her desires into (social) change. For instance, what specific social features are represented by the organizational framework? What operational strategies are present and what and how does the organization present (as) its solutions to various groups in a restricted socio-political environment? Lastly, a general awareness of and attention to cultural specificities of the everyday lives of activists allows the researcher to play a role of participant observer exploring the actors' perception of their social surroundings. This is a general proposition relevant for any social context. This consideration would therefore challenge essentialist claims regarding the uniqueness and particularities of the "other" in relation to "us" (Patai 1976; Huntington 1997; Lewis 2003; Pipes 2003).

In this case, a general, de-essentialist, understanding of the broader Islamist movement would see it as being a diverse social force pursuing social and political change within Muslim societies through the establishment of a (more or less) *Shariah*-based constitutional order. Consequently, such an order would serve as a base for a novel political framework and the establishment of a religiously based social welfare system (Gardell 2005; IRIN 2006; Feldman 2008; Esposito 2010). The broader Islamist movement[4] includes organizations which pursue these and similar goals, all adhere to a wide variety of interpretations of their goals and mobilize to achieve such goals through a number of strategic choices. Islamism, as defined below, is a shared ideological base for the MB as well as a large number of other organizations in the MENA region, which makes them, at the very least, ideologically related.

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[4] The term 'broader Islamist movement' includes all organized nonviolent (and even violent), claims-making, socio-political groups ranging from Morocco to Indonesia which have a political program where they merge aspects of Islam with a contemporary political order which they seek to transform, modify, or simply replace with a new political paradigm. Some of these organizations are mentioned in this chapter. This study is solely concerned with nonviolent Islamist organizations as they constitute the vast majority of the Islamist pool of groups.

For instance, a number of scholars of the Islamist revolt in Algeria in the early 1990s suggest that regime repression and violence against the rising Islamist mobilization caused a backlash of violent resistance among a significant part of the Islamist movement there (Hafez 2003; Kalyvas 1999) resulting in a violent civil conflict. According to this understanding, violence is a rational response, which has come about after exhausting other alternatives. One can further add that violent responses demonstrate a possible trait of political change in the state. The response would thus be seen as a remnant of the country's political culture wherein violent collective action was a tool of popular change (e.g. the independence struggle in the 1950s and the early 1960s). Another approach would be to situate and problematize violent events within a larger trend of violent upheaval stretching beyond state borders.[5]

Another example that demonstrates the importance of considering socio-political contexts when attempting to understand collective action is that of the 1979 Iranian revolution. During the widespread public turmoil preceding the overthrow of the Pahlavi regime, one could observe context dependent and, for participants, familiar metaphors including traditional religious discourse fueling the masses' rage against the Shah. Anti-regime networks further channeled, capitalized, and structured the general discontent of large numbers of participants through parroting and amplifying the defiant collective symbols and conventional ceremonies (Swenson 1985, 134-138). This provided the traditional and emerging leadership of the masses with powerful mobilization mechanisms directed against the government resulting in a relatively rapid collapse of the repressive Pahlavi regime (Moaddel 1993, 163).

The contextualization process of revolutionary (and other dissenting) events is therefore closely connected to the researcher's conception of knowledge itself. It is fundamentally, an attempt to re-construct and interpret socially contingent events in order to make sense of human social behavior. In other words, "contextualising is a very specific form of social practice - as a discursive, expressive and performative type then the kinds of knowledge claims behind this type of practice need inspecting (Dilley 1999, xii-xiii). Throughout the research and explanatory process, a researcher makes a series of judgments about what is

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[5] International power shifts, such as the Gulf War or the end of the Cold War, the influx of former combatants fighting the Soviets in Afghanistan etc.

appropriate to take into an account when explaining behavior or its broader consequences.

It therefore follows that social activism is re-constructed and interpreted together with a socio-political context wherein interaction between structure and agency is again interpreted through an analysis. In this study, individual motivations are represented within the suggested format of micro-mobilization dynamics, which is an integrated part of the socio-political context and not as a separate process. Nevertheless, for the purpose of detailed analysis one is forced to pinpoint those elements of motivation one considers necessary for social actors to act (i.e. mobilize).

State repression is therefore confined here to cultural and (state) institutional components. This consequently includes mapping the political opportunity structure (Tilly 1978; McAdam 1996; Meyer 2002), patron-client networks (Moaddel 2002; Adly 2009), socio-economic particularities, and developing an understanding of cultural patterns (general understanding of moral value systems, family structures, exposure to innovative means of information technologies and global media outlets etc.) (see Banaszak 1996 for a similar argument).

An SMO, in this case the Muslim Brotherhood, is presented as a main hub of social dissent wherein activists are trained both ideologically and operationally in mobilization strategies and tactics. The MB shapes dissenting mobilization within a context where individual activists exchange, learn and (dis)agree on goals and strategies through continuous interaction and negotiation (see McCarthy and Zald 1977, 1218).

An assumption can be made regarding the two opposing poles in the contentious relationship i.e. the (repressive) state regime and the SMO. They both contend for control of financial and socio-political resources and state institutions. The state regime has an upper hand as it is initially in control of political (military) and (usually) economic power thereby outmaneuvering social movements in terms of material, organizational and financial capabilities. However, social movements aim to mobilize the social elements of a state making numbers (of mobilized) people and commitment to its goals its primary resource.

According to late Charles Tilly, a primary concern of a social movement is to communicate its Worth, Unity, Numbers, and Commitment (WUNC) to audiences in order to gather strength through popular support, and all in opposition to its primary opponent, namely state authorities (Tilly 2004, 4). This last notion of commitment is directly connected to the complexity of human motivations, ultimately connected to individual (experiences of) perception, and interpretation of both state repression and organizational performances.

Essentially "[t]o understand why and how people organize themselves to protest against things they dislike, we need to know what they care about, how they see their place in the world, what language they use" (Jaspers 1997, 11). Again, because individual actors are not disengaged from their social surroundings it is necessary to attempt to map out the most important components of their social environment. Social agents are practical actors who are constantly evolving and acquiring new knowledge about their role in society together with changing perspectives on social, including political, functions. It is therefore important to emphasize an "agent, action, [social] practice, and above all, perhaps, the observer's proximity to agents and practice, the rejection of the distant gaze, none of which are without a relation to theoretical, but also political, dispositions and positions" (Bourdieu 1990b, 62). For this reason, coming closer to individual activists for the purpose of increasing one's understanding of their motivations to mobilize is an attempt to familiarize oneself with their perspective, being sympathetic without necessarily being empathic and equate others' emotions with one's own.

A potential value added component of this study is bridging the conceptual gap between identity formation processes and political claims in repressive states. One of the aims of the study is to partly extend the conceptual framework of mobilization under repression by emphasizing the importance of contextual framing. This means that social movement research will gain greater explanatory insight from the consideration of multiple-level analyses of mobilization in highly constrained socio-political contexts, such as that found in authoritarian states, or even increasingly repressive democratic ones.

Subsequently, as the foremost part of the analysis of individual activism under state repression, the primary focus of the study is the exploration of youth activists' mobilization choices. It is therefore appropriate to explore individual activists' general

beliefs and moral understandings of the world, their collective identities, and emotional experiences. By adopting this approach one is able to include both activists' (personal) interests and their formative ideas (see Wickham 2002, 232). Most importantly, it is possible to better understand activists' motivations for mobilization.

1.2 Research Questions

The case study sets out to explore the motivational dynamics behind specific risk-filled personal choices (agency) as they relate to the regime's repressive policies (structure) by analyzing activists' mobilization narratives. As such, one needs to consider that "[t]he mechanisms of movement formation are simultaneously rational and emotional, cognitive and embodied. Each element coexists in a whole: reasons shape feelings and feelings shape reasoning" (Crossley 2002, 33).

What is meant by a social movement in the first place? Tilly's broad definition of social movements from 1984 encompasses the contemporary Islamist movement in Egypt rather well. A movement is therefore "an organized, sustained, self-conscious challenge to existing authorities." (1984, p. 304). Individual actors engaged in social movements are therefore by definition engaged in a human enterprise of inducing and bringing about social change, which is in turn inherently linked to morals and ethics. In other words, "[m]ovements are engaged in promoting social change because there is some belief in the need either for a changed society or to defend a society from changes; an ethics is always present" (Jordan 2005, 12).

A social movement organization (SMO), on the other hand, is generally regarded as an operational component of a larger movement. The connection between the larger movement and an SMO is usually illustrated through the interpretation of shared ideas and goals (della Porta and Diani 2006). Here, as scholars have done elsewhere (della Porta, Kriesi and Rucht 1999, della Porta and Tarrow 2005), one needs to make a distinction between a social movement and a social movement organization.

The definition of social movements adopted here is that of della Porta and Diani where movements are essentially "informal networks based on shared beliefs and solidarity, which mobilize about conflictual issues, through the frequent use of various forms of

protest" (1999: 16). This definition can be contrasted with Tilly's definition where movements are described as consisting "of sustained interaction between power holders and activists who speak on behalf of a wronged population through collective public displays of determination and capacity coupled with explicit support for programs of action" (2008, 151). More specifically, an SMO is an organizational arrangement with a, more or less, formalized structure wherein preferences and goals are outlined and attempts to implement them are made (McCarthy and Zald 1977, 1218).

The process of state repression of social movement mobilization in authoritarian states has different implications for the activists involved when compared to those in democratic societies where the policing of protest events and other types of contentious displays is limited in time and space (see della Porta 1996; Earl and Soule 2006; Fernandez 2008). Activists are usually social agents engaged in actively seeking (social, political or/and economic) change directed most commonly toward power holders (politicians, bureaucrats, other social groups etc). This anti-conformist behavior is usually countered by those who are challenged in the first place (see Elster 2007).

Social movement organizations (SMOs) can be viewed as consequences of organized collective efforts to project social agents' complaints, usually through sustained and aggregated individual determination. Individual actors who have decided to engage in social movement mobilization had to negotiate their initial beliefs, coordinate their ideas for change, adapt to collective identities, and agree on a mobilization strategy. McAdam pointed out that "movements may occur in a broad macro context, but their actual development clearly depends on a series of more specific dynamics operating at a micro level" (1988, 127). This approach therefore deepens one's understanding of micro-level dynamics and potentially its possibility to create change.

A focus on individual activists' dissenting mobilization in a repressive state will help increase our understanding of mobilization dynamics, which may or may not be similar to social mobilization in democratic states. As previously suggested, any kind of political opposition against a repressive regime incurs high personal risks (Tilly 1978, Opp and Roehl 1990). It is therefore interesting to explore questions related to why it is that some individuals choose to run the risks of being imprisoned, abused and even killed even though the chances of achieving their goals, at least at that particular moment, appear so

slim. Which motivational elements can explain individual high-risk taking? In other words, a) *what motivates a young person's choice to mobilize against a repressive regime?* b) *What explains youth activists' choice of Islamist mobilization*?[6]

Answering the research question a) requires investigation and problematization of actors' decisions to mobilize against an authoritarian state. Activist narratives are a crucial source of information representing actors' perceptions of their surroundings, problems they are facing and their proposed solutions. In order to expansively understand motivation behind mobilization on a micro-level, it is necessary to contrast activists' narratives and claims with the role of the SMO in shaping such claims, but also consciously placed in a larger contextual framework. The framework, as mentioned before, includes the most notable features of state repression, as well as some of the most prominent cultural features connected to collective action and political dissent.

The initial assumption suggests that activists' interpretations of restricted political freedoms tend to strengthen their initial motivational zeal inciting broader mobilization through increased dedication and propagation of the movement's core values. Long before the January 25th revolution (2011) and its aftermath there were multiple indications that a substantial part of the non-activist population in Egypt sympathized with the (Islamist) activists' general goals of reforming the existing political system.[7] Furthermore, an initial assumption presented in this study is that dissent is driven by a strong desire that is produced and maintained by a set of beliefs (including feelings of anger, hate, solidarity etc.) inciting some social actors to actively mobilize against a repressive regime (Betancourt 1991, McAdam *et al*, 2005 Elster 2007).

Ted Gurr, for instance, argued that "[o]ne innate response to perceived deprivation is discontent or anger, and the anger is a motivating state for which aggression is an

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[6] This question is posed as a potential stepping-stone towards a future comparative study including secular (liberal) and Islamist forms of activism in repressive states. This prospective parallel comparison may reveal similarities/difference explaining (or further problematizing) why secular opposition projects have largely failed in traditional Muslim states. The question's relevance is brought in to focus by the recent revolutionary wave of regime changes where the secular and religious opposition claimed the broadest possible change focusing on a common adversary and toning down sectarian divisions.

[7] This includes the alternation of political power, the right of expression and other rights currently denied or severely limited (the MB's political program from 2008: http://ikhwanweb.com/article.php?id=15492)

inherently satisfying response" (1997, 294). Although one is inclined to believe that anger is a highly potent emotional motivator, one needs to remember that other emotions come to dominate as expressions of anger are duly repressed or restricted, often by state authorities.

Dissent is similarly expressed through circles of protest and mobilization in democratic political settings (see della Porta 1996). An interesting observation was made by della Porta when she noted that sometimes when sympathizers (of dissenting mobilization groups) have been targeted with sanctions and repression by state authorities they decide to join an organization where they receive ideological and practical training in dissent through which they attach themselves to symbols and ideas of opposition (1992, 16-17). This prospect is taken into account when exploring Islamist mobilization in Egypt.

The second question seeks to explore the cognitive experiences of activists who are already part of an organization. Presumably, activists who have crossed a mobilization threshold had also drawn the attention of the regime authorities (e.g. arrests by the state security forces, intimidation at work/ place of study, possible pressure from family members, friends etc.).[8] Consequently, one can deduce, that increased repression is directly linked to causes of clandestine and violent forms of (Islamist) mobilization as indeed previous studies suggest (Rashid 2002, Wickham 2002, Wiktorowicz 2004c, Chaudet 2006).

Violent forms of activism have been a part of mobilization processes in numerous authoritarian states in Muslim majority countries, including Egypt (Gamson 1991; Hafez 2003; Kurzman 2004; Wiktorowicz 2004a). Hafez explained that violent Islamist mobilization in North African states is a direct product of the political exclusion of Islamist political groups. As a result, what had been nonviolent Islamist movements turned violent under the process of radicalization and underground mobilization (2003, 22; Hafez and Wiktorowitz 2003, 66-67).

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[8] A threat of violent regime response simply raises the costs of violent (and even nonviolent) dissidence that activists chose to engage in. This is a proposition that will be investigated in-depth through the empirical study, and therefore, in my opinion, cannot be admitted or acquitted based on previous studies since we are dealing with a case study based on a micro-level of analysis of activism in a highly repressive state.

A similar proposition was made by della Porta regarding two extreme-left organizations in Germany and Italy during the 1970s (1992, 11-14), whereby radicalization is considered as a byproduct and perhaps a consequence of political exclusion, although in a different political context. However, the studies of Islamist mobilization do not explain or even discuss the specificities of nonviolent activism in similar (repressive) states. This leaves out an important question. If repression is a cause of clandestine violent activism, what then explains nonviolent activism in the same socio-political environment and during the same period of time?

Moreover, in order to ground these general claims it is important to investigate activists' individual experiences and perceptions of mobilization processes. The ambition is to show general results of the investigation of aggregated experiences in the hope of reaching relevant conclusions (see Stekelenburg and Klandermans 2007). Herein one can expect to find multiple dimensions, such as values, beliefs, grievances, emotions, etc., in constant interaction and influencing social actors' everyday decisions (see Klandermans and Oegema 1987; Turner 1987; Sokolowski and Heckhausen 2008; Tyler 2011).

1.3 On Repression

In order to return to the context and role of a state regime it is appropriate to introduce and conceptualize the regime's most visible feature, namely repression. The repressive Mubarak regime had, until recently, frequently targeted every political opposition group in order to prevent or impede social dissent. Individual activists were under the constant threat of state violence resulting in limited growth of the organized socio-political opposition. The repressive regime had, either through force or the threat of force, often intimidated potential recruits to oppositional groups, specifically Islamist organizations (see Munson 2001; Wickham 2002).

The Mubarak regime's strategy to generate widespread fear of state violence among the population had to do with the efficiency of this type of social control. Moreover, the regime had to constantly balance and adjust its repression tactics in order to induce "the right amount" of fear. Although Evrigenis discusses fear in a different context, one can easily make a connection to people's fear of repression: "Too much fear is paralyzing, but too little fear may prove deadly. The right amount of fear, however, enables us to sense

danger and take measures to thwart it. The fear of enemies is in some sense, then, the point at which these two mechanisms meet (2008, xii). Khawaja, on the other hand grounds this proposition and suggests that sanctioning individual activists has superior effects when compared to collective punishment. For instance, targeting entire groups of people brings about collective frustration, which may well have the opposite effect of that originally intended by the regimes (1993; 52). This argument can be extended by claiming that indiscriminate repression can also produce collective frustrations, which could spiral out of control and backfire causing popular unrest and social conditions that are unmanageable for the authorities.

What is meant by repression more specifically? Repression *by* whom and *of* what? Here state repression primarily refers to "restrictions on the rights of citizens to criticize the government, restrictions on the freedom of the press, restrictions on the rights of opposition parties to campaign against the government, or, as is common in totalitarian dictatorship, the outright prohibition of groups, associations, or political parties opposed to the government" (Wintrobe, 1998; 33-34). In other words, repression means state actions aimed at obstructing any type of mobilization that is critical of the regime. This ranges from censorship of written texts and speeches to arresting and even permanently eliminating any opponent, be it an individual of a group of individuals.

Also, repression can be viewed as a political regime's "efforts to suppress either contentious acts or groups and organizations responsible for them" (McAdam *et al* 2001, 69). The regime's efforts to intimidate its population into obedience and submission to its policies by "negative sanctions, using force or coercion, and violence by proxy" (Schock 2004, 32). Davenport argues further that repression, "consistently evokes images of specific instances of state coercive action directed against those within the government's territorial jurisdiction" (2007, 33). In other words, state repression aims at raising the costs of political opposition (Tilly 1978, 100), thus discouraging contentious collective action (through intimidation and fear) and securing regime control of the institutions (Tarrow 1994, 92-93).

It must be remembered that both sides of the contentious interaction (in this case the former regime of Mubarak on the one side and the Muslim Brotherhood on the other) had made moral and legal claims of truth and justice. More generally, as a result of

overwhelming power supremacy, an authoritarian regime is working to preserve the status quo by considering any challenge to its control as a contentious act thereby provoking coercive action on behalf of the state authorities (Davenport 1995, 683). On the other hand, it is not only authoritarian regimes that resort to repression. Indeed, all political authority confront protesters and demonstrators by limiting their protest space and often even various expressions of protest (see Earl 2006; Davenport 2007b).

However, what sets authoritarian regimes apart from those elected in free political elections is the size and shape of the public space within which social actors may challenge holders of political power. This notion of size and shape of contentious space is usually described as political opportunity structures wherein the state regime always plays a dominant role; however, in various degrees dis/allowing, controlling, and shaping the size and often character of contentious interaction with its opponents (della Porta 1996, 84-90). These assumptions have been demonstrated in the USA when confronting leftist mobilization (Zwerman 1987; Zwerman and Steinhoff 2005), in Germany and Italy (della Porta 1995; 1996) and other democracies (White 1999).

What is more, "repression is far more pervasive in nondemocracies, since most overt challenges present a direct threat to the regimes" (Schock 2004, 32). This essentially means that the political opposition in authoritarian states is not allowed to challenge political authority under any serious circumstances, and thus does not have any "real" chance of overturning political power. In democracies, opportunities to challenge interim regimes are common place and usually tolerated by the authorities. Few social movement studies have looked into social activism within the context of authoritarian rule. This gap is partly attended in the study.

For instance, activists' claims of truth and legitimate concerns stem from their sense of the regime's wrongdoing, questionable legitimacy and even moral decay. Manifestations of activists' discontent are usually performed in limited public spaces usually through organized channels of communication. In authoritarian states, space for the expression of grievances is severely limited. This postulation serves as a reminder of activists' claims-making strategies and opportunities, which are directly linked to their commitment to activism.

Procedural patterns of repression are an important part of the contextual map and need to be investigated. Khawaja argues in this direction and claims that "[t]he general political context and the movements' organizational strength should […] be considered when accounting for the relationship between repression and collective action" (Khawaja 1993, 66). Given the high risks of activism in an authoritarian state, why do individuals *choose* to mobilize against a far superior adversary in the first place? A proper explanation of motivations therefore needs event-based understanding where individual narratives offer an insight into activists' attitudes, beliefs, and emotions.

Coming back to repression, one must find out *how* it is exercised. The *how* here concerns the regime's sustained efforts to control what is interpreted as unauthorized collective action. These efforts are usually implemented through an interpersonal (and more often than not institutional) process specially designed for the purpose. The *raison d'être* of security institutions is to enforce regime sovereignty over politics in the first place, but also religious practices, media, modes of public expression and other social activities (see Burawoy and Verdery 1999; Linz 2000).[9]

What can conclusively be said about repression is that authoritarian regimes use their institutional capacities and administrative resources as mechanisms of coercion with the intention of making citizens comply with state policies (see Davenport 2007, 34-40). During the process of repression, as previously explained, political culture develops and usually presents some observable qualities. Authoritarian regimes operate not only through sheer force, but primarily through creating a sense of fear within its citizens. Herein, presumably one can find a significant number of individual actors who feel that they have more to gain in life by remaining politically passive, than opposing the regime in power (see a historical example in Barnett and Levy 1991, 338). The question remains; however, how can one explain defiant behavior of those who go against this presumption?

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[9] In an attempt to monitor and control facebook exchanges between critical voices and activists in Egypt, the Ministry of the Interior, in July 2010, created a permanent police task force to trace and apprehend regime critics (Fawaz 2010).

1.4 On Islamism

There is a "core democracy bias" in the study of social movements (see McAdam *et al* 2001). Islamism as an ideological construct is closely integrated with the creation of (new) religion based collective identities and therefore directly connected to inciting a variety of social actions. It must be added that Islamism as a collective identity is not merely dependent on traditional religious wisdoms but stretches far beyond religious agendas (Tuğal 2009, 426; Polletta and Jasper 2001, 286). Islamist activism should therefore not be reduced to pre-programmed social action only responding to religious stimulus nor should one diminish the importance of religion in inspiring and often guiding social activism in many Muslim majority states (Brown 2000, 75).

The dominant perception of some scholars of Islamism has been that Islamist movements gain support when exclusion from wealth and economic opportunities is predominant in a Muslim majority society (see Sutton and Vertigans 2005). Islamist SMOs have until recently largely been neglected by social movement scholars. Nevertheless, there have been a few attempts to explain Islamist mobilization, however, the general approach has been that of resource mobilization and focuses on the contention between macro- and meso-levels (Munson 2001; Schwedler 2001; Wiktorowicz 2002; 2004; and partly by Kepel 2002; Hafez 2003; Snow and Byrd 2007). In effect, this extension of rational actor theory misses many aspects of Islamist mobilization, not least the fact that activists have much to lose by mobilizing against an authoritarian state thus invalidating much of the preconceptions of this theoretical framework (see Beuchler 1993).

Indeed, the structural dimensions of state repression in the form of political culture and political opportunities are merged with resource mobilization theory (RMT), especially when constructing a contextual framework. However, RMT by itself is insufficient to explain the formation of the Muslim Brotherhood in particular if one disregards multi-layered phenomenological processes of social agents. The final chapter demonstrates that the RMT is insufficient to explain a success of an SMO mobilization, especially of one looks at the micro-level dynamics and what insights it has to offer.

I want to argue that, overall, the majority of previous studies of Islamist mobilization have focused largely on a one-dimensional explanation of Islamist movement advances

through the utilitarian logic of activists' self-interest, or rather the lack of other organizational choices as a means of expressing their grievances. This argument is not an attempt to invalidate previous explanations, but rather to complement these explanations as they sidestep other important elements of Islamist mobilization.

Few other studies on Islamism have largely disregarded social movement theories as explanatory frameworks and instead focused on subjective polemics of its ideological dimensions (Patai 1976; Arrighi *et al* 1989; Pipes 2003). Similarly, some studies of Islamism and politics in Muslim majority countries are those which have largely approached the subject through a political science framework highlighting the perpetual struggle over political control and dominance, usually between proponents of Islamists and proponents of, what is often described as, Western-liberalism (Huntington 1997; Lewis 2003). As such, this specific approach treats the whole (Islamist) movement as anti-systemic, backward, and an inherently anti-democratic phenomenon driven by blind and unreflective religious beliefs (Pipes 2003). By extension, some scholars have focused also on Islamists' supposed monolithic ideological capriciousness and utopian worldviews. Their analysis goes well beyond resource mobilization explanation and into the ideological capacity of Islamists, regarding them as a similar threat to that of institutionalized communism (Huntington 1997; Lewis 1990; 2003; Crone 2004). Islamism, as ideological fuel for social movements, has therefore been considered to be heading towards a direct collision with democratic ideals and modernity. A claim indirectly disputed in the end of this work.

Since the Iranian revolution, the image of Islamism as a violent form of political activism and force for usurpation within Muslim majority states that seeks confrontation with *any* opponent, including both liberals and leftists, has had a significant bearing within the political science literature (Arrighi *et al* 1989; Huntington 1997; Lewis 2003). This outlook on the subject has been translated into a view of Islamism where recollection of traditional values is inevitably disqualifiable as a trait that renders its adherents as uncreative and reactionary personality types.

It is important to mention more engaging studies that have focused on the power of Islamist ideas have explained growing popular support for Islamist SMOs as a product of modernity itself (Roy 2004; Masud *et al* 2009). The process by which Islamism generally has gained popularity among Muslim youth has been described as a neo-fundamentalist

turn in the development of political Islam. It seems that this "turn" has evolved gradually due to shifting geopolitical dynamics in Muslim majority countries in the mid-1970s (Ayubi 1980, 487-490). Moreover, a novelty in neo-fundamentalism seems to be attributed to a growing puritan strand within the general Islamist cohort focusing on individual piety as a sign of rejection of moral decay, consumerism and globalization in general (Roy 2004; Duderija 2010).

It is important to note that studies concerned with Muslim minority communities (specifically in the EU and the USA) pinpointed a wide range of complexities in the debates on Muslim immigration as it is concerned with modernity and its impact on the processes of globalization and politicization of Muslim minorities (Casanova 1994; Roy 2004; Bader 2008). All of these attempts to formulate the political impact of Islamist activism have added tremendous insight to the complexities of, first, scholarly understandings of Islam and, second, Islamism as a powerful ideological frame (an excellent summary of an earlier scholarly debate is found in Salvatore 1997, 165-183). It is therefore important to highlight the significance of such debates, as it is tempting to focus on a marginalized part of the Islamist movement, such as the neo-fundamentalist (salafi) stream of the larger Islamist movement, as it is often the most vocal and perhaps most visible among Muslim activist groups.

In this study, the Islamist SMO profiled is the Muslim Brotherhood whose activism is analyzed through an interdisciplinary study recognizing Islamist activism as a part of a social movement held loosely together with a wide range of ideas and interpersonal networks. Broad Islamist discourse is supposedly objecting to the globalization of (Western-induced) modernity. The critique is primarily voiced through the invocation of self-sustainability and cultural superiority of Islamic civilization (Snow and Marshall 1984; Akhavi 1997; Qutb 1949; 2003). Some argue that, "[m]odernization brings with it the erosion of meaning… Rationalization makes the world orderly and reliably, but it cannot make the world meaningful" (Turner, 1990: 6). By extension therefore Islamism in its own right is a product of modernity wherein identity politics play a significant role (Esposito and Voll 1996; Esposito 1999; Roy 2004).

Islamism is, in other words, promoted as a frame of ideas based on socio-political self-sufficiency. This argument, as we shall see, is presented by many Islamist organizations, including the Muslim Brotherhood, which renders their world meaningful through a process of re-interpretation of socio-political conditions through a self-constructed prism of meanings. Hence, Islamists in general tend to re-adjust contemporary meanings by referring to traditional Islamic authenticity, thus creating friction with other competing understandings of, among other things, globalization, modernity, and most notably politics. However, Islamist claims have evolved and thus been adjusted to the present institutional order in, and not only in the MENA region (see Ali 2000; Berman 2003; Sayyid 2003).

This evolution including operational and strategic adjustments made by many Islamist groups and organizations has been interpreted as a failure to produce social change. Roy (2004), for instance, claims that Islamism had produced nothing but its own "failure" as an ideological framework for the masses. Similarly, Bayat (2007) claims that Islamism has effectively reached a "post-Islamist" turn whereby it lost the core claims and entered into a phase of decline and subsequent demise. Although these scholars did observe major shifts in the overall discourse of the Islamists as well as shifts in organizational strategies and mobilization tactics, it is surely too early to claim that Islamism has "failed" or that we are now in a "post-Islamist" era.

Overall, Islamists have adjusted their claims to socio-political realities, thus grounding their claims to power in real-time, toning down their previous emphasis on the past. Most notably, Islamists have become increasingly aware of the socio-political and economic "needs" of the populations they addressed, and have made efforts to address such grievances (Gardell 2005; Habib 2006; *IRIN* 2006; Feldman 2008; Esposito 2010). The change, or the supposed "turn", can be interpreted as a pragmatic softening of claims in the Islamist discourse resulting in shifting mobilization strategies in order to adapt its activism to structural conditions.

Likewise, these claims of "failure" and "post-Islamist turn" are only relevant if one believes that the ideological and discursive framework of Islamism has somehow been canonized at some point in time. For instance, if one traces back Islamism to its proposed infancy or rather, the birth of the idea of political Islam, to the writings of Jamal-al-Din Al-

Afghani, Muhammad Abdu and Rashid Rida in the late 19th and early 20th century. It is in fact possible to observe a significant vibrancy and elasticity of their arguments and proposed solutions (Kerr 1966; Matthee 1989).

A review of Islamist political programs, ideological literature, and other informational material (e.g. recorded speeches, lectures etc.) indicates that there exists a highly romanticized perception of the Muslim historical past. This is significant as it demonstrates a desire for cultural independence and edifying self-sufficiency. The Muslim past, presumably defined by high moral principles, therefore needs to be restored (Al-Banna 1997; Al-Qaradawi 2004).

If one expands research and includes post-WWII Islamist writings, it is possible to trace changes in ideas from their originators (see Mawdudi 1960; Qutb 2003). Islam, as they conceive it, is both religion (*deen*) and state (*dawlah*), which is equal with the political arrangement of a society. Islamism therefore is just another name for Islam as a totality of religious, social, political and economic practices. In other words, Islamists' specific reading of the past, evolving forms of activism, and proposed solutions to contemporary socio-political grievances are some of the basic elements that have provided Islamists with widespread support among a part of the population in Muslim majority states (Brown 2000, 83).

In cases where Islamist SMOs have been operational since the 1970s, it is possible to notice a division between two main ideological and operational trends. The first stream has been less attentive to public demands and clung to a dogmatic interpretation of politics and rigid mobilization tactics. The second stream chose to engage with socio-political realities through a pragmatic ideological and operational framework. Even though these groups still connect their claims to Islamic tradition and religious rhetoric, they interpret these traditions in a much wider manner translating ancient terms into contemporary discourse (on Hamas' transformation see Gunning 2008).

For example, the MB representatives often presents the *shurah* (consultation) principle as closely connected or identical with the concept of democracy (at least the procedural part of consultation). Having such an understanding, the MB has created internal governing structures that demonstrate this democratic function (chapter 3). It is clear from

contemporary Islamist discourses (including the MB and many Salafi groups) that SMOs are going through both ideological and organizational adjustments (see Barraclough 1998; Abu-Rabiʻ 2004; Ismail 2006; Abdel-Latif 2009). However, questions about Islamist failure and a post-Islamist turn are still hard to fully grasp and verify. These questions, if at all relevant, could be, at least partially, answered if these groups are given a chance to exist and mobilize in a free social environment and consequently compete in open and free elections.[10]

Based on the above-mentioned assumptions, it is suggested here that Islamism, as the primary ideological framework of the broad Islamist social movement, should not be treated as *sui generis*, distant and delinked from socio-economic and political realities and moral dilemmas (see Graham 2003, introduction). Islamism and its proponents are interlinked with larger socio-political contexts, and as such, ultimately subjected to a continuous process of organizational change and even ideological and strategic modifications.

This study goes beyond dichotomies of success and failure or sweeping single-dimensional explanations of, what is considered here as, a multi-dimensional movement. Scaling down the explanatory ambition is the first step, which acknowledges the complex behavior of social actors and the driving forces behind specific forms of behavior. Social actors are, for the most part, using their "practical sense" while operating in a social game (Bourdieu 1990, 66-68), and do not exclusively seek raw utility or dogmatic guiding principles, this includes Islamists. After all, "[i]n the course of activism leaders of movements here and abroad attempted to enunciate general principles concerning movement tactics and strategy and the dilemmas that arise in overcoming hostile environments" (McCarthy and Zald 1977, 1212). This notion generally applies to the Islamist movement in Egypt; an SMO is shaped by and shapes mobilization within which individual activists exchange, learn and (dis)agree on mobilization strategies.

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[10] As this type of analysis is not central to the study it is discontinued here. But the claim made here is supported by a review of ideological standpoints made by Hassan Al-Banna (founder of the MB) during the 1930s and 1940s. His brief written works on Islamic activism are learned by all MB members and even memorized by many, representing the basic ideas of MB activism, its general strategy, and, most importantly, its goals.

During the review of the massive amount of literature written on and about Islamism it becomes clear that contention with this concept depends on "signification" of the term/object. Ultimately, the difference between signifier and signified is what decides the definition, its significance, and perhaps outcomes of its use (see Bourdieu 1991, 201-209: Yassine 2010). An etymological search of the term is carried out elsewhere; however, it is worthy to note that in Arabic: Islamism (*Islamiyyah*) is distinctly non-traditional terminology, hard or perhaps impossible to find in any (domestic) discussions on Islam and politics before at least the 1980s (see a discussion on the term in Fradkin 2010). None of the so-called, founders of Islamist ideology - Al-Banna, Qutb or Mawdudi - used the term in their writing. When activists talk about Islamism they are careful to differentiate between "literalists" within the movement (*usuliyyun*), those who are referring to religious sources more frequently and literally, and "reformers" (*islahiyyun*), those who are inclined to contextualize religious discourse and are more lenient towards wider interpretations of religious sources (chapter 6). Likewise, terminology such as moderate, radical (Zeghal 1999 and many others) or good and bad Muslims (Mamdani 2002) is not debated here as I believe that such vocabulary blurs rather than helps explain relevancy of social behavior.[11]

Nevertheless, what can be said about Islamist discourse is that activists generally tend to utilize Muslim public collective memory, which invokes reinterpreted and reconstructed constitutional ideals from the Muslim past. These translated historical successes are usually articulated using modern terminology such as state, institutions, rule of law etc. These terms are nonexistent in the Islamic legal tradition. Such messages are usually transmitted through innovative media channels and easily recognizable language with morally loaded expressions. The form and means of communication of Islamist messages are ultimately driven by the SMO's political ambitions which hinge on a broad interpretation of traditional Islamic jurisprudence, *shari'ah*, and a particular vision of truth, peace, and justice (Ismail 2004, 616; see also Feldman 2008; Martin and Barzegar 2010).

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[11] Ultimately, what may be considered as moderate/mainstream or radical depends on our deep seated inclination to liken "others" to ourselves and thus define "them" as more or less like ourselves. In other words, if someone is more like us, i.e. having the same or similar worldview, s/he is moderate; otherwise, s/he is radical/extreme etc. Here, I explore activists' attitudes toward non/violence, non/conformity in relation to surrounding cultural norms etc.

As Islamist social movement organizations operate in many different socio-political contexts, they have also learned to adjust their claims and adapt their strategies, all in accordance with the character of their relationship with various domestic ruling regimes. As discussed earlier, during this process of discursive and strategic calibration, many Islamist organizations have progressively incorporated much of the "Western" political terminology into their reform programs. One reason behind such adjustment might have been SMO pragmatism in the light of positive resonance of their modification process and their nuanced messages with large segments of the marginalized public in many Muslim majority countries (see Kurzman 2004; Wiktorowicz 2004b; Gardell 2005; Feldman 2008). Such changes in social movement discourse and ideological framing can be observed in other societies as well; however, few observers would suggest that we have entered a post-liberal or post-democratic age based solely on these observations. A credible argument could be made by invoking socio-political and economic realities where evidence-based claims are presented.

Conclusively, the main argument made in this study connected to the approach one takes to studying Islamist activism is the necessity of considering institutional and socio-cultural contexts in order to better understand the dynamics of Islamist mobilization in Muslim majority countries. This is not to diminish the relevance of the ideological components of the Islamist movement, which essentially provides a framework of meaning to activists and normative guiding principles for the organization. However, it seems that external (structural) factors have a highly significant impact on the size, shape, and mobilization strategies of Islamist SMOs. Such a focus enables an orderly platform for an in-depth study of individual activists' motivations to join an Islamist organization. It suggests alternative explanations and thus enriches a scholarly understanding of Islamism in general.

1.5 On Motivations

Social actors involved in dissenting mobilization are clearly motivated individuals who consciously choose to engage, in this case, an authoritarian state; clearly a risk-filled social action. If one assumes that an activist is a motivated social actor who actively pursues her/his pre-set goals than it follows that one needs to know both what these pre-set goals are and what makes a social actor engage in high-risk social action. In the previous section

we have discussed very broadly what these pre-set goals might be. Here, it is important to explain the driving force, or motivation, behind a decision to pursue such goals.

The assumed goals are, at least theoretically, anchored in an intricate relationship between *beliefs* and *desires* (Davidson 1984; Bratman 1987; Malle 1999; Searle 2002; Kenny 2003; Wertz and German 2007). Based on this assumption, it is therefore useful to study social actors' motivational patterns, as a way of understanding their particular choices (see also Traugott 1978; McCarthy and Kruegler 1993, 24-25; Polletta 1999; Munson 2001, 503).

A social actor's beliefs supposedly exist in a relation with human desires; and as such, we need to understand the interplay between these two fundamental factors (a similar approach is found in Tollefsen 2002, 397-398). An actor's *desire* here represents desire for acknowledgment, for a sense of agency (see Crossley 2001). Agency represents a higher notion of desire wherein material gain or loss is not central but the actor's sense of self as seen by others, his belonging to a group, or simply his (social) identity are overriding factors. In short, seeing oneself in a larger social context and identifying one's desires connected to the socio-cultural context are the means by which an actor acquires basic knowledge about basic values and morals of that particular place.

Additionally, some divide desire into two types: instrumental and terminal. Instrumental desire would mean desire to act in order to fulfill another desire, which is labeled terminal, an ultimate objective (Irvine 2006, 56-61). For instance, one could label an actor's desire for self-realization or self-actualization, echoing Maslow's pyramid of needs, as a terminal desire. Therefore, one can argue that terminal desire is a continuous urge to realize one's full capacity as a social agent, including thinking and projecting one's personal potential and achievements to others. This continuous process involves navigation between what one considers good and bad, right and wrong, desirable and undesirable (see Maslow 1970, 271-275).

Instrumental desires, on the other hand, represent specific goals desired in the everyday life of an actor. For instance, desiring freedom to express opinions publicly, alleviation of poverty of oneself or others, changing a political order, desiring justice for all etc. These could all be considered as instrumental desires. It follows therefore that in a society where individual actors are limited or prevented from expressing and pursuing their desires

there will be a greater level of socio-political tensions than in a society where individuals have such freedoms.

Even though in a short-term perspective such tensions are repressed in an authoritarian state, in the long-term such tensions may create rupture and social discontent in the hope of creating a socio-political environment where the expression of both terminal and instrumental desires is less contested by power-holders. Subsequently, in a socio-political context where there is little room for expressing this desire, there will be antagonism.

As with desires, it is important to explore how social actor's beliefs transform into goal-oriented schemas. Firstly, it is widely acknowledged that beliefs matter in explaining social action (Zwemer 1939; Smelser 1962; Fishbein and Ajzen 1975; Jasper 1997; Stern et al 1999; Wertz and German 2007). Additionally, in social movement studies, beliefs have been mentioned as an important and constitutive part of the reasons behind collective action (Buechler 1993; Williams 1995; Oliver and Johnston 2005).

Another argument which emphasizes the importance of beliefs in social action comes from Stekelenburg and Klandermans who claim that social actors "participate in a social movement not necessarily to enforce political change, but to gain dignity and moral integrity in their lives through struggle and moral expression […] Ideology [i.e. beliefs] motives create a sense of inner *moral* obligation for reasons of moral integrity maintenance" (2007, 183-184). This argument is particularly useful as it is closely connected to the previous conceptualization of beliefs.

In practical terms, beliefs are revealed by exploring activists' commitment to the movement's cause usually through their allegiance to an organization's ideological framework. The activists' commitments signify a link between the members of an organization through their shared *beliefs in the cause*. Thus, the motivational significance of beliefs is presumably highly relevant as it is directly connected to everyday practices and even group behavior. In other words, activists' shared beliefs represent an abstract bond between them, which is a crucial part of their shared (collective) identity (see Polletta and Jasper 2001). This argument can be connected to Weber's classical claims that religion motivates people to act in a particular way, in different situations. Thus, one can assume

that motivation is an ascribed intelligible epithet to a particular set of individual actions inherently dependent on a particular context of meaning (see Weber 1968, 8-10).

Beliefs are therefore important and one of the primary methods of analyzing expressed beliefs (as desires) of an actor is by registering a person's linguistic expressions and also daily practices connected to discursive expressions (e.g. going to places of worship, time spent on rituals etc.) and daily practices (activist practices). Moreover, through participant observation and comparative analysis (of various activists' behavior) it is possible to register (in)consistancies in regards to verbal and practical expressions of belief, both individually and in-group. The analysis extends to the younger generation of activists in order to sort out common motivational (belief) patterns.

For instance, a religiously devoted Muslim can be an individual who says his/her five daily prayers, fasts for the month of Ramadan, and carries out a series of various everyday religious practices. In other words, a social actor's beliefs, and religious convictions are hard to separate from the social reasons behind an actor's behavior. In the end, this study is disinterested in exploring such distinctions, as the interview process and observer participation focused on interviewees' *expressed* beliefs. Most importantly, however, is that beliefs by themselves are insufficient to initiate, or to motivate individual (social) action. Beliefs seem to represent values and solutions to various perceived problems expressed by a social actor. As such, beliefs should be considered as a necessary component of an actor's decision-making scheme guiding action rather than directly motivating it.

Another approach to the conceptualization of motivation is that proposed by Jonathan Turner who attempted to synthesize previous attempts to conceptualize motivations as an analytic tool to explain social action. The model is anchored in a specific understanding of individual needs (1987), thus differing from the approach taken here basing motivations on individual desires and beliefs rather than needs.

Research results in this study have shown that the process of belief conditioning within an SMO is vital in securing continuous commitment of its members, especially under periods when state repression intensifies. Belief conditioning here suggests that a role of "movement culture" is significant for binding different elements of the mobilization

process (Staggenborg 2002, 129), and minimizing any doubts about SMO objectives and strategies. This "cultural" reading of mobilization at the meso-level is particularly significant while exploring activism under repression since it signifies a social actor's inclination toward belonging to a group and thus experiencing emotional comfort (desired effect of socialization). Tilly argued in this direction by claiming "[a]ll social processes incorporate locally available cultural materials such as language, social categories, and locally shared beliefs" (2008; 3).

Collectively expressed shared beliefs are usually summarized within an SMO's ideological framework, and as such are important to consider. It is relevant as activists continuously translate and reflect upon the organization's ideology evaluating and modifying their understanding of it continuously. This complex process paradoxically creates both cohesion and friction within an SMO (see section 4.5).

Functionally, an SMO's ideological framework is both instrumental (e.g. specific short-term goals) and expressive (e.g. abstract ideals and purposes of activism). Its instrumentality translates into a practical application of activists' ideological understanding by following general guidelines proposed by the framework – e.g. achieve domination of the student unions. Its expressiveness translates into a general strategy adopted by activists while seeking to recruit sympathizers and thus spread their message to the rest of the population – e.g. Islamization of society. Therefore, activists' ideological training is "seen as an instrumental strategy to improve the situation of the group [or an entire population]" (Stekelenburg and Klandermans 2007, 182).[12] The constitutive effect should not be side-stepped as it brings an important element of the meso-level strategy discussed in detail in section 4.6.

The ideological framework's expressive dimension has an identity-shaping function as it presents general behavioral guidelines. Mobilization involves activists' adaptation to certain behavioral norms,[13] worldviews, and a specific lifestyle (Clark 2004; della Porta

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[12] The MB is often viewed as an instrumental organization as it employs practical activism through nonviolent strategies in achieving its ultimate goal (*expressive*), which is ultimately the Islamization of society as a means to achieve what it sees as moral justice.

[13] For instance, adopting a certain dress-code, avoiding certain places, limiting free mixing between the sexes, encouraged piety and attendance of religious collective rituals, study circles, commitment to show bravery and commitment in the face of danger (e.g. arrests, beatings, maltreatment etc.).

and Diani 2006, 28; Tuğal 2009). This, sequentially, implies that reforming oneself ultimately means advancement in one's social status- This could also include frequent expressions of civil piety, which is considered as a merit (see Abu-Rabi' 2004). As such, this identity-shaping process is part and parcel of the larger process of the reformation of society (instrumental desire) but not its ultimate goal (terminal desire).

The desire/belief model previously discussed has hinted at the importance of activists' identity. Here, identity is collective and understood to be a decentralized cognitive process ultimately shared and constructed through actors' interactions and which is reflected in "the ends, means and field of action" (Mellucci 1995, 44). The importance of identity as an anchor of the social actor's self-image "embodies the actor's continuity" (Vahabzadeh 2001, 619), it therefore becomes highly desirable, especially among disempowered social actors. Presumably, the identification process enhances the actor's feelings of belonging and personal safety.

In this study, identity is concerned with its role in motivating collective action as a part of instrumental desires, but also more than that. Activism, considered as a form of social action, represents partially an SMO's efforts to create "collective agency" (Snow 2001, 213), by which the group could assert its presence in society more visibly and more effectively.[14] An assumption that a social actor's pursuit of self-realization is closely linked with that of a (cohesive) group suggests that social identification models are important to have in mind (see Tyler 2011, 38-39). An overlapping *collective* part of identity may be presented as being a mutual understanding of unity between the members of the specific organization or a movement. "It [collective identity] brings with it a sense of common purpose and shared commitment to a cause, which enables single activists and/or organizations to regard themselves as inextricably linked to other actors" (della Porta and Diani 2006, 21).

Mellucci suggests that identity is a dynamic concept and essentially a product of interaction between active social agents (1989, 34). Furthermore, a social agent's

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[14] More broadly discussed, collective agency has been mentioned as an abstract concept describing the unified will of multiple individuals in their pursuit of common goals. Snow (2001) and other scholars mention both Durkheim's "collective conscience" and Marx's "class consciousness" as concepts which are related to collective identity and indeed precursors of such sociological constructs. Various limitations prevent further elaboration on the subject.

experiences are closely related to contextual opportunities and constraints, which in turn play a role in identity dynamics. For instance, it is possible to observe social interaction between committed activists ascribing themselves to an SMO, which is subjected to continuous repression policies by state authorities, subsequently hindering expression and pursuit of the activists' desires and beliefs.

More specifically, collective identity, according to Mellucci "refers to a network of active relationships between actors, who interact, communicate, influence each other, negotiate, and make decisions" (1995, 45). It is therefore different from individual identity, which is often regarded as set of personal traits (although affected by the collective), uniquely embodied in an individual. Activists involved in collective action develop a sense of solidarity with group members, which, in turn, reinforce group cohesiveness, which is especially important in mobilization against repressive regimes. For instance, "[i]dentification with those who suffer from repression creates unity and is, therefore, an important factor for such regrouping and the eventual crystallization of collective identity […] Repression also helps increase peoples' identification with, and commitment to, social movement organizations (SMOs)" (Khawaja 1993, 66).

Such an understanding proposes that it "is never the isolated and uprooted individuals who mobilize" (Mellucci 1988, 339). This leads one to conclude that social movement mobilization is always manifested through the collective. This perception of the collective is connected to social actors' discovery of preexisting bonds, common interests, and boundaries as they relate to and differentiate from one another. The perception is fluid and inherently relational as it emerges out of interactions with a number of different audiences (bystanders, allies, opponents, news media, state authorities etc.). A sense of collectivity therefore produces a specific type of discourse and actions supporting one's own group's claims in contrast to others (groups, regimes etc.). Simply put, collective identity provides categories by which individuals divide and make sense of the social world (Polletta and Jasper 2001, 298).

Collective identity, as well as the other concepts discussed above, are mental and linguistic abstractions, which are constructed descriptions of social "reality". As such, collective identity is composed primarily out of actors' shared attributes and contrasted against "others" who are opponents of these attributes (Polletta and Jasper 2001). Through

this process of "sharedness" members of a group construct their sense of "we/us" and meaning of the collective, usually acknowledged by other social actors (Hunt *et al* 1994).

Moreover, meaning here refers to the internalization of abstractions such as values, morals, and ethics within an actor which provides purposefulness of action. If one adopts such an approach to the understanding of identity, one needs to look into collective action and interpersonal interaction to analyze a social actor's daily life practices and through this his/her motivational frame. Islamism, as defined above, is inherently linked with collective identity, as it is interpreted as a product of modernity within which collective actors seek cultural authenticity and shared meanings. This argument goes well also with explanations offered by other scholars who have suggested that Islamist SMOs usually address grievances connected to "the cultural identity and self-esteem of the challenged population" (Snow and Marshall 1984, 136).

The role of collective identity in the motivational schema presented in this chapter is twofold. Firstly, it is argued here that identity is constructed and shared with other social actors. Collective identity is thereby closely linked to an individual actor's sense of self. Secondly, social actors' cooperation reinforces their identification with a group, which supposedly readjusts their motivation for action extending from their own personal desire of self-realization to that of the group (see Tyler 2011, 39-40). Mellucci had presented a similar argument whereby the individual actor's motivation for mobilization is frequently externalized through action that corresponds to the general patterns of socialization through which commitment is constructed and consolidated (1988, 340).

One of the most powerful indicators of individual desire for self-realization is expressed through emotions. Emotions are by extension an integral part of social action. Moreover, emotions seem to be "the site for articulating the links between cultural ideas, structural inequality and individual action" (Taylor 1995, 227). A pioneer of social research, Durkheim played a significant role in introducing emotions to sociology by conceptualizing them as "collective effervescence" (Jasper 2003, 161; Crossley 2002, 36-37). Durkheim argued that the notion of solidarity, collectivity, and commonality between social actors (i.e. activists) is reinforced by de-emphasizing the individual and emphasizing the collective through emotional bonds (Thompson 2006, 45).

For instance, individual actors strive to fulfill a terminal or instrumental desire and in the process, such individuals undergo a wide range of emotional states: e.g. hope, anxiety, joy, disappointment, happiness etc. In other words, social actors' desires, to change his/her present social or emotional condition, are in turn driven by shifting emotional states. An individual in a society is constantly a participant in social events and as such (s)he observes, experiences and "feels" his/her surrounding (see Jasper 1998). In other words, emotions give meaning to events, "without emotions, those events would be mere facts of our lives" (Matsumoto and Juang 2008, 225).

Individual motivation to mobilize in an SMO is directly linked with emotions. This link is explained in chapter 8 together with its implications on activists' motivations. It should suffice to mention that activists' understanding of such values as morality and solidarity have substantial impact in their decision-making processes. This explains why some individuals join social movements while others do not, despite living in the same socio-political context (see Aminzade and McAdam 2001, 14; see also Goodwin, Jasper and Polletta 2001; Jasper 2004). Some earlier scholars have questioned assumptions that emotions are a part of the rational deliberation of individual actors. Even though they might have recognized the cognitive function of emotions, they believed that emotions were inherently imbedded and *subjugated* to a social actor's rational reasoning involving deliberation processes about the pros- and cons- of a particular action (see McCarthy and Zald 1977; Jenkins 1983). Such criticisms are recognized here as marginally relevant, for instance in extreme cases of public rage and social chaos. However, it must be remembered that emotions are innately connected to rationality and decision-making processes, i.e. motivation (see a summary of this argument in Barbalet 2004; Pham 2007). In other words, emotions are as rational as the utility maximizing human efforts; they seem to be a different facet of the same phenomenon (Barbalet 1998; 31; Gould 2004; 162).

How to operationalize emotions? One, often quoted, definition of emotions proposes that "[e]motions involve beliefs and assumptions open to cognitive persuasion [and are closely] tied to moral values, often arising from perceived infraction of moral rules" (Jasper 2003; 155). Moreover, scholars of emotions in social movements often refer to the "infraction of moral rules" as "moral shocks" (Jasper and Poulsen 1995; Goodwin *et al* 2006). These shocks refer to mental, or better yet, physical feelings such as fear, anger, rage, shame, happiness, admiration etc. and are closely related to individuals' "moral and

social norms" (Elster 2007; 153). Islamist activism, as defined above, is recognizable in these formulations where "[a]ctivists must weave together a moral, cognitive, and emotional package of attitudes" (Goodwin *et al* 2001).

If one takes this argument further and glances at the neurological explanation of the role emotions play in human interaction, it is possible to observe a surprising unanimity of basic emotions shared by all humans regardless of cultural or political context. This universality of human emotions is anchored in human biological structure and chemical reactions in the brain (Damasio 2000). Connecting such arguments to socio-cultural contexts, it is possible to observe a large variety of expressions of similar emotions. This variety of contexts has in turn produced variety in the cultural expression of emotions (Damasio 1999; Jasper 2007).

Therefore one can advance the notion of the collectivity of emotion which furthers the previous claim that collective action, such as SMO mobilization, involves the reflexivity of social behavior and its emotional dimension. This, in turn, indicates that the social context plays an important role as it presents a set of cultural rules by which social actors usually conform (Tyler 2011, 32). Emotions are therefore both neurologically contingent (Damasio 2000, 17), and also learned to be expressed through social interaction and for that reason partly culturally contingent too (Rosaldo 1984; Fish 2005). Moreover, "[c]ulturally specific languages and beliefs about emotions shape their content and consequences, producing very different emotional responses to the same stimuli" (Aminzade and McAdam 2001, 19).

Others take the argument even further and claim that "emotions can impede as well as stimulate collective political action and foster reformist as well as revolutionary strategies of collective action" (Aminzade and McAdam 2002, 108). It is therefore reasonable to assume that social actors engaged in high-risk mobilization "invest" their emotions into their efforts to change their societies (Mellucci 1996, 83). For instance, activists may have been traumatized by personal experience with the security forces, or affected by similar experiences endured by their family members or others. These "emotional dynamics" relate to an actor's conception of *us* (or I) and *them* (Mellucci 1996, 81). The dichotomy, which is usually expressed through invoking appropriate identities, as explained above, between the in-group and out-group members, propels collective action, often through

emotional symbols and discourse. This dichotomy has substantial potential to induce activism and, at the same time, reduce ambivalence (Mellucci 1996, 83).

In this case study, fear becomes a byproduct of the state's capability to use physical force as it sees fit (or other types of coercive methods; e.g. threats, maltreatment etc.). Thus, "[t]o coerce, you need not convince. Indeed, one of the attractions of repression is that violence needs no justification to be effective: fear is reason enough. A key element of this fear is its arbitrariness. Uncertainty helps create the ambient terror, the immobilizing culture of fear, which depoliticizes" (Crystal 1994, 277).

This claim is partially tested as we see that, despite state repression, social movement mobilization still takes place. Motivation for action means that there is a motive to act. Here motive translates into the preference of one action over the other, and preference is in turn connected to the emotional link to one thing or another. For instance, feelings of love for one's neighborhood, family, or an abstract set of beliefs are all connected to desires to preserve, enhance and project feelings of affection. On the other hand, hate produces other sets of desires, which motivate behavior of a different kind (see Ryle 1948).

This case study incorporates activists' life stories, as a part of the first-hand data that was gathered through semi-structured interviews. This has been particularly helpful in mapping activists' mobilization experiences, their understanding and interpretation of repressive regime policies, and, most importantly, their group experiences as members of a social movement organization (SMO).

Conclusion

This chapter has sought to set out the theme and the agenda of the study primarily by outlining the general purpose of the study and discussing the central concepts used. Most importantly, it has introduced a conceptual framework of individual motivations which is explored throughout the study. In the background of social movement theories outlined, the chapter has discussed both an approach taken towards the subject matter as well as the most important conceptual themes where I believe contribution can be made: state repression, Islamist activism, and motivations behind mobilization. Moreover, the chapter

discussed each of these issues in greater detail explaining their relevance to the studies of social movements directly connected to individual activists' motivation to mobilize.

State repression is introduced as a dominating structural dimension in regard to social movement mobilization which is directly linked to the motivational framework of individual activists. The explanatory between impact of state repression on mobilization and individual activists' motivation is bridged by analyzing a social movement organization which is essentially the facilitator of coordinated dissent. The relevance of Islamism is highlighted in its influence on conservative middle class activists and its insistence on "authentic" socio-political traditions. Motivations in this study are based on a premise anchored in personal desires and beliefs of an individual activist. Moreover, in an effort to clarify the utility of motivation in the analysis of social mobilization I have divided individual motivation into three parts: beliefs, emotions and identities. This division serves as the main analytical framework of individual activists' narratives (Part III) which is directly linked to the structural analysis (Part II) as to construct a broad explanatory argument.

2   Research Design and Implementation

Introduction

The following chapter outlines a specific methodological and procedural scheme followed in the study. This is done by presenting a research design together with an explanation of methodology and case selection.

I start with a basic premise, no individual behavior is independent from its social surroundings, sets out my original ambition to depart from the contextualization of mobilization choices made by individual agents. For that reason, the motivation processes behind Islamists' micro-mobilization is explained and analyzed after the presentation of, what I believe are, the most important mechanisms of state repression and its impact on the development of the social movement organization (SMO), including an analysis of the organizational framework and its impact on shaping individual motivations. Through the contextualization of activists' everyday lives, one is able to map out and interpret the basic structures of communication with much of their limitations and boundaries within each analytical segment at the macro, meso and micro-levels.

2.1 Contextualization of Activists' Narratives

To explain and outline the nature of the authoritarian state and its methods of control is highly important as it represents the immediate context of social movement mobilization and individual activism. State authorities infringe on any social activity they perceive as threatening to the *status quo*. A state in this case in generally perceived as a "system of institutionalized practice" (Mitchell 2006, 169) and less as an ideological project. Again, state institutions are not separated from the society that operates independently within it. Indeed, the state's institutional framework penetrates social relations in order to uphold the *status quo* as well as to preempt any potential threat (see Davenport 2000; Earl 2003; Mitchell 2006).

Legitimate control and power over a particular territory and people is included in Weber's definition of a state, which presupposes the notion of state's right to wield physical force and a legitimate monopoly over such a right. He uses the term "human community" implying an organized state (Weber *et al* 2004).

If one accepts this definition of a state, it suggests that state repression is a mere tool of socio-political control. It further suggests that state sanctioned violence (either by state institutions or its proxies) if institutionalized[15] also becomes a legitimized form of social control through which the state promotes its self-adopted values and superiority over other forms of social organization. Another aspect of statehood could be its claim of sovereignty, which is often explained as the ability to proclaim "the state of exception" whereby state authority has the right to cancel the constitutional order (Agamben 2005, 16-17). The sovereignty dimension also includes a state's ability to "command" citizens towards the "truth" and consequently, the valorization of sovereignty is directly linked to a state's capacity to successfully command "public reason" (Schmitt 1996, 54-55). This implies that a state's power to coerce others to obey set rules and conventions under the premise that such actions are legitimate i.e. based on a previously agreed set of regulations (e.g. constitution).

The Islamist SMO selected for this case study is defined as a new social movement organization (see Hunt *et al* 1994). This marks a difference from previous studies that have sought ideological explanations for the development and growth of Islamist movements. Instead I propose an explanation where social actors' identities and emotions are in focus.

The contextualization process is focused on socio-political traditions, which is in turn approached through the mapping out of the structure of political and economic elites, the institutional framework, the historical relationship between state authorities and dissidents (a part of political culture), all of which is traced to contemporary political outcomes and dynamics. The focus is on exploring the repression-mobilization conundrum through the action-reaction dynamics of the state and the selected SMO.

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[15] Structural violence as a concept has been initiated and developed by Johan Galtung (1990) through which he argues for the importance of peace studies through the study of cultural, direct, and structural forms of state violence as a means to develop peace and stability in the social realm.

Situating the micro-level analysis within the overall understanding of individual motivations behind activism departs from an exploration of individual experiences as part of a particular context (Stelkenburg and Klandermans 2007, 160-165). Researching in-depth the macro or meso-levels may miss some of the in-depth characteristics and perplexities of activism in general and more specifically its human component.

For example, Burawoy and Verdery argue, after having conducted ethnographic studies in the societies of post-communist states, that micro-processes of mobilization intensified during the process of the breakdown of one-party systems, and therefore accelerated the moment of transformation (1999, 3-5). This is exactly what seems to be happening now in the post-authoritarian parts of the Middle East.[16] Micro-mobilization processes in repressive states might even have the capability to initiate and even carry out a system-breakdown (see Moaddel 1993, on the Iranian revolution). This study does not attempt to explain these processes of successes/failure as such; instead, it attempts to explore patterns pertaining to the motivational processes preceding such events.

Figure 1.6 schematically presents the structure of the case study with its main analytical components as well the forms of interaction between the different levels of analysis (see also Yin 2003).

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[16] At the time of writing only Tunisia and Egypt are considered as part of the post-authoritarian order in the region.

a) Macro-level (State regime and institutions)

Judiciary	Socio-political traditions
Security authorities	Historical trajectory
State agents...	(International support)

b) Meso-level: (the MB)

Constitution
Public and internal documents
Official statements
(Organizational culture in general)

Direct ‖ **Indirect repression effect - SMO filter (adjusted mobilization directives to the activists)**

c) Micro-level: (activists)

Youth Activists' Mobilization Narratives

Motivations behind mobilization

(Beliefs – Emotions – Identities)

(Nonviolent) Activism

Key:

| Repression path | Action (in)output | Analytical tools | Level of analysis | Contextual fields |

Fig. 1.6 *Procedural schema of the case study*

On a methodological note, one way to obtain the necessary data is to analyze the discursive explanations given by the activists and discern where the emphasis of their narratives lies. Another way is to participate in sessions where these questions are raised.

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The value of observation of interactions and relational dynamics between activists is also crucial in order to understand the mobilization process (particularly in repressive states).

An investigative method based on a narrative analysis serves as a tool for discovering the underlying dynamics of dissident mobilization. This approach strives ultimately to understand high-risk[17] nonviolent Islamist activism through an investigation of individual activist narratives. The specificities of social agency, previously mentioned, lay the foundations for the analysis. The initial assumption is that activists are social actors who are aware of the risks of dissent in an authoritarian state. There is an instinctive response to state repression shaped by personal experiences and organizational conditioning. Rationality is important when exploring the success or failure of social action or, in other words, the loss and gain ratio. According to Elster, a "small reward" (e.g. relief of grievance through protest, violent acts or even writing a critical blog) may be replaced with "a delayed larger reward" (e.g. organizational success, electoral gains, government reforms etc.) (Elster 2007, 233).[18]

Activist narratives have been collected through an extensive process of interviewing and collecting data from the field through participant observation. These narratives were later compared through the analysis of the commonalities and differences between activist accounts based on their emotional experiences, belief constructs, and their sense of collective identity. Understanding the motivation to mobilize against a repressive regime is at the center of the investigation and this has been subdivided thus: mobilization against a far superior adversary (i.e. repressive regime), motivation to mobilize through nonviolence, and motivation to mobilize through Islamism. The interview questions were semi-structured so that they directed an activist's attention to deal with his/her motivation through the narration about the issues at hand (see Appendix III). But, what are narratives?

They are usually considered to be the *most common feature* of an (unstructured) interview (Mishler 1986). Narratives are a highly effective (if not the most effective) source of data in

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[17] Any political engagement in an authoritarian state environment is a highly risky endeavor. This risk is significantly higher when social agents decide to engage in Islamist activism, which is viewed as especially threatening to repressive regimes (see chapter 4).

[18] For more on social movement studies based on rational action theory see Jenkins 1983; Tilly 1978; Zald and McCarthy 1987.

the research of human agency (Klandermans and Roggeband 2010, 9). Individuals tend to arrange their experiences and perceptions in a way which resembles narratives in a sequence usually following a person-specific line of thoughts and ideas, which is highly dependent on the contextual use of language and actors' interaction patterns (Polletta 2006a; see also Contarello 2008).

Narratives, it can be argued, represent "a discourse structure of genre which reflects culture. It is a central medium of cultural expression, organization and learning. It is a way to tie personal experiences, reflections and other details related to social relations. Through narrative analysis, a researcher is able to identify activists' perspective, understanding and explanation of perception of the social reality surrounding them" (Wiles *et al* 2005, 98). Here narratives signify a mode of expression of personal experiences tying together social context(s) and personal interpretation(s). What is more, narratives demonstrate the construction of "cultural contexts" (Cortazzi 1993, 58).

Polletta explains this from a social movement perspective and claims that "[n]arratives aspire to story [telling] in the sense that stories both recount events and convey their larger cultural significance [which present us with] a beginning, middle and end" of an event sequence (2006a, 181). Through the analysis of delineated and extracted narratives, one can access cultural specificities that are often missed in traditional discourse analysis or through the statistical representation of a social actor's decion making process.

Narratives are individually expressed accounts ordered in a way whereby a listener/reader (i.e. receiver) can sensibly understand what is being expressed and where special attention is given to certain types of events above others. The expressed sequence of events is usually arranged by a narrator him/herself wherein both chronological and causal explanation are fused together. For an analyst, the temporal and causal parts of a narrative might be hard to disentangle. However, with an elaborate theoretical framework presented in Part III of the study this issue is resolved.

As far as this study goes, an initial assumption is that activists in a particularly contentious social environment run a high risk of becoming the self-righteous victims of oppressive power-holders. As a result, activists tend to present regime agents as destructive, immoral, and inattentive of citizens' needs etc. It is important not to go along

with the convictions of the interviewed activists and confirm their worldview. Rather, a researcher needs to uphold a sense of balance, although this might depend on who is a subject of the interview (Polletta 2006a, 186).

One of the ways to minimize the risk of being 'taken hostage' by the rhetoric of the activists is to be aware of such risks, but also to focus on the grassroots activists, in this case youth activists. In other words, these activists tend to be less experienced in rhetorical skills, which are far more prominent in the higher echelons of an organization. Youth (grassroots) activists are, also presumably, more eager and open to tell their mobilization story in uncomplicated terms, perhaps less schooled in telling the official story of their SMO. In other words, my assumption has been that inexperienced activists are more open and untrained in their representation of their experiences and stories. The methodological preparations, extensive theorization and anticipations have minimized the risks of being a hostage' to the activists' rhetoric. The risk of being too theoretically conditioned has also been considered – and resulted in much contemplation of these issues which needed to be balanced throughout the course of authoring the study.

Semi-structured, in-depth interviews have provided ample narrative data which present activists' expressed beliefs, emotions and identities allowing for a comprehensive analysis. The first step was to identify narratives within the interviews and sort them by two main topics. a) A series of events that happened in connection with their activism including a sequence with a beginning and an end (temporal sequence), b) activists' explicitly stated perspective on the key events and their causal relationship with one's decision to mobilize.

Secondly, it is important to note here that the key words, cultural expressions, and rhetorical constructs (i.e. how much various individual expressions align with the official organization's discourse) were sorted according to the theoretical outline (beliefs, emotions and collective identities). What is important is to follow the narrative (story) and not necessarily verifying the reliability of the content (Polletta 2006a, 182). The key elements are the activists' perceptions, interpretations, feelings, expressed beliefs and identities in order to understand their choice to mobilize in this particular way (i.e. nonviolent Islamism) against a repressive regime.

Given the numerous independent interviews collected during the author's field research it has been possible to construct a motivational model which drive actors into real-life decisions to mobilize. The material has been complemented with other relevant data (e.g. participant observation, similar secondary biographical accounts etc.) concerning the activists' social and educational background. In addition, the narrative analysis of activist discourses helps to overcome the trap of an overly structuralist explanation of mobilization burdened with, above all, political opportunity structures (see Dill and Aminzade 2010).

2.2 Empirical Data

The study deals with the subjective realities of micro-level actors involved in nonviolent Islamist activism in politically difficult environments. Furthermore, to explore the dynamics of this type of activism there are several theoretical frames used to access the activists' strategizing under state repression. Activist justifications for this particular form of political action are analyzed in the light of their beliefs/desires, emotional experiences and their sense of collective identity. For the reasons already mentioned, it is necessary to tap into individual activists' perceptions and interpretations of "social reality" that surrounds them. Due to the nature of this inquiry it has been a complicated process to structure and asses the importance of all collected data. For this reason, a diagram has been constructed in order to illustrate this process, see Appendix I.

The most important component of the collected data is that pertaining to the interviews carried out during the author's field trips to Egypt between 2007 and 2009. All of the interviews were guided by a set of generic questions based on the theoretical framework that was previously mentioned, see Appendix III. Moreover, due to the sensitivity of the topic and the relatively dangerous socio-political context a letter of introduction outlining the ethical principles of the interviews and the study in general was presented to the interviewees well before the interview session, see Appendix IV.

The interviewed activists were chosen strategically so as to represent both rural and urban regions of Egypt. Moreover, it was important to include traditional and conservative individuals as well as the more reformist and less conformist youth activists, so as to

reflect the existing diversity within the organization and the movement at large, see Appendix V.[19]

What was the main purpose of these interviews? Della Porta and Mosca (2007, 5) explain the purpose of semi-structured interview techniques in sociological research:

> Semi-structured interviews encourage the emergence of interviewees' memories without placing them into too strict a framework. Moreover, the number of interviews is high enough to allow for the reconstruction and comparison of various organizational processes. Obviously, the data refer to subjective memories; this means that rather than 'an objective' reconstruction of different organizational processes we uncover the perceptions of some of the activists involved, clearly central for a deeper understanding of the mobilization process.

This definition of the semi-structured interview coincides closely with the author's understanding of the purpose of interviews. Semi-structured interviewing allows enough freedom for both elaborate narration and enough structure to focus on issues of interest (i.e. beliefs, emotions, and collective identities). As this study is concerned with activists' subjective representation and interpretation of their own choice to join a social movement organization, this type of interview technique is considered as ideal. The number of interviews conducted with activists exceeds 30; however, some of the interviews are different in length and quality. The interviews ranged from between 2-3 hours, and in some cases even 4 hours.[20]

Interview data was complemented with additional notes gathered through participant observation. Added to this, the author tried to be attentive to the cultural specificities

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[19] Reformist here denotes activists which are considered by both insiders (other activists) and outsiders (public, research community etc.) as less concerned with religious aspects of mobilization. They usually view the MB as a powerful organization which has greatest chance in opposing the regime. That said, religiosity is more viewed as a personal concern rather than communal, although it is recognized as relevant moral guide. On the other hand, "less conformist" activists are usually on the other end of the MB's activist-scale. These young activists put more emphasis on the religious aspect of mobilization, which they argue is a foundation of their commitment to the SMO and its principles. Again, their emphasis on the importance of religious dimension of their activism does not exclude their serious consideration of political realities, commitment to nonviolent mobilization strategies, pragmatism etc.

[20] Calculations (based on the experiences of senior researchers) show that 1h of audio-recorded interview data takes ca. 4h to transcribe which corresponds to 240-329 hours of transcription of all interviews. Translated into months corresponds to 2.5 - 3.5 months of transcription (of all 30 interviews) in total. The extraordinary burden this imposes on a single researcher has made me question the usefulness of *full* transcription.

operating during each meeting, as well as the "shared social conventions" which were crucial during the assessment of interview data (Potter and Wetherell 1987, 63). Any incongruity between activists in responses to the same questions have been registered and dealt with appropriately (chapter 7).

The issue of interpretation is important when dealing with any sort of "scientific" data. This is especially true when gathering narratives from a social group keen on presenting itself as coherent and morally superior in its collective reasoning and action. The data registered is already interpreted by social actors and transmitted to a researcher, who in turn interprets the narration according to his/her perception and understanding.

Thus the following question arises, is the author's interpretation of the data plausible? Habermas argues that interpretations of "socially constructed reality" are "dialogic;" that is, information about the reality is already interpreted by the actor even before it reaches us; afterward we further attach interpretations to the "original" meanings through our own constructs (Blaikie 2007, 134-136). Through this process of interpretation, the researcher becomes an interpretative accomplice. Data, in other words, undergoes an interpretation process that can be described as double hermeneutics (Giddens 1987). My approach and understanding has been noted above, and the awareness of the somewhat imprecise analytical process is mentioned here. Moreover, semi-structured interviewing is an ongoing analytical process, which is constructed in order to reveal patterns relevant to the research questions presented in the previous chapter (see also Blee and Taylor 2002).

The process of interpretation of activist narratives is as complex as it is important. For instance, given that some portions of the interview data may show significantly different accounts of specific events, phenomena, or other issues; the contradiction must be dealt with in a systematic and coherent way so as to show a plausible reason for such contradictions. "In analyzing semi-structured interviews" it becomes necessary to "make an effort to clarify concepts and categories through successive, alternating views of data collection and interpretation" (Blee and Taylor 2002, 110). In Appendix II relevant questions used in the interviews can be reviewed.

In addition, the interviewed activists were selected tactically in order to represent the widest possible cohort of youth activists reflecting the MB's internal complexity and

organizational challenges (Appendix V). The interview process produced a surprisingly rich and vast amount of data, which in turn helped in the successful realization of this project. It is important to highlight a detail concerning the activists who were interviewed. A large majority of them started their membership process during (late) adolescence. This is largely considered as a formative period regarding identity in a person's life (Klimstra *et al* 2010, 160). This could be translated into the organization's appeal among sympathizers who share personal backgrounds.

Adding the repressive component to social movement mobilization, the assessment of motivations becomes even more complex and a highly sensitive issue to explore (see della Porta 1996 for clandestine mobilization in Italy and Germany; Blee and Taylor 2002, 97-99; Klandermans *et al* 2002, 328-334; Bourdeau 2004, 13-14 on South East Asia; Zwerman and Steinhoff 2005, 98-100 on the USA and Japan). As previously mentioned, it is extremely difficult to grasp the full scope of repression in any authoritarian state due to the lack of political and economic transparency and therefore reliable data. This is especially true for Egypt, a country which had been under continuous authoritarian rule for six decades.

During the research process, it was extremely difficult to access the kind of primary data sources that would have been very valuable, such as interviews with political prison inmates, analyzing meeting protocols, and interviewing administrative staff of the Ministry of the Interior. It seems that the most consistent data regarding (repression) statistics in an authoritarian state that a researcher may obtain are the documented effects of repression (usually) collected by human rights groups and their informants from within the system.[21] As a result, the part of this study concerned with the authoritarian nature of the Mubarak regime depended heavily on extensive but diverse secondary data.

2.3 Case Selection

The existing body of scholarly literature covering the Islamist movement is large and rapidly growing. However, there is a noteworthy lack of micro-sociological studies problematizing the impact of state repression on grass-roots activism in Muslim majority

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[21] Data sets from Amnesty International, Freedom House, The Cingranelli and Richards (CIRI) Human Rights Dataset; the U.S. State Department and others have been the basis of quantitative repression assessment of the former Mubarak regime.

states and more specifically the Arab states. In the wake of the, so called, "Arab spring," it is expected that a significant amount of scholarship will subsequently focus on this topic.

Egypt has traditionally been regarded as a cultural center with a pivotal geopolitical role in the Middle East and North Africa (Pratt 2007). The country with its demographic diversity, cultural dominance in the region, and traditional scholarly focus of political science researchers has begged for a deeper investigation of a relatively unexplored dimension of Islamist activism.

After having reviewed a massive amount of scholarly works on a variety of cases, it became relatively clear that Egypt offers exceptionally favorable conditions for extensive field research, due to the relative freedom under which a (foreign) researcher could operate. Added to this, the country's socio-political conditions offered a vibrant setting for social movement activism. Moreover, the Egyptian case offered an opportunity to explore politically conservative Islamist activism as well as the circumstances wherein one could investigate general patterns of a social actor's motivations to mobilize against a repressive regime.

One might instinctively assume that the investigation of micro-level mobilization in an authoritarian state might pose significant logistical and security difficulties. This has certainly been the case. Approaching activists had its difficulties; however, with much advice from experts and senior researchers accessing the "gate keepers" created a "snow-ball" effect resulting in a massive amount of research material (observational data, recorded interview material, written sources, documents and pamphlets etc.).

This study initially included another case, namely Uzbekistan and its domestic branch of the Islamist social movement organization Hizb Ut-Tahrir (Islamic Liberation Party), for comparative purposes. This choice had to be discarded. Difficulties in obtaining access to HT activists, both in Uzbekistan and abroad were overwhelming and forced the author to reconsider the entire project. The primary obstacle was the fear of activists to participate in interviews due to the threat of reprisals from the regime. The authoritarian style of the Uzbek government has driven dissidents deep underground in fear of the punishment it can apply either to them or family members. Moreover, activists' high level of suspicion toward any unknown persons, including social researchers was a significant obstacle.

Numerous attempts to interview activists outside Uzbekistan were made. A small amount of interview material was gathered and massive amounts of secondary data (international human rights groups' reports, interviews with independent journalists and regionally based aid personnel, secondary scholarly works and NGO analyses) although this does not represent enough material to make a fair comparison between the two cases.

Conclusion

The chapter outlined the study's research design and briefly noted the study's interdisciplinary approach. The research design allowed for a systematic and coherent outline through which the research questions have been addressed. Most importantly, definition and operationalization of proposed narrative analysis has allowed a clearer overview of the chosen approach to answering a complex set of questions noted in the first chapter. The next part of the study sets forth the complex relationship between the macro- and meso-analytical levels thus frames the context there micro-mobilization takes place.

PART II

3　Trajectories of State Repression and Islamist Mobilization

There is no regime in this world which can supply the forthcoming nation with what it requires in the way of institutions, principles, objectives, and judgments to the same extent as Islam can.

Hasssan Al-Banna, founder and first General Guide of the MB

Introduction

This chapter begins by discussing the Muslim Brotherhood's (MB's) development from a grass-roots movement inspired by the critical writings of Jamaludin Al-Afghani, Muhammad Abduh and Muhammad Rashid Rida to a formalized social movement organization under the leadership of Hassan Al-Banna. It further discusses the subsequent repression of the movement under three authoritarian regimes in Egypt with a focus on the Mubarak era. In an effort to analyze the impact of repression on individual activism, the chapter also discusses the components of the state's institutional structure and its authoritarian functions.

In other words, this chapter is about the *who* of the repression – the Mubarak regime - and *who* of the dissident – the MB. State repression is presented through a multilayered and complex structure by which an authoritarian regime attempts to legitimize, maintain, and expand its power(s) and control over the institutions and citizens. The chapter highlights some of the most important areas that explain the nature of the Mubarak regime's authoritarianism. Lastly, the chapter analyzes recent developments of the MB's

mobilization structure and internal membership divisions by which it is possible to understand the impact state repression had on the SMO's internal structure. From here, a more structured discussion follows which is directly connected to the motivations of individual activists.

3.1 The Emerging Muslim Brotherhood

The Muslim Brotherhood was created in 1928 as a nonviolent, anti-colonial, and religiously inspired social movement organization opposing the *de facto* occupation of Egypt by the British (Brynjar 1998). Early on, the MB expanded their activities and developed an organizational structure unlike any other civil society organization at that time. Its activities included all aspects of modern life including the economic, social and political dimensions. It spread rapidly throughout Egypt through networks of local branches established by dedicated activists incorporating some 500,000 paying members (Mitchell 1969; Simms 2002).

The MB was not the only organized populist organization working against British colonial interests. It was rather part of a wider movement involving various political groups working against foreign colonial control. The Young Egypt Party, a populist nationalist party with the propensity to use occasional violent tactics, and the communist party had common interests with the MB, albeit based on different ideological grounds. The largest political party during the inter-war period was Al-Wafd which had no other choice, but to gradually adopt anti-colonial rhetoric, if it was to retain its leading position (see Crabbs 1975).

Initially, the MB's founder Hassan Al-Banna was against the movement's participation in the Egyptian parliamentary electoral system. He argued that that the political system (in 1920s and 1930s Egypt) was a corrupt political power game of which only the elites and the British colonialists were the beneficiaries (Simms 2002, 569-574). However, as a result of the massive amount of newly recruited activists in the 1930s, the newly established organization of Muslim Brothers started adapting to the political realities of the time. Al-Banna's preaching, travelling and dissemination of the message contributed to the widespread familiarization of the MB with the general public attracting many to join (Mitchell 1969). Al-Banna published the weekly journals *Al-Ikhwaan Al-Muslimoon* (The

Muslim Brotherhood) and *al-Nadhir* (the Warner) (Al-Ghazali 2006, xv), thus attempting to reach an even wider audience - a tradition that has been continuously developed and utilized by the MB.

Al-Banna changed his mind about political participation and subsequently participated in the 1941 parliamentary elections. He agreed on promoting the MB as a political alternative to the other parties and groups (Brynjar 1998). The MB had political party status between 1939 and 1954 (Zollner 2007; Feldman 2008, 43). Two years after "the Free Officers' Revolution" led by Gamal Abdel Nasser the MB was banned from any political participation. In fact, they only regained political party status again in March 2011 after the popular revolution, which replaced the Mubarak regime (*Ikhwanweb* 2011b; *Al-Masr Al-Yaoum* 2011). The MB and Al-Banna's change of strategy was an early indication of the pragmatism and tactical flexibility which, as it will be demonstrated, the organization retained throughout the 20th century.

The MB's campaigning prior to the parliamentary elections in 1941 clearly revealed the organization's position on one important point. They severely criticized the British presence in Egypt as a foreign occupying force, which, they argued, needed to leave (Mitchell 1969; Salamé 1993; Simms 2002; Feldman 2008 43-45). This included open opposition to the Egyptian government that was controlled by the British. The commitment to oust the British went so far that Al-Banna even sought cooperation with the Germans against the British in North Africa (Ahmed *et al* 1982).

The 1930s and a large part of the 1940s were the formative period of the organization when it developed its ideological framework and nationwide managerial infrastructure. The British protectorate authorities ordered Al-Banna's arrest and for him to be banished from Cairo. However, due to increased British involvement in WWII and their lack of interest in what they saw as the marginal social activism of the Islamists, Al-Banna and a close group of the MB leaders were released soon after their arrest (Brynjar 1998). In the 1945 parliamentary election, the MB was allowed to compete once again; however, it is accepted that the election results were by and large manipulated resulting in low support for the MB (Muson 2001, 488-489; Simms 2002). In retrospect, historians claim that the 1940s were dominated by widespread popular sympathy for the MB's leadership due its

charismatic leadership, populist message, organizational discipline, and, not least, its ideas about redistribution and socio-political reform (Lia 1998; Mitchell 1969).

MB's mobilization strategies during relatively relaxed state restrictions (1928-1954) are representative of what Tarrow calls "contentious politics" whereby the "ordinary people, often in league with more influential citizens, join forces in confrontation with elites, authorities and opponents" (1994, 2). In order for the politics to be contentious it needs to involve several distinguishable actors, each supported by a particular set of social networks, distinct socio-cultural discourse, and sustained organizational structures. The MB did incorporate all of these parts in this period.

For instance, Hassan Al-Banna was by, all historical accounts, inspired by his religious upbringing in the city of Ismailiyya by the Suez Canal by his father, a local imam, the close encounter with foreign colonialism (British troops controlling the Canal), his education as a school teacher and pedagogical background, and insights derived through the writings of religious scholars Muhammad Abduh and Muhammad Rashid Rida (El-Ghazali 2001*)*. Al-Banna formulated what has been viewed as a broad ideological framework that, his followers believed, would ultimately liberate Egypt from foreign dominance. Moreover, the liberation from foreign occupation, Al-Banna argued, should bring the Egyptian nation "back to Islam," by which, he believed, it would be possible to create a socio-economic equilibrium between the impoverished masses of Egyptians and the small elite of wealthy landowners.[22] His message to the largely illiterate Egyptian masses created a positive effect through his constant insistence on education: "The solution is education and molding of the souls of the [Egyptian] nation […] It goes beyond the mere founding of schools, factories and institutions, it is the founding of souls" (quoted in Brynjar 1998, 67).

The core members of the MB, then as now, consisted of individuals from the well-educated and urban middle classes, much like Al-Banna himself. The transition from rural habitat to the urban settings, of primarily Cairo and Alexandria, seemingly influenced their formulations of the reasons behind, what they saw as Egypt's underdevelopment,

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[22] Al-Bana said: "Islam has set out rules to bring classes closer, by forbidding the rich to hoard wealth or indulge in luxury, and by encouraging the raising of living standards among the poor, by confirming their right in the treasury of the state and the wealth of the rich, and by describing the practical ways of achieving this…" (El-Ghazali 2011, 311)

foreign dependence, and cultural decay. The MB proposed economic solutions, arguably inspired by socialism, where they sought the nationalization of the country's heavy industries and fertile land, usually owned by wealthy landowners.

The MB's calls for social justice, the political inclusion of disenfranchised populations, and a return of religious morals and ethics in the political process[23] went down well with both the working classes and peasants, and most importantly, the conservative middle classes (Mitchell 1969; Mitchell 1988, 124-15, 171). As a result, it seems that the MB's broad, populist, and religiously pragmatic message disarmed small groups of socialists and some of their arguments. It thus effectively undermined the development of a leftist grass-roots movement in Egypt.

It is possible to summarize Al-Banna's main argument through a presentation of one of his many activist principles. His explanation of the MB's overall purpose and mobilization strategies inspired many Egyptians at the time. Al-Banna explained that the MB was guided by and organized through "a *Salafiyyah* message, a Sunni way, a Sufi truth, a political organization, an athletic group, a scientific and cultural union, an economic enterprise and a social idea" (Mitchell 1969, 14; Sullivan 1995, 187; Shehadeh 2003, 15; also El-Ghazali, 275-276).

A *Salafiyyah* message here implies that Muslims in general and the MB specifically have responsibility to strive to achieve authenticity in their beliefs and practices in what relates to their religious convictions. Authenticity alludes to doctrinal puritanism and adherence to textual literalism when approaching the religious texts. All very much based on the idea of authenticity of Islamic teachings, specifically interpreted by Rashid Rida. A Sunni way indicates the importance of retracing the successes of Islamic civilization by which moral and ethical values can be revived. The emphasis on revival was important for Al-Banna as it diminishes the need to rely on, what he considers, imported ethical and moral values (e.g. European cultural influences such as arts, fashions, political traditions etc.).

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[23] Hassan Al-Banna and the early MB intellectuals were directly influenced by the writings of Muhammad Rashid Rida, his notions of *salafiyyah* (practical methodology of Islamic principles) and thoughts on the modernization of Muslim lands (see Karam 2004; Zollner 2009, 52-55). N.B. the *salafiyyah* in this context is noticeably different from what we today consider *salafi*, a puritanical form of everyday religious practices with a focus on the opinions and recommendations of Islamic scholars.

Herein a concept of a "Sufi truth" focused on a purity of faith, introvert religious practice and on individual spiritual development highlighted this principle even further.

Political organization is rather self-evident and manifested itself primarily in the organization's practical mobilization efforts in the 1940s. This formative period produced a short-lived organizational dichotomy between social and political activism. An athletic group was embodied in the MB's Boy Scout movement where physical exercise and group bonding was emphasized as a foundation of, what is described as, a healthy society. Socio-economic arguments have already been discussed. However, it can be noted that, right after the parliamentary elections of 1945, the MB's leadership made a clear distinction between its social and political work. The former type of work included the organization's efforts towards social welfare of the people while the latter focused on the reformation of the country's political system (Mitchell 1969).

The MB's political ideas have always been intertwined with religious moral ideals, including rhetoric about popular resistance. Its organizational infrastructure gives an impression of a comprehensive organization, which could potentially initiate nation-wide changes in both society and politics.

Viewed as a threat by the ascending new regime in Egypt, the MB was gradually banned just two years after the Free Officers' Revolution in July 1952, which they supposedly supported. Gamal Abdel Nasser's take-over of government in February 1954 effectively ruled out any political participation of the MB, or for that matter any other political opposition. During the inter-war period and the brief rule of the Free Officers under the leadership of Muhammad Naguib, freedom of expression was only partial to say the least; however, after Nasser's effective government takeover from Naguib, freedom of the press gradually disappeared and the regime took complete control, marking the beginning of a new phase in rather old-style authoritarianism (Crabbs 1975, 392, 404-405; Doran 1999, 17-19).

After 1954, the MB's activism had entered a new phase, a period of organizational stagnation, near extinction and eventually structural renovation (Wickham 2002, 21). The recruitment of new activists was essentially limited to introducing family members into the organizational structure, this in some cases extended to close friends of activists. Most

of the organization's leadership was imprisoned without trial, some of the leaders were even executed (Moaddel 2002, 373-374). One of the reasons that triggered such rapid repressive measures was an assassination attempt by a member of the MB on Nasser's life during a public speech in Alexandria. The swiftness and ferocity of Nasser's repression policies was immediate and highly traumatic for many of its members (see Al-Ghazali 2006).

Such collective experiences of repression encouraged the organization's leadership to reinvent itself both ideologically and organizationally (Munson 2001). The core members of the organization, for the most part in their mid-30s to early 40s, were incarcerated enduring harsh prison conditions. Nasser even organized "concentration camps" wherein numerous members of the MB spent, in some cases, more than two decades (see Al-Ghazali 2006 for a detailed and explicit description of the prison experience). By all available historical accounts, these experiences were formative and heavily influenced the leadership's understanding of social change, their interpretation of Islamic activism, and activism strategies (Mitchell 1969; Crabbs 1975; Sayyid-Marsot 1985; Doran 1999; El-Ghobashy 2005; Zollner 2009, 33-43).[24]

Early members' experiences of repression, torture and extrajudicial incarceration not only reformed the MB as an Islamist organization, but also firstly and foremostly shaped the overall beliefs and ideological understandings of this early generation of activists. Activist feelings of discontent are by and large shaped through social experiences in that particular environment (see Gordon 1992, 14-39), and as such are highly relevant for understanding motivations behind mobilization. An argument about the shaping of activist "character" is made in subsequent parts of this chapter. However, it is important to briefly theorize meso-level activism as a part of the socio-political context into which individual activists are later assimilated.

3.2 The Dynamics of Meso-level Mobilization

The dynamics and complexity of meso-level activism has traditionally attracted massive scholarly attention ever since the early days of social movement research. This has

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[24] Ideological explications of transition are recorded in Al-Hudaybi 1977.

subsequently produced a wide-range of theoretical propositions (Gurr 1970; Wilson 1973; Tilly 1978; Klandermans 1988; Mellucci 1989; della Porta 1992; 1995; 1996; Tarrow 1994; Jasper 1997; Goodwin *et al* 2001; McAdam *et al* 2001; Meyer *et al* 2002, della Porta and Diani 2006). Despite this, there are no known explicit definitions of the mobilization process today.

Here mobilization means the active pursuit of social change through directed collective action. As such, mobilization signifies a collective action process that, as McAdam et al claim, represents "conscious strategic efforts by groups of people to fashion shared understandings of the world and of themselves that legitimate and motivate collective action" (McAdam *et al* 1996, 6). We also find that collective action is usually sustained by and performed through organizations, which develop their own internal conditions and dynamics (see Gerhards and Rucht 1992; Kurzman 1998).

Meso-level mobilization is represented by entrepreneurs of activism, in this case the organized efforts of the MB core members, where the process of collective dissent coagulates into a loose structure. Dissenting collective action is a process that is apparently fueled by the emotional, moral, mental, and physical commitment of actors through which a specific interpretation of grievances is formed and later expressed.

Firstly, it is quite clear that social grievances are considered to be ubiquitous (Snow *et al* 2004b, 3-5) and not limited to a specific time and place. They are of various kinds and are found in all human societies. The collective expression of grievances is necessary for dissenting collective action to take place, it is not however sufficient to explain the mobilization process on any level. Secondly, a coordinator of the collective expression of grievances (mobilization) is also necessary for a *sustained* collective show of dissent to take place. The role of coordinator is usually fulfilled by a social movement organization (SMO), which is most commonly composed of individuals who share the same or similar grievances directed at the same source of complaint.

Organized and sustained mobilization therefore represents a point of symmetry where the supply of organized support for grievances meets the collective demand for change in a specific socio-political context (Klandermans 1988, 175-176; 2004, 374). An SMO, in other words, serves as a coordinator of the *supply* end of mobilization by constructing

frameworks, channels of communication, and venues of (collective dissent) expression. The *demand* is, essentially, the shared assertion for social change, which is often visible as the observable public discontent of mental obstacles. For instance, the revolutionary events preceding the *Tahrir* sit-in, on January 25-26 in Cairo, demonstrated the process of overcoming this mental obstacle (i.e. fear) *en masse.* The convergence of the supply of protest instruments and the demand for social change is what can be called mobilization.

Moreover, an SMO as defined earlier is considered to represent the nexus of *demand* for social change and the pre-existing, but also continuously generated, *supply* of (collective) grievances. As such, SMOs can be seen as mobilization scavengers feeding on popular discontent and grievances in a constant struggle to achieve social change. In other words, "grievances and discontent may be defined, created, and manipulated by issue entrepreneurs and organizations" (McCarthy and Zald 1977, 1215). If one adopts the idea that social movement organizations are essentially "manipulative," one misses out on a comprehensive understanding of mobilization. It is rather a discouraging notion. Social actors, such as those included in this study, are far more resourceful and critical observers of social events and participants of "social reality" than what McCarthy and Zald would have us believe.

Mobilization can also be interpreted as a procedural nexus of the supply of organizational tools (SMOs resources) preceded by the expressed collective demand for social or political change. The nexus is represented by a reciprocal correlation between inter-personal relations on the one side, and dissidents' strategic choices vis-à-vis opponent(s), on the other. Furthermore, the reciprocal interaction between the dissenting group and most commonly the state regime is irregular and continuously demands strategic adjustments. The procedural character of mobilization is not static and clear-cut. Fluidity, complexity, and transiency of collective behavior are sometimes reflected in the reciprocity of social actions (Klandermans 2004, 374).

Reciprocity means the relation between those demanding social change and those who this demand is directed towards. Moreover, reciprocity is manifested in another feature of the SMO's function as a mobilization entrepreneur, namely an SMO is as much a product of the mobilization process as it is its long-term facilitator. For example, the translation of collective dissent into a culturally familiar discourse with all the symbolism and

references this entails is usually constructed within an SMO. Schematic and ideologically loaded discourse serves as a mobilizing tool to systematize popular grievances and propose attractive solutions (Klandermans 1984, 585; Klandermans and Oegema 1987, 519).

It is also possible to argue that the nonviolent Islamist movement in Egypt and the wider MENA region can most effectively be described as a set of networks, which hold common beliefs and are based on interpersonal solidarity through which social actors sustainably interact with power holders and other opponents challenging their efforts (see SM definitions in della Porta and Diani 1999: 16; Tilly 1984, 304; 2008, 151). An SMO, such as the MB, is by default an operational part of a social movement and as such belongs to the meso-level of the investigation. Here, an SMO is "a complex, or formal, organization which identifies its goals with the preferences of a social movement or a countermovement and attempts to implement those goals" (McCarthy and Zald 1977, 1218). Moreover, an SMO is a collective action unit active in converting social actors into believing their interpretation of the situation (Klandermans 1988, 179-180).

The mobilization process of the MB has shown that the continuous negotiation and discussion between activists within an SMO creates a diffusion of innovative ideas both on the ideological and operational levels. This has been case throughout the history of Islamism in Egypt. Different groups have both exchanged members and with them ideas on strategies and tactics (see chapter 4; also della Porta and Tarrow [2012] for other examples of similar mechanisms of diffusion). However, sometimes, at the extreme ends of discussion, the rigidity of the forms of discussion and negotiation can create antagonism between the different sub-groups of an SMO. If the SMO's internal structure and procedure cannot absorb various differences, including doctrinal and operational divergence, internal negotiations could potentially result in the fragmentation of the organization and pushing the Islamist mobilization spectrum even wider. This has, in turn, caused significant friction within the SMO demonstrating the leadership's inconsistency and perhaps inability to bridge the multiple demands of the grassroots activists. Shortly after the January 25th revolution the MB experienced the first signs of serious division within the organization (El-Houdaiby 2011).

The MB's activism, already from its first days in 1928, followed the pattern of a social movement representing a process of collective opposition to a specific form of political order. The MB has formed out of (in)formal protest networks with shared ideological beliefs that were involved in a contentios interaction with the authorities, thus challenging the status quo (see Mitchell 1969; Brynjar 1998). The organization organized (public) displays of discontent, protests and demonstrations, facilitated religious sermons, and public lectures and, not least, official political party(ies) (Doran 1999).

If we apply Weber's definition of politics, we can define all of these activities as political acts, as they are directed towards holders of state power. These and other types of social activism are indicators that some people strive for (political) power, or influence over its distribution (Gerth and Mills (1946, 77). The Muslim Brotherhood is both a complex and formal organization with explicit mobilization goals, often shared with other Islamist organizations. It is an organization with a compartmentalized internal structure, which supported sustained regime dissent over an extensive period of time.

The MB's internal web of communication on a local level is based primarily on relatively confined relations between activists through friendship networks made up of neighbors, neighborhood mosque visitors, sporting partners, relatives etc.). On a more formal, association level, other forms of affiliation can be found. Here, organizational networks made up of student campus associations and workers' syndicates become functional as facilitators of collective dissent based on ideological conviction and lifestyle association (e.g. class/professional affiliation). Work-place connections are immensely important, especially for individuals who migrate from rural to urban settings. This study demonstrates in the empirical chapters (chapters 5 and 6) that similar experiences with the state authorities are found within friendship and organizational networks. Members share comparable social backgrounds, and analogous religious understandings which synergize into similar interpretations of perceived grievances and social ills.

Through processes of communication and inter-personal relations within organizational settings, activists usually develop a sense of solidarity and like-mindedness, constructed around common definitions of contentious issues and their solutions. This inter-personal familiarity in turn increases emotional bonding that can be described as "the glue of solidarity" (Collins 1990, 28). Several arguments can be made here, firstly it is through

these processes of solidarity that the construction of a group-specific *image* of an adversary (e.g. state regime) takes shape, and, secondly, it is through this process that activists are able to negotiate mobilization strategies. The strategizing part of an SMO is complex, however its aims are rather simple (Klandermans 1984, 585-587). An SMO continuously seeks to increase its support base as a means to achieve desired changes.

Individual activists compose the building-blocks of the mobilization process and, as is shown in this study, they are the essential part of our understanding of social activism. Activism is not the mere voicing of (socio-political) dissent but is understood to be a way of life. Islamist activism can be considered as such, mainly because it tightly knits general beliefs and religious faith with socio-political claims into everyday practices with the commitment to produce change. "[P]olitical activism is first and foremost a matter of lifestyle, the expression of deeply felt cultural and political orientations rather than adhesion to any specific political project and the organizations that could support it" (della Porta and Diani 2006, 132).

Activists, in this case, are central to understanding the motivations behind social mobilization. Social actors must be able to acknowledge the existence of a particular grievance, which (s)he feels strongly about in order to move this individual to *participate* in dissenting behavior. As previously argued, for social actors to participate, they ought to recognize a particular mode and goal of mobilization as compatible with their moral values and principles (Klandermans 1984, 590).

This consideration of morals and values is not automatically in conflict with what we call rationality. On the contrary, previous research and theorization has demonstrated that there exists a strong element of rationality in collective behavior (see Tilly 1978; 2008; McAdam 1982). This supposed rationality in the form of the actors' consideration of instrumentality in collective action is intrinsically connected with emotional stimuli, moral judgments and personal ambitions (see Goodwin *et al* 2000; Klandermans *et al* 2002; Polletta 2006). An SMO represents a dynamic social environment where individual activists' commitment, lifestyles, and personalities are re-shaped and articulated (chapter 7).

The above mentioned arguments about the importance of SMOs in sustaining mobilization, their central role in merging the supply and demand side of protest and exploiting grievances are also supported by earlier scholarly works. Such works have usually argued that the more structured an organization is, the more likely it is to survive occasional "waves of protests" (della Porta and Diani 2006, 145). Moreover, structured SMOs can more capably mobilize resources through sustained efforts and long-term training and planning than those groups that are less structured (McCarthy and Zald 1977; Gamson 1991). This consideration is even more important when discussing mobilization in authoritarian states.

3.3 The Macro-Structure of State Repression in Egypt

Earl divides forms of repression into three distinctive theoretical dimensions: a) *who* the repressive agent is, b) *how* the repressive action is carried out, and c) *where*[25] the repressive action takes place (2003, 47-48). A previous study of repression by Shock does not include this general typology[26] as he excludes the *where* dimension of repression and therefore misses some analytical strength. Earl therefore makes a more comprehensive effort to construct a typology of repression where she divides agents of repression into three main categories.[27] Furthermore, she divides repression strategies into observable and unobservable types pointing out the limits of research but also raising awareness about the repressive character of some regimes. This typology is particularly significant in the case of Egypt where state security operates through a well-developed network of contacts and informants, which are highly relevant to the regime's repressive containment of Islamist mobilization.

As already mentioned, the definition of repression captures three elements of repressive action that need to be addressed and explained. They are the actor(s), method, and place of repression. A state by definition demands obedience and control of both its citizens and territory (see Weber 1978). State authorities in general and authoritarian regimes in

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[25] Here Earl explains that there are both observable and unobservable parts of repression fields.
[26] Shock's definition of repression: "Negative sanctions, using force or coercion, and violence by proxy" (2004, 32).
[27] State agents tightly connected with the regime, state agents loosely connected to the regime and private agents conducting repression in the form of counter movements and state proxies (Earl 2003, 49).

particular, are concerned with *any* threat[28] that might question the existing socio-political order. State repression, in other words, is a process of maintaining political power through policies and methods, which obstruct any opposing/threatening collective action (Kamrava 1998: 64). The authoritarian regime of Mubarak had a whole arsenal of political, judicial and economic policies at its disposal, which it used to prevent political opposition that threatened the status quo (see 07CAIRO2871 2007, official document).

Some scholars of social movements and state control have traditionally focused on state policing techniques (della Porta and Reiter 1998; Earl 2003; Earl and Soule 2006; Fernandez 2008). These and other experts recognize that protest policing and its mechanisms of engagement with vocal dissidents is one of the major repression techniques. Although this is an important element of repression "mechanics", and an inherent part of a state's control strategy, it misses important aspects of authoritarian logic and its mechanisms of repression.

For instance, focusing on protest policing ignores the deterring effects of judicial sanctions imposed by a regime. This lacuna is largely connected to a traditional scholarly focus on state responses in liberal democracies, what we might call a 'democratic bias' among social movement scholars (Turner and Killian 1972; Lichbach 1987; Gupta *et al* 1993; Loveman 1998; Goodwin and Jasper 1999; Moore 2000). We need to broaden the analysis by including indicators of institutional aspects of state repression, as well as its impact on mobilization. It can be argued that state repression is ultimately the *capacity* of the state regime to control, and thus impede individual or collective opposition through physical force and/or the threat of force.

The assumption here is that "[r]egime opponents [i.e. SMO] *anticipate* state activity, search out its pattern, and in the light of that pattern, *calibrate* movement practice to navigate between the innocuous and the suicidal" (Boudreau 2004, 3, emphasis added). In the case of the Muslim Brotherhood, there is much evidence pointing in this direction. A long

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[28] The level of threat to state institutions, citizens' safety and economic interests vary greatly. Nevertheless, a threat to state authorities can come from revolutionary or reactionary types of dissent ranging from extreme left movements (anarchist/ independent syndicalist organizations) to extreme right (Christian and nationalist militias and neo-Nazi groups), and further to nonviolent forms of mobilization such as environmental activism and pacifist movements where protesters disrupt commercial and military functions.

tradition of mobilization under repression has facilitated the evolution of the organization and its strategies.

Besides the traditional forms of state repression involving the physical force of state security as a means to disperse activists (through beatings, arrests and even shootings), there is another, more profound form of social control. The psychological harassment and humiliation of activists in an effort to discourage them from continued dissent by instilling fear and decreasing their self-confidence, setting examples to other potential activists. Based on the previous consideration and on the construct of personal desire/belief, it is important, or rather socially admirable, for a person who is subjugated by state repression to try and overcome their mental barrier of fear in order to restore their sense of decorum and worth.

In Egypt, and assumingly elsewhere in the authoritarian landscape, the psychological notion of repression stretches(ed) beyond the state's capacity to impose physical sanctions and techniques of protest control. Repression includes(ed) *intimidation* of activists through audio and video recording of participation in mobilization for later use when raiding activists' homes, *obstruction* of university enrollment for known or suspected activists, *denial* of employment or military service to suspected activists.[29] After briefly theorizing control mechanisms it is important to specify forms of repression through examples.

The, now fallen, Mubarak regime was in power between October 1981 and February 2011 and during this period the regime exercised a wide variety of repressive measures against all political dissidents. The regime successfully employed "negative sanctions, using force or coercion, and violence by proxy" (Schock 2004, 32). The regime's repression strategies have been manifested in a variety of their responses to the Islamist (and secular) opposition. Repression in this study is analyzed partly through Earl's analytic framework: who represses and how repression is manifested. Identifying the *who* of repression is, on the face of it, not difficult. However, the regime structure is not merely composed of the individual members of the political leadership, but involves a wider network of social agents and institutions that cooperate in this process.

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[29] This state action is perceived as a negative sanction as military service is often a springboard to better employment opportunities and often to state employment with significant benefits.

The Mubarak regime inherited strategies from the two preceding regimes and advanced its tactics on *how* to realize its repressive policies, primarily through censorship and rigid media control, but also through the creation of secret prisons and the intimidation of regime critics (Mitchell 1969; Hinnebusch 2007; Leyne 2010; Michael 2010; Topol 2010). Moreover, during its 30-year rule the Mubarak regime succeeded in establishing full control of the political institutions through a variety of tactical tools. These tools included fraudulent elections, control of media outlets, censorship, coercing opponents into submission, imprisonment, and outright violent subjugation of its adversaries (Ibrahim 2002, 165-166; Sadiki 2009, 84, 94, 127).

The repression of political opponents in states with little or no democratic experience has been the norm *whoever* might have held the reins of power. Here democratic refers to independent state institutions (checks and balances of power), self-determination of the people, free speech, and the peaceful transition of political control. Egypt, as previously noted, experienced a short, interrupted and turbulent democratic period defined by the 1923 constitution in the period of the mid-1920s and 1930s (Sayyid-Marsot 1985; Zaki 1995, 75-76).

Political competition during that period produced several streams of political orientation. These can be considered as the precursors of the contemporary political parties in Egypt. For instance, Al-Wafd party draws on the modern and nationalist ideas of its predecessors and claims continuity of their thought.[30] It presents itself as a viable alternative to the ruling regime (Sayyid-Marsot 1985, 100-101; Ehab 2010) although one could discuss the sincerity of such claims as al-Wafd members of parliament often supported the policies of the ruling National Democratic Party (NDP).

The Muslim Brotherhood (MB) and several other Islamist groups[31] trace their roots to the same period (Sayyid-Marsot 1985, 89; Lia 1998). The leftist Socialist Labor Party and its allies, are equally eager to point to the early beginnings and tradition in Egypt going back

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[30] Here party leaders and its supporters make frequent references to party leaders Saad Zaghloul (1920s) and Mustafa Nahhas (1930s and 1940s) who, at the time, dominated Egyptian parliamentary politics.

[31] *Gam'iyyah Shar'iyyah* (institutionalized organization representing religiously conservative salafi streams of thought focused on social activism which avoids political claims), and *Ansar Al-Sunnah Al Muhammadiyyah* (another salafi-oriented organization), are some early Islamist groups who developed mobilization networks through religious pietism and avoided confrontation with the state authorities.

to the early 1920s (Zaki 1995, 75-76; Ginat 2003). An assumption can be made that the claims of political parties to have their origins in the earlier democratic period are supposed to increase their credibility and sincerity through the maintenance of a (political) tradition and prove their (long-term) public commitment (see Auda 1991).

A long tradition of Egyptian political authoritarianism has produced repression mechanisms which had become gradually more selective when pursuing political opponents. The *who* of repression in post-independence Egypt is represented by the authoritarian state regimes of Nasser, Sadat and Mubarak. All of these regimes were selective and relatively sensitive to the public reactions to repression. Nevertheless, they have always signaled that political opposition of any kind will be sanctioned and repressed, effectively incapacitating much of, what can speculatively be claimed to be, the political opposition (Brownlee 2007, 176ff).

The authoritarian regimes of Nasser, Sadat, and Mubarak, distinguished between violent and nonviolent types of opponents, and the (potentially) violent groups did not necessarily pose a greater threat, but the argument for cracking down on them was less controversial and easier to legitimize. If one wishes to theorize about these regime experiences one can assume that the regime's repression tactics have also helped to shape the nature and form of its opponents (see Snow and Benford 1992). The reverse assumption needs to be considered as well. Authoritarian regimes, in general, seem to (re)form policies and sometimes institutions in order to counter the various kinds of dissenting mobilization strategies (Boudreau 2002, 29).

The Mubarak regime often claimed to have been elected by the citizens in free and fair elections, and was therefore the legitimate holder of political power (Ezzat 2010a, 2010b). For instance, the electoral candidates of the NDP often sought popular support through established networks of patronage "most of which can realistically be channeled only from the center [of political power]" (Kassem 1999, 127). These channels of patronage and personal favoritism had been growing in importance throughout Mubarak's reign (Zaki 1995). This primarily depends on the regime's ambitions to penetrate deep into civil society by increasing the people's dependence on regime support (Brownlee 2002, 37). The regime also became progressively entangled with the business elites (Ibrahim 2002, 127-128) due to factors related to the increase in the globalization of economic communication and cultural/social interconnectedness (Etling *et al* 2009).

The Mubarak regime had been increasingly fearful of the popular appeal of the Islamists in general and the MB in particular. This is especially true after the MB's electoral "successes" in the 2005 parliamentary elections. "The Ikhwan [the MB] are very organised and extremely popular, and if they contested the elections, they could easily win against the NDP. A trend within the regime thinks that the Ikhwan [the MB] constitute the greatest political threat to Mubarak, and fears that what happened in Algeria [a civil strife starting in 1991/92] could happen in Egypt" (Makram Mohammad Ahmad, in Al-Awadi 2004, 173).

The regime's structure had been highly dependent on the stability of internal relationships and alliances between different groups amongst the political elites, including the military. This was necessary because the intended purpose of repression had been to contain, limit and eventually eradicate political challengers (see Appendix II). Analyzing the state's formal structure one can observe three important *domestic* elements on which the regime bases its power of control: elite patronage/clientelist relations,[32] coercive institutions of power, and economic control of the main sources of revenue.

3.4 The Structure of Egyptian State Repression

In Egypt patronage relations played out mainly through the regime's political party, the now dissolved National Democratic Party (NDP). The regime's interests had often been preserved through the promises of services, favors and benefits to public service employees and the general constituency – *wustah* (Goodson and Radwan 1997). The outcome of the interactive process that developed through networks of patronage was that they superseded the institutionalized channels of communication and created an unequal distribution of state services and benefits. This system maintains the repressive regime in place and perpetuates its authoritarian rule (Fahmy 2002; Sadiki 2009, 175, 276-277).

Wustah,[33] or the concept of mediation, has been particularly useful to explain why citizens vote for a particular candidate during elections. One could observe that individuals voted

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[32] This element, often referred to as *wustah*, could be described partially as representative of political culture; however, this debate is left out for the sake of coherence as it is not directly tied to the aim of the study.

[33] Or Wastah, alt. Wastah.

for political candidates they had personal ties with and from whom they hoped to receive favors (e.g. government employment, court assistance etc.) (Lust-Okar 2006, 459ff). This relationship of dependence and mediation (*al-wustah*) has been bolstered through institutional arrangements, constitutional amendments and interest-based projects, which close the doors to outside competitors such as independent business elites, or political opposition groups (see Roll 2010). And as noted previously, their primary competitors are usually middle-class professionals, the base of recruitment for the MB in Egypt (see *The Economist* 2008).

Added to this neopatrimonial networking is the role of the military-industrial complex that has been strengthened through a patronage-system of contacts and political appointments. It is important to consider that Mubarak is a former Air-Force General with an extensive personal network within the military. Some of the high-ranking military officers occupied some of the most important positions in the regime.[34] Therefore one can observe a patron-client system that penetrates deep into, what has been considered as, the most important institution of the state (interviews with activists January-March 2009; interview with Rashwan, Februrary 2, 2009) - the military.

In other words, "Mubarak furnishes his military brass with weapons and pensions; in return, they refrain from dabbling in politics and pledge to safeguard his regime from external threats" (Azarva 2007, 2). This close network of groomed relations between the regime and other important components of its infrastructure had been a primary feature of political *control* by the Mubarak family (Sobelman 2001). Moreover, the military's transformation into an important economic actor in Egypt in the 1980s further strengthened its powerful position assuring regime stability (see Zuhur 2007, 16-17).

Furthermore, the recent wave of arrests of regime ministers and members of the business elite, including Gamal and 'Alaa Mubarak (the sons of the former president) sends signals to potential contenders for power that no-one is safe from prosecution. During the post-

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[34] At the time of writing, the military establishment is in full control of the Egyptian state. Armed Forces Chief of Staff Magdi Hatata is the leader of all high-ranking defense delegations abroad and and the former Defense Minister Field Marshal Muhammad Hussein Tantawi is the Chairman of the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces and thus the *de facto* President. Tantawi has been an important part of regime stability as he also represents the military's extensive economic activities, which by some estimates compose half of all economic activities in Egypt (Alterman 2000, 114; Azarva 2007; Roll S. 2010). He is in charge of the Military Transition Government.

revolutionary interviews with activists several of the interviewees indicated their disbelief at the fact that the minister of the Interior, the former President and members of his family were under arrest (February-March 2011).

The early 1990s was an eventful time in Egypt's domestic affairs, when the violent Islamists of the Islamic Group and Islamic Jihad battled the government security forces for control of the Cairo suburbs and the towns and villages of Upper Egypt. The military played a crucial role in sustaining the regime's authority and its stability. Untainted by civilian business interests or different ideologies, this pragmatic and well-respected institution has essentially been a source of legitimacy for the Mubarak regime.

Nevertheless, the Mubarak family did excersise control over it. The sacking of Field Marshall Muhammad 'Abd al-Halim Abu-Ghazala in 1993, demonstrated this point. Abu Ghazala was considered to be one of the most respected public figures in Egypt, and was even considered as a potential successor of Hossni Mubarak (Sobelman 2001). He was revered as one of the most important military leaders and political figures since the military successes of the Egyptian army under the command of Anwar Sadat during the 1973 war against Israel.

In 1981, during the military parade when Sadat was assassinated, Abu Ghazala, then a commander of the chiefs of staff, sat on the left side of Sadat, Mubarak, then a vice-president, was on the right. This demonstrated Abu Ghazala's proximity to and influence on political power. He was undramatically removed from his position by Mubarak in 1993, which led to his retirement (Sobelman 2001; Nassar 2008). This and other similar political decisions, such as his refusal to appoint a vice-president during the entire presidential period (doing so only days before stepping down) demonstrated the Mubarak family's political style and desire to control political outcomes.

Being one of the oldest, most stable and well-respected institutions in Egypt, the military, did nevertheless step into the political vacuum to keep the state intact. The military's role in Egyptian politics has been relatively stable since the military coup of the "Free Officers" in 1952. It seems that little has changed in the importance of their influence on political power since then (for more see Gordon 1992; Kechichian and Nazimek 1997; Al-Awadi 2004; Murdock 2011).

Neopatrimonialism is therefore a concept closely related to patronage and *wustah* signifying a mode of interpersonal relations between the governor and the governed, between power-equipped elites and subordinates (see Brownlee 2002). The nature of this unequal power-relation is constructed around legal and cultural references, which differ in time and place. An early definition of patrimonialism was offered by Guenther Roth where he defines it as "personal rulership on the basis of loyalties that do not require any belief in the ruler's unique personal qualification, but are inextricably linked to material incentives and rewards" (1968, 196). Some would disagree that such a sweeping generalization could be applicable to the falling Arab regimes, especially those labeled as popular authoritarian regimes (Hinnebusch 2007, 20-21). Nevertheless, one should examine this conceptual framework as it usefully pins down a crucial element of authoritarian repressive state regimes, such as the one ruled by Hosni Mubarak.

Erdmann and Engel have developed a thick description of the newer concept of neopatrimonialism which differentiates between a "system of rule" and a "theory of neopatrimonial action" (2006; 2007). In this study, the concept of neopatrimonialism is not discussed in detail due to space constraints; instead, it is appropriate to adopt the definition developed by Erdmann and Engel. Firstly, the primary components of neopatrimonialism are traditional domination (patrimonialism) and "legal-rational bureaucratic domination" (i.e. the *neo-* in neopatrimonialism). Thus:

> Neopatrimonialism is a mixture of two, partly interwoven, types of domination that co-exist: namely, patrimonial and legal-rational bureaucratic domination. Under patrimonialism, all power relations between ruler and ruled, political as well as administrative relations, are personal relations; there is no differentiation between the private and the public realm (Erdmann and Engel 2006, 18).

Secondly, the fortunes of authoritarian regimes that hold elections are shaped in crucial ways by the variation in the type of rulers (e.g. military, personal leader, or a political party) and whether the rulers govern mainly through patronage networks, ethnic ties, or mass parties. It has been historically documented that the three post-independence

Egyptian regimes[35] controlled the political opposition in slightly different ways (Sayyid-Marsot 1985; Gordon 1992; Mitchell 2002).

Nevertheless, the Mubarak regime did feature one major attribute of authoritarianism, and that is its electoral dimension (i.e. "legal-rational bureaucratic domination"). This phase of Egyptian politics can be defined as "electoral authoritarianism: undemocratic but with multiparty elections and some degree of political pluralism" (Diamond 2002, 27). Another example to this effect is Law 32/1964, which was an important judicial tool used by the regime which gave it total (legal) control over the formation of NGOs, their role and purpose (HRW Report 2005c, 34). This informs the public of negative sanctions and the futility of opposition to the regime.

The most powerful and influential group of social actors in a repressive state such as Egypt is composed of the leader of the regime (former Egyptian president Mubarak b. 1928), and his close associates usually consisting of the highest government officials (i.e. the Central Executive Governing Body). Within this close circle the Minister of the Interior, (1997-2011) Habib Ibrahim El Adly (b. 1938) had responsibility for domestic security and was in charge of any major repressive action taken by the state security forces (directly under the Minister's authority) and the central security forces (CSF), a paramilitary unit of about 300,000 trained soldiers.

Added to this, the Egyptian General Intelligence Directorate and its chief, Army General Omar Suleiman[36] (b. 1936), had been crucial in sustaining political control and dispensing measured repression towards any political security threat to the existing regime (see Sullivan and Abed-Kotob 1999; Sullivan and Jones 2008). Furthermore, the Minister of Defence is Mohamed Hussein Tantawi (b. 1935) who is in charge of the state's military forces (Murdock 2011). The four persons directly responsible for the security of the nation have remarkably similar social and educational backgrounds and are close in age indicating remarkable stability in policy-making. Their personal bonds, trust, long-enduring political appointments and carefully groomed inter-personal networks were a key *sign* of patronage.

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[35] Gamal Adel-Nasser 1954-1970, Anwar Sadat 1970-1981, Mubarak 1981-2011
[36] Appointed as the vice-president by Mubarak during the revolutionary upheaval in Egypt, he was deposed within days by the Egyptian Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (SCAF), which has been serving as a transitional ruling body of Egypt (Murdock 2011).

The city mayors and district governors had all been appointed by the central government, a practice which reinforces the regime's abilities to enforce its policies (U.S. Department of State 2010). As this category should contain all actors who are instigators of repression, it is difficult to make a conceptual distinction between people who make the decisions (the president and his close associates) and those who are contributing to these decisions (e.g. members of the political elite, their family members, connected businessmen etc.) In order to focus the scope of the research and what is considered central to state repression, according to the definition presented above, the investigation of repression is limited to the (former) regime and its immediate supporters (the president's family, the business elite, and the supporting structure of the repressive regime, i.e. the security infrastructure).

3.4.1 An Evolutionary View of the MB's Responses

As the early success of Al-Banna is always mentioned, both by the leadership and lower-ranking activists (chapter 6), it is crucial to briefly describe this period. Al-Banna's strategy of direct communication with the people, throughout Egypt, and his willingness to take time to explain the MB's ideas in detail was highly appreciated. His popular following grew dramatically in the early 1930s.

Al-Banna and the surrounding circle of leaders decided that the membership procedure needed to be formalized so as to utilize the growing popular force more effectively. By 1935, Al-Banna had formalized the membership requirements and the procedure of becoming a fully-fledged member. It is at this point that a well-known membership unit called *usrah* (family) was defined (*Ikhwanweb* 2007c). *Usrah* is a portal to the MB's organizational structure and is highly important in shaping the young members' ideological understanding bonding the group together. Herein, the selection of members is done as regards their "suitability" for different tasks (interview with an activist January 31, 2009). But before explaining this, the general idea of "organization" needs to be addressed.

It is evident when one evaluates the history of the Muslim Brotherhood that organization, or *tanzim*, has been at the center of the MB's idea of activism. Therefore, the organizational

principles defined in the early stages came to be the hallmark of the group's success. This advantage has allowed them to supersede other Islamist groups primarily through their structural advantage, ideological pragmatism, and nonviolent strategy.

The original members of the MB, with Al-Banna at the helm, laid down the main principles of the organizational structure and its ideological roots (see a-Samman and Haim 1958). Al-Banna's charismatic persona and early background as a member of a Sufi-order presumably gave him a sense of discipline and the importance of leadership. Subsequent changes to the organizational structure came in several periods, 1970s, 1990s, and recently in 2000 resulting in the hierarchical arrangement presented in Fig. 5 (see the extensive volume of Al-Awadi 2004, also Brynjar 1998; Simms 2002; Altman 2009).

The MB's highest decision-making authority rests with the Guidance Bureau, a 16 member executive body. It has the authority to select the General Guide[37] and make all major decisions concerning issues of national concern (later implemented by the branches at a regional level). "The most important change in the organization's structure was the introduction of a decentralized system of management, which aimed to improve the decision-making process and to give a degree of autonomy to the different regional branches distributed throughout Egypt's 28 provinces. While the central leadership, based in Cairo, shaped and expressed major policies in political statements, press releases, general sermons etc., the regional leaderships were left to make day-to-day decisions on regional issues" (Al-Awadi 2005, 67).

Nevertheless, all major decisions regarding the MB's participation in demonstrations, elections, media-strategy, official statements, inter-organizational negotiations for cooperation and coordination etc. have been made by the highest-ranking leaders (i.e. the Guidance Bureau). Although, as indicated above, there is significant freedom and autonomy in terms of the implementation of such decisions, for instance the timing of particular actions. The hierarchical style of leadership seems to have caused significant tensions within the organization (see El-Hannawy 2011b; also chapter 6).

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[37] The previous and long-standing praxis included a process where the General Council had to approve the nominated candidates for the position of General Guide; however, in 2010 the change in leadership from Muhammad Mehdi Akef to Muhammad Badi´ was done without consultation with the Council, which caused quite a stir among the members. Nevertheless, due to extraordinary regime repression of the organization, the transition was accepted as legitimate.

Two primary strategic divisions are made regarding the MB's organizational focus, the political and social fields of operation. Firstly, the MB's political wing is responsible for regulating campaigns, coordinating messages and their dissemination (information and media division), and economic affairs including guidelines for membership fees and *zakat* regulations but also financial donor affairs. Secondly, the activities of the MB include its extensive and traditional welfare assistance, various communal activities, a female division, and vital syndicate affairs (interviews with activists January-March 2009; see also Abdel-Latif 2002).

This is an overview of the general organizational structure; presented, however, without explicit descriptions of the different electoral mechanisms and the bylaws that govern the jurisdiction of each level of organization. This structure is the result of decades of negotiations and adjustments whereby the MB appropriated the lessons learned from their confrontation with the different regimes. Modifications to this structure, although not very drastic, demonstrate the pragmatic nature of the organization in their encounters with the shifting levels of regime repression.

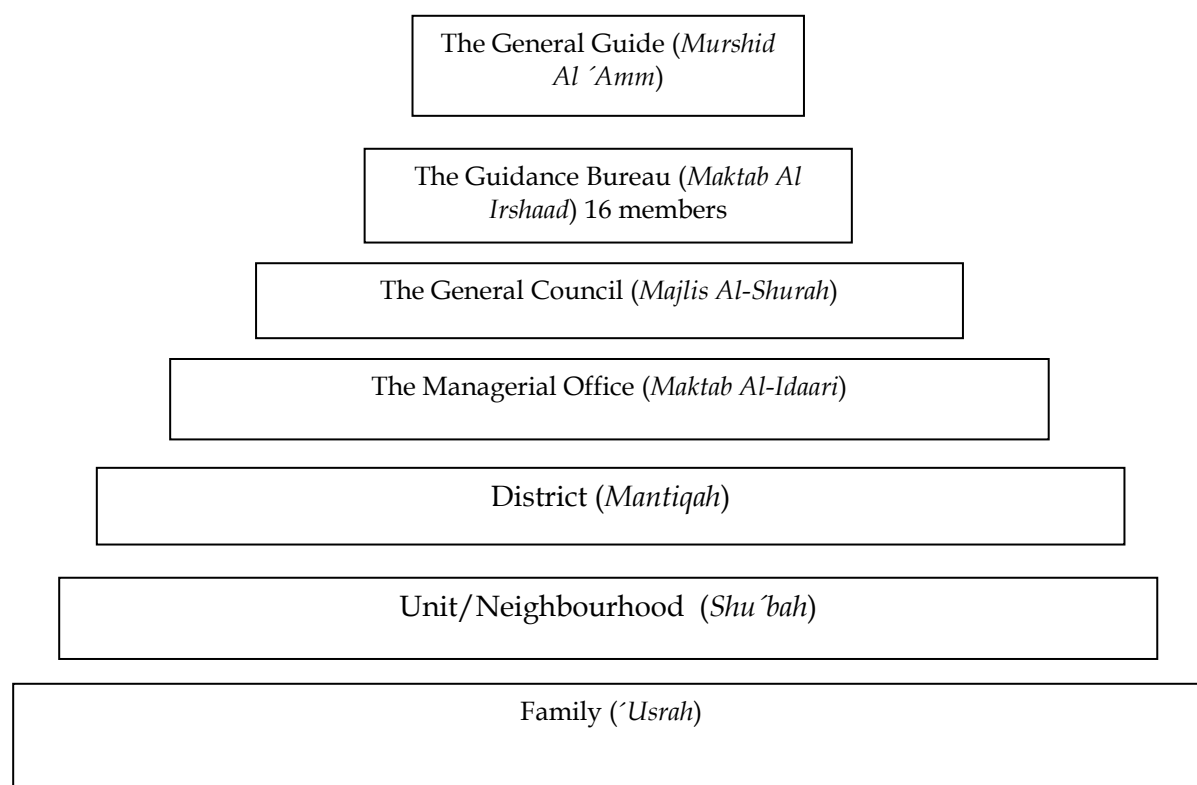| The General Guide (*Murshid Al ´Amm*) |
| The Guidance Bureau (*Maktab Al Irshaad*) 16 members |
| The General Council (*Majlis Al-Shurah*) |
| The Managerial Office (*Maktab Al-Idaari*) |
| District (*Mantiqah*) |
| Unit/Neighbourhood (*Shu´bah*) |
| Family (*´Usrah*) |

Fig. 2.4.1 The Muslim Brotherhood Hierarchy Pyramid

The hierarchical order of the organization can be interpreted as a parallel state administration wherein activists can be promoted and rewarded for their efforts. This meritocratic institutionalization of activism and mobilization functions as a motivational factor in a socio-political context which is interpreted as a dystopia in both an institutional and a moral sense. Moreover, the emphasis on the MB's organizational capacity has enabled the creation of a sustained stream of highly educated and ideologically committed activists, economic resources and most importantly (in post-revolutionary Egypt) mobilizing structures; i.e. support networks throughout the country.

Sympathizers of the organization, or rather its activists, and their work are supposedly motivated to join due to the gradual membership process. Herein they become familiar with the organization's outward qualities and during the familiarization process they develop strong personal bonds with more senior activists. This process is marked by increased emotional attachment, ideological training, and perhaps most importantly, identification with other (similar) individuals. This will be explored further in the next chapter.

The evolution of the MB reflects its pragmatic attitude whereby the organization could adapt, survive, and at the same time project its vision to many sympathizers. The organizational structure clearly represents an alternative institutional order within which activists have attempted to demonstrate ideas of meritocracy, accountability and integrity, all of which, the activists argue, is the opposite of the people's perception of the regime. One primary symbol of regime repression is its security apparatus which has demonstratively been the most hated institution of the fallen regime (see Sullivan and Jones 2008; El-Hannawy 2010; Khalil 2010; *Ikhwanweb* 2011e; Adib M. and ElWaziry 2011; Fahmy 2011).

The emotional reactions of individual activists are usually shaped through group interaction. Interactions between activists are essentially based on shared beliefs and supported by moral values of right and wrong (e.g. social or organizational rules). The former regime's repressive policies and the specific actions of its security forces have all produced significant levels of frustration which has, as the MB's development demonstrated, been dealt with not only on an individual, but also an organizational level.

The MB's Islamist framework presented the activists with a recognizable set of references including concepts such as virtue, forbearance and self-control. Organizational support for individuals activists affected by repression has therefore weaved together both cognitive and mental tools relieving emotional stress, trauma and doubts.

3.5 Practical Tools of Repression

Two of the primary forces that had been responsible for undermining the organizational structure of the political opposition in general and the Muslim Brotherhood specifically are the Central Security Forces (CSF)[38] and, the now defunct, State Security Intelligence Service (SSIS).[39] The CSF was formed in 1977, hiring some regular military conscripts, as part of Sadat's policy to secure public space that was threatened by the frequent food riots[40] caused by his neoliberal economic reforms (Sayyid-Marsot 2007, 159; Richards and Baker 1992, 28).

The increased threat from Islamist organizations was also one of the major concerns[41] (Al-Awadi 2004, 77). Soon after its formation, the CSF was "responsible for guarding public buildings, hotels, strategic sites (such as water and power installations) and foreign embassies. [And often] they also helped direct traffic and control crowds" (Metz 1991, 340). Their strategic responsibility was initially to protect the government and secure the major cities around the country from any internal security threat or disorder. Its general task came to be primarily crowd-control and the enforcement of state security policies. The CSF is, at its core, a paramilitary organization with a hierarchical chain of command, uniformed personnel, armed with light weapons, and supported by armoured personnel carriers.

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[38] *Quwwāt al-Amn al-Markazī*

[39] *Mabahith Amn al-Dawla al-'Ulya*

[40] The background to the worst riots in Egypt is complex; however, the catalyst seems to have been the IMF and the WB demands on the debt-burden of the Sadat regime forcing it to dispose of state subsidies on basic foods (for extensive discussion see Dethier Jand Funk 1987).

[41] The mid-to late 1970s were marked by increasing Islamist mobilization. The growth of Islamist membership was primarily noticeable in state universities where Gama'ah Islamiyyah (Islamic Group), a network organization established itself as a major competitor to the Muslim Brotherhood as they recruited activists from the same pool of recruits. Moreover, the Islamic Group were far more vocal and critical of the regime and, as it later showed, more willing to engage the regime head-on (for more see Gerges 2000; 2007)

The CSF revolted in February 1986 burning and causing damage to state property throughout cities in the Delta, Cairo, and Upper Egypt (Lesch 1986). The reason for the revolt is not established with certainty. There are several indicators that point to a rumor about the regime's plans to increase the mandatory service of poorly educated CFS recruits from three to four years which was a catalyst which triggered the anger of already frustrated and underpaid soldiers (Kechichian and Nazimek 1997, 129) to relieve their frustrations on state owned property (Al-Awadi 2004, 86). The ill-organized mutiny was efficiently put down by the regular army and the Special Forces, which were deployed across the country. The aftermath and the lessons of these events have been debated by numerous scholars (Springborg 1989; Kechichian and Nazimek 1997; Frisch 2001; partly by Brumberg 2002).

One major consequence was the appointment of a new Minister of the Interior (in charge of state security), Zaki Badr, who served for only four years. The prison conditions during his time in office deteriorated further and it was, in his own words "a terrible place" (*Al-Akhbar* 1988). He was a staunch opponent of the Islamists across the board, allegedly uttering the statement: "I only want to kill 1 percent of the population," indirectly threatening the Muslim Brotherhood, the largest Islamist organization in Egypt (*Los Angeles Times* 1990; see also Metz 1991; Campagna 1996; *New York Times* 1997). Soon after these statements and his vocal criticism of other influential members of the regime, Badr was sacked and replaced by Abdel Halim Musa, another individual with state security credentials originating from Upper Egypt.

Musa had a more pragmatic approach to the violent Islamist organizations and was willing to offer militant activists a way out without harsh prison sentences (Campagna 1996). Consequently, the authoritarian tactics of the regime had developed into a more selective and sensitive strategy. This change might also have been a response to the popular upheavals in Eastern Europe which toppled nearly all the repressive communist regimes (see Dunn 1990).

The Mubarak regime strengthened its state control further by boosting its military and domestic security and intelligence capabilities. For instance, during the period prior to the fall of the Mubarak regime, the CSF counted well over 300,000 troops. They were a national paramilitary unit with rapid deployment capabilities and light military

equipment under the direct supervision of the Ministry of the Interior (Cordesman 2006, 193).

The State Security Intelligence Service (SSIS) is well known for its ubiquitous presence in Egyptian society, and particularly wherever there is perceived opposition to the regime and its policies (interview data; Sullivan and Jones 2008, 33-35). The SSIS is under the direct control of the Ministry of the Interior, and it has several branches of operations. The most infamous branch of the SSIS is its interrogation center *Lazoughli* (see *Alkarama* 2009), in central Cairo where many of the interviewees for this study were interrogated in a violent fashion. Other branches include the domestic general intelligence services (directly under the authority of the president via the Minster of the Interior), military intelligence (Ministry of Defense), and a special court system for prosecuting cases filed by the SSIS (Zuhur 2007).

3.5.1 Enduring the Systematic Torture

The most visible, controversial, and perhaps most extreme, sign of state repression is the torture of dissidents (see Skoll 2010, 84-96). Torture seems to have been a working interrogation routine of the SSIS and even the regular police-force as a method of shocking and disabling an inmate both physically and mentally.[42] The Nadim Center set up by the Medical Doctors' Syndicate, which reports cases of torture committed by the security forces reports that torture strips victims of fundamental human values and reduces them to an object of abuse. "Through the total control of the victim's body and mind, the aim is to reshape him or her according to the wish of the torturer and the authority he represents" (Nadim Center 2000, 8-9).

Ahmad Saif al-Islam, an attorney of law who often represents the victims of brutality and torture inflicted by the police and security authorities, claims that the police used to

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[42] The definition of torture is a highly contested and debated topic. The definition used here is appropriated from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Torture therefore means the "deliberate, systematic or wanton infliction of physical or mental suffering by one or more persons acting alone or on the orders of any authority, to force another person to yield information, to make a confession, or for any other reason." As Klayman points out "the definition contains three essential elements: the action must be intentional, it must result in physical or mental suffering, and it must be purposeful" (1978, 482).

randomly choose people who appeared to be salafis,[43] arrest them and hand them over to the SSIS. These individuals are in turn 'pressured' (i.e. tortured and beaten) to name other people for the SSIS to arrest. "They arrest any person they think might take part in some plot, no matter how vague. Also, any time they try to arrest a person and they can't find them, they arrest someone else. For instance, let's say they want to arrest a guy named Zain, and they don't find him. Then the arrest his brother, his father, even a wife" (HRW 2007b, 5-6).

These testimonies and cases of arrest of salafis did not create (comparatively) much attention in the media. This is often the result of salafi unwillingness to organize demonstrations and protest in support of their co-religionists, basing such arguments on religious texts and judicial claims (Elyan 2011). Moreover, this lack of coverage of abuse of salafis might also depend on the media's (perceived) unwillingness to cover cases of people they do not sympathize with (interview with a salafi in Abu Kabir, January 2009; for similar example see Davenport 2010). A well known case is that of Sayyed Bilal, a 31-year-old salafi, who died during the SSIS interrogation (allegedly due to torture and beatings) in Alexandria shortly after being taken into custody. He was detained on January 4 2011 on suspicion of being responsible for the bombing of the Two Saints Coptic church, part of a wave of arrests carried out by SSIS (Amnesty International 2011; Abdelfattah 2011; Ashour 2011; *Ikhwanweb* 2011g; 2011h).

Furthermore, another case of police brutality, which was widely reported and covered by media outlets, and which had a significant impact on youth engagement in political reforms, is the death of Khalid Saeed – a non-activist (see El-Hannawy 2010). Two SSIS agents in the city of Alexandria beat 28-year-old Khalid so severely that he died from his injuries, on June 6, 2010. He was politically or religiously unaffiliated, not involved in any sort of activism, including religious groups such as *salafies*. During his family's visit to the hospital morgue where Khalid's corpse was preserved, his brother took a picture with a mobile phone camera of Khalid's battered and disfigured face.

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[43] The appearance usually refers to men between 18-40 with long beards, often dressed in long traditional dress (*jallabiyyah*) who are frequent and regular visitors to the mosque either for the purpose of prayer or study circles. They are generally considered to be pious, and stringent religious practitioners of Islam.

The photo was later posted on facebook under Khalid's name where visitors could see and read about the events that caused his death.[44] The profile of Khalid with comments about his death and police brutality has allegedly attracted 222,000 visitors and "members" expressing their anger, rage, and fear about the regime and its state security apparatus (El-Hannawy 2010; Khalil 2010). The rage spilled out onto the streets of Alexandria and Cairo where people called for the punishment of those responsible, however, with limited results (Nafaa 2010). The facebook account under the profile of Khalid Saeed was moderated by Wael Ghonaim (England and Saleh 2011), a google employee, who was later implicated directly in the wave of demonstrations starting on January 25, 2011 (Swaine 2011).

The effects of these and other documented cases of state security abuses became easily available on public websites, such as youtube.com, social network sites like facebook and myspace, and numerous blogs created by activists and nonactivists alike. The perception of the general public is hard to determine with any level of certainty; however, all correspondence and (long distance) interviews with the activists during and after January 25 indicate that the Khalid Saeed killing marked a shift in regime repression, whereby *all* Egyptians were a target of repressive policies. The harsh treatment that was previously reserved for political opposition, whether religious or secular, came to be applied to the rest of the population, regardless of their political and religious affiliation.

Why this came to be the case is difficult to answer. Nevertheless, what is certain is that the escalation of repression by the central security forces and the state security intelligence services spread anger and rage beyond the traditional dissident groups. What the population earlier perceived as discriminate and targeted repressive state action came to be more indiscriminate, erratic and unpredictable. The increasing availability of internet access and the high level of literacy among Egyptian youth (resources for mobilization) turned anger, rage and a general sense of frustration with regime policies (socio-psychological strains) into a potent social force with enough determination and stamina to overcome fear and fatigue to launch continuous protests (mobilization process).

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[44] The group of supporters for justice for Khalid was formed under the name of "We are all Khalid Saeed" where thousands of members spread information about his case. This was immutable proof that repression from the Mubarak regime was directed toward the general public and not only the political opposition (El-Hannawy 2010).

3.6 Egypt's Neoliberal Turn and Its Aftermath

The previous section explained the workings of the security apparatus employed by a repressive regime. In this section I offer an extended presentation of neopatrimonialism and the economic effects of this system. A relational dimension of neopatrimonialism in Egypt has been partly described as cronyism (Adly 2009). This featured, and most likely still features, interdependent power relations between the Egyptian political, military and business establishment (see Kechichian and Nazimek 1997; Bellin 2004). This situation had provided the MB's business elite, which in large part consisted of merchants and expatriate professionals, with an opportunity to exercise a form of moral economic management boosting their credibility among many religiously conservative Egyptians.

It has long been obvious that the neopatrimonial relations are hierarchical and, in the case of Egypt's political elite (usually demobilized army officers), it has an authoritative advantage over others (Heydemann 2004). This relational mechanism includes a system of rewards and a solidarity mentality where the risks of losing such privileges might create resistance and even defection.[45] It is not possible to know with any amount of certainty whether this scenario played out in Egypt in the wake of Hosni Mubarak's resignation. It seems that the military's power advantage and relatively untainted image with the public enabled the immediate take-over of power by the Supreme Council of the Armed Forces (see 08CAIRO2091 2008; 09CAIRO1468 2009 official documents).

In the case of economic or business elites, their primary interests are "in profit, [leading them to be] far more concerned with a regime's effectiveness than with its openness: they want a state weak enough to loot but strong enough to be worth looting […] businessmen profit more from lobbying the state than from competing in the market, they divert both entrepreneurial and financial resources from productive investment to rent seeking, that is, building political influence for economic profit" (Crystal 1994, 272). Such arguments are also connected to the social impact of economic underdevelopment, which has traditionally been analyzed in the light of a disempowered and "patrimonialy" bounded labor force (see Richards and Waterbury, 1994, 140). In the end it must be remembered

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[45] For comparative purposes, see Kalyvas (1999b) who shows the former communist system's complexity of personal networks and defection during the loss of privileges.

that the vast majority of the Egyptian work force consists of self-employed workers running small businesses and/or small agricultural enterprises.

On the other hand, a large proportion of the political elite in the late Mubarak-era was synonymous or, at least, closely linked with the economic elite. This claim has partly been supported by the numerous cases of financial embezzlement among appointed political figures allegedly violating constitutional provisions of executive power (see (*Al-Ahram Online* 2011; 2011b; 2011c; 2011d). It is plausible to assume that financial elites with broad economic interests operating in an authoritarian political system usually comply with a repressive regime's policies. Large business owners and financiers are, most likely, not interested in calling for political plurality and freedom of expression, due to the very nature of their operations. The financial elites in Egypt have, in this process of adjustment, gone even further and in many cases merged with the political elites. As such, the financial actors have directly contributed to the resilience of the authoritarian regime by adding to its financial strength and making the financial sector deeply imbedded within the political decision making processes of the state, thus adding to the disempowerment of the general public (Salman and Assies 2007, 218-219; Sadiki 2009, 200-210).

Islamist dissent against repressive regimes across the MENA region in general, and in Egypt more specifically, has been critical of such development in the political system attracting a substantial number of supporters. It has become clear that the substantial part of populations in Egypt and Tunisia consider the Islamist alternative as a pragmatic and (certainly politically untested) antithesis to the corruption and nepotism of authoritarian regimes (. For instance, "[c]ommentators in Egypt have noted that the Brotherhood changed [or rather diversified] its slogan from "Islam Is the Solution" to "Fighting Corruption Is the Solution," which contributed to huge gains in the legislative elections held in 2005 (Bayerle and Hassan 2009, 265). Moreover, it is possible to trace social strains, political dissent and public frustrations back to the deteriorating economic situation (Meital 2006, 258-260). Dissident SMOs and political parties have often referred to the deteriorating living conditions in order to reiterate their ideological framework, which, accordingly, is supposed to offer a much brighter alternative and solutions to poverty and inequality (Bayat 1998; Caromba and Solomon 2008, 121).

In order to have a more comprehensive overview of Egyptian Islamist dissent as it relates to socio-economic grievances it is necessary to revisit the political climate of the mid-1970s. The liberalization of the Egyptian economy can be traced back to the initial period of Sadat's presidency (1970-1981). The 'economic opening' (*infitah*) policy during the mid-1970s followed the path of increased privatization or de-Nasseratization (e.g. selling off state owned companies) allowing for the (re)birth of a powerful economic elite which has since been linked to the ruling regime (Abu-Rabi' 2004b, 90).

The policy of *infitah* has had many socio-political consequences, too many to be discussed here. However, one that is relevant to the case of social movement mobilization is the state's abandonment of its traditional role as the leader of an economic monopoly. This included the state's role as the initiator of societal development projects and the primary provider of employment (Al-Awadi 2004, 34-35, 143-144; Sadiki 2009, 113-114).

With *infitah*, the Sadat regime relaxed its policies on religious activities which brought about the rise of salafi/puritan religious movements in the form of the Islamic Societies (*Gama'at Al-Islamiyyah*)[46] which came to flourish due to increased freedom to prosletize among, primarily, university students (e.g. salafi-students winning many posts in student unions) (Ismail 2006, 142ff). At the same time, the MB increased their membership base through student unions after a long period of repression by the Nasser regime. The MB grew more rapidly than ever before (Beattie 2000, 202-203). This process of religious awakening brought about increases in the number of places of worship, widespread printing and distribution of religious literature and religious video/audio recordings by charismatic Islamic preachers. This in turn gave rise to religiously inspired associations, educational camps and other related activities (Ayubi 1980, 491-194; 1991; Ibrahim 2002, 70-73; Wickham 2002, 36-62; Al-Awadi 2004, 131; Ayoob 2004).

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[46] The salafi-movement has been the MB's prime contender and rival for sympathetic activists since the mid-1970s. In the 1980s intensive support for the Islamic Societies (including The Islamic Society organization –*Gamaa Al Islamiyyah*, the largest group among several other) on a grassroots level developed the confidence of these groups as they confronted the Mubarak regime through a violent set of strategies. In the 1990s, popular support and membership diminished due to several reasons, in particular the brutal state repression. Throughout the 2000s, salafi mobilization has taken another shape focusing on nonviolent strategies; nevertheless, continuing to promote a puritanical form of Islamic practices attracting a substantial number of activists.

At the same time, this seemingly 'relaxed repression', after Nasser's nearly totalitarian hold on power, produced different kinds of socio-political tensions. Sadat's insistence on signing a peace treaty with Israel provoked widespread popular opposition, even among those friendly to the regime. Sadat, sensing opposition from within his own ranks, in an unprecedented political act in the post-colonial period, dissolved the parliament, and dismissed two hundred of his party's MPs several months before signing the treaty in March 1979 (see Auda 1991). After the peace treaty, there was an increase in Islamist displays of grievance in the form of protests and publications against the regime which produced severe repression tactics. The authorities regularly intimidated voters during the already restricted political elections, for instance they banned suspected Islamists from voting. The arrests of Islamist activists came to be identified as a primary regime tactic in limiting their activities. The regime supposedly even assassinated several leading Islamist activists and a few members of other opposition groups (Hinnebusch 1985). These and other regime tactics in turn incited to violence an already numerous cohort of salafis (e.g. the Islamic Group and Islamic Jihad) creating an emotional synergy of 'regime rage' amongst the religiously inspired opposition fuelled by what was perceived as illegitimate regime actions. The synergy of these effects is often referred to as the "Autumn of Fury" (see Haykal 1983).

Another significant factor that led to increased popular hostility against the Sadat regime was manifested in what is known as "the bread riots" of 1977. This was a widespread revolt across the country as a result of the state's low economic performance and the decision to reduce state subsidies directly causing popular protests with mass-destruction of state property in cities across Egypt (Richards and Baker 1992, 28; Adly 2011, 303).

During the same period, the economic liberalization as envisioned by Sadat produced rapid economic growth, 8 percent overall between 1974 and 1981 (Ikram 2006, 25). Nevertheless, it is important to remember that poverty and economic grievances are more complex than what is found in statistics on the economic performance of markets. Amartya Sen argues that "the standard of living is really a matter of functionings and capabilities, and not a matter directly of opulence, commodities or utilities" (1987, 16). The contentment of social actors with their lives is ultimately connected to their capabilities to live them as they desire.

Even though Sadat's policy did advance the overall economic performance of the country, at least in the long-term, it did effectively enable the emergence of an economic elite, sometimes referred to as *munfatihun* (lit. openers, here profiteers from the *infitah*) (see Ryan 2001). Such economic actors did cooperate with the regime and were incorporated into a state support structure meaning they ultimately benefited from its policies. Doctors and Lawyers syndicates have thrived in particular under the relative freedom from repressive policies of the regime allowing them to internalize organizational structures and pool resources, which would otherwise be viewed by the regime as a direct political threat (see Al-Awadi 2004, 127-130). Today there are more than four million members of Egyptian trade unions and they include just above 26 percent of the total work force (ETUF 2010).

The policy of *infitah* continued under the reign of Mubarak. The policy of *infitah* was, in retrospect, deemed as only moderately successful in advancing Egypt's economy, mainly because it failed to produce sustainable growth and economic distribution mechanisms. On the contrary, perpetuation of budget deficits followed by increased (youth) unemployment put increasing strain of the regime's ability to deliver public services (Wickham 2002, 37-39). Moreover, the overpopulation of urban centers, internal urban/rural disruption together with poor urban planning and the insufficient production of basic food stuffs were often mentioned as primary indicators of Egypt's economic underdevelopment. In the first half of the 1990s, both the International Monetary Fund (IMF) and the World Bank (WB) put pressure on the Egyptian regime to adopt expanded neo-liberal financial policies including the further privatization of state assets and deregulation as a means to achieve a true market economy.

At the same time, the expansion of the state bureaucracy continued throughout the 1990s where state wages "sustained its expansion from 23.98 per cent of total expenditure in 1990/91 to 30.57 per cent in 1997/98 and maintained that level until 2006 (28 per cent). The average share of wages in total expenditure stood at an average of 23.57 per cent in the period 1990–2007 and at almost 30 per cent of total current expenditure of the same period" (Adly 2011, 303). Such development shows that at the same time that the state was expanding, the economic system was being increasingly deregulated. This indicates the paradoxical domestic policies of the Mubarak regime.

During the same period, the regime purged many of the financial magnates close to the previous Sadat regime. They were disempowered through a string of judicial proceedings as a way of securing a hold on political control (see Merriam 1983). Moreover, during the later period of the 1980s Egypt was increasingly dependent on foreign imports (e.g. foodstuffs, industrial material) and worsening domestic production further adding to economic inequalities (Mitchell 2002, 215-220). Economic poverty, seen through the rates of (unequal) income distribution, had steadily increased in the 1980s and 1990s (Nel 2008, 79). By 1991, Egypt was categorized as one of the poorest countries in the world (Ibrahim 2002, 166). Added to this, Sadat, and later, Mubarak experienced a diminishing role as a provider of an overarching national ideology, much in contrast to Nasser (Kepel 2006, 65). Such a loss of ideological advantage enabled the religious opposition to claim ideological and moral superiority.

For instance, the increased variety of imported goods has generally been inaccessible to the masses, mainly due to high prices. Islamists generally used the growing gap in spending power to indicate the regime's "immoral" consumerism and the increased Westernization of Egyptian public life (see Halliday 2005). Islamist SMOs generally spoke of social inequalities caused by the regime's neo-liberal economic policies and at the same time, what has been perceived as socio-cultural decadence fueled by foreign influences (see Abdo 2000). Here Islamist activists tapped into growing frustrations among a substantial part of the young Egyptian population, especially unemployed university graduates, formulating an alternative to the authoritarian Mubarak regime (Ibrahim 2002, 129-130).

Although the Egyptian economy had been dependent on income from the tourist industry, which is extremely sensitive to global economic changes, a massive amount of the regime's income is generated by gas and oil exports (U.S. Energy Information Administration 2008). This in turn suggests that "[t]he continuing existence of significant income of this kind enables incumbent regimes to maintain patronage-based neo-patrimonial political systems" (Sclumberger 2006, 50). The patron, as indicated before, refers to an incumbent politically appointed (or elected) administrator who through his/her position of power develops and utilizes personal networks in order to remain in that same position or move to an even higher position of power (see Therkildsen 2005, 36-38).

It is important here to have in mind that whatever political grievances were present in Egypt, they had been further magnified by economic deprivation and poverty. Youth unemployment in Egypt has been about 20%, considerably higher than the unemployment rates of similar states. When asked, almost 70% of unemployed youth (15-24 yrs) answered that they are willing to emigrate for employment opportunities (*Global Employment Trends for Youth* 2010, 22).

These claims are further supported by the World Bank's (WB) assessment of Egypt's economic performance in the first half of the 2000s which shows that poverty levels have remained stable. The 2005 WB report showed that in the year 2000 more than 45 percent of the Egyptian population lived on 2 US dollars or less a day[47] (the World Bank Report 2005; Zuhur 2007). The data shows that ever-increasing levels of poverty have been on the rise since the early 1990s, the initial period of renewed economic reforms (el-Naggar 2005) although this stagnated in the 2000s. Nevertheless, the risk of widespread popular unrest due to the decreased purchasing power of the Egyptian masses and the deteriorating socio-political situation were already extremely high in 2008 (*Economist* 2008b).

The Islamists of the MB were however better prepared to cope with economic hardships than most of the Egyptian population. Already in the late 1990s, many of the Muslim Brotherhood's well-educated and unemployed professional youth activists sought employment in the Gulf States where the booming oil-economies demanded skilled labor. "It is estimated that about 2.1 million households benefited from the remittances of one or more migrant workers during the 1980s —a total of roughly 12.6 million Egyptians, or about 23 percent of the population" (Abdo 2000, 81).

Gathering strength by appealing to the disempowered student graduates and offering an, at least theoretical, alternative to the grim socio-economic realities, the MB made significant gains in recruiting new activists at the end of 1990s and beginning of 2000s. The organization improved its financial structure (e.g. investment and banking) due to the massive inflow of capital from its members working in the Gulf states. Immediately, the organization's social programs were expanded by building new educational facilities,

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[47] The WB's official poverty line.

welfare distribution centers, medical facilities etc. (Abdo 2000, 79-80; Ibrahim 2002, 58-60; Ikram 2005; *IRIN* 2006).

Other Islamist SMOs connected to the Islamic Societies (as discussed earlier) sought to increase their influence in some of the most impoverished suburbs of Cairo as well as several towns and cities in Upper Egypt. They succeeded in establishing a rather functional system of social welfare distribution in the poorest areas. This eventually drew the attention of the state security services due to the regime's fear of independent activism, no matter how apolitical it seemed (see Abdo 2000, 121-125; Wickham 2002, 36-62). SMOs such as *Gamaa Al-Islamiyyah* and Islamic Jihad even developed their own security services, which ensured that the distribution of resources was effective. The security personnel also made sure that Islamic rules were not transgressed, such as, the prohibition of drug and alcohol consumption, upholding a dress-code etc. Increased pressure from the state security authorities to control regions where the salafi SMOs were most active provoked a violent response from the SMOs own "security" forces (Ajami 1995).

The Mubarak regime's readiness to use force was demonstrated during several occasions when it clashed with the salafi SMOs (see Urdal 2006). Robert Springborg puts this development in a larger context: "the lack of organizational and ideological cohesiveness within the elite, increasing lassitude within state structures, the emergence of counter-elites and ideologies within the increasingly active legal and underground political oppositions, and the growing independence of associational groups and even governmental bodies, such as the judiciary" (in Alterman 2000, 2).

The spiral of Islamist grievances and regime responses had additionally been fueled by a general sense of perceived injustice of nepotism (see Richards and Baker 1992; Heydemann 2004; Adly 2009). Moreover a restricted political culture, despite economic "openness" did in fact encourage market monopolies, business cartels and increased economic control of large scale businesses (see Zaki 1995; Schlumberger 2006).

Even though the upwardly mobile middle class is rising, there are (unintended) consequences, which create strains manifested in popular demands for change. These demands have been observed across the ideological board, and most clearly so in the MB

(Clark 2004; Benin and el-Hamalawy 2007). It seems that the MB's organizational framework and its network based mobilization capabilities extend well beyond any other SMO which also suggests that the MB will have an advantage in elections in post-revolutionary Egypt. One such organizational advantage is the MB's dominance in several important professional syndicates which are highly relevant in the organization of election campaigns.

3.7 Turning Adversity into Economic Opportunity

The Mubarak regime's neoliberal policies did open up business opportunities for up-and-coming Islamist (professional) middle classes who were often educated in the medical and engineering faculties of Cairo and Alexandria. This is especially true for the Muslim Brotherhood guest workers in the Gulf states from where they brought large amounts of capital and invested in small and medium size businesses (Tammam 2009; Tripp 2006, 86). During the late 1980s and throughout 1990s the MB capitalized on its promotion of the Islamist corporate "spirit" where they focused on developing a discourse of a moral economy. In this process, university unions dominated by MB activists as well as professional syndicates continued to play a central role. These places also functioned as focal points of mobilization for new activists and places to organize protest activities.

The MB's mobilization strategy focused mainly on recruiting up-and-coming generations of professionals who would contribute with their competence in order to bolster the organization. However, the MB's policy on economics as well as on social change remained anchored in an ethical approach and its practical impact on society at large (Barker 2003, 137-138). The MB's growing financial elite were not very critical of increased economic freedom even though they voiced their discontent with the influence of the U.S. or European-style capitalism and the interest-based banking system. In its place the MB was eager to develop a model of an Islamic ethical economy based on religious premises and directives (Tripp 2006, 95, 103-105, 124-125).

The Mubarak regime's neoliberal economic reforms were re-initiated in the early 1990s following the global trend in the wake of the fall communism in Eastern Europe. The regime continued with "deregulation, privatization, reduction of social services, and curtailments of state spending [these] have been the watch words, rather than

participation, greater responsiveness, more creative and effective forms of democratic state intervention" (Fung and Wright 2003, 4). Moreover, the regime continued to consolidate its authority by incorporating the financial elites into the political structure. The primary outcome of this development was the state's decreased willingness or rather capacity to deliver public services. In the 2000s, popular frustrations rose as the regime increasingly allied itself with the business elite driven by market profits. This has been interpreted as a cause of poverty among large segments of the population (Schlumberger 2006, 49). One of the most noticeable changes in people's lives was a decrease in state subsidies for staple food products. Egyptian society seemed to suffer from the state's inability to fulfill the obligations of representation and social security.

The MB wanted to capitalize on public dissatisfaction by pooling its resources (e.g. wide personal networks, community service centers, mosques etc.) and present its solutions to the people not only, for what it describes as a morally decayed political structure, but also as an economically competent alternative through its long record of the effective administration of funds and wealth distribution (see Altman 2006). The increased concentration of wealth in the hands of the few and widening impoverishment among the general population in combination with socio-political repression presented the MB with unprecedented mobilization opportunities. For instance, Khalid Munir, an *Al-Hayat* journalist, believes that much of the support enjoyed by the Ikhwan candidates was because "people could find them whenever they needed them and whenever they expected to see them, not just during election campaigns"" (quoted in Al-Awadi 2004, 173).

To be present in the public consciousness the MB needed economic resources and they found this in some of their wealthier activists. Businessmen like Khayrat Al-Shater, Hassan Malik, Osama Sulaiman, Youssef Nada and Ibrahim Munir[48] have been some of the most high-profile MB activists and leaders. As such they were regularly detained, interrogated, and even exiled. The regime's justifications for such actions have often included allegations of belonging to a banned group (the most common charge used against MB activists). Another common indictment against the MB's leaders is financing terrorist groups such as the case of the MB's foreign relations representative Nada.

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[48] Nada and Munir are residing in Europe but are however responsible for various tasks in the name of the MB (see Al-Shafey 2011).

Khayrat Al-Shater was arrested in the wake of the state security round ups immediately after the Al-Azhar demonstration[49] on December 10, 2006. He was initially acquitted of all charges by the civil court, only to later be sentenced by the military tribunal to seven years in prison on the usual charge of belonging to a banned group (i.e. MB) (Hill 2010).[50] He is a member of the executive Guidance Bureau, and a Deputy of the General Guide together with Muhammad Habib. Many thought that he would even become the General Guide after Muhammad Akef (Interview with Al-Anani, Rashwan, Al Schoubaki January-March 2009). Al-Shater became an activist in the 1970s and had remained a popular figure among the "reformist" streams within the organization and especially among the younger members. For instance, one of the young Brotherhood members stated that al-Shater's significant role is due to the people's perception of "his and others continuous [economic and personal] sacrifice and steadfastness within the organization, and this produces a sense of admiration and veneration among the youth" (interview with Muadh Malik son of arrested Hassan Malik, February 2009).

Moreover, Al-Shater was heavily involved in the engineer syndicate's self-sustained health-care social services; however, his arrest weakened the strength of the syndicate as well as its social impact (Al-Awadi 2004, 75). Furthermore, when it comes to financial issues related to the MB it is rather unclear whether the organization is financed by the wealthy businessmen (Lynch 2007) or if it has its own independent sources of funding, membership fees and suchlike. The MB's assets are sometimes estimated to be up to 20 billion Egyptian pounds (ca. 3, 5 billion dollars) (Zinah 2007; see also IHT 2007; Michael 2007). Information regarding the MB gathered from newspaper reports is to be treated with caution. Nevertheless, this assumption of its wealth seems accurate as the organization has for a long time been under pressure to avoid dependence directly on single individuals or groups of individuals who could easily be jailed and economically ruined. Furthermore, the organization's budget is limited as the Muslim Brotherhood operates through a fairly decentralized economic framework where each local branch diversifies its economic investments and funding (Zinah 2007; interviews with activists in Nasr City, February 2009).

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[49] The event is presented in the next chapter as well as the implications following on from it.
[50] Al-Shater was rereleased from prison after serving 4 years, just 2 weeks after the fall of the Mubarak regime.

There are several important points to make regarding what has been presented in this chapter. There is a chronic lack of effective welfare benefits, which produces widespread grievances primarily among the middle-classes. This growing frustration aggregates other elements of social discontent that had increasingly been pointing the blame at the deposed regime. Sympathizers and new recruits had been presented with an ideologically loaded discourse, which appealed to their, already religiously sensitive, moral sentiments (interviews with activists in Cairo, January-February 2009).

Conclusion

Mubarak's authoritarian regime capitalized on interpersonal relations between political, military and economic elites. The relations were institutionalized as power associations which synthesized their various interests. It can be argued that the process of preserving and protecting elites interests (control over political and economic resources) served as the main driving force behind mechanisms of repression. The regime's role was to organize and execute repression policies as a process for limiting political opposition by raising the costs of (individual) dissent. The individual costs of social movement mobilization would therefore be intimidation, causing enough fear to discourage dissent.

Furthermore, coercion and intimidation were not only instruments of repression. The regime's ambition was also to legitimate its authoritarian rule, speculatively, because it simply did not preside over large enough resources or have the administrative capacities to completely control its nearly 80 million strong population.

Within this political context the MB's evolution as a social movement organization was largely dependent on its relationship with the authoritarian regimes. Al-Banna's ideological propositions and charismatic profile contributed to some of the most vital initial strategic choices made by the early generation of activists. Already in the 1930s the MB was appealing to the educated middle classes of professionals. Moreover, the organization came to retain such appeal throughout the century by addressing the grievances of the conservative class of educated dissidents who seemed to challenge the power of a small stream of military and later business elites. In order to create a viable alternative in the eyes of its sympathizers and active members, the MB structured its organizational framework as an alternative institutional arrangement to the authoritarian

state. This included an internal electoral system, district management, political and social committees, advisory councils etc.

The MB has played the role of facilitator or entrepreneur of mobilization for conservative middle-class dissidents. It supplied organizational tools for activism as well as a discursive framework by which activists could claim moral and ethical superiority over the authoritarian regime(s). The MB has developed its organizational structure which offered an alternative social "reality" wherein the identities of members were linked by feelings of solidarity. The older generations had responsibility over the young ones and religious/moral principles became a part of activists' attitudes in dealing with each other and the "other" (i.e. the state authorities).

The authoritarian regime(s) structure on the other hand was largely organized around neopatrimonial principles where the relations between people of power were more or less institutionalized. Such power relations between superior/inferior social actors were perpetuated by a process of electoral authoritarianism and regular regime repression mechanisms directed toward (perceived) political dissent. The state security forces had been the main coercive instrument of the former regime and the primary guarantor of the regime's hold on power. Likewise, the regime's control of economic resources and the distribution of wealth played a significant role in the preservation of power. The former regime's tight grip on the religious institutions, an important social institution in a conservative society such as Egypt, had been crucial in its repression campaign especially against religiously inspired political dissent.

It is evident that the MB has utilized the competences of its members, who are professionals with skills ranging from engineering and medicine to law and education. The professional background and experiences of such activists can be considered as resources, which are regularly utilized by the organization. Economic mismanagement and high unemployment rates in Egypt have increased preexisting (socio-political) grievances reinforcing feelings of frustration with the regime often encouraging sympathizers of the MB to mobilize against, what is perceived as, a cause of grievances in the first place.

An argument can be made here, resources, much like capital, are scarce. It follows that there is competition for resources between SMOs and other types of social activities (entertainment, consumerism, workplace activities etc.). Mobilizing resources therefore is one of the organization's primary concerns. Such concerns are expressed through the formulation of SMO strategies whereby activists continuously work out tactics to attract new members, as well as increasing the levels of commitment and resource investment by the existing members. The religious element plays a significant role here as it adds to the organizational resources in the form of visual expressions of piety and representation in places of worship and other public places. Such a religious resource is often observable in the official SMO discourse wherein this specific form of mobilization is seen as a more pious or authentic form of protest and social engagement.

Lastly, the MB has been highly effective in organizing its members along the lines of their competences thus providing its members with a sense of practical purpose. Lastly, the MB's religious and cultural dimensions are highly important as they tap into the moral framework of both sympathizers and activists, again giving their activities and risk-taking a sense of purpose, authenticity, and achievement.

4 The Regime and Islamist's Struggle for Legitimation

I oppose violence in any form… This is not only a political position, but also a personal position bound in my own character… Even if I am oppressed, I shall never turn to violence… Never in all my days has it come into my mind to take part in an assassination… or a conspiracy against any person… regardless of who that person was… despite the fact that Sadat was most evil to me… I felt sadness.

´Umar Al-Tilmisani, third General Guide of the MB, 1985

Introduction

The previous chapter outlined the general concept of repression and gave some examples of repressive tools employed by an authoritarian state. This chapter discusses the *how* of the repression. It selectively maps out the actors of repression' methodology together with organizational responses of the MB in their parallel struggle for public approval and support. The chapter also presents how nonviolent activism can effectively work even under a violent authoritarianism. The methodology of state repression can be divided into three broad categories (Shock 2005). First, *negative sanctions*, which include excluding oppositional political forces from public appearances and activities (Hamzawy 2009), martial law (Abd al-Mu'izz Muhammad 2006), media censorship (Stacher 2011, 89), travel restrictions imposed on individuals perceived as troublesome (Interview with Ibrahim al Houdaybi January 2009) and direct threats (Interviews no. 16 and 17).

Second, the *use of force* entails the prevention of protesting through physical means, incarcerations, beatings in custody (Interview with Abdel Moneim Mahmoud January 2009), and other acts of torture and violence or the threat of violence by state agents. Third, *violence by proxy* is generally employed through the regime's empowerment of a

third party whose purpose is to provoke or intimidate the activists (see Goldstein 1978; Davenport 2007b).

4.1 A Culture of Repression

Political culture can only sensibly be studied if one delineates its contents. Here, political culture is translated into a process of transition of (political) knowledge gained through either experience or learnt from one generation to the next. More precisely, political culture represents a "control mechanism," which instructs and offers rules "for governing behavior" mainly through the construction of a "framework of symbolic meaning" (Geertz 1973, 44; 1964, 39-46).

Moreover, control mechanisms for governing and its justification are formed through the institutional framework of a state within which the regime's policies are formed and implemented. It is within the institutional framework that one can observe the general rules governing the relationship between state authorities and civil society. Moreover, it is important to clarify the circumstances within which the relationship, institutional framework and control mechanisms are shaped. It is therefore important to recognize collective political experiences as important elements of future outcomes. Again, a context dependent analysis is to be preferred if we wish to fully understand this process.

Within the relationship between the rulers and the ruled, all social actors involved (e.g. ruling elites, educated and uneducated masses, upper, middle and lower classes etc.) are aware of the general institutional principles of government and power. Moreover, there exists an overarching set of beliefs and values that, at least superficially and by no means statically, functions as a sort of institutional glue (Stacher 2001; Lane and Ersson 2005). Understanding political culture in this way avoids the trappings of essentialism where culture is often identified as a static abstraction predetermined by previous experiences, which somehow govern political outcomes (see Huntington 1997; Pipes 2003).

For instance, the aftermath of the Egyptian revolution of 25th of January or Tunisian regime overthrow on 15th January, 2011, is most likely to be far less dramatic than the events preceding the revolutions. Moreover, one could argue that the initial transition and later accommodation of political adjustments is expected to be along the general lines of

the previous relationship between the rulers and the ruled (at least in practice). However, what might separate Egyptian political culture from the neighboring states is the process through which the regime tried to maintain a balance between maintaining legitimacy through its reference to the Constitution (e.g. prolonging the state of emergency, amending the Constitution, recurring local and presidential elections etc.) while continuing to suppress and prosecute its political adversaries. The Mubarak regime's quest for legitimacy entailed a specific set of ruling techniques where a balance between preemptive and reactive punitive measures had been the norm. It was when this norm had first been breached and repression (through brutal torture and violence) was perceived as indiscriminate that much of the public felt threatened by the regime's violence. Individual cases of the use of excessive violence against seemingly innocent and politically unaffiliated individuals provoked massive reactions among primarily middle-class youth (see HRW 2007b; El-Hannawy 2010).

The evidence shows that during much of Mubarak's presidency, Egypt's most efficiently administered institutions had been the state security infrastructure (Munson 2001; Hinnebusch 2007, 17-19; Ibrahim 2008; ICG 2008, 5-7). In the end, however well maintained and financed the security services were, they could not withstand the sustained popular uprising which caused them to collapse within the first week of the revolutionary protests (Telephone interviews with activists in Tahrir Square, January 2011; Gardner 2011).

Even before the Mubarak regime, Egyptian politics had been dominated by authoritarian rule for generations. As such, subsequent generations of Egyptians have acknowledged that political authority is appointed, and the power to appoint authority did not rest with them. In other words, the population had largely been familiar *with* and aware *of* the benefits resulting from the acceptance of political authority and, at the same time, they were aware of the possibilities and risks of dissent. It can therefore be claimed that, at best, state repression limited dissent, mainly because social actors became discouraged to participate given the high risks involved (see Toth 2003, 536; Stack 2008).

During Mubarak's reign, the Egyptian populace has frequently been reminded about the necessity of the regime's restrictive policies as they guaranteed social and economic stability, public security, and national dignity. The regime's strategy was purposefully

aimed at instilling fear of potential socio-economic uncertainty, social violence and a collapse of order in the event of the regime's fall. According to the current and former repressive regime representatives (in Tunisia, Libya, Egypt, Syria and Yemen) the chaotic situation will inevitably create insecurity and indiscriminate bloodshed.[51] This argument has been used frequently as a deterrent to genuine democracy and support for gradual political change (Arab Human Development Report 2009, 76, 190; Al-Anani 2010).

Many of the repressive regimes in the Arab world have been keen on portraying the political opposition (particularly Islamists) as generally incompetent and a potentially reactionary political force in an attempt to delegitimize and discredit dissent (Arab Human Development Report 2009, 61, 69, 71). The Mubarak regime's discrediting of dissidents was done using several methods, one being simply denying (or severely limiting) their entry into political institutions by dismissing their mobilization as being ultimately destructive and subversive to the well being of society (Lust-Okar 2008; Dunne and Hamzawy 2008).

The Mubarak regime's repression methodology was multidimensional. It included tactics which were aimed at preventing dissent through the preemption of mobilization (e.g. indoctrination, propaganda), the suppression of opportunities (e.g. amending the constitution, enforcing emergency laws, banning parties), the violent show of force (e.g. imprisonment, torture, closed military tribunals) and harsh prison punishments, all employed to deter social actors from dissent.

For instance, Mubarak's security apparatus actively pursued repressive policies that (severely) limited participation in dissenting groups (Stacher 2001). One of the regime's repeated propaganda tactics, again for the purposes of legitimatization, was to appeal to the citizens through the rhetoric of nationalism, i.e. national unity, social stability and security. The regime presented itself as the sole guarantor of such needs, and any challenge to its authority was labelled as unpatriotic, destabilizing and detrimental to the

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[51] After having compared the transcripts of the presidential speeches given by Zine El Abidine Ben Ali in Tunisia (TAP 2011), Hossni Mubarak in Egypt (BBC NEWS (2011a), 'Ali Abdullah Saleh in Yemen (SABA News 2011, not a transcript), and Bashar Al-Assad in Syria (SANA 2011), it is quite clear that the regimes have been using a similar tactic of provoking fears among the population by blaming foreign involvement in destabilizing the state, warning of chaos and the destruction of society and the state if these regimes were to be removed. This pattern will be explored elsewhere.

collective good (see presidential speeches, Egypt State Information Service 1997;[52] 2006;[53] 2008; *BBC NEWS* 2011a).

As a result of the unending tradition of authoritarianism in Egypt, power relations between the regime and the governed were unbalanced. In other words, the opinions will and desires of the Egyptian people were not represented by the power brokers. Nevertheless, this unequal relationship with the authorities was perceived as the norm by which common political communication was conducted and therefore was rarely objected to (Pratt 2007, 25). This was illustrated by one of the non-activist youths who was interviewed for this research who calmly answered a question regarding how he felt about the many checkpoints established by the armed central security forces (CSF) throughout Cairo's main intersections in suburbs and the down town area: "What is wrong with that? They are securing the main roads in and out the city." Question: "Securing them from what?" His answer: "I do not know… from bad guys, …I guess."

The common occurrence of checkpoints at the main intersections where heavily armed uniformed paramilitaries are placed with their machineguns does not seem to arouse much objection. Even the activists did not object much, expressing their sympathy with young soldiers, rarely older than 22, who are primarily recruited from rural areas outside Cairo or Upper Egypt, with poor education and most often obliged to serve 24 months of service within the CSF before been released to return home. It can be argued that the Mubarak regime, building on the experience of its predecessors, had normalized restrictive political opportunity structures using state security institutions (e.g. the CSF and ISSI) as mechanisms for controlling political activities.

Added to this is the notion that, prior to the January 25th protests, a variety of active dissident groups (e.g. Islamists, liberalists, secularists, leftists etc.) were unable to pinpoint

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[52] "It is also natural for the people with all its categories to stand by the side of the police forces while performing its noble mission of safeguarding their lives and means of living and chasing terrorist gangs of criminals and transgressors who deceive Allah and the believers, but verily they know not that they are deceiving but themselves. It is a source of our pride that policemen are performing this sacred task with full courage and audacity, without hesitation to sacrifice themselves in favor of the homeland and the people." (Hosni Mubarak on November 15, 1997 in a speech to the Egyptian Parliament)

[53] "We will go on boosting the constituents of the comprehensive power of the State; the army, economy and people, and we will not allow attempts to undermine Egypt's regional role or affect its national security or its supreme interests and those of its citizens." (Hosni Mubarak on September 21, 2006 in a speech to his National Democratic Party during its fourth Congress)

a strong personality with leadership qualities around who they could rally. This is an important observation of political culture (or rather organizational necessity) wherein the focal point of dissent is often concentrated and projected through an easily identifiable leader who represents the dissidents' claims. Such a leadership figure was expected to shoulder the challenges of a temporary oppositional leader who would compete against the president who has been in charge for 30 years (06CAIRO2010 2006, official document).

This claim was later partly sustained in the 18-day popular revolution during which Muhammad Al-Baradei[54] stood out above the rest for his unpartisan stance (unaffiliated with any particular dissident group participating in the protests), international reputation (former IAEA president), diplomatic experience and charismatic appeal (Knell 2010; Slackman 2010); Zohny 2010). Al-Baradei became a serious player on the Egyptian public scene in February 2010 and was even seen by the Muslim Brotherhood as a serious challenge to the repressive regime of Mubarak, with whom they ought to support and cooperate (*IkhwanWeb* 2010f; 2010g).

These observations indicate that Egyptian political culture, at least concerning political leadership, leans towards being person-centered, rather than ideologically oriented. For instance, in the immediate aftermath of the fall of the Mubarak regime, massive amounts of media coverage was given to the importance of personality and a leader's representativeness for public interests. The unstable situation in the aftermath of the revolution raised public concerns of a possible counter-revolution, resulting from the lack of single unifying leader. Some groups that participated in the revolution argued that, by the time of the fall of the Mubarak regime, Al-Baradei had already fallen from favor, mainly due to unfavorable media coverage (Afify 2011), and perhaps because the lack of support from any significant representatives of Egyptian political establishment.

After the fall of the regime the public demanded the appointment of a Prime Minister, an institutionalized leadership position considered by many to be central for the political transition. Ideally this would be someone who was untainted by their close dealings with the former National Democratic Party regime. It took nearly three weeks to find a

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[54] Muhammad Al-Baradei, a Nobel Peace Prize laureate, is the former leader of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), an organization under the patronage of the United Nations. Upon his return to Egypt he challenged the legitimacy of the parliamentary elections in November 2010, and therefore indirectly challenged, at the time, the ruling Mubarak regime.

prominent enough figure for the post of Prime Minister, namely Essam Abdel-Aziz Sharaf (Elieba and Hussein 2011).[55]

The argument pertaining to the political culture's fixation with the cult of personality can also be supported by looking at the events prior to the revolution in January-February 2011. Egypt has not experienced *free and fair* elections and political pluralism (*ta'addudiyya*) in over eighty years. During this period, a culture of authority has been developing along with the public admiration of charismatic leadership (Ismail 1998, 207-208; Abdo 2000, 53, 71, 87, 115; Ibrahim 2002, 15, 47-48, 137, 202). The charisma of a leader counts towards what is perceived as their personal virtues and qualities (e.g. personal bravery, higher moral conduct, rhetorical abilities etc.). Such qualities do not necessarily have to be perceived as of divine origin to be extraordinary in the public's eyes (Weber 1978, 241). The Weberian conceptualization is highly relevant in this case.

For instance, Ernest Gellner advances Weber's charisma argument whereby he claims that the "routinization of charisma" is a process by which leadership charisma comes to be highly relevant in a political culture. Gellner's argument is based on the notion that adherents of monotheistic religions, in this case Egyptian Muslims, traditionally have a highly pluralistic view of leadership; however, through the routinization of one particular conception of leadership, one can often find a broad consensus among the populations in favour of the personal qualities of an individual (political) leader (Gellner 1981, 14).

The activists interviewed for this research likewise indicated that charisma had been crucial in the early days of the organization. Hassan al-Banna, the founder of the MB, has been regarded as a role model who succeeded in translating the Islamic tradition into a modern framework of democracy, state institutions, and even parliamentary elections (interviews no. 2, 5, and 10 in Cairo Jan.-Feb-2009).

At the same time, the embodiment of the last Egyptian regime was Hosni Mubarak who continuously reminded the public of his relevance and legitimacy through a wide-range of discursive and tactical tools, often in an effort to discredit and delegitimize opposition

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[55] Essam (b. 1952) was the Minister of Transportation from 2004-2005 briefly serving in the Mubarak regime, after which he resigned his post due to a dispute with Mubarak's close aide and the Prime Minister, at the time, Ahmad Shafiq (Tran 2011).

groups, especially Islamist dissidents (Barnett and Levy 1991; Lyall 2006, 410-411; Azuri 2007). Moreover, any attack on the person of the president was viewed as an attack on Egypt's sovereignty and national pride; a clear sign of the importance of a leader-figure. As a consequence, any individual or group that challenged the legitimacy, health, or even capability of the president was potentially liable for legal persecution and punishment (*Ikhwanweb* 2007d; CJP 2008).

For example, on the eve of the student exhibition of visual arts at the University of Cairo in 2003 the Minister of Higher Education, Moufid Shehab declared in a media interview that: "Students have a right to make exhibitions as long as they are not against morals or [do not] include impolite words about the president" (HRW Report 2005b, 59), thus giving a warning to participants not to criticize the regime. Moreover, such statements and general regime actions had made it clear that there are clear limits to public critique of figures in power. This despite constitutional assurances of the right to freedom of speech. In the Constitution, chapter 3, Articles 47 and 48 guarantee freedom of speech and the press; however, they have been altered by stating that freedom of expression is free as long as it is expressed "within the limits of the law," which is interpreted by the authorities in a very restricted fashion.

4.2 Legitimate Authoritarianism?

Political opportunities in Egypt have generally remained unchanged throughout the post-independence period. However, the Egyptian political system under Mubarak (1981-2011) developed into what could best be described as electoral authoritarianism.[56] At the outset, this political style of governance seemed to be regulated by a different set of claims to power. The concept of electoral authoritarianism has been widely used by political scientists in order to analyze a governance trend among many developing countries (Brownlee 2001; Diamond 2002; Levitsky and Way 2002; Schedler 2006; Snyder 2006; Sadiki 2009; Storm 2009). The concept of electoral authoritarianism in this study relates to

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[56] According to Freedom House, *Freedom in the World*: *Country Ratings 1972–2007,* www.freedomhouse.org, Egypt has only experienced four consecutive years as being "partially free" during the period indicated. All other years its status was graded as "not free." This indicates that there have been some changes made within the system allowing the opposition to increasingly voice their objections (however in careful way). More on this below.

the overall judicial process connected to political repression in Egypt. This requires further explanation as it is directly related to Islamist meso-level claims of legitimacy.

There was continuous tension between the Mubarak regime's political aspirations, (power ambitions and control policies) and the core group of Egyptian judges (Brown 1997; Mitchell 2002; Antar 2006; El-Ghobashy 2008; Said 2008). This tension existed throughout the post-independence period mainly due to the apolitical nature of the judges' member organization(s) and the long tradition of Egyptian constitutionalism. After Nasser's subjugation of previously independent religious institutions (e.g. Al-Azhar) which broke their long jurisprudential tradition, the judges considered themselves as the modern inheritors of the Egyptian legal order. The judges have been central to the widespread resistance against Egypt's authoritarian rulers thus sharing a cause with the MB. The main source of the judges' independence has been the constitutional provision which meant that (court) judges were not directly appointed by the regime (Bernard-Maugiron 2008, 8-12).

Electoral authoritarianism in Egypt can broadly be described as a repression strategy of the regime which uses the pretence of staging multi-party elections in order to claim that it was democratically elected (Schedler 2006, 16). Brumberg describes the Egyptian political system as "[l]iberalized [which] has proven far more durable than once imagined. The trademark mixture of guided pluralism, controlled elections, and selective repression in Egypt, Jordan, Morocco, Algeria, and Kuwait is not just a 'survival strategy' adopted by the authoritarian regimes, but rather a *type* of political system whose institutions, rule, and logic defy any linear model of democratization" (2002, 56).

Subsequently, the Mubarak regime's veneer of political legitimacy through minimally competitive political elections had been utilized more frequently in the past decade, even more frequently than by the former Sadat regime (Ghobashy 2008). [57] Further evidence suggests that this tactic has been particularly successful in a political environment with a semi-legal, weak, and fragmented political opposition. Such conditions facilitated the

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[57] Nasser did not employ such political tactics, but installed a military dictatorship, which later transformed into a one party system with a form of pan-Arab (pseudo-socialist) ideology (see Gordon 1992).

regime's claims to power, legitimacy, and its stabilizing political and economic role as a protector of Egyptian unity (Botros 2010).

What is more, in order to sustain its effort to claim legitimate political power, the Mubarak regime had to work in accordance with the constitutional order. Therefore, to work successfully within the legal framework, laws needed to be manipulated. In turn, the regime's legal and political bureaucrats needed to do so without causing too much of a stir with the public, critical intellectuals, and the "independent" media. This included judges constantly aspiring for professional independence. The process of legal manipulation is not new to the Mubarak regime and it can be traced back to the military rule of Nasser in the mid-1950s. Within this context the MB developed its own organizational structure and mobilization strategies which helped its development into a demonstrably most effective political force in the immediate post-revolutionary period.

The Supreme Constitutional Court (SCC), installed during the Sadat regime, had substantial influence on limiting of the development of electoral authoritarianism throughout the 1990s and 2000s. The MB clearly considered the SCC as an institutional space through which they could challenge the regime's repressive policies. Through the SCC the MB systematically challenged what they perceived as unconstitutional government policies connected to the imprisonment of its activists, the prohibition of political participation, fraudulent electoral process etc. (Moustafa 2010, 14ff).

For instance, throughout the 1990s Muslim Brotherhood members have fervently challenged the regime's legitimacy through claims that it had breached the state's constitution in several instances (for specific cases see Al-Awadi 2004, 207; 2005, 135-136, 141-146; Arafat 2009, 182-183). To be sure, the MB's activists lost nearly all the cases, and those they won were never implemented due to the Mubarak regime's unwillingness to process the relevant legal decisions (Wickham 2002, 224; Moustafa 2007, 164-167). What tended to happen is that the regime handled the vast majority of Islamist legal claims and disputes through the (Emergency) State Security Courts, which were out of the hands of civilian judges. The Mubarak regime's constant balance between legitimate and illegitimate control strategies reflected its resilient pragmatism (Arafat 2009, 108-110).

Arguably, Mubarak as a person did not possess the charisma and public appeal that his predecessors enjoyed. Instead, he relied on institutional policies, the most important of

which were those which legitimized his power. The constitutional framework was therefore shaped accordingly on a regular basis. Such policies in turn aggravated both the judges and the Islamists alike (Moustafa 2007, 81-81, 154-164, 217). This process of constitutional corrosion had been ongoing throughout the reign of Mubarak (see Kassem 1999). This therefore shows that electoral authoritarianism had its serious limitations undermining the regime's legitimacy throughout the layers of Egyptian social fabric.

It is nevertheless important to mention one key ingredient in the Mubarak regime's institutional control and that is the constant extension of the emergency laws. Under the pretext of state security and stability, the state of emergency has regularly been extended allowing the regime to keep major constitutional freedoms in check (Billingsley 2010, 157). The Emergency laws effectively restricted the many basic rights guaranteed by the constitution.[58] Not unlike several other regimes in the region, the security apparatus (i.e. the State Security Intelligence Service - SSIS) could, under the provision of the law, arrest suspects without court issued warrants, issue *de facto* indefinite detentions,[59] and use torture-like interrogation tactics including the outright abuse and humiliation of detainees (Nadim Center 2000; Zaki 2005; 2007, 50-62; HRW 2011, 519).

Documented systematic abuse of political and criminal prisoners has demonstrated that the control of information was not total. The Mubarak regime was not able to be in complete command of the flow of information, which in turn provoked reactions amongst the public (*AlJazeera* 2011). Public knowledge of some of the examples of the abuses and torture of inmates by the security apparatus supports the assumption that the Mubarak regime was not a totalitarian autocracy (Wickham 2002, 224). The cases of Khalid Saeed and Sayyed Bilal discussed previously were instrumental in the widespread public protests that preceded the popular unrest of January 25th.

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[58] Egypt has been in a virtual "state of emergency" since 1967 through which Nasser, Sadat and Mubarak could circumvent the constitutional restrictions of their power primarily concerning domestic "security threats" through the establishment of military courts (Brown 1997, 114; Moustafa 2008, 151).

[59] Some members of the Islamic Group and Islamic Jihad have been detained without trial since the mid-1990s. They are held under the Article 3 of the constitution (Emergency Law) which stipulates that prisoners are allowed to appeal their detention every thirty days. However, the court (had almost exclusively rejected the Islamists' requests) can extend their detention indefinitely since there is no limit to how long detention can last.

In these and other cases, the overwhelming majority of judges have attempted to uphold the superiority of the constitutional order – thus seriously undermining the regime's authoritarian policies. This resistance of the judges serves as a proof of a tradition of judicial independence and civil servant resistance against the dominant executive order in Egypt (Hatina 2007, 238-239). The main organization through which judges and lawyers could organize their claims and protect their interests is the Judges' Club (created in 1939).

The Club, a civil interest association, has been a gathering place for incumbent and retired judges and counselors since its inception. Its primary function has been to coordinate judges' interests and to create a platform to voice and protect their opinions.[60] By 2009, more than 90 percent of judges were members of the Club making it a formidable civil organization (Said 2008, 112; Wolff 2009, 102-103).

One particular issue that is important to mention is the legality of the controversial electoral system used in Egypt. Article 88 of the Egyptian Constitution states that "the law shall define the necessary conditions that the members in the People's Assembly must fulfill. It shall specify the provisions for elections and referenda, providing that the balloting takes place under the supervision of a judicial body." "A judicial body" is not defined in the legal text nor is the election process identified (except mentioning the People's Assembly prior this sentence), and lastly there is no reference to what supervision entails (ballot counting, supervising ballot casting, electoral campaigns etc.). These issues could have been solved if the Supreme Constitutional Court as the highest judicial body had been allowed to clarify such ambiguities. However, the Mubarak regime consistently avoided implementing such solutions (see Wolff 2009, 104). Ambiguity served the purpose of allowing the regime to interpret the constitution in a broad way through which it safeguarded its control over the institutions.

Subsequently, the regime regularly invoked differences in interpretation and argued that, for instance, there were not enough judges to oversee the parliamentary and presidential elections (El-Ghobashy 2006). For instance, in the 2000 parliamentary election the Supreme Constitutional Court challenged the election results on the basis of the absence

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[60] According to Tariq Al-Bishri, a retired judge with Islamist sympathies, the primary and recurring demand of the Club is the fulfillment of the Constitutional provision for independent courts and the empowerment of the Judicial branch of government. Al-Bishri even wrote an open letter to the public in 2004 with the title "I Call You to Disobey" inciting people to disobey the regime as it was unrepresentative of the popular will.

of judges at the polling stations, a requirement according to the previously noted Constitutional paragraph (Article 88). This was a consequence of Law 73, which effectively allowed the Minister of the Interior to determine how many polling stations should be set up across the country, thus controlling the task of the judges. In the 2000 elections, nearly 10,000 polling stations were set up across Egypt. These were supervised by not only judges (being insufficient in number), but also by State prosecutors from the "State Cases Organization" and low-ranking judicial employees (Brown and Nasr 2005, 3). The "parliamentary elections were conducted in stages over several weeks to enable the comparatively small number of judges (8,000) to supervise thousands of main and auxiliary polling stations" (El-Ghobashy 2006).

The legislative push-and-tug struggle between the regime and the legislative institution(s) produced instantaneous criticism from opposition groups. Opposition candidates complained strongly about irregularities in electoral supervision (e.g. the definition of judicial supervision) and suspected tampering with the ballot boxes moments after the election (Pratt 2007, 105; Wolff 2009, 104). Moreover, voters suspected of voting for the opposition were systematically harassed by the security forces and hired thugs (*baltagiyyah*) (Brown and Nasr 2005). Many of the opposition candidates were openly intimidated and even jailed making it nearly impossible for them to compete with the regime party (interviews with Abdel Moeim Abd-Al Futtouh, member of the guidance council of the MB, February 2009; Arafat 2009, 163-167).

The regime reacted to the Judges' and (perhaps) the opposition's claims by rapidly amending the constitution allowing for the extension of the ballot for few more days in order to allow the judges time to travel and visit all the other polling stations where most of the votes had already been cast (Brown and Nasr 2005, 3). Nevertheless, the consequences of this particular case of judicial tampering did at least have positive effects on the following election (El-Ghobashy 2006).

The parliamentary elections of 2005 highlighted further both the regime's strategic ambiguity and its continued search for legitimacy. The Constitution was amended in early 2005. Article 82 explained the succession or President and role of the successor and this was amended so that the President is allowed; however not obliged, to appoint the vice-president during his reign. This amendment was interpreted as strengthening the role of

the Mubarak family in domestic politics, even though there was never any official recognition of that being the case (Billingsley 2008, 159-160).

Moreover, what was new in 2005 was the regime's effort to convince the public that Egypt was to hold its first free presidential elections (together with multi-party elections) where independent candidates would be able to run for the post of president, including those unaffiliated with a political party (read the MB candidates) (*Al-Ahram* 2005). Article 76 of the Constitution did propose such a possibility; however, the regime made sure that the amendment (Law 174) made it virtually impossible. It suggested that "any independent candidate seeking to run would need the support of 250 elected politicians drawn from the People's Assembly, the Shura Council or upper house, and the provincial councils. Since the NDP [the regime's National Democratic Party] and its supporters control most of the seats in all three bodies, most analysts considered it nearly impossible for an independent opposition candidate to run in a presidential election" (Sharp 2005).

Moreover, during the spring and summer of 2005 (preceding the elections) the Egyptian judges, through their association, made a firm stance on their demand for independence. They threatened to boycott their constitutional role of supervisors of the electoral process if their demands were not met. After negotiations with the regime, the judges' representatives agreed to supervise a reduced number of polling stations together with regime appointed civil servants employed primarily by the Ministry of Justice (Sharp 2005; Meital 2006; Soliman 2006; Wolff 2009).

Voter turnout in the 2005 parliamentary election was estimated to be around 20 percent whereby 454 parliamentary seats were distributed as following: 75% to the regime party (NDP), 20% to the Muslim Brotherhood's (independent) candidates,[61] 2,5% to the secular opposition, 2,5% to other independent party candidates. The 2005 election process, despite unprecedented Islamist gains, was dominated by random police violence and suspected vote fraud.

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[61] The MB candidates competed in only one third of the electoral districts due to pre-electoral mass-arrests of their candidates. The MB boycotted the parliamentary elections entirely as they agreed with several other parties to do the same. The decision was made on the basis of the regime's repression efforts in the first round of the elections and suspected fraud made it impossible to compete for seats in the parliament (*AlJazeera* 2010; *Ikhwanweb* 2010b; Soueif 2010).

However, the Mubarak regime changed its appeasing attitude towards the critical judges and opposition. It seems that "[t]he November-December 2005 parliamentary elections have catapulted the Brotherhood into its most visible-and most scrutinized position ever […] tactics of voter intimidation and ballot stuffing failed to stop the Brotherhood affiliates from winning a historic 88 seats in the legislature" (Shehata and Stacher 2006, 33). This prompted the regime to increase repression. In 2006 the Egyptian parliament debated a significant number of articles in the constitutional which were subject to an amendment process initiated by the regime. In 2007 the vast majority of these amendments were passed which effectively blocked any attempt by the MB to increase their presence in Egyptian politics. On the contrary, the amendment of Article 5 of the Constitution used "new language [which] forbids not only the formation of a party but also 'any political activity,' and not only on a religious basis but 'within any religious frame of reference.' This latter phrase—*marja'iyya* in Arabic—is particularly important, as it is one used increasingly by some mainstream Islamist parties" (Brown et al 2007, 3). This will be discussed further in subsequent chapters.

In the parliamentary election of 2010, the regime suspended all judicial monitoring of the polling stations thus eliminating the last hope of fair elections (Zaki 2010, 62). Further independent NGO assessments showed that "in all phases, domestic monitors observed clear violations of the electoral law, including the late opening of polling stations, voter intimidation, vote buying, lack of voting secrecy, misuse or absence of indelible ink, incorrect or missing names on the voter registry, and continued campaign activity on Election Day. Irregularities were not exclusive to the ruling party and its candidates or supporters, and some irregularities were perhaps unintentional due to lack of organization or competency" (International Republican Institute 2005, 9-10). One can assume that the regime's credibility sunk even lower among the Egyptian public.

It can be argued that ever since the 2000 elections, the mounting tensions between the judges and the regime resulted in social movements supporting the judges. It is during this period of escalating repression that both the youth movement for change, *Al-Kifaya*,[62] and the MB developed sympathy and support for the judges' claims to establish the rule of law (Wolff 2009, 105). The massive support for the judges' protests against the regime

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[62] *Al-Kifaya* is commonly translated as "enough," however, this phrase can also have a subtler meaning: "self-sufficient"

resulted in what is known as the "Judges' Revolt" in 2006. This apolitical "revolt" consisted of an organized "walkout" of approximately 8000 judges (*BBC NEWS* 2006; Zuhur 2007, 102; ICG 2008, 3-4; Meital 2006; Wolff 2009).[63] Nevertheless, the judges' judicial claims had an effect on the entire opposition coalition movement (*Al-Kifaya*) and the MB allowing them to claim legitimacy for their calls for socio-political change (Browers 2009, 117).

Due to the exceptional synergy of dissenting voices angered by the regime's constitutional tampering and increased repressive policies, political dissidents increasingly based their common agenda on judicial arguments (Moustafa 2007, 10). For instance, the Mubarak regime had traditionally focused its efforts to contain the MB and other Islamist organizations by portraying them as a security threat and thereby justifying the extension of the state of emergency (Wolff 2009, 105). During the 2006-2007 period, dissent by Egyptian judges created greater difficulties in justifying the state of emergency. Similarly, secular dissidents, such as those of *Al-Kifaya*, have further complicated the regime's control policies. The synergy of claims from the judges, Islamists, and the new secular movement elevated the tensions between the regime and significant parts of Egyptian civil society.

The judges on the other hand had been careful not to be associated too closely with any (political) opposition group since that would jeopardize their supposed impartiality (Brown and Nasr 2005). The SCC, for instance, constituted a separate contentious space within the general judicial upheaval, and it increasingly voiced its resistance to what the Court deemed unconstitutional regime policies.[64] However critical the SCC may have been, it had to focus its demands exclusively on constitutional interpretation. Otherwise, the Mubarak regime would have reacted by sanctioning or even dissolving the entire institution. This would have been the case if the SCC (or the Judges' Club) had questioned the regime's legality or its continuous extension of the emergency laws. After all, the emergency laws were fundamental to Mubarak's claims of legitimacy. In other words, ruling against the emergency laws would be have been "institutional suicide" (Moustafa 2008, 108).

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[63] Without dwelling too much on the"Revolt" it is important to note that "the year 2005 marked a turning point for the rule of law and promotion of democratization in Egypt" (Wolff 2009, 111).
[64] One of the critical issues the Court ruled unconstitutional is the imposed ban on foreign funding of NGOs.

The struggle between the regime and the judges was most clear in the case of the supervision of electoral polls and this might be a crucial battlefield even in post-revolutionary Egypt (see El-Ghobashi 2006). The Mubarak regime sought to limit the role of the judges, while the judges themselves sought to ensure their role at the electoral polls, thus ensuring, what they considered to be, their continued constitutional role.

4.3 The Progression of a Mobilization Culture among the Islamists

Under the reign of Sadat, the MB experienced something of an "Islamist spring" where both economic and socio-political opportunities, i.e. "objective realities" were interpreted as being positive and used to empower the entire movement.

Springborg argues that the leadership of the MB benefited economically through, what he describes as, cooperation with the Sadat regime. He claims that the evidence for his argument lies in the fact that several of the members of the Guiding Council of the MB benefited immensely from the economic policies shaped by the Sadat regime (Springborg 1989, 235-237; for a similar argument see also Kepel 1983, 104-107).

Another element, not discussed at length by Springborg and Kepel, is Sadat's amnesty for a large number of jailed Muslim Brotherhood activists, including Al-Tilmisani in 1971 (Ramadan 1993, 165-166). Following his decision, Sadat relaxed the restrictions on the MB and other Islamist groups enabling a variety of Islamist mobilization efforts *en masse*. In this opening of poltical, or rather social, opportunity structures, it seems that the MB leadership had the tacit approval of the Sadat regime to expand their mobilization efforts (i.e. *da´wah*); however, there is no apparent evidence to support the claim that there were close contacts between the regime and the MB's Guidance Bureau.

Sadat's neoliberal policies of *infitah* effectively benefited the financial elites, which already had a substantial amount of economic capital and were ready to invest it. Moreover, increased economic opportunities for people with substantial income also benefited many of the leading members of the MB. Many of their leaders were already large landowners

who saw the chance for the MB's economic independence. During the early years of the Mubarak regime, *infitah* policies reached their peak potential for the expanding Islamic investment corporations where massive amounts of Gulf capital and increasing domestic investments (est. 1 million Egyptians had invested their capital) created a new investment market (Moore 1990). During this period, the MB had become the most notable Islamist SMO in the entire region.

Abdel-Muneim Abul—Futtuh, a student-activist in the mid/late-1970s, later Chairman of the Medical Faculty Student Union at the University of Cairo and a former member of the Guidance Bureau, points out that the organization received no special treatment during the regime crackdowns on the organization in 1979. "We [the MB] refused to cooperate with the regime. We were not against the communists and the Nasserists. There was no need for us to be against them. Egyptian society is conservative and therefore naturally inclined towards religious values. The [Egyptian] society is a product of Islamic Civilization where all creeds are welcome to exist side by side" (interview no. 22).

Abul-Futtuh proclaimed, in a tone and rhetoric style typical of this generation, that within the organization, tolerance, resilience against regime repression and self-confidence are highly important to the MB contributing to its survival. Nevertheless, other evidence does indicate that the MB, directly or indirectly, benefited from Sadat's relaxed repression (increased political opportunities) and *infitah* policies by strengthening the membership base of the organization. And perhaps most importantly, it created a model of "Islamic success" for younger generations of Islamist activists and aspiring sympathizers.

By most accounts of this period, the MB succeeded in creating a considerable following both in the rural region of greater Cairo as well as in the vast region of rural Upper Egypt where the population is significantly more conservative and traditionally drawn to salafist forms of mobilization (Gerges 2000). The MB of Al-Banna in the 1930s was concerned with both the religious and material wellbeing of the Egyptian people, and especially the working classes, whereby they invoked the *Shari'ah* framework and attracted a massive following (Beinin and Lockman 1987, 364). In the 1970s and 1980s the public was drawn to the MB due to what was interpreted as a successful merging of traditional values with modern socio-economic institutions and processes. This public

awakening to the call of Islamist dissent is often called A*l-sahwa al-islamiyya*, or the Islamic Awakening (see Hussein 1988).

However, the success of the MB had mainly been attributed to emerging middle-class professionals and their attraction to the message of the Brotherhood Islamists together with their economic successes. Even in the inter-war period, the MB had an important role to play in the Egyptian public sphere: "[t]he Brothers wielded considerable financial power; they ran businesses, social welfare agencies, and youth clubs, and they printed their own newspaper" all of which was significantly reduced during Nasser's intial repression campaign (Doran 1999, 18).

Nevertheless, the MB, it seems, carved out a significant social space for its mobilization. The organization's recruitment of activists was regularly taking place in professional syndicates. Here, in relative freedom, prominent leaders of the MB could propagate and organize new activities including services for the middle-classes (Abdo 2000, 79-81).[65] Nevertheless, other emerging Islamist organizations were focusing their mobilization efforts on the country's universities and many of the rural regions of the Egyptian countryside where the population growth was exceptionally high during this period (see Al Awadi 2004, 100 ff; Blaydes 2011, 43-45).

In the mid-1990s the MB found themselves in the midst of the violent domestic conflict between the armed factions of two Islamist SMOs, the Islamic Group (*Gamaa al-Islamiyyah*) and Islamic Jihad (*Jihad al-Islami*) and the state security forces including the military. Nevertheless, in 1994, a small political opening presented itself, an opportunity the MB was ready to capitalize on. It is in that year that the under-pressure Mubarak regime reiterated its commitment to a "multi-party system".

This policy was primarily applied to dampen the grievances of the agitated Islamist movement and thus decrease sympathy amongst the public for violent Islamists. "According to a report issued by the NDP's secretariat in 1994, the NDP upholds democracy and the multi-party system, the freedom of the press and the judiciary, respect for human rights and a strong parliament that exercises effective control on government actions. On the confrontation of terrorism, the report said: 'There is an urgent need to

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[65] Services include pension savings, helth insurance, interest free loans etc.

mobilise all sectors of the population, through political parties and legitimate institutions, to confront the forces of darkness'" (*Al-Ahram Weekly Online* 1995).

The MB capitalized on this initiative by introducing their first political program in 1995 wherein they presented their main goals and principles. In the proclamation of the ideological framework, Ma'moun Al-Hudaibi, the sixth General Guide of the MB (son of the second General Guide Hassan Al-Houdaybi), called all political forces in Egypt to endorse a 15-point agreement by which all political forces would comply.[66] The first point of the agreement, a sweeping proclamation, declared "To confirm unequivocally that the people are the source of all power so that it is not permissible for any one individual, party, group, or institution to claim the right to authority or to continue in power except with the consent of the people" (Al-Hudaybi 2000, 35).

This position complements the opinions of Al-Hudaybi's predecessor, Muhammad Hamid Abu al-Nasr, who in 1988 expressed his doubts about the Mubarak regime's efforts to create a stable and secure society through authoritarianism. "Security, according to legal and social scholars, is realized when freedom is coveted, when justice takes its course and allows the general activities of groups and organizations in the shelter of laws that judge each transgression and give each citizen the opportunity to defend himself" (quoted in Abed-Kotob 1995, 326). Moreover, Abu al-Nasr wrote again in 1990 commenting on the fall of the Soviet Union and in connection to the Egyptian regime's domestic repression:

> "Freedom is dear and it is preferable for you to avoid your nation's anger and riots. It cannot be imagined that any people will remain under subjugation and repression after hearing and witnessing surrounding nations achieve their freedom and dignity. .... A nation's power is derived not from material power, but from the entire citizenry's liberty, the people's trust in the government, and the government's trust in the people. A government that lacks the people's trust due to the government's dominion, subjugation, and denial of the people's rights and freedoms has no weight among states; nor will it achieve stability" (quoted in Abed-Kotob 1995, 326).

These comments and opinions of two consecutive General Guides are representative of what were activists' concerns about the increasingly volatile security situation in the

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[66] See "The Principles of The Muslim Brotherhood"
http://www.ikhwanweb.com/article.php?ID=813&LevelID=2&SectionID=116

country at the time. It also reveals the general principles of the MB's discourse where the concepts of freedom and justice are at the center of their rhetoric. It is therefore not surprising that the MB recently named and registered a political party under the name of 'Freedom and Justice Party' shortly after the resignation of the Mubarak regime (*Al-Masr Al-Yaoum* 2011; Fathi 2011).

Moreover, the statements of Abu Al-Nast made in the MB's own publication (*Liwa´ al-Islam*, "Banner of Islam") widely available in Egypt at the time demonstrate a certain amount of "spatial" freedom within which the organization could propagate its message. The Mubarak regime was not in full control of the numerous press-houses, which could print the MB's pamphlets, newspapers, books and other propaganda materials which could easily, but by no means openly, be distributed across the country. It seems that such activities were true for other Islamist SMOs as well.

One major difference between the MB and other Islamist SMOs, besides its organizational structure, mobilization strategies, and ideological formulations, is their various approaches to targeted audiences. The difference is in rhetoric and the type of language they used. Different audiences include: middle-classes, professionals, administrators, poor rural population, aspiring students from rural regions, university students of humanities and other science students and the rural and literate peasantry. They all had a different point of departure in their grievances with the regime. The salafi-style Islamist SMOs generally approached their audiences with a Quranic message deeply rooted in religious traditions. They saw their duty to primarily educate the public in religious doctrines, personal religious conduct and interpersonal relations based on Islamic ethics. The MB on the other hand toned down the traditional rhetoric filled with religious metaphors and instead translated, what they saw as Islamic, values into a more pragmatic yet conservative message, which appealed to a wider number of people. The MB had its base in the professional middle-classes but aimed at wider audiences by diversifying its membership base.

Beinin argues in this direction,"[t]he social base of political Islam extends well beyond the modern, middle class intelligentsia. This is because, in contradictory ways, Islamism appeals to both the losers and the winners of global neo-liberal economic restructuring" (2005, 113). Other studies have shown that this educated, professional, and ascending

segment of the population is highly conscious of their religious identity. During the 1990s this increasingly politicized activist cohort had increasingly taken responsibility for services traditionally provided by the state (health clinics, education, practical assistance, financial help etc.), thus widening their message, appeal and activism to wider audiences (Singerman 1995, 253-255; Bayat 2000; Berman 2003, 14-15; Clark 2004, 948-950). This mobilization shift was directly connected to shifting political opportunities in the mid-1990s during the regime's repression campaign against violent Islamist SMOs. At the same time, the MB expanded its political pragmatism also as a result of their strategic choice to distance themselves from violence as much as possible. This could primarily be observed in their increasingly inclusive political ideas and political framework (El-Shoubaki 2004, Interview with el-Shoubaki, February 18, 2009; Antar 2006, 4).

Increased pragmatism can also be traced to the MB's increasingly diversified cohort of activists. This largely consisted of (former) Islamist university students, later professionals, and members of professional syndicates who often showed exceptional discipline when dealing with corruption at their respective places of work (i.e. university faculties and syndicates) (Mitchell 169, 171; Al-Ghazali 2006). This was viewed as highly valuable moral capital and ethically superior behavior. Such behavior, perhaps stemming from fear of a tarnished individual reputation among colleagues, resulted in many of the MB's professionals gaining the admiration and respect of their colleagues and the awareness of the general public.

This observation needs to be contrasted with the state administrators who, on the contrary, demonstrated the opposite qualities and were often ensnared in (neo)patrimonial relationships. For instance, many former Islamist student activists (later professionals) expressed their critique of exam routines, professors' extra-legal fees during exam periods, and the privileged treatment of students with personal bonds to academic faculty. On the other hand, their moral and ethical commitment not to engage in interpersonal bidding with faculty members produced much respect for their character (and at the same time the MB) among unaffiliated student colleagues (Zubaida 1992, 8; Abdo 2002; Beinin 2005, 115; Omar 2009).[67]

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[67] Students regularly refused to use personal connections to affect or simply bribe university faculty of administrators in order to pass exams. This has been something which many of the upper-middle classes (often affiliated with the regime) did regularly, according to the secondary literature and many of the interviewed activists.

Similar episodes of activists' personal commitment to the MB's message and code of conduct together with changing modes of regime repression (POS) stimulated many sympathizers to mobilize. This inflow of well-educated recruits together with the MB's traditional ability to organize and direct social activities were their greatest mobilization assets (resource). The middle-class background of the original leadership of the organization and their familiarity with the cultural codes and practices (including religious attitudes) of this segment of the population brought about the expansion of mobilization primarily during the time of increased political opportunities (early and mid-1970s and later mid-1990s). Moreover, increased economic opportunities in the 1980s through the emigration of a large number of the MB's professionals to the oil-rich Gulf states maintained the organization's growing infrastructure. It also enabled the establishment of social projects, which in turn increased their public appeal.

4.4 "Preachers not Judges" – Rejecting Violence

Nevertheless, the MB's pragmatism was partially a product of a trial-and-error method. Firstly, there is much speculation by historians regarding the MB's political activism in the 1940s. This is primarily connected to the organization's use of violence against the regime(s). The primary element of contention is Al-Banna's awareness of Salih Al-'Ashmawi and later 'Abd Ar-Rahman As-Sanadi's (they were not the core members of, what later came to be known as Guidance Bureau) and their efforts to establish a secret unit[68] for "special operations". Knowledge of their activities means that the MB would be considered as endorsing a method of political terror through a secret unit responsible for targeted operations including the assassination of enemy figures (for discussion see Mitchell 1969, 133-151; Lia 1998; Khatab 2001; Zollner 2007; 2009, 12-16).

What is reasonably assumed in the limited number of historical accounts is that the secret unit did exist and that they performed acts of political violence against both British officials and Egyptian government officials in the late 1940s. The chain of reactions from the government of King Farouq escalated its violent retributions, which culminated in the assassination of Hassan Al-Banna on February 12, 1949 (Lia 1998).

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[68]*Al-jihaz al-sirri*

However, it is also claimed that before his death, al-Banna, publicly stated that violence in the course of social change is a non-Islamic practice and that the MB did not embrace violence as a mobilization strategy. Before his death, Al-Banna went so far as to invite the Egyptian king to accept the message of the MB in a letter written in the summer of 1947 where he stated the MB's basic ambitions and principles. The letter included a wide range of issues including a summary of Islamic beliefs and morals, the problems of political leadership and economic reformation and why King Farouq should embrace these principles (Marcotte 2005, 77-80).

In the aftermath of Al-Banna's death, and the choice of Hassan Al-Hudaybi as his successor, the organization counted somewhere between 300,000 and 1 million followers.[69] Under Al-Hudaybi's leadership, the Muslim Brotherhood experienced some of its most difficult periods. Regarding the MB's evolving political understanding of Islam after al-Banna (1953), Muhammad Abdullah As-Samman wrote a declaration under the title (*Usus al-hukm fi'l-Islam*) "The Principles of Government in Islam." Herein, As-Samman argued that, "Islam takes into consideration only the sovereignty of the people and looks upon the state as the servant of the people... Islam bases rule on ethical principles and considers them the best support of government" (As-Samman and Haim 1958, 247).

This style of reasoning went far beyond what traditional salafi-doctrine allowed, and in a way revolutionized the Islamist approach to politics. Moreover, he argued that "[a]bsolute rule is the worst enemy of Islam, because it allows one individual to rule absolutely in a nation. Absolute rule also allows rule by a family or a ministry. It is strange that those Muslim countries who have forsaken true Muslim rule have fallen under the sway of absolutism of one kind or another" (As-Samman and Haim 1958, 249).

The critique of Muslim majority societies' moral and social decline precluded change in the organization's attitudes towards the general public. The message of the organization in the post-Al-Banna period became increasingly inclusive. As-Samman's declaration(s) in effect reflected a view held by many MB activists, especially in the post-Nasser period. Moreover, As-Samman's warnings concerning the risks of absolutism are reflective of the

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[69] There are numerous sources which present a range of numbers of active members and followers. See Harris 1964; Lia 1998; Munson 2001; Zollner 2007; 2009;

thinking of the MB's core members, as they would never have been endorsed publically (i.e. published) otherwise. In other words, the organizational control and internal cohesion of the MB's inner-circle was too close for such categorical statements to be published without the group's approval.

Nevertheless, despite these declarations of political pragmatism and inclusiveness, in 1954 an attempt on Nasser's life was made by (a) member(s) of the MB. This indicated that either the organization was not committed to their publically declared message or it had lost control over its "unit for special operations" (Ibrahim 1988, 640). This incident was perhaps the most serious expression of violence after al-Banna's death.

Nasser's response was swift; the regime outlawed the organization, a decree, which until April 2011, was still in effect. All through the late 1950s and first half of 1960s the organization suffered from mass-arrests without trial or trials by military tribunals resulting in many executions. Moreover, the systematic torture of members and even forced exile of known members was routine (Zollner 2009, 34, 38-40, 148-149). The severity of the regime's repression pushed the organization to the brink of extinction.

The period between 1954 and 1971 is the period of systematic repression of the Muslim Brotherhood, marked on the one side by the arrests, torture, and general coercion of activists[70]. On the other hand, during this period the MB had to adapt, re-organize, and reinvent itself. For instance, many of the religious and other doctrinal texts were written during this period. Sayyid Sabiq wrote his nonpolitical work, *Fiqh As-Sunnah* (lit. Jurisprudence of the Tradition), wherein religious rituals and principles were summarized serving as a major reference on the issues of religion for the MB and others (see Salahi 2005).

The period of the MB's strategic re-evaluation and organizational reinvention was uneventful in terms of the recruitment of new activists; nevertheless it was highly productive in terms of the production of written works. The main ideological product of this era was the MB's authoritative work *Preachers not Judges* (Al-Hudaybi 1977) which

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[70] Both Nasser's and initially Sadat's regimes.

was written[71] as a mobilization guide for the organization. This by many accounts was a collective effort and seen as an answer and refutation of Sayyid Qutb's widely read book, *Milestones* (1965-66). The MB openly refuted violence as a legitimate tool to create social change. This categorical denunciation of violent mobilization was overwhelmingly accepted by the activists at the time and was evidently adhered to. Moreover, this is in stark contrast to as-Samman's previously published declaration.

On the one hand, Qutb has been described as the intellectual founder of contemporary violent Islamist groups who allegedly supported violent forms of social change (Kepel 1989, 61; Zollner 2009, 47; Gumuscu 2010, 3). Today, the MB members recognize Qutb, at the time a member of the Guidance Bureau, as a Muslim thinker; however, largely a product of his time and with little impact on the ideology and methodology the MB represents (spec. interviews Jan.-March 2009). On the other hand, Abul-Futtuh, former member of the Guidance Bureau, summarized the MB's stance on his legacy: "Sayyid Qutb is an Islamic thinker whom we respect, but [he's] neither an ideological nor an operational reference for us. There is a huge gap between the thought of Hassan al-Banna and that of Qutb. Our ideological references are the writings of Al-Banna and all documents produced by the Society [the MB] since then" (ICG 2004, 10).

It was ´Umar al-Tilmisani, the third general Guide of the MB (1973-1986), who was chiefly in charge of the organization's transition. He was, according to some, the most influential Guide after and since Al-Banna (Interview with Diaa Rashwaan, February 1, 2009). His leadership had a significant impact on Sadat's arguably relaxed mode of repression. Al-Tilmisani did not challenge the Sadat regime directly as he was keen on traveling and visiting various towns and villages throughout Egypt. He wanted to revive Al-Banna's mode of communication and closeness to the Egyptian people. During his 13 years as leader of the MB he conversed with massive numbers of ordinary Egyptians - activists and non-activists alike. It seems that he wanted to create a new political base, by recognizing and acknowledging the people's everyday grievances and their practical needs. This mobilization methodology gave Al-Tilmisani a distinctive sense of the socio-political climate in Egypt at the time. His efforts to deepen the presence of the MB among

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[71] Much controversy surrounds the authorship of the book which is a distraction from the main issue here (see Zollner 2009, 64-71). What is clear is that the work was embraced by the Guiding Council of the organization and used as proof of their commitment to nonviolent mobilization.

the "regular" Egyptians, when the situation presented itself,[72] are clear signs of the organizational renewal of the MB.

Firstly, Al-Tilmisani shared Al-Houdaybi's categorical commitment to nonviolence. He consequently developed a principled stance in this regard (Auda 2004, 387). Secondly, he emphasized the importance of political power, therefore shifting slightly from the socio-educative focus of the MB, inspiring large numbers of university students to join the organization as a tool by which to change the political system, although this was not an end in itself (interview with Abdel-Moneim Abdul-Futtuh February 19, 2009). Al-Tilmisani writes:

> The first level of power is the power of creed and belief. The second is the power of unity and belonging. And the third comes from the power of weapons and strength. If the power of creed and belief is lost and there is no unity, reliance upon weapons results in destruction. The Brethren do not consider revolution, nor do they depend upon it, nor do they believe in its utility or its outcome. As for rule, the Brethren do not request it for themselves. (Abed-Kotob 1995, 324; Sullivan and Abed-Kotob 1999, 47).[73]

These general points do echo Al-Banna's initial message and style of presentation much in agreement with the first generation of MB activists (Al-Banna, Al Houdaybi, Al-Tilmisani, Al-Mashour, Akef etc). This argument can also be extended to claim that the MB's leadership, consisting mainly of first and second generation activists, made the decision to not take part in the first day of popular protests on January 25, 2011. This decision might have depended on the older generation's hesitant attitude towards direct confrontation with the state authorities (see Adib M. and ElWaziry 2011; Fahmy 2011; *Ikhwanweb* 2011c; 2011d; 2011e). Such reluctance and the cautious responses of the older generation of leaders have led to internal disputes between the younger and older generations of activists in recent years.

For instance, the MB's leadership was explicitly warned by the state security authorities (ISSI) not to participate in the protests days in advance and they threatened the organization with mass-arrests and individual repercussions (*Ikhwanweb* 2011e; Adib M. and ElWaziry 2011; Fahmy 2011). Nevertheless, despite the threats and intimidation from

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[72] I.e. a change in political opportunity structures
[73] Original quote is from Al-Tilmisani (1985).

the ISSI, the leadership, during the night of 24th of January and hours before the main protests erupted, decided to announce their official decision to participate. However, it is difficult to assess if the decision was made because the leadership thought that not participating in the face of a gathering momentum for change would be more harmful than participating and provoking the state security services (Elmeshad 2011; skype-interview with a MB activist February 7, 2011).

Returning to the importance of the MB's efforts to promote their moral authority, Al-Tilmisani envisioned the MB taking part in the political system through legal means so as to familiarize the people with their ideology ('the call') and methodology. It is clear that he considered the MB's ideas and beliefs as being central to their mobilization and not necessarily for the organization's take-over of state institutions (interview with Abdel Munaim Aboul Futtuh and activists Jan.-March 2009). The first test of this commitment to the changed strategy came in 1984, during the early reign of Hossni Mubarak, when the organization's members took part in parliamentary elections for the first time.[74] In the light of shifting regimes and its subsequent different authoritarian tactics previously discussed it can also be noticed that the MB houses multiple layers of activists primarily divided into different generational cohorts. The next section explains this in greater detail.

4.5 Danger of Gerontocracy within the MB

The MB's broad and sweeping rhetoric coupled with its pragmatic and sometimes ambiguous messages does at least help to clear internal tensions over ideological and political disagreements. This has been the case despite a well thought out initiation process. The first example of generational differences in the MB is that of a splinter group created in 1995/1996. In the last year of Muhammad Hamid Abu al-Nasr's leadership (1986-1996), the MB experienced the most serious rift in its history. Several members from the 1970s generation of activists decided to leave the organization and create a pure political party in accordance with their own interpretation of Islamist mobilization. A

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[74] Although banned as a political party by the regime, the MB decided to join forces with the New Wafd party (approved) and through this alliance manage to mobilize their members to vote in what were clearly manipulated elections. The multi-party electoral law was passed by the Mubarak regime just a year before, which coincided with the MB's decision to participate in the political process (see Pratt 2007, 72).

small group of MB members,[75] with Abu Al-´Ala Madi at the forefront, after feeling organizationally and ideologically constrained, and not listened to by the senior leadership, decided to create *Hizb Al-Wasat* (lit. Party of the Center)[76] (Stacher 2002; Wickham 2004, 213-215; El-Ghobashy 2005, 385).

There seems to be two major reasons behind this extraordinary break away of several high-profile activists. The first is the disastrous election results of the 1995 parliamentary elections which resulted from considerably harsher regime repression (Wikcham 2004). The second and organizationally more worrying reason is the seriousness of internal disagreements between the reformists among the younger generation of activists and the older more conservative leadership.[77] The primary disagreement concerning the MB's mobilization strategy is the leadership's refusal to split the organization's operative functions into political and social parts, as was suggested by the reformers (ICG 2004, 16). In turn, the *Wasat* leadership hoped to form a recognized and legitimate political party based on secular grounds so as to avoid the usual criticism of being a religiously based political group.

In 1996, the Wasat leadership applied for a party license from the Egyptian High Electoral Commission (Committee on Parties). The Commission turned them down in the same year and subsequently all subsequent times they applied (1998, 2004, and 2006) (Michael 2004; Browers 2007, 78; Altman 2009, 22). It became clear that *Al-Wasat*'s insistence on political legitimacy only resulted in the heightened suspicions of the regime, which increasingly mistrusted any public opponent regardless of their political/religious affiliation. In other words, the Mubarak regime saw any new opponents only as more of the same (see Stacher 2002, 431-432; Wickham 2004, 213-215; El-Ghobashi 2005, 386-388; Brownlee 2010, 11-12).

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[75] Some of the most prominent defectors were Hisham Ja'far (journalist), Ibrahim al-Bayoumi Ghanem and Hamed Abdel Maged (all professors at Cairo University).

[76] The creation of Al-Wasat party created a new wave of scholarly interest in further conceptualizing Islamism. A concept of "*wasatiyyah*" or centrism was born, or rather advanced to wider audiences. Its primary features are moderation in religious matters and a virtual separation between religious doctrine and politics, very much akin to Christian democracy in Europe (see Stacher 2002; Kurzman 2003b; Wickham 2004; El-Ghobashy 2005)

[77] Again, disagreements are primarily anchored in different reading of religious principles together with difference in its emphasis in strategizing the MB´s mobilization.

The seriousness of the split was downplayed by the MB leadership including Aboul-Futtuh[78] and Al-Eryan who were both from the same generation of activists as the *Wasat* leadership. These two strong personalities expressed their emotional and personal attachment to the MB's ideas and its code of conduct which essentially dictated how, when, and where to express one's public opinion and what type of opinions are acceptable (see Browers 2007, 79; El-Ghobashy 2005, 384). There were serious speculations about the demise of the entire organization at the time of the split: "the generation conflict could threaten the very existence of the Brotherhood. 'The old are getting older and their mentalities differ widely from those of the younger generations' […] This year [1998] marks the Brotherhood's 70th anniversary. Unless they reach agreement on a new method to keep them going, there won't be anything called the Brotherhood by the turn of the century" (Rashwan quoted in Howeidy 1998).

Despite this and other speculations, it seems that the split did not create serious long-term damage to the MB concerning their political successes or mobilization pattern. It can be assumed with a fair amount of certainty that the split of *Al-Wasat* did not cause much disruption in the mobilization and recruitment of new activists to the MB. What on the other hand did happen is that the outspoken criticism by the younger generation(s) resulted in the transformation of the MB's mobilization "culture". Previously, one could expect unquestionable obedience towards the organization's vanguard.[79] Gradually this organizational attitude was contested primarily through the youth's insistence on ideological clarifications and the accommodation of diverging opinions on mobilization strategies (interviews no. 13, 19, 21; El-Ghobashy 2005).

Were such tensions inevitable? During the MB's almost nine decades of history, the organization has gathered a large cohort of supporters who are composed of several different age groups and social backgrounds, although most of the activists are broadly considered to be from the middle classes. For instance, some aging activists joined the organization in the 1950s as teenagers, and young professionals. Others are activists who joined as recently as the late 2000s, also in their teens. Such generational diversity has undoubtedly played a role in the organization's internal dynamics and the

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[78] He is now formally an ex-MB member and founder of a new political party.
[79] This phenomena can be described as gerontocracy and is very much based on cultural legitimacy as well as beliefs that the older, more experienced, generations are wiser and more able to make difficult tactical and strategic decisions, especially when dealing with the aging repressive regime.

operationalization of its ideas and goals (see Whittier 1997). In order to have a clearer overview of this internal dynamic it is possible to divide the MB's activists into four main generational cohorts. Each cohort requires some attention.

a) During the initial period after the Free Officers' Revolution and Nasser's ascension to power in 1954 until the mid-1970s the MB experienced a period of stagnation (Wickham 2002, 21). Recruitment was limited to family members and close friends. Most of the leadership, as already noted, was imprisoned and some of them had even been executed. The shocking and traumatic experience of repression (Moaddel 2002, 373-374) forced the organization to reinvent itself both ideologically and organizationally (Munson 2001). The core members of the organization, for the most part in their mid-30s to early 40s, were incarcerated in some cases for more than two decades and endured harsh prison conditions. These experiences shaped their outlook and interpretation of what their duty as activists and Islamists meant (see Al-Ghazali 2006 for a detailed and explicit description of the prison experience; Zollner 2009, 33-43).[80] Many of the novice recruits were raised in the spirit of resisting repression and the regime through deep religious commitment and perseverance. This period was marked by the entrenchment of basic organizational values amongst its members as well as the building of strong personal bonds. One important indicator of their commitment is that there were very few defectors from the organization despite the high-levels of repression.[81]

During the interviews for this research, the activists often repeated one word, *sabr* (patience). Patience, they say, was something they had learned from the "older" generation (of 1950s and 1960s). Some of the representatives of this generation today include the former General Guide Muhammad Mehdi Akef and Mahmoud ˊIzzat. One of the primary traits of the older generation is their political and social conservatism. This translates into a reluctance to undertake sizeable strategic risks[82] caused by fear of regime backlash and thereby losing those gains they had already made (interview with Al-Anani, January 18, 2009). The current General Guide, 68 year old Muhammad Badiˊ, is a person

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[80] Ideological explications wrote in prison are also recommended Al-Hudaybi 1977; Qutb 2003.
[81] Interview with Dr. Diaa Rashwaan on February 2, 2009, a long-time analyst with insight into the internal affairs of the MB.
[82] Mass demonstrations, better organized political pressure on the regime, division between the social and political parts of the organization, staging rallies and sit-ins etc.

who partly[83] represents this generation of MB cadres characterized by conservatism on both the personal and activist level.

b) The second generation of activists mobilized during the period of relaxed tensions with the Sadat regime, in the early 1970s.[84] During this period, the MB focused on renewing its ideological platform to launch a recruitment campaign primarily aimed at university campuses from where the next generation of members came. Today, these 50-60 year old activists constitute the core of the Guiding Council from which the majority of the elected Members of Parliament were selected (in the elections of 2000 and 2005). For instance, ca. 90% of the elected MB parliamentarians in the 2005 elections, are from this generation (interview with Diaa Rashwaan, February 1, 2009). On the one hand, this generation is often considered as religiously conservative (as they were brought up in a period of charismatic preachers such as Abdel-Hamid Kishk; Sayyid Sabiq and others). But on the other hand, they are considered to be the MB's political pragmatists.[85] This pragmatism is reflected in their willingness to compromise on some of the core ideological issues that have been heavily criticized by the secularists and liberals (see Stacher 2002; El-Ghobashi 2005; Al-Anani 2010). Some of the isseues were also mentioned and that is the role of religion in politics, the status of minorities and women etc.

One of the most vocal representatives of this generation is Essam El-Erian who is often referred to as the MB's spokesman on political affairs and the chief of its political committee (Stacher 2008). He summarized the MB's approach to political change: "The Muslim Brotherhood is not pushing for radical change in Egypt. Aware of political realities, we decided to contest only 10,000 of the 52,000 seats the government announced are up for grabs in the local councils [2008], so as not to provoke the regime into fixing the final results and to allow for coordination with other opposition groups. Realizing our responsibility as the country's largest opposition group to defend the rights of minorities and vulnerable groups in Egyptian society, our lists included candidates from different economic and social classes, as well as women and Copts" (El-Erian 2008).

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[83] Badiʹ is not within the age cohort of the early generation of MB activists; however, he represents a conservative and more traditional understanding, which has been considered as politically introverted and socially pro-active (interview with activists in Cairo January-March 2009).
[84] Many of the long-term prisoners imprisoned in the mid-1950s were released during this period.
[85] The example of this hyper pragmatism was discussed earlier in the case of *Hizb Al-Wasat*.

Muhammad Habib, another representative of this generation and the former deputy-Guide, claimed that the MB is a resilient organization with an adaptable infrastructure. After the 2007 regime crackdown he had this to say about the MB political candidates: "We will continue to work according to our agenda but the tactics will be different…. The repression is as strong and as annoying as in the 1960s and the 1990s but now they [the regime] are much smarter and plan better. They know better where to hit us" (Shehata and Stacher 2007). He is one of the first who showed his disappointment with the election of Badi´ as the new General Guide by resigning from his post of Deputy Guide (Gerges 2010).

c) The third generation is represented by activists who joined the movement during the organization's expansion in the late 1980s and early 1990s. Today those persons are in their mid-40s and early 50s. They have witnessed the military confrontation between the violent Islamist organizations such as the Islamic Group (*Gama'a Al-Islamiyyah*) and the Islamic Jihad (*Al-Jihad Islami*) and the full repressive arsenal of the Mubarak regime between 1992 and 1997. Regime repression affected large numbers of MB activists resulting in mass-arrests and the widespread torture of Islamists across the board, and especially members of violent organizations (see Al-Sayyid 2003; ICG 2004; Zuhur 2007; HRW 2011).

This generation of MB members is generally considered to be in command of the most important administrative tasks required to keep the organization's complex system together. In addition, many of them are heavily involved in parliamentary politics as well as being politicians at the local level in their respective regions. They are conservative both religiously and politically. This is most likely a result of their mobilization experiences dominated by harsh regime repression. Moreover this generation of activists has its cultural roots in the rural regions of Egypt, which have usually been traditionally more conservative than the urban regions (Tammam 2008). Their commitment to the leadership's decisions, organizational capabilities, and the general principles of the organization can be considered as fairly strong.

In summary, this generation seems to be similar in their style of activism to the oldest generation, with the crucial distinction that they are willing to engage the regime within

the political system. Well-known activists include Sa´ad Al Qatatni,[86] Mahmoud Al-Waleed, Hamdi Hassan, Abdullah Al-Zahawi and others (*Ikhwanweb* 2007b; 2010c; ICG 2008; EASD 2010). Many of them were recruited during their student years at the universities of Cairo and Alexandria, but also in Asyut, Minya and others.

d) The fourth generation is perhaps the most diverse group of activists. Most of the interviewees in my study joined the MB in the period very soon before and after the successful election of 2005. This indicates that it was an intense period of recruitment and (relatively) high "visibility" of the MB on the university campuses, which in turn resulted in higher numbers of MB members. Moreover, if one considers the social background of the second generation and many activists from the fourth generation it is possible to find a pattern. These young activists, primarily from rural regions of Egypt, have more of less outspoken ambitions to climb the social ladder. This is often voiced through their commitment to what is considered prudent by their respective communities, namely religious piety, a high level of education, healthy income, and general notion of public discipline and "good" character (see Al-Ghazali 2006; interviews no. 1, 4, 6, 8, 9, 10, 12).

Most of this generation's activists are between the ages of 18 and 35. The character of their everyday activism has been greatly affected by the availability of information technology.[87] One can argue that their knowledge and familiarity with international and domestic political events as well as their experiences in the education system has largely contributed to their critique and questioning of authority. Moreover, it is quite clear through observation and interviewing that many of the young activists have been deeply affected by the original message of Hassan Al-Banna (interviews no. 7, 8, 10). What on the other hand does create some tensions among the younger activists are the various interpretations of Al-Banna's message. These activists are generally very well versed in Al-Banna's original organizational doctrines, equally committed to nonviolent strategies, and are sensitive to the religious scholars' opinions regarding their daily lives and religious duties. Some of them are very careful to emphasize the MB's role as a vehicle to

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[86] The first leader of the MB's Freedom and Justice Party
[87] The vast majority of the MB bloggers belong to this generation. They are the most vocal in their criticism of the movement as a whole and of the organization they are members of. Furthermore, their critique of the regime partly resulted in the regime's decision to create a special task force of the security services dealing with criticism of the president and his family (see Metcalf 2006; Mayton 2008; Osman 2008; Radsch 2008; Al-Anani 2010).

realize their religious ideals and not see this itself as the purpose for mobilization (interview no. 1, 10).

The more literal reading of Al-Banna and the MB ideals prevails among those activists who come from the rural regions of the Nile Delta or Upper Egypt. It is not incorrect to label their small cities and urban centers as rural spaces as there is a pervasive feeling of being in the countryside when one visits such places. The conservative environment and relative (religious/cultural) homogeneity of the populations encourages an unquestioning attitude towards religious texts in general, including religiously inspired social messages written by a highly respected (martyred) public figure.

Some similarities between these activists' backgrounds and their approach to nonviolent Islamist mobilization remind one of the middle generation's attitudes during the mid- and late 1970s. Both generations (despite high levels of education[88]) have this persistent attitude of practicality when it relates to issues of politics and social change. They constantly downplay existing ideological inconsistencies among the younger generations and hold strong to the principles of unity and an unwavering conviction in their efforts (interviews no. 1, 2 10, 28). These activists are generally considered to be religiously conservative, culturally traditional, more docile, doctrinally faithful and part of the socially active majority which is considered as being the mainstream amongst MB activists (interview with Al-Anani January 18, 2009; interview no. 29).

The other stream of activists within this generational cohort is a vocal, urbanized, highly pragmatic, compromising group of activists who are generally less religiously conservative. They are in a minority as they are more vocal in their criticism of the leadership primarily in their view of increased politicization of the MB, which they hope would lead to greater openness to cooperate with other political forces (e.g. liberals, leftists etc). They have usually dominated the MB's blogosphere and other social media outlets and are at the forefront of the cooperative projects with other opposition groups (e.g. *Al-Kifaya* liberal-led opposition alliance). They are generally familiar with international affairs both within the Muslim-majority countries of the Middle East and

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[88] Almost all of the interviewees and their extended network of activist (student) friends are attending or have graduated from faculties of medicine, engineering, education, IT, and a few, from mass communication.

North Africa, as well as European states and the U.S. and they are generally capable English speakers (interviews no. 13, 16, 17, 21, 26; see also Lynch 2007; Radsch 2008; Al-Anani 2010).

The MB's generational diversity suggests increased tensions within the organization where different age-cohorts and their inter-generational supporters attempt to influence the direction of the organization. Shifting levels of state repression (e.g. changing political opportunities) have had a significant impact on both the MB's ability to mobilize and where mobilization could take place. Various age-cohorts have tried different solutions to changing regime policies further aggravating the existing tensions. Moreover, looking back on the long-term recruitment process, it is possible to observe that the activist attitudes towards the organization *per se* are not necessarily negative. This includes the MB's values, ideals and administrative routines. The difference in attitudes among the activists is primarily concerned with tactical and strategic adjustments, i.e. responses to regime repression. This must not be a negative consequence of the rapidly developing evolution the MB's activism. The MB was actively pursuing innovative efforts to promote a popular image thus hoping to broaden its public support and win long-sought legitimacy. This made them more prone to populist rhetoric than, for instance, the salafi-oriented groups which where rhetorically bounded by the Islamic tradition to a much greater extent.

4.6 Tracing the MB's Path toward Political Legitimacy

In 1984, Al-Tilmisani set up and supervised a political committee consisting of senior leaders to prepare the MB's new political platform. During the preparatory process, the committee drew on the experience of Islamists in several Muslim majority states, including Turkey, Yemen and Jordan where Islamist political parties had gained some political recognition. Al-Awadi, who held personal interviews with a member of the committee (Muhammad Fuda) writes: "Fuda also showed me two separate drafts of a party manifesto which had been prepared by the Brothers; one draft was for the Egyptian Reform Party or *Hizb Al-Islah Al-Misri* and the other was for the Consultation Party or *Hizb Al-Shura*. Neither draft was ever formally submitted to *lagnat al-ahzab* [a regime controlled institution, the "Parties Committee"], for fear that they would be rejected" (Al-

Awadi 2004, 83). Nevertheless, the MB's ambition to operate through the political system had been in the making for more than two decades.

The 1984 parliamentary elections resulted in the MB's independent candidates occupying 12 seats of the Parliament. This was possible because the MB activists allied themselves with the New *Wafd* party, which had the legitimate right to propose parliamentary candidates (Auda 2004, 387). This was unprecedented, as the MB had not previously been represented in the Egyptian parliament. This political gain had set the MB on the course of political participation and subsequently induced further organizational transformation. As the political opportunities opened up, the MB expanded its field of activities from social programs to political campaigning mainly through for the use of legal loopholes so as to avoid regime sanctions.

Next time around at the 1987 parliamentary elections, the MB switched their political allegiance from New *Wafd* to - two other parties - *´Amal* (Labor Party)[89] and *Al-Ahrar* (Liberal party). This was mainly due to New Wafd's fears of losing votes to the MB and becoming a victim of the regime's repression policies. The MB's alliance with the leftist Labor Party and the Liberals won 65 parliamentary seats out of which 36 were occupied by the MB (Schwedler 1998, 27; Sullivan and Abed-Kotob 1999, 48; Fahmy 2002, 76-77).

This was another milestone in the MB's mobilization story. It tripled its presence in the parliament. Officially banned by the authorities, the MB came to be even more politically active. It seems that the MB's middle generation, those who mobilized in the mid-1970s during their university studies, gained prominence within the organization and were thus able to realize their vision of political legitimacy (see Springborg 1989). Moreover, the fears of the New *Wafd* party, that Islamist discourse would dominate its agenda and provoke the wrath of the regime, were proved correct. The Islamist rhetoric of the MB started to have an effect on the leftist and liberal voter cohorts of the *´Amal* and *Al-Ahrar* parties causing them to distance themselves from the MB. They essentially viewed the MB as a political rival and competitor which started to dominate their political agendas.

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[89] Commonly known as the Socialist or Workers' Party, created in 1978, but suspended in 2000 by the authorities after regime-critical articles were published in the party's organ (*Al-Sh´ab*). The civilian court later overruled the suspension as anti-constitutional; however, the ban remains.

The MB's political "successes" had a profound effect on the entire organization, especially on the new generation of activists (mobilized in the 1990s). As already noted, the impact of newcomers in the mid-1970s was felt first in the mid-1980s. During this period (1970s), many of the ambitious student activists entered professional syndicates and trade unions. There they propagated the MB's social policies, exchanged ideas, pooled resources, and developed personal networks with likeminded individuals which resulted in increased political pragmatism (Al-Sayyid 2003, 20-21). Allegedly, this was a long-standing ambition of the founders of the organization: "The marriage between the Muslim Brotherhood and middle-class professionals, which began in the mid-1980s, was no accident; it just took longer than the Old Guard had expected" (Abdo 2000, 79).

The MB essentially mobilized entire networks of individual contacts which were built during their university years as well as those honed through syndicates and unions. The MB activists were not doctrinally strict (unlike the salafi-oriented groups) and were able to engage non-activists in broad debates about social change allowing inspiration from non-Islamic sources. More importantly, the educational and professional skills of the activists had enabled the formation of vast support networks as well as communication among activists in different parts of the country. Although the MB did have a solid organization even prior to its presence in the professional syndicates and trade unions, activist-professionals with their communication and organization skills enabled the organization to reach the point where the MB was considered to be a state-within-a state (Wickham 2002, 203).

The next time around, the 1990 parliamentary elections presented the MB with a much greater challenge. The Mubarak regime passed a new Electoral Law, which allowed only pre-approved individuals to run for parliament effectively excluding political coalitions (Abed-Kotob 2004, 328). Changes in the political opportunity structure forced the MB's leadership to adjust its political strategy. This was primarily visible in their use of a new type of discourse which showed a willingness to accommodate modernist concepts (such as a democratic political framework, free speech, a civil state with equal citizen rights etc.) by increasingly adopting a political discourse using these concepts (Abdel Maguid 2003).

The organization retreated to what has been the basis of its mobilization, namely social services and civil society activities where they hoped to reinvigorate grassroots activism

and thereby strengthen their activists' low morale. The organization's leadership was keen to keep up the mobilization momentum by demonstrating to more inexperienced (low-ranking) activists the practical applicability of the MB's principles. In other words, the organization saw the political crisis as an opportunity to recruit new activists by supporting social programs in the communities where the MB had a large presence (see Beinin and El-Hamalawy 2007). This suggests that the MB primarily intended to strengthen its organizational structure by attracting professional competence. Moreover, the organization focused its efforts on securing mobilization though the improvement of its financial assets by managing them in more secure way. Nevertheless, their search for political legitimacy continued unabated.

During this period of forced political retreat much of the debate within the MB dealt with the legacy of Al-Banna and his ideas of political participation and its fruitfulness. Political opportunities did change and thereby so did the MB's attitudes towards participation. It can be argued that the pragmatic attitude of both al-Houdaybi and Al-Tilmisani had much to do with the later course of the MB's mobilization.[90] Their strategy largely followed the instructions of Al-Banna. Firstly, familiarization of the organization's ideals and methods (*ta´reef*) was developed to the point where the entire population of Egypt was, at least vaguely, familiar with the MB's message (Hussein 1988, 1012-1013; see Al-Banna 1997b). During periods of intense state repression, the MB retreated in an attempt to reinvigorate the mobilization of the grassroots rather than politically challenge the regime.

In the 2000s repression levels shifted several times and the Mubarak regime attempted to provoke greater divisions within the MB. The more conservative stream of activists were traditionally more keen on social services and long-term retreat from political participation as a means to work on the grassroots level and thereby gather more popular support.[91] The more reformist stream of activists traditionally lobbied for increased

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[90] Interviews with Khalid Hamzah, Mehdi Akef, Ibrahim Al-Houdaybi and others January-March 2009.

[91] As partly discussed in footnote 19, conservative or less compromising activists have anchored their mobilization for the great part in religious dimension of the MB's ideas of social change. Conservatism therefore reflects these activists' emphasis on moral issues. By noting this it can be argued that main difference between the reformist and conservative MB activists concerns their de/emphasis of the moral framework loosely defined by the MB's main ideologue, i.e. Hassan al-Banna.

political engagement through which they could challenge the regime using the existing institutional framework. Ibrahim Al-Houdaybi, a university graduate and an influential MB member said, "the [Egyptian] regime is against the moderates [in the MB]. They need extremism to subdue [activism]. Their definition of what is extremism and radicalism is therefore circumstantial. We know that the security forces [the SSIS] are those who interpret the definition according to their understanding and the current climate on the streets. They are given a free hand to reign in the streets among ordinary people" (interview in Cairo February 2009). Many MB activists perceived the Mubarak regime's shifting repression tactics as a strategy to split the organization, or at least make it more inward-looking, conservative and religiously dogmatic. The dominance of such a tendency within the organization would have inevitably brought about increased repression. The MB, seeking to legitimate their dissent, welcomed popular demands for political freedom which had, in effect, proved only marginally beneficial.

The Mubarak regime's political/electoral reforms were seen as an attempt to take the edge off popular dissent. However, these were proven to be only partial attempts to create free and fair elections. This seems to have been an attempt to "let the steam out" and allow the opposition to vent its grievances openly. The unruly parliamentary elections in November of 2010 and the apparent total exclusion of the Islamists support this assumption (see Mansour 2007; Abbadi 2008; Michael 2010b; Murphy 2010; *The Telegraph* 2010). Mubarak's National Democratic Party (NDP), which had dominated the parliament for nearly three decades, swept the polls. A tactic of temporarily amending the electoral laws had been employed in order to marginalize any political opposition party, a prime example of what has been defined as electoral authoritarianism (see Kienle 2001; Brumberg 2002, 56). In other words, marginal political reforms had been made in order to legitimize its rule by readjusting external practices while internally preserving a strong sense of loyalty to the ruling regime and its party (Kienle 2001; Meijer 2004, 283; Shadid 2001, 31).

Such provisional and cosmetic changes to the legal clauses pertaining to elections had already caused significant frustration back in 2008. In relation to repression the local elections, the former General Guide, Akef, said in an interview: "Our approach as Muslim Brothers is a peaceful, legal and constitutional approach. […] But we are not responsible for others. It is very likely that (people will) explode … people are fed up" (*Egypt News*

2008). Concerning the parliamentary elections in November 2010, the regime's mass-arrests, the confiscation of property and the exclusion of thousands of MB affiliated students from governing student bodies were all intended to subdue the MB and, again, exclude them from parliamentary participation by all means (Al-Desoukie 2010; *Ikhwanweb* 2011).

It is important to note that the MB's continuous strategizing drives another process inherently linked to mobilization, namely the development of collective identity. Through the continuous search for political partners (be it a nationalist party like New *Wafd*, Liberals or Leftists) and at the same time failing to sustain this cooperation, the activists are asserting their own sense of the collective. This collectivity is always developed, in contrast with other social or political groups. It is essentially an outcome of social relations within this particular group of activists (Melucci 1989), but always in relation to outsiders. Moreover, the MB's continuous internal debate regarding mobilization tactics is another process by which the MB constantly redefines itself in relation to the authoritarian regime. The regime's repressive policies provide strong incentives for activists to identify with other individuals who are going through similar experiences.

Conclusion

This chapter outlined the contentious relationship between the authoritarian regimes in Egypt and the MB's Islamist mobilization throughout the 20th century. It later mapped out the relationship between the Mubarak regime and the MB and its continuous search for legitimacy of its existence and actions. The chapter presents an argument which claims that the Mubarak regime's repressive policy had been a continuation of a post-colonial order set up firstly by Abdel-Nasser, adjusted and continued by Anwar Sadat. During a period of nearly 60 years, Egyptian state institutions, much like those across much of the Middle East and North Africa (MENA), developed authoritarian mechanisms to suppress any form of political dissent. At the same time these regimes sought to legitimaze their actions by referring to the dangers of chaos in their absence, dangers of foreign invasion, and dangers of theocratic Islamic rule.

However in Egypt, much unlike other states in the MENA region, dissenting social movement organizations such as the Muslim Brotherhood, survived, developed and

subsequently succeeded in mounting substantial socio-political opposition to the authoritarian regime. The MB experienced a considerable variation of political opportunities from negative sanctions (being banned from political participation), coercive policies (mass-arrests, torture and military trials) and violent crackdowns to relative tolerance of its political participation through electoral alliances. Subsequently, the MB responded to shifting repression policies through the development of a strong organizational structure and effective strategizing seeking legitimacy among the public. They succeeded in attracting a substantial following primarily among the growing conservative middle-class. Many of the indicators point to an uneasy relationship that the MB developed with the repressive authorities through which they could adapt, again, by utilizing their well-structured organizational framework including the support networks they had created across the country's urban centres.

The authoritarian state under the rule of Mubarak developed into an entrepreneurial partnership between the business and political elites with the military ending up as the largest beneficiary of this cooperation. Any opposing social-forces came from the disadvantaged layers of society including middle-class youth, bureaucrats and professionals with a variety of ideological frameworks who came to be the main challengers of state power. Within the fragmented dissident camp, the MB represent(s)ed the largest and the most well organized socio-political force with a half-century of experience in dealing with repressive regimes.

5 Places of Contention and Political Opportunities

The multi-party system in Egypt is a decoration!

Essam al-Erian member of the Muslim Brotherhood's Guidance Bureau and a political spokesperson, interview with the author in Cairo, January 26, 2009

Introduction

After discussing the main elements of Egyptian repression and mobilization culture and the regime's and the MB's struggle for legitimation of its actions it is important to discuss the important places of contention together with its effects on Islamist mobilization. This chapter therefore discusses several important places where the MB saw opportunity to express its dissent. Moreover, these places of contention are presented as a part of the shifting political opportunities and thus also the socio-political context (see Boudreau 2002). The chapter is in effect about the *where* of repression, or at least partially about that. It is because of space constraints that the chapter only discusses three most visible and thereby easily observable "spaces" of contention, namely the professional syndicates, the courts, and in part the religious institution(s).

As demonstrated above, a social movement organization (SMO) responds with tactical adaptation to a state's policies. This is especially true in the case where state action is directly repressive and threatening even if a regime is seemingly inactive with regard to social mobilization. A state regime is considered to be a dominant institutional actor with a developed infrastructure and means of upholding public order and thus exhorts its will on society.

5.1 Political Opportunity Structures

The concept of political opportunity structures (POS) has been developed and used by scholars of social movements for decades (e.g. Tilly 1978; McAdam 1982; Tarrow 1994; McAdam *et al* 1996; Gamson and Meyer 1996; Osa M. and Corduneanu-Huci C. 2003; Meyer 2004). The POS broadly represent "objectivated realities [of state induced policies] that are subject to transformation" (Benford R. 1997; 423). These "objectivated realities" are regime policies directly related to the dis/enabling of a social mobilization's shape, size, outcome and the social space within which it takes place in a particular society (Meyer 2004; 131).

Moreover, opportunities here refer to a state's actions, the rules projected on society, and the general power relations between state institutions and civil society. Political opportunities are a set of political circumstances that "encourage, discourage, channel, and otherwise affect movement activity" (Campbell 2005, 44). The political structure is therefore a representation of a perceived structured social reality within which social actors operate (most often) in accordance with general principles of that society. It further follows that the narrower the opportunities to express one's opinion, dissent and objections are, the smaller the space, regime tolerance and freedom of expression there is.

The effect of opportunity structures in authoritarian regimes is often reflected in the level and method of repressive actions, such as the enforcement of emergency laws, prohibition of organized political opposition, torture and imprisonment, military tribunals for civilians, media censorship etc. These and other observable repression policies usually raise the personal costs of dissent resulting in the discouragement of political dissent. For instance, dissidents have been jailed, harassed, economically sanctioned and professionally disadvantaged etc. These observations presuppose that the state apparatus is capable of changing the structure of social relations through control of the public space including state institutions and the distribution of wealth (see Tilly 2008).

What is, on the other hand, lacking in much of the scholarship on the POS, is the observance of state institutions and their operations as part of a larger cultural framework, partly discussed in the political culture section. The observation and description of institutional state structures and an evaluation of its repressive outcomes

(Appendix II) does not explain dissenting social action, which is based on more than calculations of personal gains and losses (Polletta 2006, 140-144). Therefore, the baseline of the POS as they relate to social movement mobilization is that of their contextual relevance. For instance, the collective dissent dealt with in this study questions the legitimacy and authority of the ruling regime on the premise that it is morally bankrupt. On the other hand, the regime claimed moral legitimacy through all available means, including religious arguments and authority. These considerations are therefore directly linked to the cultural context of that particular society.

Consequently, one might assume that political opportunities are consequences of regime policies directly affecting, not only the instrumentality of dissent but also the way this collective action is invoked and voiced. Although Tarrow had not brought into play the cultural dimension of political opportunities and social movement action before the second edition of *Power in Movement* (1998), he had argued earlier that the political opportunity structure is essentially a macro-level power structure made up by the policy-maker (i.e. the regime) (Tarrow 1988, 428-429). The power structure is nevertheless contingent on historical events and rooted in the political traditions of a particular society. The cultural turn in social movement theory (and studies of political opportunity structures) returned and developed throughout the 1980s and 1990s (Mellucci 1989; 1995; Emirbayev and Goodwin 1994; Williams 1995; Goodwin J. and Jasper 1999), and it is clear that this approach is here to stay (Goodwin, Jasper and Polletta 2000; Meyer and Jepperson 2000; Eyerman 2006; Polletta 2006).

This study follows the development of this cultural(ist) trend, as this approach is useful in explaining individual motivations behind political dissent. It is therefore important to narrow down the concept of political opportunity structures. First, it is necessary to explain and situate the power structure of the repressive regime. Including its decision-making processes (e.g. those targeting SMOs and other opposition groups), which are commonly initiated and structured at the top of the political hierarchy. A widely held belief among the Islamists and even other Egyptians was that the Mubarak regime lacked the proper legitimacy to rule the nation (Zahid 2010; *Ikhwanweb* 2011f) and for that reason had to rely on largely interpersonal relations between the (representatives of) power elites including the army (see section on neopatrimonialism).

Second, the regime's tactical responses to perceived threats have largely been looked at through the types of repressive action employed against its opponents. In other words, scholars have not probed the regime's justification for such tactics and long-term strategies as this is not the purpose of their investigation. Instead, their goal was to describe and analyze observable repressive state actions carried out by the security forces such as the (mass) arrests of activists, taunting these activists, interrogation techniques used on them, seizures of funds etc.

For instance, the Mubarak regime's repression tactics are described as more complex and more sensitive to various socio-political elements than previously thought:

> The Mubarak government also clearly prefers to use the tactic of repression sparingly, and by regional standards, successfully limits its recourse to "the stick". Whether from calculation or conviction, the government is committed to a process of consultation with important social actors and of political reform. The government's style, in marked contrast to that of its predecessor's, has been one of consensus building. From the point of view of economic reform, this has sometimes, perhaps rightly, been viewed as a weakness. It is important to stress, however, that it is also a political strength. (Richards and Baker 1992, 36).

Other preemptive state actions, such as the limitation of political and religious freedoms, were accomplished through state dominance of religious institutions, media outlets, education and many other facets of civil society, such as, worker unions. State propaganda tactics and various levels of intimidation techniques are also significant elements which are discussed below (see Jasper 1997, 36).

Moreover, as the regime's repression tactics are complex they also need to be further nuanced. Political opportunity structures can be subdivided into stable and volatile elements (Gamson and Meyer 1996; 281). The *stable* component of the POS is the existing political culture. To be exact, the political culture is connected with long-term power relations between the elites and the population. This includes a historical heritage regarding the alternation of political power, its procedural traditions, constitutive class, and consequences (historical outcomes).

An assumption, related to Egypt, is that power relations within the ruling elites and the history of power ascension produces a fear of losing the hold on power, which, in turn, feeds repression policies. An initial argument, favored in this study, has claimed that modern Egypt has had a relatively long tradition of a strong and stable society. In addition, we find here a tradition of stable; however, a weak central state authority (see Migdal 1988; Fahmy 2002). The notion of political tradition and its subsequent transition has been discussed in the previous chapter. These long-term traits of regime repression are acquired over extensive periods of time and are subjected to, more often than not, *slow* changes. What is remarkable though, is that the revolutionary events during the 18 days of massive popular protest throughout Egypt (January 25- February 11, 2011) did dismantle the Mubarak regime which had effectively ruled the country for 30 years.[92]

The *volatile* part of political opportunities describes the disorderly aspects of political power and it is dynamic. For instance, network relations between the political elites, shifting capacities of social control, but also increasingly (ir)regular international political pressure. Egypt has experienced rapid political changes since the military coup of 1952, which resulted in sweeping changes of the allegiance of the elites and attitudinal policy-shifts regarding political opposition.

The situation has some resemblance to the recent change of the regime in power, although lacking the same popular element. The fallen Mubarak regime was in tune with the political and economic pressures and incentives from abroad and therefore was volatile in its domestic policies. The regime's dynamics of repression, including its attitude toward political opposition (i.e. Islamists), was one of the regime's main claims to justify repression to foreign audiences (Brumberg 2002, 66; Al-Awadi 2004, 162).

5.2 Syndicates as a Contentious Space

Article 56 of the Egyptian Constitution from 2007 states that "[t]he creation of syndicates and unions on a democratic basis is a right guaranteed by law, and should have a moral entity. The law regulates the participation of syndicates and unions in carrying out

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[92] The important question is; however, did the revolution also alter the repressive mind-set of the government officials, the interim military council or change the competing political parties' attitude towards a plural-political system? This is an empirical question well worth examining, although not within the confines of this study.

social programs and plans, raising the standard of efficiency, consolidating socialist behavior among their members, and safeguarding their funds. They are responsible for questioning their members about their behavior in exercising their activities according to certain moral codes, and for defending the rights and liberties of their members as defined in the law."[93]

Syndicates, at least in the Mubarak period, represented member-organizations for and by professionals in the same occupation. Hence, medical doctors, lawyers, engineers, judges, teachers, and other professionals could organize themselves legally in an effort to collectively seek improvements for their line of work. The members regularly elected one or a group of representatives who later represented their shared interests primarily vis-à-vis (and most commonly) state institutions. Although legal, syndicates were fragile and exposed member organizations, which were regularly sanctioned by the authoritarian regime if the authorities saw any signs of political threat. Syndicates essentially represented a social space where interpersonal communication enabled its members to exchange ideas, experiences and solutions to their grievances. Within such a space, syndicates represent a volatile political opportunity structure , which was exposed to risks of sudden and unexpected changes.

For instance, in the 1992 Lawyers' syndicate elections, the MB activists achieved a major success primarily by lobbying among its members. One of the MB's tactics was to help pay the "fees of some 3,000 members (who could then vote), utilizing volunteers from the Islamic Law Committees, and, most importantly, presenting a unified front" (Zuhur 2007, 64). This resulted in the MB's domination of the syndicate's board. The tactic of lobbying syndicate members proved effective.

Already in the 1970s, when the syndicates were allowed to form, the MB made many of the professional syndicates an integral part of their long-term mobilization strategy. Initially this meant organizing social service programs and health facilities. Later, the MB expanded its activities to organizing forums on social issues, an initiative which attracted large numbers of professionals. Many of the younger members were later introduced to

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[93] The Constitution has partly been suspended and replaced by the provisional Constitutional Declaration ratified by the referendum of March 30, 2011. In this ratified Constitutional Declaration the right to form syndicates is secured in Article 4.

the organization's wider political goals and ideological framework (Ibrahim 2002, 58; Al-Awadi 2004, 67; ICG 2004, 12-13).

The professional associations offered important mobilization opportunities for the MB as highly educated individuals found its reformist strategies not directly confrontational. The MB's mobilization was essentially nonviolent, inclusive and gradualist, aimed at participatory institutional reforms (Hamid 2010). The successes of the MB within many of the professional syndicates were primarily constituted by enlarging its membership but also by organizing public propaganda campaigns against, what they perceived to be, the unjust treatment of political opposition, military trials of dissidents, economic corruption etc.

One important episode connected to the MB's syndicate activism is that of its social relief efforts during the 1992 Cairo earthquake.[94] The rapid deployment of the MB's relief assistance to the affected populations in the poor suburbs of Cairo had a largely positive effect on the public's view of the MB. One contemporary observer describes his account with the MB's relief campaign: "The Muslim is a brother to the Muslim, like bricks in one building, holding each other," proclaimed a sign at the entrance to the center, one of eight set up around the city by the Muslim Brotherhood and the fundamentalist-controlled Physicians' Syndicate"(Murphy 1992).

A MB activist and member of the Medical Doctors' syndicate explained: "We were able to reach the victims because we were told about them by members of the movement who lived in the same locality. How else could we have known who lived where? There was no way we could have reached and helped the victims so quickly if we had not used the networks of the *tanzim* [organization] present in the areas and neighborhoods that were affected. Our contacts also enabled us to distribute our financial aid properly because it was those same members who told us who was a genuine victim and who was not" (Al-Awadi 2004, 69). The *tanzim* here refers to the MB as a organizing body, in this case, for various relief efforts. The MB's pool of supporters and activists combined with its networking capacity provided a rapid insight into the damage caused by the earthquake

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[94] On October 12, ca. 5.3-5.9 magnitude (Richter scale) earthquake hit south Cairo: "Maximum damages were reported from Cairo, El-Giza and El-Fayyum which lie near the epicentre and within the Nile Valley" (El-Sayed *et al* 1998, 293).

and the people affected allowing its organizational structure to react and rapidly organize first-aid and relief assistance.

The regime, on the other hand, was alarmed by the inability of state authorities to provide relief efforts in a substantial way to those affected. This was blamed on logistical and administrative inefficiency. As a response to the rapid deployment by the MB and other Islamist SMOs in the wake of the earthquake, the regime introduced Law no. 100 in 1993. The new law essentially froze the professional syndicate's social and political engagement by placing the syndicates under external administration (Kienle 2000, 121). "The law initiated a debate about the politicization of professional syndicates and the domination of Islamists on the councils of many important syndicates. The law raised questions about the boundaries between syndicates' activities and political activity and between political parties and professional syndicates" (Arab Strategic Report 2004).

This in effect resulted in most of the MB dominated syndicates losing the right of self-rule. The selected bodies including the Medical and Lawyer syndicates, did not have any board elections 1993, primarily due to Law No. 100's electoral restrictions and the syndicates' perpetual appeals to the state's Supreme Constitutional Court. It was not until December 2010, after the parliamentary elections, that the Supreme Court ruled against Law No. 100 and its subsequent amendment (Law No. 5/1995) as unconstitutional. The authority of external administrative bodies, i.e. Judiciary Guardianship Committees, over the syndicates was thereby invalidated signaling to all syndicates that they could hold new elections for their governing bodies (Elyan 2011).

The MB's seemingly public, provocative and bold activities in syndicates exposed much of their ideals to a wider audience primarily through media coverage. This, some argue, had a positive effect on their organization by indirectly legitimizing their message (Al-Awadi 2004, 78-79). This is one important point where the MB differed from other Islamist SMOs despite their shared religiously inspired ideals. For instance, *the Gamaʿah al-Islamiyyah* (Islamic Group) and *Jihad Al-Islami* (Islamic Jihad) opted for violent mobilization strategies tapping into a different and limited pool of frustrated sympathizers; while the MB had organizational routines, which "eased" the sympathizers into becoming long-term activists with specific roles to fill within the organizational structure.

5.3 Courts as a Contentious Space

Another institution that the MB saw as a potential place where to challenge the regime's legitimacy is the Supreme Constitutional Court (SCC). Already in 1979, Sadat's regime established the SCC as a step in a plan to attract foreign investments and further secure private property rights (Moustafa 2007; Billingsley 2010, 110-111). Sadat also used the new Supreme Constitutional Court and the reformed administrative courts as centerpieces for a new ideology focused on the importance of "*sayadat al-qanun*" (the rule of law) and Egypt as "*dawlah mu'assasaat*" (a state of institutions) to legitimize his rule. Institutional reforms and rule-of-law rhetoric were used by Sadat to distance his regime from the institutional failures of the Nasser regime. Moreover, Sadat aimed at building a new narrative of legitimating his rule, distinct from the previous regime. For that purpose, he created the SCC and later the National Courts which were additionally anchored in religious traditions. "Henceforth, personal status codes were derived from certain aspects of religious law, but applied by judicial officials without extensive training in religious law per se" (Moustafa 2010, 6).

The MB, on the other hand, regarded not only the SCC, but also the lower courts as spaces for activism and a rhetorical platform where they could challenge the regime's actions. The MB presented the Mubarak regime with a difficult challenge as the regime's intention was to strengthen its legitimacy for its rule, and not to be challenged through it. The SCC was the highest judicial authority making it institutionally the most relevant (Al-Awadi 2004, 53-56).

The MB seemingly distinguished between the regime, its policies and repressive actions, on the one side, and the Egyptian constitutional framework, on the other (*Al Hayat* 1995, interview with the Supreme Guide). Their view of the regime as essentially illegitimate powerbrokers was based on their interpretation of the Constitution. Moreover, the MB continuously worked towards legitimizing their activism by referring to the constitutional order and shaping their mobilization in accordance to their understanding of its framework despite the constraints imposed upon them by the regime. Through high-profile judicial cases the MB aimed to attract more sympathy for their cause. Firstly, they showed a firm commitment to nonviolent mobilization. Secondly, they affirmed their

commitment to the constitutional order. Thirdly, they provided social service provisions during a time of intense violent confrontations between the regime's security forces and the Islamic Group and Islamic Jihad. Lastly, their repeated electoral "successes" had contributed to the profile of the MB as one of the most vital and viable opposition groups to the Mubarak regime.

The Mubarak regime, in contrast, continuously extended the emergency laws, one of the most powerful repressive tools, and cancelled much of the constitutional provisions which would enable the opposition to participate in the political process. One of the main elements of the emergency laws is the regime's policy of using the military courts as a means to combat the Islamists. In military courtrooms there was no transparency, no possibility to appeal and, most importantly for the regime, no risk of losing (HRW 2007).

The regime could, in any given instance, argue that military trials are legitimate and in full accordance with the constitutional provisions under the Emergency clause of the Constitution. Consequently, MB activists were regularly tried in military courts and therefore denied any rights they would have received in the civil courts; e.g. a public hearing, the defense having access to evidence used against the defendant, the right to appeal etc. In the military courts, civilian defendants are denied these rights and the Court's decision cannot be overruled by any other authority with the exception of the President of the Republic (i.e. commander in chief of the armed forces) (Ismail 2007; Trofimov 2009; *Amnesty International* 2010).

A short overview of the judicial process is important to consider as the former Mubarak regime, besides being an electoral autocracy, depended on systematic institutional procedures focused on the selective reading of the Constitution. In short, "Egypt has [had] rule *by* law but not rule *of* law. Far from being lawless, the state is careful to cloak its actions in both constitutional and legal legitimacy" (Springborg 2003: 186). Nevertheless, it is important to have in mind that due to its long constitutional tradition, organizational complexity, and committed judges, the Egyptian judiciary has been hailed as being

relatively independent from the central government (Abdel Wahab 2006).[95] It has therefore not been surprising to observe the political aftermath of the January 25th revolution wherein all political actors showed their commitment to the constitutional order, even if they did not agree with its content (see El-Hannawy 2011; also Brown *et al* 2007; Moustafa 2007; 2008; Billingsley 2010).

5.4 Religion and the State

Article 2 of the Egyptian Constitution states that Islam is the state religion and that *Shari'ah* is the primary source of legislation. Moreover, the Constitution also sums up what can be described as the collective moral duties and ethical obligations of Egyptian citizens and the state authorities. "Society shall be committed to safeguarding and protecting morals, promoting genuine Egyptian traditions and abiding by the high standards of religious education, moral and national values, the historical heritage of the people, scientific facts, socialist conduct, and public manners within the limits of the law. The State is committed to abiding by these principles and promoting them" (Egyptian Constitution, Chapter 2, Article 12).

This and similar constitutional articles have routinely been used by the MB to blame the Mubarak regime for its laxity and unconstitutional conduct adding weight to its discourse which is directed primarily toward the public rather than the regime. Naturally, such discursive tactics aimed to delegitimize the regime, and at the same time reinforce the organization's moral arguments, thus increasing their appeal among the religiously conservative middle classes. Hence, the MB's religious message encourages socio-political critique of, what is perceived as, the authoritarian institutional order dominated by morally decadent elites.

In order to better understand the MB's widespread popularity it is necessary to take a broader look at the role of religion in the Egyptian society. Religion (both Islam and Chrostianity) has been an integral part of Egyptian civil society, deeply penetrating most

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[95] Chapter 5, part four on Judicial authority, articles 165 and 166 of the (Mubarak era) Egyptian Constitution states: "The Judicial Authority shall be independent. It shall be exercised by courts of justice of different sorts and competences. They shall issue their judgments in accordance with the law. Judges shall be independent, subject to no other authority but the law. No authority may intervene in judiciary cases or in the affairs of justice."

people's practical lives. As such, ever since the 1952 Free Officers' revolution, the subsequent ruling military regimes have sought to control or at least confine citizens' religious practices, considering them to be a potential threat to its power (Abdo 2000, 52-55). The primary indicator of the regime's efforts to bring religiosity under control is the political management of religious institutions. This included one of the most prestigious traditional Islamic centers of learning, namely Al-Azhar. This millennial university/religious institution was established in the mid-10th century and has since then been an important Islamic establishment for Muslims in Egypt and other Muslim communities worldwide (see Zeghal 1999; Gesink 2010).

Gamal Abdel-Nasser put an end to the religiously based Shari'ah Courts in 1955, "along with all other confessional courts [i.e. Christian and Jewish], and personal status cases were folded into the jurisdiction aspects of religious law" (Moustafa 2010, 6). This trend of institutionalizing traditionally independent religious schools and courts started several decades earlier in Turkey under the totalitarian rule of Ataturk. Later, the early Ba'ath parties in Syria and Iraq instituted similar policies. Other places with comparable secularizing projects are post-independence Tunisia and Algeria.

Nevertheless, due to the long tradition of Al-Azhar's strong religious influence, both in and outside of Egypt, it was far too difficult to drive the secularization project to the extent witnessed in Turkey. The Egyptian judicial system remained, at least in theory, partly rooted in the *Shari'ah*, and partly in the French civil code (Abdel Wahab 2006). Accordingly, merging the two legal traditions produced Egypt's Civil Law, which developed into a highly sophisticated framework.

Al-Azhar has been a place where some of the most learned scholars of jurisprudence, theology and history gathered and where they played a major role in the interpretation of religious texts. Due to its traditional religious and judicial influence on civil society and the state it has regularly been at odds with political rulers throughout its history. Not as a challenger of political power, but rather as an independent (institutional) body with exclusive rights to dispense religious decrees and textual interpretations. As such, Al-Azhar has had a large influence on the Muslim populations extending far beyond Egypt (Moustafa 2000; Kavli 2001; Zollner 2009, 47, 149; Hamzawy and Brown 2010; Zeghal 1999, 377-378).

5.5 Activism as a Religious Duty

Outside of the realm of institutional expressions of religion (e.g. al-Azhar's fatwa council and Ministry of Endowments) we can find a wide variety of Muslim communities ranging from introvert spiritual groups (e.g. *sufi*-brotherhoods) to intensely polemical and violent factions (e.g. al-Qaida-minded groups). A religious community is defined here as an interactive and wide social network within which individuals share values, religious practices, and what can be described as a collective identity. The Muslim Brotherhood can be regarded as representative of a religious community where its activists share common values and religious practices. For instance, activists often refer to their activism as a religious duty, something that, they believe, should be adopted by all Muslims in Egypt (Ismail 2001, 37; Al_Ghazali 2006, 31-32; *Ikhwanweb* 2010; Interview with activists in Egypt, January-March 2009). It is within this complexity of interconnected emotions and beliefs that one can identify a strong bond between Islam as a religious doctrine and socio-political activism. The bond is often represented through an ambiguous concept of Islamism, briefly discussed above.

The definition of Islamism here refers to the socio-political process of identification of the political through a continuous referral to religious values, beliefs, and practices. The political here is closely related to the Schmittian understanding of the concept wherein "friends and foes" are at odds with each other. For instance, the Arabic word *deen*, often translated as religion, helps understand how Islamists interpret religion in practice. The word *deen* signifies a much broader meaning than religion as defined by Durkheim. "A religion is a unified system of beliefs and practices relative to sacred things, that is to say, things set apart and forbidden – beliefs and practices which unite into one single moral community called a Church, all those who adhere to them" (1915: 62, quoted in Fields 2005, 165). Indirectly, moral community is defined in the light of those outside of such a community.

Deen in the Quranic text is linked closely to general conduct in life including its spiritual and physical components, e.g. "system of beliefs and practices" but also communal and individual. This means that conduct and behavior both in the sacred relationship with the Divine and the "secular" interaction between individual members of the Muslim

community, and between the communities of different faiths, is to be guided by religious sources (see Al-Qaradawi 2004). In other words, religious duties carried out in the mosque and other religiously defined spaces are as important as other human activities and these are inherently linked to ethics, morals and what is described as spiritual improvement (Mawdudi 1960, chapter 1). Those outside this frame of reference are therefore considered as partly or totally outside of the actual group.

The MB therefore presents Islam (i.e. *deen*) as a comprehensive system of social values, which through socio-political discourse (e.g. Quranic law, education etc.) and a practical set of applications (e.g. socio-political order, justice system etc.) aims to solve the contemporary ills of a society (Al- Qutb 1949; Al-Banna 1997b; Ghazali 2006; Abdelhadi 2010) - or at the very least, offer guiding principles in this direction. Islam (*deen*), therefore, as envisioned by the Islamist movement in general and the MB in particular, is not considered as a belief system exclusively concerned with the spiritual domain. It is regarded as a source of guidance for all areas of human life; from the conceptualization of the Divine to a detailed individual *and* socio-political institutional arrangement (Khurshid 1988, 37).

Having noted that, it is important to remember that Islamist social movement organizations often disagree amongst themselves on strategic, tactical and even doctrinal issues forcing different groups to negotiate and compromise on a number of issues (see Gardell 2005). One crucial issue where Islamists disagree amongst themselves is the methodological aspect of social change, which is here directly related to social movement strategies. The nonviolent reform strategies of the MB were continuously repressed by the ruling regimes producing a situation wherein nonviolent mobilization is met with violent state policies. Despite this, and the presumed desire of some activists to respond with violence, the MB seems to be in control of its members through tactical and organizational adjustments.

One feature of such a strategy has been the MB leadership's rhetorical and organizational modifications over the years appealing to public religious sentiments. They did so by adopting recognizable cultural symbols (e.g. Quranic verses, religious establishment – *shuyukh*, symbols of education – teachers and school curricula etc). Through the

invocation of these symbols, they also addressed general popular demands and grievances by proposing adequate solutions (for similar examples see Jasper 1997, 287).

On the other hand, the process of identification by which the (initially sympathizers and later) activists associated themselves with a group has produced 'social glue' where individuals with common (religious, ethical and even political) values were able to rally together against, what they perceived as, a common enemy (e.g. the political system, regime, other groups etc.). The sense of collectivity produced by processes of identification and differentiation between friend and foe developed a deep-rooted sense of solidarity and cooperation between activists.

In this process of identification, the MB's ideological reference point had a central role. Initially, the MB's founder, al-Banna, formulated the organization's ideas and practical steps of reformation on both personal and collective levels. The transformative process involved changing from a passive Muslim observer to an active socio-political participant and proactive activists engaged in, what is described as, the 'betterment of society'.[96] The themes usually covered by Al-Banna were straightforward, using Islamic traditions (*Qur'an* and *Ahadith*) as supporting arguments and presented in a simple discursive style. He presented the themes of social reform targeting the rising middle classes, workers and middle-class professionals in an attempt to inculcate a sense of national dignity and pride in a time of great social distress (Al-Ghazali 2006, xv-xx).

Al-Banna's religious message, initially described as puritan (i.e. salafi), did initially provoke the traditional religious establishment. His teachings challenged the traditional view of religious authority by encouraging a more individualistic approach to religious texts, which inevitably initiated a conflict with the local religious authorities who viewed the religious message in his teachings as undermining their authority (Mitchell 1969, chapter 1; Lia 1998, 32-35). Subsequently, Al-Banna realized that a conflict with the religious establishment could have detrimental effects on the rest of his message, whereupon he abandoned direct confrontation with the religious authority of "popular

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[96] Some of his treaties are "Between Yesterday and Today," "The Message of the Teachings," "Our Cause," "On Jihad" and others.

Islam."[97] Instead, Al-Banna focused on a void of socio-political activism using religious discourse. By doing this, he hoped, the MB could set up a method of education for a growing number of activists, who would be qualified and able to initially alter widespread heterodox religious beliefs and practices, and later even the existing socio-political arrangements (see Mitchell 1969).

Al-Banna and the leaders of the MB formulated their social activism as a *de facto* religious obligation as it represented religious (personal) sacrifice, individual dedication and a sign of piety to devote one's life to, what they saw as, righting the wrongs (Al-Banna 1997; 1997b; *Ikhwanweb* 2010d). Interpreted Islamic virtues were at the center of the MB's argument for mobilization. The issue, however, had been how to transmit these ideals to a wider public (Wickham 2002, 58-60). Moreover, Al-Banna, drawing on Muhammad Abduh and Muhammad Rashid Rida, popularized religious discourse by appealing to Islamic solutions for the prevailing popular grievances at the time. Again, he upset the religious establishment putting him, at least temporarily, at odds with the traditional religious elite. Later he developed close links with a number of religious scholars within Al-Azhar. Al-Banna contrasted his Islamist value system with that of the political and economic elites, presenting his movement as an alternative socio-political order, which appealed to many Egyptians during the time when the upper classes seemed unconcerned with the practical problems of the masses (e.g. lower and impoverished classes).

The Mubarak regime faced a dilemma during the 1980s and 1990s, as the Islamist SMOs seemed to gain in popularity among the increasingly disempowered sectors of society. The regime, through its religious institutions, had increasingly appropriated some of the Islamists' discourse, but at the same time it increased its repressive policies (see Zahid 2010, 102-104). More specifically, regime representatives (through the state controlled media) increasingly discussed issues related to the promotion of religious modesty in popular culture, censuring free-spoken religious critics, frequent manifestations and celebration of religious holy days etc. (Abdo 2000, 8-10; Abu-Rabi' 2004b, 109-110) .

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[97] Popular Islam is sometimes called "folk Islam" (see Zwemer 1939; El-Zein 1977) and entails heterodox religious practices: *sufi*-practices, saint and relic-worship, other types of superstitious, heterodox beliefs etc.

For instance, in the 1980s, the state television broadcaster made TV programmes containing religious messages. The regime regularly consulted Al-Azhar scholars on issues of both domestic and foreign policy, thus increasing the institution's social relevance. Moreover, Al-Azhar was used as a proxy-state regulatory body to prosecute complex judicial cases on heresy, which demonstrated to the conservative public the regime's concern with matters previously promoted exclusively by the Islamists. The regime supported the building of new mosques and other religious buildings in an effort to present its policies as pious, hoping to drain some support away from the Islamist SMOs (Voll 1991; Rodenbeck 1998, 185; Eltahawi 1999).

Such regime tactics proved only marginally successful. After all, the MB had their most successful political gains in history when in the 2005 parliamentary elections they won 25 percent of the electoral seats. Their "Islam is the solution" campaign was effective in spite of a fraudulent electoral process, and certainly startled the Ministry of Interior's analysis of weak support for the MB's political ideas. Subsequently, the regime resorted to what it knew best – repression of opposition. State security authority intensified its repression tactics in the aftermath of 2007's constitutiuonal amendments, employing a new policy of total *exclusion* of the MB from any political activity (policy of *iqsah*). The MB was thus toatly incapacitated in terms of its political participation. Its socio-religious activism was nevertheless fully functional revealing the organization's firm presence in much of the Egypt's urban centres.

It can further be argued that the MB's ambitions to "Islamize" the Egyptian socio-political framework had partially succeeded despite the lack of political freedoms. Nevertheless, the MB's political ambitions have grown with its electoral successes beginning in 1984. The SMO seemed to be utilizing all the political opportunities they could seize. For instance, Mustafa Mashour, the fifth General Guide and Muhammad Ma'moun Al-Hudaybi, the sixth General Guide, both declared that through parliamentary participation the organization could more easily explain to the public what the MB proposes and its benefit for the nation (in Abed-Kotob 1999, 331-332). These proclamations made in the late 1990s and beginning of 2000s marked MB's political ambitions taking the social aspect of their mobilization to a new level, i.e. success in the 2005 elections.

By 2006, the MB provided social health programs through 22 hospitals and privately run schools throughout every one of the 27 provinces. Moreover, "[t]he organisation also runs numerous care centres for poor widows and orphans as well as training programmes for the unemployed. 'We work in both rural and urban areas,' Abul Futouh pointed out, 'The goal is to reach out to the most marginalised people in society' " (*IRIN* 2006). These and other social welfare projects have traditionally been part of the MB's awareness-raising and long-term strategies, which supplemented their mobilization efforts at the country's universities and professional syndicates.

In addition to the MB's operational structure, Essam al-Erian[98] confirmed that the MB's dedication to its ideological roots was part of their unabated commitment to "Islamic issues". Shortly after the 2005 parliamentary elections al-Erian declared that the MB strives:

- To develop a clear political platform aimed at explaining the MB's standpoints on political governance and their priorities concerning state policies, legislation and decision-making procedures.
- To achieve a balance between the organization's fields of activism: its social, education and political dimensions as an attempt to reach out to the Egyptian public.
- To raise the public's political awareness and support for reformation of Egyptian politics and create public synergy wherein the citizen would feel responsible for economic development, employment, social solidarity and public safety.
- To "reassign public emotions into productive work and positive engagement."
- To seek strength in cooperation with likeminded intellectual and political forces regardless of their political affiliation, and which share the common goal of free political competition and the reformation of the Egyptian political system (El-Erian 2005).

This declaration fits well with the MB's earlier official proclamations. There is a discursive pattern which had been crystallized in this statement given after the electoral successes of 2005. However, one needs to go back in time in order to capture the pattern's positive effect on the development of the Islamist movement.

Firstly, by the mid-1970s, a wave of Islamist mobilization generated a significant amount of organizational capacity by which networking between different social strata and increasingly educated and self-aware individuals enabled the spread of ideas of Islamism

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[98] The previous leader of the MB's politburo and currently the leader of the MB's political party (Freedom and Justice Party).

and a culture of resistance. The violent Islamist mobilization in the 1990s and the regime's repressive policies resulted in the pacification of previously violent Islamist SMOs and added to the credibility of the MB as a potential political alternative. This development prompted the regime in a direct way, to "Islamize" its public media and thus gain popular appeal. Again, this could be interpreted as the regime trying to take the edge off Islamist popular support. In turn, at least as it relates to 2000s, these socio-political developments prompted Islamist SMOs in general and the MB in particular to develop innovative political strategies.

Secondly, the MB's progressively more practical approach to mobilization pushed for a more nuanced use of Islamist rhetoric resulting thus in a broader interpretation of their ideological framework. The MB stepped up its rhetoric by promoting themselves as symbols of justice and an authentic alternative to the repressive regime, and that it was a religious duty for Egyptians to do the same.[99] This rhetoric prompted an internal discussion about the structure of the organization and eventually resulted in internal reforms leading to the election of candidates to the *Shura* Council and the Guidance Bureau. From an administrative perspective, there was always a sense of meritocracy within the MB, which became more prominent as the organization developed. This mobilization process had a public dimension through which the MB presented their organizational framework[100] as functioning, credible, and based on merit (as opposed to patronage) (see Al-Awadi 2004). As previously noted, all of these qualities carry massive weight in the Egyptian context.

The socio-political conditions of Egyptians during the time when the research for this study was carried out are significantly different from those in the period of al-Banna. The MB has developed both ideologically and operationally. The activists faced a different type of state institutions and the regime had been far more complex in its dealings with civil society. The MB had become more pragmatic and organizationally sophisticated with clearer political ambitions. The ideological framework represented by the MB had become known to amongst a much larger segment of the population. Moreover, the MB now faces

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[99] It must be noted that MB activists never claimed that it is a religious duty to belong to their particular organization, which would effectively excommunicate the rest of the Muslim population; rather they argued that it was a religious duty to oppose the perceived injustices caused by the regime. Nevertheless, the activists who were interviewed often proclaimed that their version of opposition was the one closest to the (textual) traditions of Islam.

[100] Authenticity relates to the textual and judicial tradition of early Islam (see chapter 2).

much more diversified competitors, in an increasingly more fragmented Egypt. These competitors are usually presented in the form of other Islamist or liberal SMOs and political parties, which makes it difficult to estimate what the exact size of (political) support for the MB's version of the Islamist project is. There are now larger and more developed rival organizations draining the traditional base of the MB's supporters (the middle classes) of both the religious and secular kind.

Conclusion

Thus far we can conclude that the popular support for Islamist SMOs in general and the MB in particular depends on several reasons. Some scholars would have us believe that socio-economic deterioration is one of the primary reasons for the growth of (especially violent) Islamism in Egypt (Ayubi 1991, 162). Socio-economic impoverishment of the population after the neo-liberal reforms has been debated and there is some empirical validity to support such claims (see Ibrahim 1980; Hoffman 1995). One major claim promoted by these and similar studies is that unfulfilled expectations of social mobility felt by the lower-middle classes created social grievances that were rarely (directly) addressed by the MB and therefore functionally adopted by other SMOs prone to violence.

The Muslim Brotherhood represents middle class Islamism and it has done so since its formation. If one analyzes the class structure of the organization's leadership, it is evident that all of the leaders (General Guides) have had a middle-class background.[101] This is also true if one analyzes the *overall* membership of the MB (see Springbord 1989; Zubaida 1992; Simms 2002; Clark 2004b 147-149). In this study, all of the MB activists interviewed were from either rising lower middle-class or classic middle-class backgrounds. The interviewees were the sons and daughters of prosperous merchants, middle-class professionals, administrators, and/or civil servants.

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[101] Founder and the first Guide: Hassan Al Banna (school teacher), 2nd Hassan Al Houdaybi (High Court Judge), 3rd Umar Al-Timlisani (family of large landowners), 4th Muhammad Hamid Abu al-Nasr (professional), 5th Mustafa Mashhour (wealthy landowner family), 6th Ma'moun Al-Houdaybi (son of the second leader), 7th Muhammad Mehdi Akef (school teacher), 8th and incumbent General Guide, Muhammad Badi´ (university professor).

Given the professional set-up of the MB leadership, the organization had enough social capital to systematize their administrative efforts as well as activism. In such a way the MB could plan and schedule their efforts in a much more efficient way than other SMOs, Islamist or not. For instance, the MB's early opposition to British economic and political dominance in the first half of the 20th century developed the MB's reformist capabilities establishing a certain kind or reputation and thus attracting, what has become, a bulk of their support from the grassroots (i.e. middle-class professionals) (Taji-Farouki and Nafi 2004; Simms 2002). These aspects of Islamist mobilization are necessary conditions to reflect on, if one is to explain the continuous appeal of the MB to many Egyptians.

A large number of Egyptian civil servants and professionals were attracted to what they considered their 'social reflection'. The MB's message and tactics presumably fitted their socio-political reference framework (El-Ghobashy 2005, 380).[102] Nevertheless, the middle-class specificities of the MB core members needs further elaboration in order to be analytically relevant.[103] The middle-class here includes "the means of production" (merchant, artisan, land/property owner etc.) and intellectual labor-force (mainstream professionals: medical doctors, teachers, engineers etc.) (Esping-Andersen 1992). Essentially, class distinction is related to socio-economic and political power or rather powerlessness in the case of many activists. It is a complex conceptual framework discussed elsewhere (see Beinin and Lockman 1987; Richards and Waterbury 1990; Esping-Andersen 1992; Turner 2003).

Timothy Mitchell, in his historical overview of the MB, argues that the Egyptian public's record of rejecting state repression goes back to the period of British colonialism, which later developed into internalized permanent resistance toward the Israeli occupation of Palestinian territories, as well as the Egyptian ruling regime(s). He further adds that the MB's initial popularity was manifested most visibly in "schools, universities and the press, [which] like the military barracks, were always liable to become centres of some kind of revolt, turning the colonisers' methods of instruction and discipline into the means of organized opposition" (1969, 171). This mobilization trend persisted throughout the

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[102] See Chapter 6 for further elaboration of this claim.
[103] For the purpose of this study, to define (social) class one is compelled to look at Weber's definition which explains it in terms of a "market situation" (Weber 1978). Here economic interests are related to the labor market and therefore directly connected to property or lack thereof. The category of (social) class is a situation rather than a hierarchical position defined by tradition.

20th century developing strong activist networks and adding to the development of Islamist social capital.

As noted above, the repressive Mubarak regime perceived political dissent as a major threat, directly influencing its "security" policies. Such policies had in turn been calculated in accordance with the threat's scope, character, and intensity (see Davenport 1995, 693 ff.). One may assume that as the repressive state consciously uses available resources in combating dissent "the benefits of dissent are likely to be low, while the costs of protest as a response to repression are probably very high" (Carey 2006, 4). Moreover, data gathered in this study has shown that dissidents also engage in cost-benefit calculations of collective action (see Tilly 2008). The deliberative process at both ends of dissent involves the instrumental element of the mobilization/repression continuum. Focusing on motivation for mobilization one can notice a multitude of sensory inputs and these need to be taken into account. Sensory inputs are directly connected to the cognitive representation of an individual actor's behavior and thus are immensely relevant in the analysis of mobilization.

I argue here that the MB survived and gradually developed into a solid social movement organization through the leadership's long-term planning and the establishment of membership system that transformed peripheral sympathizers into loyal and dedicated activists. Their appeal rest(s)ed primarily with their organizational skill to coordinate the *supply* of mobilization mechanisms for socio-political dissent. Moreover, well-established networks of communication and an interpersonal (i.e. *viva voce*) style of recruitment supported by regular neighborhood *usrah* ("family") group activities played a significant role in maintaining the organization's cohesion and survival in spite of shifting authoritarian regimes and repression tactics.

In addition to these claims, inconsistent long-term state repression policies aimed at undermining (Islamist) socio-political dissent did not, in any real sense, result in the suspension of social movement mobilization. On the contrary, it can be argued that the

inconsistency of state repression[104] increased public grievances, which are, on the one hand, periodically not publically articulated, and on the other hand, incite growth of organizations which develop sustainable mobilization strategies in times of relaxed repression. The organization of the Muslim Brotherhood managed to maintain its structure in times of extreme repression and, unlike other SMOs, capitalized on those periods of increased political opportunities thereby outperforming other dissenting socio-political groups.

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[104] Repression tactics shifted frequently from mild repression such as censorship, even toleration, to severe forms of repression with mass-arrersts, long prison sentences, torture etc. In addition, the Mubarak regime's security apparatus had in recent years (2009-2010) indiscriminately cracked down on any type of perceived misbehavior increasing public insecurity and vulnerability causing the rapid spread of public discontent and rage (see cases of Khaled Saeed, Bilal, etc.)

Part III

6   Agency and Trajectories of Islamist Activism

> *"By interacting with Islamic activists, we begin to become familiar with their perspectives. By learning their perspectives, we may understand how they engage and restructure the institutions around them. Through this understanding, we may bridge the chasm that has separated Islamic studies and social movement theory."*

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Charles Kurzman in Wiktorowicz (ed.) 2004, 289

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Introduction

This chapter introduces the third part of the study and it begins with focusing on the central part of the inquiry. The chapter presents an analysis of individual activist narratives connecting them with the contextual framework mapped out in the previous chapters (i.e. state repression and organizational structure). This part of the study deals directly with individual motivations behind activism, it is necessary to explain what is meant by motivations. The interviewed activists' motivation for mobilization are directly connected to the micro-history of the Muslim Brotherhood, the rise of Islamism, its framing of grievances, all in the background of the previously discussed state repression.

As far as this chapter is concerned I continue to clarify some of the inner workings of the MB's organizational dynamics seen from agency's point-of-view, the primary level of the subsequent analysis. Moreover, the concept of motivations is problematized and

operationalized as to fit the research questions. Thereafter, the chapter contextualizes individual motivations in the light of some of the main elements of state repression. Most importantly however, the chapter discusses one of the central issues in research of Islamist activism, namely in which way does the MB appeal to numerous young individual in Egypt. Here the MB's long mobilization tradition has produced an activist image and a culture of resistance deeply entrenched in the public bedrock of Egyptian society.

It will become clear that the MB's activists have consciously and voluntarily engaged in socio-political dissent against the repressive regime. This claim is discussed through the chapter invoking the different theories presented in the first chapter. Moreover, this consideration suggests that an explanation of (social) behavior in a given time and space is essentially a unique combination of necessary conditions for its occurrence. In order not to fall into the vulgar relativism, and thereby avoid doctrinal or "anything goes" type of explanations, it is important to spell out such considerations. Once again, the objective here is to understand the activists' motivational framework(s) in the course of mobilization processes subjected to external repression.[105]

6.1 Motivations Disentangled

First of all, motivation seems to be at the core of human behavior. Klandermans informs us that "[t]he social motivation score is the sum of the products of values and expectations" (Klandermans 1984, 590). In turn, a social agent has deeply held values, which are connected to his/her beliefs. Such a consideration compels one to assume that an agent continuously makes normative claims on others and that these claims often stretch far beyond self-interest (Stern *et al* 1999, 83). An assumption of clear-cut rational choice movement participation, for instance, is insufficient especially as this choice for mobilization includes enormous social and financial costs without any certainty of success (for elaborated examples see Kelly and Breinlinger 1996, also Tyler 2011).

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[105] It is worth remembering that the guiding research questions are central throughout this discussion: *Q1: What motivates the choice of young people to mobilize against a repressive regime? Q2: What are some of the main reasons young people choose Islamist activism in a Muslim majority state?*

This case demands investigation of an agent's decision-making process as it pertains to the active choice to mobilize. Moreover, these specific choices are considered to be socially dependent. More specifically, the choice-making process therefore is deeply connected to socially defined norms and morals, which have often been described as culture (Kroeber and Kluckhohn 1952, 20, 62; Staggenborg 2002, 129; Jasper 2010, 83). It follows that any investigation of human choices is contextually dependent and deeply interlinked with cultural reference frameworks, not to mention the use of language.

Concerning agent expectations, Klandermans argues, "if persons expect favorable reactions if they participate and unfavorable ones if they do not, then the score is positive. If they expect unfavorable reactions if they participate and favorable ones if they do not, then the score is negative" (Klandermans 1984, 590). This claim has been valuable as this study adheres to such socially specific notions. Klandermans and Oegema later developed the understanding that a commonality of shared values[106] is registered far more frequently among the actors participating in a particular social action than among those who choose not to engage in this particular action (Klandermans and Oegema 1987, 527). Again, social agents' shared values seem to be a precondition for social action; however, there is more to it. Agents need to have a similar set of shared opinions on a particular issue or, rather, a similar attitude in regard to the particular issue.

Considering the activists' attitudes adds a necessary consideration which encompasses a cross-section of an agent's belief-emotion nexus (Tyler 2011, 32). Attitudes seem to describe a product of an agent's desire to engage in social action wherein personal moral understanding plays a role of obligation within motivation. It is for this reason that this study considers motivations as socially contingent (see Forgas *et al* 2005, 5-7; Tyler 2011, 5). This is the primary reason for including a large amount of information pertaining to the socio-political and economic conditions in Egypt.

This is not to say that individual agents are totally controlled by their emotions where beliefs and desires combine with socially conditioned values. The instrumentality of social agent's choice is highly relevant and a necessary condition for the motivation behind, in this case, mobilization. "On the part of the movement the arousal of motivation requires

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[106] Shared values are presented here as a form of (near) absolute agreement with the purpose behind a particular social action.

control of costs and benefits of participation. In fact, since it is perceived costs and benefits, control is not sufficient. Movements must communicate to potential participants the extent to which collective and selective incentives are controlled by the movement.

Consequently, the mobilization of consensus is also an essential part of this stage of the mobilization process" (Klandermans and Oegema 1987, 520). Such motivational potential, if recognized by an SMO, can be transformed into organizational strength where its infrastructure enables activists to target sympathizers' particular desires and perhaps even sense of obligation. For instance, repressed people's general desire for justice and freedom or even economic improvement, can be amplified through socially recognizable symbolism and a (religious) sense of duty.

6.2 The Impact of Repression on the Development of Individual Motivations

The questions central for this study have been concerned with the motivational drive of people to engage in contentious activism which is directly combated by the ruling regime.[107] In the Egyptian case, young people have increasingly experienced intense political alienation.[108] Some had argued that this development had in turn encouraged much of the middle-class youth to seek alternative strategies to voice their (political) opinions (see Abdalla 1985; Wickham 2002, 77-85). For instance, a survey from the 1980s showed that the vast majority of young university students did not participate in the political process at that time.[109]

Later studies had shown that the rural population of Egypt had higher voter turnout compared to the urban regions (Wickham 2002, 86-87). This electoral trend indicated that patrimonial networks linking the dominant politicians and subordinate local "voters" was easier to establish in the countryside than in urban areas where similar allegiances are more unstable. Other studies have compared literacy levels and electoral voter turnout

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[107] The limitation of the study's focus and primarily its scope put restraints on an investigation which might have broadened even further our understanding of the processes of motivation.
[108] Periods prior to the growth of social movement organizations, such as, the beginning of 1970s, mid-1980s, early 1990s and mid-2000s.
[109] The survey data from the early 1980s reported that 91% of university students were not politically engaged (i.e. voting in elections or participating in political parties) (Abdalla 1985, 233).

demonstrating that it is twice as high among illiterate voters. These findings further support the argument about prevailing nepotism, where personal favors are exchanged for political support (Zaki 1995; Blaydes 2006).

Youth dissatisfaction connected to unashamed patrimonialism in Egyptian politics (incl. state admistration and education) under the Mubarak regime had been the cause of rising frustration among large segments of the population throughout the 2000s (Al-Husseini 2008, a *Kifaya* activist; Diehl 2005; Ibrahim 2007; *Ikhwanweb* 2010e). "The regime is self-centered actually. The only thing that concerns them is their profits. [It is about] what to do to get more from the people, not how to give to the people" (interview No. 5).

Some of the youths who decided to mobilize in a bid to change the regime they perceived as unjust and corrupt were later violently repressed - a new experience for them. Sudden arrests, short police detentions, long-term imprisonments, military tribunals, suspensions from universities and/or places of work, random beatings, insults and other forms of personal humiliation were all part of the activists' cognitive process and the formation of emotional and identity responses. Nearly all of the activists interviewed for this research had been arrested at some point by the State Security Intelligence Service (SSIS).[110] This in turn changes their perception of the regime, but more importantly, it brings about a different attitude towards their mobilization and a sense of urgency for their activism.

For instance, all the activists interviewed described their prison experiences[111] as a traumatic set of events. This is something that they had been warned about by their senior fellow activists. During their preparatory period, the activists were advised to anticipate and mentally prepare themselves for such experiences. It was the SSIS officers who most commonly performed the arrests of activists and they apparently follow a similar procedure. The activists[112] are usually, however, not always taken in custody, with other activists during the SSIS raids. They often take place between 02.30 and 03.30 in the night catching the activists totally by surprise, i.e. while sleeping. The SSIS officers were usually armed with handguns and in civilian clothing. The activists were rounded up, handcuffed

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[110] *Amn Al-Dawlah*

[111] This is a summary and construction of the practical process by which the SSIS apprehend the members of the MB based on multiple interviews.

[112] The description of the SSIS arrest procedure is based on the information collected from several interviews (No. 3, 4, 8, 16, 21).

and taken to the detention center (*tarhilah*) where they are photographed and registered (*feesh wa tashbih*). Shortly thereafter, usually the morning after the arrest, they are taken to see a jury of (3-4) judges where they are questioned about the events surrounding their arrest. The description of the arrest is presented to the judges by the SSIS in a written statement. After the jury has questioned the activists they are usually taken to one of the detention centers spread out throughout the country, of which *Lazoughly* in central Cairo, is historically considered to be the most notorious.

The headquarters of the SSIS and the Ministry of the Interior are both located in the same place as *Lazoughly*. Next, the SSIS agents interrogate the activists and it is during this process when most of the alleged torture takes place (see HRW 1991; EOHR 2003; Stacher 2005; U.S. Department of State 2006; Galal 2008; HRW 2011, 518-519). Torture as a means of intimidation and information gathering had been a regular part of the state security practices: "Police and security forces regularly engaged in torture in police stations, detention centers, and at points of arrest. In March [2010] the SSIS arrested Muslim Brotherhood member Nasr al-Sayed, detained him incommunicado for three months, and tortured him for 45 days during interrogation. They released him without charge in June" (HRW 2011, 519). After questioning, the activists are usually transferred to prison and placed in a shared cell (usually housing at least 10 prisoners) with either other activists or non-activist inmates.[113] Most of the activists interviewed for this research were never sentenced to prison; instead they were eventually released without any formal charge.

One interviewee recounted his experiences in the custody of the SSIS on various further occasions (interview no. 16). He is a well-known blogger and freelance journalist, often writing about the regime and its methods of suppressing free speech and political dissent. Consequently, he is a widely recognized MB member, primarily through his (online) writings and critique. As such, he had "made" himself a direct target of the regime's repressive machinery. He was first arrested in 2003, a 23 year old student at the time,

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[113] The following is a summary of the arrest procedure deduced from multiple interviews and other sources: The imprisoned activists are held for at least a couple of days, up to 30 days, or even several months without charge. The Emergency Laws allow detention without charge for up to 30 days, which can be renewed every 30 days after that indefinitely. There are unconfirmed accounts of such detention of prisoners arrested in the early 1990s still residing in the Egyptian prisons (interview with a salafi activist in February 2009; see also U.S. Department, Bureau of Democracy 2008). The young MB activists are usually held for up to 45 days upon which they are generally released while leaders that are more senior can be in custody for several months (IHRC 2010).

which proved to be his most difficult prison experience. The last time he was arrested (2007) he was additionally charged with cooperating with a foreign organization (referring to Amnesty International). The most common charge brought against the activists is "belonging to an illegal organization" and the same applied to the activists from Nasr City.

In 2003, interviewee no. 16 was subjected to torture by beating in the well-known SSIS detention center in Nasr City (*Madinat Al-Nasr*) in the vicinity of Cairo (see HRW 2003b); "It [interrogation experience] reinforced my [previously held] view of the oppressors [the regime]. I could relate to the old slogan [of the Muslim Brotherhood], which says 'prison does not change ideas.' For sure, I was terrified by being blindfolded, having my hands tied behind my back for the duration of [the initial] 13 days. It didn't change me..." During the period of interrogation, the SSIS agents asked about the information pertaining to the organizational structure of the MB. At the same time, the agents were "advising" the activist to renounce his MB membership and focus on "more productive activities."

During the course of SSIS' interrogations, the activist felt that the questions the agents asked him made less sense and that he felt more convinced of his (activist) beliefs and the purpose of his activities. Other interviewed activists (with no immediate connection to the previous one), experienced a similar set of circumstances. They, in many ways, repeated similar feelings connected to their experiences of torture and interrogation (interviews no. 4, 8, 17). They confirmed their pervasive feeling of growing dissent and conviction of their previously held ideas. The data indicates that arrests, detention and interrogation (beating) by the SSIS contributed to an increase in personal commitment. The activists expressed this commitment to activism and the organization by increasing their involvement in administrative work and mobilizing efforts (e.g. distribution of information and propaganda material both online and in printed form, using their time normally dedicated to study and work to carry out duties in different activities and committees, etc.).

When asked the question, "how would harsher levels of state repression affect your activism and the organization," the majority of the interviewees answered confidently that they would continue to mobilize "in the most appropriate way." A 24-year-old

physician from a city in the Nile Delta) stated: "If they arrest the Brotherhood leadership, then we will choose other leaders. If it gets worse, we will go underground. We [the MB] are too big to be destroyed by the regime" (interview no. 1)

Another 23 year-old medical student at the al-Azhar university (from the same region in Upper Egypt) responded: "If we are not given the opportunity to sustain our work in the open we will go underground. We shall avoid the public display of our presence and work in secrecy until our numbers are high [enough]" (interview no. 10) Very similar responses were given during interviews with other activists indicating a high level of commitment to their cause and the MB's organizational framework (interviews no. 1, 2, 7, 9). Furthermore, the activists seemed to hold a determinate perception of the regime as the primary enemy, as well as, the focus of their emotional animosity.

State repression in the form of arrests, detention, and even torture cannot be claimed to *directly* motivate regime dissent in the form of nonviolent Islamist mobilization. However, what can be claimed is that this specific form of increasing repression *strengthens* the resolve of these particular activists. It amalgamates the collective resolve of, what has been presented as, a diverse cohort of individual dissidents who would otherwise not cooperate in the same form or fashion. Their common and collective experiences reinforce previously held feelings of "regime induced injustice and corruption upon entire society". In other words, their initial individual motivation for dissent is toughened by negative experiences with the regime authorities. Some reasons behind such developments are discussed in the next section.

6.3 The Impact of the SMO Conditioning on Individual Motivations

The Muslim Brotherhood's leadership set up certain criteria for their potential members. These criteria had been developed into a gradual process of membership and by doing so, sympathizers and potential activists were progressively introduced to the principles of the organization, its message, and purpose. Over time the MB modified this carefully planned system of dissent and its organizational robustness all in accordance with Al-Banna's

initial vision. The organization encouraged early-career activists to dedicate their time and effort to activism gradually.

A couple of female activists explained that sympathizers are approached through a recruitment-mechanism usually referred to as *qawaafil* meaning trailing, or rather, "guidance" (interviews no. 24, 25). Guidance is considered to be a wide concept, it means both guiding a person to 'correct' everyday practice (and belief) of Islam, but it also means guidance towards Islamist activism, which is virtually inseparable from Islamic practices (interviews no. 2, 3).

For instance, a group of female activists confirmed that their interest in politics and social change ignited their interest in the MB's mobilization. "The Election of the [MB] parliamentarians in 2005 have brought politics into focus. [State] Security repression has blocked nearly all forms of political participation [of the MB]. During campaigning at Cairo University [prior to the elections] Rasma [a fellow student and MB activist] drew our hearts closer to their cause. They [the MB activists] built solidarity [amongst each other] so that they can overcome fear [of security crackdowns]" (a focus group interview no. 29).

Subsequent training of sympathizers/activists is called *tarbiyyah*, a concept that is widely applied in Arabic-speaking Muslim majority societies. This essentially encompasses the concepts of fostering, educating or instructing and it is a central idea in the MB's organizational framework. The concept and practice of *tarbiyyah*, it can be argued, is greatly responsible for the high level of organizational commitment and maintenance of relative organizational cohesion throughout periods of state repression.[114]

Another important aspect of organizational motivation is the particular membership process. Firstly designed by Hassan Al-Banna in the mid-1930s, it is still in function and interviewees have confirmed its importance to their mobilization experiences (interviews no. 2, 21, 24, 25). Munson relates from Mitchell (1969) that the membership is three-tiered (2001, 497). However, it is more correct to describe the MB membership as five-tiered.[115]

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[114] This argument is presented in the light of the size of the SMO which in 2009 counted between 200 000 and 1 000 000 active paying members.

[115] (brother – *akh;* sister – *ukht:* 1. *muhibb(a),* 2. *muntasib(a),* 3. *muayyid(a),* 4. *muntazim(a),* 5. *'amil(a)*

That is if one includes the initial levels of targeted sympathizer (see the Introduction; also Klandermans 1993; interview no. 21).

The membership process is a gradual introduction to the organization's principles, goals, methodology and responsibilities. The process is also, more than anything else, a way to establish and nurture personal bonds and solidarity between activists. These personal (emotional) bonds ensure that individual activists commit their time, energy, and indeed lives to the organization and the "cause". It also goes to say that the wider network of friends and acquaintances of most of the interviewed activists are allegedly impressed by the MB's coherent and organized dissent against the perceivably corrupt and repressive regime. Some of the individuals from these activists' networks decide to join as a result of their attraction to the organization's ability to express and coordinate dissent. Moreover, these connected individuals, with limited insight into the organizational practicalities notice another interesting element regarding the MB – an ongoing process of meritocracy within the organization (interviews no. 10, 19, 21).

The organizational ascension process is highly practical by way of ranking and tasking the members. This subsequently improves the activists' insight/knowledge about the organization's practices and their psychological mindset (higher risk-taking) by preparing them for the repressive policies of the regime (prison sentences, torture, etc.). It has not been uncommon for the membership process, from initial association with the MB to a fully-fledged member (from *akh (ukht) muhibb(a)* to that of *'amil(a)*), to take up to ten years. The length of the process depends largely on the initial age of an activist.

The organizational impact on a young person's mentally formative period (early-late teens) is massive.[116] This period in turn creates a largely committed and loyal generation of activists ready to take on the challenges of MB activism and possibly ascend up the organization's leadership ladder. Moreover, it is important to note that this and similar SMOs, which employ a gradual membership process, are difficult to infiltrate by the authorities. In turn, such organizations have a substantially longer cycle of mobilization than other more informal or loosely organized social movement organizations.

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[116] See Bordens and Horowitz (2008), where they discuss overwhelming teenage needs of affiliation and intimacy where social relationships are fundamentally linked to these needs of affiliation (317).

First, there is an (active) sympathizer called *akh muhibb* (loving brother, or *ukht muhibbah* in the case of female).[117] Here a sympathizing individual does not have any particular tasks to perform, but occasionally attends study circles and spends time with regular activists. This internal classification is often useful for active members to know how to approach a particular individual regarding the ideological principles of the MB, and his/her everyday religious practices. This is a process which usually takes about a year.

Second, *akh mu'ayyid* (supporting or assisting brother) is a rank which introduces minor obligations on an individual activist such as attending the regular meetings of the neighborhood *usrah*. He/she needs to be familiar with the basic principles of the MB. The period within which a person can advance to this level is usually 1-2 years.

Third, *akh muntasib* (connected or belonging member) is a formal member of the organization who pledges allegiance (*bayʿah*) to the organization.[118] They have the right to vote in elections at the neighborhood-level (*shuʿbah*) for their representatives. Members usually spend three years at this rank before advancing to the fourth level.

Fourth, *akh muntazim*[119] (organizer brother) performs tasks in accordance to his abilities and interests. Usually student members at this level who attend different faculties are assigned tasks in accordance with their study major (e.g., mass-communication majors are usually tasked with organizing video-audio entertainment events etc.). Members on this level usually spend two years before advancing to the next stage.

The fifth level of membership is called *akh ʿamil* (active brother), which indicates fully-fledged membership. Membership as *ʿamil* entails a range of responsibilities including voting. This rank is attained if one proves his diligence, commitment and effectiveness as an organizer and shows that he is a dedicated activist who is ready to sacrifice even more

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[117] Over the years of research I have had many similar questions about female activists and their role in the MB. It can be argued that female activists have an important role in the SMO primarily concerning the promotion of the MB's ideas through female-dominated social and religiously-based networks of friendship. This certainly includes university student unions and various support groups. Throughout the MB's history main bulk of female activists have been spared torture and imprisonment leaving them proselytizing the SMO's ideas and for instance, organizing support activities for imprisoned activists. It is clear however that the female activists have not been highly-profiled within the main leadership structure of the SMO.

[118] *Bay'ah* has certain religious connotations and is assumed to be a serious commitment to a cause or a group which entails religious obligation.

[119] Comes from the word *tanzim* (*nizam*), meaning organization.

to the cause. Most importantly, activists on this level are allowed to contest different organizational roles (usually low and medium-level ranking positions e.g. membership of *shuʿbah* and *mantiqah* councils). This person is also allowed to have knowledge of a range of organizational secrets, perform regular religious practice, acquire substantial religious knowledge etc.

The activists interviewed for this research were nearly all *muʾayyid, muntasib* and *ʿamil* level members. This has contributed to an increased understanding of the MB's intricate organizational structure and gradual levels of organizational commitments and responsibilities. It seems that a diversified membership arrangement allows for the existence of a large variety of opinions among the youth members. This ultimately allows the leadership opportunities through which they can select (what they perceive as) appropriate members for organizational advancement.

For instance, fully-fledged membership, from initial contact with the organization, can take up to eight years to attain. A sympathizer is usually introduced to the organization's ideas and *modus operandi* through a gradual process wherein the individual firstly becomes attached (*muhibb*) to an already active member (initial *tarbiyyah*) and later introduced to other members. Subsequently, the sympathizer adopts a code of moral behavior (*muntasib*) and develops closely linked relationship with a local *usrah* unit through which questions and doubts are cleared and wherein one develops a close relationship with several other activists (intermediate *tarbiyyah*).

Connected to the membership process is the *usrah* or family system initiated by Hassan Al-Banna. It represented, and still represents, the most basic form of organization in the MB.[120] Its well-developed network of *usrah*-groups functions as a doorway into the organization. It is within the neighborhood *usrah* that activists form close personal bonds with other members of the organization. It is here that activists have an opportunity to "prove" themselves as dedicated *ikhwani* (MB activists) and thus get an opportunity to advance within the organizational structure (*Ikhwanweb* 2007e). Moreover, the ethics of duty, morality, dedication, responsibility, respect, and, most importantly, a sense of purpose are taught and propagated to the activists (interviews no. 2, 3, 4, 8, 9).

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[120] Other similar Islamist groups across the region employ a similar if not the same system, see the elaborate description of Hamas in Gunning (2008).

It is through the *usrah* meetings and other forms of *tarbiyyah*-based activities that the MB had managed to educate its members in matters of religious belief as well as its organizational doctrine (e.g. Al-Banna's writings etc.). Such methods of indoctrination/education/training usually stimulate activists' confidence thereby increasing their sense of belonging, solidarity, and identity (see Melucci 1995). This sense of purpose indirectly prepares the activists for the inevitable confrontations with the authorities and, more than likely, various periods of imprisonment. For instance, during cases where activists are imprisoned, the MB's local committees have procedures ("prison committees") by which members usually arrange regular visits to imprisoned activists (interview no. 24, 25, 29). The purpose of this organized effort is to support, encourage, and console jailed members. An activist (former local MB leader) from the rural town of Abu Kabir stated that "the group's support cancels my fear [of prison and torture], I'm aware that they [other activists] will come to visit me in prison [if I was to be arrested]" (interview no. 8).

The MB is an SMO where dissenting political ideas, an operational experience collected over decades of activism, and the effective use of cultural references (e.g. Islam) have merged into an appealing discursive nexus. Many youths from the growing and increasingly frustrated conservative Egyptian middle-class recognized the MB's efforts as noble and realistic enough to motivate them to mobilize. The former Mubarak regime's increasingly indiscriminate repression left the MB as the only civil society organization vital and strong enough to absorb such brutal policies.

In addition, the MB's activists displayed a set of positive attitudes toward politics and social change largely corresponding to the conservative middle-class youth's vision of a just society. Moreover, the MB's organizational structure with multi-level membership, well-ordered interpersonal networks and systematic educational programs have all contributed to a high level of solidarity and interpersonal cohesion between the activists. This in turn resulted in a strong sense of collective identity and commitment to the organization's (group) ideals.

6.4 Different audiences, different language

The conceptualization of motivations discussed previously can be linked to the Muslim Brotherhood's ideological pragmatism. The interviewed activists often elaborated their understanding of "sensitive" issues regarding the MB's ideological program. These issues included the legal status of the Coptic minority and women, the rotation of political power and freedom of speech, among others. (Altman 2009, 13). The ambiguity of the MB's political message, often-alluded to, did raise some questions that are frequently used to discredit the organization's intentions; however clear they might be (Abdel-Latif 2008). In order to disentangle some of the tensions which exist about the MB's political and ideological rhetoric, it is necessary to reflect on the possibility of the MB speaking to several different audiences. This in turn can explain their highly pragmatic discourse where personal assurances of public safety, broad welfare policies and Islamic attitudes take center stage (see Habib 2005).

One observable aspect of the MB's ambiguous or rather multidirectional rhetoric can be found if we compare the organization's Arabic (ikhwanonline.net) website with its English (ikhwanweb.com) counterpart. The rhetoric, tone and content differ slightly in several ways. Firstly, it is noticeable that the content of the Arabic webpage is far richer and more developed covering wider topics such as education, childcare, culture and arts, politics, news on the MB's activities and details of recent regime repression campaigns, including the names of harassed and arrested members etc. This can partly be explained through the language competence of those responsible for the website and also the reality of a much wider Arabic-speaking audience.

Nevertheless, on the English webpage, one can find primarily general news regarding MB's activism, a broad presentation of its opinions, reports about the arrests of members, internal and external analysis of the organization's strategies etc. The webpage is clearly directed towards a non-Arabic speaking audience in an effort to diffuse possible suspicions held by the reader especially concerning political plurality, women's rights, democracy etc. During the interview process, many activists confirmed that they read the MB's English website, although quite irregularly.

One case that demonstrates a difference between the two websites is the issue of Copts being allowed to propose their candidacy for the post of the president of Egypt. Preceding the 2005 parliamentary election, the organization's Arabic site explained that the Coptic minority would have their citizenship rights secured under the *shar'iah*-ruled Egypt as "the people of the pact" (*ahl al-dimmah*) a somewhat unclear position. In the terms of rights the dominant group would have greater rights while *ahl al-dimmah* would enjoy a special status allowing them to organize their own religious community and have legal independence, however it would also have somewhat limited political rights, primarily concerning possibilities of running for a president of the state. On the English site, on the other hand, the statement read clearly that the Copts would be assured of all their political and civil rights, including the right of running for the head of state in free and open elections (Altman 2006).[121]

Another difference is the style of presentation of the content (e.g. graphical depiction of events) which is rather more provocative on the Arabic page. It invites an emotional response from the reader as it presents graphic details of the regime's violent treatment of the MB members and others. If one analyzes the textual presentation on both web pages, it is noticeable that the more provocative texts are found on the Arabic webpage. The reader is presented with categorical statements on what is right and wrong or truth and falsehood, details conspiracies by the Arab states against the MB, and other analytic propositions not found on the English webpage.[122]

It is helpful to note here that the Islamists' quest for authenticity can also be seen in their attachment to formal Modern Standard Arabic (*fusha*), which signifies what can in turn be described as an insistence on discursive eloquence and a high level of abstraction and ambiguity that can be found in written and spoken messages. The earliest generations of leaders are well versed in formal Arabic reflecting both their religious attachment and a high level of education. The younger generations of activists are in comparison less proficient or insistent on the formality of language. Significant numbers of the committed *salafi* youth are far more capable in both speaking and understanding the *fusha*. This

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[121] As this study is being completed, the MB's political party (Freedom and Justice Party) is leading all other political parties in the Egyptian electoral process and this essentially presents a test of their political claims and willingness to commit to their promises.

[122] Specific data is hard to present in detail. However, during the past three years the difference has been consistent in the general tone of the organizational messages. There are two separate web-teams responsible for each webpage.

primarily reflects their interests which are often rooted in understanding the classical religious sources, religious education and practices. Language in this instance creates a form of a distance between highly (linguistically) educated and modestly educated Egyptians.

6.5 The Attraction behind MB Activism

Where do motivations fit into this explanatory framework? The initial assumption discussed in the introduction suggests that a social agent's motivation is anchored in that person's beliefs and desires. For instance, human desire for the self-realization of one's own personality helps one to understand their place in the world. Society is propelling this quest for resolving the tension between the inability to achieve these goals and the inherent drive to do so (see Žižek 1997).

Similarly, the relationship between a seemingly cohesive social group (e.g. the MB) and an individual agent is bridged by the notion of constructed identity, emotional attachment to other members of the group, and supposedly shared beliefs about the world around them. Subsequently, a social agent's desire to transform perceived social injustice, inequality and corruption is achieved through the transformation of his own self into the ideal example. This is often done by identifying and developing (religious, political etc.) beliefs that articulate (culturally) familiar (moral) ideals of justice, equality, honesty, etc. and assuming a particular role in society through the adoption (or development) of a novel identity. The MB's educational framework as discussed above, including the multi-tiered membership, represents a total (identity) transformation model for an individual activist.

On an instrumental note, a rational-choice explanation would have us believe that individuals are "utility maximisers" who within particular opportunity structures and situations seek to maximise the fulfilment of subjective desires (see Klandermans 1984, 590; Crossley 2002, 75-76). This explanation rests on a disguised psychology, according to which man is by and large a one-dimensional being, guided in his or her reasoning and acting by the principle of maximising purely selfish desires (see Crossley 2002, 131). Without disputing this argument totally, it is necessary to broaden the analysis. Activists must *interpret* the surrounding social conditions (including economic and political conditions). They further must interpret and judge the solutions to various grievances

they experience. The solutions may come from their own contemplation or more often from signals, messages and discourse from outside. In the end it is they, individual social agents, who *enact* "solutions" to their perceived grievances.

Between interpretation and enactment there is a whole range of things that can happen such that the principles and strategies proposed might completely change from their original character, and become through their use and application something else. Indeed, the principles can even be rejected, and if this was not so, then Mubarak's regime, repressive and brutal as it was, would never have been toppled. Subsequently, as some sociologists of knowledge have shown, to understand any social behaviour one must assume that it was constituted by a thinking person or persons in social situations determining and determined by them (see Berger and Luckmann 1968).

In this study, the MB's youth activists have been engaged in dissent against a more powerful adversary (i.e. the authoritarian state) through an existing organizational network through which the activists have a shared sense of solidarity and purpose. Presumably, this explicit set of emotional interconnectedness and shared values and beliefs offers the activists cognitive tools by which they are able to interpret their grievances, isolate their causes, and imagine possible solutions. At the same time one needs to keep in mind that MB activists recognize the regime's contentious policies regarding their organization and the potential consequences of challenging the regime (see Munson 2001; Al Ghazali 2006, chapter 3; HRW 2007; Caromba and Solomon 2008). Therefore it is plausible to assume that activists go beyond the instrumental calculation of risks and thus weigh in with their deeply held beliefs and values as a means of overcoming strong emotions of fear.

6.5.1 The "shumuliyyah" argument

As can be observed from previous chapters, the tone and style of the MB's discourse has had a powerful effect on sympathetic individuals. One activist remembered his first contact with the organization. "I was convinced by their [MB's] ideas and their example… by the completeness [*shumuliyyah*] of their conduct. They respect the minds [opinion] of others. Their way is not that of violence as it was not the way of the Prophet" (interview no. 8). Another activist (female) proclaimed that "The MB has the best Islamic thinking of

all Islamists, presenting Islam as a complete moral code to obey by" (interview no. 6). These enthusiastic formulations reflect the high level of emotionality connected to what is perceived as organizational completeness of faith and practice.

If one spends time conversing and interacting with the MB activists it is easy to notice that the completeness argument is constantly interwoven throughout their narratives. The initial reaction is that there is something here which directly relates to individual motivations. What are the primary features of this connection? Firstly, one can clearly notice that the MB's mobilization program appealed to a massive audience (sympathizers) which initially admired, if not shared, much of its general moral values – e.g. Islamic socio-political ideals. These of the other shared opinions, if not values, were usually manifested in shared perceptions of corruption and decadence of the authoritarian regime. Most importantly, however, many sympathizers (later activists) shared the MB's socio-political ambitions for the middle-classes.

Secondly, much of the initially assumed similarity in attitudes between activists and sympathizers are manifested in an abstraction of the belief-emotion nexus and this supposedly emanates from personal beliefs/desires and emotions. Attitudes here include shared perceptions of grievances resulting from the apparent injustice and corruption of the regime. Furthermore, shared attitudes are produced as consequences of a similar middle-class environment (neighborhoods, workspaces, associations) where people of comparable living standards, level of education, and professional background interact through interpersonal communication – developing a sort of common class consciousness[123] (see Snow 2001). For instance, in my interview with Ibrahim Al-Houdaybi it was possible to discern that the MB's ambition is to broaden their support base regardless if such supporters are members or not. This strategy was primarily manifested in the organization's ambiguous rhetoric by which they have tried to appeal to the masses of primarily upwardly mobile middle-class. He emphasized that the regime is far more interested in creating polarized society than in unifying its citizens. "The regime does not want moderates. It is interested in extremism. The security apparatus (SSIS) is in charge of defining security threats and it want to label all enemies of the regime as

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[123] This explicitly Marxist notion fits well here, but it might be closer to Weber's notion of "status group" where the focus on economic power/capital is widened to include other dimensions of group feeling and shared attitudes.

extremists. It is therefore in the interest of the MB to tone down controversial rhetoric and seek popularity among the Egyptians."

Thirdly, the notion of shared beliefs is highly relevant here as the MB activists focus much of their time clarifying the deeper meanings of their beliefs to nonactivists primarily by exemplifying the "right" Islamic practices (e.g. *viva voce* tactics), emphasizing and focusing on common ideals and shared beliefs (e.g. culturally recognized and conservative understanding of Islam, demonstrating the moral superiority of a religious person, positive impact of a high-level of education (e.g. embracing moral responsibility to incite social change etc.).

Fourthly, the MB demonstrated a religiously based common identity perceived by many conservative observers as appealing and desirable – in as much as it combined modernity, tradition and political activism). As such, the MB's Islamist identity has usually resonated with conservative middle-class and their socio-economic expectations. Furthermore, its identity was not only religious but also nationalist and inclusive enough to be easily adopted, in spite of the obvious threat of state coercion. Here, a gradual membership process by which sympathizers are eased into the organization's internal structure and subsequent membership is crucial in shaping individuals' conception of the in-group's identity and its opponents (regime authorities). Nevertheless, the threshold where sympathizers cross over to membership is hard to pinpoint. One might assume that individually expressed interest in group-belonging indicates a person's desire to transform him/her-self into a desired/imagined ideal, e.g. taking on the MB's collective identity label. Data give additional support towards this argument. Activists who were interviewed frequently described their search for suitable groups through which they could express their grievances, or rather, their religious conviction and practice (interviews no. 2, 6, 7, 10, 24, 25; see section 4.5).

This leads us to consider the completeness argument linking it to general Islamist ideas and concepts as essential parts of the identification process. This process has often an amalgamating effect on an individual through which the proposed organizational framework is linked with personal experiences and perceptions. Moreover, close personal interaction and socialization (e.g. *usrah* activities) presents Islamism as an accommodating, egalitarian, pragmatic and morally superior alternative to the dominant

reality (perceived dystopian social order). Herein, it is important to note that the moderation argument expressed by the interviewees is directly linked with the organizational learning process through which the activists disassociate themselves from violent (or nowadays puritan salafi) Islamist groups. So, it is possible to claim that the MB's activists are keen observers who often react to the slightest sign of interest in the MB (usually) by their peers and thereafter connect to this person in most suitable way.

It becomes rather clear that Islamism as an ideological framework is a secondary motivational factor compared to the identity argument, wherein the identification process precedes ideological justification. An overwhelming number of activists described Islamism in the interviews as a *post hoc* explanation for mobilizing. Added to this, the MB's Islamist ideological framework functions as explicitly identity-shaping (transforming) wherein an individual can (and should) adapt to a specific set of behavioral conventions. These conventions are usually the adoption of a certain dress-code, observing daily prayers, regular attendance of usrah-study circles, commitment to a set of principles, taking responsibility for assigned duties etc.[124] Nevertheless, the activist narratives overwhelmingly highlighted the MB's perceived solidarity and sense of purpose as the primary features of its attraction (interviews no. 1-10, 16-21).

The MB activists are fairly easily recognizable as dissidents (at least, to a trained eye) and thereby categorized, often by sympathizers, as commendable social actors. Sympathizing spectators have been familiarized into believing and considering the social movement activists as a social force for good in their society, an attitude sometimes translated into "relational characteristics of a position into a unitary lifestyle, that is, a unitary set of choices of persons, goods, practices" (Bourdieu 1998, 8).

We can consider the MB as representing the desired *shumuliyyah*, completeness, of Islamic beliefs and practices through which particular individual Muslims can understand, come close to, and practice their religious beliefs in a context that is assumed to be corrupt and morally decayed. The *shumuliyyah* concept, hence, represents an evolved expression of the

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[124] The MB's style of activism is, in many ways, comprehensive including lifestyle dimensions pertaining to a particular style of dress, pursuit of higher levels of education, particular consumer patterns, living in a particular neighborhood, choice of professions, every-day religious practices, visiting carefully chosen mosques, attending the study cycles, attending religious talks, prayers, etc. These and other activist attributes as well as the organization's public actions: demonstrations, propaganda efforts, parliamentary motions etc.

culture of resistance where Islamist claims-making is systematized. Again, the concept is deeply connected to the collective identity of the MB as a complete way of life. This, in turn, includes religiously based (inspired) political opposition to authoritarian rule. The proponents of such identity have demonstrated a capacity to sustain mobilization despite intense coercion, which presumably indicates their moral and organizational superiority (interview no. 2, 12). As a consequence of continuous repression, a large number of youth activists, despite their wide-ranging diversity of opinions, have developed a deep sense of solidarity, commonality and attachment to the MB's ideals supposedly based on a belief that the organization represents a far better alternative than the deeply resented authoritarian regime.

Conclusion

By way of conclusion, this chapter presented some of the initial findings of the study. Firstly, motivations are explained as a product of individual agents' deeply held values, perceptions, and understandings of their social environment. Motivations can be viewed through social agents' attitudes in relation to a specific object, in this case, an object of discontent and grievance. Individually held beliefs play an important role and guide an individual towards what is perceived as a positive feeling of fulfillment and steer them away from what is perceived as negative feelings.

In this case study, it has been demonstrated that state repression through coercion of dissent has had a negative impact on the overall mobilization of opposition. On the individual level, the impact of repression is divided into two parts. The coercion of activists has a negative impact on the recruitment of new activists rendering such processes much slower. The second part is that repression measures applied to Islamists has a generally galvanizing effect on these activists. Repression simply reinforces their commitment to activism. On the organizational level, the regime forced the MB to continuously rearrange both its ideological and operational agenda in order to primarily circumvent the judicial obstacles set up by the authoritarian regime. These tactical adjustments of Islamist priorities have partially resulted in internal frictions reflected primarily in generational squabbles.

These tensions were noticeable already in the early 1980s. Initially, disputes depended to an extent on the regime's irregular levels of repression and activists' disagreements over how to respond to shifting political opportunities. These divisions of opinion and strategic vision are more visible and outspoken at the grassroots level. Nevertheless, it can be demonstrated that prior to the fall of the Mubarak regime, the MB as an organization seems to have had largely successful internal mechanisms to handle such tensions without allowing factionalism to escalate to the point of organizational breakdown.

Concerning motivation among the MB's sympathizers it can be argued that the gradual membership process is an important mechanism. It allows activists to develop an emotional attachment to both the ideas of the organization, and, more importantly, to other activists who, in the eyes of the relevant sympathizers, embody organizational principles of correct moral conduct. The MB offers activists a particular environment (usrah etc.), where certain morals and pre-determined codes of conduct have had a strong impact on social interaction, and thus on the individual activists' decision-making processes. As a result, the motivation behind the decision to join the MB is constructed in a communal environment which allows individuals to cope with their own internal socio—psychological tensions by sharing experiences and thoughts with their peers. Grievances they have experienced and personal ambitions combine in the pursuit of self-realization in a complex socio-cultural context (see chapter 1).

During such a process, the SMO provides a shared foundation on which activists (or rather sympathizers on the way to becoming activists) shape their behavior based on "social practices, values and traditions that sustain symbols, rituals, institutions and social relations" (Neuman 1998, 318). It is in this interactive social space that an individual's sense of agency and his perception of the surrounding socio-political structure merges into a specific type (organization based) of identity and social practice (i.e. the particular style of activism). This understanding of the outcome of social interaction within an SMO largely corresponds to what Bourdieu conceptualizes as "[t]he habitus [which] is this generative and unifying principle which retranslates the intrinsic and relational characteristics of a position into a unitary lifestyle, that is, a unitary set of choices of persons, goods, practices" (1998, 8).

Analyzing the different aspects of the MB, one can find all of the necessary constructs that enable individual activists to engage a superior adversary, express their grievances (e.g. vent emotional tensions) and the need for social affiliation through robust identity affiliation etc. Individuals assumingly perceive the particular SMO as a legitimate mechanism through which they can make claims of others (e.g. the state, other social actors, communities etc.) (see Steinberg 2002, 200 ff).

What is more, this claims-making process, as presented above, is guided both by the pre-existing social movement organization's traditional mechanisms, in this case the MB, and its members who interact and constantly re-invent both their long- and short-term claims-making techniques (i.e. mobilization strategies). Consequently, this process can be considered to represent a culture of resistance. Moreover, the culture of resistance is not only an internal process of negotiation between the specific organization and its members, but very much a dynamic practice affected by the influences and pressures from external opponents. As presented above, the antagonistic relation between the Mubarak regime and the MB as its opponent presented continuous strategic and operational challenges that needed to be overcome. If we yet again consider the authoritarian state authorities as an obstacle to mobilization for intimidated sympathizers it is possible to understand that a gradual process of persuasion (*qawaafil*) and inter-personal communication becomes even more important than in other cases.

Sympathizers develop an emotional attachment to the ideas of other activists and start to interpret their dissident through already familiar religious rhetoric. Later, a particular sympathizer deepens his personal association with a particular activist, often by attending *tarbiyyah* places (i.e. study group and other informal activities), whereby they become acquainted with everyday practices of the activists and the MB's ideas and goals. Subsequently, the sympathizer, recognizing state repression as a threat, overcomes their fear through the consideration of a particular (moral) duty (section 4.6) and becomes an activist. State repression tactics, described by the interviewed activists, seem to only strengthen the commitment of fully-fledged activists as they have been warned and mentally trained for such experiences and therefore taught to expect such state actions. The next chapter discusses activist constructions of agency by analyzing their narratives through expressed beliefs, emotions and their sense of collective identity.

7   Motivation and Beliefs

Introduction

The understanding applied in this study, presented in the first chapter, implies that "[o]ur cognitive beliefs, emotional responses, and moral evaluations of the world […] are inseparable, and together these motivate, rationalize and channel political action" (Jasper 1997, 12). Moreover, our personal beliefs/desires and emotions are considered as being closely tied to our consciousness and our cognitive decision-making processes (Hervieu-Léger 2001, 167; Mann 2002, 59-80; Dai and Sternberg 2004, 11). The result could subsequently be analyzed as attitudes, as discussed in the previous chapter.

However, motivation is considered here as inclusive of attitudes and therefore analytically inseparable. Ubiquity of social grievances has previously been discussed by Meyer and Lupo (2010, 141ff), and if one stretches the analysis it is rather clear that collective grievances posses motivational drive that is theoretically linked with mobilization potential as discussed in the three coming chapters, including this one.

Motivation as discussed in the first chapter represents desire-based motives that are translated into emotional preferences of one sort of behavior over the other. The process of the translation of preference-making is deeply connected with the closely held beliefs and desires of an individual in order to understand, or realize, their role/place in this world. Thus, exploring beliefs on a micro-level is useful primarily because it produces new knowledge about the activists' (in)consistency of norms and later the compatibility of an SMO's ideological framework with the understanding of individual activists. Approaching activists' moral beliefs through their normative discursive framework (narratives) enables the construction of a common norm-based denominator. At the same time, it enables us to analyze the instrumentality of activists' beliefs and its motivational impact. This, I believe, is equally true both for emotions and identities. In sum, this approach has the potential to present a limited spectrum of compatibility and consistency

between the ideological (as well as emotional and identity) program of an SMO and its general activist pool.

7.1 Interpreting Motivation through Beliefs

In order to move beyond the obvious obstacle of conceptualization there needs to be a distinction between ideology and belief. On the one hand, ideology represents an abstract system of values and beliefs which propose a specific view of a social reality and which guides collective action in order to attain hegemony (Snow and Benford 2000, 613; Mann 2002, 244; Schwartz 2002, 161; Scott 2006, 86). On the other hand, beliefs mean often expressed attributes attached to a set of normative ideas which are formed through direct observation, acquired knowledge, or inference, regardless of whether they posses factual substance or not (Fishbein and Ajzen 1975; Manstead and Hewstone 1995).[125]

On an epistemological note, Davutoglu argues that the Islamic *Weltanschauung* offers an alternative to the secularist one and thus is directly contributing to the historical tensions and continuous misreading[126] of the "other's" cultural content (1994, 195-202). This is at odds with a "Western" understanding of religion's distinct role and its assumed separation from the political realm. Esposito argues that the "modern" understanding of religion is much deprived of its organizational heritage and is often considered to be irrational and threatening in general and downgraded to the level of personal belief and spirituality. This notion carries both advantages and disadvantages. This understanding of organized religion ultimately produces an image of Islam, as a system of beliefs seeking influence in both the political and personal realms, as "incomprehensible" and "threatening" (Esposito 1999, 8).

Talal Asad further argues in a similar direction by describing secularist criticism as "a sign of the modern, of the modern subject's relentless pursuit of truth and freedom, of his or her political agency" (2009, 54-55). Consequently, collective claims made by Islamists

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[125] For a more thorough discussion of beliefs as epistemic expressions and their social relevance see Goldman 1986.
[126] The misreading here is a critique of a significant but politically influential part of "western" scholarship primarily in political science. The late Edward Said has spelled out such a critique in his *Orientalism* and other subsequent works.

through religiously dense discourses in Egypt and elsewhere in the region may sound unintelligible, zealous and foreign. As a result, outside observers (e.g. Western analysts, public, media etc.) have often viewed Islamism as an amplified call for a dangerous, threatening, and non-rational form of socio-political organization.

Islamism has been defined as an ideology which tends to delineate the political identities of its proponents from other non-Islamist political groups (Lahoud and Johns, 2005; 16). Ideology in this way means "a general system and an integral part of political mobilization" (Wieviorka 2003b 81), and when researching individual activists one is "revealing the meaning of action behind or through actors' ideologies" (Wieviorka 2003b, 94). This could be applied to any modern ideological constructs, as these frameworks usually delineate between insiders and outsiders, conformists and non-conformists, etc. However, this understanding of ideology as well as their content is not fixed, but (often) transient in both content and the solutions they propose.[127]

Beliefs, as described above, are expressed attributes attached to a set of normative ideas while ideology is an abstract system of values and beliefs which propose a specific view of a social reality. It is therefore helpful to narrow down the concept of beliefs to a more manageable social element. One can analyze beliefs through activists' *personal* understanding of the SMO's ideological framework and their attachment to the proposed ideals (values and beliefs). This allows us to understand the impact of the SMO on an individual activist, its social influences and thereby bridge the gap between meso- and micro-levels of analysis.

For example, those Islamist social movement organizations inspired by the MB are strongly attached to the idea of the comprehensiveness of Islam. This generally means that the religious doctrine of Islam[128] represents the guiding moral principles for both the individual relationship (*'ibadat*) with the transcendent and at the same time a collective (*mu'amalat*) endeavor forming *the* basis of an Islamic society. "The Islam that was revealed in the Glorious Qur'an and *Sunnah,* known to the whole *Ummah* [imagined community of

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[127] As this brief introduction demonstrates, differentiating beliefs from ideology is a very complex and multi-faceted task, and has not been tackled in its entirety due to lack of space and time.
[128] This essentially means the canonized scriptures of Islam, Al Qur'an (the Holy Book) and Al-Sunnah (collection of traditions of the Prophet) together with documented statements of the early generation of Islamic scholars.

believers], the earlier Muslims and their followers, is an integrated one that defies and rejects partitioning. It is the spiritual, moral Islam, ideological Islam, educational Islam, striving Islam, social Islam, economic Islam, and political Islam. It is all these, because it has in all these fields objectives, rules and directions as well" (al-Qaradawi 2004, 27).

This assumed comprehensiveness of Islam includes all aspects of social relations and serves as a measuring stick of contemporary society with all its faults and laxity. "By doing so, they [the Islamists] claim for themselves the role of the leadership of the society thereby challenging the traditional political and religious leaderships" (Abdulwahhab 2003, 41). Therefore, when researching Islamist activism it is important to view participation in such collective action as being closely connected to expressions of religious experience and signs of personal piety. Piety here comes as a significant marker of personal value and the ability to be virtuous, again connected to a general moral worldview.

In much of the Egyptian social context in general, and in Islamist circles in particular, personal piety might be understood as an acquired personal trait, much like, generosity or moral conduct, which is seen as admirable and worth pursuing (interviews no. 2, 11, 15, 23). In a delineated social context such as an SMO, piety can be seen as a kind of cultural capital and instrumentally important in the building of trust within the organizational structure. This is especially true in a hostile environment where freedoms are restricted. Personal piety in a traditionally conservative and religious society not only represents very valuable personal capital, it can also be motivational and inspirational. More specifically, piety in Muslim traditions signifies authenticity of practice in relation to the early generations of Islam, in particular the Prophet.

Saba Mahmoud argues, "Muslim piety […] is predicated not so much upon a communicative or representational model as on an assimilative one. […] Muhammad, in this understanding […] is a figure of immanence in his constant exemplariness, and is therefore not a referential sign that stands apart from the essence that it denotes" (2009,

76).[129] Under this premise, it is plausible to assume that the invocation and practice of traditional moral values brings with it a certain appeal among parts of the population.

In our interviews Muslim Brotherhood youth activists generally explained that piety, as they saw it, harbored two important aspects. A practical dimension of individual spirituality and awareness as expressed through the Islamic creed, as well as, solidarity and compassion shared with their community (including other Egyptians as well as members of the MB) (interviews no. 15, 16, 21, 22).

The practical expression of piety of the older MB generation has generally been highly respected by younger activists. Such general attitudes can be explained in several ways, one of them being that traditional Egyptian society regards older people as worthy of a higher degree of respect. However, within the context of the Muslim Brotherhood, in this case, the oldest generation of activists is often viewed as particularly pious due to several reasons. Firstly, this is mainly due to their personal sacrifices.[130] Secondly the older activists have collectively cared for their fellow activists and this proves their solidarity and devotion to the overall organizational framework and the "cause." Lastly their religious dedication and conservatism gives them significant cultural capital (interviews no. 1, 2, 8, 15; see also Gunning 2008, 12-13 and 120-122). It must be noted that the youths' admiration does not result in total conformity. This has been noted in the section 5.5 and it represents one of the more sensitive issues concerning the Muslim Brotherhood in general.

On the other hand, as an Islamist SMO, the MB was able to establish a sense of a moral authority (Bourdieu 1990, 129; Benn and Peters 1977, 326-328). As a collective, it accomplished this through its activism in the form of charity projects, health clinics, political campaigning, and political participation (voicing opinion in the parliament, public statements etc.). This can be described as regular meso-level activism (see sections

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[129] Space does not permit further elaboration of this claim but it will hopefully suffice to direct the reader's attention to noteworthy scholarly discussions on piety and its socio-political significance in Weber (1992, 9-11), Stout (2004, 20-24), Collins (2007, 33), Gunning (2008, 59, 121-122) Torpey (2010, 148-152).

[130] All members of *Al-Maktab Al-Irshad* (Guidance Bureau) have served long prison sentences during primarily the 1960s and 1980s. Khayrat Al-Shatir, one of the "younger" members of the Bureau, is currently serving a seven year sentence (since 2006).

3.3 and 4.5).[131] The leadership of the MB has, since the early days, claimed authenticity of its constitutional moral values and their practical application. The realization of such values is closely linked to religious duties which by default are applicable to all Muslims.

In reality, Islamist beliefs are evolving and increasingly diverse. Their expectations are informed by their beliefs stretching far beyond the religious dogmas one would initially assume. The interviewed activists continuously (re)interpreted their environment (e.g. state repression, cultural and institutional restrictions, etc.) attributing many of the socially developed labels to identified aspects of various dimensions of the society. For example, state security forces are resented, not necessarily as individuals, but as symbols of repressive power. From that it follows that negatively held feelings are translated into a previously constructed belief structure that informs the activists about appropriate social behavior, etc. Beliefs therefore both inform a social agent about what to expect, but also these same beliefs are informed by perceptions of social reality which assist an agent to (re)act in a particular social situation.

7.2 The Attraction of the MB's Beliefs

At this point it is important to narrow the concept of Islamism further (see section 1.4). In its broadest meaning, Islamism symbolizes, not unlike any other ideological construct, a particular socio-political outlook on (socio-)political arrangements which is inspired by a specific interpretation of Islamic religious beliefs. As such, Islamism is promoted and understood to be a self-sufficient guide to moral ascendancy within a particular society. Islamism, as defined in this study, translates into a wide spectrum of religious beliefs, practices, values, and moral commitments which are ideologically framed by social movement organizations and translated into various modes of mobilization.

Consequently, wide-ranging interpretations and practical applications of an Islamist framework produce an even wider range of strategic and operational practices. A rough distinction can be made between violent and nonviolent Islamist SMO practices. Violent strategies have been given a large amount of scholarly attention (Kepel 1993; 2006; Gerges 2007), nonviolent means less so (Wickham 2002). On the nonviolent side, an obvious focus

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[131] Those who view themselves as leaders of nationwide social improvement.

of this study, one finds organizations which mobilize their efforts both politically and socially, often simultaneously[132] (Munson 2002; Clark 2004; Gardell 2005; *IRIN* 2006). This means that Islamists actively pursue the reformation of social and political spheres through the conscious usage of modern political instruments, but at the same time employ symbolical tools inspired by religious tradition(s) (Wiktorowicz 2004a, 2-4).

In other words and as previously noted, Islamism partly represents "political responses to today's social challenges by imagining a future, the foundations for which rest on reappropriated, reinvented concepts borrowed from the Islamic tradition" (Hefner 2005, 6). And it is partly a set of responses to, "the failures of authoritarian nationalist governments [in the Muslim majority states], and the socio-economic divisions that have been exacerbated by neo-liberal globalization." The failures of state regimes and the effects of predatory economic policies have amplified already existing popular grievances amongst the up-and-coming middle classes which were excluded from access to political power, and, for the most part, economic prosperity (Turner 2003, 140).

Based on such an understanding, one can argue that Islamists, such as the Muslim Brothers, are products of both socio-political circumstances and modern political concepts such as nationhood, liberalism, democracy, market economy etc. The MB represents a reaction to the middle-classes' sense of socio-political alienation by packaging its message into a familiar expressive format and offering broadly formulated solutions to the popular grievances of the conservative masses. It therefore follows that the Islamists' quest for authenticity begins by invoking and translating the past in order to find solutions to present grievances. This has made them an attractive alternative to the repressive regime(s) (see Kurzman 2003b; Abootalebi 2003; for contemporary development see Irfan 2011; Goldstein 2011). In this quest, Islamists are far from being unique (see Halliday 2005, 210-220), as they represent a religious dimension of modernity which continuously searches for inimitability.

Moreover, the promoters of Islamism directly challenged traditional religious authority. As argued in the section 4.4, this authority (the Mufti and Shaykh Al-Azhar) did accept

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[132] Functions which enable them to conduct social work such as providing health care, shelter and other assistance to the needy in a society. Being active throughout civil society, they are actively gathering popular political support as part of the mobilization process.

and, at the very least, passively supported the repressive regime, primarily on the grounds of religious principles. On the other hand, the MB and other Islamist SMOs (Islamic Group etc.) challenged the regime's legitimacy on the basis of similar principles. This struggle for authority and interpretation of religious doctrines has been most clear in the case of the puritan salafis whose religious scholars had enormous influence over the trajectory of the salafi religious revivalist mobilization (see Haykel 2009).

The MB has depended on the religious scholarship of a selective number of scholars (Yusuf Al-Qaradawi being the most prominent), however, the MB never allowed the rhetoric of these scholars to dominate their socio-political agenda. Moreover, their political and administrative structure, since its inception, has never been dominated by them, or indeed any other religious leaders or imams. As demonstrated previously, the core leadership of the MB has always consisted primarily of professionals. It can thus be argued that Islamism, in the case of the MB, is a religiously *inspired* mobilization framework aimed at producing social change. This type of mobilization usually aspires to encouraging collective piety in the course of producing socially responsible civil servants and administrators, and in recent decades, fully fledged politicians.

The MB's Islamism supplies its activists with a certain set of diagnostics about the socio-political challenges they have experienced. Diagnostics are, as previously described, turned into specific solutions, which are culturally recognizable, contextually informed and simplified so as to appeal to the broadest number of social agents (Buechler 1993, 222). The MB's moral framework and moral obligations are transmitted to sympathizers and potential activists early on in the recruitment process. Similar SMO recruiting processes can be found elsewhere (see Klandermans 1984; Klandermans and Oegema 1987; Neuman 1998). Essentially, Islamist and other types of SMOs are addressing an important question; namely, how does a social agent become convinced by organizational goals and strategies?

The MB is addressing a variety of audiences with a special focus on the conservative middle-classes and in order to attract wide support, the organization employs a morally

loaded discourse[133] that is familiar and appealing to large segments of the population. Slogans such as *Islam huwa al-hall* (Islam is the solution) or *Ma'na lil-islaah* (With us to reform), although ambiguous, are easily recognizable and often attractive. Such discursive catchphrases are of great help in many of the conservative milieus in Muslim majority countries.[134] Islamist appeals for change are often answered *en masse* in societies where other tactics feel foreign or connected to authoritarian regimes (see Berman 2003). Nevertheless, such populist slogans are far from sufficient if one is to explain the MB's mobilization process.

Islamist activists' perception of regime repression is strongly connected to their understanding of morality and ethics. Taking this dialectic proposition for granted, the activists' general beliefs are a set of normative ideas which are constantly in a process of transformation and which greatly influence individual observations and experiences. For example, the MB's young generation of activists have been exposed to a greater variety of information[135] than any other generation before them (Arnett 2002; Lubeck and Britts 2002). This essentially complicates their understanding of the Islamist framework as it brings forth novel socio-political ideas and raises a new set of questions which in turn creates friction within the organization. Such friction has been discussed above as inter-generational tensions which, if left unattended, will lead to the fragmentation of the organization (see Swedenburg 2007).

It is important to note that the writings of Hassan Al-Banna and other MB leaders, including Al-Hudaybi and to some extent Qutb, and later Tariq al-Bishri and others, have all had an impact on formulating the MB's profile which is anchored in general Islamic values, sense of deep civilization, and a vision of a just and modern society. For instance,

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[133] Islamist groups, organizations and parties usually incorporate such words as liberation, justice, brotherhood, unity, community, resistance, development, virtue and call into their official titles and slogans.

[134] Such political discourse has not been allowed in states such as Tunisia (until recently), Turkey, or Uzbekistan, where state authorities have viewed any politicization of religion as a direct breach of their constitutional framework. On the other hand, more conservative societies: Morocco, Egypt, Jordan, Kuwait or Pakistan have their regime of power been so traditional that the regimes there have often taken advantage of this religious conservatism. This is the case of contemporary Egypt and Tunisia where religiously inspired parties have won general elections with overwhelming majorities.

[135] The globalization of cultures and the advancement of information technology including digital media, satellite TV-channels, newspapers, radio and other forms of communication have invigorated Middle Eastern societies in several aspects, too many to be discussed here (see Lubeck and Britts 2002).

the interviewed activists articulated their desire for personal (material) progress as well as moral beliefs through a vision of a more just and fair society. The multiplicity of personal experiences among these activists and, again, their varied exposure to alternative political ideas (e.g. democracy, political plurality, various freedoms etc.) had created a vibrant and perhaps polemical atmosphere within the SMO. This is not only the case between generations, but even more so within the younger generation itself (see section 5.5). Through examining the expressed beliefs of these youth activists it was possible to observe a wide variety of understanding of al-Banna's original message (both between the youth activists and the leadership, but also within the youth cohort).

A blogger-activist and resident of Cairo explains what attracted him to the organization in the first place: "*Al-Ikhwan* [the MB] did not represent a monolithic understanding of religiosity. All of my friends went to the same mosque. We used to go out to eat and have fun together. I got to learn their understanding of religion. Our parents approved of our friendship and association with this social milieu, as it was moderate and disassociated from [extremism]… so everyone approved of it. The model [the MB] we have chosen was moderate, not too extreme and focuses on the social aspect of mobilization" (interview no. 20). This activist's initial perception of the MB's understanding of religion and its Islamist character can be considered representative of the middle-class nature of the organization that has long been noted by outside observers. His choice of words, such as, "social milieu" suggests the relevance of class association and a demarcation from the religious understanding of others (i.e. salafis, in this case considered to be too simplistic in their understanding of Islam).

This pragmatic description of the MB's approach is the hallmark of its long-term mobilization. Such pragmatism was, if not established then at least secured, in the organization's early past (see Al-Hudaybi 1977). The unwillingness of the leadership to canonize the organization's Islamist ideology allowed sympathizers more room for differing ideological interpretations.[136] Parents of activists are usually religiously conservative (i.e. observing Muslims) and in many cases not necessarily activists

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[136] As noted previously, Hassan al-Banna's early experiences with the religious clergy including their reluctant stance towards his puritan message set the ground for the organization's future ideological framework.

themselves. Although, it must be noted that the majority of activists interviewed did say that their parents were also activists.

Those activists whose parents were members of the MB were very eager to point out that the decision to mobilize was solely their own. This indicates a strong stance on self-ascribed independent individuality together with freedom of choice. This is important as their indirect claim of freedom and individuality points toward a particular desire for personal freedom in an environment where individual choices of expression are limited. Their urban social surroundings and the authoritarian and neopatrimonial state with its ubiquitous state security presence, have an impact on activists' understanding of the MB's ideological framework as they shape their beliefs and visions of social goals (see Arnett 2002 for a more general discussion).

In the more rural social context of northern Egypt, in the governorate of Sharqiyyah, I interviewed a 24 year old medical student, who resided for 18 months in Saudi Arabia when he was 10 with his family (his father was a guest worker in the far east of the country). There, he met a member of the MB from Syria, a local imam, who taught him to recite the Qur'an. He was also briefly introduced to the MB and its Islamist ideas. The second time he encountered Islamism was in a more practical way in his late teenage years. Namely, he observed the military trial of his uncle, an MB activist and member of the General Council, and a chairman of the Pharmacists' Syndicate in the Sharqiyyah governorate. At the end of the trial, his uncle was sentenced to 5 years in prison for his membership in the MB. He considered the court's decision to be deeply unjust and humiliating (interview no. 10).

Shortly after his uncle's trial, a brief period of mass-arrests followed along with the trials of leading members of the MB. The activist felt that he needed to know what the regime's actions were about. He kept himself informed by reading the news through *Al-Sha'ab* (The People), which is the Islamist friendly, socialist bi-weekly newspaper.[137] The newspaper was regularly read by his close friends and its formulation of what was happening with

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[137] The newspaper has traditionally been one of the most critical of the regime and initially started as the mouthpiece of the communist party *Al-´Amal* (Workers' Party). However, through a coalition with the Muslim Brotherhood in the election of 1987 and through the influence of the party leader Magdi Hussein and later Adel Hussein, it became pro-Islamist (see Howeidy 1995; Fahmy 2002, 76-77).

the MB activists seemed to have a significant impact on all of them. The newspaper had tapped into questions of justice and freedom, which was in contrast to conventional state controlled media and thus was highly relevant to these youths.

After his uncle's sentence and the judicial ordeal of many other "well-regarded" community members (i.e. MB leaders), he wanted to know what danger these people posed to state security. The young activist began to look into the MB literature and explore the ideas of Al-Banna. His personal experiences of the events surrounding his uncle's arrest prompted him to ask specific questions regarding the circumstances of the trial and the 5-year sentence. He regarded his uncle as a "decent, well-respected, assiduous, and kind" individual who was regarded as such by others as well. The discrepancy between how the state regarded him (a danger to state security and belonging to a banned organization, i.e. a criminal) and how the people from his community knew him seemed to have a deep impact on this young activist.

Prison he says "is for criminals and for people who have committed acts of crime, and he [uncle] wasn't like that. People asked me why they arrested this respected person. He is in the faculty of medicine, he is a good man, and he treated us well. Why did they [the SSIS] arrest him? This [political] system is corrupt. This system is invalid." He also expressed an oft-repeated metaphor hinting towards the futility of the regime's action: "They [the regime through the ISSI] are trying to encircle water with fire."

According to the activist's narrative, he began to inquire about his uncle's political views and read the literature of the MB. He ended up siding with the ideas proposed by the MB and its strategic approach viewing its organizational structure as one of its main strengths. However, one of the main reasons he decided to join the MB is his experience with the other activists whom he had met in the local mosque during the ten last days in the month of Ramadan.[138] There he regularly discussed the texts of Al-Banna with the MB activists: "I've read about Al-Banna's ideas, completeness of religious duties and other main principles presented by him. I like them [the ideas]. I searched for a way to apply these principles in real life and I had some questions, which I asked the people. There

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[138] The timing is significant here because the month of Ramadan is the month of fasting and the last ten days are considered even more religiously important. Membership is indirectly connected to religious duty.

were numerous discussions on similar topics, and I developed a strong relation with the *Ikhwan* [the MB activists]. Eventually I became a regular visitor of the local *usrah*."

This activist changed his daily routines by performing his prayers and spending time with newly acquired friends. His mobilization process was almost identical to that of a religious conversion (see Poston 1992, 148-154). After being asked what specific things were the most convincing while inquiring about the organization, he answered: "I liked the organization, the planning and… the Ramadan program in the mosque was unlike any other. The religious program and entertainment, sketches and plays, all was well prepared and arranged. As well as the food,[139] deserving five stars […] [there was] a Spirit of Brotherhood [*rouh al ukhuwwah*]."

Here the activist stresses the MB's organizational skills, which he perceived as unique. According to him, the rest of society (i.e. the state institutions), including the religious establishment, were poor organizers. This, for him, indicated that the MB's understanding of Islamic principles was of higher value than that of the official religious institutions, effectively controlled by the state. Thus, associating with the organization added to his newly won religious experience and a sense of moral valorization which seems to have strengthened his sense of purpose. The regime, on the other hand, was viewed as a sort of antithesis to the MB and everything it represented.

Throughout the interview, he demonstrated, through his verbal expressions and physical behavior, the self-assurance of his choice to mobilize. Every time the MB's values were mentioned he was eager to point out the validity of this point of view indicating his personal emotional attachment to the organization (interview no. 10).

Another student activist, an 18 year old female mass communication student from the Governorate of Sharqiyyah, presented her reasons for joining the MB. She was 14 when she first considered joining the organization to which her own father was affiliated. "I believe that the group has the best Islamic thinking compared to other groups in Egypt,"

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[139] In Egypt and other Muslim majority countries, it is customary to arrange for the breaking of the fast by having different people prepare the food for each day (ca. 30 days) in the local mosque. This is viewed as good religious ethics and a praiseworthy practice. I assume that is why this particular activist mentions food and other particularities, which he sees as notable and positive about the organizational skills of the MB.

she answered the question as to why she joined the MB. Again like many other activists, she explained the slogan "Islam is the solution" as her *modus vivendi* not merely through external appearances (pointing to her veil, mentioning her daily prayers and other rituals) but also including spiritual, moral and mental well-being.

She is an active blogger,[140] and was, for instance, especially active in informing others about the arrest of her brother (also an activist and interviewee). She wrote about the details of the entire trial on her blog as a means of exposing the regime's "injustice". On another occasion, she and two of her activist friends (who were also interviewed) were detained by SSIS agents in a subway station in central Cairo and taken to a police station nearby. They were arrested on their way back from a MB protest when the SSIS agents approached them asking them to hand over a map with documents they were carrying. The activists refused to cooperate and were locked in one of the cells in the police station. As they were not searched,[141] they were able to use their mobile phones to call two of the MB parliamentarians, who also happen to be lawyers by profession. The senior activists appeared shortly thereafter and requested that the female activists be released.

There are several important points that need to be highlighted as a result of this event. Female members do not usually participate in demonstrations as there is an organizational principle that discourages this type of activity which is considered as too risky (a focus group interview no. 29). It is important to consider that the SSIS agents did not forcefully take the documents they demanded. The female activists themselves explained this behavior as sign of respecting "the red line" which the regime upheld in its relationship with the MB. There is an organizational distinction made between the mobilization of females and males. For instance, female activists are discouraged from participating in demonstrations and other forms of protest that may be targeted harshly by the central security forces (CFS). Several activists mentioned the notion of a "red line" indicating some kind of unofficial understanding between the MB and the security apparatus where the female activists are not physically abused.

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[140] During talks and communication with other activists in Cairo independent from the female student activist, I was informed that she is well-known through her blog and the information about the activities of the MB female section in the Nile Delta.
[141] It is important to note that the female activists were not physically searched. This might have been because there were no female police officers present and male officers were not allowed to perform the search.

It is important to note here that the regime made a clear distinction between nonviolent and violent Islamists in the treatment of their female family members. During the 1990s conflict between the regime and the violent Islamist groups, numerous cases of abuse against family members of activists were reported. Mothers, wives, and daughters of activists were imprisoned, held hostage, and abused in various ways by the regime authorities (UNHCR 1994). In the case of the MB's relationship with the regime, it did not systematically maltreat female activists. On the other hand, the MB's female activists were discouraged, although not banned, from actively participating in public protests. Another interpretation of this SMO strategy is that the MB does not encourage female participation in risky public events based on their ideological principles (gender segregation). Whatever the case might have been, none of the available data supports the latter assumption.

Furthermore, the detained female activists were keen to show that they were not intimidated by the SSIS agents' demands, which might point to their trust in the "red line agreement" between the regime and the organization. It might also indicate the MB's success in training their activists to not display fear to the state security services (interviews no. 1, 2) Nevertheless, this particular female activist said that their fear was a real and deeply felt sensation and that they (three female activists) were all shaking out of fear of what might happen to them. "If we were boys, they would most likely have beaten us and taken documents forcefully, but they didn't."

In this case, the female activists resorted to what in Egypt is described as *wustah* (see section 2.4), an influential personal contact, who is able to assist you in a time of need. In this case, the senior members of the MB, who were lawyers and members of parliament, could intervene swiftly and help the girls by coming to the police outpost, and intercede on behalf of their release.[142] The response of the senior members of the MB demonstrated a well-organized response-structure which the youth activists referred to during the interviews (interviews no. 6, 24, 25).

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[142] The MB leaders (parliamentarians) acted on the basis of their organizational duty, but the reason could have also been a close personal relationship with the girls' parents. In any case, the female activists were released after 4 hours in detention and were allowed to keep their documents.

Despite the "red line agreement", female activists were beaten by the Central Security Forces (CFS) during the public demonstration of female blogger activists at the University of Zaqaziq (capital of the Al-Sharqiyyah Governorate), the fall term of 2008. Other activists explained in the interviews that this behavior, which is considered as extraordinary, was a message to the organization that the regime does not tolerate an excessive show of defiance from MB activists.

To the question of whether there is anything which could cause her to leave the organization she replied: "This is our way, which is […] There is nothing which could prevent me from my activities. It is my life and my work … perhaps only death." Her level of commitment and determination can be considered particularly high. Her attitude and straightforward narrative indicates that in the early stages of adulthood individuals often express great dedication. Perhaps because most of their "basic values, attitudes, and world views [are] formed during those years" (Krosnick Alwin 1989, 416).[143]

Based on this particular activist's testimony, it is possible to argue that an activist's religious beliefs and ideological attachment to the MB's framework is overshadowed by that person's moral sense of right and wrong, justice and corruption, etc., which are most often justified in religious terms *post hoc*. Her response to the question, "why are you a MB activist?" is supportive of this argument. After noting how the state is corrupt, oppressive, unjust and kleptocratic she justifies her choice of activism by saying that "the MB has the best Islamic thinking of all Islamists, presenting Islam as a complete life code to obey by." This implies that the MB presents Egypt with an ideal solution for (perceived) socio-political ills.

Another activist, a 23 year old, medical student from the city of Samannoud in the Governorate of Al-Gharbiyyah (interview no. 2) answered the question: "What would you do if the regime decided to decapitate the leadership of the MB?" during a focus group interview: "Ideas are [successfully] opposed by ideas and force only by force. If ideas are repressed by force, ideas will survive … They cannot be defeated by force, only by [better] ideas." He continued, "the regime is afraid of our ideas! If we have freedom to express

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[143] A similar attitudinal tone was observed with the majority of the other interviewees. The assurance these activists demonstrate, regarding their commitment to their ideas, is that their understanding of religion, practice and social work reflects a sort of truth about the religious duties of humankind.

our ideas freely, we will win." The activist means that the MB would win political elections and therefore political authority through popular support.[144] Another activist in the same group of interviewees, a 21 year old student agreed with the previous statement and added, "you see, when [almost] the entire leadership of Hamas was arrested, all that was left were the 18 year-olds who continued to carry on the ideas." This illustration of activist commitment to the MB's ideas seemed to be reinforced by the group dynamics (interview no. 4). All of the interviewees in the group were engaged in supporting the comments of the first speaker proclaiming their commitment by nodding and confirming the first interviewee's statements by hand and head gestures.

In contrast, a vocal MB activist and another well-known blogger, is a 19-year-old student of telecommunication engineering at the university of Al-Mansura, Governorate of Ad-Daqahliyyah, who presented himself as a pragmatic Islamist willing to take progressive ideas from any Islamist group (e.g salafi and others). He explains: "I want to learn about Islamic jurisprudence and the *hadith* [reported actions and sayings of the Prophet], and there are no Muslim Brotherhood study circles on this topic in my city. But there are such study circles run by the salafis, and I can take [ideas] from them. I'm ready to learn about these issues from them. I'd like to have a comprehensive understanding [of religion]. I think [however] that the Muslim Brotherhood have the perfect idea [understanding] of Islam. But their behavior is not good. When I meet my superior [leader of his *usrah*] I get no answers about politics and the religious stance on such issues. He promises us that we will meet one of the higher leaders and discuss issues of politics, and that never happens" (interview no. 21).

This activist belongs to the reformist wing of the youth activists (see section 5.5) and stresses his desire to explore the writings of the organization. Subsequently, he wishes to confront the local leaders about these issues, however, without receiving any substantial feedback. Feeling intellectually neglected, he chose to express his discontent through his blog which, according to him, has led some of the low-level activists to view him as a die-

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[144] This statement is particularly interesting and somewhat prophetic as during the writing up of the study the MB's political wing (Freedom and Justice Party) won over 40% of the electoral votes in the first post-Mubarak parliamentary elections.

hard pragmatist.[145] Nevertheless, he views the MB's ideological framework as a successful combination rooted in pragmatic premises laid out by its founder, Hassan al-Banna.

He makes his standpoint clear by noting that the organization (and Islamist movements in general) need to develop from the urban centers and not from the rural regions. "Al-Banna wanted an urban movement that is the reason he moved from the city of Ismailiyyah to Cairo. Today, the majority of our leaders are from the provinces." His understanding of the current structure of the MB stems from the assumption that activists from rural regions (himself included) are traditionally conservative. His inkling is that those activists are bound to tradition and rigidly attached to their religious practices. This implies that the rural activists (which form the majority of the leadership) are inflexible in their approach to other opposition groups which are viewed suspiciously.

The initial reason for his critique seems to stem from his personal experiences with a senior MB leader, a member of the General Council (who also happened to be a family friend and a neighbor). The young activist contacted the senior leader two weeks prior to our interview to receive some answers to his previously stated questions: "He [the senior leader] came to convince me that there is no point [i.e. it is not appropriate] in criticizing the Brotherhood because I'm not familiar with its organizational policies. He told me: 'It is better for you to make an effort to convince people [non-MB activists] of the Islamic solution, rather than criticize this solution.' He advised me to read more about Islam and respond to the critiques of others. But I saw no contradiction in wanting to criticize the organization [for its weaknesses] and informing others about its values." The activist claimed that the member of the General Council later told him that he was ready to sit with him personally and show him the political platform of the organization in order to satisfy his curiosity. This was done to reduce some of the tension within the organization.

Other interviewees, including the young reformist activist, said that a common saying used by the leadership of the MB while informing the younger members is "You know what you need [to know], Not what you want [to know]." Firstly, this seems to demonstrate that the MB's operational structure is shaped as a response to the regime's

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[145] Some brand him as a "secularist" or rather a traitor to the inner core ideas of the organization. He should be regarded as a representative of a minority-faction among the younger generation of Muslim Brotherhood activists.

repressive policies (chapters 3 and 4). Secondly, the MB's gradual membership suggests that this is a common practice already in the initial phases of membership (chapter 5). Thirdly, the MB's hierarchical structure, centralized decision-making and de-centralized operations, suggests that secrets are a common tactic under state repression as a means of securing organizational functions even if a part of the leadership is incapacitated (i.e. arrested, jailed etc.) (chapter 2).

In summary, the interviewed activists expressed deeply held religiously based understandings of the concepts of justice, duty, personal and social development, and morality in a continuous process of discerning "right from wrong." All of the interviewees agreed that the MB has been the most capable dissident organization and at the same time a representative of "the best" interpretation of Islam which attracted their attention and eventually commitment to actively seek social change. Their mobilization narratives reveal that the vast majority of interviewed activists had a relative or a close friend who was an activist before them.

Their relation with activists before their mobilization indicates that their "moral compass" was pointing them toward the MB. The organization's political platform presented these sympathizers with familiar concepts based on their interpretation of "Islamic values". These young activists embraced very early on (some at the age of 14 and others as 17, 18, and 22 year-olds) what they perceived as a comprehensive *modus vivendi* with, what they have described as, a clear purpose.

Firstly, this indicates that the activists had relatively well-developed and acquired religious beliefs prior to mobilization and that their understanding of religion largely coincided with that of the MB. It also suggests that the MB's religious framing is culturally informed and in-tune with a wider social understanding of religiosity. Moreover, high-risk activism means that the MB exhorts an additional effort to present its mobilization as a religious and moral obligation upon all citizens as a process of social transformation.

Secondly, the targeted part of the population (urban/rural middle class students and professionals) could recognize the (religious) image presented by the MB. By extension, one might include here political and social parameters, such as (collective) grievances in relation to the authoritarian order which was also addressed by the organization, again

through a familiar set of references. After all, the majority of the activists' parents (or at least one parent) were members of the organization, which might have affected their choice. When asked if that was the case, the vast majority of those activists answered that they made a self-informed and independent choice to become members. This, in turn, suggests that the youth activists are highly aware individuals who want to appear as independent and reasoned; and at the same time, be part of a larger social force sharing common moral values and beliefs which gives them superiority over the state which is anathema to their ideal imagined society.

It is further possible to argue that the personal grievances of the activists were amplified through their religious beliefs, framed by the MB. This subsequently motivated them to accompany other individuals with similar types of grievances. This assumes that individual agents are drawn to other social actors with a similar world-view. Shared beliefs and a politicized understanding of religious practice reinforce activists' sense of purpose of their choice of resistance. If one continues along the same lines, it is possible to claim that closely held desires to relieve (regime related) grievances also prompt action from the individual. The social aspect of such action assumes that an individual actor came to be attracted to a particular idea of social change. These particular collective actions are therefore based on a similar reading of moral values suggesting that motivation for action is based on yet another set of stimuli preceding it.

Conclusion

This chapter discussed the MB's general beliefs reflected through activists' narratives. It has become rather clear that due to the MB's extensive mobilization experience, the leadership had developed a broad spectrum of group-specific beliefs merging both cultural and religious conceptions of ethics and morals evidently adopted by its young activists. We can conclude that MB's Islamist beliefs, seen through activists' narratives, motivate mobilization by engaging individual youths' search for authenticity and desire to rebel. This is obviously closely connected to a general performance of activism, which represents a social actor's embedded position in a larger set of social relations where one feels (dis)connected to (from) a society. The performance and the expressive form of a norm-based denominator involves an individual's sense of belonging to larger groups, it presents a sense of purpose for activist practices, modes of expression etc.

Individual socio-religious beliefs and cultural conditioning corresponded to the MB's "worldview" and as such contributed to individual motivation to mobilize. Their version of Islamism appealed to these activists more than that expressed by the puritan salafis as it was more pragmatic and corresponded to the socio-political realities they were experiencing. Similarly, the activists' view of regime repression as unjust found synergy with their feelings of social and religious responsibility and, more importantly, their desire to find their place in the world and give their lives purpose.

8   Motivation and Emotions

Introduction

Understanding motivation behind dissent by mapping the beliefs, emotions and collective identities of activists is about understanding the moral landscape of that individual. The landscape here implies a sense of (shared) moral values by which individuals identify and share similar moral perspectives with others. An account of the collective expression of shared moral values could be observed during the 18-day long sit-out of tens of thousands of protesters in *Tahrir* (Liberation)-square in central Cairo[146] (*Al-Ahram* 2011). The symbols and slogans[147] of the crowds were collective expressions of anger and discontent with the incumbent regime. The regime in its turn could not withstand the sustained public pressure in the urban centers boosted by media's continuous coverage. In the end, President Mubarak stepped down marking the transition of the Egyptian political system.

Emotions are considered as an inherent part of the desire/belief model and thereby contextually dependent on the motivational process. "[E]motions are constituted more by shared social meanings than automatic physiological states" (Jasper 2003, 153; see also Kemper 1978). This part of the cultural mosaic urges deeper investigation. Some previous studies on emotions distinguish between emotion rich and emotion poor-cultures based on the assumption of social life differentiation (Manstead and Wagner 1981; Kemper 1984; 1987). This distinction is cautiously recognized here. For instance, the spectrum of

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[146] These events are now commonly referred to as *Thawrat 25 Yanaayir* (The January 25th Revolution), *Thawrat Al-Ghadab* (The Rage Revolution), *Thawrat al-Shabāb* (The Youth Revolution), (see (*Al-Ahram* 2011).

[147] Among the most visible symbols were the numerous Egyptian flags, others such as "Game Over!" "We Win! Go out!" and the most common *Irhal!* "Step Down!" or simply "Leave!"

expressed (secondary)[148] emotions is narrower in societies where socio-economic disparity is the different layers of a population in a society. If applied, this proposition indirectly suggests that in Egypt one is expected to find an emotion rich culture as the socio-economic divide is very wide (see chapter 2).[149]

8.1 Interpreting Motivation through Emotions

Today, much research on emotions in social movements has demonstrated a "return" of emotions in social movement studies (Smith 1992; Jasper and Poulsen 1995; Barbalet 1998; Jasper 2003; Gould 2004; Goodwin *et al* 2000; Goodwin *et al* 2001; 2006). These and other scholars have made significant progress in bringing emotions back into the study of social movements. This can be described as part of a culturalist trend in the study of social movements. James Jasper is one of the main proponents of this approach and he notes that popular "protest is like religious ritual […] it embodies our moral judgments, so that we can express allegiance to moral visions" (1997, 14).

The notion of "moral visions" is closely related to a social actor's beliefs and identities, and as such, it is inherently connected to the actor's emotions. These visions are bound to produce a kind of a moral compass. As shown previously, Islamism gives a sense of moral purpose to its adherents as it represents more than just than a lifestyle choice (interviews no. 15, 16, 21, 22; see also Abdulwahhab 2003, 41; Al-Qaradawi 2004, 27). At the same time, if one subscribes to the claim that "protesters and activists are rational actors, in the broadest sense of that word; they make calculations about costs and benefits and

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[148] Kemper (1987) argues on the basis of several independent studies of emotions that we can distinguish between primary and secondary emotions where primary emotions are universal transcending cultural specificities (e.g. fear, anger, depression, satisfaction etc.). Kemper discusses secondary emotions as they are more culture-specific and therefore more sensitive to social dynamics (e.g. guilt, pride, shame etc.). These emotions are considered to be expressions and consequences of the environment (i.e. products of social construction).

[149] It is reasonable to suggest that the series of unfolding events starting with the January 25th demonstration and ending in a Revolution 18 days later in Egypt had much to do with the substantial (contentious) emotional capital of the protesters which had accumulated through a far-longer process than the unprecedented and richly televised rupture of public discontent.

strategize about how to secure their interests" (Gould 2004; 161), then it is not difficult to correlate mental processes (including emotions) to an actor's motivational process.[150]

The critique of the rational choice theory approach to social movements can be summarized through an argument made by Robert Benford where he argues that "[w]e continue to write as though our movement actors (when we actually acknowledge humans in our texts) are Spock-like beings, devoid of passion and other human emotions. This might be one area in which common sense makes the most sense, for any lay observer or movement participant would testify to the importance of emotions in collective action" (1997, 419). In other words, there is something more to be said about social actors' choices than the mere calculation of (personal) benefits.

This study, by extension, adopts an approach advanced by cognitive studies of emotions in which attention is on the situational character of expressed emotions. Lazarus, Averill, and Opton (1970) argued that "it is necessary to ask two questions: First, what is *the nature of the cognitions* (or appraisals) which underlie separate emotional reactions (e.g, fear, guilt, grief, joy, etc.). Second, what are the determining *antecedent conditions* of *these cognitions.* Since the analysis is relational or transactional the determining conditions must be of two types: *situational* (referring to environmental factors) and *dispositional* (referring to the psychological structure of the individual, e. g. his beliefs, attitudes, personality traits, etc.) (1970, 218--219, emphasis in original; found in Kemper 1978, 10).

More specifically, the main components of the operational definition of emotions are:[151] (*dispositional*) a) the actor's evaluation of the context or specific stimulus coming from outside, (*situational*) b) the stimulus is directly responsible for change in physiological sensations, c) the sensations in turn cause the display of "expressive gestures," d) gestures are often culturally specific and therefore dependant on contextual dynamics (Thoits 1989,

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[150] To clarify further: a motivational process has been described as a transformative process through which a social agent goes from a stage of inaction to action and in which (secondary) emotions are considered to be largely culture-specific and therefore more sensitive to social dynamics (e.g. guilt, pride, shame etc.). These emotions are considered to be expressions and consequences of the environment (i.e. products of social construction), so emotions represent a specific set of shared meanings between individual agents.
[151] The definition is based on previous research by Peggy Thoits (1989) and the discussion of her definitional efforts in Aminzade *et al* 2001, introduction).

318)[152], e) lastly emotions are thoughts which are embodied within each social actor (*dispositional*) and "structured by our forms of understanding" (Rosaldo 1984, 143).

As was noted in the introduction, emotions are an essential part of both individual and collective action. They are in turn intrinsically linked to an individual's understanding of morality and ethics, which are closely connected to their emotional state in any particular moment (Barbalet 2008, 132). Emotions in collective action, however, have much to do with interpersonal solidarity, often amalgamated and emphasized by cultural traditions of a concerned group or organization (see section 2.2). For instance, if one takes a virtual tour of different Islamist activist blogs and facebook groups it is possible to distinguish a pattern of emotionally charged debates wherein the desire to change the present state of (socio-political) affairs is underlined in most posts. These online debates have usually been propelled by images, news reports and materials provided by other media outlets (Eyerman 2006, 206-207).

Moreover, these debates often include details of individual suffering at the hands of the regime or collective feelings of humiliation deriving from the same source. Often, in return, these online statements are amplified through additional comments and personal examples of encounters with the state authorities.[153] Such patterns of online proclamations presumably tap into the (personal and moral) sensitivities of fellow activists, which reinforces the general sense of sympathy and solidarity (Collins 1990, 28; (Thompson 2006, 45).

Solidarity is a situational emotion and essentially points toward different agents' explicit responses to each other's behavior and experiences where similitude, friendship, love, loyalty etc. represent the social reciprocality of emotions (see Goodwin *et al* 2000, 77). Solidarity therefore acts as an important amalgamator of intra-group cohesion. Moreover, solidarity becomes the shared emotion felt by activists that is continuously reinforced by their relation to an external actor (i.e. the repressive regime) (interviews no. 1, 6, 15, 24).

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[152] "Emotions can be distinguished from feelings, affects, moods, and sentiments" (Thoirs 1989, 318).

[153] See www.ikhwanbook.com; facebook groups such as "We are all Khaled Saeed," "Alexandria's martyr," "Day of Wrath;" blogs such as arwaya.net, ana-ikhwan.blogspot.com, al-ghareeb.blogspot.com (accessed irregularly between December 2009-March 2011)

Furthermore, the role of dispositional emotions such as fear and hate, are analyzed through activist narratives in relation to their motivation to mobilize in a particular social movement organization despite high personal risks. The initial assumption made in the introduction is that fear and hate are negative social incentives and often crucial for our decision-making processes (see Elster 2007). A dispositional element of emotions is connected to activists' cognitive processes and their individual considerations about how to overcome these negative incentives.

It is important to point out that the MB's internal tensions between activists of different generational cohorts (section 5.5) are largely reduced by the customary exchanging of opinions, meetings, discussions, and primarily through discursive appeals to each other's dispositional emotions. Even though this exchange and listening process does not produce significant operational changes, desired foremostly by the youth members, it does reduce inter-personal tensions. For instance, a relative high-level of tension is continuous within the SMO (at least, during the course of this study). This can partly explain the relatively few organizational ruptures or mass-exodus of activists. A notable exception is the split in 1996, leading to the formation of *Hizb Al-Wasat*, section 5.5.

Moreover, the differences between the youth activists themselves have most effectively been bridged through the invocation of situational emotions such as the necessity of solidarity and internal cohesion in the face of external coercion. Organizational mechanisms such as *usrah*-meetings, general discussion groups, religious study circles, and the meddling of senior activists have been of immense importance in the transmission and amplification of such emotions. These mechanisms of organized mediation and negotiation have largely been successful in preventing organizational fall-out. Moreover, subsequent regime repression contained fragmentation, and in turn, it added to the solidification of the MB's Islamist mobilization. In other words, external pressure added to overall suppression of the group's internal disagreements. Shared situational emotions concerning the external antagonist have therefore played a major role in creating a shared sense of solidarity and meaning among an otherwise diverse group of activists.

8.2 Dissent and Emotions

Taking the previous argument of the role of emotions in motivation for social mobilization further, one needs to look into culturally specific forms of emotional expression. Here such specificities are viewed through the observation of activists' daily practices. In order to tap into this emotional capacity it is necessary to include the social movement organization's ideological and operational framing of emotions (partially mentioned in sections 1.5, 4.5, 6.5). How and when are activists targeted through primarily discursive and practical organizational tools designed by the leadership? This is the situational side of the construct of emotion (habitus) which is usually, but not exclusively, shared by groups of social actors in close proximity.

For this reason, one of the initial assumptions of this study is that activists are bonded by collectively shared emotions and moral constructs (i.e. general beliefs about life, such as religious beliefs), usually designed by an existing social movement organization. These in turn stimulate inter-personal solidarity and cohesion in a way which gives meaning to the participants. The study highlights two important emotions connected to social actors' decision to mobilize, namely the emotions of fear and hate. Both of these emotions are apparently negative emotions and both are present in social actors before they become activists as either a motivating or inhibiting factor for mobilization. The question therefore remains, is there any coherent pattern of (positive/negative) emotional stimuli observable in individual activist narratives? If so, what can explain social actors overcoming their fears? Is hate motivation enough in social actors' decision to become activists?

Another aspect by which one may analyze the role of emotions in the motivation process is through a more direct approach, namely the disentangling of individual agent narratives. During the course of this study a massive amount of discursive data concerning activists' collectively shared emotional experiences has been collected. This has been done because emotions are an inseparable part of the narrative and thus activists' discourse.

Building on the conceptual framework discussed in section 1.5, it is useful to note Polletta's claims regarding the importance of emotions. "[E]motions may *be* narrative. When someone slights us, we feel like the scrawny man having sand kicked in his face.

We know that anger calls for revenge, shame for redemption, and embarrassment for action to restore one's dignity because of the stories we have heard over and over again in which those responses are thematized. Emotions are thus configured by canonical plots, plots that we glean from novels, films, advertisements, songs, and so on. Stories provide a guide to our own feelings" (2006, 195). In order to coherently connect emotions to actors' motivations it is important to analyze activist narratives.

Narratives present a wider scope of analysis while traditional discourse analysis often focuses on explicit terms, and therefore risks missing the interconnectedness between specific and general expressions of the narrative (Robinson and Hawpe 1986, 122). The analysis of emotions within activist narratives offers an opportunity to sort out emotional expressions[154] (see Burger and Miller 1999) with a specific focus on activists' fear and hate (for the regime). Furthermore, narratives offer solid representations of human experiences within a particular context; they bond and construct a meaningful (discursive) explanation (Boudens 2005, 1288), and as such offer a nearly holistic insight into, in this case, activists' behavior and its justifications.

Individual activists clearly react to each other's behavior and thus exchange their emotions within a social movement organization. Jasper argues that collective emotions can be viewed through a dual analytical prism. Firstly there are affective emotions which can be described as the dispositional side of emotions. Affective emotions are those such as love, trust and respect. Such emotions "are examples of affects with an enormous impact on political action. We have deep tendencies to trust certain individuals, groups, and institutions but not others, and many of our allegiances, alliances" (Jasper 1998, 402). Affection is thus developed through affiliation and interaction with others who, as we have seen above, have a tendency to share particular beliefs, desires, worldview etc. Secondly, Jasper argues, emotions may be reactive and on the opposite side from affective emotions on the emotional continuum (1998, 402). Reactive emotions fall, by and large, into the previous category of situational emotions and are largely described as volatile or transient and include impulsive emotions such as anger, outrage, grief etc. (Jaspers 1998, 406).

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[154] Expressions considered here are both verbal and nonverbal (e.g. specific shifts in the tone of voice, physical expressions, choice of words, silence and pauses during the conversation or interview etc.).

The interviewed youth activists recounted that during the recruitment process their emotional states changed, in some cases, from extreme reluctance towards activism in general to intense sympathy and even love and devotion for the MB's ideas and its actions (interviews no 8, 24). Moreover, this notion of the situational character of reactive emotions is further specified by Jasper into "reciprocal" and "shared" emotions, signifying the complexity of collective or in-group feelings. Reciprocal reactive emotions are those of solidarity, interpersonal affection, loyalty etc. Shared reactive emotions are those collectively shared by the members of the group, such as distrust and suspicion of outsiders (e.g. regime authorities, socio-political opponents, economic elites etc.). In other words, shared reactive emotions are those collective feelings that activists hold in relation to their antagonist(s) (Jasper 1998, 417-418; also in Goodwin *et al* 2000, 77).

An example of reactive shared emotions is demonstrated by a 29-year-old member and a well-known figure among the youth activists residing in Nasr City. He explained his feelings in relation to the military trials of Kharat Al-Shater and Hassan Malik in 2007. "Living through injustice, it is a very painful experience. [The struggle of] changing the regime is now an obligation, for the sake of all of us." In response to the question, does he feel hate, he answered, "Certainly, hate towards those who are destroying society and this country. Killing even the dreams of the people [i.e. the regime]." He points out the blatant attack by the state authorities on people who were, as he formulates it, "honest and righteous" (i.e. Al-Shater and Malik), and how that reinforces his image of the regime's total disrespect for human rights (interview no. 15). Hate here is an explicit response to regime actions, which were perceived as unjust and deeply offensive. This was an emotional response given by several other activists (interviews no. 8, 11, 29).

Another activist, who during the interview remained calm and observably discontented, remembered his time in jail for the first time in 1998[155] where he remained for two weeks. "The toughest time is… when you don't know why and how long you'll be there. The beatings are always present and it varies… from guard [interrogator] to guard and his mood, I guess." The guards were, as reported by other activists, cautioning him to stay away from the Muslim Brotherhood, and concentrate instead on his studies, indicating the

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[155] He was jailed, for longer periods, on two other occasions in 2002 and 2003.

fruitlessness of activism. Prison personnel explicitly stated that continued activism would destroy his future (interview no. 16).

After being asked if he considered the option of ceasing his activism, he replied: "Everyone who joins the Brotherhood is aware of the dangers and that there will be a lot of sacrifices. And… there is a price to pay. I'm willing to give whatever it takes, and I believe that all Brothers [activists] think the same […] Patience is a beautiful thing, and we have lots of it." The activist's emotions represent the reciprocal dimension of emotional support to endure coercion with patience alluding to a general sense of awareness of the dangers of mobilization. This is again connected to organizational historical experiences, where activists' sense of solidarity and, oft-repeated encouragement of patience reinforce their sense of duty toward social change (see section 4.5).

After discussing fears and the consequences of activism, the activist (interview no. 16) reassured himself that all difficulties will come and pass, "I therefore don't think much about dangers and fears." He argued that Muslims [alluding to his non-activist friends] do not mobilize out of fear of the regime's actions. "The argument of most of the people [in Egypt] is just that, they are afraid of the consequences of what might happen [to them] and their families." His consideration and opinion of nonactivists can be interpreted as sympathetic to the public's concerns, which are based on the harsh realities of regime repression of any form of dissent. On the other hand, he indirectly points towards his own commitment and duty to mobilize against a "tyrannical regime".

The following question was therefore connected to the MB activists' efforts to persuade non-activists to join: 'what is the MB strategy to recruit people?' One particular activist responded: "The usual answer of the [MB] leaders is that 'we all will pass through difficulties [e.g. torture, imprisonment, humiliation], which we need to overcome.' But, the *Ikhwan* [MB] does not focus much on this problem [i.e. difficulties]. This [state of persuasive mobilization efforts] will change [once] the Brotherhood [attains] legitimacy in the eyes of the people, when people are aware of public affairs." He continued: "people must be aware that their poverty is dependent on the corrupt political system… and that their lives will not change until we achieve democracy and we change the system." In passing, he mentioned Turkey as a successful example, where guided social mobilization brought public awareness to the point of massive political engagement and subsequent

socio-political change. Feelings of discontent and deep felt resentment of the regime permeated his narrative exposing the rooted discontent shared by other interviewees (interviews no. 1, 6, 11, 14, 16).

Firstly, his personal (physical as well as psychological) experiences have been translated into feelings of social responsibility and personal duty inciting engagement into apparently dangerous action (i.e. situational/reactive, shared emotions). Secondly, his choice of mobilizing with the MB is indicative of the organizational targeting of specific audiences, who are morally sensitive, frustrated with the regime, and ideologically aligned with the organization (dispositional emotions). For instance, this activist's desire for freedom and a plural political system (concepts developed and imported from outside of his own cultural context) is evident, and is something adopted by the organization. Thirdly, cultural tools such as religious commitment to the MB's version of Islamism and middle-class identity has apparently helped to synchronize his moral ideals, personal grievances, ideological beliefs and feelings of solidarity with the rest of the society into a resolute commitment to activism.

Another fully-fledged activist of the MB, then in his late-twenties, who was a financial manager employed in the private sector explained his feelings toward the regime. "I saw my father, a respected public figure, who just days before his trip to *hajj* [religious pilgrimage to Mecca] gave a great amount of money to charity [to the poor]… five hundred families were [dependent] on his [continuous] donations… I saw him… being arrested [by the SSIS agents] at the door of the airplane [bound for pilgrimage]. He was dressed in *al-ihram*[156] the purest of the pure, I saw him… uhmm, [I'm] twenty-four [years old], I never saw him do a bad thing. And on the other side I saw somebody [regime agent] who does all the bad things" (interview no. 15).

His voice revealed an emotional uneasiness and a deep sense of sympathy for his father.[157] He came across as deeply moved, firstly by his father's determination to do that which is considered to be righteous. Secondly, his perception that the regime represents the

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[156] *Al-Ihram* is white clothing worn by pilgrims made out of two pieces of cloth, one for the lower part of the body and the other used as a garment for the upper part. This indicates that he is a pilgrim and wearing white so as to be purified by the pilgrimage rituals. The religious sensitivity is high as a person wearing such ritual clothing is under strict rules not to use any form of violence or commit any other religiously "disliked" act.

[157] A high-ranking member of the MB (the Guidance Bureau)

diametrical opposite of his father - a coercive force, repressing what he perceived as morally righteous and ethically good. He continued, "I'm not alone, the whole nation is against [the regime]. So, I'll win in the end." This proclamation refers to his perception of widespread social grievance just waiting to turn into a popular dissent, which further adds to his self-assurance of mobilization success (a situational emotional state where shared emotions motivate his feelings of resistance). Moreover, his conviction that the MB's form of Islamism is "the right path" for socio-political change could be a result of his personal background. His family's activist commitment, his upbringing, and organizational training (*tarbiyyah*) have all shaped his explicitly resonant stance against the regime (see section 5.3). The role of the organization in shaping both reciprocal and shared emotions is indispensable. This argument is expanded below.

Other activists, such as two sisters from Cairo's middle class neighborhood of Al-Ma'adi, 23 and 18 years old,[158] show similar manners of conviction when they answered the question, 'are you afraid of what the police might do to you if you are arrested?' They both answered: "We've been arrested, by the way. The police locked us in a room at the police station. We were shaking [out of fear]! But, we didn't show them. They [the MB] taught us not to show fear [to the authorities]. They taught us not to cry in front these… black clothed [CSF officers]... Yes, they [the MB] teach us to be strong, so as you get stronger they [the authorities] get weaker. We were yelling so hard that they became softer, talking calmly with us." The two sisters called some of the male activists who came and showed their support by rapidly setting up a small demonstration in front of the police outpost. The matter was solved in a matter of hours and they were released (interviews no. 24, 25).[159]

According to their narratives, the result of the incident was that the two sisters became even more confident of their activism. It seems that the rapid response from the organization (i.e. the two Muslim Brotherhood MPs arrival at the police station) strengthened the female activists' feeling of belonging, solidarity and community that is well prepared for such incidents and where camaraderie is highly valued. According to

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[158] The two sisters' background deviates from other activists as they were born and brought up in Pakistan and Malaysia (respectively), due to their fathers' exile from Egypt during the early 1990s for his role and membership in the MB. They became conscious members of the MB when they returned to Egypt three years prior to this interview.
[159] This event was previously described by another female activist who was incarcerated with the two sisters (interview no. 6).

the two sisters, the process of overcoming an intense sensation of fear and its physical symptoms (e.g. shaking, crying, clinching their limbs etc.) was a rewarding experience. It added to their confidence as activists, as they were supported both by other activists (who were quick in organizing a small protest outside of the prison) and by the intervention of the leading members which resulted in their hasty release. This deeply felt sensation of emotional strength is a recurring theme in the interviewed activists' narratives (interviews no. 2, 17, 21).[160]

The two sisters continued to describe the experiences of their first activist demonstration: "During our first demonstration, or just before it, we went around the campus, speaking to other students about the cause we were protesting for, and that felt really nice… We were doing something concrete informing others about the Brotherhood, and who we are […] Another time is when we protested and there were some people who came and took pictures of [demonstrators], to later send them to the police, and then there were Brothers who came and protected us from [them]. It feels really nice, when they protect you and they don't know you, your name or anything about you, but they still protect you from people that might put you in danger… that was nice."

Their feelings of belonging, solidarity, and sacrifice merged and coalesced in this situation where physical protection prevailed over personal unfamiliarity. Their feelings of "doing good" for the community and the sympathy from fellow activists played an important role in their everyday commitment to the MB. During the interviews, the two sisters mentioned several times the importance of their everyday activism, which they explained is a lifestyle, just like being a Muslim believer who performs his/her daily rituals. Added to this, the majority of the interviewed activists explained that the MB offers them "the best method of Islamic practices", where "the Muslim is built from the inside [out], rather than [starting] from the outside." Their narratives indicated several dimensions of motivational capital emerging from the MB's mobilization. Firstly, there was consistency in the explanatory belief discourses, this is again the *shumuliyyah* argument (see section 5.6.1). Secondly, their emotional commitment to the organization is based on their positive

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[160] The regime authorities, on the other hand, presumably considered their action (i.e. the detaining of the female activists due to their refusal to hand over maps with organization documents) as a minor offense as the reaction of the MB seemed to be attracting much political and public attention. The price of negative publicity seemed to be too costly in comparison to the benefit they could obtain from the information entrusted to low-level activists.

experience and explained through both dispositional and situational emotions. Thirdly, the organization's role in framing activists' emotional experiences is well worth noting.

For instance, the MB activists are informed by other activists about what to expect in the form of regime coercion during the course of different activities. They are also taught how to mentally prepare for different types of regime sanctions towards them. The MB's facilitation of training and instruction together with close cooperation between activists is a form of communal care, solidarity and belonging to what they conceive as the representatives of [moral] good which contain the highest emotional value to these activists.

In a focus-group interview with four MB female activists at the University of Cairo[161] the activists recounted numerous example of the authorities' abuses they themselves had suffered from, and the physical maltreatment the male members had experienced during their incarceration. At the same time, these female activists were eager to stress how these experiences (both personal and those of their fellow activists) strengthened their resolve and feelings of commitment to "resist injustice".

Nevertheless, the activists all agreed that *fear* is one of the major factors that makes people reluctant to join the MB. According to them, the reformation of Egyptian society begins with the reformation of the individual and overcoming the fear of personal safety for the good of the rest of the society. A similar statement was given by Ibrahim al-Houdaybi[162] in an interview in Cairo, where he explained that the strategy of the MB is to build up a strong individual commitment to the cause (overcoming fear), which would automatically translate into the reformation of families.[163] After such a transformation of "social building blocks", civil society would begin to transform into a powerful oppositional force through social interaction of committed individuals (e.g. activists) in, for instance, mosques and work places etc. It is thereafter that the state institutions would successfully

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[161] The interviewees were female students of Mass Communication, a 19 year-old activist from Alexandria, a 20 year-old activist from Cairo, a 19 year-old activist from Kafer Al Sheikh, and a 20 year-old activist from Cairo. The activists refused to be taped, for that reason there are no direct quotes recorded, only interview notes.

[162] A 29 year old activist, who is the great-grandson of the second General Guide of the MB and a well-known figure within the movement and a wider circle of Egyptian public figures.

[163] It is important to consider that Egyptian society is culturally and religiously (Muslim and Christian) highly traditional when it comes to family life, which indicates that the overwhelming majority of young people are married or intend to marry.

be reshaped according to the will of the people. This outline of the MB's overall strategy was first formulated by Al-Banna and it seems still highly relevant for young activists today.

The female activists were keen to point out that one of the key features of their activism was to introduce the MB's main principles, its socio-political program, and mobilization strategy to the public. Their role has been to convince others to actively pursue the MB's goals and objectives in accordance with their ideals, which falls into the framework of the MB's strategy. These *qawaafil* or "training" efforts were all directed towards targeted sympathizers whereby the activists focused on reducing fear through a wide range of arguments. The leadership, on the other hand, had consciously encouraged the youth activists to fulfill their duties as recruiters and not to dwell too much on organizational issues (outside of their operational tasks), something which some of the reformer activists usually criticize.

The female activists in this interview came across as more religiously conservative than previously interviewed members. Three of them were openly critical of the reformist youth (see section 5.5). They expressed a strong dislike of those who call for the adoption of, what is perceived as, foreign concepts such as a "Western-style" multi-party electoral system. They believed that such a principle already existed in the Islamic tradition, and that is the concept of *shurah*, consultation of the political leadership in matters of public (state) concern. They also felt that "reformist" activists have been "corrupting" the organization from within, viewing them with great suspicion. The main point of their critique had been that "reformists" had a compromising attitude when dealing with the MB's basic principles (i.e. establishing a *sharia´ah* based political system). Moreover, they pointed out that the religious scholars are those who would have influence over the judicial framework making sure that the law is compatible with the basic principles of Islam.

Regarding their fears, they all expressed that they are minimal. This, they explained, is due to their conviction that what they do is a religious obligation and thus grounded in an emotional attachment to their personal (and shared) beliefs. They conceived of their activities as unavoidably risky which would make "anyone apprehensive"; however, such negative emotions needed to be overcome by not allowing them to dominate one's

choices. The organizational structure and its function is to train activists to overcome these negative emotions by stressing the "necessity" and "sacredness" of their mission. Moreover, negative emotions seem to be overcome through a group dynamic where senior members act as mentors and examples to younger activists who feel encouraged by the support and attention received by others (interview no. 8).

After the focus group interview, the eldest among the female activists and the most vocal in the group asked that her name should not be made public in the study as it might affect her future employment.[164] She was attempting to apply for a position in a government-owned corporation. Such unintended effects of the meeting with a group of activists reveals the complexity of activism in general, and dissent in an authoritarian state in particular. Strong allegiance to the MB's values, strategies, activism and its ideas did not prevent this activist, and surely many more, to reserve her right to choose how, where and when her commitment to activism can be made public.

Data obtained from the interviews with youth activists demonstrated that regime coercion is a mobilization obstacle, mainly for sympathizers of the MB as it instills negative emotions, namely fear. Repression has a deterring effect on sympathizers as they observe the MB activists being subjected to various forms of (physical and mental) sanctions, intimidation, and persecution. However, once recruited, activists' commitments seem to be strengthened by the regime's repressive actions. Here, organizational conditioning and group dynamics have a large influence. Initially many of the interviewed activists admitted that the feeling of fear had incapacitated them from actively engaging in the organization's activities. However, they suppressed such fears by inducing feelings of hope that they will pass, primarily though talking and discussing with their *usrah* leader and reading the organization's propaganda materials.

The activists explained that their emotions of fear and anger were expressed though a "sensible" and "correct" understanding shaped largely by *tarbiyyah*; the MB's organizational training efforts. Moreover, during the interviews it had been clear that

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[164] The standard agreement between the interviewer and the interviewed activists was that their names would not be made public, regardless of whether they approved of it. This choice was based on the assuumption that activists would be more willing to accept to be interviewed if anonymity was promised from the start. Moreover, the guiding ethical principles adopted in the frame of the qualitative research interviews suggested such a course of action. The standard agreement/letter of introduction was constructed so as to include such principles. For details see Appendix IV.

senior members (rank of *´amil*) had more structured responses often expressed through religious terminology. Less senior activists (ranks of *mu'ayyid* and *muntasib*) were more spontaneous in their responses, emphasizing the initial shock induced by arrest and beatings. The process of overcoming this fear and controlling the anger can be partly attributed to the preparatory stages of their activism, *tarbiyyah*. The activists later described a stage of overcoming their fear as an exhilarating event followed by feelings of relief (that the fear subsided) and an increased level of commitment against the regime.

The activists told of maltreatment and beatings, and what they perceived as unjust imprisonment, harassment, and sanctions,[165] as a result of the regime's "fear,"[166] its incompetence, and corruption. All the activists I interviewed who were subjected to abuse (e.g. torture), expressed, in different ways, that their resoluteness to mobilize became stronger after the abuse. Even when asked if they were willing to pay the ultimate price (i.e. death) for mobilizing, the vast majority of them answered in the affirmative (interviews no. 1, 2, 3, 6, 8, 10, 15, 17, 21 and others). These answers are given to highlight the gravity of their conscious mobilization choices and their personal commitment to the MB's cause.

In sum, the activists' shared emotions of fear and anger felt individually and induced by their interaction with the repressive regime are channeled through an organizational framework. The interpretation of collected data points to a conclusion where one can understand that their collective emotional experiences are indeed reflected in their common commitment to the same organizational principles and strategies. What is more, the similar social context that the vast majority of youth activists share, that is; (aspiring) middle class, university educated, religiously conservative families with (close or distant) family ties to the organization, positive personal experiences with other activists and, at the same time, negative personal experiences with the regime authorities, all shape personally felt emotions into a collectively expressed convention of fear (and anger).

The interviewed activists' commitment, which in itself is a feeling of attachment to a certain set of principles, acts as a nexus of firstly, individual desires toward the fulfillment

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[165] Sanctions can be in the form of individual suspensions from their work place or studies, or even the seizure of financial assets etc.

[166] The activists view the regime as powerless in countering the MB's ideas and their alternative solutions to the underdevelopment of society.

of personal goals stemming from a particular set of beliefs and the perception or direct experience of inequality/injustice. And secondly, it is a nexus of an individual actor's enjoyment and drive toward experiencing solidarity, communality and altruism felt in a group. This might be a way of releasing emotional tension between the desire for (either personal of social) change and a sense of helplessness in initiating this change.[167] Thirdly, and noted previously, faith-based community presents an individual with a strong sense of purpose. Within this explanatory framework another necessary factor plays a role in motivating individual agents to mobilize, namely the desire to belong to a social group.

Conclusion

Regarding the role of emotions in motivating individuals to participate in high-risk mobilization it became clearer that situational and dispositional emotions had simultaneous effects on their choices. The former relates directly to the external effects on individually experienced emotions, the latter, on the other hand, refers to personal attitudes and emotional experiences related directly to interpersonal interactions. The activists' sense of solidarity toward their comrades is one central situational emotion which came to dominate their choice to mobilize. This became clearer as the activist interacted with other members through the intimacy of *usrah*-related activities. The threat and reality of state coercion seemed only to reinforce their initial feelings of solidarity, friendship and "spirit of brotherhood" as expressed by one of the activists (interview no. 10). Lastly, it is important to mention the emotions of moral superiority that came to the surface during the interviews. Such feelings of a sacred mission did not dominate the activists' narratives, nevertheless it is important to highlight their significance.

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[167] It is appropriate to mention the concept of self-realization as one of the factors in the desire/belief argumentation which is closely connected to the emotionality of social agents (see section 1.5). Nevertheless, the continuous contemplation of individual agents living in an authoritarian state involved multiple levels of contemplation including the capacities of such agents to engage in intellectual deliberation. Emotions are therefore highly important as a motivating factor, mainly due to their complex and interdependent relation with beliefs and the identity of a person.

9   Motivation and Identity

Introduction

Identity is the third element of the constructed motivational framework (section 1.5). As noted previously, scholars of social movements have acknowledged the vital importance of identities in organized social action (Mellucci, 1989, 31; Benford 1997; Meyer and Jepperson 2000; della Porta and Diani 2006). Other scholars have focused on religious identities which, according to the Durkhemian explanation, are voluntary and bring with them a certain set of responsibilities and expectations (see Casanova 1994). Yet others put forward the notion of a distinct identity as a demarcation from the rest of the society (Castells 2004), similar to historical Jewish identity as a minority living among the gentile majority (Levitt 2007, 220).

The notion of identity is very closely linked with the process of motivation as it (re)presents an individual activist's sense of group belonging (i.e. finding one's place in the world). By exploring the individual understanding of a collectively constructed sense of identity, it is possible to, at least partially, re-construct activists' sense of continuity, on the one hand, and possible fragmentation of identity, on the other. As discussed in the preceding chapter, generationally rooted tensions within the MB in effect reflect identity related strains which threaten the entire organization's temporal continuity and internal cohesiveness.[168] Identity, it can be argued, accentuates activists' links and sense of belonging to a group of like-minded individuals.

What is even more important is the performative aspect of collective identity. This aspect of identity emphasizes an understanding that actors are not socially equal and that each segment of the population has its markers that (symbolically) set them apart from others (McCall and Simmons 1978, 233). Hence, the contextual 'tool-box' includes identity labels,

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[168] For a broader discussion on the similar topic of continuity and SMO cohesiveness see Meyer *et al*, 2002.

cultural signifiers and socio-political aspirations that produce a range of identity structures. In the case of MB activists, there is a heavy cultural marker of religious everyday practice including class consciousness (both through advanced economic status and a level of educational competence). Moreover, without commonly agreed general goals and strategies this collective identity would dissipate and eventually be without content.

Thus far this study has partly demonstrated that the meso-level Islamist mobilization process utilizes religious traditions as a reference point from which activists derive common norms, solutions (to perceived social ills) and even justifications for their mobilization strategies. Personal beliefs are translated into everyday expressions of faith wherein practices are inspired (or ordained) by religiously inspired training (*tarbiyyah*).

9.1 Interpreting Motivation through Identity

In social movement studies, it is possible to consider (collective) identities both as *prerequisites* and *outcomes* of movement accomplishments (see Buechler 1993). This is similar to the role of emotions. Presumably, a strong relational bond between activists within an organization produces an overarching feeling of *us*, which is often reinforced through "collective public displays" group unity, inter-personal solidarity and self-worth. Communal or collective identities are often "embedded" in the everyday lives of activists (see McAdam *et al* 2001) and highly important to explore.

The Islamists of the MB and others are keen on presenting themselves as propagators of the well-being of the *Ummah* (the Islamic nation) and *al-Jama'ah* (the community of believers), indirectly indicating a specific delineation between Muslims and non-Muslims, or those who are a part of the community and those outside (sections 1.4; 2.1; 3.3). The youth activists I interviewed presented themselves as *ikhwan* (Muslim Brothers) and *islamiyyun* (Islamists), which are the two main identity labels used by the activists. The adoption of a particular collective identity, if one adopts the desire-belief framework, entails adopting (what might be thought of as) an ideal identity, or "collective agency" (Snow 2001, 2213). Nevertheless, identity here is treated, not as a fastidious goal, but as a product or a consequence of an actor's desire to achieve both individual and social change.

Having in mind these arguments, it is important to ask questions that activists are most likely asking themselves: what is the goal of activism and how can I reach these goals? For this reason it is necessary to probe the role of (collective) identity in activists' motivational framework. This indirectly suggests an inquiry into a person's reason(s) behind the choice to delineate oneself from the rest of the population in terms of their discursive and practical performances. When such a process of delineation becomes collective we can talk about collective identity which is ultimately constructed through social interaction and centered on "the ends, means and field of action" (Mellucci 1995, 44). Here the collectivity of identity is viewed as positive and therefore desirable by individual agents and thus worth pursuing (motivating feature). In addition, the interviewed activists had claimed that their perception of the completeness of the MB's identity has been reflected in its activists' pro-active and responsible social role. This essentially drives forth many of the sympathizers' identification with the those people they see as (morally) responsible and organized.

9.2 Islamist Identity

What is noteworthy with the MB's youth activists is the awareness with which they narrated their mobilization process. Their conscious choice and persistence to become an active member of the organization reveals their understanding about their Islamist identity as being constructed and consciously adopted during the mobilization process (interviews no. 1, 21, 29). According to the activists, social change starts with a change in one's own life-style and outlook on social reality (interview no. 2). It can further be argued that the process of identification deepens through a shared sense of solidarity with a particular community of believers – a profoundly motivating concept, as it is exemplified by activists' everyday lives.

For instance, an outcome of the identification process is observed (by outsiders) and felt (by protagonists) to create an overarching collective identity (see Buechler 1993). It is, however, difficult (even possible) to distinguish successfully between the two sides of

identity development (process and outcome).[169] Collective identity hence reminds us of a socializing process by which social actors seem to define their own purpose, and which is directly linked to these actors' everyday practices (see McAdam *et al* 2001; Tuğal 2009). Consequently, identification process (chapter 1) of the MB's activists offers an insight into what can be described as organizationally desired collective agency, thus a motivating element of collective identity.[170]

The interviewed activists' notions of value and their moral judgments of right and wrong are constantly shifting and can seldom be considered as static (interviews 2, 8, 10, 13, 21). The formation of initial personal moral values starts in adolescence in the family and is later shaped by the social environment and collective associations. Fromm argues that "[t]he value judgments we make determine our actions, and upon their validity rests our mental health and happiness" (1986 [1949], viii). It seems that the ability to make these moral decisions depends much upon the agent's early psychosocial conditioning, out of which identity is essential part of.

For instance, most of the interviewed MB activists have family members who have been members of the organization, and even if all of these activists were keen on emphasizing that they made their own informed choice to become an activist, one must assume that their relative(s) had an impact on their decision. A sense of independence and individual sense of identity is clearly (intellectually) tangible in the activists' narratives. What is more, the activists highlighted the MB's presentation of an Islamic life-style, its comprehensives and compromising tone as desirable and worth pursuing. They were all asked the question, "why are you a MB activist?"[171] One of the two interviewed "sister" activists responded, "I liked their ideas, I liked the environment." Lifestyle, environment, and (the MB specific "Islamic") ideas all play a role in the attraction of the aspiring middle

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[169] For the purpose of this study, with regard to actors' motivation, it is not essential to discern the two aspects of identity formation as it would not add much clarity to our overall understanding. Furthermore, it can be claimed that the successful (and clear) analytical separation of the two parts of collective identity is unachievable.

[170] Snow (2001) and other scholars mention both Durkheim's "collective conscience" and Marx's "class consciousness" as concepts which are related to collective identity and indeed precursors of such sociological constructs.

[171] The question was posed so that it was understandable by the interviewee, as it is the most common way of referring to MB activists (be they female of male), it simply translates as 'why are you an activist?'

classes as it appeals to their socio-economic and religiously conservative background, as well as the tone of the ideological message (interview no. 24).

The female activist seemed to be captivated by the sense of the harmonious coexistence of religious practice (described as upholding good morals etc.), on the one side, and entertainment and a relaxed atmosphere, on the other. She emphasized that "they [the MB activists] were not as rigid and impersonal as the salafis… they had many activities and it was never boring." Here the means of activism appealed more than other groups. The MB's sense of community and their inclusivity denuded the perception of religious stringency, thus alluding to their progressive Islamic identity. Here again the ideals of *shumuliyyah* are central. The ideal type of the Islamic practices, gender roles, and most importantly socio-political engagement are, according to both female and male activists central to their sustained engagement in the MB's activism.

Another activist, a 35-year-old male from the rural town of Abu Kabir answered the question "why are you a Brother"? by declaring his ideological conviction: "I was convinced by the MB's ideas … These ideas are held by a large number of people and these people were exemplary in their [moral] behavior and their defiance against the government." He further clarified his explanation noting that the senior MB activists represented an ideal-type Muslim. Their lifestyle and mobilization for, what he described as, superior moral values represented the completeness of (Islamic) religious practice. He used the word *shumuliyyah*[172] to formulate his description, a term used by several other activists (not acquainted with him) when answering the same question. This account indicates the activist's attraction to the MB's collective identity due to its specific holistic lifestyle. Other activists pointed out this very same feature as the central reason for their involvement with the MB (interviews no. 2, 8, 29).

The two sister activists (interviews no. 24, 25) described the process by which they select potential recruits for the organization. This is primarily done on their university campus. "We pick the girls who are ready to change." Meaning that they approach with their message those individual females they perceive look and "think" like themselves. The two sisters explain that these individuals are those who are interested in issues of religion and who they *identify* as potential "*ikhwan*" (or rather *akhawat*). This process of selection

[172] Often translated as universality or universal.

has been described as *qawafil*, trailing or leading, and essentially signifies organizationally instituted guidance of sympathizers. Initially this means that the potential candidates for recruitment has spoken about their wishes to be better religious practitioners, part of a "righteous" group (*jama'ah*), or those who simply wish to be more observant of moral duties – all identity shaping concepts. The entire process (*qawafil*) is situated in an environment, here a university campus, where a familiar field of social interactions brings with it a range of identity/social markers needed to successfully approach a sympathizer or a potential activist.

Another activist, a 35-year-old male from Cairo and a member of the Managerial Office and its educational department as well as being the organization's media strategist, explains that he joined the organization when he was 22 (interview no. 17). This is unusually late in comparison to the vast majority of the other activists interviewed who usually joined during their late teens. He pointed out that, prior to deciding to join the MB, he was seeking a group of people (i.e. organization) through which he could express his dissent against the regime – in other words, he was seeking to adopt a personally suitable (collective) identity. Moreover, he explained that he searched for groups he thought would fit his personality. "The main reason I joined [the MB] was because of religious reasons. Previously, I had experiences with Marxist groups at my old university [University of Al-Mansura, department of Engineering]. But when questions about religion came up, those questions were avoided. At the time the only [organized] people were the *Ikhwan* [Brothers]… the *salafis* were active at the time as well, but they were closed [minded], and [their adherents' behavior] didn't fit my personality. They were shunning politics."

The activist was actively seeking a politicized group fitting certain set of (personally desired) qualities. He therefore "entered" the space of collective action (i.e. university campus). Moreover, he identified a particular (identifiably) distinguished group (the MB) which he could relate to. In other words, his self-image allowed him to see some the MB's activists as similar to or compatible with himself. His cultural conditioning aligned with the cultural framing of the MB's activists. He therefore wanted to categorize himself as distinct from other social groups (e.g. nonactivists, liberals, leftists, regime supporters etc.). It must be added that the interviewed activists' perception of themselves as morally superior to their opponents, but also non-activist population in general, was deduced

from their discourse, but also their mannerisms when talking about other groups (interviews no. 2, 8, 13, 15, 17, 29). This is connected to the general understanding of their own mission as being religiously mandated. This can further be interpreted as identity driven activist behavior based on a specific shared values of a religious community (*jama'ah*).

Furthermore, when asked about the particular qualities of the group, the activist answered: "The sense of community and brotherhood, [is] a kind of psychological care. They would ask about [the situation of] those who were affected by crises [...] When one is sick, they would ask if one needed assistance. Simply, they would stand shoulder to shoulder" (interview no. 17). He continued to explain that his reading of the MB's history affected him profoundly. The most memorable parts of this history were, according to him, the high level of solidarity between the members and their perseverance during "unjust imprisonment and show trials." His positive reading of the older activists' experiences and their organizational work resulted in a high level of sympathy, which eventually produced personal commitment for the MB's ideological and strategic framework. Moreover, adopting the organization's ideas also changed his identity in as much that his personal priorites have changed complying with the community's overall image. This process of personal association, what I call identification process, with achievements of the elders developed his initial commitment and compliance with the organization's internal rules was rewarded. As a result, he climbed the organizational ladder rapidly and was then elected as a member of a regional managerial office as one of its youngest associates.

If one considers his initial interest in political dissent and his membership in first a Marxist group and later the MB, it is reasonable to assume that regime repression did not deter him. What is more, the Islamists' determination to continue their resistance in a disciplined and organized fashion, demonstrated for him admirable communal unity and venerable individual strength. This in turn made a strong impact on his choice to mobilize with the MB. Furthermore, his previously constructed personal beliefs, referring initially to his Marxist leanings (e.g. solidarity, justice and equality), and later to religion (e.g. his Muslim faith and specific moral and ethical understanding etc.) all converged in the MB. This alignment of the social agent's socio-cultural conditioning, social class, personal

desires and religious beliefs on the one side, and socio-political dissent in the form of a particular SMO, on the other side, is reflected to large extent in the identification process.

Added to this, the oft repeated term, *shumuliyyah*, "completeness" or "universality" of the MB's model of (Islamic) socio-political change summarized, for the activists, an ideal-type life-style on a personal, but also, social level. The "completeness" argument included their understanding of the MB's reform strategy which they viewed positively for its focus on reform of both the social and political "system." In connection with their praise of the organization's efficiency, the interviewed activists added that political and social transformation is possible through personal development (religious and moral piety etc.) and socio-economic development (higher education, professionalism etc.) which are all incorporated within the (interviewed) activists' identity affiliation. The identification process, wherein "completeness" argument has much siginifcance, includes these multiple identity dimensions.

For instance, a 23-year-old activist from a rural town in the Nile Delta and a zealous adherent of Al-Banna's ideas reiterated this point: "It's not about the organization, nor the structure, it's about the idea, so regardless which organization it is, if it promotes *these same ideas*, I'm there. The *Ikhwan* [MB] is just a vehicle for ideas" (interview no. 2). These and other youth activists were active interpreters of their own choices and readily engaged in debates about the meaning of their work. Their sense of identity, i.e. understanding of themselves, is highly influenced by their SMO, which initially attracted their attention through actively seeking members that fit a certain profile (e.g. a young, energetic and religiously inclined individual who opposes the regime). A collective identity can therefore be seen as a perceived representation of, firstly, outwardly identifiable commonality, and secondly, of common norms and comparable values. Values here might represent religious doctrine, an ideological framework, or any other normatively based system of thought.

This three-fold process of identification, through the SMOs goals, strategies, and mobilization, invites further consideration of the in-group/out-group dichotomy. Furthermore, and more importantly, the activists seem to enter the identification process in pursuit of self-enhancement (see McCuddy 2007). Here, they associate themselves with a morally superior social community which gives them a motivational incentive across

both the emotional and identity dimensions. Their argument of moral responsibility should not be confused with identification, although they are interconnected. The argument should instead be understood as the activists' emphasis on the MB's "embodiment" of a complete image of a righteous and modern Muslim. Identification process in this case is essentially an agent's conscious transformation in terms of their (ideal) group affiliation, which then allows them to fulfill their preconceived desires.

Moreover, the interviewees' active choice to mobilize was developed by firstly categorizing themselves *vis-à-vis* other social agents and later amplifying their choice through self-enhancement. This can be described as a paradoxical process of individualization though social movement participation. The categorization part of the process is based on commonality with other activists, e.g. shared level and preference of education, grievances, politicization, class background, religious understanding, locality, family ties etc.

If one is to focus on only one of these commonalities, namely the class dimension, it is easy to see that their consumer patterns (middle-class professionals) are steadily growing. This is primarily noted in these activists' life-style(s) by the clothes they wear, the food they consume, the neighborhoods where they live and the private schools they attend etc. This lifestyle is in many ways desired by those individuals belonging to the lower classes (rural populations and low-middle income workers) who are also religiously conservative. Such a lifestyle becomes a model because it is both principled (in religious terms) and commendable (in economic terms) in a disadvantaged socio-economic context.

Thus, there is an instrumental motivational stimulus which is indirectly utilized by the MB. One of the young activists from Nasr City explained that the educated middle-class had been increasingly marginalized from the professional labor market. He was quick to point out that 88 percent of those unemployed in Egypt are university graduates below 40 years of age. In turn, pressure from graduates' families to find employment has been mounting which creates serious psychological tensions and growing frustrations over unfulfilled expectations which drives such individuals towards political dissent (interview no. 26). Such contemporary developments can be connected to both previous and contemporary religious practices. Ever since the 1970s, religious conservatism has become widely accepted by the growing middle-classes in the urban regions of Lower

Egypt (Khadduri 1970; Bello 1981; Abdalla 1985; Davis 1987; Munson 1988; see chapter 2). In turn, this development can be connected to a wave of new MB activists during the same period (section 2.6).

Based on the sum of previous claims, it can be argued that the general public opinion about everyday religious practices has evolved into a social context where such practices have been broadly regarded as something admirable and in general positive for the youth of Egypt. Public opinion can therefore be translated into widely-held positive attitudes toward religious identity. This cultural undertone produced displays of religious piety, observing daily prayers, avoiding "places of sin" (i.e. bars, discoteques etc.), attending religious talks and conferences, repeated usage of religiously loaded language, etc., which further permeates most segments of civil society. Moreover, these religious "symbols" colored the socio-political discourse making proponents of Islamism widely popular and confident (e.g. the MB and in particular salafi groups).

It can further be argued that the MB's youth sympathizers did not wholly deviate culturally, religiously, or even ideologically from the bulk of the Egyptian population. On the contrary, the MB's activists, according to their own accounts, came closer to the ideal-type Muslim already recognized by a substantial part of the population and therefore created a desirable identity. Within the framework of this ideal-type identity one can find individuals' conscious choice to make claims regarding the palpably corrupt and ineffective political regime and demand for change. Arguably, motivation for such, apparently dangerous, collective action is appealing due to the antagonistic role of the political regime. The MB thus represents the means of reaching desired goals, e.g. creating an Islamic society/state where justice would be secured, corruption minimized, meritocracy implemented etc. The organization's choice of nonviolence and the continuous self-portrayal as victims propagated by its members creates an image of resilience and the antithesis of the repressive regime.

For instance, during the 1990s and 2000s the MB intensified its search for political recognition and the legitimatization of its claims. During the same period, it turned its focus toward the poor areas of large cities (Cairo and Alexandria primarily) where they utilized the pre-existing networks of elaborate social-service clinics which inspired many disadvantaged youths to pursue higher education and aspire toward improving their

socio-economic standing (see Richards and Waterbury 1990, 408-422; Langohr 2001; interviews no. 14, 22). The MB's leadership understood that youth in general and students in particular are more likely to adopt an Islamist identity and to voice, organize, and sustain political protest due to a number of reasons (discussed elsewhere) (Cook 2001). The assumption is that the MB capitalized on its role as a service provider thereby gaining much sympathy if not outright political support in the form of newly engaged activists. Furthermore, the perceived organizational efficacy of the MB is a positive feature adding to the activists' experience of contributing to social change. The activists also praised the MB's complex structure which offers advancement based on merit instead of patron-client relations.

In summary, Islamist identity has played an important motivational role primarily because of the desirability of the MB's lifestyle as understood by many conservative youths. Here one is able to appreciate the utility of the MB's gradual membership process. Potential activists are eased into the organization's ideas, goals, and internal structure through an identification process which reinforces their initially held sympathy toward the SMO. The in-group identity (i.e. ideal type Muslims) is contrasted to those on the outside, primarily in contrast to the regime (e.g. sinful and corrupt Muslims). Most of those interviewed expressed their interest in group-belonging in a way one could read as indicative of their desire and resolve to transform him/herself into the desired/imagined self. Within this process, the MB's image corresponded to their expectations. For instance, some activists told of their search for a suitable group through which they could attain spiritual advancement, self-realization, and not least, social change, or collective transformation into a community of believers – all elements of the *shumuliyyah* argument.

The Muslim Brotherhood has developed its ideological framework, organizational structure and mobilization strategies over nearly 90 years and accumulated a vast amount of activist experience. The MB's activism has become an integral part of Egyptian civil society and its tradition of (nonviolent) dissent developed a set of social networks and values often reflected in particular activist attitudes and practices. What is more, the MB had created a lifestyle which could evidently be observed by non-activists, sympathizers and opponents alike. This recognizable lifestyle had featured a fully-fledged arsenal of identifiable elements: style of dress, level of education, consumer patterns, home

neighborhood, profession, particular religious practices, attendance of regular study cycles, religious talks and prayers, etc.

Moreover, the MB's public actions such as talks, demonstrations, propaganda efforts, participation in parliament and political motions, and not least the publicized arrests and trials of known MB activists have all contributed to the creation of the organization's positive image. The regime's efforts to suppress the MB further enhanced the Islamists as victims of "unjust" repression by morally bankrupt state authorities. Consequently, the MB in general, and its activists in particular, are easily recognized as dissidents and thereby categorized, at least by sympathizers, as commendable social actors. In other words, sympathizing by-standers have been conditioned into seeing these social movement activists as a social force for good in their society, an attitude sometimes translated into "relational characteristics of a position into a unitary lifestyle, that is, a unitary set of choices of persons, goods, practices" (Bourdieu 1998, 8).

The Islamist activists told of their perception of the MB's *shumuliyyah*, or completeness, in relation to their understanding of Islam and its ideal-type practice. The *shumuliyyah* concept represents an evolved culture of resistance to the authoritarian state wherein Islamist claims-making processes become an institutionalized part of (Islamist) civil society. Again, the concept is deeply connected to the identity of the MB, its leadership and committed activists. This includes religious and political opposition to authoritarian rule and its proponents who demonstrate a capacity to sustain mobilization despite the intense coercion of its members and organizational structure. Moreover, large numbers of youth activists, despite a wide-ranging diversity of opinions, have developed a deep sense of solidarity, comradeship, and a set of affirmative attitudes towards the MB's activism.

Conclusion

The last three chapters, including this one, situated much of the activists' narratives into the previously constructed motivational framework. It can therefore be claimed that the *tarbiyyah* process emerged as one of the most powerful organizational tools to ease sympathizers into the MB and its Islamist framework. We can therefore conclude that the MB's youth activists portrayed themselves as conservative, morally responsible,

determined, organized, brave and economically successful dissidents against the obviously coercive and perceivably corrupt state authority.

The MB's Islamist identity can be understood here as a result of its own evolution and is at the same time central in attracting new members. The MB's middle-class profile allowed many conservative youths to detect positive communal attitudes among its activist counterparts. The above illustrated process of identification with the organization's core activists is explicit and consciously acknowledged by the interviewed activists. Moreover, the activists described MB mobilization as "complete" because the organization had created a self-image encompassing, they would argue, all aspects of life. This essentially translates into a lifestyle image projected by the established activists (i.e. *akh 'amil*) primarily through their own coded behavior, and later into publically observed social relations. These relations, often interpreted as solidarity and comradeship by outsiders, are desirable and thus worth pursuing.

The idea of completeness is discussed elsewhere in the thesis; however, it needs to be mentioned again. The *tarbiyyah* process is in effect a speeded-up identification process designed to transform an active sympathizer (i.e. *akh muhibb*) into a full-fledged activist (i.e. *akh 'amil*). The MB's institution of *usrah* has certainly been central for such transformation. The identification process is therefore consciously entered into as a sign of (activists') acceptance of the overall lifestyle of the Muslim Brothers. It goes to argue that the central markers of the Islamist identity function as a powerful motivator for individuals who desire to transcend their personal status-quo and even their social role (in the case of rural and lower middle-class university students). Moreover, the appeal of the MB's Islamist activism with the much of the urban youth depends, in large part, on its inclusive and yet culturally conservative message presented through recognizable moral symbols and directed against a demonstrably corrupt and repressive political order. In other words, the MB's sympathizers (including lower level activists – *akh muhibb*, *mu'ayyid*, *muntasib*) recognize its activism as a legitimate way of bringing about socio-political change in their society. Moreover, the identity is sufficiently broad that it can accommodate both religiously conservative and less conservative individual activists (see section 4.3.4). The completeness argument mentioned by so many activists therefore reflects the organization's inclusive and resonant mobilization tactics (including its

ambiguous ideology) allowing for the development of a vibrant and well-rooted resistance culture.

10   Summary and Conclusion

The context of freedom will undermine the dominant organisational rhetoric calling for unity at the cost of diversity. As the emergence of various political manifestations seems inevitable, the Brotherhood's leadership will decide to either allow diversity through a flexible organisation, or disallow it though a rigid one, leading to numerous splits. Either way, continued political inclusion and freedom will lead to transcending the phenomenon of political Islamism as it currently exists, and its re-emergence in more sophisticated and more diverse forms.

Ibrahim El-Houdaiby[173]

Introduction

In this closing chapter, the critical findings of the study will be presented and summarized. The study has been an attempt to explore individual motivations behind Islamist social movement mobilization in a repressive state. My initially stated ambition to holistically present motivations behind social movement mobilization through the contextualization of individual actors' narratives has proven both challenging and complex. The primary difficulty has been to combine different disciplinary approaches to studying collective action and thus make sure that this interdisciplinary project can be appreciated by researchers of all relevant disciplines (social movement studies, repression studies, and social psychology).

The most challenging part in the research process was the failure to anticipate the relatively fast disintegration of the Mubarak regime.

10.1 Islamist Mobilization Dynamics

The study represents an attempt to go beyond the Western conception of social movement activism by exploring the mobilization of Islamism in an authoritarian state. One

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[173] Opinion Editorial "The Muslim Brotherhood's trial of pluralism," *Al-Ahram Online*, 23 April, 2011

important objective of the study has been to de-essentialize the MB's activism by placing the motivational narratives of young individual activists at the core of the investigation. In order to grasp their motivational processes the study was constructed around what has been argued to be the necessary components of a motivational framework: beliefs, emotions and identities. Although these elements of motivation are not exhaustive by any means, they do cover much of the motivational drive in this case. For the purpose of a comprehensive discussion of motivations, the study was divided into two empirical parts where the first part includes a broad discussion about the relations between the state authorities and the development of the MB's mobilization. This macro – meso contention revolved around the unequal interaction which forced the MB to evolve its claims, tactics and objectives.

The third chapter of the dissertation situated the emergence of the MB in a constructed argument of supply and demand of social dissent with the Islamist ideological frame as its guiding principle. Subsequent authoritarian regimes in Egypt continuously sought to repress and limit any political dissent, in particular that of Islamists. The authorities used a broad range of methods in order to penetrate all seams of the Egyptian socio-political fabric. Some of the primary repression tools regularly used by the authorities have been identified as regime dominated patrimonial networks of dependence, continued dominance of the parliament, coercive security policies and economic control mechanisms. In response, the MB developed its organizational structure paralleling that of the state, however, without any real political power. The organization's primary intent was to demonstrate moral and ethical credibility among the masses, all in a continuous effort to legitimize their mission.

During the course of its protracted mobilization, and under irregular levels of repression, it became clear that the MB was a well organized and thought-out claims-making enterprise. It further became clear that the MB's claims derived primarily from conservative middle class students and professionals. The source of its claims and membership also partly explains their successes where a well-functioning structure and resonant moral discourse attracted ambitious youth activists. The effective resonance of the MB's discourse was due to the leadership's skilled usage of religious and political symbols where their view of modernity, tradition and religious moderation presented their activism as a viable alternative to the prevailing socio-political order. The middle-

class youth (and presumably most other social groups) considered the regime authorities to be corrupt, immoral and deeply unjust contributing to their sense of socio-political alienation. The MB therefore sought ways to legitimize their efforts by diversifying their initial social-relief efforts with participation in the political process. This, the MB saw as highly important for their mobilization despite the fraudulent character of these elections.

The fourth chapter clarified the disposition of the regime's repressive policies against Islamist mobilization. It categorizes the former Mubarak regime as an electoral authoritarian state where political elections are used as a power mechanism through which the regime sustains whatever legitimacy it enjoys among its citizens without overusing its coercive capabilities. The MB had in many ways functioned as a facilitator of the supply of, what is often called, a pragmatic Islamist culture of dissidence. Again, the synergy of traditional Islamic values, organizational sophistication, a general perception of moral superiority and increasingly politicized strategies all contributed to the MB's visibility and importance in Egyptian civil society. Moreover, during periods of high-level repression the organization focused on amalgamating the existing inter-personal networks thus developing a high level of trust among its members. During periods of more relaxed government intervention the MB could rapidly expand its activist network throughout the country and could facilitate a massive membership drive by utilizing the existing social capital within the organization. Substantial numbers of organizational network hubs were located in professional syndicates, student unions, and social welfare facilities. Such places were, at times, spared from harsh regime repression.

The fifth chapter broadened the analysis of the contentious relationship between the Islamists and the regime by exploring the spaces of contention. Here the study partly utilizes the concept of political opportunity structures where student unions, syndicates and judicial courts were identified as important "battle grounds" for the MB's activism. Such places of contention were considered by Islamists as important platforms where citizens could hear activist claims and observe the regime's often flagrant breaching of the constitutional order. This was the case despite relatively strong regime control over media outlets. The most important effects of this contentious dynamic were that many Egyptians started to sympathize with the MB's mobilization even if they disagreed with its ideological orientation.

Moreover, this chapter further broadened the discussion including the religious institutions (focusing on al-Azhar and the Muftiate) in order to highlight the regime's efforts to delegitimize Islamist claims of authenticity and civil piety. This is important as the Islamists in general, and the MB in particular, stressed the religious institutions' subservient role in relation to the regime which delegitimized their authority as interpreters of religious doctrines. Nevertheless, it is important to point out that the contention about civil piety is more complex.

Al-Azhar, with its long tradition of independence from political domination, progressively opposed the regime's policies as they had been seeking an increased social role. Hereafter the salafi form of Islamism was introduced as a competing mobilization framework where personal piety and apolitical associations attracted increasing numbers from the urban lower middle-classes and rural populations. Nevertheless, the MB's style of activism seems to have attracted larger numbers of young followers primarily because of its inclusive, pragmatic and modern framing of perceived contemporary socio-political tribulations. Another attraction with the MB's activism has been highlighted here and that is the organization's merit-based organizational capability unlike any other Islamist (or even secular) organizations.

In the third part of the study I presented four empirical chapters on micro-level Islamist activism and a specific interpretation of individual activist motivations behind mobilization. The sixth chapter clarifies motivations based on the particular understanding that social agents' actions are anchored in their intimate desires and beliefs about the world. One major driving factor in human behavior is our, perhaps utopian, quest for emotional equilibrium where our ambition is to align our beliefs and values with the social order surrounding us. An agent's desires stem therefore from their sense of agency or self, as seen/projected by others. It follows from the accumulated interview data that the activists sought to fulfill their desires by way of their conditioned beliefs, which in turn corresponded to those projected by other activists. In other words, it can be argued that social conditioning had given these middle-class youths a set of guiding values which prepared them for Islamist mobilization. Or rather, the MB's projected image of Islamic values and practices in the eyes of sympathizers and early-stage activists created a vision of the SMO's ideas as reflexive of the *completeness* of both an individual person and society as a whole.

Another, equally important, element of this process is the MB's organizational malleability, i.e. the organizational effort to correspond to the expectations of the conservative middle-classes. The leadership, consisting of several generational cohorts, experienced various forms of state repression and, over time, it developed a social setting within which accumulated (personal as well as organizational) experiences played an important role. Shifting levels of state repression have had positive effects because the organization absorbed and even utilized their consequences.

Although with a somewhat rigid organizational structure, the MB succeeded in establishing an atmosphere where inter-personal dialogue could take place, where ideas and solutions to various obstacles could be discussed and agreed upon. It can be argued that this particular feature of the MB's strength lies is its organizational complexity manifested primarily through its multileveled structure. This created the total opposite from what people perceived how the state functioned. Such a process, in general, allowed the organization to anchor its strategies with its grass-root activists projecting high levels of group trust and cohesion. Nevertheless, despite this organizational plasticity, the effects of shifting state repression have also had their negative effects, namely the creation of tensions between the reform-minded and more conservative activists primarily observable in the youth activist cohort (18-35 yrs.).

The seventh, eighth and ninth chapters deepen the analysis of the micro-level by subdividing motivations into three interlinked dimensions, beliefs, emotions and identity. As the primary concern of the study has been to understand the motivations behind individual choices to mobilize against a repressive state it followed that the activists' narratives were divided into three categories. The interviewed activists' beliefs as they relate to the MB's Islamism have been shown to be evolving and relatively diverse. This is primarily observable in the activists' narratives related to the ideas of Hassan Al-Banna. However, their sense of piety and moral maturity is surprisingly coherent. Their ideal type Muslim, or rather ideal Islamic lifestyle, is heavily informed by the examples of the older generations. Here, commitment, loyalty, perseverance and decision-making capabilities are all admired and thus contrasted with their perceptions of the regime's practices: corruption, injustice, disorder, callousness etc. Such powerful image-forming

framework of the MB and its relatively long-term conditioning has had a powerful effect on all the activists who were interviewed.

On the emotional level, the interviewees reflected deeply on their moral vision and emotional commitment to such an idea. As motivation is a process involving transformation from one mental state to another, emotions are considered to be situational or dispositional. Both of these categories of emotions are contextually dependent. Situational emotions are those emotions directly simulated by outside events. For example, the imminent threat of violence results in fear and discontent. Dispositional emotions are a result of the social agent's deliberative internal mental process about the world. The vast majority of the interviewed activists agreed that situational emotions, such as fear and hate, stemmed from what they perceived as unjust treatment from the regime authorities. The feeling of hate had an encouraging effect on their decision to mobilize, while fear had an inhibiting effect. However, the sensation of fear, though an obstacle, can have rewarding effects if it is overcome. One such effect was increased commitment, loyalty and an enhanced sense of purpose.

MB activists always targeted individuals who they thought had sympathy towards its form of Islamism. Thus, activists already had a head start in convincing such individuals to mobilize. Moreover, the MB's multi-step membership process ensured that an individual is eased into the organization gently, primarily by developing an individual's sense of solidarity and duty.

The motivational element of identity has proven somewhat different than originally imagined. It seems that the process of identification translates well into the motivational construct discussed in the first chapter. The interviewed activists spoke about their attraction to the MB's image of embodying Islamic unity of faith and practice. In other words, other alternatives for political or religious engagement were either impractical (salafism), deviant/apolitical (sufism), secular (liberalism/Marxism) or corrupt (the regime). The activists considered that the ideal type Muslim resided within the ideas of the MB and therefore chose to mobilize as part of this organization. The activists found individual piety, personal commitment and organizational superiority within a social community that was distinguished from all others. The distinction was on both moral and

organizational levels which enhanced these activists' feelings of superiority and thereby stood as the embodiment of collective agency.

10.2 Agency and Motivations

Coming back to the central questions of the study: a) *what motivates a young person's choice to mobilize against a repressive regime?* b) *What explains youth activists' choice of Islamist mobilization*? The two questions have been used to guide the direction of the study by anchoring its main purpose and level of analysis. Addressing these broad questions has proven both challenging and far more complex than initially imagined. Human motivations are very complex, affected by seemingly innumerable factors which are illusively hard to pin down. This realization, learned the hard way, perhaps explains why so few sociologists have attempted to capture and explain motivations behind social action.

Nevertheless, the motivations behind young Islamist activists have been tackled by departing from an abstract premise regarding the transiency of human beliefs and desires. Firstly, state repression policies and their effects were a dominant structural element which directly affected all Egyptian citizens and their attitudes towards politics in general and political engagement in particular. Secondly, prevailing organized dissent creates a climate of social contention between certain group(s) of social agents and the dominant regime. Such dissent represented a counter-culture and thus promised to uphold certain sets of guidelines offering, at least in theory, an alternative social order to the existing one. Thirdly, spectators/citizens are participant observers of this asymmetrical interaction sometimes even choosing to participate on either side of the contentious continuum.

The number of interviewed activists is far too limited to make any generalizable claims regarding human motivations in general. However, there is enough data to suggest that motivational tendencies provide a qualified vindication of my argument. The preceding analysis suggests that Islamist youth activists are clearly motivated by their understanding of abstract virtues prompted by their beliefs, which in turn make these virtues valuable and worth pursuing. Their opinion of the state authorities and the political system has been in direct conflict with their values, and thus a valid target of their protest.

The tension between the activists' ideals and their understanding of the social "reality" surrounding them was formulated by the existing social movement organization, which represented an ideal framework of formulating and expressing their anger and frustrations. The Muslim Brotherhood's role was therefore primarily as a culturally acceptable practical facilitator of their deeply felt resentment of political authority and its style of rule. The interviewed activists' reflective engagement with the organization had been dynamic and thus developed over time. Most importantly, the activists' narratives reiterated their conviction that they are able to shape the MB's activism. The activists (both reformists and conservatives) argued that it is within the organizational framework they are able to achieve social changes. It is within the organization that individual activists exchange, learn and (dis)agree on goals and strategies through a continuous interaction and negotiation all facilitated by the managerial structure(s).

The key feature of Islamist organizations and the central feature of Islamism in general is the claim of authenticity of religious beliefs and comprehensiveness of their practices/traditions which is in turn highly valued by conservative societies. The effect of the authenticity argument is amplified further when Islamist discourses are contrasted with the authoritarian political climate and the regime's practices. This refers again to Islamists' all-encompassing call for societal transformation based on general Islamic values,[174] which are generally familiar to Muslim audiences. Hence, it can be argued that the state authorities had in one way or the other contributed to the external motivations of activists. The perception of unfair treatment, injustice and corruption by individual activists contributed to the internalization of state behavior within the framework of personal beliefs/desires. It is therefore hardly surprising that the MB's political party was named "Freedom and Justice" reflecting the group's epistemic meticulousness and activists' value laden worldview.

In other words, the general motivational framework of these activists' beliefs is the organization's provision of ideal values, beliefs and practices which correspond to their internal conceptualization of such ideals. The activists' sense of duty is prompted by the organizational provision of the purposefulness of socio-political dissent - *telos*. Moreover,

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[174] These values can often be summarized as basic understanding of Islamic concepts of justice, honesty, piety, freedom, and other religious moral values.

activists' motivations as they relate to the second dimension, namely emotions, are closely linked with the internal deliberation of mobilization. An activist's desire to enjoy the benefits of camaraderie, solidarity and care are all acquired through prolonged interaction, again facilitated by organizational practices, or rather, traditions. The Muslim Brotherhood's accumulated activist experience including its handling of diversity among its members produced a set of attitudes which directly contributed to its survival and evolution. Such collectively maintained attitudes can be described as moral understandings of (personal) duty and organizational obligation.

The general sense of positive attitudes dominated the interviewees' narratives, despite recurring internal disputes, and thus indicated an organizational capacity to shape activist behavior. This process would not have been possible without a high level of trust between the activists, again, despite occasional disagreements. Another positive effect of inter-personal trust is that the sensation of fear is significantly diminished as activists become empowered by solidarity and camaraderie which focuses his emotional energy on "duties." A religious element of motivation is significant as it provides emotional attachment to social practices. Moreover, external signs of religiosity and piety are a valued part of social capital which highlights trustworthiness and commitment to organizational principles. In this way activism offers a sense of regained control over oneself, or rather over one's own actions suggesting increased personal confidence, courage and a sense of freedom.

For instance, the activists' categorical commitment to nonviolent mobilization strategies is worth mentioning. Their narratives indicated that the long-term effects of nonviolent strategies are far more useful, attracting far more support from the wider population than violent mobilization would ever do. But more importantly, these narratives revealed that their commitment to nonviolence is in itself a form of protest due to, what they described as, the regime's "desire" or intention to provoke a violent response. A violent reaction would inevitably provoke the escalation of repressive policies and, in the long-term, discredit and delegitimize the MB's activism. In the end, nonviolence indicated the activists' expression of perceived collective autonomy, distinct from the regime-dominated political space.

The third element of motivation discussed in the study is identity. The activists again clearly indicated the importance of their adherence to an Islamist understanding of social change and its primary promoter, namely the MB. Their committed attachment to the group was significant in a highly contentious political climate where any expression of political opinion produces a social identity label. As previously noted, the overwhelming majority of activists are conservative middle-class students/professionals who identify with the MB's discourse, lifestyle, and claims. The activists reiterated that the MB's Islamist vision represents what they perceive as the "completeness" of Islamic life. As such, the organization is a civil society hub where like-minded dissidents share their convictions and experiences in order to resist the dominant power-framework.

As the activists are eased into the MB's community through a multi-stage process they are also conditioned into a close-knit collective (e.g. *usrah*). Within this organizational unit interpersonal interaction is intimate and shapes their personality. The dynamic of the MB's early-stage activism is generally perceived as "captivating" as narrated by several activists. This dynamism suggests that the process of identification continuously modifies activists' sense of identity. This tendency drives forth activists' commitments by propelling one's sense of duty and belonging to an exceptional collective effort. This process may partly explain the surprising level of conformity within this large size social movement organization. Even though the study noted generational tensions within the MB, given the size of the organization (200 000 – 1 000 000 active members), the fallout has arguably been minimal.

The "captivating" outcome of the identification process further suggests that the organizational culture of resistance offers activists tangible notions of personal ascendancy where self-improvement includes both the spiritual and material dimensions. The idea of ascendancy suggests here a notion of peer-pressure where activists' performances are used as an incessant measuring-stick. Such a procedure is usually used to evaluate one's status and thus communally recognized level of personal commitment. The ideas of the identification process, a high level of trust, and close interpersonal communication further suggests that activists develop ever more sophisticated means of cooperation through which individual ascendancy serves as one of the main motivating elements.

Lastly, the role of state repression cannot be underestimated as it provides external motivational incitements for mobilization. The authoritarian regime thus represents a polar opposite to the activists' moral values and their collective practices providing a collective sense of being under siege. It is therefore plausible to argue that the MB activists generally share common experiences, grievances and ultimately space within civil society stimulating an individual sense of belonging and a communal feeling of superiority.

These insights into the motivations of MB activists offer a clearer overview of Islamist activism in general explaining the continued successes of Islamist SMOs, not only in Egypt, but in the entire MENA region. In the light of the revolutionary events across the region, the dissertation generates an explanation which contextualizes Islamist mobilization and electoral successes and thus de-essentializes the presumed exceptionalism of this form of activism. The MB's Islamism in pre-revolutionary Egypt have motivated (and still motivates) mobilization due to its capacity to provide conservative middle-class youths with purpose, a sense of autonomy and an opportunity for merit-based personal ascendancy. All of the things the authoritarian regime could/would not match.

10.3 Advancing Research on Islamist Activism

The above overview and summary of the dissertation's main findings presents a different approach to the study of Islamist activism in general, and the mobilization of Muslim Brotherhood youth activists in particular. The study thus represents an attempt to understand Islamist activism from the perspective of the participants themselves viewing their mobilization through a constructed motivational schema. Moreover, much of the research was focused on contextualizing the activists' deliberation process so as to link the repression dynamics of the authoritarian Mubarak regime with social movement organizational responses and individual choice-making processes. This interpretivist attempt to bridge the different levels of analysis necessitated an interdisciplinary research design.

For instance, identifying actors' beliefs and desires, emotions and identities as they relate to motivations behind their activism and studying them as both culturally contingent and disruptive elements of social relations "normalizes them, so that that they no longer

appear irrational or mistaken" (Jasper 2010, 83). The study of Islamist activist culture is therefore a part of the study of the contextualization process within which a state's institutional framework is presented including the regime's repression capacity and tactics, the prevailing socio-economic conditions as well as the traditional structural elements of the society (e.g. patron-client relations).

It should thus be clear that a social agent's behavior is in many ways determined by an individual's continuous reflection on his social surroundings which is in turn processed through internal cognitive processes (e.g. emotional experiences) that are subsequently shared with others. Culture therefore often "consists of shared mental worlds and their perceived embodiments. The latter may include words, artifacts, artworks, rituals, events, individuals, and any other action or creation that carries symbolic meanings" (Jasper 2010, 60).

The interviewed activists' motivational narratives point towards a notion of activist culture where the mobilization practices of previous generations of activists are transferred and taught to the next generation of recruits. The contemporary activist culture includes the successful interaction between individual activists, which is in turn contingent on codes of behavior previously established and agreed upon. In a (macro-meso) contentious scenario, the SMO's display of coordinated and composed behavior communicates cohesion both to its adversaries, i.e. state authorities, and observers making it simultaneously both a target of repression and an object of admiration.

In the macro-meso-micro/repression-dissent interaction it is possible to isolate several distinctive propositions which could advance future research. Firstly, Islamist activists by and large focus much of their efforts on the invocation of cultural symbols through both a socio-political and morally loaded discourse. Their sense of "authentic" lifestyle involves both mental and social incitements for mobilization. The search for "moral" practice in a group guided by solidarity, structured dissent and long-lasting traditions inspired many middle-class youth sympathizers to mobilize. As such, one needs to consider an approach which involves "talking to Islamists" rather than "talking about them." In doing so, a researcher will widen the scope of the analysis and notice, despite initial assumptions of group conformity, a wide range of diversity within Islamist activism.

Secondly, by placing agency at the center of the analysis a researcher is compelled to investigate the surrounding circumstances and external structures of the social milieu within which a social agent necessarily resides and thus constructs a comprehensive explanation of the phenomena of interest. I want to argue that a contribution of my social movement studies approach to our understanding of Islamist mobilization hinges on the centrality of activists narratives' in my explanation.

Thirdly, a consequence of the suggested narrow focus in research on Islamist activism is a deeper insight into the dynamics of this particular culture of resistance. Dynamics here point toward both contextual cultural specificities and more importantly various interpretations of shared beliefs and ideas about strategies and outcomes of activism. The MB's activists are composed of several distinct generations and streams of thought. Such diversity creates tensions, but it also drives forth the organization's evolutionary process. This evolving dissent culture displayed relative discursive consistency and ideological potency in competition with existing cultural views (liberalism, Marxism, salafism etc.). Moreover, the long-term effects of this type of activism include the creation of new strategies of collective action where the successes of such actions depend largely on the political opportunities and potency of competing ideologies.

Fourthly, and directly connected to the previous point, is the consideration of socio-political change within the environment within which activism takes places. Here, a sophisticated consideration of the dynamics of political opportunity structures is preferable. As has been demonstrated, the MB's mobilization experienced various periods of state repression ever since the late 1920s. As a consequence of this prolonged mobilization process the organization integrated different age-cohorts together with their different ideas about the course of activism (operationally, organizationally, ideologically etc.). The effects of state policies on Islamist activism are important to consider and highly relevant in explaining both the perceived diversity and uniformity of Islamist SMOs. This is indeed an important lesson.

Fifthly and perhaps most significantly is the deliberation of the meanings of activism in relation to its practitioners. In which way is activism fulfilling activists' social and mental desires? How socially relevant is activism for a particular group of individuals? These considerations are a product of this study's deliberation process within which

epistemological revisionism has been at its heart. Previous attempts to address the complexities, or rather simplicities, of Islamist activism have compelled me to reflect on individual choices to pursue social change in accordance with widely criticized "anti-systemic" conceptions of an Islamist vision of the social order. In order to cut deep into the tension between theory and practice it was necessary to ask the question of why seemingly well educated, well-informed, young and fairly well-off youths choose to mobilize in dangerous and allegedly reactionary forms of activism? This study has shown that the tradition of Islamist activism in Egypt has developed a culture of resistance among parts of the civil society which attracted youths to commit themselves to this form of dissent. Therefore, cultural specificities are closely tied to the formation and functions of social movement activism as nonconformist behavior.

This study has shown that sociological research of (semi)clandestine micro-level activism is a complex, dangerous, and vivacious form of dissent against a repressive regime. The revolutionary events that lasted for 18 days in Egypt (January-February 2011), have shown that, if wide and intensive enough, popular discontent can dislodge a perceivably stable authoritarian regime from its position of power.

10.4 Future projections

Taking the previous suggestions as a set of guidelines, one could depart from the findings of this study and hence broaden the analysis further. Egyptian society has, since the colonial time, had a distinctive and settled class-system, however, with the possibility of relatively slow mobility. This suggests that the ruling regimes had a stable base of recruits and therefore ability to control and manipulate the system to their advantage. Built-in tensions between the social classes and the dichotomy of urban vs. rural was used to the advantage of authoritarian regimes as the most effective way to administer the state. For this purpose, the post-colonial regimes (i.e. Nasser, Sadat and Mubarak) have used the full spectrum of institutions to control the population and preserve the status quo. Some of the institutions, such as the Ministry of Interior and its state security services have had a free reign to enforce regime policies.

The notion of de-westernization of social movement studies discussed briefly in the first chapter of the study can be broadened here. Traditionally, the majority of world-leading

scholars of social movements studied SMOs and the dynamic of social dissent in states where the political system rarely limited political participation. Within this context, these scholars helped shape theoretical frameworks used in social movement studies and more clearly utilized in this study. Ever since crowd behavior came to the fore of sociological investigations (Gustave Le Bon) to value-added models of collective behavior Chicago school (Herbert Blumer and Niel Smelser), onward to studies of specific forms of organized dissenting behavior and the now classic period of social movements (Ted Gurr, Charles Tilly), and later to more diversified explanations of social movement formation and dynamics (John McCarthy and Mayer Zald, Doug McAdam, Alberto Mellucci etc.), to process theories and political opportunities (David Meyer, Sidney Tarrow), and onward to new social movement theories (Alain Touraine, Ernesto Laclau, Chantal Mouffe, also Mellucci, della Porta and others) have attempted to explain the social dynamic of movement mobilization from a wide variety of epistemological angles adding to a substantial body of theoretical literature. They were all concerned with shedding more light on changing socio-political conditions in the modern age. Some focused more on structure, others, more recent scholars, gave more attention to agency-driven explanations, including the specific (social) features of the concerned agents.

This study has attempted to build an investigation of a complex form of activism situated in a "non-traditional" context (an authoritarian, Muslim majority state) by considering several streams of argumentation on individual motivation. By placing the underlying elements of motivation for mobilization at the center of the investigation I have emphasized the centrality of social movement activism in the overall social change. Here, the dynamic of social conflict highlighted the notion that the social movement (organization) mobilization in a non-western/democratic context is not anomalous either on the meso- or the micro level.

The purpose of my "beyond democratic contexts" claim has been to combine different streams of argumentation in order to address multiple levels of analysis as well as to present a complex argument explaining the core question of investigation – individual motivation behind mobilization. However, these streams did not provide enough substance to address the depth of structural control mechanisms used to combat different forms of activism. For that reason, I had to seriously consider a variety of studies on state repression in general and the MENA region in particular. This included an analysis of the

development of Islamist thought, its components, and objectives in a framework of dissenting opposition. On the other hand, theories on social movements provided wide-reaching theoretical frames addressing relevant elements of a social movement dynamics from early formation stages to mobilization outcomes. At the same time my insistence on individual motivations required further theoretical expansion incorporating relevant elements from social psychology. My effort to explain individual motivation for mobilization in an authoritarian state was done by way of addressing all of the three levels of analysis. In addition, three major themes - repression, Islamism and motivation - had to be conceptualized and operationalized as equally important in the scope of the study.

Through a combination of the class-domination of politics and economics and repressive mechanisms, the regimes have attempted to control citizens' beliefs and ideas. The ruling regimes have always propagated stability and the importance of security for the people. Their warnings about dangers of political dissent which would lead Egypt into socio-economic chaos followed by irreversible national fragmentation have scared most of its citizens into silence for decades. It therefore followed that the regime needed to construct and maintain sufficient mechanisms of repression controlling those who still wish to voice their dissent. This process resulted in the regime's nearly total control over the political outcome of the political process. Islamists, as the primary form of opposition, had to create an alternative paradigm of power discourse that could be understood by the vast majority of the population and oppose it to that of the regime. This discourse had to be clear and distinct enough in order to motivate and offer both theoretical and practical solutions to perceived grievances.

In post-revolutionary Egypt, one can observe the fragmentation of the political spectrum into a wide variety of political alternatives with progressively more weak state authority, weak economic performance, emboldened civil society, with increased military involvement in the political realm. In such a situation, the Islamist movement is expected to flourish; however, their continued growth and popular support depends ultimately on its political and socio-economic performance. The old institutional structure has barely been reformed. Neopatrimonial structures are still in place. The attitudes of the security personnel have barely changed. In light of such realizations, the question therefore

remains, will authoritarianism fade? Will the victorious Islamist political parties live up to their moral visions of justice, freedom, and transparency?

El-Houdaiby's introductory quote poses several interesting reservations regarding the survival, course of development, and role of Islamist activism in the changing political landscape in the MENA region. Further research could therefore include an exploration of the supposed changing dynamics of the Islamist social movement organizations in post-revolutionary states. This could be done by focusing on changing mobilization spaces of Islamist SMOs in the wake of the fall of the authoritarian regimes. Changes in these states have opened new paths of social change, including new spaces for mobilization and new opportunities for Islamist organizations to recruit and strategize their activism. One crucial change is that the Islamists now can compete in free (space) and fair elections (opportunity) for the first time.

Such an approach invites a further deepening of the intersection between structure and agency in transitional phase(s) of political systems in the MENA region through an analysis of mobilization's spatial dimensions. One could look at structural changes (in the future case, regime shifts) and its effects on social mobilization among Islamist organizations. Or, as done in this study, one could branch out with a thorough overview of changing micro-level dynamics and explain Islamist mobilization both before and after the fall of authoritarian regime(s).

Lastly, one could seek to develop a description and more complex understanding of the spatial conditions and effects of activists' participation in Islamist SMOs in the various stages of the political transformation process. The main empirical focus would therefore lay in time with contextual changes in the MENA region by focusing on the early period after political transformations in Egypt, Tunisia, Morocco or potentially Libya or/and the states in the Gulf region.

Appendices

Appendix I - Case study's procedural design

Case study (data collection - "procedural" design)

a) *Contextual dimension*:
Dynamics of regime repression and
dissident Islamist organizations

b) *Imbedded micro- dimension*: Micro
mobilization dynamics

Research questions and hypotheses based on theoretical assumptions and concepts
-Previous research and the extension of their findings applied and developed-

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Triangulation thorough multiple sources

Second-hand material,
academic works,
expert interviews

Sources

Semi-structured
interviews,
participation
observation,
biographies

Government policies,
Newspapers, Human
Rights and NGO reports

Case study analysis with the attached narrative analysis of activists' life stories

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"Holistic" elaboration of the results and their discussion

Appendix II - Egypt's Repression Index

a)
Freedom House assessment on Egypt's political and civil liberties (2002-2010).

Year/ Liberties	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009	2010
Political liberties	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6	6
Civil liberties	6	6	6	5	5	5	5	5	5

Source: The Freedom House official website: http://www.freedomhouse.org

Political Liberties
"Ratings of 3, 4, 5 – Countries and territories with a rating of 3, 4, or 5 include those that moderately protect almost all political rights to those that more strongly protect some political rights while less strongly protecting others. The same factors that undermine freedom in countries with a rating of 2 may also weaken political rights in those with a rating of 3, 4, or 5, but to an increasingly greater extent at each successive rating.
Rating of 6 – Countries and territories with a rating of 6 have very restricted political rights. They are ruled by one-party or military dictatorships, religious hierarchies, or autocrats. They may allow a few political rights, such as some representation or autonomy for minority groups, and a few are traditional monarchies that tolerate political discussion and accept public petitions."

Civil Liberties
"Ratings of 3, 4, 5 – Countries and territories with a rating of 3, 4, or 5 include those that moderately protect almost all civil liberties to those that more strongly protect some civil liberties while less strongly protecting others. The same factors that undermine freedom in countries with a rating of 2 may also weaken civil liberties in those with a rating of 3, 4, or 5, but to an increasingly greater extent at each successive rating.
Rating of 6 – Countries and territories with a rating of 6 have very restricted civil liberties. They strongly limit the rights of expression and association and frequently hold political prisoners. They may allow a few civil liberties, such as some religious and social freedoms, some highly restricted private business activity, and some open and free private discussion."

b) Amnesty International's assessment of Egyptian political and civil freedoms (2000-2009).

Year/ Liberties	2000	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007	2008	2009
Civil and Political liberties	3	4	4	4	4	3	4	4	4	4

Source: The Political Terror Scale official website: http://www.politicalterrorscale.org

"4: Civil and political rights violations have expanded to large numbers of the population. Murders, disappearances, and torture are a common part of life. In spite of its generality, on this level terror affects those who interest themselves in politics or ideas.

3: There is extensive political imprisonment, or a recent history of such imprisonment. Execution or other political murders and brutality may be common. Unlimited detention, with or without a trial, for political views is accepted."

Appendix III - Generic Interview Questions

Background and political activism
- Could you tell me a little bit about yourself? (Focus on age, education, family structure, class background, ambitions etc.)
- What motivated you in particular to get involved in activism?

Identity
- How would you describe yourself? (In terms of class, belief and group belonging)
- Would you call yourself an Islamist?
- Where do you feel most comfortable? (Home, school, mosque, café bar, with the "Brothers").
- How many of your friends are **not** in the Brotherhood?
- What do they think of you as being active Islamist?
- Looking back at your active time as a "Brother, what was your opinion about the group?
- What were your positive and negative views about the group?
- How did that change? (Did the group change or did you change so that you would fit in the group?
- Who was the most influential person (close to you) who prompted you towards activism?
- Which type of people (or a person), outside the Brotherhood, are you likely to identify yourself with, both in Egypt and abroad?
- How many people from your neighbourhood are "Brothers"?
- Did you spend time in state custody? (jail, prison, police station, house arrest etc.). If yes…
- Where you alone in detention? If not…
- How did the presence of other members of Brotherhood affect your stay in prison?
- Did you become stronger or weaker after your time in detention?
- What would you most likely change with the Brotherhood, if you had that power?
- Why that (whatever the answer is)?
- What is the primary obstacle in coming together, and fulfilling the objective?
- How many other similar groups exist in this country?

Emotions (primary focus on: anger and fear)
- Tell me about your feelings when you have joined the "Brothers"?
- How does it feel to be called a "Brother"?
- What do you feel about people that are practicing Muslims and yet they do not join the Brotherhood?
- What about your feelings about the current state arrangement in Egypt?
- What about your first demonstration, how did you feel when demonstrating? (scared, angry, frustrated, excited)
- Given the repression from the state, are there any feelings that could wake your urge to fight back?
- What are the most traumatic experiences in your life related to your activism or relationship with state authorities?
- How did you feel after the mass arrests of Brotherhood members in past years?

- What opportunities do you feel exist in the Egyptian society today? Has it become worse or better since the 1990s?
- How do you feel about *Gamaah al Islamiyyah* (violent group) and their previous war against the regime?
- If there are any, what is the single most likely reason that would compel you to use arms against the regime?

Beliefs (particular ideological preferences, religious belief, belief of organization)
- How important was your faith in motivating you to be a "Brother"?
- Why do you think it is important for Muslims to be concerned with politics?
- What do you think about apolitical Muslims, *sufiyyah*, *salafiyyah*, etc.?
- Can you elaborate on any (*dalil*) reference to any texts or other sources that would back your activism?
- Does the Brotherhood allow for different beliefs in the organization? (non-Muslims, Christians, democrats, communists)
- Explain what the slogan (Islam huwa al Hall) "Islam is the solution" means. Elaborate…
- What role do you think that Islam can play in Egypt and other countries?
- What does the term (*3Adl*) Justice mean to you?
- What does the term (*Shari3ah*) Islamic Law mean to you?
- Describe what would (*Ad- Dawla Islamiyyah*) the Islamic state look like?
- What about citizen representation in such a state?
- What would a role of religious scholars be like?
- Would you cooperate with non-religious groups in order to change Egyptian society? If so, what is your explanation?
- Have you ever considered in joining any other groups such as the Islamic Jihad or *Gamaa al Islamyyah*?
- What do you think about GI, as it has reversed its strategy from violence to nonviolence?
- Which other groups or organisations do you most commonly work with?
- Did working with other groups affect you/your movement (effects of cross-fertilisation)
- What is your opinion about excessive poverty in Egypt?
- So far, do you consider the movement to have been a success/failure?

Appendix IV – Letter of Introduction

The letter of introduction was based on 4 ethical principles:
"1 reducing the risk of unanticipated harm;
2 protecting the interviewee's information;
3 effectively informing interviewees about the nature of the study, and
4 reducing the risk of exploitation" (DiCicco-Bloom B. and Crabtree B. (2006), "The qualitative research interview," *Medical Education,* 40).

TO WHOM IT MAY CONCERN

This letter is to introduce Mr. Emin Poljarevic who is a PhD student at the European University Institute in Florence, Italy. His doctoral research, which I supervise, addresses the evolution of social movements in Egypt. For his empirical analysis, Mr. Poljarevic plans to interview persons engaged in different political groups. I will be most grateful for any help you can give him for a fruitful development of his research.

Given the social science nature of his research, and in order to ensure privacy, interview partners will remain anonymous, and no information that could help identification will be published. Names of individuals and places will be replaced with numerical symbols and not exposed to any external party, be they domestic or international. All sensitive information pertaining to the interviewee is therefore protected in accordance with academic norms and ethics. Furthermore, interviewees will have an opportunity to review the transcript of the interview if they so desire.

Please, feel free to contact me directly if you have any question.

Let me also thank you in advance for your kind attention.

Yours sincerely,

Donatella della Porta
Professor of Sociology
Phone: +39 055 4685 240
Email: Donatella.DellaPorta@eui.eu

Arabic version of the letter:

<div dir="rtl">

لمن يهمه الأمر

تمت صياغة هذا الخطاب من أجل تقديم السيد/أمين بولجاريفيك طالب الدكتوراه بالجامعة الأوروبية بفلورنسا-
إيطاليا، وتتناول رسالته،والتي أقوم بالإشراف عليها، تطور الحركات الاجتماعية بمصر ،ووفاء بحاجات بحثه
العملية ينتوي السيد/بولجاريفيك إجراء مقابلات شخصية مع عدد من أعضاء مجموعات سياسية مختلفة بمصر
ولذا فإني سأكون شاكرة لكل مساعدة وعون يمكن لسيادتكم تقديمها في سبيل إتمام بحثه العلمي.
ونظرا لغلبة طابع العلوم الاجتماعية على بحثه، ومراعاة لمقتضيات الخصوصية فإن أسماء المشاركين في
المقابلات الشخصية المقرر إجراؤها ستحظى بالسرية ولن يتم نشر آية معلومات قد تفضي إلى التعرف على هؤلاء
الأشخاص حيث سيتم استبدال أسماء الأشخاص والأماكن برموز رقمية وسيتم حجبها عن كافة الأطراف
الخارجية، محلية كانت أم دولية، واستنادا إلى ذلك ستحظى كافة المعلومات ذات الحساسية بالحماية طبقا لمعايير
وأخلاقيات البحث الأكاديمي،علاوة على إتاحة الفرصة لإطلاع الأشخاص الملتقى بهم على نصوص المقابلات إذا
ما أبدوا الرغبة في ذلك.

وأرجو الاتصال بي مباشرة في حال كان لدي سيادتكم آية أسئلة أو استفسارات،
وتفضلوا بقبول فائق التحية والشكر لتعاونكم،

</div>

Donatella della Porta
Professor of Sociology

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Appendix V - List of Interviewed Activists

Interview No.	Date of Interview	Activist Name	Place of Residence	Age
1	▉	▉	Samannoud	24
2	▉	▉	Samannoud	23
3	▉	▉	Samannoud	22
4	▉	▉	Samannoud	21
5	▉	▉	Samannoud-Madinat Nasr	24
6	▉	▉	Abu Kabir	18
7	▉	▉	Abu Kabir	20
8	▉	▉	Abu Kabir	35
9	▉	▉	Abu Kabir	29
10	▉	▉	Abu Kabir	24
11	▉	▉	Abu Kabir-Kafr Saykh	25
12	▉	▉	Abu Ahmad-Sharqiyyah	45
13	▉	▉	Cairo	25
14	▉	▉	Cairo	60
15	▉	▉	Cairo	25
16	▉	▉	Cairo	29
17	▉	▉	Cairo	48
18	▉	▉	Cairo (brief)	38
19	▉	▉	Asyout	18
20	▉	▉	Alexandria	29
21	▉	▉	Al Mansoura	19
22	▉	▉	Cairo	60
23	▉	▉	Helwan	24
24	▉	▉	Cairo	24
25	▉	▉	Cairo	18
26	▉	▉	Madinat Nasr	23
27	▉	▉	Cairo	19
28	▉	▉	Alexandria	21
29	▉	▉	Cairo University- female focus group	19.21,21,22

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